THE TRANSFORMATION OF A PASTORAL ECONOMY: BEDOUIN AND STATES IN NORTHERN ARABIA, 1850-1950

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy to the
Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford

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ABSTRACT

The Transformation of a Pastoral Economy:
Bedouin and States in Northern Arabia, 1850-1950

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This thesis analyzes economic change among the bedouin of northern Arabia by examining four factors: the trade in camels; intertribal raiding; large-scale attacks by the Akhwan; and trade and smuggling. Many writers have assumed that the sale or hiring of camels for transport by camel-herding tribes was their major source of income, and that the spread of modern transportation caused a decline in the demand for camels, resulting in lower prices for the animals, and an economic crisis for the bedouin. The well-documented case studies in this thesis will show that the transformation of bedouin society in the modern era was more complex.

The first chapter will present an overview of the principal factors that affected bedouin livelihoods during the nineteenth century: the environment, intertribal relations and relations with settled populations. The second chapter examines how the trade in northern Arabian camels changed between 1850 and 1950. It shows that demand for camels rose and fell throughout the period, even as the use of modern modes of transport increased. In fact, from about 1892 to 1914, the sale of thousands of camels from northern Arabia in the markets of Egypt for butcher's meat accounted for a large portion of the total camel trade in the region. The third and fourth chapters examine in detail the ways in which intertribal raiding, large-scale attacks by Akhwan forces and government policies affected bedouin livelihoods in Kuwait, Iraq and Transjordan between 1920 and 1940. The final chapter demonstrates how growing state power altered bedouin trading patterns during the same period, and how some tribes became involved in smuggling, or were harmed by zealous anti-smuggling measures carried out by government officials.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCB	Bedouin Control Board
EHME	Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914: A Book of Readings*
EHMENA	Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa*
FOCP	Foreign Office Confidential Print
GJ	*Geographical Journal*
IJMES	*International Journal of Middle East Studies*
IOR	India Office Records, British Library
JRCAS	*Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*
MES	*Middle Eastern Studies*
PP	*Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers*
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew
AIR	Air Ministry records
CO	Colonial Office records
FO	Foreign Office records
SAC	Private Papers Collection, Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford
SSO	RAF Special Service Officer (Iraq)
TJFF	Transjordan Frontier Force

TRANSLITERATION

Arabic words are rendered into the Roman alphabet according to the style used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

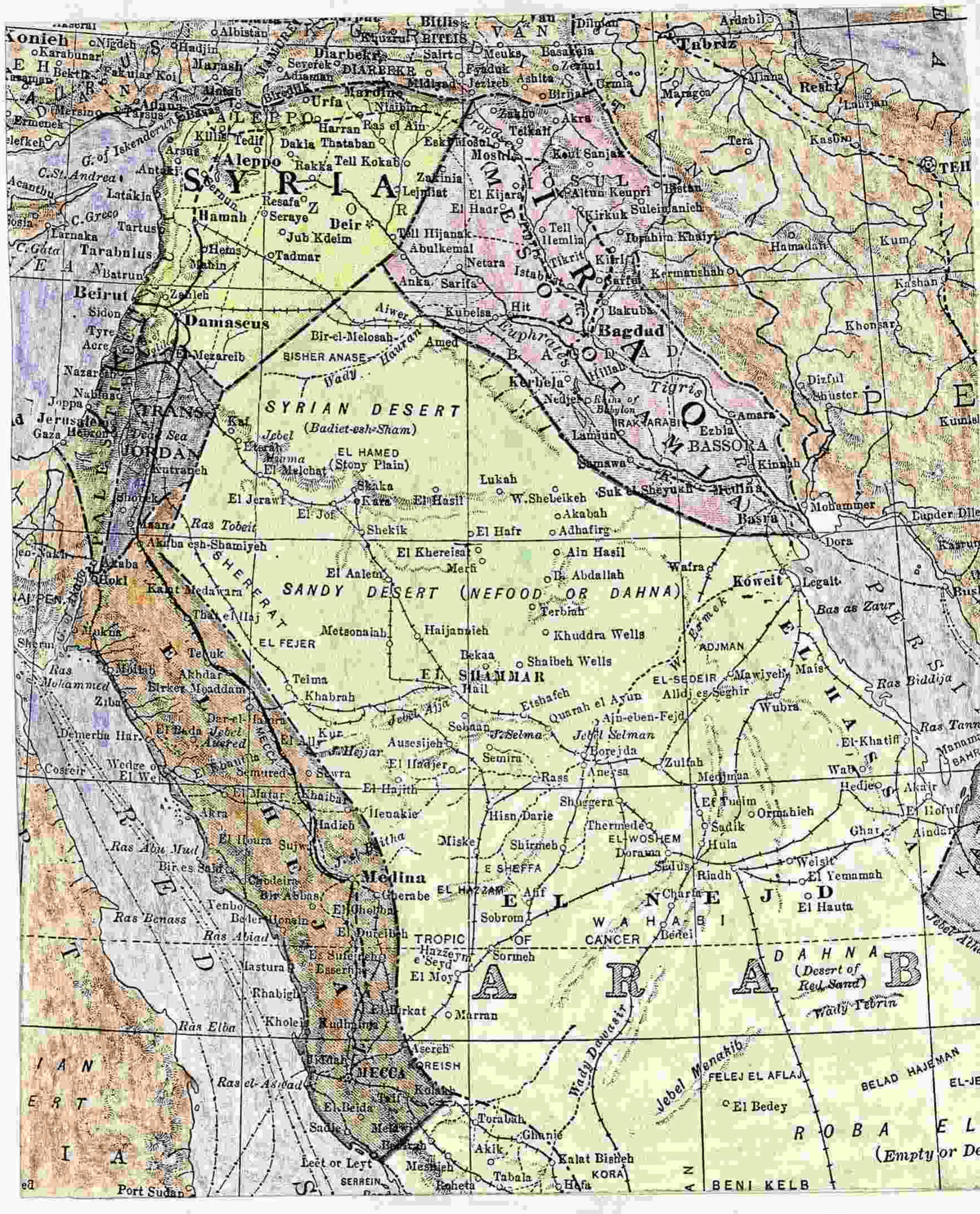
MAP 1
Tribes and Confederations in Northern Arabia, c. 1930



Sources: Great Britain, Admiralty, Naval Intelligence Division, *Western Arabia and the Red Sea* (London, 1946), 398; and A. I. Pershits, "Khoziaistvo i obshchestvenno-politicheskii stroi Severnoi Aravii v XIX- pervoi treti XX v. (istoriko-etnograficheskie ocherki)," [The Economy and Sociopolitical Organization of North Arabia in the Nineteenth to the First Third of the Twentieth Century (Historical-Ethnographic Studies)], *Trudy Instituta etnografii Akademii Nauk SSSR* New Series [Papers of the Institute of Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR] vol. 69 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1961), 41. Selected tribes and confederations are listed on the approximate location of their rangelands.

MAP 2

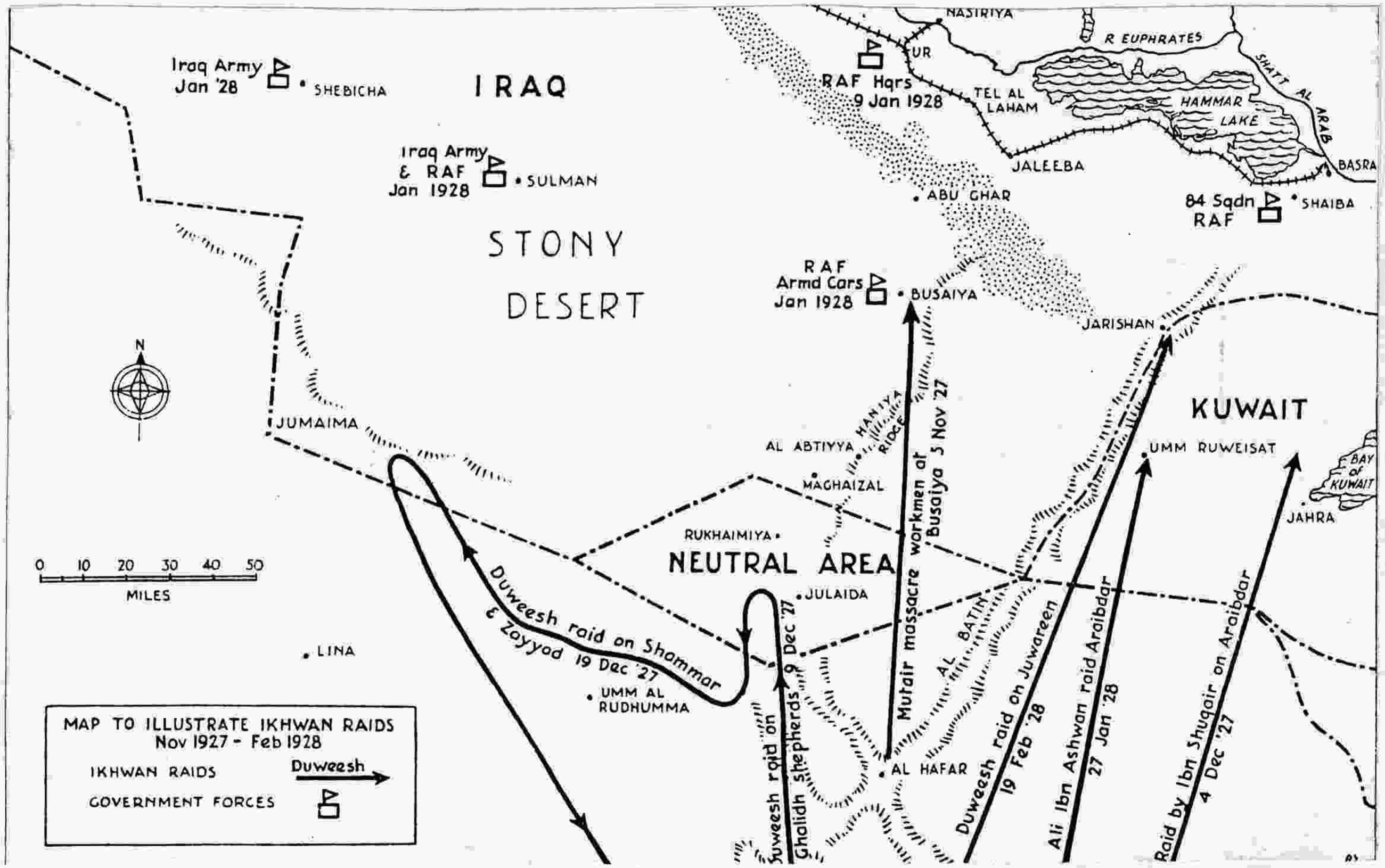
Towns, Topography and Main Routes of Northern Arabia, c. 1920, Including Palestine, Transjordan, Syria and Iraq



Source: Unknown atlas. Plate printed by L.L. Poates Engraving Co., NY.

MAP 3

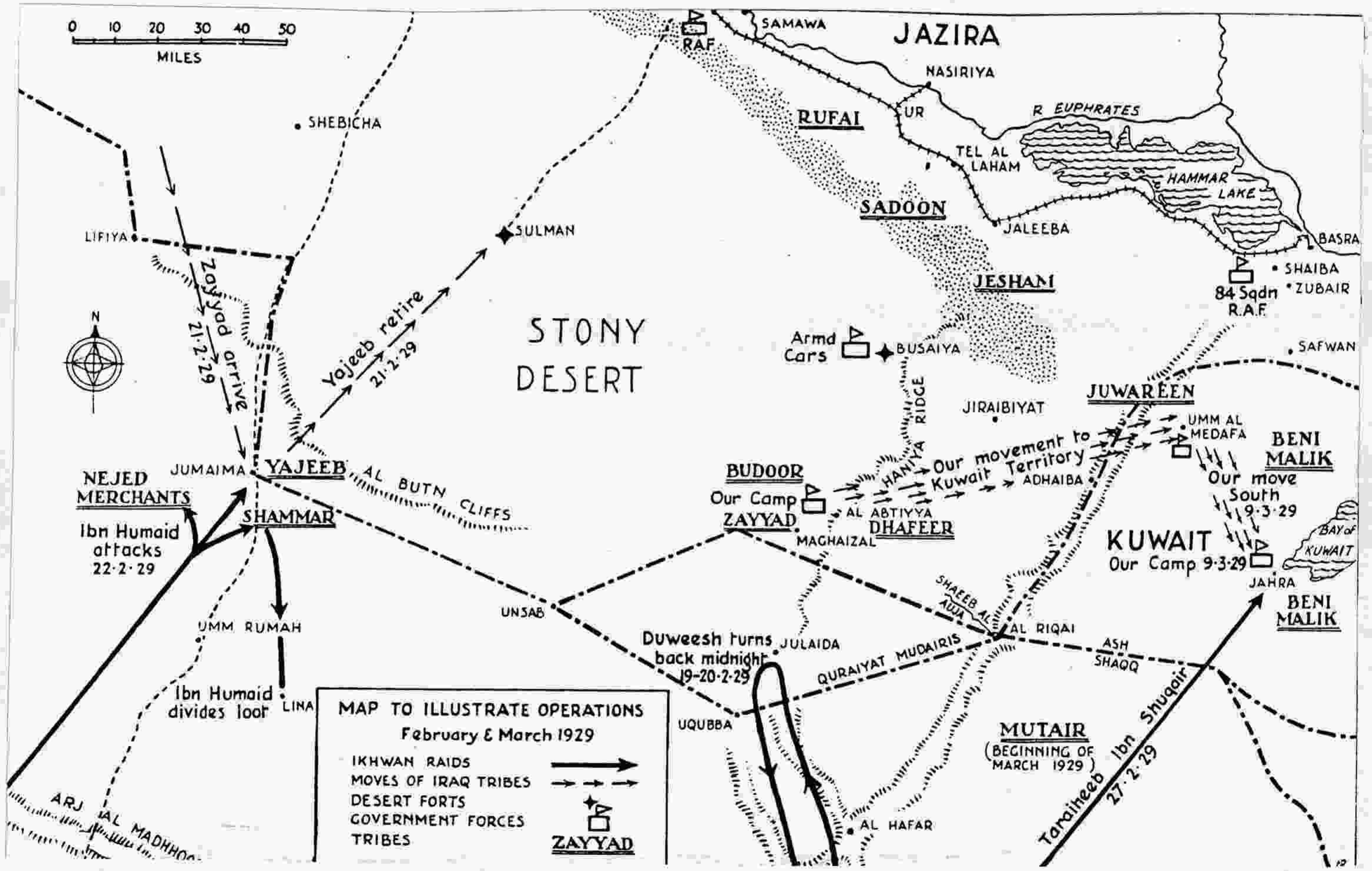
Akhwan Raids in Iraq and Kuwait, Nov. 1927 to Feb. 1928



Source: John B. Glubb, *War in the Desert* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), 195.

Map 4

Akhwan Raids and British Defensive Operations in Iraq and Kuwait, Feb. and March 1929



Source: Glubb, *War*, 265.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines how aspects of the transportation revolution and the rise of new states between 1850 and 1950 affected economic change among camel-herding pastoral nomads of northern Arabia. First, the study tests the validity of assumptions in the literature that have held that the coming of modern transportation led to a collapse in bedouin livelihoods because demand for pack camels diminished.[1] This study will use data on such factors as volume and direction of trade, prices, and market conditions from primary and secondary sources to present a more complete picture of the trade in camels than has been hitherto available. Second, the thesis will examine the ways in which the rise of new state systems around northern Arabia affected such bedouin activities as raiding and trade. Specifically, the study will draw on a large pool of primary sources in order to analyse the effects of British policies in Kuwait, Iraq and Transjordan on the bedouin tribes during the period between the First and Second World Wars. Finally, one chapter will analyse the effect of large-scale attacks by the Akhwan on the tribes of Iraq and Transjordan during the 1920s.

In the twentieth century, many observers of bedouin society have published interpretations of the processes involved in economic change. Some of these interpretations have become commonly accepted in the broader academic community, influencing the literatures on economic history and economic development. A good example of mainstream thinking about economic change among the bedouin appears in the work of Fred Scholz. In a list of the main processes that have affected the livelihoods of nomads of "the Islamic Orient" after the Second World War, Scholz included the following: the creation of national

borders, which hindered bedouin movement; the coming of "supra-tribal administration," which limited the political autonomy of tribes and the power of their leaders; and increases in cultivated land, which led to smaller grazing areas. In addition, the author stated:

> The introduction of new methods of transport led to the disappearance of camel caravan traffic; because of this and the related decrease in the need for camels, an important source of nomad income was lost.[2]

These processes, concluded the author, "resulted in restriction or even destruction of the subsistence basis of the tribes and thus to a change in traditional economic and social patterns."[3]

Many others have emphasized the role of transportation in explaining bedouin "decline." The following summary of the plight of the bedouin by Albert Hourani captures the gist of such interpretations.

> The 1920s and 1930s were the period when nomadic pastoralists virtually disappeared as an important factor in Arab society. The coming of the railway and the motor car struck at the activity on which the long-distance pastoral economy depended: the rearing of camels for transport.[4]

This theme seems to have emerged in the years following the First World War and has been repeated since that time by Western travellers and scholars, and even some bedouin themselves. The references in published and unpublished sources are too numerous to mention; only a representative sample follows. A British official in Iraq in 1931 stated that modern means of transport "have to a very great extent taken the place of camel transport, thus practically removing the income to the Bedouins from their sale of camels."[5] A British official in Kuwait stated that the bedouin of Arabia complained about restrictions on raiding imposed by the Najdi ruler, 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Faysal Al al-Saud in the 1920s and

1930s, adding that "...the situation is yearly getting worse, especially since the motor car has practically killed the camel export trade of Arabia."[6] K.S. Twitchell, writing of Saudi Arabia in the early 1950s, said that the coming of the automobile put an end to the formerly "large export of camels to Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq." Considering how Saudi Arabia has actually developed since Twitchell's time, however, it is clear that he was overly sanguine about the future potential of the use of camels for local transport: "Where the time element is not a factor, the companies operating in Saudi Arabia will undoubtedly use the maximum camel transport, since it contributes to the welfare of the people."[7] Richard Bulliet observed that it was not the widespread return of the use of wheeled transport (i.e., carts and carriages) that threatened bedouin livelihoods. Instead, "[i]t was the internal combustion engine that made the return of the wheel revolutionary by making traditional patterns of camel nomadism obsolete."[8]

Some aspects of this interpretation are supported by germs of truth. For example, steamships, trains, motorcars and lorries *did* replace camel transport on many routes. In addition, after a brief period of inflated camel prices during the First World War, there *was* a precipitous drop in prices afterward (albeit with varied degrees of recovery later on). Finally, camel nomads had clearly lost political and military advantages in the 1920s and 1930s.

Notwithstanding these supporting arguements, the "transportation theory," when subjected to closer scrutiny, cannot support the claims of its proponents. For example, as this thesis will show, modern transportation, while replacing camels on some routes, also replaced other animals. Thus, in some locales, the owners of other animals were more affected than the local bedouin. In addition, not all camels used for transport purposes were owned by bedouin, so declines in demand often

affected these non-bedouin owners more than the bedouin. Paradoxically, modern transport, in some locations at some times, actually caused an *increase* in the demand for animal transport. Finally, the importance of the camel in bedouin society was rooted in a number of factors, only one of which was the animal's utility as a beast of burden. It is not clear why the transport thesis has gained such wide currency over the years, despite anything but largely anecdotal evidence to support it. One explanation may be that it conformed to the conventional wisdom that modern transport the world over quite visibly replaced animals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Certainly a motivation for mandate government officials to put forward this explanation may have been to attribute most bedouin hardships to large, relatively impersonal, historical forces such as the coming of the motorcar rather than to their own policies.

One of the most convincing counter-arguements to the transport theory is that not all camel-herders were experiencing declining camel herds and economic hardship during the period of greatest penetration by modern transport. According to William Lancaster, "From about 1920 onwards the Rwala were pretty well supreme in the desert... Fairly small tribal sections, or more probably parts thereof, are reported by outside observers as having tens of thousands of camels...."[9] If the bedouin of northern Arabia were so heavily dependent for their livelihoods on the provision of pack camels, why has the long-term trend during the twentieth century been for the region's camel population to rise steadily, even as camel transport has all but disappeared?

This thesis will demonstrate that the bedouin of northern Arabia played important and complex roles in the region's economy, and not just in the area of camel transport. Following is a summary of the questions explored in each chapter.

Chapter One will show that the bedouin interacted with settled populations in a number of ways, the most significant being trade. This trade was a two-way process. The bedouin did supply pack animals, as well as animals for meat and for draught purposes. They also sold or exchanged pastoral products such as wool and clarified butter (*samn*). In turn, town merchants sold or exchanged staple foods, textiles, weapons and other goods. This chapter will show, moreover, that the camel was not the only animal carrying loads and passengers overland, but that mules and donkeys were also in widespread use.

The second chapter examines the camel trade in detail, showing that the volume of trade in Arabian camels used for butcher's meat in Egypt may well have overshadowed the trade in pack animals. In addition, Chapter Two will examine how the demand for camels was affected in different times and places. The coming of modern transportation at the very least had mixed results. For example, increased traffic at the region's ports during the nineteenth century, thanks in large part to the growing use of steamships, meant that the demand for pack animals to carry products for import and export increased.

As has been mentioned, the development of new political formations after the First World War had important consequence for the bedouin. Scholz has noted that the creation of borders, the expansion of new administrative systems, and the expansion of agriculture were among these factors for change, but how did they affect the bedouin in concrete terms? Chapter Three provides an account of how British policies, backed by such advanced weapons as machine guns mounted on armoured cars and bombs dropped from aeroplanes, in Iraq and Transjordan altered and eventually eliminated a key institution of bedouin society: raiding. In addition, the chapter contains an analysis of actual losses suffered by raided tribes in Iraq

during the 1920s, culled from hundreds of British reports. This analysis points to the continuing importance of the camel, both as target for raiders and as a mount for armed bedouin. More importantly, it shows that raids exacted a high human and material toll from the victims.

Another source of losses for the bedouin of the region was from desert warfare on a massive scale waged by the Akhwan, the irregular, tribally organized forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz. Chapter Four examines the effect of large-scale attacks by the Akhwan and their allies. These attacks had a number of motivations, including religious fervour, simple plundering, Saudi state-building efforts, anti-Hashemite campaigns in the 1920s, and the Akhwan revolt against Saudi authority in 1929-30. Akhwan attacks differed from bedouin raids in a number of ways. They tended to be larger, more organized and more destructive. While much of this bloody episode in the region's history has been told in works by Glubb, Kostiner, Habib and others, who have focused on the political, military and religious aspects of the conflicts, none has detailed the human and material cost.[10] This chapter contains a tally of casualties and losses, based on the extensive and detailed records of British officials in Iraq, Transjordan and Kuwait.

The rise of state systems in the region not only meant that the bedouin monopoly on security in their traditional territories would be challenged and eventually usurped, it meant that customary bedouin commercial relationships with the settled population would also have to undergo changes. Chapter Five examines how the new states attempted to control musabila, and to criminalise as "smuggling" attempts by tribes to continue finding the best markets to buy their needs. In particular, it shows how the Saudi blockade of Kuwait in the 1920s and 1930s not only resulted in large losses of income for the merchants of Kuwait, but

also in hardship and suffering for the bedouin tribes who relied on the town's markets. In addition, the chapter sheds light on Iraq's aggressive patrols into Kuwaiti territory and the harassment of bedouin suspected of engaging in unsanctioned trade.

This thesis re-examines key portions of the existing narratives on change in bedouin society, and offers new insights and interpretations which will contribute to the economic history of the Middle East, as well as to the literature on the bedouin of northern Arabia and the study of state-society interactions. The following sections provide explanations concerning the study's periodization and nomenclature, and the rationale for using northern Arabia as the unit of geographic analysis.

Periodization: Slow and Rapid Mechanisms of Change

The paucity of sources on most subjects relating to bedouin society has influenced the time periods covered in the chapters of this thesis. Because information on the trade in camels is so scarce, the period covered in that chapter is long: 1850-1950. Thus, while the sources do not permit a detailed examination of the trade in camels in one particular time at one particular place, it is possible to use them to ascertain general trends and test past assumptions about the connections between the camel trade and the arrival of mechanized transportation. In addition, the period examined is framed by two major turning points in the use of transportation in the Middle East, beginning with the rise of regular steamship services to the region, and ending with the coming of air transport. According to Charles Issawi, from "the 1840s on, steamers rapidly took over the region's trade in which local sailing ships had been important."[11]

The period 1850-1950 has political implications as well for the bedouin. It ranges from the time Ottoman officials were attempting to expand their control of populations on the fringes of their empire to the post-World War Two years, when

the creation of new states effectively completed this process. Whereas in the nineteenth century tribes were able to extract payments (*khuwa*[12]) and other emoluments from some urban powers and populations, and could play a decisive military role, by the middle of the twentieth century they were militarily overshadowed or absorbed, were economically beleaguered on a number of fronts, and had become ever more closely tied socially and politically to the emerging state systems of the region. The age-old struggle between the peoples of the towns and the peoples of the countryside had finally been won by the urban groups, but not without periods of intense opposition.[13]

As previously noted, conventional interpretations of the fortunes of the bedouin in general and the trade in camels in particular have held that the period was one of regular defeats for the tribes and increasing economic hardship due, especially after the First World War, to the decline in the demand for camels. The year 1950 is a logical ending point for the study because a number of factors after World War II introduced dramatic new transformations not only in bedouin society, but also in other populations. First, the 1950s saw the beginnings of significant oil exports from the region. While oil had been discovered earlier, the war had delayed production and exports. Second, the creation of Israel in 1948 effectively cut off the last remnants of the overland camel trade to Egypt.

The relatively larger number of sources on bedouin activities during the 1920s and 1930s in Kuwait, Iraq and Transjordan, areas under British administration and/or protection, means that the chapters on intertribal raiding, Akhwan attacks and the trade in provisions can focus rather closely on this pivotal era. The period is distinct because it saw the rise of new states in the places where previously the Ottoman Empire or tribal chieftancies held sway in the settled zone. These wholesale changes in the political organization of the region had tremendous effects on economic activities. In addition, the rise of these new states coincided with new methods of military control and new forms of transportation.

Nomenclature: 'Bedouin' and 'Tribe' in an Economic Context

It is important to clarify what is meant for the purposes of this study by terms such as "bedouin" and "tribe," which have been used in both published and unpublished sources to label a wide range of persons and groups. As Madawi Al Rasheed has noted, in the nineteenth century the term "bedouin" referred to not only nomadic groups, but also to sedentarized tribes that "shared a set of images of themselves with regard to their tribal origin, values, attributes and qualities."[14] Since this thesis focuses on economic change, the terminology will be shaped by factors affecting this change. Thus, while the term "bedouin" may have a number of connotations, in this study it will refer to those peoples whose primary means of subsistence was pastoral nomadism: the herding of sheep, goats and camels in a variety of combinations. While this thesis deals mainly with questions involving camel-herding tribes, sheep-herding tribes also enter the picture, and will be identified as such when appropriate.[15]

Another expression used in this study, "bedouin society," is more inclusive than "bedouin," since it refers to social customs and practices as well as economic ones. Bedouin society thus includes all persons – regardless of source of livelihood – who claimed a tribal identity and are thus governed by the traditions, conventions and laws of northern Arabia's tribes. Therefore, bedouin society could encompass settled communities as well as nomadic or semi-nomadic groups, since all villages and towns in the Arabian interior and many on the desert fringe were inhabited by persons who maintained their tribal identities and practices. In this sense, the term is close to Al Rasheed's use of *badu* to denote a cultural category rather than an economic one.[16]

As for the term "tribe," this study adopts the specifically northern Arabian connotation, very well elucidated by Al Rasheed.[17] Implicit in the term is the notion that it can include nomads, semi-nomads and sedentary populations. In addition, while the notion of lineage and the predominance of family relations in governing many aspects of social organisation are important in the notion of tribe, there also is possible a degree of mobility and flexibility. This means that "tribe" does not denote a static socio-economic grouping, but one that changes over time. Tribes can form and dissolve; they can grow, shrink in size or change in composition. They can also move and alter their predominant forms of livelihood.

Indeed, for all these terms it must be stressed that since they refer to evolving human groups, they should not be construed as fixed and unchanging. Members of bedouin tribes have throughout their histories shifted their activities: camel nomads have turned to raising sheep and goats; semi-nomadic sheep-herders have settled and taken up farming; both groups have engaged in other pursuits – such as fishing, pearling, manual labour and soldiering – as their circumstances changed. Far from denoting some rigid ideal type of pastoral nomads, the "bedouin" and their "tribes" were often in the process of becoming something else.[18]

Northern Arabia: An Ecological Zone and Social Space

Northern Arabia can be defined in a number of ways. For the purposes of this study, it is both an ecological zone and a social space. It encompasses those lands which in the nineteenth century lay beyond the Fertile Crescent's frontier of settlement and extended down into the Arabian Peninsula to the formidable geographical barriers posed by the Hijaz and Asir mountain ranges and the dry, trackless expanses of the Empty Quarter. In current terms, the region occupies the

arid steppes of Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Kuwait, as well as the rocky and sandy deserts of central and northern Saudi Arabia. Most of the region was covered by sandy deserts and rocky steppes, which supported a variety of flora. This combination of terrain, climate and flora made large portions of northern Arabia an ideal breeding ground for the dromedary camel. In addition, many of these same lands could be utilised for the herding of sheep and goats, so that over time nomadic and semi-nomadic groups of herders came to dominate the area. Therefore, in addition to being an arid land with only few oasis settlements, northern Arabia became the domain of pastoral nomadic tribes, the place where their social customs, military power and economic activities dominated for centuries.[19]

This connection between the region and the people is ancient, and the geographical barriers separating the northern part of the Arabian peninsula from the southern part serve as a dividing line between what have become known as the northern tribes and the southern tribes. This separation and the distinctive ecological and historical characteristics of the north and the south provide a natural taxonomy of the peninsula's tribes, which writers and researchers use to this day. Therefore, while recognising that a wide variety of literature exists on the bedouin, including those of southern Arabia, Palestine/Israel, Egypt and the rest of North Africa, this study will address the literature on the bedouin of northern Arabia.

The climate and landscape of northern Arabia were major factors in shaping the patterns of human activities over the course of the past few millenia. The region's most distinguishing environmental characteristic in modern times has been its scarcity of fresh water. With the exception of the Euphrates River, which cuts through the northern stretches of the Syrian Desert (also called Hamad), there are no rivers or lakes in the region. Life, for the most part, has depended on rain and

groundwater. The pattern of precipitation had four characteristics. First, it was highly seasonal, with showers generally starting around October and ending by March; rain almost never fell in the hotter months. Second, rains tended to be localised and sporadic, with showers watering often widely scattered parts of the region. Third, average annual rainfall was low, about five inches per year in the twentieth century. Finally, there was a regular cycle of drought, two or more years of below-average rainfall.[20] The major physical features included rocky steppes, fields of volcanic basalt (*harra*), regions of sand (*dahna* and *nafudh*) with high dunes, high rocky outcroppings sometimes reaching the height of a mountain (*jabal*) or extending into a range, salt flats (*sabkha*) and watercourses and valleys (*wadis*).

The combination of scarce water and terrain that was mainly sandy or rocky left few options for humans wishing to live in the region. In the nineteenth century, the principal ways in which these scanty resources were exploited were through agriculture, trade and pastoralism. Permanent habitation was possible only in those few areas where groundwater was available year-round. In such locales, a system of oasis agriculture revolving around the date palm developed over the centuries. The cultivation of this staple was supplemented by fruits, vegetables and grains. The uncultivated and largely unsettled expanses of the arid landscape was known as the *badia* (whence comes the term *badu*, or inhabitant of the badia). It was used as pasture by nomads and semi-nomads who herded sheep, goats, horses and camels. In the summer months, herds of animals had to live near permanent water sources, while in the rainy season they had to move to those parts of the badia which offered grazing and pools of water following rains. These herders evolved into a society known as bedouin, organized into tribes and confederations and those armed groups

mounted on horses and camels often were strong enough militarily to control large portions of the northern Arabian steppe. The mountains, sandy deserts and lava fields hindered overland transport in many areas, but also could offer refuge for bedouin from outside attackers. Nonetheless, large parts of the badia were fairly flat and became busy caravan routes over which goods, travellers and pilgrims could move with relative ease. These routes benefited not only those who used them but also those who controlled them and were able to collect fees from travellers. Thus, despite its relatively humble endowments, northern Arabia attained importance on account of the caravans that crossed it, and from the political and economic significance of the bedouin who controlled it.[21]

Population statistics for the settled areas are scarce and unreliable; they are moreso for the countryside. Consequently, the following description of the population of northern Arabia must be provisional and broad. According to one estimate, the whole of Arabia had roughly 1 million inhabitants in 1800. By the end of the century, northern Arabia alone may have had this many persons.[22] Factors which hindered population growth included disease, drought (which resulted in famine), and conflict. Migration was another factor affecting the region's population, with constant movements within the region and a tendency during hard times for groups from the interior to find sustenance in the settled lands of the Fertile Crescent.

The proportion of nomads to settled folk fluctuated throughout history, as did the overall size of the population. The general trend in the nineteenth century seems to have been toward settlement and urbanisation. This was the result of natural growth on the part of urban populations, as well as rural to urban migration. Peasants moved to towns and cities, and pastoralists settled in the countryside or in

town quarters.[23] The ratio of settled to nomadic population varied from place to place within northern Arabia, and depended in part on an area's environment. To obtain a very rough example of this principle, we can look at population estimates which appeared before World War One. Najd, with its relatively widespread availability of underground water, was said to have some 250,000 settled inhabitants and "only a small nomadic element." In the region of al-Hasa, roughly two-thirds of the population was settled and clustered around a few large oases, some of which were watered by springs. The remaining third of the inhabitants was nomadic. The drier region around Jabal Shammar, on the other hand, could support a population that was said to be divided evenly between nomads and settled folk[24].

An overriding social characteristic of the population was the prevalence of tribal affiliation. This affiliation meant different things to the different people who claimed it. At the least, among both settled and nomadic populations, it governed family interactions and social practices. Among much of the nomadic bedouin, the norms and customs of tribal society evolved into a system to address all their needs: social, economic and political. For example, in those areas in which bedouin held control, it meant their legal practices and social customs were employed in the collection of tribute, the waging of war, the provision of hospitality, and family matters such as marriage, divorce and the disposition of property after death. Bedouins were thus best able to develop a *modus vivendi* with those settled communities which they could dominate, or which did not attempt to encroach on the bedouin social, economic or political domain. However, when faced with strong town-based powers that sought to challenge bedouin control in these spheres, such as the Ottomans, there was often competition and conflict.

Literature: Bedouin and Economic Change

A major impetus for this study was to examine economic change during the modern era among a population that had been politically and economically important for hundreds of years – the bedouin of northern Arabia. Very few works have focused on this subject, and many of those that have often suffered from one or another shortcoming. One of the most incisive examinations of economic change among the bedouin focused on the tribes of Transjordan during the 1920s and 1930s. It emerged in a somewhat heated exchange on the pages of a scholarly journal between two men who had different experiences with the bedouin: Eliahu Epstein and John Bagot Glubb. The main points to emerge are summarised below.

Focusing on the bedouin of Transjordan, but occasionally alluding to bedouin in other countries in the region as well, Epstein began by writing in an article in the *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society* that "The nomads' economy, which was based chiefly on camel and horse breeding, cannot hold its ground in the face of competition with the motor-car and the aeroplane," adding that tending sheep was more secure and profitable. Epstein also noted that restrictions on bedouin mobility in the post-war years prevented tribes from escaping drought by making long migrations. In addition, some of Transjordan's tribes were forced by pressures on pastoralism to move toward agriculture as a source of livelihood. One of the points Epstein made in the article was that although some tribes were attempting to survive hardships that were worsening year to year by turning to agriculture, the tribes were not given adequate "financial and technical assistance" due to the "meagre treasury" of the Transjordanian government.[25]

Glubb, who had held several government positions in Iraq and Transjordan that had given him extensive first-hand experience in dealing with the tribes, seems to have taken Epstein's article as somewhat of a personal attack. Glubb disagreed with Epstein's analysis, portraying it as sterile and distant from reality. For example, Glubb stated that Epstein's "facts and figures" were correct, and that "he has studied the subject on paper." All but unstated was Glubb's implication that his own credibility concerning the situation of the tribes of Transjordan was greater on account of his years of experience in the badia. Countering Epstein's portrait of tribal decline, Glubb noted that bedouin tribes have been becoming sedentarized throughout history; that camel breeding was not on the decline; that Epstein's statistics were not typical because they covered years of drought; and that government financial assistance would not help the tribes because "it would introduce a simple, smiling people to the hell of race hatred."[26] He also noted that there continued to be a "large demand for camels" to carry agricultural harvests, and that "it is not usually realized that the principal market for camels is not for transport but as butchers' meat, particularly for Egypt."[27]

Epstein's rejoinder to Glubb's subtle digs and bold, undocumented assertions was by contrast on the whole measured and scholarly in tone. Nonetheless, his arguments were not without their flaws. Epstein acknowledged that nomads had in the past settled, but stated that the present situation was different because the probability was small that nomadism would return as a viable alternative. Thus, whereas past episodes of sedentarization were usually temporary, the current one appeared permanent. Epstein refused to budge on the question of declining camel values being caused by the spread of motor transport. He quoted a passage from Bertram Thomas which implied that the export of camels to Egypt

was to provide transport animals. Clearly, as will be shown in Chapter Two, this traffic was principally to supply animals for slaughter, as Glubb stated. To further buttress his argument regarding the influence of the motorcar on the camel market (but actually weakening it), Epstein presented a series of trade statistics to show that camel exports to Egypt had decreased since the First World War, as had camel prices. Epstein is unconvincing in his attempt to justify his use of camel population figures in the 1930s as evidence that the "underlying problem of [economic] decline" was a more important factor than the severe drought that struck the region at the time. Far from being "irrelevant," as Epstein stated, droughts were vitally important factors influencing bedouins and their herds.[28]

It is somewhat unusual that the strands of inquiry introduced by Epstein and Glubb were not pursued by subsequent scholars. Instead, when they appeared at all in works of economic history, bedouin and other pastoral nomads have tended to be described only briefly and sometimes even inaccurately. For example, in a major book dealing with economic and social change in the Ottoman Empire, Donald Quataert dealt with nomads in a section on transportation only in the context of supplying pack animals and controlling overland routes, ignoring their larger economic role as producers of pastoral products and consumers of town goods. While most of the section offered a good analysis, the undocumented assertion that tribal "pacification" resulted in "reduced camel herd sizes" is at odds with the data collected in this study.[29]

An even more cursory treatment of pastoral nomads, written by Nikki Keddie, appears in a volume dealing with the "Islamic Middle East." In her comparison of Egypt, Iran and Turkey, the author focused on the negative aspects of nomadic societies, stating that although they were "useful as utilizers of marginal

land and producers of livestock products, pastoral nomads often interfered with settled agriculture and were an element of political instability who frequently blocked attempts at orderly development."[30] The treatment of bedouin was not only brief but hostile and inaccurate in Z.Y. Hershlag's book on economic history of the Middle East. For example, the author stated that after World War I, "the rule of the Beduin was greatly limited, and robbery as a means of livelihood became well-nigh impossible; thus the traditional life of centuries was upset." He added that new boundaries "limited movement of nomads, who previously had been free to roam over the entire Ottoman Empire[!]."[31]

Nonetheless, some general works, notably those by Issawi and Roger Owen, have made more concerted and objective attempts to deal with the relationships between pastoral nomads and peoples in the settled zone. Issawi's *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914* is noteworthy because it presented works dealing with nomads and the wider economy. The author reprinted two articles dealing with various aspects of change in bedouin society and provided introductory comments. The first article was by Norman Lewis, which will be discussed later; the second, a translation of an article by the Russian ethnographer A.I. Pershits.[32]

The article by Pershits is valuable because it provides a serviceable overview of the economic activities of the bedouin, with discussion of camel-herders as well as the sheep- and goat-herding tribes, known as *shawiyya*. The author employed most of the standard secondary sources and travellers' accounts up to the early 1950s, with insightful comments about the role of the environment, and the effects of state-formation, and of the world economy. Still, Pershits left out several important sources, including the exchange between Epstein and Glubb

described above. The article had other shortcomings as well, and not merely the "usual Marxist slant" noted by Issawi in his introduction.

The most glaring problem with Pershits (as with others), was his incautious use of the sources. From a statement by a European traveler or government official dealing with a certain time and place, Pershits made unsupportable generalizations about all of bedouin society. In doing so, he contributed to the dominant interpretation which inextricably bound the "decline" of bedouin society with the development of modern transportation. For example, citing a single British official, the author stated that since the First World War, and the construction of roads and the arrival of motorcars and lorries, "camel drivers were not only deprived of hiring their animals and escorting caravans, but were faced by an enormous fall in prices and demand for camels."[33]

In other cases, he made bold assertions without citing a reference. Perhaps the most perplexing of these was his statement that in the nineteenth century the countries of the Arabian peninsula "were drawn into the world capitalist market and began to feel more strongly the competitive effect of capitalist livestock exports from Australia, Argentina, and the Union of South Africa."[34] While most would agree that Western countries increased their commercial penetration of the Middle East during this period, there do not appear to be any sources indicating significant livestock imports from outside the region until well after oil exports transformed the economies of the producing countries. On the contrary, many sources attested to the fact that before World War II the region exported pastoral products such as wool to Europe and America, and live animals to neighbouring regions.

The Fertile Crescent, 1800-1914 is another work by Issawi that makes important contributions to our understanding of economic change in bedouin

society. While this book offers familiar interpretations regarding the downward trend of nomadic populations and the connection between the coming of modern transport and the decline of bedouin fortunes, it also raises the novel possibility that the region's growing urban populations consumed increasing amounts of pastoral products, possibly offsetting any negative influences on bedouin incomes.[35] In addition, the book contains several readings from primary and secondary sources that shed light on the activities of pastoral nomads. The excerpt that is most pertinent to the aims of this study is "Trade with the Beduins, 1914" by A. Ruppin.[36] One of the rare accounts providing statistics for all aspects of the trade in pastoral products, including camels, it also described how the trade was carried out. (Reference to this source will be made in the chapter on the trade in camels.)

Owen also attempts to offer a nuanced view of the role pastoral nomads play in the region's economy, but he first offers some caveats. In *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914*, he states that the systematic study of economic history in the Middle East has been severely constrained by the quality and quantity of the source material, and by a lack of specialist studies.[37] While this is certainly true, it must be observed also that the problem becomes more acute as one moves from the study of such subjects as external trade to internal trade, from cities to the countryside, and from the twentieth century backward. We know most about the ruler and the merchant, less about the peasant and worker, and very little about the nomad. To illustrate this point, in Owen's book, the most comprehensive and current synthesis of the economic literature in the field, just over one page out of 19 dealing with rural economic activity around 1800 was devoted to the role of pastoral nomads in raising animals. This was not due to any lack of interest on the part of the author, nor to the lack of importance of this segment of the rural

economy,[38] but to a paucity of sources – both primary and secondary.[39]

Although he does not provide any details on economic change among pastoral nomads in the nineteenth century, Owen offers valuable analytical insights into how pastoral nomads can be conceived in an economic context. He posed three questions whose answers could illuminate the role of pastoral nomads in the wider economy. First, he asked, "To what extent did the income of a particular community or group depend on its herds or flocks?"[40] This point is often missed by those attempting to analyse bedouin society, the assumption being that all pastoral nomads relied *primarily* on the sale of pastoral products and/or live animals. In fact, the situation was much more complex, even among camel-herders, some of whom were involved with agriculture, fishing and trade as well as herding.[41]

Owen's second question was: "In so far as the groups which obtained the bulk of their income from animals were concerned, it is necessary to ask whether or not they were able to produce a marketable surplus." This dealt with the issue of a tribe's ecological zone, its potential markets, and its degree of self-sufficiency. Some tribes, such as the Rwala, had better grazing lands and larger camel herds, and could thus sell many surplus animals. Others, like the Al Murrah, may have been rich in camels but distant from camel markets and thus had little or no connection to the trade in camels.

Finally, the author stated, "Whatever the relations between the nomads and the settled population, it is important to ask if some at least of their transactions were not carried out in cash rather than by means of barter." Connections to the cash economy had important implications for camel-herding tribes. Unfortunately, the sources are suggestive, but not eloquent on this subject. Nonetheless, the

questions posed by Owen inform portions of the present inquiry.[42]

Mention has been made of Lewis's article on the frontier of settlement. Lewis subsequently expanded this article into a book, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980*, which is one of the most analytically sound and best-documented historical treatments of pastoral nomads in northern Arabia, with a strong account of economic factors.[43] While not a work of economic history per se, but one guided by the concerns of historical geography, this book is valuable because it shows how a multiplicity of factors – government policing, population movements, climate, land tenure laws – have influenced such processes as bedouin sedentarization in the transitional zone between the badia and the settled agricultural lands of the Fertile Crescent. In addition, Lewis provides an excellent study of how the Ottoman authorities and other town dwellers interacted with nomadic tribes in a variety of ways, sometimes peacefully and other times aggressively. The author has shown how bedouin society in the nineteenth century was connected to the towns in a variety of ways, including trade, taxation, security and transport. In short, Lewis demonstrated that it is possible to tell the story of marginal areas and populations (i.e., outside the great cities and towns) by a resourceful and diligent questioning of the sources.[44]

A handful of other works contribute to our knowledge of economic change in the region. Al Rasheed, for example, has presented a good summary of the caravan economy as it operated in the Arabian interior, with special emphasis on the importance of controlling trade and pilgrimage routes to town-based powers.[45] Hala Fattah provided an insightful examination of trade patterns and the interaction of local merchants, Ottoman leaders, and British colonial officials and British merchants. Of particular relevance to the present study is Fattah's examination of

the horse trade and the activities of local merchants.[46] Dan Rabinowitz's examination of economic change in the nineteenth century has shown how important local factors – often outside the field of transport and the trade in camels – could be in shaping bedouin activities.[47] Eugene Rogan's study of the expansion of Ottoman control in southeastern Syria painted a complex picture of the relations between states and tribes, involving such diverse aspects as security, communications, land tenure and taxation.[48] Finally, Alexei Vassiliev's history of Saudi Arabia is notable for its careful depiction of social and political structures, with an excellent analysis of ways in which inequality manifested itself in both nomadic and settled societies on the peninsula from the eighteenth century onward.[49]

In addition to contributing to the literature on economic history, this thesis will also add to that body of scholarship that focuses on the bedouin of northern Arabia. Most of this literature centres on such questions as genealogy, oral traditions, social relations and political status; however, some works have dealt with such economic questions as herding practices, the economy of the tent, and changes in sources of bedouin incomes. None of these studies has provided a satisfactory historical analysis of bedouin involvement in the trade in camels, as will be shown in the following survey of some of the most significant works. At best, each has contributed a small piece to a large puzzle.

Burckhardt was the most prolific and precise observer of the bedouin of northern Arabia in the nineteenth century, and his influence is noticeable in many subsequent works on the subject. For example, in his introduction to the "Nomad Economy" chapter, Issawi quoted the Swiss traveler's description of the annual expenditures of a bedouin family "in easy circumstances."[50] Some of Burckhardt's

observations in his *Notes on the Bedouins and Wahhabys* are pertinent to this study. For example, he stated that the incomes of tribes and the types of activities they pursued varied from location to location. In addition, he noted that Najd was "the country most rich in camels" among the lands of the Arabian peninsula, and camels were exported from here to Syria, Hijaz and Yemen, as well as from the "Syrian deserts" to Anatolia. Burckhardt also observed that camels tended to be much more expensive in Hijaz than in Najd, indicating the importance of price differentials for trade. Finally, he stated that in addition to the demands of commercial transport, town powers (such as Muhammad Ali's force invading Hijaz) often required large numbers of camels, mainly for military transport.[51]

Antonin Jaussen devoted a chapter to the economic life of the tribes in his book on the bedouin of the lands east of the Jordan River during the first decade of the twentieth century. Although the author focused on ethnographic details such as the types of clothing worn and utensils used by the bedouin, he also described aspects of their commercial activities, and the ways in which camels and other animals were employed. In addition, he delved into such questions as property ownership, and the relationships between nomads and cultivators.[52]

An even more detailed portrait of bedouin life appears in the works of Alois Musil, especially his encyclopaedic *Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouin*, which dealt with the period around 1900 to 1920.[53] Here, too, the emphasis was on social matters, but the author also presented a small amount of information on economic activities. For example, he listed the incomes and expenditures of the tribe's paramount shaykh, Nuri al-Sha'laan, illustrating the huge economic gulf between the larger shaykhly households and the average bedouin. There were also details about the expenditures of an average bedouin for such necessities as a tent,

clothing, weapons, and the mechanisms of credit with merchants.[54]

Musil's *Manners and Customs* also contains useful information on the buying and selling of camels, mainly in the context of the 'Agayl, a group whose ancestral home was the Qasim region of Najd and which came to dominate the trade in camels starting in the second half of the nineteenth century.[55] Nonetheless, like Burckhardt and others, Musil on occasion was vague and contradictory. For example, he wrote in one passage that the Rwala sold their camels "either in the inner desert or in the settled territory, *nearly always* to the same wholesale ['Agayl] merchants who live in the larger towns on the borders of Arabia as well as in Egypt and India." Later in the book, however, Musil wrote that the tribe "*usually* sell to the *fellâhîn* or to the merchants who import in caravans the various goods needed in the towns and settlements situated far from the sea or from railways; some camels are also sold for meat in Egypt and Irak [i.e., to the 'Agayl]." (Emphases added.) While the two passages create some confusion as to who the principal buyers of Rwala camels were, they also implicitly raise the question of the relative importance of the pack/draught animal market versus the one for meat.[56]

With rare exceptions, the coming of new political formations on the fringes of the badia after World War I and an increased interest among some westerners in bedouin matters did not bring with it a concomitant focus on the question of economic change in the literature.[57] Instead, the emphasis on social structure, customs, poetry and political relations continued. Nonetheless, these works made contributions to the study of bedouin society to a greater or lesser extent.

Certainly the most comprehensive of these works was by Max Freiherr von Oppenheim. Using a large array of secondary sources as well as fieldwork, Oppenheim compiled a dauntingly lengthy account of bedouin histories,

geneaologies and post-war conditions. Information about economic matters was sparse. He noted, for example, that while the 'Anaza tribes had opportunities to rent their camels for transport in Syria (for agricultural harvests, the government, and pilgrim traffic), "[w]ith the introduction of modern modes of transport, these opportunities for renting their animals became diminished, another source of income lost after the war."[58]

Another author of the same period, Ahmad Wasfi Zakariyya, produced an important book dealing with the tribes of Syria. And he, too, broke little new ground in the field of economic change, although he provided good insights into the political and social situation of the tribes during the mandate period, and wrote a section on the process of sedentarization.[59]

Modern studies of the bedouin began to appear in the 1960s, mostly by anthropologists, and these have made great contributions to our understanding of how bedouin society was organized and operated. Although the fieldwork for these studies was done after 1950 and thus many of the observations lay beyond the purview of this study, they can shed much light on the dynamics of bedouin society around that time. These include works by Dawn Chatty, Donald P. Cole, William and Fidelity Lancaster, and Bruce Ingham.[60] And although he covers an area far from northern Arabia, Talal Asad has made important practical (with his work on the Kababish Arabs of Sudan) and theoretical contributions to our understanding of nomadic camel-herding nomads.[61]

While most of these works have dealt with the contemporary situation of certain tribes or sections, those by Lancaster and Chatty have attempted to provide historical background as well. Lancaster's *The Rwala Bedouin Today* offered important insights into the economic activities of the largest of 'Anaza tribes. Some

of the author's observations mirrored the standard narrative regarding transportation and the camel trade. For example, he asserted that "Before the First World War the primary economic activities were raiding and selling camels, but when mechanized transport became available the bottom dropped out of the camel-market." On the other hand, unlike other writers, who assumed that a decline in the trade in camels meant a decline in herd sizes as tribes moved to other sources of income, Lancaster wrote that from about 1935 to 1958, the Rwala shifted from an economy which relied on widespread and varied interactions with town markets and populations to "virtually a subsistence economy," relying mainly on the milk of their camels. In addition, because the tribe became so wealthy in camels during this period, they may have overgrazed their rangelands. A major blow to camel-herding as the principal activity of most sections of the tribe came when a serious drought from about 1958 to 1962 caused the death of more than half of Rwala camel herds. Lancaster also has shown how the economic options of shaykhly families often differed from those of regular tribesmen. Finally, the author provided thoughtful insights into the non-economic motivations such as "reputation" and "honour" among the Rwala for such "economic" activities as raiding, extracting khuwa payments, and smuggling.[62]

Chatty's *From Camel to Truck: The Bedouin in the Modern World* focused on two Syrian tribes, the al-Fadl and al-Hassanna, that had shifted from camel- to sheep-herding after World War I. Basing her description of the mandate period in Syria on official French reports, the author noted that the period was one of wholesale change in and around the badia. With increased cultivation and land registration, some bedouin turned to agriculture, others were forced to reduce the range of their pastoral migrations, while still others replaced their camel herds with

sheep. According to Chatty, another important period of change for these tribes came in the mid-1960s, when they sold their pack camels and began using trucks, not only to haul their household possessions and carry out marketing, but also to carry flocks to water and water to flocks. This evidence clearly challenges on a number of levels the standard narrative regarding modern transportation and the bedouin. First, with these tribes at least, the effects of the "transportation revolution" were more variable and delayed, highlighting some of the differences between tribes that herd mainly sheep and those that herd camels for sustenance. At the same time, the importance of camel transport in some areas is brought far past its period of supposed decline. According to Chatty's informants, until they started using trucks, the tribes had rented camels to farmers on a daily basis during the harvest, earning up to a third of their annual cash income in this way.[63]

Sources

Three principal classes of sources were used for this study: published travellers' accounts, government publications, and unpublished reports and documents from archives. As have previous students of the bedouin and the badia, I examined the accounts of travellers, and found most useful the nineteenth century accounts of Burckhardt, Doughty, and Blunt, and Musil's detailed accounts from the early twentieth century.[64] I also used government publications from Egypt, France, Great Britain, Iraq, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and Transjordan in order to collect statistical data on camel populations, trade, prices and the consumption of camel meat. The archival material came from three main sources. The first important class of archival material was from the India Office Records (IOR), housed in the British Library, London. This is one of the principal repositories of reports by British officials in the region dealing with tribal activities, especially in

Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The second group is documents generated by the British Foreign Office (FO), Colonial Office (CO) and Air Ministry (AIR), and held at the Public Record Office, Kew. The AIR class of documents proved to be particularly rich in details about intertribal raiding, British policies and actions regarding the bedouin, and the effects of Akhwan attacks on the tribes of Iraq. Finally, the Private Papers Collection, Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford, was of particular value. It contains the papers of two British officials, John Bagot Glubb (for Iraq and Transjordan) and H.R.P. Dickson (for Kuwait), who were astute, sympathetic and prolific reporters on bedouin society. They created a large body of writings about such bedouin matters as raiding, trade and politics that are unavailable elsewhere. In addition, I have used material from the U.S. National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

Methods

The varied nature of the sources and the wide variety of questions examined has meant that a number of methods have been employed in this thesis. Three overarching principals have guided the course of this study: to examine factors affecting economic change among the bedouin; to bring to the forefront the effects of this change on the average bedouin; and to focus on those questions that have been either ignored or inadequately dealt with in the existing literature.

In the first chapter, I have constructed a schema of the economic role played by the bedouin of northern Arabia, with particular attention to relations with settled populations. In addition, the chapter describes and analyses the functions and roles of the camel, within bedouin society as well as in the settled zone. Finally, the chapter presents the methods of animal-borne transport and shows the relative importance of the camel.

In the second chapter, I tabulate and analyse data on camel prices, the trade in camels, and camel populations. In looking at prices, I attempt to determine what factors affected changes in prices, and whether there was any correlation between the replacement of camel transport with mechanized modes. Figures on camel imports and exports, as well as on camel meat consumption, give some indication as to the volume and direction of trade, and the economic effect on camel-herding tribes.

For the third chapter, I have collected and analysed as much information as possible on the economic impact of intertribal raiding. The largest pool of data on intertribal raids came from British officials in Iraq. Therefore, it was possible to cull information from hundreds of reports on such questions as the numbers and types of animals raided, the sizes of raiding parties, and the names of tribes raiding and being raided. While British officials also wrote reports about raiding involving Transjordan tribes, the quantity and level of detail was not as great as for Iraq. Nonetheless, the chapter presents an analysis of British tribal policy in both Transjordan and Iraq.

A similar attempt to gather as much information on material losses was made in Chapter Four on Akhwan attacks. However, here, in addition to presenting the numbers of animals lost and their value, the sources also permitted an examination of how British reports on bedouins affairs – raids and attacks in particular – changed from vagueness to great detail as officials decided to gather evidence in order to buttress claims for compensation for losses. Thus, in addition to presenting the magnitude of losses to Kuwait, Iraq and Transjordan to Akhwan attacks, the chapter also demonstrates, by presenting actual excerpts from the British official reports, how ever greater attention was paid to the losses suffered by

the Akhwan victims.

For Chapter Five, which deals with *musabila* (the bedouin caravans to obtain provisions) and smuggling, relatively few reports came from officials in Transjordan, but many more from Kuwait, dealing mainly with the Saudi blockade on the amirate during the 1920s and 1930s, and with the illicit trade that developed between Kuwait and Iraq during the same period. The sources contained figures on the effects of the Saudi blockade and details concerning official measures to enforce it, as well as efforts by bedouin and traders to circumvent it.

Bedouin society was as complex and varied as any other portion of the Middle East's population. However, in the past many writers have tended to portray economic change among the bedouin in either overly simplistic or inadequately documented ways. By grounding this study in a large body of sources and focusing on the trade in camels, raiding, Akhwan attacks and trade, this study will shed light on several processes of change and on the transformations of bedouin/state interactions. Thus, the findings of this study and others like it will make it more likely that future works of scholarly synthesis on the Middle East will contain more answers than questions about the bedouin of northern Arabia. In order to set the stage for the analysis of economic change among the bedouin in the twentieth century, Chapter One will lay out a schema of bedouin/town interactions in the nineteenth century, with special emphases on the roles of the camel and on the varied modes of animal transport.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

[1] Throughout this thesis, "modern transportation" refers to conveyances that used engines or motors, including steamships, trains, motor cars, lorries, and aircraft.
[2] Fred Scholz, "Changes in the Bedouin/Nomad Regions of the Islamic Orient," in *Bedouins, Wealth, and Change: A Study of Rural Development in the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman*, ed. Rainer Cordes and Fred Scholz (Tokyo: UN University, 1980), 1. While the author deals with the post-World War Two era, these same changes began to make themselves felt earlier. Most writers point to the period between the First and Second World Wars as the era of most intense and decisive change.
[3] Ibid., 1, 2. Scholz notes that tribal leaders often helped accelerate some of these processes in most of the Middle East, but because the governments in the "Arab oil-producing countries of the Gulf region" were more closely linked politically to the tribes, these governments instituted more programs aimed at promoting bedouin economic development than other governments in the region. It should be noted that similarly close government-tribe links can be found in Jordan.
[4] Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1991), 334.
[5] Muhammed Fadhel Jamali, *The New Iraq: Its Problem of Bedouin Education* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934), 136.
[6] H.R.P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949), 343. In conformity with general Arabic usage, as well as the preference of a growing number of writers in English, this study will refer to the Saudi ruler henceforth simply as 'Abd al-'Aziz. The English version of the name – Ibn Saud – that has been popular in the past, will be used only in quoted sources.
[7] K.S. Twitchell, *Saudi Arabia* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1953), 66.
[8] Richard Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel* (New York: Morningside Press, 1990), 263.
[9] William Lancaster, *The Rwala Bedouin Today*, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 14.
[10] John B. Glubb, *War in the Desert* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960); Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916-1936: From Chieftancy to Monarchical State* (New York: OUP, 1993); and J.S. Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors of Islam: The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Saudi Kingdom, 1910-1930* (Leiden: Brill, 1978).
[11] Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (henceforth, *EHMENA*) (New York: Columbia UP, 1982), 47-8.
[12] The Ottoman state, for the most part, had a monopoly of power in the settled zone. One manifestation of this was the state's demand that its subjects pay taxes, and its implied guarantee that it would protect its subjects from outside attack. Bedouin tribes offered similar arrangements in places where they claimed supremacy, their traditional rangelands or *diras*. Khuwa was a payment, usually annual, in cash or in kind, by a party (a weaker tribe, traveler or town dweller) to a member of a tribe (the *akh*, or "brother") in exchange for the akh's assurance that his tribe would not raid the payee and that it would prevent others outside his tribe from causing the payee harm or loss. Another recognition of bedouin power can be noted along the pilgrimage route from Damascus to the Holy Cities. Tribes whose diras were crossed by the *darb al-hajj* received annual payments (*surra*) from Ottoman authorities. In exchange, the tribes were expected to ensure security along their portions of the route.
[13] For a perceptive analysis of this phenomenon, see Sami Zubaida, "The City and its 'Other' in Islamic Political Ideas and Movements," in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Kenneth Brown, et. al. (London: Ithaca Press, 1986), 327-41. "The institutions of the state exercise their powers from the great cities. The 'tribes' are tamed, sedentarised, or incorporated; the last politically significant tribal movements were seen in the early decades of this century in Saudi Arabia and Iraq." 330. For details on how this conflict played itself out on the frontier of settlement in Syria and Jordan, see Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987).
[14] Madawi Al Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidi Tribal Dynasty* (London: Tauris, 1991), 119.

[15] While some writers note that "true" (*'asil*) bedouin claim that tribes such as the Shararat, Huwaytat and the Badul, who do not possess a "noble" genealogy are not really *badu*, this study does not make that distinction. See, for example, Jibrail S. Jabbur, *Bedouins of the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, eds. Suhayl Jabbur and Lawrence I. Conrad (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), 261; and Lewis, *Nomads*, 3. This study's use of "bedouin," then, coincides with Lewis' use of "'*arab*" to denote Arabic-speaking pastoralists.

[16] Al Rasheed, *Politics,* 118-25. The term is posed in counterdistinction to the *hadhar*, or settled, non-tribal populations.

[17] Ibid., 17-28.

[18] The approximate rangelands of the principal tribes and confederations of the region appear on Map 1.

[19] Although Egypt is geographically distinct, the fact that its bedouin had links with tribes of northern Arabia and its markets were important destinations for northern Arabian camels means that it will figure occasionally in this study. For a slightly different construction of parts of this region, based on commercial, political and social considerations, see Halah Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745-1900* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 13-61.

[20] For the most detailed historical analysis of rainfall patterns, see Raouf Sa'd Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan: The Frontier of Settlement in Transjordan* (London: Tauris, 1989), 8-23; 254-61. An overview of climate, as well as geological features, soils, flora and fauna for the entire Middle East is well-presented in Colbert C. Held, *Middle East Patterns: Places, Peoples and Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1989), 30-67.

[21] For an excellent summary of the ecological factors affecting human life in northern Arabia, see Christine Moss Helms, *The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia: Evolution of Political Identity* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 31-51. See also Emanuel Marx, "The Tribe as a Unit of Subsistence: Nomadic Pastoralism in the Middle East," *American Anthropologist* 79 (1977): 344-47.

[22] For other population estimates, see Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East 1800-1914: A Book of Readings* (henceforth, *EHME*) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 342; and Helms, *Cohesion*, 33-4.

[23] This trend is better documented in the lands bordering northern Arabia. See, for example, M.S. Hasan, "Growth and Structure of Iraq's Population, 1867-1947," *Bulletin of the Oxford University Institute of Statistics,* XX (1958), in Issawi, *EHME*, 157-8. Hasan notes that Iraq's nomadic population fell from half a million in 1867 to a quarter million in 1947, and from 35 per cent of the total to 5 per cent.

[24] Great Britain, Admiralty War Staff, *A Handbook of Arabia,* 2 vols. (London: 1916) p. 2:299 for Hasa; p. 2:351 for Najd; and p. 2:377 for Jabal Shammar.

[25] Eliahu Epstein, "The Bedouin of Transjordan: Their Social and Economic Problems," *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society* 25 (April 1938): 228-36.

[26] The remark about "racial hatred" must be understood in the context of the times. One of the burning issues of the 1930s was the intensifying colonization of Palestine by European Jews. As a Zionist, Epstein saw the large influx of Jewish capital into Palestine (as well as the influx of foreign capital in other Arab countries) as a salutary process, the assumption being that foreign capital also could help the tribes of Transjordan. Epstein, "The Economic Situation of the Transjordan Tribes," *JRCAS* 26 (Jan. 1939): 182-83.

[27] John B. Glubb, "The Economic Situation of the Transjordan Tribes," *JRCAS* 25 (1938): 448-459.

[28] Epstein, "Economic Situation," 177-184.

[29] Donald Quataert, "Transportation," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, ed. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), 817.

[30] Nikki Keddie, "Socioeconomic Change in the Middle East since 1800: A Comparative Analysis," in *The Islamic Middle East, 700-1900: Studies in Economic and Social History*, ed. A.L. Udovitch (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1981), 770.

[31] Z.Y. Hershlag, *Introduction to the Modern Economic History of the Middle East*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 170.

[32] A.I. Pershits, "The Economic Life of the Nomads of Saudi Arabia," Charles Issawi, trans., from "Khozyaistvenny byt kochevnikov saudovskoi Aravii," *Sovietskaya Etnografia* (Moscow: n.p., 1952) 104-12 in Issawi, *EHME*, 343-49.

[33] Ibid., 347. The author also assumes that all bedouin, in addition to selling camels, acted as "camel drivers" and caravan escorts, which was certainly not the case. Also, he ignores the information in *A Handbook for Arabia* which deals with large-scale exports of camels to Egypt for meat.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent, 1800-1914: A Documentary History* (New York: OUP, 1988), 23.
[36] A. Ruppin, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet,* in Issawi, *Fertile Crescent,* 325-28.
[37] "To speak very generally, the study of the economic history of the Middle East – Egypt apart – remains underdeveloped compared with that of many other parts of the non-European world. More so than elsewhere, much of what is being written about the region has to be regarded as introductory or only provisional." Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914* (London: Methuen, 1981), *x*. The author also notes (p. 24) that "an almost complete absence of reliable statistics" is one of the major disadvantages suffered by studies dealing with the region's economy around 1800.
[38] "It would be wrong, however, to confine a description of Middle Eastern agriculture in 1800 merely to the cultivation of the soil by settled communities of peasants. *Equally important in many areas* was the raising of horses, mules and camels for transport, cattle for use as draft animals and for their meat, and sheep and goats for their hair, wool and skin." (Emphasis added.) Ibid., 43. Owen neglected to mention the raising of donkeys, and the fact that sheep and camel meat, not to mention milk products, were also important pastoral products.
[39] Another reason for the scarcity of sources had to do with the conceptual gulf which separated settled society from the bedouin. This gulf persists, and often colours the outlooks of scholars in the Middle East as well as the West. Thus, among many economic historians, there has been an attitude that bedouin activities, because they were deemed somehow "primitive" or "traditional," were not worthy of serious study alongside such conventional areas of economic activity as commerce, banking, manufacturing and agriculture. For this reason, the study of bedouin society has been dominated by ethnographers and anthropologists, whose interests often touched on economic matters, but focused mainly on social structures and interactions, or, at best, micro-economic activities.
[40] Owen, *Middle East*, 44.
[41] "There were few tribes in Arabia which were purely nomadic – that is, those which herded only camels. Nomads might herd sheep, goats, camels, or any combination thereof and may additionally have owned land in settled areas or tended isolated stands of date palms." Helms, *Cohesion*, 44.
[42] Owen, *Middle East*, 44.
[43] See also by the same author: "Peuplement et développement de la steppe en Syrie (1800-1920)" in Riccardo Bocco, et al., eds., *Steppes d'Arabies, Etats, pasteurs, agriculteurs et commerçants: le devenir des zones sèches* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993), 45-60.
[44] Lewis, *Nomads*. See especially chapters two and three for accounts of camel-herding tribes.
[45] Al Rasheed, *Politics*, 95-111. For a historical account of caravan traffic crossing the Syrian Desert, with few useful details about nomadic involvement, see Christina Grant, *The Syrian Desert, Caravans, Travel and Exploration* (New York: Macmillan, 1938).
[46] Fattah, *Politics*, 159-83.
[47] Dan Rabinowitz, "Themes in the Economy of the Bedouin of South Sinai in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (henceforth, *IJMES*) 17 (1985): 221-28.
[48] Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), 44-90. For a more detailed picture of pastoral production in the same region, see the same author's thesis, "Incorporating the Periphery: The Ottoman Extension of Direct Rule Over Southeastern Syria (Transjordan), 1867-1914," Ph.D., (Harvard, 1991), 202-16.
[49] Alexei Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia* (London: Saqi, 1998), 29-63.
[50] Issawi, *EHME*, 343.
[51] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 2:1-49; 2:69-70; 2:69, 87-88; 2:294-94; 2:304-5.
[52] Antonin Jaussen, *Coutumes des Arabes au Pays de Moab* (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1908), 235-86.
[53] Alois Musil, *Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928).
[54] Musil, *Manners*, 59; 61; 122-25; 132-34; 269.
[55] In formal Arabic, the name is transcribed as 'Uqayl or 'Uqayli (pl. 'Uqaylat; 'Uqayliyun). However, in this study it is transcribed according to colloquial pronunciation. For details on the

origins and activities of the 'Agayl, see 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani Ibrahim, *Najdiyun wara' al-hudud: "al-'Uqaylat"* (London: Dar al-Saqi, 1991), 19-154.

[56] Musil, *Manners*, 248; 278-81.

[57] See, for example, Dickson, *Arab of the Desert*; H. St. John B. Philby, *The Heart of Arabia*, 2 vols., (London: Constable, 1922); Glubb, *Arabian Adventures* (London: Cassel, 1978); Robert Montagne, *La Civilisation du Desert*, (Paris: Hachette, 1947); Victor Müller, *En Syrie avec les bedouins; les tribus du desert*, (Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1931).

[58] Max Freiherr von Oppenheim, *Die Beduinen*, 4 vols. (Hildesheim: George Olms, 1983), 1:72.

[59] Ahmad Wasfi Zakariyya, *Asha'ir al-Sham* (1945, 1947; [Damascus]: Dar al-Fikr, 1983), 316-23.

[60] Dawn Chatty, *From Camel to Truck: The Bedouin in the Modern World* (New York: Vantage Press, 1986); Donald Cole, *Nomads of the Nomads, The Al Murrah Bedouin of the Empty Quarter* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1975); Lancaster, *Rwala Bedouin*; Fidelity Lancaster, *The Bedouin* (New York: Gloucester Press, 1978); and Bruce Ingham, *Bedouin of Northern Arabia: Traditions of the Al Dhafir* (London: KPI Ltd., 1986).

[61] Talal Asad, *The Kababish Arabs: Power, Authority and Consent in a Nomadic Tribe* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1970). See also by the same author "The Bedouin as a Military Force: Notes on Some Aspects of the Power Relations Between Nomads and Sedentaries in Historical Perspective," in *The Desert and the Sown: Nomads in the Wider Society*, ed. Cynthia Nelson (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley, 1973), 61-73; and "Equality in nomad social systems? Notes toward the dissolution of an anthropological category" in *Pastoral Production and Society*, Proceedings of the International Meeting on Nomadic Pastoralism, Paris, 1-3 Dec. 1976, ed. L'Equipe écologie et anthropologie des sociétés pastorales (Cambridge: CUP, 1979), 419-427.

[62] Lancaster, *Rwala Bedouin*, 43, 93, 99, 100, 112-16, 121, 123.

[63] Chatty, *Camel*, 41; 104; 107; 119-140.

[64] Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia* (1829; London: Frank Cass, 1968.); and *Notes.* Charles Montague Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, 2 vols. (New York: Random House, 1936). Anne Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1879). Alois Musil, *The Northern Hegaz, A Topographical Itinerary* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1926); *Arabia Deserta: a topographical survey* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1927); *Palmyrena: a topographical itinerary* (New York: American Geographical Society,1928); *The Middle Euphrates* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1927); *Northern Negd*, (New York: American Geographical Society,1928).

CHAPTER ONE

BEDOUIN, CAMELS, TRANSPORTATION AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE BADIA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

> *Domestic animals [of pastoral nomads] represent as well a social value which cannot be deduced from their other functions.... Myths which explain how livestock was originally given to men, rites and sacrifices, which often represent the only occasions for the consumption of the meat of domestic animals, and ties which are established between individuals and their animals, cannot be explained except in terms of this social value of livestock. Better, one can say that it is this social value which dominates and determines its value as a consumable good.*[1]

Was the main function of the camel in the Middle East to carry goods in merchant caravans, and did modern transport thus destroy the "bedouin economy?" Clearly not. However, as shown in the Introduction, this has not prevented many writers from espousing this explanation. Obviously, not all who have written about life in the badia have seen the processes of economic change in such terms. Instead, they have shown that a multiplicity of factors could combine in a variety of ways depending on the place, time, and actors involved.

This chapter will contribute to this nuanced and multifaceted view of change in bedouin society by outlining the main variables influencing the pastoral economy in the nineteenth century. Particular attention will be paid to those factors relevant to the questions addressed in this thesis. These include: the relationships between nomadic and settled populations; the uses of the camel in the badia; and the uses of the camel in the settled lands, with an emphasis on its place in the region's system of transportation.

Bedouin have been an important part of the population of northern Arabia for more than two millenia. Throughout this period they have interacted with the settled populations, trading with them, fighting for them and against them, and becoming part of them. When groups of bedouin coalesced and developed a

sufficient degree of political cohesion and military strength, they could form powerful chiefdoms, dominate large portions of the region and threaten the lands of the Fertile Crescent.[2] Such periods of strength, however, were evanescent, and inevitably gave way to periods of relative weakness and disunity. At these times, they could become victims of energetic efforts by settled powers to extend their hegemony into the badia. At all times, however, no matter what the military balance of power, there were widespread economic links between nomads and townspeople. Thus, even when town-based powers were ascendant, the herds of the bedouin provided most of the pastoral products and pack camels required by the towns, and the fighting men of the tribes were often recruited as irregular forces for the states or empires of the borderlands.[3]

Economic change among the bedouin has been influenced by a number of factors, which can be grouped under three broad headings: the environment, intertribal relations, and relations with settled peoples. Under the last category are included those influences which originate in the regional or world economy. Needless to say, these factors rarely played themselves out singly, but often combined in complex ways.

Coping with Nature

The challenges posed by the natural environment were severe and regular. These included such calamities as drought, disease and plagues of locusts. In addition, the northern parts of the region could be plunged into deep winter cold that could cause widespread animal losses. Thus, camel-herders in such an environment only could survive if they had access to a wide range of subsistence options. In northern Arabia, bedouin society had evolved a number of mechanisms and strategies to guarantee this access. These included the general qualities of mobility and adaptability, as well as specific practices and conventions typical of bedouin herding groups. Mobility involved not only the ability to travel long

distances with herds and tents in search of grazing, water, and markets. It also entailed social mobility, the possibility of families, herding groups and larger tribal sections to shift affiliation from one tribe to another. Sweet has used the term "fissioning" to describe such shifts if they were temporary, usually in response to ecological crisis.[4] These movements also could be permanent and have political as well as economic causes.

Adaptability could manifest itself in the fluidity of the mix of animals herded by bedouin or in the variety of non-herding activities bedouin engaged in for the sake of survival. The participation of bedouin in these activities could be forced or voluntary, temporary or permanent. Tribes whose dira bordered on agricultural lands, for example, often worked in the fields during harvest season, late summer or fall. Some tribes along the Persian Gulf, on the other hand, spent summer months fishing or pearling. Others provided non-agricultural transport when demand was high (during pilgrimage season) or when necessity dictated. During the nineteenth century, even if economic necessity drove some bedouin into such occupations as soldiery, transport, labour, or trade, most of the badia continued to be controlled by bedouin tribes, offering the possibility of an eventual a return to herding for those who so desired.

Two of the most important mechanisms within tribal society for ensuring the survival of those struck by hardship were the practice of raiding and the tradition of extending hospitality and mutual support. As has been postulated by Sweet, raiding was one way in which it was possible and socially acceptable for camels to circulate widely in bedouin society, often from richer tribes to poorer ones.[5] In fact, the only way to replenish a camel herd decimated by drought within a reasonable time by bedouin who had no other resource but their cunning and courage, was through raids on other tribes. Hospitality and other forms of resource-distribution also could ameliorate the affects of drought or other hardship. For

example, the literature contains frequent references to victims of raids or other destitute tribesmen receiving animals, food and household goods from members of their tribe who were better off. Indeed, raiders themselves were known to allow the women of raided tribes to retain necessities for survival. In addition, the role of shaykhly families in this regard is significant: just as they had the most opportunities to accumulate a surplus, so were they also expected to distribute parts of that surplus to needy tribe members if they were to continue to receive their support.[6]

Tribal Politics

Tribal politics were another important factor that influenced the economic status of bedouins. While many descriptions of tribal relations before 1950 have focused on the predatory or violent aspects – theft, raiding and war – the long-term survival of bedouin society could not be assured without mechanisms of co-operation and periods of relative peace. Camel-herding, as will be shown in Chapter Two, was particularly vulnerable to the hardships of conflict; therefore, the nurturing of large herds was facilitated by intertribal co-operation. When they could, for example, tribal groups strove to establish relationships among each other to ensure the best possible conditions for camel herding (access to pasture, water, markets and guarantees of security). Often such alliances were strengthened by ties of marriage. Bedouin society also had a loosely organized but widely recognised system for managing other aspects of relations in the badia. One of these, which helped regularise the power relations, was the khuwa system, under which weaker groups would offer payment to stronger groups in order to assure security. In addition, the customs and practices of the bedouin legal system, which governed social as well as economic transactions, helped maintain order.[7]

As in other societies, order broke down. As noted, the cause was sometimes environmental. But as often as drought and other factors pushed tribal groups from

their own rangelands to those of other tribes, causing inevitable friction, social and political factors also could fuel intertribal raiding and war. Blood feuds, personal or clan rivalries, cupidity, religious differences and simple desire for expansion have fuelled instability and violence in the badia for centuries, and such conflicts continued in the nineteenth century. A noteworthy example of a large-scale power struggle among tribal groups was the Rashidi-Saudi rivalry, which had numerous economic consequences, including the shifting and interruption of trade routes, loss of life and property, and the involvement of outside powers.[8] Chapter Three will examine in detail the phenomenon of raiding and how the 1920s and 1930s saw dramatic changes in this activity.

Towns and Tribes

Because the bedouin of northern Arabia have been in constant contact with townsmen for such a long time, a wide range of complex relationships developed, including many types of economic interactions. Consequently, economic changes in the bedouin domain do not usually lend themselves to simple explanations. In addition, the often dense web of relations between the two groups meant that there were many avenues for change in the settled zone to affect the badia, and vice versa. So, for example, when conflict in Iran prevented Shia pilgrims from taking their annual trip across northern Arabia to Mecca and Medina, tribes astride the pilgrim route would feel the consequences. Similarly, when currency exchange rates in Aleppo fluctuated, it could have weighty consequences for the bedouin who were dependent on that city's markets. A failure of a grain harvest in Hauran could cause a shift in the annual marketing practices of thousands of nomads. Once again, as with crises brought on by other factors, those bedouin who were most adaptable or had the greatest economic options at their disposal had the best chance of surviving difficult times.

Khazanov has suggested four general ways in which nomadic populations have responded to "the outside world" in a historical context: sedentarization, trade, submission, and subjugation.[9] These provide a useful starting point for examining the relationships between the bedouin of northern Arabia and various settled populations.

Sedentarization

Nomads in Arabia have been establishing themselves in settled communities throughout their history. In the nineteenth century, most of the inhabitants of the towns and villages of Najd, Jabal Shammar and al-Hasa were the descendants of nomads or semi-nomads. On the fringes of the badia, too, many towns were wholly or in part populated by settled bedouin. This sort of sedentarization has always been an option for the bedouin, and was frequently adopted during times of privation. In some cases, sedentarization was one of many coercive policies initiated by town officials aimed at weakening, controlling, and exploiting bedouin populations. Such was the case with Ottoman officials who made fitful attempts to settle nomads – by persuasion and by force – along the desert line. They had some success with semi-nomadic sheep-herders, and little or none with camel-herding tribes of the 'Anaza and the Shammar tribal confederations.[10] Clearly, in examining the issue of sedentarization it is important to ask what the causes are and who the beneficiaries of the process are intended to be. A frequent occurrence has been partial or temporary sedentarization, in which the herding option was kept open by portions of a tribe continuing to keep camels, or a tribe being sedentary only part of the year (say, to oversee date harvests or engage in maritime pursuits), or a tribe settling down, and then returning to the badia after a number of years.

Trade

The strongest and most widespread links between the bedouin and the townsmen were through trade. These links were historically long-standing and

economically important. Khazanov cites one estimate, for example, that "about 5% of the urban population of Syria was involved in supplying goods to nomads" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He also makes a distinction between pastoral trade and "mediatory trade," by which he means the indirect involvement of nomads in non-pastoral trade – through such activities as supplying pack animals, guides or guards, and levying fees for the safe passage of caravans.[11] A third option can be added to these: the direct involvement of bedouin in non-pastoral trade. The large share of the region's economy devoted to "the desert trade" reflects a general trend of accommodation and co-operation between nomads and townsfolk, an aspect of the relationship which is rarely dealt with in both the unpublished sources and the literature.[12]

Access to markets was on occasion an area of contention, not only among bedouin themselves, but also between townsmen and nomads. Local officials granted access to markets, pastures and water sources under their control only to those tribes willing to abide by security arrangements. In addition, the right to buy and sell in the towns also could involve the payment of fees by the bedouin to town officials.[13] Thus, officials could use the threat of withholding marketing privileges as an instrument of control over the tribes. For example, in the late 1850s the governor of Aleppo responded to bedouin attacks on villages by sending military expeditions against the bedouin and curtailing trading privileges.[14] Yet another tool for tribal control was for officials to encourage or exploit intertribal competition for resources.[15]

The trade in pastoral products, or the desert trade, was a necessity for the tribes and a potentially lucrative source of income for officials and merchants. For example, an 1858 estimate by the British consul in Aleppo put the annual value of the desert trade at around 5 million piastres.[16] On occasion, tribes vying for the same market would try to outbid each other or take marketing privileges by force.

In the 1870s, the Sba'a tribe had used the plains outside Homs and Hama for their summer pastures, paying 600 camels per year. The Rwala, whose paramount shaykh, Sattam ibn Sha'alan, reportedly said his people "want the plains of Hama for their camels, which have increased, thank God, and multiplied these last four years, so that the Hamád [the Syrian Desert, east of Damascus] cannot any longer contain them." The Rwala therefore offered the Ottoman authorities in Homs and Hama 1,500 camels a year and 50 mares to be shared among the officials of those cities and Damascus. When the Sba'a came, they fought the Rwala (who sought the military assistance of the Ottoman forces) and drove the tribe back to Damascus.[17]

Among the pastoral products traded in northern Arabia in the nineteenth century, those produced by sheep- and goat-herding tribes – wool, milk products and animals for slaughter – formed the largest categories in terms of volume and value. This trade seems to have increased during the course of the century as demand grew for meat in the growing urban centres of the region, and as foreign merchants began to export larger quantities of wool. Meat from sheep, and milk products from sheep and goats, formed an important part of town diets, with feast days creating enormous demand for animals to slaughter and consume. Wool and skins were important raw materials in textile and leather craft trades in the towns.[18] And wool was one of the principal exports from the region, and the largest markets were in Basra, Mosul, Aleppo and Damascus. In addition, wool was one of the few pastoral products that appeared regularly in export statistics recorded by Western observers. According to a British report dealing with Aleppo's trade in the years 1868 to 1877, "the trade of the Desert was sufficiently important to constitute a distinct branch of Consular business." The trade in wool was estimated at £257,586 in 1873, and the desert trade in such products as salt, *samn* (clarified butter from sheep milk), cheese, lambs, horses, camels and alkali for soap-making amounted to some £35,000.[19] Both local and foreign merchants invested heavily in the wool

trade, some buying flocks outright, others paying advances on future production to sheep-herding tribes.[20] The large-scale export of wool mainly to Europe and America became an important factor in the late-nineteenth century, and may have provided an economic impetus for some camel-herding tribes to begin shifting into sheep-herding. Nonetheless, the demand for camels remained strong, and many camel-herding tribes sold or traded surplus animals in an active and widespread market. This activity will be examined in detail in Chapter Two. Horses were another important item of trade for some tribes during this period, with buyers as far afield as Bombay, Istanbul and Europe.[21]

The volume of trade in the other direction (i.e., items needed by the bedouin), was also significant. The requirements of the bedouin were relatively simple, but the production and sale of these goods formed an important (but poorly documented) part of the economies of many towns and cities of the region. Staple foods and textiles were the two main categories of this trade in terms of volume. Depending on the market, the most important staples were wheat (Syria), rice (Iraq and Arabia) and dates (Iraq and Arabia). Tents, storage bags, and clothing were the main textile items. Other important items included coffee, tea, sugar, weapons, jewellery, saddlery, leather goods (such as water skins) and household utensils for the preparation of food and coffee. Because the camel gave bedouins such great mobility, tribes tended to have a degree of flexibility in their marketing options. For example, Jaussen spoke to a shaykh of the 'Atawna tribe, who told him that his men had brought back grain from the widely scattered markets of Mota, Karak, Iraq and Tayiba.[22]

Many tribes also had contacts with settled peoples through mediatory trade. The degree and type of involvement varied by region and time period. Because the supply of animals, drivers and guides, and the guaranteeing of security (through payments of khuwa and surra) were often lucrative and long-term sources of

income, this, too, was an area in which far more co-operation took place than is customarily presented in the sources and literature. References to the chronic cupidity and wantonness of the bedouin with regard to raiding caravans are too frequent to list. However, there is evidence to suggest that many raids were in retaliation for provocations on the part of town officials, or were brought on by dire situations such as drought. In 1891-2, for example, tribes around the Holy Cities were reported to be attacking pilgrim caravans because Ottoman officials had withheld their customary payments. "It is sincerely hoped that Osman Pasha... will put a stop to the nefarious practices by which the yearly food contributions to which [the bedouin] are entitled by formal stipulations go to enrich the agents, favourites, and parasites of the Grand Shereef and others..." On one occasion, the shaykh of one of the aggrieved tribes made explicit the object of the raids, stating that an attack on pilgrims by his tribe was a "misunderstanding" and that an agreement had been reached with the other tribes that attacks "should be solely directed against the Turkish escorts [of the pilgrim caravans], Government property and the merchandise of traders..."[23] Non-payment or reduction of this fee, whether from the cupidity or malevolence of the Ottomans, or from lack of funds, was clearly the cause of many attacks on the pilgrimage caravan.[24]

Evidence for bedouins acting as traders in non-pastoral products is scanty, but among certain tribes this trade was clearly an important activity. This trade is also evidence of the willingness of bedouin to engage in activities not related to herding when the opportunity or need arose. Often, a tribe supplemented its herding activities with this trade. Desert products that were occasionally sold by the bedouin to town buyers included truffles, locusts, charcoal and alkali. In parts of the Hamad especially, truffles (*kamiyya*) flourished in good seasons and bedouin families devoted extra time and energy to gather them between February and April for their own use and to sell. Dried on the tops of their tents or on the ground, the

truffles would keep for long periods. If the truffle harvest was a good one, a family could reduce the amount of wheat or rice it normally purchased from town merchants.[25] Burckhardt noted that "each family gathers four or five camel loads and lives off it," and that in Damascus at the time they would sell for one-half penny per pound.[26]

It is entirely possible, however, that tribes, sections of tribes or families abandoned herding in favour of these forms of trade if they proved sufficiently remunerative. One of the most notable examples is that of the southern Sinai bedouin supplying charcoal to the Cairo market. Other examples include the participation of many tribes in the trade in alkali ash for soap production and the exploitation of salt pans.[27]

In some cases, this trade may have been the reason for some bedouin to settle in the towns. When this occurred, the bedouin were able to influence the character of cities and towns by putting the stamp of their social structures and practices, and the impact of their economic activities on the quarters of their residence. There are numerous examples of town quarters inhabited by settled bedouin where, in addition to livestock and other pastoral products, trade was carried on in other items of desert origin. Town craftsmen or merchants who specialised in products for the bedouin market (harriers, wood workers who fashioned camel saddles and milking bowls, smiths, textile merchants, coffee and tobacco sellers, etc.) could often be found clustered together near the town gate opening to the badia, or at a gate leading to a well-travelled track. For example, Burckhardt noted that there was a sort of bedouin bidonville outside the walls of Jedda on the road toward Mecca.

> These huts are inhabited by the camel-drivers who traffic between that city and Djidda; by poor bedouins, who earn a livelihood by cutting wood at considerable distance in the mountains; and by negro Hadjis who adopt the same means of supporting themselves during their stay at Djidda. Here is held a market for live cattle, wood and

charcoal, fruits and vegetables in wholesale.[28]

Another observer recorded a similar scene at the other end of the Jedda-Mecca road, probably one of the most-travelled in the region.

> In the SW corner of [Mecca] dwell a whole colony of Bedouins from the province of the "two holy places," [i.e., Hijaz] most of them in miserable huts, the more well-to-do in simple houses. They transact the hiring of camels to Jeddah, Taif, and Medina (in which capacity they are called *mekharrijin* or *mitsabbibin*) and the importation of sheep, milk, butter, and dates from their native places.[29]

In Syria, the track south from Damascus, in addition to being an important portion of the hajj route, led to the granaries of Hauran and the markets of Palestine farther south. The Maydan quarter of Damascus was the part of the city that served as the gateway for caravans to and from the south, and was thus the main area for town/bedouin interaction. The 'Agayl were clustered here, near the camel and horse markets, and the quarter was "occupied by bedouins when they came to town."[30]

The degree of involvement of a bedouin tribe in these types of trade cuts to the core of one of the central questions of the following chapter: How did changes in the transportation system in the region affect the trade in camels and the bedouin economy? In the nineteenth century, the picture is more complex than has been hitherto presented.

Submission

Often, when tribes wanted to have regular trade relations with a town under Ottoman control in the nineteenth century, they had to accede to official requirements. This could mean negotiating a *de facto* status of submission, especially for semi-nomadic tribes. However, with stronger nomadic tribes, the relationship with town authorities often took the form of a sort of mutual recognition. Tribal shaykhs would agree to such concessions as the payment of

taxes, supplying fighters or camels, and agreeing to maintain security in the badia, usually against other tribes. At the same time, local authorities would present the shaykhs with semi-official titles, and acknowledge their position with payments of cash and gifts of honour such as robes, weapons and horses. The personalities and predispositions of local authorities also coloured the nature of these agreements, with some Ottoman governors taking a decidedly hostile stance toward the tribes, while others managed to work with them rather amicably. Whatever the exact nature of submission, this sort of arrangement certainly put limits on a tribe's independence. It also had economic benefits which made it so worthwhile that there was often competition to obtain such recognition.[31]

The nineteenth century was a period of transition on the frontier of settlement, the region where relations between the town powers and the nomads were worked out. In the early part of the century there appeared to be considerable encroachments by bedouin into settled lands, sometimes under the banner of the Muwahiddun movement. Starting around the 1830s and continuing throughout the century, however, town powers – whether under Egyptian or Ottoman flags – made strong efforts to extend the area under their control. Whether the bedouin tribes were expanding their diras into poorly policed lands, or retreating in the face of resurgent town powers, the bedouins' prime motivation was to find good grazing for their animals. Sometimes even this simple requirement brought about conflict with the authorities.

Contrary to popular perceptions, the bedouin responded on occasion to the challenges posed by the authorities with equanimity and reason. For example, an Ottoman cavalry force was ordered to move members of the Slut tribe from the Laja' region, where they were camping, to Qunaytra. The shaykhs of the tribe, unable to change the minds of the unit's officers, took them hostage and permitted one of their number to send a dispatch explaining the situation to his superiors.

In this report the author advises that the Slut are not rebelling, but rather reacting to the way in which matters pertaining to them are proceeding. If they are ordered to camp in the Ghuta region they will do so, or if they are ordered to move on to the Hawran or to the desert, they will camp there; and if they remain in the Lijah, they will be obedient and abide by all requirements made of them. But they cannot camp in the vicinity of al-Qunaytara, because it does not have pasturage sufficient for their flocks and herds as well as those of the 'Anaza....[32]

Subjugation

During the nineteenth century, bedouin tribes could challenge the Ottomans on the fringes of their empire, but they could not hope to inflict defeat. It was only over many of the towns and villages on these fringes and in the interior of the badia that tribes were able to establish dominant relations. This was formalised with the collection of khuwa, and manifested itself in favourable or exclusive access to necessities such as wells, grazing and markets.[33] Interestingly, it was often when tribes were able to subjugate settlements that some of their members decided to become sedentarized. Some towns that were in zones not well policed by the Ottoman military had the misfortune of being taxed both by the bedouin and the local administration. During some periods, these borderlands became zones of conflict, with town authorities seeking to expand their hegemony (and tax base) in agricultural lands that had previously been neglected by them.

One such period was the 1830s, when Egyptian rule over the Syrian provinces was marked by an increased military presence which backed official policies aimed at pushing back the control of bedouins over agricultural lands in the frontier of settlement and of trade routes. A strong military presence was able to enforce Egyptian prohibition on the collection of khuwa by some tribes, and surra payments to various tribes were suspended.[34] Although by some accounts the Egyptian measures succeeded in reducing bedouin exactions and attacks (presumably what is meant when the expression "increased security" is used),

merchants, peasants, and others continued to be vulnerable to the predations of officials and soldiers. In addition, new customs regimes were established between the Turkish and Egyptian areas, with trade to Iraq charged particularly high tariffs by the Egyptians.[35] As the Egyptians withdrew from Syria, the bedouin returned to their former pasturing lands on the fringes of cultivation and began to collect khuwa from settled populations and semi-nomadic tribes.[36]

The Ottomans, too, made efforts to expand their hegemony at the expense of the bedouin. Clearly, they were best able to succeed in those areas where they had the will and the ability to project their power. While they had less success in Arabia and the Gulf, the Ottomans did succeed in bringing large portions of Syria under more direct control.[37]

Roles of the Camel in the Badia

How should the camel in bedouin society be studied? Anthropologists and ethnographers observe and record the social importance of animals, while social scientists focusing on economic matters tend to see animals in strictly material terms such as monetary value or productive capacity. It is only by looking at all the roles of the camel that it is possible to understand the part the animal plays in the processes of economic change in bedouin domain. Unlike other products exported from northern Arabia, such as dates, pearls or sheep, the camel (like the horse) attained during its long contact with humans social as well as economic value. By the nineteenth century, after millenia of evolution, the nature of the relationships between man and camel in Arabia was complex and varied. Before domesticating it, man probably hunted wild camels for their meat. After domestication, it is hypothesised that the principal use of the animal was for its milk. It was only later, once efficient saddles and harnessing techniques were developed, that camels were used extensively in transport, for riding, and as draught animals.[38] As the camel's use by humans spread, it was gradually given some of the social and economic

functions previously held by other domesticated animals such as sheep, goats and cattle. Thus, in addition to its importance as a source of subsistence, of transport and as an article of trade with settled peoples, the camel had an important role in the social interactions among the bedouin themselves.

Camel as Sustenance

Not all bedouin relied on the camel for sustenance to the same extent. Ecological and economic conditions determined how reliant a particular bedouin group was on camel milk. What the bedouins ate is of primary importance because it reflected the nature and extent of exchanges with settled peoples, which in turn dictated a family's herding strategy. Thus, a tribe such as the Al Murrah of the Empty Quarter, whose dira was relatively isolated from large settlements and had few exchanges with them, would focus its herding practices on increasing the size of its herds of milch camels. Conversely, the Rwala, a tribe whose dira bordered on a the large market of Damascus and which had access to the produce of its own date gardens, would utilise herding strategies which not only ensured an adequate supply of milk, but also surplus camels trained for riding or transport, or fattened for slaughter. Although there is scant data from Arabia, research in Africa demonstrates that herders in different ecological and economic situations adapt their herding strategies to their particular needs.[39] The varieties of such adaptations in northern Arabia meant that different tribes had different connections to the camel market, and thus were affected by changes in the market in varying ways.

It is important to note as well that even tribes considered primarily camel-herders often had sections that herded significant numbers of sheep and goats. An 1880 account of tribes in the Euphrates valley is illustrative. "The Weldi breed cattle and sheep; the Affadli, buffaloes and cattle; the Sebha camels and sheep with a few horses; the Aghudat camels and horses; and the Bagara cattle alone."[40]

According to an estimate of bedouin populations and herd composition in the Syrian badia around 1940, among the tribes classified as "nomadic," only the Rwala, numbering 5,500 tents, had an average number of camels per tent (21) significantly higher than the average number of sheep per tent (2). Among the Sba'a (4,000 tents), the camels/sheep per tent ratio was a very close 11:8. For the Fid'an (4,000 tents), however, the balance was entirely lopsided, with some 5 camels and 15 sheep per tent. The herds of the Wuld 'Ali and the Hasana, also classified as nomadic tribes, consisted principally of sheep, as did the herds of all the tribes listed as "semi-nomadic."[41] The figures provide evidence that by the middle of the twentieth century the long-term shift away from camel-herding toward other pursuits, including sheep-herding and agriculture, was well advanced.[42] Still, even in the nineteenth century, sheep-herding by fully nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes was undertaken on a large scale. In addition, members of all tribes, to a greater or lesser extent, engaged in a wide range of non-pastoral activities.

Herd size and composition are two variables crucial to understanding both the economy of the bedouin household as well as the mechanisms of the camel trade. The camels in bedouin herds were used in four principal ways: transport, riding, milking and breeding. Burckhardt observed early in the nineteenth century that an 'Anaza bedouin (considered a relatively rich confederation) who had ten camels was considered poor, one with 30-40 camels was in "easy circumstances," and one with 60 was rich. In poorer tribes, the owner of ten camels may have been considered wealthy.[43] Unfortunately, there have been few attempts to collect data on herd sizes among the bedouin of northern Arabia before the mid-twentieth century.

For earlier periods and other locations, a lack of data permits only some general observations. First, there was a wide range of herd sizes for bedouin

households. The number of camels per tent was governed by a number of factors, including the relative wealth of the family, the quality of the tribe's dira, the importance of camels in the tribe's economy, the availability of other sources of food, and the success of the family and/or tribe in herding, defending their animals, and raiding. Second, those with herds larger than the minimum needed for supplying milk and transport for the household (let us say about 20 camels[44]) could afford to sell more animals. Finally, for those tribes that had a high reliance on camel milk for subsistence, the percentage of female camels in the herd was probably 70-80 per cent. Tribes with access to other sources of food, or those who could obtain regular income by hiring out pack camels more than likely had a higher percentage of males.

Tribes that exploited rangelands with few sources of water and little access to agricultural products or outside sources of income or exchange could nonetheless subsist on camel milk most of the year. The milking camel (called *al-naga* or *al-misih*[45]) was of the utmost importance in such tribes, and herding practices were focused on preserving and increasing the herd of milch camels. Even among the Rwala, whose members had access to dates, wheat, and income from camel sales, camel's milk was a vital source of food. According to Musil, "A milking camel is called *hallâba*. It is not sold at any price, as it nourishes the whole family."[46] Thus, the tribe's herd of milch camels was usually the largest and most carefully nurtured. Milking was normally the role of the men and took place in the morning and evening.[47]

Camels as a Source of Status and Power

Riding camels made up another important portion of the herd, and these could also be viewed with a large degree of esteem, especially those thoroughbreds which showed their fine breeding by being swift, gentle of gait, intelligent and silent in raids. The superlative qualities of a fine thoroughbred could arouse an

intense emotional reaction even from Western observers. Upon seeing the "magnificently caparisoned" dromedaries whose mounts were carrying the standard of Ibn Rashid in a large pilgrimage caravan in the 1870s, Anne Blunt noted:

> These most beautiful creatures have coats like satin, eyes like those of a gazelle, and a certain graceful action which baffles description. Not even the Arabian horse has such a look of breeding as these thorough-bred camels. They are called *naamiyeh*, because one may go to sleep while riding them without being disturbed by the least jolting.[48]

For the most part, female camels were used for riding because of their speed and temperament. One term used for a riding camel, *al-jaysh*, signified the military importance of the animal. For many centuries, control of the badia went to those groups who could muster the most fighters on camel back. In economic terms, an armed bedouin on a riding camel not only could defend his herd and pose a threat to other bedouin and settled folk alike, but he also could offer his services as fighter to chieftains or town officials for a price or a share of the spoils of battle.

Breeders of thoroughbred camels took as much care in protecting their lineages as did breeders of horses . A fine camel of a noble line was not only an economic asset, but a symbol of honour to its owner and his tribe. Some breeds were known by their region or tribe of origin. One of the most well-known and sought after for riding was the *'umaniyya*, which was noted for its speed and fine carriage.[49]

Colour, too, was a significant factor in camel herd, white and black being particularly prized. Special care was taken in herding such "prestige" camels in order to prevent raiding or other mishaps.[50] In addition, other colours seem to have made some camels more desirable to own in certain times and places. In the early part of the nineteenth century, for example, the fashion preference among women of the 'Anaza tribes were for "slight-formed" camels of gray colour, while Bani Sakhr women esteemed "camels of a brownish-red colour."[51] It is important to note, then,

that the connection of certain types of camels with bedouin status and prestige also influenced herding practices and gave some camels a significance and value far beyond their "economic" worth.

Camels and Pastoral Transport

When looking at the transport function of camels in the badia, it is important to distinguish between those animals used primarily for transport related to pastoral activities of the herding group, and transport for hire (which is discussed in the following section). Each herding group needed pack animals to move tents, provisions and other belongings. Male camels (called *al-zamal* or *al-hijin*) were preferred for this purpose because they tended to be larger and stronger than females. The training of pack and riding camels began at about age three, and their working career began at four or five. Not only were pack animals used to carry belongings from one camping place to another, they were essential for transporting town purchases to the camp. Just as merchants organized caravans to carry goods from town to town, bedouin camping in the badia would often band together to undertake trips to market towns, mainly to replenish their provisions of staples. Thus, the coming of modern transport was more likely to remove camels and other pack animals from merchant caravans and the herds of town-based camel drivers than from those of the bedouin.

Camels for Non-pastoral Transport

Many bedouin, individually or as a tribe, were involved in renting their pack and riding camels to townsmen. This activity, like pastoral trade, was a major opportunity for interaction between the bedouin and the settled population. The renting of camels could occur on an *ad hoc* basis on a small scale, or it could become a major long-term undertaking, institutionalised with formal agreements between town officials and bedouin shaykhs. In such cases, the renting of transport and riding camels could become an important source of income and thus a prime

determinant of a tribe's herding and migration strategies. This was true in agricultural areas, where the demands for transport of crops was seasonal, as well as in major towns along the hajj route.

> [For the conveyance of the 30-40,000 pilgrims from Damascus in 1833] it is computed that not less than eighty thousand camels are required; these are principally furnished by the Anaize Bedowins, who have arrogated to themselves the monopoly. Some few other tribes, upon condition of paying a portion of the profits, are, when their own camels are not sufficient in number, allowed to join in the procession.[52]

Bedouin from all along the darb al-hajj rented their animals each year. A separate section on the pilgrimage will provide more details on that aspect of bedouin involvement in transport.[53]

Bedouin also rented their camels for commercial transport. For example, in addition to carrying pilgrims, members of the Harb tribe of the Hijaz also carried goods between Jedda and Medina.[54] In most instances, there are no statistics on the volume of this traffic. However, there is a fair amount of information on the use of camel transport on the overland Cairo-Suez leg of the East India Company's regular steamship route that connected India with England beginning in 1834.[55]

Here is a well-documented case which demonstrates that the increased traffic in goods and passengers along some routes, made possible by the coming of regular steamship service, actually *increased* demand for camel transport – at least temporarily. Tribes of the northern Hijaz, Sinai and Egypt, such as the Huwaytat, Tarabin and others, provided camels for this route. In the early years, passengers and their luggage were carried between Suez and Cairo on camels and donkeys. The mails were carried by "two tribes of Mount Sinai Arabs" and members of the "Maage" tribe. Later, after the route was improved, most passengers rode in

coaches while bags and a growing amount of freight were carried by camels.[56]

In addition, camels carried imported British coal, used to fuel the steamers, from Cairo to Suez.[57] As shown in Table 1.1, the traffic in coal was large, averaging nearly 11,000 camel loads per year from 1838 to 1846. The source does not note how many camels were used, but it is reasonable to assume that the number ran into the hundreds, and that the service provided a significant and steady source of cash for the bedouin camel-owners. Ironically, these caravans may have been a factor in the spread of steamship transport. According to one writer, because the caravans helped reduce the cost of coal at Suez from £10 to £3, they were "no small factor in the rapidity with which steamships multiplied in eastern waters after 1835...."[58]

Table 1.1
Camel Transport Used by the East India Company to Carry Coal from Cairo to Suez, 1838-1846

Year	*Camel loads*	*Hire (shillings/ton)*	*Subtotal Hire*
1838	10,686	693 ½ @ 30 9,992 ½ @ 33	350,557 20
1839	13,340	1,163 ½ @ 33 6,746 @ 45 5,430 ½ @40	559,185 20
1840	8,814 ½	@ 36	317,322 00
1841	11,063	4,582 ½ @ 40 6,480 ½ @ 45	474,922 20
1842	14,111 ½	@ 40	564,460 00
1843	7,941	"	317,640 00
1844	7,667	"	306,680 00
1845	15,329	"	613,160 00
1846	9,877	"	395,080 00
TOTAL	**98,829**		**3,899,007, 20**

Source: FO 407/3, "Correspondence respecting the Transit through Egypt," 52.

The number of camel loads for cargo was small at the outset (only 50 in 1843), but grew steadily (1,568 in 1844; 1,971 in 1845; and 2,563 in 1856). With the rise in the volume of goods and passengers passing in transit, Muhammad Ali

saw the possibility of yet another lucrative government monopoly, so he took over the transit operations in 1846 and forced the bedouin to accept lower rents for their animals. The British complained that this "nationalization" of transit services resulted in their merchants paying higher fees, and noted that it cut into the revenues formerly received by the bedouin. According to one report, "such is the peculation of the public servants, the [bedouin] Arabs do not receive more than half the sum that is charged to the Egyptian Government; and it is not therefore surprising that their services are only obtained by compulsion."[59]

The increase in demand for pack animals caused by the growth in traffic due to modern transport was not an isolated phenomenon. Similar scenarios, with local variations, played themselves out in the hinterlands of other ports in the region – Aden, Alexandretta, Alexandria, Basra, Beirut, Jaffa, Jedda, Kuwait – that saw an increase in freight and passenger traffic due to the coming of regular steamer services. For example, Ruppin, describing Greater Syria in the first decade of the twentieth century, noted that high demand for camels to carry such products as grain and oranges to ports during the fall and winter harvest seasons caused transport costs to rise three-fold over those charged during the slow summer months.[60]

After steamships, the next major innovation in transport in the region was the railway. Here, too, there was a mixed effect on the demand for camel transport. The laying of track and the construction of stations and other facilities often had to be accomplished with the aid of pack animals, including camels. And once the lines opened, animals transport did not disappear. For example, once railways began operation in Palestine and southern Syria, camels continued to play an

important role, providing a cheaper alternative in some cases, and continuing to give access to locales with poor roads or tracks, where modern transport had not yet penetrated.[61]

The largest construction project in the region during the nineteenth century was the Suez Canal, begun in 1859. While the digging was done by hand until 1863, then by machines, many camels were required to carry fresh water to work sites and to move loads of earth and rock.[62]

Camel Products and By-Products

In addition to providing milk and transport, the camel was useful in other ways. Its hair (*wabar*) was gathered and stored for spinning, weaving and sale. The bag in which these gleanings were kept was called a *labayd*. When one considers that a camel could shed up to five pounds of hair during each moulting season, a family with a hundred camels could gather a considerable sum. There was a great demand in towns for camel hair for various woven products. For example, the weaving of *abbas*, with their alternating tawny and white stripes, traditionally required the use of sheep's wool and camel hair. Although camel hair was also in demand for use in fine garments in the West, there is not much information regarding this trade in the sources.[63] Many bedouin considered the material to have such low value that only the humblest items were made from it, items such as the sack used to cover the camel's udder to prevent the young from suckling, as well as carrying bags, slippers, and headwear.[64] Water bags and other items were fashioned from the tanned skin of camels. The animal's droppings were used for fuel and as an absorbent material placed next to a baby's bottom. Its urine served as a sterile and beneficial wash for new-borns and for hair. The bones could

be fashioned into tent pegs and other implements; even the ticks off its hump provided a snack for falcons. Not surprisingly, the leather from the pads of its feet made fine soles for sandals.

The Social Roles of the Camel

To be "rich in camels" had more than a mere economic connotation to the bedouin, for the beast, mentioned often in the Quran and in pre-Islamic poetry, had symbolic and social value as well.[65] The camel was closely intertwined in the fabric of bedouin life and identity in many ways. Bride price, blood money and other social transactions were calculated in the currency of camels. If one member of an 'Anaza tribe killed another, the blood price would be "fifty she-camels, one delul (a camel fit for mounting), a mare, a black slave, a coat of mail, and a gun."[66] This price varied from tribe to tribe, and even among the 'Anaza some negotiations among the concerned parties resulted in a lowering of the indemnity. In cases involving physical injury, the camel was the currency of choice: for wounding someone's shoulder a man would have to pay three camels to the victim; for an arm, one camel. A tribe member wishing to induce another to become his guardian (in the institution of *wasy*), would offer a four-year-old she-camel to the prospective guardian. If a case were brought to a qadi, the cost for deciding a dispute over a horse would be a she-camel.

A father wanting to acknowledge his son's reaching manhood would give him a camel or a mare. Young couples were often aided in starting their new lives with a gift of a camel. Among the 'Anaza, a man gave his wife a she-camel if he wished to divorce her. And, conversely, a wife could attempt to induce her husband to utter the words of divorce by presenting him with several camels.[67] Desert bards

who composed verses of praise in honour of a shaykh or accomplished fighter were occasionally rewarded with a camel or sheep. Distances were measured in the length of an average camel's daily march (20-30 miles, depending on terrain and weather).

Despite the fact that camels were used as a form of currency, even into the twentieth century, Lancaster has argued that the animals should not be seen merely as a type of material wealth. Instead, the circulation of camels in bedouin society can best be understood, according to this view, if their relationship to the concept of honour is taken into consideration. A member of the Rwala was judged not by how many camels he owned, but by "how many camels passed through [his] hands and what happened to them." The main impetus for raiding, then, was to have surplus camels to distribute and thus enhance one's reputation in the eyes of the recipients and of those who learned of the act of generosity.[68]

In poetry and song, the camel figured as a symbol of beauty, grace, nobility.[69] The qualities – swiftness, temperament and endurance – of a purebred riding camel were highly sought after and esteemed. Camels of the best breed and quality fetched very high prices. Camels were branded but also named. A herder could often tell each of his camels not only by appearance but also by its footprints, and the animals were known to follow the sound of his singing back to camp after a day at pasture.

Too often the social value and significance of the camel has not figured into the calculations of outsiders looking at bedouin society. Like cattle and horses in other parts of the world, the camel provided milk, meat and transport, and was bought and sold. In bedouin society, however, the camel was seen as much more

than just an animal to be herded, milked, ridden and marketed, it formed a part of bedouin history, daily life and identity.

The Camel as Commodity

An apparent paradox emerges when examining some sources on bedouin society. On the one hand, as the following chapter on the trade in camels amply demonstrates, people bought many camels annually for a variety of uses – from the cultivator who needed a draught animal to the pasha who required thousands of transport animals. On the other hand, bedouin occasionally have been quoted as saying that they were reluctant to sell camels and would do so only if forced by circumstances. Burckhardt noted, for example, in the early part of the nineteenth century:

> Most families of the Anezes are unable to defray their annual expenses from the profits on their cattle, and few Arabs would sell a camel to purchase provisions: he knows from experience, that to continue long in a state of peace, diminishes the wealth of an individual; war and plunder therefore become necessary.[70]

Even in the second half of the century, as Doughty noted, the bedouin were "never very willing to sell [their camels]" because they consider them "a profitable possession" which will keep reproducing, whereas money was "barren good that passes quite away in the using." He added that the bedouin "will sell of their beasts only when they have some present need of reals, and then the sooner of the males, but they are better for the carriage."[71]

The paradox dissolves, however, once it is remembered that a) there was a continuum among camel-herders, from those using their camels mainly for subsistence, and those herding mainly for markets, and b) within individual tribes, there was variability in herd sizes, with shaykhly families tending to accumulate large herds capable of producing surplus animals for sale. Most bedouin were not among the wealthy shaykhly class and lived a marginal existence which could tip

into poverty and hunger with the next drought, raid, or other misfortune. "Wealth, however, among the Arabs is extremely precarious, and the most rapid change of fortune are daily experienced."[72] Nonetheless, some tribes used camel-herding as part of their means of obtaining cash and agricultural products. The Shararat tribe were said to have few horses but "innumerable camels." Segments of the tribe travelled each year to the Hauran region to "sell camels and purchase wheat."[73]

Bedouin also obtained surplus animals by war, raiding and theft. There are numerous accounts in the towns surrounding the badia of disputes over stolen animals.[74] Many of those that were not soon recovered eventually reached market.

Uses of Camels in the Settled Lands: Overland Transportation

The long, plodding caravan of camels driven by their bedouin owners is one of the stereotypical images of the Middle East. From Orientalist paintings to mass-marketed postcards, from motion pictures to the titles of novels and anthropology treatises, "caravan" has over time taken a firm hold of the public's imagination regarding the region. Unusual as camels may appear to many, and as romantic as the notion of caravan life may seem (especially to city-dwellers), the reality of the region's transportation system in the nineteenth century was much more multifaceted and mundane. For example, while camels were an important pack animal, especially in the badia, they were by no means the principal transport animal in the region. Donkeys and mules probably accounted for at least as much of total traffic as camels, and quite possibly more. On many routes, especially on the frontier of settlement, camels, donkeys and mules worked side-by-side. In many parts of the Middle East, where climate, terrain and other factors made donkeys and mules more practical, camel transport was not even common. A British report on Mesopotamia covering the first years of the twentieth century stated that mules, donkeys and camels were used on many major routes.[75] Nonetheless, even scholars and other educated observers apparently have been

seduced in the past by the image of the caravan and overplayed its importance to the bedouin economy. At the same time, the other uses of the camel – as a draught animal and as a source of meat – have received scant attention. This has led to faulty assumptions about the dynamics of the bedouin economy.

In order to understand better the role of the camel in the transportation system of northern Arabia, and the relationships between the settled populations and the bedouin with regard to this activity, it is necessary to examine the manner in which overland transport was carried out before the coming of motor vehicles. The study of animal-borne transport is one of the many lacunae in the economic history of the region.[76] The following analysis will focus on three variables: ownership of the animals, the requirements of pilgrimage transport, and the distance travelled. Looking at each will shed light on a different aspect of the dynamics of overland transport. All transport, it should be remembered, also was affected by a range of factors, including the local and world economy, the political situation, and the availability of alternative modes of transport.

Ownership of Animals

Many writers have worked under the assumption that since bedouin owned, sold or rented most of the camels in the region, they would be the hardest hit by drops in demand for the animals. While it is certainly true that the bedouin were the chief source of camels, it is far from clear what percentage of the pack camels used in the region they owned. While it has been noted that some tribes rented their camels to pilgrims along the hajj route and to agencies carrying goods and coal between Cairo and Suez, many town-dwellers also owned pack animals, camels among them.

Four broad classes of owners for transport camels can be discerned, each operating under particular sets of requirements and constraints. First were those bedouin who rented their camels for transport. Second were peasants, landowners

or merchants, who owned camels for their own use. Some of these also hired their animals to others when the opportunity arose. For the peasant, especially, animals often served more than one function, working as draught animals as well as transporting produce to market. It was common practice for peasants to pool their pack animals and move from farm to farm during harvest season to transport the produce.[77]

While estimates for most parts of the Middle East are scarce, it is clear that the type and quantity of animals used for draught and transport purposes varied from region to region, depending on such factors as climate, topography, local custom and availability of animals. Camels often figured into this mix of domestic animals. For example, an Egyptian government survey of eight rural provinces in Lower Egypt published in 1873 provides a glimpse of the types of pack animals, owned mainly by fellaheen, in a very large agricultural area beyond the arid zone. Of the 128,535 pack animals counted, by far the largest percentage was donkeys (58 per cent), camels and horses were nearly even at 21 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively; and fewer than 2 per cent were mules.[78]

A British report from Iraq in 1918 is illustrative of the mix of animals kept by semi-nomadic groups, who engaged in agriculture part of the year and spent some months herding their sheep in the badia. These tribes, the Shammar Toqah and the Zubayd, used horses, camels and donkeys for riding, donkeys and camels for transport, sheep for wool, meat and milk products, and cattle for draught purposes and milk products, as shown in Table 1.2. Note that in both groups, donkeys were more numerous than camels.

Most of what is known about camel ownership by merchants and landowners is anecdotal. For example, referring to Palestine in the early twentieth century, Graham-Brown noted: "Merchants would sometimes keep strings of camels for their own use and to hire out. Sometimes they would employ a

Table 1.2
Animals Owned by Two Semi-Nomadic Iraqi Tribes, 1918

Tribe	*Shammar Toqah*	*Zubayd*
Men	2,030	1,500*
Horses	550	280
Sheep	10,500	20,000
Donkeys	730	700
Camels	530	130**

Source: CO 696/1, Administration Report of the Baghdad Wilayat, 1918, 66, 69.
* "Men capable of bearing arms."
** "Probably an underestimation…."

professional camel driver who would be encouraged to work well and stay in the job by being given a share in the capital invested in the camels."[79] In the lands that would become Transjordan, members of the Abu Jabir family were large landowners around the early years of the twentieth century. They used a combination of animals to get agricultural goods to market in Palestine and to bring back necessities. In addition to their own camels, the Abu Jabirs also employed the camels and donkeys of local tribesmen in varying combinations, depending on costs, availability and reliability.[80]

The third class of animal owner – the transport worker – specialised in offering transport services full-time. These men were typically based in a larger town or city where occupational specialisation and demand were greatest. They tended to be seen by city dwellers as members of low social classes not worthy of much respect. This was no doubt in part due to the fact that the camel-owners at least were of bedouin origin. A more detailed description of these workers appears in the section on local transport.

Government ownership was the fourth type, and these animals were mainly for use by the military, but occasionally for general transport purposes.[81] Government involvement in transport, unlike the previous types, brought new dimensions to the system. First, economic concerns were not usually the primary driving forces. Therefore, massive demand for transport was brought about by military campaigns, for example, and prices paid for transport were not always

governed by the market. If animals were not confiscated outright, they were often hired forcibly at below-market rates, as will be discussed below. In addition, animals used by town powers often were not cared for adequately and suffered higher mortality rates than those owned by bedouin or peasants. Finally, the government monopolised certain types of trade and transport activities, bringing the economy of monopolies into play with regard to pack animals. Sources as far back as the sixteenth century, for example, describe methods by which authorities obtained transport animals from their owners. One such practices as *mübayaa*, in which the Ottoman administration imposed the delivery of a certain number of animals (or other goods or services) upon a district under a unilaterally fixed price.[82] This had several consequences, including the frequent removal of animals from the transport market by owners who feared such exactions. In order to compensate for any resultant losses, the owners would increase the prices charged to private transport customers.

Bedouin reluctance to sell or hire their camels also could arise from a fear of losses from combat and poor working conditions. Burckhardt estimated that between 1811 and 1814, "thirty thousand camels belonging to the army had perished in the Hedjaz." So dire a crisis resulted from the lack of pack animals that Muhammad Ali sent emissaries as far afield as Libya and Syria in order to purchase camels for his campaign. As a result, some 4,000 camels were purchased from Syrian bedouin and brought to the Holy Cities with the hajj caravan, and 2,500 camels were brought with the Egyptian hajj.[83]

Animal-owners faced similar pressures several years later, during the Egyptian occupation of Syria, when transport workers and bedouin often removed themselves from the reach of officials when they felt that their beasts would be vulnerable to seizure by the government. The owners feared that officials would pay a mere fraction of the regular hire and that they would caused the animals to be

overburdened and otherwise abused. When exactions did occur, the animal owners raised the prices they charged merchants (by 30 to 50 per cent in one account) in order to make up for losses incurred by low military payments. On at least one occasion, the animals of a caravan were taken while in transit, leaving disgruntled merchants and merchandise sitting in the roadstead until other transport was arranged.[84]

The demands of government officials persisted into the twentieth century, when Ottoman authorities reportedly requisitioned camels from the Bani Sakhr and other tribes in order to carry materials needed for the construction of the Hijaz Railway. For example, Bani Sakhr camels carried wood from forests of the Balqa and near Shawbak to supply construction needs, and the camel owners were not compensated.[85]

When coercion was not possible or practical, or when the need was particularly dire, officials attempted to meet their transport requirements by offering high payments for animals. For example, when Muhammad Ali invaded Hijaz, he attempted to obtain camel transport from tribes around the Holy Cities and Ta'if by paying their chiefs. Apparently because the rank-and-file "equally despised and disliked" the invader, most were unwilling to hire out their camels. Only those bedouin who relied on the Muhammad Ali's granaries at Jedda and Mecca, and thus were also militarily vulnerable "to the attacks of the Pasha's cavalry," offered their camels for hire.[86]

Local officials were not the only ones affecting the region's transport system. In the 1850s, British and French bought "large numbers of horses and mules" in Syria, creating a shortage of pack animals in some places.[87] The British also used Syrian camels during their military campaigns in the Crimean War.[88] In addition, Doughty stated that in the years previous to his journey in 1877, camel brokers traveled through "all parts of the upland Arabia, to buy for the border-

countries, and thereby the price of camels had been doubled within a few years." He added that if a war was declared with Abyssinia, for example, "Arabia might be searched in few weeks by these emissaries, and, an advance offered, there could be brought forth many thousands of camels."[89]

Pilgrimage

While military and commercial demand for pack animals was important, the most notable long-distance routes were those that carried Muslim pilgrims and others to and from Mecca and Medina. At times overshadowing the purely commercial caravans, the hajj ensured an annual demand through much of the Ottoman era for transport camels for thousands of travellers, including pilgrims, officials, escorts, and merchants. Although pilgrims descended on the Holy Cities from many directions, the two major hajj caravans in the nineteenth century were the Syrian, originating in Damascus, and the Egyptian, setting out from Cairo.[90] Because of the religious and political prestige attached to it by the Ottoman authorities, the Syrian hajj grew to be the most important of these, and Damascus developed into an important camel market and caravan provisioning station and staging area.

Certainly by the nineteenth century the portion of the pilgrimage that consisted of Ottoman officials made up an economically important core whose number probably did not vary from year to year as much as that of the pilgrims and merchants. According to Tresse, who used figures from French consular reports, Ottoman officials hired nearly 3,000 camels during the pilgrimage of 1851, paying an average of just over 300 piastres per camel.[91]

The number of pilgrims, on the other hand, fluctuated widely, and influenced the number of camels needed each year. When there was serious unrest in Arabia, or when certain routes became unusually dangerous, pilgrims would stay away. For example, for about ten years in the first part of the nineteenth century,

Muwahhidun[92] attacks prevented the Syrian and Egyptian hajj caravans from proceeding to the Holy Cities (although individuals acceptable to the Muwahhidun were said to pass unhindered).[93] Other factors influencing the number of pilgrims included outbreaks of disease, and the economic and political situation in the home country of the pilgrims. In 1842, because of severe fiscal difficulties on the part of the Ottoman administration, the French consul in Damascus sent a dispatch stating that "I predict that the pilgrimage caravan to Mecca will not be able to proceed this year... because the 'Anaza arabs who each year furnish their camels for the transport of the pilgrims do not want to give this year without advance payment, and the treasury of the government is dry."[94]

The Syrian hajj was estimated to number 15,000 to 20,000 in 1739 and about 100,000 in 1773.[95] Burckhardt reported that the hajj of 1814 contained some 4-5,000 persons ("including soldiers and servants,") and about 15,000 camels. Some writers gave the number of pilgrims in other hajj caravans in the first half of the nineteenth century as between 30,000 and 50,000, but Tresse did not give credence to these. Instead, he judged as more accurate the estimate of the French consul in Damascus, who counted some 4,500 pilgrims in 1834. Nonetheless, he conceded that 40,000 pilgrims may have made the journey in a good year toward the end of the eighteenth century.[96] According to the experience of a Damascus *mukawwam* (transport contractor), between 1875 and 1910 the demand for camels for the hajj fluctuated between 4,000 and 20,000.[97]

The provision of pack and riding camels to the Syrian hajj seems to have changed very little between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, although it appears to have become more systematised. Two sources of transport were prominent during the entire period: bedouin tribes and mukawwams. In the sixteenth century, the procuring of camels was described as "one of the most difficult problems of the caravan administration."[98] This should not be surprising,

since the administration paid roughly half the going rate for transport, often forced contractors to take on official loads, and were not known for treating animals with care. One inducement offered to bedouin who agreed to supply camels was the right to fly the Sultan's flag – a sort of official recognition that continued into the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century, for example, tribal leaders who agreed to co-operate with the Ottoman regime in a number of areas, including the supply of camels not only to officials but to pilgrims, were granted generous subsidies and an official title.[99] From the early part of the nineteenth century there is the account of Dhouhy ibn Asmayr, shaykh of the al-Mashatta section of the Wuld 'Ali tribe.

> He derives his influence from the intimate connection with the Pasha of Damascus, to whom he was in the habit of furnishing every year a vast number of camels for the pilgrim caravan. He seldom encamps, even in the winter time, farther than eight or ten days' journey from Damascus.[100]

By this time a significant evolution had taken place: one section of a camel-herding tribe had clearly become closely linked with offering pack animals, and adjusted its herding practices to meet those demands.

It is possible that another source of camels developed precisely because the Syrian hajj grew and with it the demand for camels. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, records show villagers of the Hauran region renting camels to the hajj caravan through the mediation of their shaykhs. Many of these villagers were sedentarised bedouin, and they may have settled in part to participate more easily in the transport economy.[101] At the same time, tribes of the 'Anaza and Bani Sakhr also contributed camels, as did the residents of Sukhna (Sakhana).[102] Camels continued to be procured from settled areas as well as from nomadic bedouin into the nineteenth century.[103]

As noted, during the Egyptian occupation of the Hijaz, the government became involved in buying and commandeering bedouin camels for various transport purposes. During the hajj of 1814, for example, the plain of Arafat "contained, dispersed in different parts, from twenty to twenty-five thousand camels, twelve thousand of which belonged to the Syrian Hadj." Muhammad Ali reportedly detained the camels of the Syrian Hajj for ten days in order to carry provisions between Jedda, Mecca and Ta'if to supply his troops.[104]

Most pilgrims probably rented their camels, often as part of a package that included water, provisions, saddlery and bedding. In addition to pilgrims, however, hajj caravans also had a large contingent of merchants, many of whom owned their animals. According to one account, a member of the Damascus consultative council bought 16 camels on behalf of his colleagues in order that they might take advantage of the commercial possibilities offered by the pilgrimage caravan of 1844.[105]

There were other sites of Muslim pilgrimage in the region, most notably the Shi'a pilgrimage destinations of Najaf and Karbala. Thousands came to the shrines and cemeteries of these cities, to pray, to visit relatives, to bury their dead, and carry out commerce. Around these cities, as at the Sunni shrines across the peninsula, the steady flow of pilgrims and other travellers gave a major impetus to the development of transportation systems catering to their needs, often using animals other than camels. Musil, for example, reported that in 1912 "many" Shi'a pilgrims travelled on the backs of hired donkeys along the Baghdad-Karbala and Karbala-Najaf routes.[106]

Table 1.3, referring to the early years of the twentieth century, offers even greater detail regarding the traffic to the major Shi'a shrines of Iraq. The trends in animal use presented in the table may be indicative of transport patterns in the nineteenth century. Although pilgrims from surrounding areas visited the shrines,

the data in the table reflects the traffic from Iran, which passed through the eleven quarantine/customs stations, the one with the most traffic being Khanaqin. The significant drop in numbers for the year 1904-5 shows what a devastating affect epidemics had on travel, and on economic activity as a whole. What is probably most noteworthy in these figures is the importance of horses on these routes; camels, in contrast, were rarely used.

Table 1.3
Mesopotamian Pilgrim Statistics, 1902-1907

	1902-3	*1903-4*	*1904-5**	*1905-6*	*1906-7*
Pilgrims	30,933	53,469	13,362	69,312	49,351
Corpses	4,742	7,237	97	7,277	5,716
Pkgs. of Merchandise	7,617	3,505	886	10,070	14,468
Horses	28,646	50,520	164	50,547	37,965
Mules	3,826	765	190	4,477	7,369
Camels	28	979	198	269	–

Source: FOCP 9324, "Report on... Trade of Mesopotamia," G. Lloyd, 1908, 347, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol 16.
* A cholera epidemic in Mesopotamia caused reduced traffic during this year.

Although there were many sites of Christian pilgrimage, the major one was Jerusalem. The city attracted travellers from Christian communities within the region as well as those from abroad, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition, many Jews visited Jerusalem for its religious significance. The traffic of Christian pilgrims continued year-round, but the peak time was during the Easter season, and was regular enough so that some locales imposed duties on pilgrims passing through overland.[107] While some Christian pilgrims undoubtedly used camels on their journeys, other animals were used as well. According to a report from 1860, the number of mules available for transport purposes in Jerusalem increased each spring because the Armenian pilgrims who had ridden down on them left them behind and made their return trip by sea.[108] Pilgrims arriving by ship at Jaffa were also important transport users. In the 1860s, travellers had to proceed by horse, mule or donkey. Camels tended to be used for heavy baggage and merchandise. Some 12,000 pilgrims used the Jaffa-Jerusalem

route annually, and 20,000 camel-loads of freight passed the same way, according to an 1868 report.[109] By 1877, passengers could travel by carriages, but the poor condition of the road meant that donkeys, horses, mules and camels continued to be important.[110]

Distance also is an important factor to consider when gauging the comparative utility of various pack animals. Each animal has its own strengths and weaknesses, often giving one type an advantage over others under a specific set of circumstances. Some of these differences are illustrated in Table 1.4 from data on pack animals based in Baghdad around the turn of the twentieth century. Several qualities of the camel made it preferable to donkeys and mules over long distances in northern Arabia. Because it could graze while walking and its water

Table 1.4
Data on Pack Animals in Baghdad, c. 1907

	Camels	*Donkeys*	*Mules*	*Horses*
Feed cost en route (Raij piastres/day)	nil.	10	14	12
Purchase cost (Turkish pounds)	10-14	4-10	8-30	8-12
Animals per handler	10	8	4	4
Avg. load (lbs.)	500	230	300-370	300-370
Baghdad-Aleppo, summer	yes	no	yes	yes
winter	yes	no	yes	yes
Baghdad-Kirmanshah, summer	yes	yes	yes	yes
winter	no	yes	yes	yes
Baghdad-Mosul, summer	yes	yes	yes	yes
winter	yes	yes	yes	yes
Baghdad-Mosul - Transport cost (mejidiehs/36 maunds)	8	9	9	no data
Baghdad-Mosul - Speed (days)	20	12	12	no data

Source: FOCP 9324, "Report on... Trade of Mesopotamia," George Lloyd, 1908, 152-3, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol. 16.

requirements were lower, it was often less expensive to use on long marches over the steppe. In addition, it was the only pack animal that could negotiate large regions of shifting sand, and thus was the sole way for merchants to transport goods in many parts of the Arabian interior. Finally, camels could carry heavier loads and

required fewer handlers, making camel transport the cheapest form of animal transport in many regions.[111]

Nonetheless, the camel's utility should not be overestimated. Mules and donkeys were faster, and were much preferred on routes that climbed steeply or were rocky. Extreme cold and slippery conditions also were impediments to camel transport.

Distance Travelled: Local, Regional and Long-Distance Transport

For purposes of examining how distance affected transport, the categories "local," "regional" and "long-distance" can be used. Since this study is concerned principally with economic matters, local transport is anything that takes place within the boundaries of a human settlement, whether urban, rural or nomadic. Regional transport takes place in a physical, social and economic space in which the inhabitants are linked by numerous and varied relationships of production, exchange, and obligation, usually an urban agglomeration and its agricultural hinterland within which there is an organic and dense web of economic, political and social interactions. In the case of towns bordering on or surrounded by the badia, a region could consist of a settled zone and those nearby rangelands of bedouin who had strong economic links to these towns. Long-distance transport thus connects regions, either adjacent or more distant.[112]

A man building a new house in Hama hires a muleteer to carry wood and stone to the construction site. A Damascus baker pays a donkey driver to bring loads of flour from the miller. An Aleppo merchant hires a porter with a strong back to haul bales of fine silk into a khan. As in urban centres around the world, the demands of commerce and everyday life were met by an active and specialised

network of individuals and organisations providing transport services. The daily movement of goods and people in villages, towns and cities, and within their immediate vicinity, represented the portion of the transportation network that carried the most traffic.

A number of factors dictated which animals were used most in local transport. These included environment, custom, availability and cost. Thus, in cramped alleys of big cities and towns, humans and donkeys carried most of the goods. Camels were the pack animal of choice throughout the Arabian interior, with the exception of the Hasa oasis, which was surrounded by camel-herding tribes, but where the famous white ass native to that region not only dominated local transport but was exported to other towns. Camels also were prevalent in some parts of the settled zone. For example, they were the principal pack animal in the hill country of northern Samaria up until the Second World War, with about one in every ten village households owning a camel in the early twentieth century.[113]

While each city and town in the Middle East had its own unique system of transport, some broad similarities can be discerned. These included a degree of specialisation and organization of transport services absent in smaller agglomerations. Damascus and Cairo provide good examples.[114] For example, there was differentiation among the types of animals employed in transport, and among the types of goods transported. In those places where animals were inappropriate or impractical, such as in some khans, an *'attal*, or porter, could be hired by a merchant to carry his merchandise a relatively short distance for a set fee.[115] The *hammal*, on the other hand, carried goods in and around town on the back of his pack animal, usually a donkey. In Damascus, each locale had a number

of *hammal*s for this purpose. Two other occupations specialised in using their donkeys in the city's environs: the *tarras* and the *sa'iq* transported grain and grain products. These occupations were crucial in keeping the city fed by carrying grain from the warehouses to the milling establishments, and then taking flour to the bakers.[116] In some cities, transport workers formed a major part of the workforce. According to an 1871 estimate, of the 150,066 persons employed in "recognised occupations" in Cairo, 14,037 (9.4 per cent) were porters, 7,112 (4.7 per cent) were donkey and camel drivers, and 3,876 (2.6 per cent) were water-carriers.[117] The authors of the *Qamus* considered most transport workers to be of a low class. Raymond characterized the lowest rung of Cairo's workers early in the nineteenth century as water carriers, domestic servants, valets, and renters of horses, asses, camels and mules.

Regional transport is the next category to be examined. Much of this traffic was geared toward the large volume of exchanges of agricultural and pastoral products from the hinterland for imported items and merchandise produced in the towns. As noted earlier, some merchants and peasants had animals of their own; others hired them as they were needed. For longer distances, there was the *makary*, who kept horses and mules, hiring them out to carry men or merchandise "from town to town." At any one time some hundred *makary* could have been found in Damascus, each with 5-10 animals.[118] The *baghghal* hired out mules for the same purpose: carrying goods over longer distances. The *hammar*, on the other hand, hired out donkeys to people wanting to go on "an outing, or to the village, or to a distant place," the rider paying according to the distance travelled. Camels, too, were used in local and regional transport, and their hiring was carried out by the

jammal.[119]

Cuinet offers a glimpse of some regional routes in Greater Syria in the 1890s. Even as railways were built or planned on routes that served such ports as Beirut, Haifa and Tripoli, passengers and freight continued to use animal transport. Passengers on the Beirut-Damascus or Tripoli-Homs-Hama roads could take coaches to their destinations while "the merchandise is transported on carts…, and more commonly on the backs of camels, mules and horses," the cost being much lower. Camels annually carried nearly 200,000 tonnes of grain from the interior, mainly Hauran, to the port of Acre until the railway took over this traffic.[120]

Exchanges between nomads and town merchants formed an important category of regional trade, necessary to tribes that herded predominantly sheep, as well as those specialising in camels. The arrangements of this trade varied, with the bulk probably taking place when tribes came to town markets and departed with goods on their own animals. However, some merchants dealing in the desert trade went out among the bedouin, often well into the steppe, to bring town products to them and take back animals or animal products in return.

Long-distance transport is the final category of overland traffic. During the nineteenth century, several important long-distance tracks crossed northern Arabia, with camels carrying a large portion of the traffic. These included the imperial/pilgrimage route from Istanbul, through Damascus and on to the Holy Cities; routes between Syria and Egypt across Palestine; and routes connecting Syrian cities with Iraqi cities, especially Baghdad and Basra. There was a wide circulation of locally produced goods within the region, and there was a considerable amount of international trade, some of it shipped onward. During the

previous centuries, the volume of trade waxed and waned, and trade routes shifted or disappeared entirely thanks to war, economic crisis or new patterns of travel. These changes occurred in the nineteenth century as well. What was unique during this period was the arrival of mechanised transportation, which would help revolutionise the world economy and begin a rapid transformation from the widespread use of animal transport on land to its almost total replacement.

Camels dominated the trade routes traversing the region's steppes, dunes and wadi beds, but it is unclear how many were employed, what percentage were owned by bedouin, and what portion of the traffic was carried on other animals.[121] Scattered reports tell us that caravans often had hundreds and occasionally several thousand camels, and that they crossed a route – say Baghdad to Aleppo – a certain number of times per year. The secondary literature contains some data on these movements, but without a much larger pool of information on long-distance caravans, it is impossible to speak with precision about this important aspect the region's trade.[122]

Still, it is possible to make some generalisations about the long-distance transport economy and its relationship to the camel-herding bedouin. First, the provisioning of long-distance merchant caravans was normally carried out by persons specialising in the work.[123] As mentioned, all larger towns had a standing supply of pack animals kept by their owners year-round in readiness for caravan duties. Therefore, there would not normally be a large annual demand for camels for commercial purposes from the bedouin, except to replenish the herds of the *jammamil* or other town camel-owners. Even towns in the interior of northern Arabia relied on camels owned by jammamil and merchants (or sometimes jointly)

to carry merchandise long distances.[124]

Second, while it was often customary to employ members of tribes as guides and guards, this practice seemed to have been undergoing transformation during the nineteenth century. Town-based groups such as the 'Agayl, the Najada and the Sakhkhana vied for the opportunity to conduct and protect caravans emanating from places where they had settlements. For example, the 'Agayl were a community whose members migrated from the Qasim region of Najd to Baghdad and other Iraqi towns from about the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to a British source writing in 1834, the group arranged with Sulayman Pasha around 1770 to monopolize "the trade of guarding and guiding the caravans which go between this place [Baghdad] and Aleppo and Damascus." Still, the group did not control all caravan traffic, and the fact that a large caravan was being conducted by members of the 'Anaza confederation caused the 'Agayl to threaten harm to the caravan in 1834.[125] When Anne Blunt set out from Damascus on her way into northern Arabia, she "had no difficulty in getting a couple of Agheyls to start with us as camel drivers." On another occasion, she noted, "the Agheyl are proverbial for their unimpeachable honesty; and there is no man among them who might not be trusted with large sums of money."[126]

Third, khuwa payments continued to be required for caravans crossing tribal diras where town powers could not project their military force. However, even with the khuwa system, instances of raiding and robbery of caravans took place, particularly during periods of political turmoil – within and without the badia.

Finally, those long-distance caravans which were the most beneficial economically to the bedouin were those taking camels and horses to market, almost

exclusively by the 'Agayl. It is not surprising, then, that there is almost universal agreement that tribes normally took great care to ensure the safety of these merchants and their animals.[127]

The Camel in the Settled Lands: Other Uses

Even less is known about the numbers of animals used for non-transport purposes than about those used for transport. This lack of data, however, does not mean that large numbers of animals were not used for non-transport purposes. Nevertheless, many writers who have dealt with the issue of the so-called decline in the demand for camels in the era of modern transport have all but ignored this important segment of the animal market in northern Arabia and the neighbouring lands.

Before the widespread use of engines and motors, a large proportion of the energy needed by the farmers and townspeople of northern Arabia was provided by animals – donkeys, mules, horses, cattle and camels. Just as in transportation, travellers' accounts suggest that camels were used more than donkeys and mules as one left the well-watered lands of the Fertile Crescent and went toward the badia. Nonetheless, many thousands of camels were required in towns and villages in work dealing with agriculture, food production and supplying water.

As evidence of the widespread use of the camel for non-transport purposes, one need only look at Palestine at the end of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, where camels performed such diverse tasks as turning water wheels, pulling ploughs, and turning olive oil presses.[128] Those animals used for the intense labour of turning millstones or drawing water for hours each day often died prematurely or were sold for meat after they had outlived their usefulness.

This type of demanding work was carried out by other animals as well as camels. An account describing Aleppo in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, for example, states that there was a "multitude of animals used for transportation and moving machines."

> They had a limited life span and required constant expenditures on food and shelter. Porters, millers, pressers, and others invested in them, paying usually 13 to 20 piastres for an ass and 50 to 70 piastres for a mule.[129]

In the Arabian interior, settlement and agriculture would not have been possible in many locales without the relatively cheap availability of camel power to pull water from deep wells. On occasion, town dwellers of Arabia would go out among the tribes to buy well camels, paying for the beasts with their dates or wheat.[130] Camels owned by townsfolk were kept most of the time near the towns, often under the care of bedouin herders who took the animals into the steppe for grazing.

The consumption of camel meat was another use of the camel in the settled zone. Camel meat was consumed throughout the region, and because it was generally cheaper than mutton,[131] it was often used by the poorer segments of town society. In the badia, however, and its oasis towns, camel meat was probably more popular that sheep, which was used mainly on special occasions. At the Hail palace of Muhammad Ibn Rashid, for example, Blunt reported that 200-300 guests were fed each day by the amir, with the meal consisting of "rice and camel meat, sometimes mutton."[132] Of course among bedouins, camel meat was consumed by all classes, usually on special occasions such as religious feasts, weddings or circumcisions. Young camels would be sacrificed side-by-side with sheep and goats by those with means.

In addition, the camel held an important place in Muslim practices during the annual hajj. The animal was deemed better than cattle, sheep and goats for use

as offerings during the days of sacrifice (*qurban*) which began with 'Id al-'Adha (10 Dhu al-Hijja) and ended two days later. Camels had to be at least five years old, and a part of their attraction was that the share of meat given to the poor was greater after a camel was killed than after the slaughter of smaller animals. According to prescribed formulas, the minimum sacrifice was one sheep or its equivalent, one-seventh share of a camel or cow.[133] According to Burckhardt's early nineteenth-century account,

> On the day of *korbán*, the great sacrifice on Mt. Arafat, each Arab family kills as many camels as there have been deaths of adult persons during the last year in that family, whether the deceased were males or females. Though a dead person should have bequeathed but one camel to his heir, that camel is sacrificed; and if he did not have one, his relations kill one of their own camels. Seven sheep may be substituted for a camel; and if the whole number cannot be procured for the *korbán* of the death-year, the deficiency may be supplied by killing some on the next or subsequent year. The korbán is therefore always a day of great feasting among the tribes.[134]

The demand for sacrificial camels was often considerable, with the numbers killed rising and falling with the number of pilgrims and their economic status (only those who had the means were required to buy an animal for sacrifice). Because camels were preferred and abundant, they may well have made up the majority of animals sacrificed on qurban in the early years of the nineteenth century, but over time there was a shift toward the use of more sheep.[135] The raising of sacrificial animals for each year's hajj doubtless was an important economic activity for tribes in the Hijaz and Najd. There is a lack of data regarding the number of animals slaughtered each year, but according to a description of the hajj of 1885, 200,000 animals were slaughtered at Mina that year.[136] Because the number is so high, and looking at scattered figures for the twentieth century, it is likely that most of the animals were sheep, with perhaps ten per cent or fewer camels.

Finally, camels were used for ceremonial purposes by town populations. The uses of camels in ceremonial situations was clearly less widespread for settled peoples than for the bedouin; nonetheless, camels were used in such ways as well in villages and towns. The most noted and visible manifestation of the such a role in the nineteenth century, surely, was the specially selected camel used to carry the *mahmal* in the Syrian and Egyptian the hajj caravans. On a smaller scale, camels were also an integral part of wedding festivities in many villages, carrying the bride and her party, usually with gaily festooned litters. Similarly, camels were employed in circumcision celebrations, carrying the honoured boy.[137]

In Summary

In order to better understand the ways in which the pastoral activities of the bedouin were affected by outside forces, especially modern transport, this chapter has put forward a number of observations. First, the trade in camels was part of a trade in pastoral products that included other live animals, such as sheep, goats and horses, as well as their products and by-products. Bedouin tribes dominated pastoral production in much of northern Arabia, and while some tribes were known as either sheep-herding shawiyya or camel-herding "true" bedouin, in reality, the herds of all tribes tended to contain a mix of animals. This mix of animals changed, and herding practices were adjusted or abandoned, not merely because of innovations in the transportation system, but as a result of many other factors, including the climate, the condition and availability of pastures, access to water sources, the demands of markets, and the nature of the political situation.

Second, within bedouin society the camel had a number of roles. While some tribes were closely involved with the sale and/or hiring of camels for transport in the settled zone, this clearly was not the case with all tribes. In addition, all camel-herding tribes relied on their milch camels to a greater or lesser extent for subsistence, and the camel was an important source of military power and status.

These roles of the camel gave it value outside that of its utility for transport. In the settled zone, too, the camel was used in ways outside of transport: for draught purposes, as meat, and in ceremonial situations. Thus, the question of the "decline" in the value of the camel with the coming of modern transport becomes much more complicated.

Third, the system of animal transport in the region was varied. Donkeys, mules and horses were used in addition to camels. It should also be emphasized that even where camels were used, bedouin were not always the owners of the animals. Instead, men working in the transport trade or merchants owned the camels used in caravans. While data is scattered and incomplete, it is possible at least to say that in some places the introduction of modern transport affected donkey and mule owners more than camel owners or bedouin.

Finally, the steamship and the railway did not always totally displace camels and other animals. On the contrary, in some instances the construction and operation of new modes of transportation created new demands for animal transport, whether for hauling coal to steamship and train depots, or bringing agricultural products to bustling ports. Thus, while in some cases modern transport admittedly eliminated the need for camels and other animals, it also could spawn new caravan routes or draw increased traffic to old ones. One way to gain insight into the impact of modern transport on the activities of camel nomads is to examine the trade in camels, which is the object of Chapter Two.

NOTES TO CHAPER ONE

[1] Pierre Bonte, "French Marxist Perspectives on Nomadic Pastoral Societies," in *Nomads in a Changing World*, ed. Carl Salzman and John G. Galaty (Naples: Instituto Universitario Orientale, 1990), 57.

[2] For a brief historical overview, see Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, trans. Julia Crookenden, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 274-7. See also Talal Asad, "The Bedouin as a Military Force: Notes on Some Aspects of the Power Relations Between Nomads and Sedentaries in Historical Perspective," in *The Desert and the Sown: Nomads in the Wider Society*, ed. Cynthia Nelson (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley, 1973), 61-72; and Ira Lapidus, "Tribes and State Formation in Islamic History," in *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, ed. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Berkeley: UC Press, 1990), 25-47.

[3] A particularly lucid discussion of the interdependence of towns and tribes, in the Iraqi context, appears in Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 13-18, 21-22.

[4] Louise Sweet, "Camel Pastoralism in North Arabia and the Minimal Camping Unit," in *Environmental and Cultural Behavior*, ed. A.P. Vayda (Garden City, NY: Natural History Press, 1969), 137

[5] Sweet, "Camel Raiding of North Arabian Bedouin," *American Anthropologist*, 67 (1965): 1139.

[6] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 1:317. Antonin Jaussen, *Coutumes des Arabes au Pays de Moab* (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1908), 273. Sweet, "Camel Pastoralism," 140.

[7] The literature on bedouin law and customs is fully and critically examined in Frank H. Stewart, "Tribal Law in the Arab World: A Review of the Literature," *IJMES* 19 (1987): 473-90.

[8] See, for example, Madawi Al Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidi Tribal Dynasty* (London: Tauris, 1991), 32-48; 150-58.

[9] Khazanov, *Nomads*, 198-227.

[10] For a description of the Euphrates valley about 1865-72, see Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 25-31.

[11] Khazanov, *Nomads*, 202, 208.

[12] One exception is the section on pastoral trade by the bedouin of Transjordan in Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), 113-14.

[13] For Ottoman policies in Hasa at the end of the nineteenth century, see Frederick F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf* (New York: Columbia UP, 1997), 65.

[14] FO 195/595, report by Consul Skene, 8 April 1858, in Jibrail S. Jabbur, *Bedouins of the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, ed. Suhayl Jabbur and Lawrence I. Conrad (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995), 577-8.

[15] For example, the pasha of Baghdad was described as attempting to manipulate segments of the Shammar Jarba and the 'Anaza by offering land to prospective allies in the early 1830s. J.G. Lorimer, *Gazeteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia* (Calcutta: Supt. Government Printing, 1908), 2:1316.

[16] FO 195/595, report from Consul Skene, 8 April 1858, in Jabbur, *Bedouins*, 578.

[17] Anne Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1879), 1:69, 2:89, 140. The sources contain frequent accounts of disputes over access to markets and pastures. In 1861, for example, the Rwala were in a dispute with the Wuld 'Ali over the allocation of grazing around Hauran. In an attempt to resolve the situation, Fuad Pasha allocated specific lands to each tribe, enjoined them to keep the peace, reserved the right to call military conscripts from among their number, and kept hostages to guarantee the agreement. The pasha made no demands for sedentarization, but the agreement soon broke down nonetheless. FO 195/1027, despatches from Consul E.T. Rogers in Damascus, 20 June, 10, 12 July 1861, in Jabbur, *Bedouins*, 603-4.

[18] Estimates for the early part of the twentieth century for the amount of trade with the bedouin of Greater Syria appears in A. Ruppin, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet* (Berlin, 1916), 258-262, in Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent, 1800-1914: A Documentary Economic History* (Oxford: Oxford University

Press: 1988), 247-9. On economic links of the towns near Hama with the tribes, see Dirk Douwes, *The Ottomans in Syria and Lebanon: A History of Justice and Oppression* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), 28-30. In addition to trade, these links included partnerships in the ownership of flocks of sheep and of pack animals, as well as the extension of credit to bedouins by town merchants.

[19] Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt general eds., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984) Part I, Series B, Vol. 6, 205-6, Foreign Office Confidential Print (henceforth FOCP) 3882, "A Review of the British Consular Reports on Trade with Turkey in Europe and Asia during the last Ten Years: 1868-1877," E. Hertslet, 30 April 1878. This trade was said to decline after 1873 as a result of bedouin hardships caused by Ottoman efforts at sedentarisation and other policies. Wool was also important in the trade of other cities. In 1890 and 1891, wool was recorded as the second most important export from Damascus in terms of value (after flour). See "Report on the Trade of Damascus" by Eyres, 18 August 1892, Great Britain, House of Commons, *Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers XCVII*, 182. Wool far outstripped the value of other items exported from Baghdad to Europe and America in the same years, with exports each year amounting to more than a quarter of a million pounds Sterling. "Report on the Trade of Baghdad," Ibid., 192. Wool exports from Basra were second in value in 1890 to dates, and third, behind dates and wheat, in the following year. "Report on the Trade of Bussorah," Ibid., 204. Wool was Aleppo's single most valuable overseas export, with £277,519 in exports reported from the port of Alexandretta in the years 1891-92. "Report on the Trade of Aleppo," Ibid. 294. (In addition to bedouin, Turcoman and Kurdish tribes also herded sheep and sold their products in northern Syria and Iraq.) For a compilation of export statistics from Greater Syria's ports to Europe between 1835 and 1913, see M.S. Kalla, "Role of foreign trade in the economic development of Syria 1831-1914," Ph.D. (American University, Washington, DC, 1969), Table II, 260-62.

[20] Sarah D. Shields, "Regional Trade and 19th Century Mosul: Revising the Role of Europe in the Middle East Economy," *IJMES* 23 (1991): 26-28. This article contains figures for wool and sheep exports from Mosul between 1874 and 1912.

[21] Halah Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745-1900* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 159-83.

[22] Jaussen, *Coutumes*, 265.

[23] Letters from Cecil G. Wood, Jeddah Consulate, to HM the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Jan. 23, May 27, and June 21, 1892. Though clearly reflecting an underlying bias against local Ottoman officials, the report is indicative of a recurring trend.

[24] Abdul-Karim Rafeq, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus, 1723-1783* (Beirut: Khayats, 1966), 55-8, 214. Writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Rafeq notes that bedouin attacked the Syrian hajj caravan on some occasions because Ottoman authorities withheld surra payments. On eighteenth-century evidence suggesting a link between drought and bedouin attacks, see Karl Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980), 174-7.

[25] Blunt reported a bumper crop of truffles during her travels in the Syrian desert in 1877; as a result, the tribes were "now independent of corn for a year." She noted that a camel load of 200 okes was worth 35-40 shillings and that the men of the Abu Saray, a tribe near the Euphrates, had gone to Damascus to sell their harvest. Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes*, 2:25, 32.

[26] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 1:61-2. For details on varieties of fungal plants in the desert, and methods of harvesting them, see Jabbur, *Bedouin*, 77-9.

[27] The bedouin of Tor on the Sinai Peninsula were reported to have brought caravans of charcoal numbering 1,000-2,000 camels every few weeks to Cairo. André Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIII^e siècle* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1974), 351. On this commerce, see also Rabinowitz, "Themes in the Economy," 218. Aleppo, Damascus and Nablus were among the region's centres of olive oil soap production, and bedouin tribes sold alkali (*qelu* or *qeli*) in the form of the ashes of the barilla and other plants, to the soap producers. The size of this traffic was significant, with up to 3,000 camel loads of *qelu* brought to Nablus alone in the early part of the nineteenth century. Among the tribes supplying Nablus were the Bani Sakhr, Huwaytat, and the Adwan. On the Nablus trade, see Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 203. On the sedentarized tribes in Sukhna who supplied Aleppo soap makers, see Albert de Boucheman, "Une

Petite Cité Caravanière: Souhné," *Documents d'Études Orientale*, 6 (1937): 77-9. Also, FO 195/976, despatch from Skene, in Jabbur, *Bedouins*, 598. On the salt trade of the villages of Wadi Sirhan, see Max Freiherr von Oppenheim, *Die Beduinen* 4 vols. (Hildesheim: George Olms, 1983), 2:190; and H. St. John Philby, "Jauf and the North Arabian Desert," *Geographical Journal* 62 (1923): 244. See also Julius Euting, *Tagebuch Einer Reise in Inner-Arabien*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1896), 1:102-3, who reported that in 1893 between 3,000 and 4,000 camel loads (205 kg./load) annually were estimated as the region's production, which was marketed by the local tribes. Burckhardt reported that bedouin brought salt from the vicinity of Ta'if to Mecca around 1814. *Travels in Arabia* (1829; London: Frank Cass, 1968), 34.

[28] Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia,* 13.

[29] Snouck Hourgronje, *Mekka* (London: Luzac & Co., 1931), 5.

[30] Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes,* 30. In addition, there was an active sheep market, and one of the quarter's streets was called *zuqaq al-jammala* (Camel Driver Alley). Brigitte Marino, *Le Faubourg Du Midan à Damas à l'Époque Ottomane, Espace Urbain, Société et Habitat (1742-1830)* (Damascus: Institut Française de Damas, 1997), 126.

[31] See, for example, Lewis, *Nomads*, 25-36, on the relations between the Ottoman officials of Aleppo with various leaders of the Fid'an tribe.

[32] Asad Rustum, *Al-'Usul al-'arabiyya li-tarikh suriya fi 'ahd Muhammad 'Ali Pasha* (Beirut, 1933) [documents on the bedouin of Syria from the Royal Egyptian Archives], item no. 5507, report dated 11 September 1838, quoted in Jabbour, *Bedouin*, 545-6.

[33] A description of the economic consequences of Shammar control of the region around Hail appears in Al Rasheed, *Politics*, 95-132.

[34] For example, a despatch from Muhammad Ali Pasha to Muhammad Sharif Bey on 3 February 1834 stated that "he does not agree to the payment of purses from the Syrian treasury, as had been the custom in the past, to the bedouins of 'Anaza, Wild 'Ali, Hasan, Banu Sakhr, and other tribes." Rustum, *Al-'Usul*, item no. 3358, in Jabbur, *Bedouins* , 543. See also Douwes, *Ottomans*, 139; and Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 38.

[35] For example, the customs duty for gum from Diarbekr to Aleppo was 18 piastres per camel load, the duty for a load from Baghdad was 80 piastres. John Bowring, "Report on the Commercial Statistics of Syria," *Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers* XXI (1840), 42.

[36] Douwes, *Ottomans,* 141.

[37] On Arabia and the Gulf, see Anscombe, *Ottoman Gulf.* On Syria, see Lewis, *Nomads*, 25-73, 124-129; Eugene L. Rogan, "Bringing the State Back: The Limits of Ottoman Rule in Jordan, 1840-1910," in *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, eds. Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell (London: British Academic Press, 1994), 32-57; and Douwes, *Ottomans*, 24-31.

[38] Richard W. Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel* (1975; New York: Morningside Press, 1990), 66-110.

[39] The Gabbra of Kenya, for example, whose camels were used in many of the same ways as those of the bedouin of northern Arabia (i.e., for milk, transport, and meat), had herds with about 56 per cent females. Whereas Somali herders, who used their animals mainly for milk, kept the number of females between 70 and 80 per cent. R.T. Wilson, *The Camel* (London: Longman, 1984), 138-9. (Although this data is from the twentieth century its principles can be applied to earlier periods.)

[40] FO 195/1305, despatch from Granville, 3 November 1880, in Issawi, *Fertile Crescent*, 60.

[41] Lewis, *Nomads*, 202-209. While the author acknowledges that the figures are "inaccurate and unreliable," they can offer a general idea of herd composition.

[42] For example, the 3,000 tents of the "nomadic" Syrian Shammar were estimated to possess only 5,000 camels and 3,000 sheep, clearly reflecting the reality that many Shammar had by then taken up agriculture. Ibid., 203.

[43] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:69. The Qahtan were richer still, with a "middle class" tribesman owning some 150 camels, and a "poor" one just 40 camels. Ibid., 2:46-7.

[44] Burckhardt's observation would tend to support this number, and describing bedouin in the twentieth century, Sweet suggested that 20 camels per family would be a fair median. Sweet, "Camel Pastoralism," 132-3. Glubb put the average at 15-20 in 1930. Public Record Office, Colonial Office records, CO 831/11/1, Note on the Situation on the Southern Frontier of Transjordan by Capt. J.B. Glubb, 3 January 1931, 16 (henceforth, Note on Frontier). Lancaster arrived at similar figures, referring to the Rwala in the twentieth century. William Lancaster, *The Rwala Bedouin Today*, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 139-40.

[45] A wide variety of terms were used by the bedouin to differentiate between camels of varying function, colour, age, and even appearance and temperament. Most of the following terms were used in Najd and appear in Ahmad Wasfi Zakariyya, *Asha'ir al-Sham*, 2nd ed. (1945, 1947; [Damascus]: Dar al-Fikr, 1983), 243. See also Alois Musil, *Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928), 330-36.
[46] The author was referring to the Rwala, c. 1908. Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 89.
[47] For milking practices of the Rwala, see Ibid., 87-90.
[48] Anne Blunt, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd* (1881; London: Century Publishing, 1985), 318.
[49] The *'umaniyya* breed originated in Oman, but was bred by several tribes in Arabia, including the Manasir. For lists of other breeds found in the Arab world, see Ibrahim al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat* (Riyadh: Dar al-Asasalah li al-thaqafah wa al-nashr wa al- 'alam, 1985), 59-60; Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqa, *al-hayat al-'ijtima'iyya 'ind al-bedu fi al-watan al-'arabi* (Damascus: Tlasdar, 1988), 329; Hanna Nasr al-Hitti, *al-'Ibl al-'arabiyya al-'asila* (Tripoli, Lebanon: Jarrus Barras, 1990), 15-17; Muhammad Mustafa Shukri, *al-'Ibl wa ra'ayatuha* (Doha: Dar al-Thaqafa, 1992), 11-13; and 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani Ibrahim, *Najdiyun wara' al-hudud: "al-'Uqaylat"* (London: Dar al-Saqi, 1991), 309.
[50] See Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 334-6.

> Although he knows that he cannot use them on a dangerous trip because of their color, which makes them conspicuous to the enemy at a great distance at night as well as by day, and although he also knows that every robber or raider prefers the white animals to all others, nevertheless he continues to breed them. It is as if he enjoys playing with the danger threatening his favorite animals, and, the greater the risk, the more white she-camels he wishes to have.

[51] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:85.
[52] J.R. Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs* (1840; Farnborough: Gregg International, 1968), 1:359.
[53] "Once into the Hijaz, the pilgrimage commander also assured that the enormous quantities of provisions imported from Egypt through Jidda for sale to the pilgrims were transported by the Bani Harb tribe to Mecca. In return, members of the tribe received cash grants from the purse commissioner." Barbir, *Ottoman Rule*, 166. The Harb also rented their camels for fees set by the government to pilgrims. Saleh Muhammad al-Amr, *The Hijaz Under Ottoman Rule 1869-1914* (Riyadh: Riyadh University Publications, 1978), 35-6. Members of the Shammar, Dhafir, Shararat, and Huwaysin tribes rented their camels to travellers in the Persian hajj which crossed from Najaf to the Holy Cities via Hail at the end of the nineteenth century. The caravan witnessed by Blunt numbered some 4,000 camels. Blunt, *Pilgrimage*, 317-18. More data on the bedouin and the hajj appears in Chapter Two.
[54] Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, 24. Caravans of 60-100 camels were reported to have departed Jedda every 40-50 days, carrying "principally India goods and drugs," and occasionally pilgrims.
[55] For an overview of this traffic as it affected Egypt, see Ahmad Ahmad al-Hitta, *Tarikh Misr al-iqtisadi* (Cairo, 1957) in Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East 1800-1914: A Book of Readings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 407-9. The author makes only passing reference to camel caravans and focuses on the development of modern transport, the leveling of the Cairo-Suez road and carriage transport.
[56] On the use of camels for the mail service, see PRO, Foreign Office records, FO 407/3, Walne to Murray, Cairo, 17 April 1847, 34. Camels continued to be used for passengers to a limited extent after 1846. A published list of fares charged by the Egyptian agency that took over the overland route, the Transit Administration, noted that the administration reserved the right to send "male European servants and mechanics by dromedaries or donkeys" should all seats in their vans be taken by "gentlemen, ladies, children, and female servants." In addition, it left open the possibility of "gentlemen desirous of crossing the Desert on dromedaries or donkeys," but did not guarantee their arriving on time for the steamer at the other end. Ibid., Tariff of the Transit Administration, (n.d., c. 1847), 51.
[57] Local supplies of coal were not deemed adequate in either quantity or quality.
[58] Halford Lancaster Hoskins, *British Routes to India* (New York: Octagon, 1966), 221.
[59] FO 407/3, Report by Consul Alfred S. Walne on transit through Egypt, Cairo, 29 May 1847, 49. The carriage charged by bedouin for heavy goods was 36s per ton.
[60] A. Ruppin, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet* (Berlin: Koloniel-Wirtschaftliches Komitee, 1917), 326.

[61] Haim Gerber, *Ottoman Rule in Jerusalem, 1890-1914* (Berlin: K. Schwarz, 1985), 241-42.
[62] Hoskins, *British Routes*, 365-66.
[63] In 1864-5, some 7,584 Turkish piastres-worth of camel hair were exported from Baghdad. *PP*, LXVII (1867), 275.
[64] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:44, 68-9.
[65] Oral accounts of the mythological origin and domestication of camels among the Ajman and al-Murrah appear in Roger M. Webster, "Camels in the Mythology of the Bedouin of the Rub' al-Khali," *al-Ma'thurat al-sha'abiyya* 17 (Jan., 1990): 7-25. Mentions of camels in folk poems are found in Abdel Aziz al-Mutawa'a, "al-Hujn fi al-Sha'r al-Sha'by," *al-Ma'thurat al-sha'abiyya* 31 (July 1993): 104-11. For religious and literary references to the camel, see al-Hitti, *al-'Ibl*, 42-54.
[66] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:153.
[67] Ibid., 1:112, 114.
[68] Lancaster, *Rwala Bedouin*, 140.
[69] For some songs mentioning camels collected by Musil among the Rwala in the early twentieth century, see *Manners and Customs*, 358-68.
[70] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:71.
[71] Doughty, *Travels*, 1:275.
[72] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:71.
[73] Ibid., 1:30.
[74] For example, see Rogan, "Incorporating the Periphery," 213-15.
[75] FOCP 9324, George Lloyd, "Report on ... British Trade in Mesopotamia," 1908, 152-3, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol., 16.
[76] For a broad overview, see Donald Quataert, "Transportation," Part IV in *Economic and Social History*, ed. Inalcik and Quataert, 814-23. The author acknowledges, "The story of the wagoneers, hauleteers and caravan operators, however, is difficult to reconstruct. There is little completed research and, besides, these transporters have not left us many records." Ibid., 814. See also Issawi, *Fertile Crescent*, 212-15; 218-19.
[77] This type of ownership is poorly documented, but a 1905 report listing the animals kept on "an Arab farm in Hebron" may be indicative, for Palestine at least. It had 6 oxen, 1 camel, 1 donkey, 150 goats and 50 sheep. Issawi, *Fertile Crescent*, 315.
[78] FOCP 4661, report on Egypt by the War Office Intelligence Branch, 13 July 1882, 160, citing *Statistiques de l'Egypte*, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol. 9.
[79] Sarah Graham-Brown, *Palestinians and their Society* (London: Quartet Books, 1980), 97. See also Ya'akov Firestone, "Production and Trade in an Islamic Context: Sharika Contracts in the Transitional Economy of Northern Samaria, 1853-1943 (II)," *IJMES* 6 (1975): 308-325, on how such joint-ownership arrangements operated.
[80] Raouf Sa'd Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan: The Frontier of Settlement in Transjordan* (London: Tauris, 1989), 104-109. The author based his descriptions of local transport on family documents from 1908 to 1911.
[81] Government officials were involved in many other economic activities as well, including agriculture and trade. Around 1800 in Mosul, for example, the camels that Sulayman Pasha rented out to merchants were raided by a bedouin tribe, according to Dina Rizk Khoury, "The Introduction of Commercial Agriculture in the Province of Mosul and its Effects on the Peasantry, 1750-1850," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, ed. Caglar Keydar and Faruk Tabuk (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), 170. Among the in-kind tax collections recorded for the sanjak of Nablus in an 1860 report from Ottoman officials was "Grain pour la Nouriture des Chameaux." FOCP 982/252 (inclosure) (Dufferin to Bulwer, Beirut, Nov. 18, 1860) 72, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Series B, Vol. 6. Camel ownership was even more common among the chieftaincies of the Arabian interior and their successor governments.
[82] Soraya Faroqhi, "Camels, Wagons, and the Ottoman State in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *IJMES*, 14 (1982): 527. The author also makes the important point that because so much of what was transported overland was for use by the Ottoman state, "a large sector of Ottoman overland transportation was removed from the sphere of the market, and entered into what might be termed the sphere of administrative fiat." Ibid., 534-5. This certainly was as much the case in the nineteenth century as it was in the sixteenth and seventeenth.
[83] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 2:294-94; 304-5. In one campaign alone, only 300 camels out of 10,000 survived a particularly deadly march. Ibid., 334.

[84] "...and frequently goods have been left at a distance of two to four hours from Aleppo, to which they have been obliged to be taken after a delay of many days by any conveyance that could be procured." Bowring, *Report*, 62. Camel drivers even took refuge in the British Vice Consulate on several occasion while awaiting the merchandise of British merchants, Ibid., 66-7. "It is to be remarked that none of these practices took place under the former Government to anything like the same extent." Ibid., 118; see also 47, 88-9, and 91.
[85] Mustapha Hamarneh, "Social and Economic Transformation of Trans-Jordan, 1921-46," Ph.D. (Georgetown University, Washington, DC, 1985). The author's source was a man of the Bani Sakhr, interviewed in 1984.
[86] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:287.
[87] Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "The Impact of Europe on a Traditional Economy: The Case of Damascus, 1840-1870," in *Economie et Sociétés dans l'Empire Ottoman,* ed. Jean-Louis Baqué-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Paris: CNRS, 1983), 421.
[88] Bulliet, *Camel*, 258.
[89] Doughty, *Travels*, 1:275.
[90] The hajj route from Iraq to the Holy Cities, the ancient *darb zubayda*, was normally traversed by smaller numbers of pilgrims and other travellers than these routes. Nonetheless, local tribes and chieftaincies regularly competed over the right to collect fees from them. The most notable conflict in the nineteenth century was between the Al Saud and the Al Rashid. See Al Rasheed, *Politics*, 108-11.
[91] René Tresse, *Le Pèlerinage Syrien aux Villes Saints de l'Islam* (Paris: Imprimerie Chaumette, 1937), 105-6.
[92] "Muwahhidun," rather than "Wahhaby," will be used throughout this study, except when sources are quoted directly.
[93] Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, 2:1069.
[94] Tresse, *Pèlerinage*, 99-100.
[95] Rafeq, *Province,* 61, 298.
[96] Tresse, *Pèlerinage,* 282-290.
[97] Grant, *Syrian Desert*, 229.
[98] Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517-1683* (London: Tauris,1994), 48.
[99] Barbir, *Ottoman Rule*, 169. The shaykh would also agree to provide security along the caravan route, accompany and assist the *jarda* relief caravan, and defer to the governor of Damascus in matters concerning the pilgrimage.
[100] Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:4.
[101] It was much easier for settled tribes to supply camels to the hajj, since they remained in one place year-round. Nomadic tribes, on the other hand, could only supply camels to customers in Damascus with ease during those years when the hajj fell during the summer months, when the tribe's normal migration would bring it to the area's permanent water sources.
[102] Rafeq, "New Light on the Transportation of the Damascene Pilgrimage During the Ottoman Period," in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Societies: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor Wadie Jwaideh*, ed. Robert Olson (Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1987), 129-30.
[103] "Almost every town in the eastern part of Syria furnishes its beasts for [the hajj]; and the great Bedouin Sheikhs of the frontiers of that country contract largely for camels with the government of Damascus." Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, 247. As mentioned earlier, the prices paid by the Ottoman government were frequently below market rates. For example, the bedouin who paid tribute to the mutasallim of Hama in the early nineteenth century, in addition to payments of sheep and butter, were "obliged to furnish at a low price for the transport of the Hadj." Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:12.
[104] Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, 268, 285.
[105] Zouhair Ghazzal, *L'Économie Politique de Damas durant le XIX^e Siècle* (Damascus: Institute Français de Damas, 1993), 145.
[106] Musil, *The Middle Euphrates*, (New York: American Geographical Society, 1927), 39.
[107] The town of Bir in Iraq charged 100 paras for Christians returning from Jerusalem. J.S. Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia* (London: H. Colburn, 1827), 35.
[108] FOCP 982, Memorandum from Edwin S. Burnaby, Beirut, 5 October 1860, 57 in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Series B, Vol. 6.

[109] U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the U.S. Department of State, Record Group 59, Microfilm roll 453/1, Lorenzo M. Johnson, "Annual Report , Consulate of Jerusalem," 30 September 1868.

[110] In 1877, 29,300 camel-trips were made on the Jaffa-Jerusalem road, compared to 33,000 trips for horses and mules, 48,700 for donkeys, and 2,400 for carriages. In 1881, camel transport was the highest grossing category on the same route, bringing in more money in tolls than carriages, horses and mules, and donkeys. Roger Owen, ed., *Studies in the Economic and Social History of Palestine in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 71.

[111] Several factors other than the type of animal used affected the cost of transport. For example, on journeys from Baghdad to Hamadan (and on other routes), transport costs varied by item transported. On some parts of the journey, camel transport prices rose on account of difficult terrain. Other factors included availability of animals and general market conditions. It should also be noted that by custom or practice, certain items were usually relegated to specific animals. Thus, muleteers shunned the transport of iron because it tended to damage saddles and animals, leaving this product to be carried mainly by donkeys. Bags of sugar, too, were "almost always" carried by donkeys, while wool was usually carried by camel. FOCP 9324 "Report on... Trade of Mesopotamia, " George Lloyd, 1908, 299, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol. 16.

[112] These categories correspond roughly to those of Al Rasheed, *Politics*, 105. She divided the types of trade carried on in Hail as "long-distance," "oasis-desert," and "local oasis." Owen, *Middle East*, 50-1, also used three types of trade, but his "region" was the Middle East, so his classification included "trade with countries outside the region, intra-regional and local trade."

[113] Firestone, "Production and Trade," 317.

[114] On the various Damascene guilds involved in transporting pilgrim, commercial and government traffic, see Rafeq, "New Light," 127-36.

[115] For some details on the porters in Aleppo in the eighteenth century, see Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 158-161, 171-2, 180.

[116] Muhammad Sa'id al-Qasimi, et al, *Qamus al-Sana'at al-Shamiyya* (Paris: Mouton, 1960), 69, 114, 175. Although the *Qamus* refers to the situation in Damascus around 1900, when the influences of modern transport began to make themselves felt, its descriptions of traditional transport occupations easily apply to the nineteenth century.

[117] FOCP 4661, 176, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol. 9.

[118] For a description of transport and trade networks around Jabal Nablus in the nineteenth century, see Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, 78-81. In this part of Palestine, as elsewhere, "[t]he most prevalent means of local transport was the donkey, and two of the most familiar sights along the well-trodden paths were the pack animals of hired transporters (*makaris*) and the itinerant merchants (*haddars*). The *makaris*, often poor peasants with little or no land, moved goods and people back and forth for a fee." 79.

[119] al-Qasimi, *Qamus*, 47, 83, 466.

[120] Vital Cuinet, *Syrie, Liban et Palestine, Geographie Administrative: Statistique, Descriptive et Raisonée* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1896), 43-4l; 361-62.

[121] A caravan from Aleppo to Baghdad in the early nineteenth century, for example, reportedly contained 400 camels, but also about 100 horses, mules and asses. Buckingham, *Travels*, 7.

[122] See, for example, Owen, *Middle East*, 53-54; Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 52, and *Fertile Crescent*, 212-13; Linda Schatkowski-Schilcher, *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries*, (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1985), 62, 69; and Quataert, "Transportation," 817-20.

[123] For an overview of the organisation of merchant caravans from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, see Grant, *Syrian Desert*, 131-156.

[124] Soraya Altorki and Donald P. Cole, *Arabian Oasis City: The Transformation of 'Unayzah* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 67-73; and Al Rasheed, *Politics*, 105.

[125] James Fraser, *Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia &c....* (London: Richard Bentley, 1840), 323-24.

[126] Blunt, *Pilgrimage*, 24; *Bedouin Tribes*, 2:225.

[127] "The entire dependence of the bedouins on the camel traders for a livelihood, has introduced a number of interesting customs. Thus the camel merchant is everywhere immune from aggression and attack. Raiding parties pass him by unscathed." SAC Glubb, Iraq, S. desert (2) "Ships of the desert," n.d. See also G. Leachman, "A Journey through Central Arabia," *Geographical Journal* 43 (1914) no. 5: 501.
[128] Photos of camels engaged in these uses appear in Graham-Brown, *Palestinians*, 43, 48, 56.
[129] Marcus, *Middle East,* 180.
[130] Doughty, *Travels*, 1:377, on the shaykh of Tayma buying well camels among the bedouin.
[131] In Mecca in December 1814, for example, a pound of beef was 2 piastres 10 paras, a pound of mutton was 2 piastres, and a pound of camel meat was 1 piastre. Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, 243.
[132] Blunt, *Pilgrimage*, 268.
[133] Sayyid Saabiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, Vol. 5, p. 110.
http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/law/fiqhussunnah/fus5_78.html. Accessed Nov. 9, 2000.
[134] Burckhardt, *Notes,* 1: 100.
[135] In the twentieth century, the preference for sheep grew to the point where it had become more common for a pilgrim to slaughter one sheep, or, alternately, take a one-sixth share of a camel or cow to slaughter.
[136] Hafez Farmayan and Elton L. Daniel, ed., trans. *A Shiite Pilgrimage to Mecca: The Safarnameh of Mirza Mohammad Hosayn Farahani* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 242.
[137] Photos of these uses in Palestine in the late nineteenth century appear in Graham-Brown, *Palestinians*, 68-9, 140. For photos from the mandate period in Palestine, see Shelagh Weir, *Palestinian Costume* (London: British Museum, 1989), 75, 254, 258-60.

CHAPTER TWO

NOMADS, MERCHANTS AND MARKETS: THE TRADE IN CAMELS, 1850-1950

> *Modern anthropological studies prove the obvious, that there is more than one way to live with a camel. A camel can be milked, ridden, loaded with baggage, eaten, harnessed to plow or wagon, traded for goods or wives, exhibited in a zoo, or turned into sandals and camel's hair coats. No camel-using group does all of these things, nor is the balance in importance between one use and another likely to be identical between two unrelated groups.*[1]

Modern transport was not the straw that broke the back of the camel trade. Instead, the great movements of camels from the bedouin to the markets waxed and waned as a result of many other factors, including drought, war, the level of cotton exports in Egypt, or the general condition of the world economy. Thus, the trade in camels did not dwindle and disappear once trains and trucks took over many caravan routes, and camel prices were affected by a myriad of factors. Modern transport had mixed effects on the market for camels, and probably was not decisive in forcing most bedouin who herded and sold camels to alter their herding practices or to adopt other forms of livelihood.

This chapter will examine several aspects of the camel trade in order to show some of the factors that affected it; how active it was; and how it changed over time. By looking at historical changes in the price of camels, it will be possible to suggest that factors other than the transport economy affected the trade in camels. In addition, building on the work of Epstein, the chapter will give more details on the nature of the trade in Arabian camels in Egypt. The price of camels was of vital importance to tribes that relied on them, whether they sold them for meat in Egypt, transport in Damascus, or drawing water in Hail. At the very least, this chapter will show that camel prices (and thus bedouin fortunes) underwent

wide fluctuations. However, based on an analysis of herd sizes in various countries, the chapter also will demonstrate that despite periodic declines in prices and demand, the long-range tendency has been for camel herding to persist, and in some places thrive, indicating clearly that even with the coming of modern transport there were other reasons for people to keep camels.

The Camel Trade Before 1850

A scarcity of sources means that the trade in Arabian camels before 1850 can be described only in a broad and tentative manner. While details are scattered, there is general agreement on broad generalizations: that the deserts and steppes of Arabia, Syria and Iraq were the great producing regions, and that caravan and migration routes linked them across hundreds of miles with the markets on the frontier of nomadism and beyond. Camels were one of Arabia's few early exports, along with frankincense, myrrh, gold, pearls and horses. According to one writer, camels were brought from Arabia to Egypt during the reign of Philadelphus, the second Ptolemy, as early as the third century B.C.[2] Unfortunately, there is no reliable information on the number of camels in the region, much less on the numbers that were bought and sold or the prices that were paid over time in a specific market.

What is known about the actual practice of buying and selling mainly comes from sources in the twentieth century, but it can confidently be assumed that these practices applied as well in the nineteenth century. For the sake of analysis, the various transactions can be grouped into four broad types. The simplest type of transaction, and perhaps the most common, was the sale of an animal by a bedouin to a buyer – either a townsman or another bedouin. While Sweet found no evidence of bedouin purchasing camels from other bedouin,[3] scattered but convincing

evidence contradicts this assertion.[4] Another type of transaction was the sale of camels by bedouin to merchants or other middlemen on an *ad hoc* basis. These involved sales that did not follow a standard routine, with buyers who may not have been in the camel trade *per se*, but saw an opportunity to make a profit. For example, Jibrail Jabbur, who grew up in the town of Qaryatayn, on the edge of the Syrian Desert, recounted how one summer he participated in a "camel-trading partnership" with four others from the town, buying camels from bedouin encampments and selling them to "traders who came from the cities to purchase them."[5] This was a temporary arrangement among townsmen, mainly merchants, who had capital to devote to the camel trade. "Abu Mish'al," a resident of 'Unayzah in Qasim and a jammal, told of a similar arrangement. He would take money from fellow townsmen, go out with his young helpers to where the herds were being watered in the summer months, and buy "camels and ghee and dried cheese." Upon his return, he would sell the animals to wholesale traders and to 'Agayl (who would then take the animals to markets in the northwest). He would sell the remainder at the camel market in 'Unayza.[6] Some bedouin took their camels directly to merchants in the towns and received payment in cash. For example, a group of 'Anaza were returning from Aleppo in 1925 after having sold camels there, and were raided between Sukhna and Hama by some Shammar, who took the party's camels and the cash proceeds of the sale, some 1,200 liras.[7]

A third type of sale was directly to government agents. These sales could be driven by occasional demands for military transport, or by such annual caravans as the hajj. The fourth type of sale was the seasonal sale of camels by bedouin to merchants specializing in the camel trade. While there is little information on this

class of transaction before 1850, more information appears in the sources in later periods.

Still, some details about the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can be pieced together from a variety of sources. According to Plaisted, in 1750 a caravan with 2,000 camels and an escort of some 200 musket-bearing guards set out from al-Hasa in eastern Arabia. The caravan worked its way northward, and by the time it departed the Baghdad region for Aleppo it had been joined by some 3,000 additional camels brought from "various parts of the desert" (most likely Najd and the Iraqi desert). Of the now 5,000-strong camels, only 400 were carrying loads and the rest were for eventual sale. The caravan was "chiefly made up of young camels which are sent by the Sheik of Lasser, or Ahsa...who is a potent prince, and appoints one of his dependents to be the Caravan Bashi." Plaisted estimated that 3,000-4,000 camels per year on average were sold in Aleppo during this period.[8]

Burckhardt, writing of the early nineteenth century, gave evidence of a regular export trade in camels from northern Arabia to Anatolia, not for the purposes of transport or consumption, but for breeding.

> The Turkmans and Kurds from Anadolia purchase, every year, eight or ten thousand camels in the Syrian deserts, of which the greater number are brought there by dealers from Nedjd. They use them in propagating the breed of Turkman camels called *Maya.*[9]

This reference is noteworthy because it provides evidence of another important use of Arabian camels (i.e., breeding) not taken into consideration by subsequent accounts of the camel trade.[10] In addition, it is an early mention of the role of "dealers from Nedjd," doubtless members of the 'Agayl who dominated the trade in the latter part of the century.[11]

Prices are another way to glean some insights regarding the region's camel trade. While the list of prices in Table 2.1 is small and scattered in time and place,

it is still possible to use it cautiously in order to put forward some provisional generalizations. For example, as with other items of trade, the price of camels decreased as one approached the producing regions in the northern Arabian interior. In 1751, for example, camels were twice as expensive in Aleppo as in Basra. The potential profit of 100 percent no doubt attracted the camel owners of Arabia to the large caravan that travelled Aleppo each year, described above. Driven by the spending potential of large numbers of foreign pilgrims arriving each year, merchants in the towns of Hijaz often charged the highest prices in the region for their goods (including camels). This may explain why a "common" camel there went for £26-32 in 1816 and only £6 in Damascus in 1833. Finally, as was true during all periods and in all locations, camels varied in price according to their individual qualities, such as age, breed, condition and abilities. A fine riding camel from a notable line would always fetch the highest prices, such as the "best Oman delul" for £158 in 1816 in Najd.

Table 2.1
Camel Prices, 1751-1844

Description	*Price in source**	*£ Sterling***	*Year*	*Location*
--	Rs. 40	5	1751	Basra
--	MT$ 40	10	1751	Aleppo
good	MT$ 60	32	1816	Hijaz
common	MT$ 50-60	26-32	1816	Hijaz
good hijin, Nubia	MT$ 80	42	1816	Cairo
--	MT$ 12-40	6-12	1816	Egypt
best Oman delul	MT$ 300	158	1816	Najd
--	£ 10	10	1816	Arabia
riding	MT$ 30	6	1833	Damascus
--	600-800 piastres	6-8	1840	n. of Petra
--	1062 piastres	10	1844	Damascus

Sources: For 1751: Carmichael in Carruthers, *Desert Route,* 176; for 1816, Burckhardt, *Notes,* 2:69, 70, 88; for 1833, J.R. Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs...,* (1840; Farnborough, Hans: Gregg International, 1968), 340; for 1840, Henry Layard, *Early Adventures in Persia, Susiana and Babylonia,* 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1887), 1:68; and for 1844, Zouhair Ghazzal, *L'Économie Politique de Damas durant le XIX^e Siècle* (Damascus: Institute Français de Damas, 1993), 145.
*Rs.= Indian Rupees; MT$=Maria Theresa thalers; piastres=Turkish piastres.
** Conversions to sterling were made using sources as close to the date and location of the camel price as possible, and therefore are approximate.

Camel Trading Networks of the 'Agayl, 1850-1914

No group was more closely identified in the literature with the trade in camels from about 1850 to 1950 than the 'Agayl. It is not difficult to see why this was the case. Many of them descended from residents of the Qasim region of Najd, whose towns were surrounded by some of the largest camel-herding tribes of Arabia. The two main towns of Qasim, 'Unayza and Burayda, were important (often rival) centres of regional trade and the sites of large livestock markets. For a variety of reasons – political, economic, environmental – groups of these Najdis emigrated to towns elsewhere. The first migrants went to the settled zone of Iraq, but others eventually reached Syria, Hijaz, Egypt and as far afield as Bombay, establishing small communities. The 'Agayl thus evolved into a far-flung and well-organized trade diaspora, with branches radiating from Najd and Iraq outward along the routes which led to the major camel and horse markets.

Migrants may have been moving from Qasim to Iraq for centuries, but the name "'Agayl" used in reference to these people only begins appearing in written sources in the 17th century. The 'Agayl of Baghdad reportedly claimed as their tribal ancestor a shaykh 'Ali, who was appointed leader of their guild after the Ottomans conquered the city under Murad IV in 1638. As noted in Chapter One, during the early years of their residence in Iraq, the 'Agayl engaged in caravan work alongside other groups. From this period through the 19th century, the 'Agayl organized themselves based on the area of their origin. These were loose associations, akin to guilds, and had a leader only in the event of an emergency.[12]

The origins of the group's involvement with the camel trade are murky. According to Ibrahim, the 'Agayl had long been involved with the trade, but their

role as middlemen between the bedouin and town buyers may have broken down after the invasion of the region by Egyptian forces sent by Muhammad Ali. During this period, the bedouin reportedly began to sell their camels directly to officials of the invading force. Once Egyptian rule ended, the role of the 'Agayl as intermediaries could resume.[13] While the importance of the 'Agayl grew during the second half of the nineteenth century, others participated in the camel trade as well.[14]

Why were the 'Agayl trading networks so successful? Three important ingredients of their commercial formula were capital, connections and communications. The most wealthy and prominent members of this group included the Al Bassam family, which dominated the region's largest camel market in Damascus, and provided the capital to fund far-flung trading ventures that involved not only camels but also horses, coffee, textiles and other commodities. Wholesale merchant families such as the Al Bassam made arrangements for 'Agayl agents to buy camels from the bedouin.

These agents operated under a variety of arrangements with their wholesalers. For example, large merchants often gave their agents money for buying camels, letters of introduction and gifts for the shaykhs of the tribe to be visited. The agent divided the profits of each journey with the wholesaler on a scale that reflected the degree of risk each was willing to accept. According to Musil, if the agent and the wholesale merchant agreed to split a potential loss 50/50, then profits would be split equally as well. On the other hand, if the merchant agreed to absorb the entire loss of a venture, he would be entitled to 75 percent of any profits. Occasionally, the 'Agayl agent would be faced with the necessity of selling camels at a loss if the price of camels dropped between the time of purchase and arrival at

market .[15]

Not all 'Agayl buyers worked for a large wholesaler. Some were independent, dealing in small numbers of camels. In either case, the purchase of camels from the bedouin took place either near the settled zone or in the steppe. Transactions near the towns intensified in the autumn. In preparation for their annual migration into the badia, herding groups would purchase several months' worth of provisions and supplies.

According to a late-nineteenth century source, "No sooner does a horde of Bedouin encamp within a two or three days journey of a town, than a stream of professional buyers begins to flow in their direction. ... " The author also noted that every September and October the Ibn Hadhdhal tribe of the 'Anaza confederation encamped west of the Euphrates between Karbala and Razzaza.

> Nominally, they come to buy dates; but their camps form great camel markets which attract crowds of buyers. In fact, the Ibn Hadhdhal, though there is no better blood in the Aeniza, are every year taking on more the character of horse and camel sellers. It is not so to the same extent, perhaps, with their natural enemies, the Shammar. They, too, sell their colts as they go; but their first thought is to 'see what God will give them', i.e., make free on every opportunity with other people's property.[16]

In the 'Agayl heartland, the Qasim region, the camel buyers would make purchases from such nearby tribes as the Qahtan and 'Utayba "at the beginning of the summer, after the harvest, and towards the end of the summer when the Bedouins need money to provide themselves with clothes and provisions for autumn and winter." The 'Agayl also traveled farther afield, to the region of al-Hasa, where they bought from the southern tribes: the Dawasir, Al Murrah, and Mutayr, bringing the camels back to Qasim for pasturing. In Qasim, the camel trade was reported to slow down during the winter because the "Arabs are not in need of money, for they

have laid in their winter stock of clothes and provisions, and they prefer to reserve their camels for breeding and for milk."[17]

Once they had finished purchasing camels, the 'Agayl in the Qasim region would form large caravans for the sake of security and follow several routes to the north and northeast.[18] Some left with their herds in the fall and followed a route that took them through Jauf, Amman, Palestine, and then down to the large markets of Egypt. Others would travel in early spring, driving their camels slowly across the Hamad and letting them graze.

The watchwords for these agents, petty traders and merchants were flexibility and opportunity. If they saw a chance to make a profit along the way, they would, and they were assisted by their compatriots who inhabited the main towns along the caravan routes. Not only did these local 'Agayl offer hospitality to the travellers, they would act as brokers in the local livestock markets, and provide information on such crucial matters as camel prices in distant markets and the security of various caravan routes.[19]

An 'Agayli travelling to Damascus, then, could either sell his animals there or continue down to Egypt if prospects seemed better there. If an 'Agayli sold his camels in Damascus in early summer, he might in turn have been hired by a local merchant to purchase camels around Syria from bedouin in their summering camps -- in Jaulan, Balqa, or around Hama and Homs.[20] 'Agayl who set out from Qasim and were headed toward Egypt via Palestine might stop in Sakaka (near Jauf) for water, and if they happened to sell all their camels there, they could travel to Iraq, buy more camels, and carry rice, dates, textiles and other town goods back to Qasim.[21] When the winter grazing was good, the 'Agayl would let the herds travel slowly so they would fatten before reaching market.

> On reaching the border of the desert, the 'Akejli proceeds to the nearest large town where camel markets are held. If he can sell his animals there advantageously, he will do so and return to the tribe from which he came and buy camels again; but should he think that he could do better in Egypt, he will buy [as many camels as] he can from other speculators whom he happens to find in the town and then journey on to Egypt.[22]

In the Hamad, however, some 'Agayl would spend the winter and spring traveling from one bedouin camp to another to buy camels. Just as they did in other commercial transactions, personal relationships played an important part in the camel trade. Merchants often developed long-term commercial dealings with certain tribes. This may have arisen as much out of necessity as out of convenience and custom, for the extension of credit was a common practice by merchants.[23] In such cases, year-to-year contact by the 'Agayl with the same tribe was to be expected. In addition, it would not be difficult to imagine that it would work in the camel dealer's favor to have access to a tribe which consistently produced large numbers of quality animals. "A Sheikh will not willingly sell to any but his own buyer, lest in a succeeding year he should lose his market. He prefers the man he knows and has harboured yearly."[24]

A striking example of one warm relationship between 'Agayl and bedouin is displayed in a bedouin poem recorded by Musil. It tells of an 'Amarat shaykh named Fahoud who

> ...was caught by the Pasha of Syria in the market place of Hama and was imprisoned. His friends, 'Akejl of the 'Ali kin, who at that period escorted commercial caravans from Bagdad to Syria, sent him word that on a certain day they would liberate him and bring him back to Bagdad. Overjoyed with hope, Farhud describes in his poem the manner in which the 'Akejl would carry out their plan.[25]

Nonetheless, the 'Agayl were not held in universal esteem among the bedouin.

Reflecting the prejudices of the time, many Shammar believed the inhabitants of

Qasim were descended from the Jews, "as they are always after profit and deceive the Bedouins."[26]

Like anyone else entering the badia, the 'Agayl were subject to tribal custom and law. In order to ensure their safety and that of their flocks, 'Agayl would often have an akh in those tribes with which they had frequent contact. The 'Agayl might pay some cash, clothing and even a riding camel every year to each akh, who in turn was expected to hold any camels his tribe may have obtained which had the 'Agayli's brand until an 'Agayli claimed them.[27]

Upon reaching a tribe's grazing area, the 'Agayli and his assistants would pitch their distinctive round white canvas tents in the camp of the shaykh, who would protect the merchant and his property and expect a payment per head of camel bought.[28] It also happened that some 'Agayl stayed in the tent of a bedouin, who received a *mejidi* for each camel sold if the merchant was provided with the board, and a Maria Theresa dollar (about half a *mejidi*) if the 'Agayli provided his own provisions.[29] In addition, the shaykh may have extracted a khuwa payment from all 'Agayl staying with him or passing through, just as he would from any other party traveling through his tribe's dira.[30] "The Bedouins now bring their camels to his white tents, *hijaâm*, and as a rule sell them for cash. Only when the agent has brought arms and ammunition from al-Kwejt or al-'Azêr for sale, will they exchange their animals for these articles."[31] Each 'Agayli branded his animals with his mark, and often hired herdsmen from the tribe to tend the animals. The 'Agayli might stay with the tribe as it wandered in the inner desert during the winter and then accompany it around June to the settled area. According to Musil, "many herdsmen accompany the agent's herds as far as Egypt and on their return tell of the wonderful things they have seen or learned on their trip."

On the return trip from the markets of the borderlands, the merchants often brought items, especially textiles, to sell in their homeland. The 'Agayl generally brought the profits of their dealings back to their home base, whether in Qasim, Iraq or elsewhere. Although they were normally granted special immunity from attack by the bedouin tribes among whom they traveled, the 'Agayl, too, were occasionally subject to theft and other mayhem. According to one account, two rich merchants from Qasim were returning from Damascus in 1907 carrying the profits in gold from two years of camel dealing when their Singara escorts robbed and killed them in the Nafudh Desert.[32] Others chose not to risk losing everything during the long journey home. A group of 'Agayl traveling from Damascus to Baghdad around 1912 took drafts from Damascus, payable in Baghdad. From there they took their cash by a steamer to Basra or Kuwait and then by caravan to Qasim.[33]

Camel Markets

Livestock markets could be found in nearly all towns in the region. Several factors influenced the placement of these markets, which usually were situated on the outskirts of the urban areas. Ease of access to the badia was an important consideration, as were questions of adequate space, hygiene and taste (or at least a sensitivity to odors, noises and waste products associated with large numbers of animals). The composition of the market's stock, its size and period of operation varied from town to town. At one end of the scale would be small towns where the cattle souq would merely be an open space near or part of a market area where livestock transactions took place. At the other end would be cities like Damascus and Cairo, where individual markets were established for horses, camels, donkeys, cattle, and sheep and goats. According to 'Agayl interviewed by al-Musallam, camel buyers in the first half of the twentieth century varied in their preferences for

camels according to their region. Thus,

> ...the inhabitants of the highland towns and villages of Palestine and Syria bought *hejazi* camels; those of southern Palestine bought *'anazi* camels; the Egyptian fellah of the northern delta bought *nejdi* camels; and the bedouin of Sinai bought *masri* or *'umani* [camels].[34]

Table 2.2 lists some of the Middle East's principal camel markets around 1940. These and other markets (Aleppo, for example) operated in the nineteenth century as well.

Table 2.2
Principal Camel Markets, c. 1940

Region	Markets
Northern Arabia	Burayda, al-Hasa, Hail, Jauf, Riyadh, 'Unayza
Iraq	Amara, Hilla, Mosul, Najaf, Samawa
Syria	'Athra, Dayr al-Zur, al-Ghouta [Damascus], Hawran
Jordan	Amman, Ra's al-'Ayn, Zarqa
Palestine	Bi'r Saba', Dayr al-Balah, Gaza, Jenin, Khan Yunis, al-Lod, Tulkarm
Egypt	Abu Kabir, Abu Hamad, al-'Arish, Balbis, Imbaba, al-Matariyya, Rafah, Shabayn al-Kawm, al-Zaqaziq

Source: Al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*, 83. Most of these markets also were active in the nineteenth century and earlier, except the Damascus market was then located in the Midan quarter. The list is not exhaustive. For example, Aleppo also had a camel market; however, it undoubtedly declined in the twentieth century.

Local demand determined the type and number of animals sold at these markets. Aleppo, Damascus, Hama and Homs, for example, were important centres for the trade in sheep and their derivatives, such as wool and samn.[35] Because of the demand for Arabian horses by the British forces in India through most of the nineteenth century, the Persian Gulf ports of Basra and Kuwait had important horse markets.[36]

According to some sources, the largest camel market was in Damascus, in the northern section of the Midan quarter (Midan Fawqani), south of Ziftiyyah Square. In the nineteenth century, several factors helped ensure the pre-eminence of the city's trade in camels. The first was the annual pilgrimage caravan, which

required large numbers of camels every year. In addition, while its importance as a stop for long-distance caravans declined, Damascus continued to be an important transit point for the traffic between Iraq and the Mediterranean, as well as a regional hub for overland transport, especially for Hauran grain. And finally, Damascus itself had a considerable agricultural hinterland which required camels principally for the transport of crops to market.

The economic activity of the Maydan quarter revolved around trade with the bedouin, grain trade, and transport to and from points south of the city. For example, grain merchants who bought from Hauran farmers had storehouses in Maydan, and the quarter was a staging ground for caravans toward Palestine, Egypt, and Hijaz. These activities required pack animals, either for hire from transport workers, or for sale from livestock dealers.

It is not surprising, then, that the Maydan quarter was home to populations from outside the city who specialized in such activities. Like urban quarters around the region, the Maydan changed in population and economic activities in the course of time. In the early part of the nineteenth century, some of the transport trade was carried out by the Sakhkhana, persons whose origins were in the town of Sukhna.[37] However, by the end of the century sources such as Doughty and Blunt do not mention the Sakhkhana, but refer almost exclusively to the 'Agayl, not only as caravan guides and jammamil, but also as the principal camel merchants. Like their colleagues in Baghdad, Cairo and other cities, the Damascus 'Agayl organized themselves in a sort of a guild which had a leader who represented them before the government. This elected "shaykh" during the time of Doughty's visit in 1876 was a camel broker from 'Unayza named Sulayman Abu Da'ud. He had replaced another camel broker from a Burayda family in that year.[38]

Many markets were governed by the same municipality rules that regulated other segments of the souq. In some towns, for example, a fee had to be paid for each camel brought for sale at the market. In addition, in many of the larger markets, including 'Unayza, Burayda, and Damascus, transactions in the camel market were handled by brokers (*dallals*), who acted as intermediaries between buyers and sellers, and who received a fee for their services.[39] The larger markets were open several days a week, while smaller ones operated for one or two days a week. The opening times of livestock markets in southern Palestine on consecutive days listed by al-Musallam certainly facilitated the work of the travelling 'Agayl, who could make the rounds without missing an opportunity to buy and sell.[40]

Volume of Trade

Of all the trade statistics available for the region during this period, the few figures for the size of the livestock trade of the bedouins must be considered the most difficult to analyze.[41] Nonetheless, some very tentative and general observations can be made. De Ségur, the French consul in Damascus, estimated in 1850 that the bedouin of Syria sold between 10,000 and 12,000 camels each year, 4,000 in Hauran and the rest in Damascus, where they found their way into the service of the hajj caravan.[42] While the consul made no mention of uses besides transport, it is probable that some of these animals were used for draught purposes and for slaughter. As for the trade in camels used for meat in Egypt, it is difficult to ascertain when this began, but clearly it was well established by the end of the nineteenth century. At least two sources (Ruppin and *A Handbook of Arabia*) agree that about 30,000 camels annually passed from northern Arabia to Egypt in the period just before World War I,[43] agreeing roughly with the Egyptian statistics that appear in the section "Egypt, Cotton and Camels" later in this chapter. Most passed

through Damascus, but, as already mentioned, some were taken via other routes.[44] What is less clear is how many animals were bought from the bedouin each year. According to Ruppin, about 100,000 were brought to Syrian markets annually "from Dayr al-Zur and the Syrian desert," with 40,000 used as beasts of burden in the country and 30,000 exported, previously mentioned, to Egypt. He does not mention what became of the remaining 30,000 camels, but it may be assumed that at least some were slaughtered locally for meat. *A Handbook of Arabia* states that between 24,000 and 32,000 camels were brought to the Damascus market each year by the 'Agayl of Qasim. By the *Handbook*'s estimation, 32,000 camels were exported from Syria to Egypt and 7,000 to 8,000 to Anatolia. In addition, about 5,000 camels were estimated to meet the annual demand "for food and for agricultural purposes" in Mesopotamia, Syria and "Arabistan" (Iran's Khuzestan Province), bringing the total number of animals sold to 44,500, less than half Ruppin's figure. Most of the camels destined for Anatolia passed through the market in Aleppo, which is reported to have handled about 300 camels each Wednesday for six months each year.[45] Although Baghdad had been an important centre for the 'Agayl in the nineteenth century, its camel market was much smaller than that of Damascus early in the twentieth century, with just a few dealers, "such as 'Assafi and Da'ud ibn Juweili."[46]

Estimates of the size of the camel population of northern Arabia during this period should be used only as indications of general orders of magnitude. According to a traveler in 1883, there were about 600,000 camels in middle and northern Arabia.[47] In another source, for 1906, the estimate for the number of camels owned by the 'Anaza confederation was 300,000.[48] Ten years later, an estimate for Arabia had 720,000 animals. As can be seen from Table 2.3, there was

a considerable pool of camels to be found in the vicinity of most major markets. What is also clear, is that there were wide fluctuations in the number of animals

Table 2.3
Camel Populations in Arab Provinces

Province	*1895-96*	*1909-10*	*1910-11*
Haleb	200,000	29,149	90,010
Zor	5,100	10,350	24,513
Sürye	71,872	43,368	90,919
Beyrut		8,226	1,153
Kuds-i Serif	4,250	15,167	12,941
Bagdad	27,171	28,212	37,618
Basra		22,980	5,165
Mosul		4,788	12,342
Total	*308,393*	*162,240*	*274,661*

Source: Justin McCarthy, *The Arab World, Turkey and the Balkans (1878-1914)* (Boston: 1982), 290, 294, 298. The figures, from Ottoman publications, most likely refer to the number of animals on which tax had been paid and thus provide more a measure of the degree of fiscal efficiency in a particular place than the actual animal population.

counted in a province from year to year. These no doubt were less a reflection of market conditions and more of the high degree of mobility of camel-herding bedouin.

Prices

Contrary to common perceptions, in a period when modern transport began to make significant inroads along the region's routes, the price of camels seems to have remained fairly constant. Table 2.4 contains prices reported in published sources for a variety of types of camels throughout the region between 1851 and 1913. Because the pool of data comes from a wide variety of sources and is so scattered temporally and spatially, it is used with caution, but it still can be broadly suggestive of actual prices. At the very least, it can be used to demonstrate that there was no general downward trend in prices, and that the price of an average riding or pack camel seems to have hovered around £10. According to another

source, *A Handbook of Arabia*, far from declining, the price of camels "more than doubled" in the fifteen or twenty years previous to the book's 1917 publication. If, as the evidence suggests, camel prices did not decline in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the first decade of the twentieth, it suggests that although there may have been factors that put supply and demand temporarily out of balance, contrary to accepted interpretations there were no major structural changes in the market.

Some rapid dislocations between supply and demand were created by man, others by nature. The hajj season brought on enormous demand each year in the vicinity of the Holy Cities, and the prices of all items rose considerably. Doughty, for example, wrote that the price of a good *'umaniyya* camel would rise to 150 riyals in Mecca during the hajj, 250 percent over the price of a similar camel if it were sold in the Najdi town of 'Unayza. Natural stresses on camel markets usually came in the form of drought. When periods of insufficient rainfall plagued the region, bedouins would attempt to sell as many animals as they could before they succumbed. This had a tendency to drive prices down. Then, after large numbers of animals perished, there would be shortages of camels and the price would again rise. Similarly, a drought in one region could give rise to a demand for camels from another.[49]

Some other generalizations regarding camel prices are buttressed by tables 2.4 and 2.5. First, as in earlier periods, prices were lower in the producing regions and in small, relatively isolated towns than in the cities. Thus, a pack camel that would sell for £10 in Damascus could fetch only £2 in al-Wajh and £4 in the interior of Arabia. Second, a camel's worth increased with its age from birth until it

Table 2.4
Camel Prices, 1851-1913

Description in Source	*Price in Source*	*Price in £***	*Year*	*Location*	*Source*
riding	500 piastres		1851	Damascus	Tresse, 153
	10-400 dollars	2.5-100	1853	Madina	Burton, NPMM, II:16
delul	50-100 mej.		1864	N. Arabia	Guarmani, 115
meager price	£5	5	1875	Aleppo	Jabbur, 600
large pack camel	11 riyals in rice	2	1877	Al Wejh	Doughty, I:438
large pack camel	20 riyals	4	1877	Inner Arabia	Doughty, I:438
young	£10	10	1877	Syria	Blunt, BTE, 208
delul	£10 16 shil.	10.8	1877	Syria	Blunt, BTE, 208
best delul	5 camels	26	1877	N. Hejaz	Doughty, I:249
young	30 riyals	6	1877	N. Hejaz	Doughty, I:249
robust male	50 riyals	10	1877	N. Arabia	Doughty, I:275
at birth	1 riyal	0.2	1877	N. Arabia	Doughty, I:369
excellent he-thelul	15 riyals in rice	3	1877	Al Wajh	Doughty, I:438
best she-camels	35 riyals	7	1877	Hail	Doughty, I:665
good omania	60 riyals*	12	1877	Unayza	Doughty, II:489
good omania, pilg. time	150 riyals	30	1877	Mecca	Doughty, II:489
delul and pack	£10 *	10	1878	Syria	Blunt, PN, 6
	£10	10	1878	Mzeirib	Blunt, PN, 45
1-year-old	25 mej.	5	1879	N. Arabia	Blunt, PN, 180
2-year-old	35 mej.	7	1879	N. Arabia	Blunt, PN, 180
	8 Turkish £*	7.2	1908	N. Arabia	G Lloyd, TCM, 1907
	10 T£	9	1908	Baghdad	G. Lloyd
	11.5 T£	10.35	1908	Damascus	G. Lloyd
	13.5 T£	12.15	1908	Alexandretta	G. Lloyd
deluls	13 T£	11.7	1908	Baghdad	Butler, GJ
male	12 T£	10.8	1908	Baghdad	Butler, GJ
	79 mej.	13	1909	Syria	Musil, Ar. Des., 300
young thoroughbred	57 mej.*	10	1910	Jordan	Musil, N. Hijaz, 28
with gear	£13	13	1913	Damascus	Bell, Letters, 254
good pack	£20-30	20-30	1913	Jordan	Aref in Issawi, 347

Sources: (Full citations.) Tresse, *Le Pèlerinage*, 153; Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah & Meccah*, 2 vols. (1893; New York: Dover, 1964), 2:16; Carlo Guarmani, *Northern Nejd, A Journey from Jerusalem to Anaiza in Qasim*, trans. Lady Capel-Cure (1866; London: Argonaut Press, 1938), 115; Jabbur, *Bedouins*, 600; Doughty, *Travels*, 1:438; Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates* , 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1879), 1:208; Blunt, *Pilgrimage*, 45; FOCP 9324, "Report on... Trade of Mesopotamia," G. Lloyd, 1908, 347, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part I, Vol 16; S.S. Butler, "Baghdad to Damascus via el Jauf, Northern Arabia," *GJ* 33 (1909); Musil, *Arabia Deserta: a topographical survey* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1927), 300; Musil, *The Northern Hegaz, A Topographical Itinerary* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1926), 28; Florence Bell, ed., *The Letters of Gertrude Bell* (London: Ernest Benn, 1927), 254; Aref al-Aref, *Bedouin Love Law and Legend, Dealing exclusively with the Bedu of Beersheba*, (1944; New York: AMS Press, 1974), 190-91.

* When a relatively narrow range of prices for camels was given in the source, i.e., £7-9, the median price was listed in the chart.

** Conversions to sterling were made using exchange rates as close to the date and location of the camel price as possible. Decimal values were used in this column for ease of tabulation.

Table 2.5
Camel Prices in Syria, 1909

*Type**	*Age (mos.)*	*Mejidi*	*$US*	*£ Sterling*	*Range***
Mahloul	3-12	10-12	9.00-10.80	1.66-2.00	1.2
Mafroud	12-24	15-20	13.50-18.00	2.5-3.33	1.33
Hejje	24-36	18-28	16.20-25.20	3.00-4.66	1.55
Ged'	36-48	30-40	27.00-36.00	5.00-6.66	1.33
Theni	48-60	40-60	36.00-54.00	6.66-10.00	1.5
Rub'	60-72	60-80	54.00-72.00	10.00-13.33	1.33
Good Delul		85-200	76.50-180.00	14.16-33.33	2.35

Source: Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 349. While the text does not mention a location, it is assumed by the context that the prices refer to Syria. *The terms in this column are those by which camels of each specified age, until their sixth year, were called by the Rwala. Other terms were used by other tribes. **The higher price is divided by the lower price to obtain the ratio between the two. This column and the one labeled £ Sterling were added by the author.

attained maturity at about six years. Finally, a fairly wide range of prices existed among pack and riding camels, depending on such variables as breed, lineage, temperament and condition.

Egypt, Cotton and Camels

The relatively large market for camels from Arabia which existed in Egypt at the end of the nineteenth century was clearly a boon to camel-herding tribes and to the merchants willing to undertake the long journeys required to buy and sell the camels. This relatively unexplored facet of the camel trade may well have compensated for any decline in demand for long-distance transport animals which no doubt occurred between 1850 and 1914.

It is not clear when large-scale exports from northern Arabia to Egypt began. André Raymond, in his *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIII^e siècle*, did not mention camels as being part of the imports Cairo received from Syria in the second half of the eighteenth century. Given the long-standing commercial connections between Syria and Egypt, it is likely that some camels had been part of this traffic for a long time. One reason that Raymond did not mention camels as an

import item may have been that this segment of the trade was not significant enough during the period to appear in the sources. If the camel trade was long-standing, it may have been encouraged during the 1830s, when the Ottomans were pushed out of Syria by Muhammad Ali, barriers were placed on Syria's trade with the Ottoman regions, and communications with Egypt intensified.

However, there is abundant evidence that camels were among the fairly large number of animals imported into Egypt from Arabia and Bilad al-Sham in the second half of the nineteenth century. According to the tables in Appendix A, which are based on Egyptian government statistics, some 23,983 camels passed through the customs post at al-'Arish during the years 1873-77 on their way to Egypt (Table A.1). With about 5,173 camels recorded as leaving the country during the same period, we can assume that 18,810 camels stayed in Egypt (Table A.3). Camel imports were second in quantity only to sheep (139,517) and ahead of horses (10,620), mules (3,750) and asses (2,504). The number of camels that stayed in the country varied widely from year to year, from a high of 7,092 in 1873 to a low of just over 1,800 in both 1875 and 1876.

According to Chart 2.1, showing animal imports to Egypt from "Turkey" (i.e., overland from Syria, Palestine and Arabia) between 1884 and 1903, camel imports were at a relatively low level until about 1890. One factor that may have given an impetus to increased camel imports from Syria and Arabia was the disruption of imports of camels from Sudan which occurred during the Mahdist revolt (beginning in 1881) and subsequent unrest in Sudan.[50] Historically Sudan had been an important source of camels for Egypt.[51] What is more certain, as will be shown below, is that the dramatic increase in camel imports to Egypt which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century was linked to the rise in peasant

income from cotton.

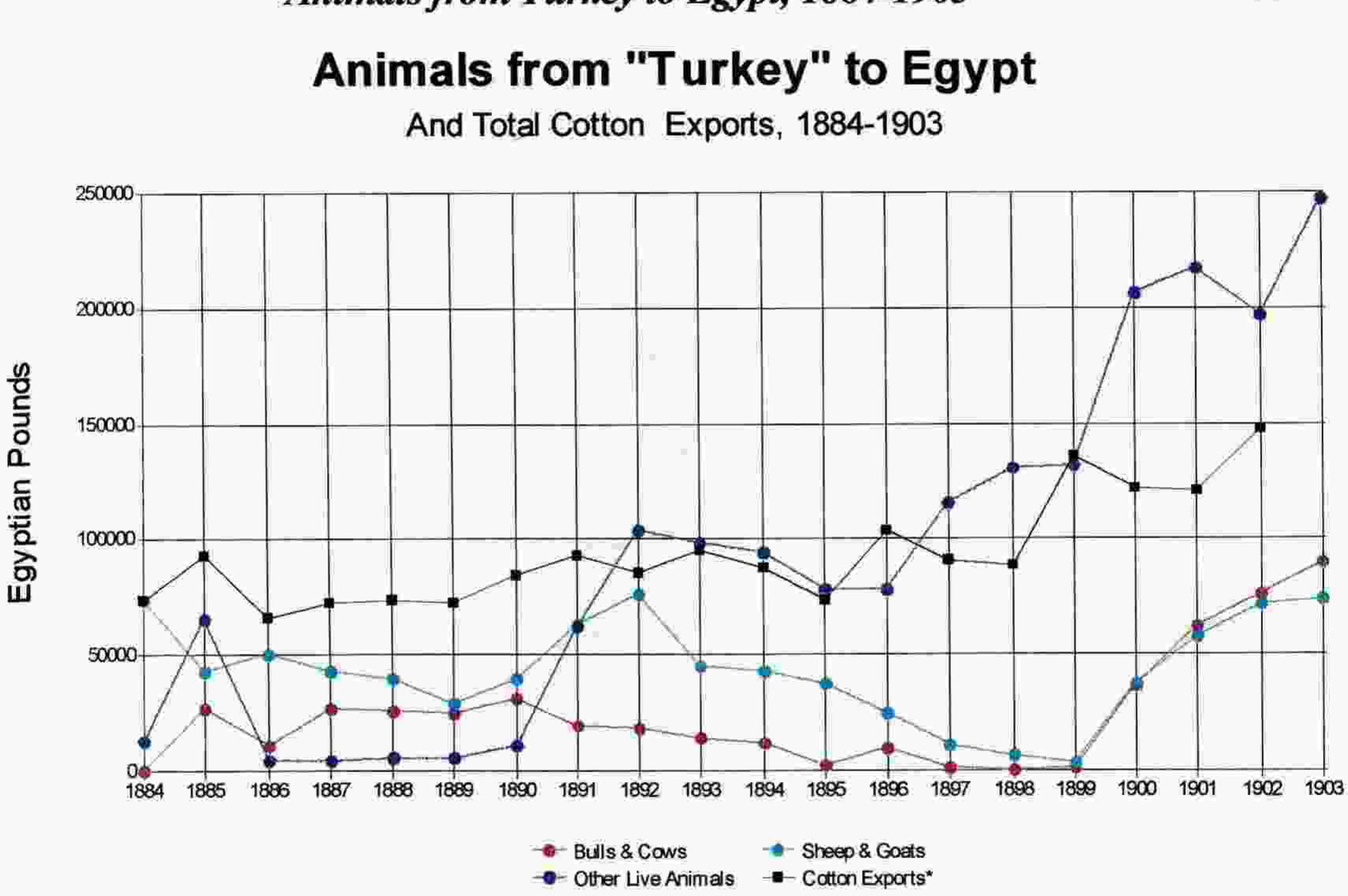
By the second half of the nineteenth century, Egypt's *fallahin* consumed a fare amount of meat from camels imported from Arabia. Since cotton became the major export crop during this period, the volume of its production and export had a large effect on other segments of the economy, including the import of camels. When income from cotton exports was high, the fellahin benefited.[52] According to Musil, "Fat she-camels more than 20 years old" were bought by the 'Agayl for the Egyptian market, and their price was linked to incomes in Egypt from each year's cotton crop. "If the *fellâhîn* in that country have had a profitable year, they do not stint themselves in camel meat."[53]

The link between cotton export earnings and camel imports is illustrated quite clearly on Chart 2.1. (Note that all evidence suggests that the category labeled "Other Live Animals" on the chart and in the source refers mainly or entirely to camels.[54]) For most periods there is a general degree of correlation between the two variables. The only exceptions are the periods 1890-92, when the value of camel imports rose dramatically while cotton export earnings stayed relatively flat, and 1899-1904, when camel imports rose quickly again, while the value of cotton exports declined slightly, then rose again. Another significant trend apparent from this data is that after 1891 the value of camels imported from the Ottoman Empire exceeded the value of imported cattle, sheep and goats, by a wide margin in 1903. Whereas between 1886 and 1890 the value of camel imports was well below the value of other livestock imports, after 1891 camel imports took off on a meteoric rise while other livestock imports plummeted until 1899, then recovered sharply.

The average price per camel imported into Egypt from Arabia in 1902 was E£4.77 and in 1903, E£5.29, low compared to most of the prices in Table 2.5, but

animals sold for slaughter were at the low end of the price scale.[55] (Riding and pack animals in their prime commanded at least twice the price.) This high level of camel imports from Arabia and the Ottoman territories continued up until the First World War. The average annual number of camels imported during the years 1899-1912 was 41,137.[56]

Chart 2.1
Animals from Turkey to Egypt, 1884-1903



Source: Egypt, Director-General of Customs, *Commerce Extérieur de L'Égypte, Statistique Comparée 1884-1903* (Rome, 1904), 123, 174. *In order for the graph line for cotton exports to be on a similar scale as those for animals, the numbers for that category were reduced by a factor of 100; therefore, the line for Cotton Exports shows trends accurately, but does not reflect the actual value.

Table 2.6
Egypt: Camel Importsfrom Ottoman Lands

Year	Camels
1902	41,198
1903	46,640
1904	57,324
1910	34,317
1911	46,619
1912	48,982

Source: Eliahu Epstein, "The Economic Situation of the Transjordan Tribes," *JRCAS* 27 (January 1939): 179. The author was citing Egyptian Government statistics.

Camel Market Conditions During World War One

The war had conflicting effects on the region's camel marketing system. The most dramatic and universal effect was the rapid increase in both demand for camels and in their price. Both sides in the conflict required large numbers of pack animals to move men and materiel, and attempted to purchase or rent what camels they could from owners in the towns and steppe. In addition, Turkish officials often took animals from the bedouin outright.

Because the combatants imposed economic embargoes on territories controlled by their enemies, trade routes were disrupted or closed. Thus the traffic between Arabia and Syria to Egypt gradually dwindled. Starting in the autumn of 1914 the British prevented the 'Agayl from driving camels to Egypt from Turkish-controlled territories.[57] According to one set of Egyptian statistics, camel imports from "Turkey" slowly disappeared during the war years. Camel imports numbered 45,743 head in 1912; 33,043 in 1913; 18,268 in 1914; three in 1915; and none in 1916. Other animal imports from Turkey saw similar declines.[58] Trade was similarly interrupted in the areas under Turkish control. The Turks were thwarted on occasion from purchasing camels from the interior of Arabia. For example, because he opposed the Turks, 'Abd al-'Aziz

> ...had arrested [Turkish] agents sent to purchase supplies in Kasim, and had not only stopped them from buying but had refused to allow them to return to Medina. He had, too, held up camels bought in Nejd, with the result that some £15,000 paid for them became a dead loss.[59]

The trade in camels appeared to have come to a near standstill in Damascus for a time, at least, with bedouin retreating into the badia for fear of confiscation of their animals by the government. According to a British source,

> The Turks commissioned Mohammed Bassam, Ibn Rawwaf, and Ibn Dhiyab, well-known Damascene buyers, to send out to the Ruweilah and purchase from them, but the attempt was made very half-heartedly, and the results were next to nothing.[60]

One reason for this seeming inability to obtain camels by the Damascus 'Agayl was the lack of economic incentive. When the government didn't confiscate animals outright, it seems to have forced sellers to accept payments below the market value. In this sense, the 'Agayl camel dealers and the bedouin both suffered from some Turkish practices. The Ruwalla, for example, were reported to have resented "deeply" the government for requisitioning camels the 'Agayl had bought from them.

> Naturally, the 'Akejl were indisposed to buy camels now, since they could never hope to get as much for them from the Government as they would have received in Egypt; consequently the Bedouins, unable to sell their camels, were suffering from want. Moreover, when at the end of June they entered the tilled region where the Government was stronger than they were, they were dispossessed by troops who commandeered their horses and camels for the Sultan in Constantinople.[61]

The Turks were not entirely unsuccessful in obtaining camels for the war effort. In December 1915, they were able to buy camels through Ibn Rashid.[62] Additionally, in the patchwork of loyalties and alliances of convenience that characterized tribal politics, some bedouin groups cooperated with the Turks.

The closing of normal routes of commerce and other factors created shortages and high prices for commodities and livestock in the region. Thus, the incentives for smuggling increased. Large 'Agayl merchants in Damascus such as the Bassam reportedly made hefty profits as a result. No doubt camels were part of this illicit traffic.[63]

Table 2.7
Camel Prices, 1914-18

Description	*Price in Source*	*£Sterling*	*Year*	*Location*	*Source*
avg. price	8T£		1914	Arabia	Hndbk of Arabia, 2:19
avg. price	10T£		1914	Damascus	Hndbk of Arabia, 2:19
avg. price	250 F.fr.		1914	Syria	Ruppin in Issawi, 326
	250-500 F.fr.		1915	Syria	Ruppin in Issawi, 327
good pack	50-100£	50-100	1915	Beersheba	Aref in Issawi, 347
from W. Sulayman	4-11T£		1915	N. Nejd	Musil, NNagd, 136
well-bred riding	20 liras		1916	Al Hasa	Gztr of Arabia, 1:778
	35£	35	1917	Jerusalem	Preston, 317
	50£	50	1917	Hejaz	Ar. Bull. 45, 128
	80-150 MT$		1918	Arabia	Philby, THA, 8
ordinary	20T£		1918	Aleppo	Lewis, 234

Sources: (Full citations.) Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2:19; Ruppin, *Syrien al Wirtschaftsgebiet*, in *EHME*, Issawi, 326-7; El-Aref, *Bedouin,* cited by Pershits, "Economic Life," in *EHME* Issawi, 347; Musil, *Northern Nagd*, 136; Great Britain, *Gazeteer*, 1: 778; R.M.P. Preston, *The Desert Mounted Corps: An Account of the Cavalry Operations in Palestine and Syria, 1917-1918* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1923), 317; *Arab Bulletin* 45 (13 March 1917), 128; Philby, *Heart*, 8; Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 243.

If one generalization can be made based on the sparse evidence, it is that conditions seemed to have been more depressed during the war in the areas under Turkish control, and bedouin who had camels to sell could make handsome profits in other areas. This could give rise to prickly observations by British officials:

> In one place, as we neared a Bedouin encampment, I asked one of the Ageyl of what tribe the Bedouin were and whether they were for the Sherif. "No," he replied, "not for the Sherif; for British gold." In this part of the world, gold is now so plentiful that the British sovereign may almost be said to be the unit of coinage. The filthiest Arab unearths (the term is no mere *façon de parler*), a bag of gold when making his purchases in the Suq, and they pay £50 for a camel as an ordinary procedure.[64]

According to Philby, writing of central Arabia around 1918, the economic situation of the bedouin,

> though still one of hardship and anxiety, has improved in the last decade and particularly during the four years of the war out of all proportion to the general rise in the standard of living, largely on account of the increased value of the camel.[65]

He noted, however, that with the end of the war, "the golden stream has stopped,

and soon there will be as little trace of it in the black-boothed settlements as there is

of the winter torrents in their barren watercourses when summer has gone."

Although no account has been taken of inflation, Table 2.7 shows that camel prices generally were higher during the war years, with three- to five-fold increases from the pre-war years not uncommon. Since there is no data on the number of camels sold during the period, it is impossible to say how much wealth this price increase brought the bedouin.

New and Old Patterns for the Camel Trade, 1920-1939

While a number of major changes took place in northern Arabia in the period between the First and Second World Wars, there were also strong currents of continuity among the bedouin. At the same time that new political formations caused disruptions and transformations, the sporadic outbreaks of peace and the occasional preoccupation of town authorities allowed bedouin society to return to customary patterns of life and commerce. The period was also characterized by government attempts to create statistical realities, and so it is possible for the first time to present official estimates of such things as camel populations and livestock trade figures. These figures varied in quantity and quality from place to place, and if one thing is clear, it is that they show that factors other than the coming of modern transportation were at work in affecting bedouin livelihoods.

Several , sometimes conflicting, factors affected the trade in camels during the period when the British and French took over the administration of some territories, and the state of Saudi Arabia was in a turbulent period of formation. As noted earlier, the increasing use of motorized transportation in place of camels, especially during the interwar period, has been seen by many as the reason the camel-herding nomads of northern Arabia finally lost their age-old position as generally autonomous and powerful lords of the region's steppelands. While it is

true that camel nomads lost a great deal of independence during this time and suffered economic hardships, it will become clear that the principal cause for this was not the replacement of the camel with the wheel. In fact, the period saw *increased* demand for camel transport in some regions, belying the generally accepted image of decline in the camel market.

The question of new national borders was one of the principal issues that affected bedouins and the merchants, such as the 'Agayl, who traded with them. In the early years of the 1920s, for example, bedouin, merchants and local officials were attempting to work out ways in which they could maintain their interests. Officials sought ways to control populations within their boundaries, to count them and to tax them. The bedouin sought ways to keep or expand their pasturelands, access to markets and right to carry on such traditional practices as raiding. And merchants attempted to uphold their right to travel safely and without hindrance and carry on trade with as little interference from officials as possible.

With the creation of new borders and the arrival of new powers, these interests often clashed. In 1924, for example, Abdullah al-Hulaysi, an 'Agayli, complained to the representative of the sultan of Najd in Damascus that his caravan of 85 camels bound for sale in Egypt was stopped by the Palestinian gendarmerie in Majdal and asked to pay the animal tax. The 'Agayl merchants who were leading the camels pleaded that they had come from Syria and were in transit, and were thus not liable to pay the tax. Upon investigation, British officials found that the caravan was accompanied by a certificate from the Damascus customs authorities stating that the destination of the camels was Palestine, and thus the camels could not be regarded as in transit.[66]

By the 1930s, agreements were in place between Saudi Arabia on the one hand and Syria, Iraq and Transjordan on the other, to allow the movement of tribes to and from those countries and to carry on their trade. This of course meant that they could bring their livestock and other goods from the badia and oases such as dates and samn to trade for products of the towns. By the terms of the Hadda Agreement of 1925 between Najd and Great Britain, legitimate merchants from Najd could cross Transjordan and enter Syria to carry on trade, and their goods (with the exception of camels and other animals) were exempt from customs dues.[67] Nonetheless, local leaders often attempted to divert or curtail bedouin trade patterns. As described in Chapter Five, the blockade of Kuwait by the forces of ʻAbd al-ʻAziz was widely ignored.[68]

The world depression of the early 1930s, coupled with the effects of a drought, caused great hardship and suffering among the bedouin of Arabia. Reduced numbers of pilgrims, scarcity of goods, and devaluation of local currencies were some immediate effects, causing especially dire circumstances among poor bedouin throughout the peninsula. For example, in Hijaz the Saudi government required a large number of camels for military purposes, depleting the stock of local bedouin. On the other side of the peninsula at the same time, large tribal movements from the interior of Arabia toward Iraq were taking place as a result of "great scarcity and the depression of the Rial in the Hijaz."[69] Difficult times were also forcing massive movements from Najd. Despite the nominal prohibition against travel by Najdi tribes into Kuwait for marketing, ʻUtayba bedouin with camel herds numbering about 6,000 arrived in Kuwait from Shaqra in April 1931. A Najdi native told the British Political Agent in Kuwait that this was tacitly permitted by ʻAbd al-ʻAziz as a temporary palliative "owing to the 'hard' times that

existed in Nejd at the present moment."[70] On the lands bordering the badia in Syria, Transjordan and Palestine, bedouins who had no other economic options resorted to hiring their camels out to farmers and merchants and working as farm labourers.[71]

Peace did not reign in northern Arabia after World War I. Instead, the scope of fighting and the participants changed. As the following chapters will show, in the areas that came under British and French military control, conflicts arose between the occupying powers and bedouin tribes as well as among the tribes themselves. There were uprisings with tribal involvement in Iraq and Syria. In Arabia, 'Abd al-'Aziz fought for and won control of Hijaz and consolidated his rule over much of the peninsula. The scale of fighting was smaller than that of World War One and thus did not appear to interfere with the camel trade as much. However, the camel was widely used in the region for transport and fighting, and so demand for good animals was constant.

The Traffic to Egypt Returns and Wanes

During the 1920s and 1930s, camel exports to Egypt from northern Arabia declined to levels below those recorded before the war. According to Glubb, this was because the Egyptian government was beginning to offer Sudanese camels "preferential treatment."[72] What this treatment was is not clear; perhaps it meant reduced customs fees. Even so, Sudan's herds were just as vulnerable to the caprices of the climate as were the herds of northern Arabia. Table 2.8 shows a large increase in camel imports from Arabia in 1936. According to one report from that year,

> An altogether exceptional number of [Najdi] merchants have crossed Transjordan during the last six months, conveying sheep and camels for sale, originally to Palestine and now to Egypt. (An alleged lack

> of grazing in the Sudan is said to have intensified the demand for camels from Arabia this year.)[73]

What is clear is that there was no strong connection between the prices of camels and the level of imports. As shown in Table 2.8, while the average price per camel fell from £12.5 in 1922 to £5.6 in 1937, the number of camels sent to Egypt was roughly the same. Two other factors may have been coming into play, however. First, as was noted, the worldwide depression had an effect on the market for camels, just as it had affected all other markets. Glubb, writing in 1932 while in Transjordan, stated that the world economic crisis was the main cause of the "deterioration of the economic position of the bedouins in the last two years." He added:

> The greatest markets for bedouin livestock, camel and sheep, have always been Syria and Egypt but particularly the latter which normally buys huge numbers annually for butchers meat. This market has almost completely ceased to exist in the last two years. In the autumn of 1930 fat camels were finding a ready sale for export to Egypt at an average price of about 16 pounds a head. The present nominal price for the same animal would be about L3, but even at that price it would probably not find a buyer. This fall in the value of camels is much greater in proportion than that in the value of grain and greater still in that of manufactured articles such as clothing.[74]

Second, the relative availability and price levels of Sudanese camels no doubt affected what Egyptian buyers would pay for Arabian camels. Both of these factors would help to explain why, according to one camel merchant, a fat camel from Arabia for the Egyptian market would fetch 18-10 Palestinian pounds in 1928, only 4-5 pounds in 1933, and 8-10 pounds in 1935.[75]

While governments generally became more adept at recording imports and exports, discrepancies between different sources were not unusual. For example, The figures in Table 2.8 were taken from Egyptian government statistics, but according to another set of Egyptian figures, camel imports from all sources for 1922 numbered 23,000 head, with a value of 291,000 L.E. (12.65/head); and in

1923 numbered 35,000 head, valued at 278,000 L.E. (7.94/head). Of the total imported that year, 17,500 head came from Syria, 9,600 from Palestine, 6,000 from Tripolitania, and the remainder from other sources.[76] In 1924 the value of camel imports dropped to L.E. 94,000, and in commercial reports for the next two years camels did not even appear in the summary of imports.[77] According to another

Table 2.8
Egypt: Camel Imports
From Northern Arabia, 1922-37

Year	Camels	Avg. Price
1922	23,291	£12.5
1935	22,628	
1936	35,554	
1937	24,798	£5.6

Source: Eliahu Epstein, "The Economic Situation of the Transjordan Tribes," *JRCAS* 26 (1939): 179.

source, camel imports into Egypt had fallen to 13,500 animals (L.E. 6/head) by 1931, and 12,100 animals (L.E. 5/head) in 1932.[78] Needless to say, this decline in camel prices meant that bedouin households had to sell more camels per year to maintain their standard of living, thus depleting their camel herds more quickly.

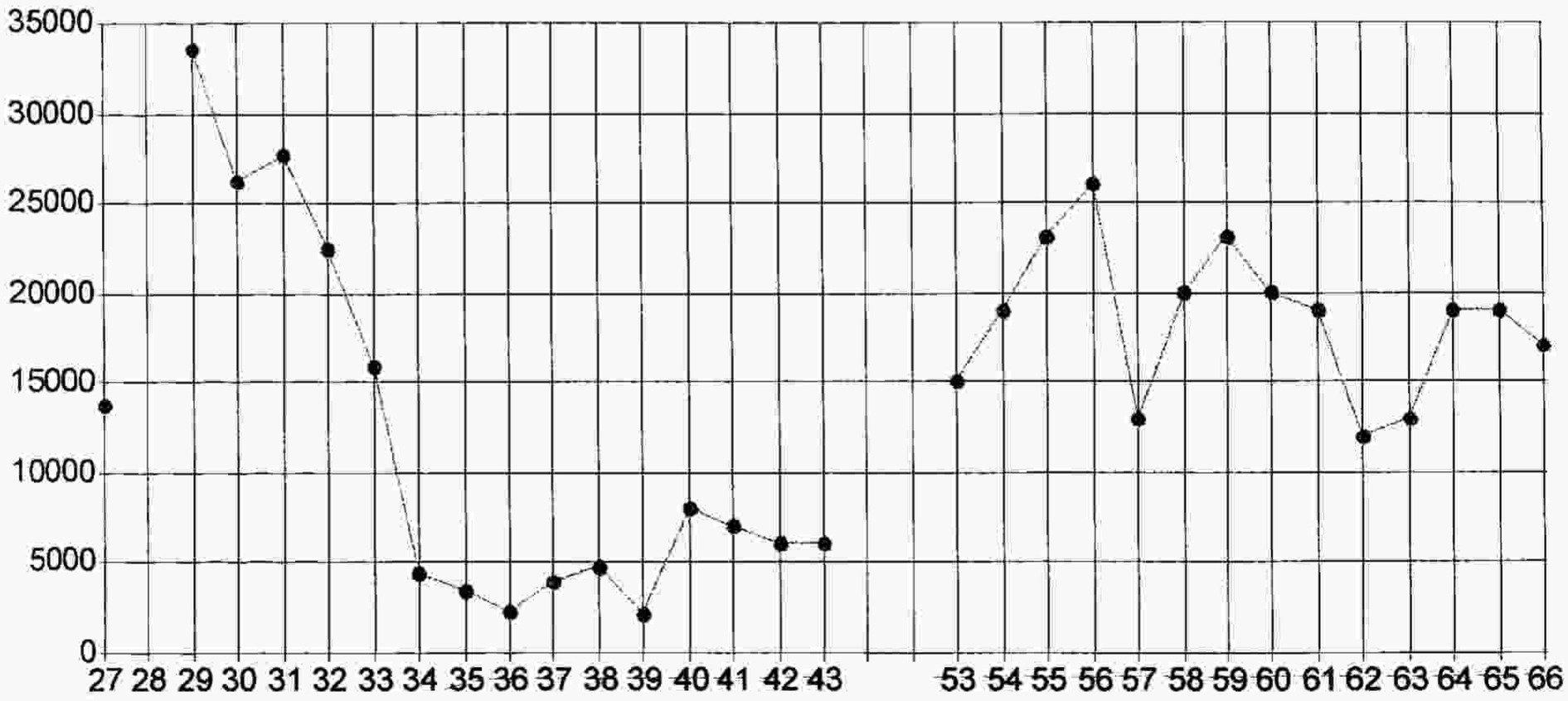
Transjordan and Palestine

The above factors in themselves were detrimental enough to the normal way of life for bedouin who relied on the sale of camels for income, but when compounded by the cyclical crises in the bedouin economy caused by inflation, shifts in the market for camels, Akhwan attacks and new government prohibitions of raiding, drought, and locusts, they could be catastrophic. For example, Lewis has described the situation of the Bani Sakhr of Transjordan. An unusually long drought between 1926 and 1934 precipitated a massive decline in the camel population of Transjordan during the period. Under normal circumstances in the past, a tribe would move when its herds were threatened with the consequences of drought. In this case, however, the tribe was restricted in its rangeland, and in any event, according to Lewis, many had decided that camel-herding was not feasible,

and they turned to farming and sheep-herding.[79] The decline in the value of camels during the period was a factor in the bedouins' calculation to give up camel herding, but only a lesser one.

Chart 2.2 is indicative of a precipitous decline in camel populations in Transjordan in the wake of the drought. While the camel population rose between 1927 and 1929 from 13,800 to 33,500, it plummeted to 2,300 by 1936. Clearly, many animals died or were sold off. Chart 2.3 contains data on animals slaughtered in government abattoirs in Transjordan between 1955 and 1970. It shows that during another major drought, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the number of camels butchered for meat rose dramatically. This type of increase probably occurred during earlier droughts as well, with the owners hoping to obtain some gain at least from animals doomed to die otherwise. Nonetheless, while the 1930s were a low point, the long-term trend was toward gradual recovery, even as modern transport became widely used.

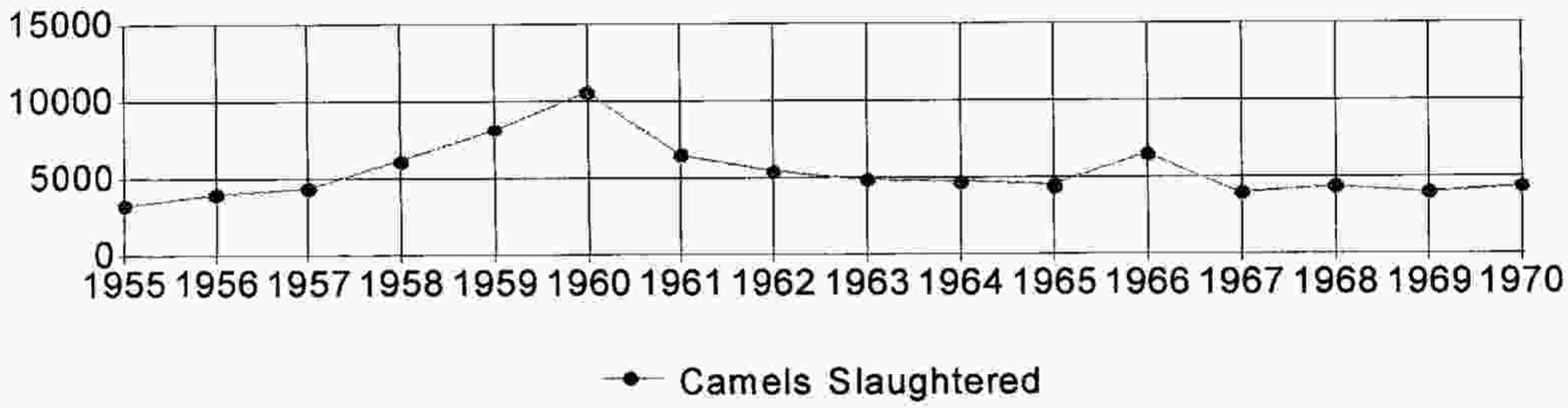
Chart 2.2
Transjordan: Camel Population, 1927-66



Sources: For 1927-43, A. Konikoff, *Transjordan: An Economic Survey*, (Jerusalem: Economic Research Institute of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, 1946), 46, 109 (the author cited *International Yearbooks of Agricultural Statistics*, 1931/32-1940/41); for 1953-66: Marion Clawson, et. al., eds., *The Agricultural Potential of the Middle East*, (New York: American Elsevier, 1971), 275 (citing official Jordanian statistics).

As chapters Three and Four will demonstrate, intertribal raiding and the massive raids by Akhwan from Najd in the 1920s also resulted in a massive hemorrhaging of camels and other property from Transjordan's tribes. In addition, since there appeared to be a considerable recovery of the region's herds in the 1950s (which was too rapid to be accounted for by natural increase), it can be assumed that some herders migrated to Syria or Arabia and then returned.

Chart 2.3
Transjordan: Camels Slaughtered, 1955-70



Source: Jordan, Ministry of National Economy, Department of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook* (various publishers: Jerusalem, Amman, 1956-71).

While the camel-herding tribes of Transjordan had fewer animals to sell, this did not mean the trade ceased. As seen in Table 5.2 in Chapter 5, camels continued to pass from Saudi Arabia through Transjordan in the 1930s, presumably for sale in Palestine or Egypt. In addition, al-Musallam, relying on informants who lived in the 1930s and 1940s, the 'Agayl remained active in the livestock markets of Transjordan, especially in Amman.[80]

Nonetheless, at the same time the Bani Sakhr and other bedouin in Transjordan were suffering privation and losing camels to severe drought and raiding, the camel population in Palestine was growing and the market for camels appeared robust. The arrival of British administration brought a boom in all manner of infrastructural development, and the camel continued to provide the cheapest form of transport. During the 1920s and 1930s, large numbers of camels were used in all the mandate territories to build the roads that were supposed to make them obsolete. According to a British report describing the situation in Palestine in 1925,

for example,

> The demand for animal transport in building operations, road-making and industrial developments has resulted in a considerable importation of camels.[81]

As shown in Table 2.9, between 1921 and 1932, the camel population of Palestine jumped from 8,846 to 32, 317, a 3.6-fold increase. The increase may have resulted in part from improved methods of livestock enumeration. In addition, some tribes that migrated away from the fighting during the First World War may have returned afterward.

At least a portion of the camel transport required by builders, farmers and merchants may have been supplied by bedouin themselves. According to a 1934 report, some bedouin from Transjordan would work in Palestine for several months a year.

> Very poor bedouins, who own only one or two camels per family, state that they can earn a livelihood in Palestine, where there are always odd carrying jobs to be done for hire. Camels are used for carrying building material, manure from stables to fields and gardens, grain from fields to villages, and so on. There is very little work to be found in Transjordan on the way of plying for hire.[82]

One bedouin of the Negev speaking in the 1960s recalled (perhaps with a large dose of nostalgia) the British administration between the wars and said it compared

Table 2.9
Palestine: Camel Population, 1921-37

Year	*Camels*
1921	8,846
1925	25,546
1930	25,341
1932	32,317
1934	32,033
1937	28,085

Source: Said B. Himadeh, ed., *Economic Organization of Palestine* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1938), 177 (citing Dept. of Agriculture statistics).

favourably to subsequent policies by the Israelis vis-à-vis the bedouin. "The whole country was ours then, and nobody bothered about permits for work, for weapons, or even for the sale of animals."[83]

Syria and Iraq

Just as in Palestine, the authorities in Iraq and Syria implemented infrastructural development and other construction projects. It is probable that camels played a role as low-cost transport similar to that in Palestine. However, in Iraq, the preferred beast of burden in most settled areas was the donkey, mule or horse. The increased use of the motor car and lorry probably forced more donkeys out of the transport business than camels. A major innovation was the institution of regular motor service between Damascus and Iraq in about 1923. Travellers, especially at the outset, were subject to attacks from bedouin opposing the intrusion and from common robbers. While this speedy trans-desert motor service may have attracted some travelers and merchants away from camel transport, what is more likely is that the route was little traveled by town folk in the first place, and the speed and relative ease of motor transport created a new market and competed more with sea transport between the Levant and Iraq. In addition, representatives of tribes along the route were given a portion of the proceeds of this traffic, continuing the traditional khuwa relationships of the past. Considering that between 1934 and 1940 there were some 172,880 entries and exits recorded for individuals in Iraq from this route, those payments amounted to a considerable sum, and show some evidence (reports of occasional violence aside) that the motor companies were able to co-exist with the tribes.[84]

Still, on at least one new route, camel transport was still used extensively. According to a report from 1934, some 20,000 loads of salt were taken from Azraq to Syria that year, on the backs of camels owned by Syrians.[85]

On occasion, events outside the region affected the market for camels and other pastoral products. For example, in November1935 there are several reports of

Italian buyers seeking to export large number of camels from northern Arabia to Eritrea, where Italian forces were at war. Although press accounts stated that some 10,000 camels were purchased in Syria, Italian officials on the scene stated the "only 800 were purchased and shipped from Tripoli." Soon afterward, an embargo on exports from the mandate territories to Italian buyers went into effect.[86]

Although there was an official cessation of Syro-Iraqi trade during the early years of the 1920s , the age-old movement of live animals (sheep, camels, horses and mules) across the steppe that linked the two countries continued. In 1923, for example, an 'Agayl merchant reportedly purchase several hundred horses in Iraq and brought them "across the desert to Damascus."[87] Government statistics showing individual categories of imports and exports only begin to appear in the 1930s. In 1931 the top four items imported from Iraq to Syria were live animals, including sheep (valued at 1.2 million Syrian pounds); horses (S£139,636); camels (S£92,494); and mules. Iraq was the principal source that year of Syrian camel imports, accounting for 93.5 percent of total imports in that category.[88]

In addition, camel exports from Syria continued, mostly in the direction of Transjordan and points south. This was a continuation of the earlier pattern of large exports of pastoral products from Syria. However, just as in earlier periods, some of the pastoral products that moved south from Syrian territory did not originate there. (From what we have presented of 'Agayl practices, for example, it is likely that some of the camels recorded as exported from Syria originated in Iraq or Saudi Arabia.) According to government statistics for the year 1924, the value of camel exports (11,947,380 francs) was second only to that of sheep exports (12,085,616 francs) in the general category of agricultural and pastoral products. Table 2.10 contains what little information French authorities published regarding the exports of camels from Syria during the mandate period. It is not clear why, but exports of live animals were only broken down by species in the years 1924-28. Record-keepers during the previous and subsequent years gathered data on all species under

the general heading of "animaux vivants," echoing the category mentioned earlier in some Egyptian customs statistics.

Table 2.10
Syria: Camel Exports, 1924-1928

	Head	Value
1924		11,947,380 francs
1925		10,821,000 francs
1926	765	5,856,500 P.S.
1927	1,058	1,443,725 P.S.
1928	7,232	8,590,505 P.S.

Source: France, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Rapport sur la Situation de la Syrie et du Liban* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1924-1928). (P.S.= Syrian piastres.)

There is also some evidence that the number of camels sold by those Rwala who summered each year in the Golan declined in the late 1920s. According to Zakariyya, the tribe used to sell some 30,000 to 35,000 camels annually in 1922. This number dwindled to 12,000 in 1927 and 8,000 in 1928.[89]

Despite the fact that new borders were gradually drawn and governments attempted to bring nomads more closely into their grasp, in some cases by encouraging settlement, some attempts were made to allow certain traditional practices. Among these was the annual migrations tribes undertook to their winter grazing lands in the badia and to market their products or exchange them for town goods in the summer. The degree of bedouin freedom of movement varied according to time and place, but the trend was toward less freedom as time passed. Nonetheless, there are many accounts in the 1920s and 1930s, for example, of the frequent movements of Najdi camel herders into the settled regions of Iraq, and of Iraqi sheepherders crossing over to northern Saudi Arabia. As the following chapters will show, often these movements occurred without incident; at other times, they provided an occasion for conflict.

Raiding was another factor affecting camel-herding bedouin and the value of the camel. Many of the stolen animals were disposed of in the region's livestock

markets.[90] In order to get an inkling of the magnitude of this movement of animals, we could look at one case. Between 1923 and 1927, for example, Najdi tribes claimed losses of 24,389 camels and 3,355 sheep, while Iraqis claimed raiding losses of 1,146 camels, 6,987 donkeys and 76,268 sheep.[91] Unless they desperately needed the animals for themselves, raiders had strong incentives to sell looted animals as quickly as possible, since the looted camels would be clearly identifiable by expert bedouin eyes. In addition, camel merchants themselves were protected from some of the risk inherent in dealing with looted animals by the custom that no raided camel could be reclaimed without compensation by its original owner from someone who could prove he had paid for the animal.[92]

Even as machines replaced camels and other animals as a source of transport and power, the camel retained some measure of its value. Many bedouin kept their herds, in part because they continued to provide an important source of subsistence, but also because camels continued to hold their social and economic value. The export market to Egypt may have been on the decline, but there was a steady demand domestically for camel flesh in both Syria and Iraq. For example, Jabbour, referring to the early 1980s, noted that "The meat eaten by settled folk is mostly of animals raised by the bedouins, especially mutton and goat meat, followed by that of the camel, which even today still comprises an important part of the village diet in certain parts of Syria and other Arab countries."[93] In addition, government statistics for Syria between 1945 and 1955 state that an average of 7,400 camels annually were inspected in government slaughterhouses.[94] It can safely be assumed that at least this many were slaughtered in the 1920s and 1930s. In fact, it appears that the camel population was rising, from 48,000 in 1945 to a high of some 106,000 in 1954. Once again, the motorcar and the camel were thriving side by side.

As yet another illustration of the persistence of old patterns, a report from 1937 stated that "in the last three years the number of pilgrims who proceed to

Mecca by camels from Syria and Transjordan has been steadily increasing." At the same time, some pilgrims chose to travel by motorcar via Jauf under the protection of Nuri ibn Sha'alan, shaykh of the Rwala.[95] Despite the hardship of the journey, many thought it worth their while, perhaps for reasons of economy, or of nostalgia, or simply adventure.

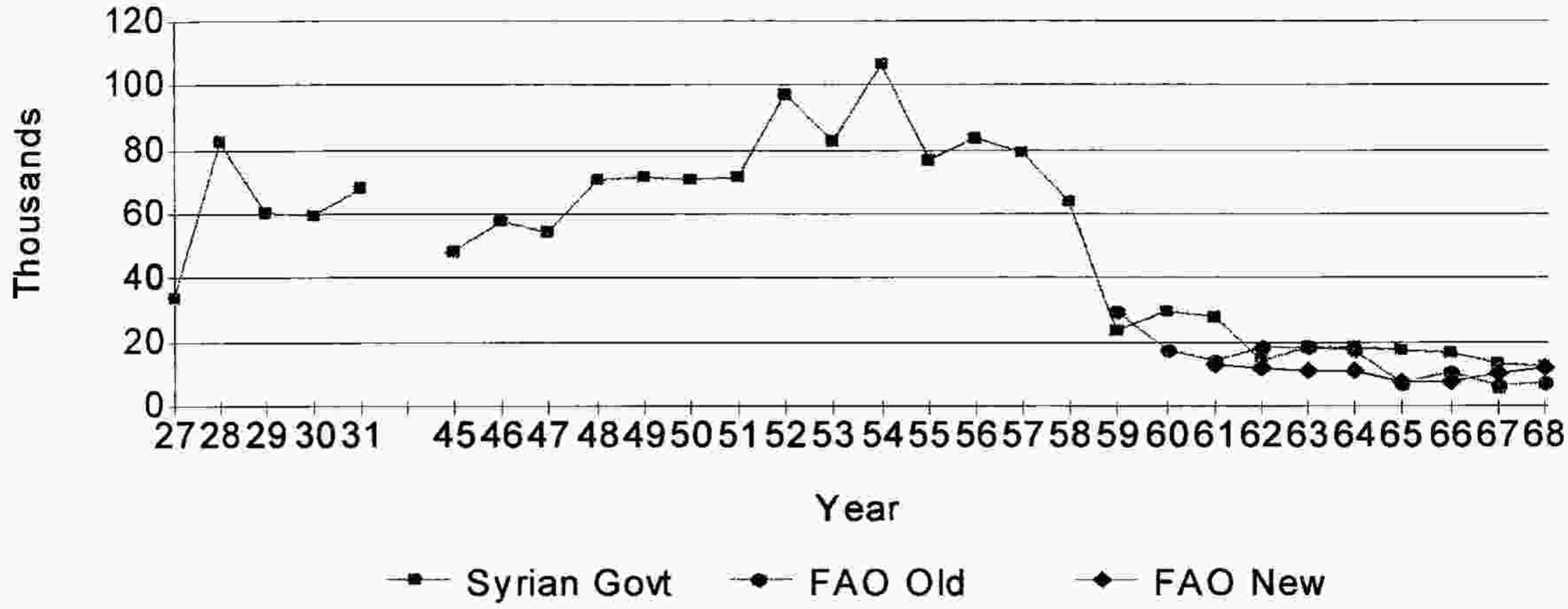
> This year many Syrian pilgrims split up in ones and twos and joined bedouins en route. Though the desert formerly was a nightmare to the townsmen and villagers of Syria, their fears these days are rapidly fading. Moreover, to the bedouin pilgrim, it is very convenient to pick up a townsman, who is only too happy to pay the expenses of both, in return for a guide, philosopher and friend who can steer him through the desert.[96]

While the increase in land traffic probably did not affect the market in camels, it was undoubtedly a boon to those bedouin who were able to rent their animals.

Even as the road network expanded and the number of motor vehicles increased in Syria, the camel herds in its badia reached impressive levels. It was only as a result of events in the late 1950s and early 1960s (well after motor transport had taken over from the camel and the donkey) that a major and, up till now, permanent, reversal took place, as described well by Lewis.[97] A severe drought struck the region, drying up wells and killing forage for several years. Added to this was political hostility toward tribal leaders by the Syrian regime, and a more inviting political and economic climate in Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The plummeting line in Chart 2.3 can but hint at the hardship of the Syrian bedouin during those years.

In Iraq, large camel herds seem to have been viable at least until the Second World War and possibly much later. At the same time, observers noted that increasing numbers of bedouin were giving up herding and engaging in other

Chart 2.4
Syria: Camel Population, 1927-68



Sources: "Syrian Govt.": 1927-31, Said Himadeh, *Economic Organization of Syria* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1936), 44; 1945 to 1968, Syria, *Recueil des Statistiques;* 1959-68, "FAO": *Production Yearbooks*, (Rome: Food and Agricultural Organization, various years); 1961-68, "New FAO": FAOSTAT Online Database, http://apps.fao.org., accessed Sept. 19, 1997.

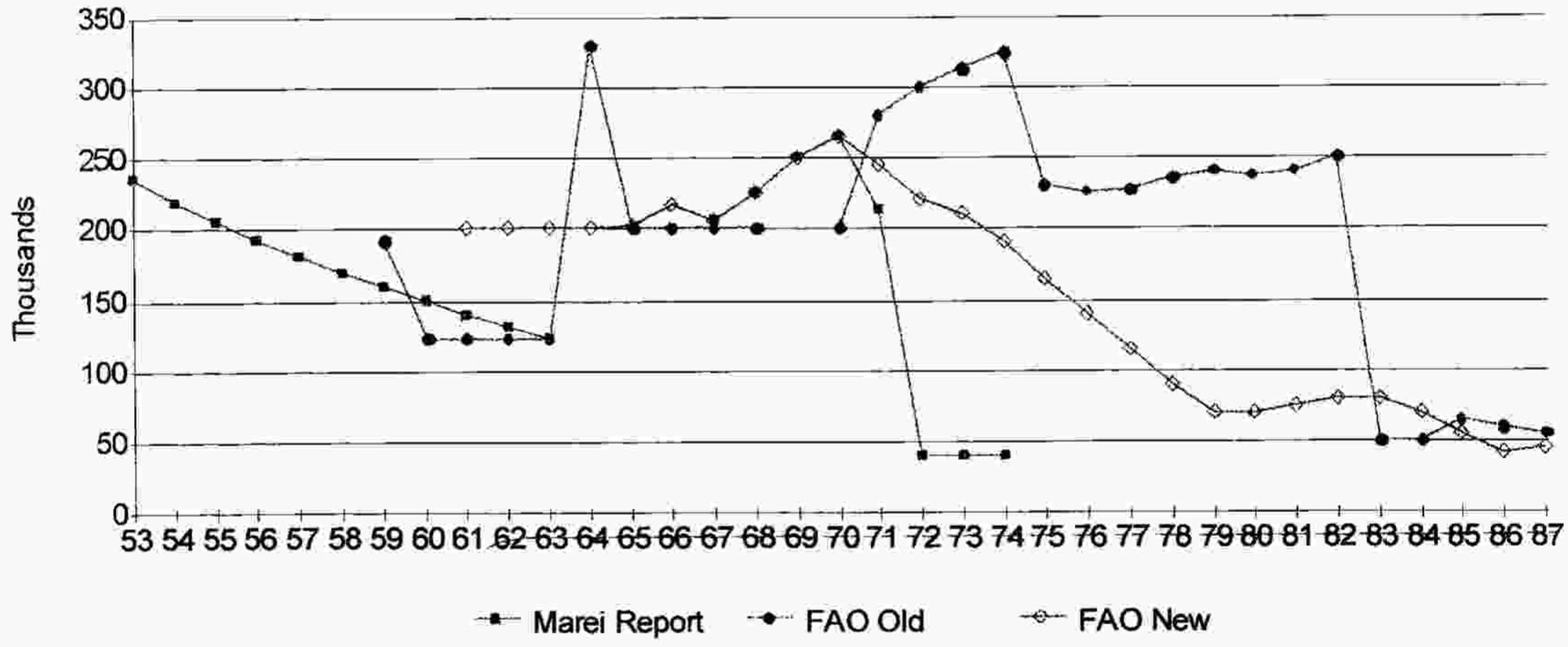
occupations.[98] What seems a contradiction can be easily explained. While the camel population may have been increasing (due to lack of raiding, fewer animals sold), so was the bedouin population. It is more than likely that bedouin who were not needed for pastoral duties worked outside the camp to supplement the family's income. The increasing numbers for camels taxed in Table 2.11 may signify an increase in camel population, or they may simply reflect more efficient tax-gathering methods. In any case, it is clear that the numbers represent a fraction of the camels in Iraq. Despite the wide range of estimates from different sources, Chart 2.4 at least points to an order of magnitude for the Iraqi camel population of between 120,000 to some 200,000 in the early 1960s. The chart also illustrates quite graphically that figures from all sources must be used with the utmost caution.

Table 2.11
Iraq: Camels Taxed, 1934-39

Year	*Camels*
1934	68,590
1935	59,976
1936	73,327
1937	71,051
1938	82,403
1939	2071*

Source: Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1940* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1942), 91.
*The animal head tax, or koda, was repealed and replaced by a new law which took effect in 1939, accounting for the unusually low figure in that year.

Chart 2.5
Iraq, Camel Populations, 1953-87, Various Sources



Sources: 1953-74, Said Marei, "Report on Agricultural Policy in Iraq," cited in Abdulwahab M. al-Dahiri, *Economics of the Agricultural Sector in Iraq*, (n.p., 1976), 217; 1959-87, "Old FAO," *Production Yearbook* (Rome: Food and Agricultural Organization, various years); 1961-87, "New FAO": FAOSTAT Online Database, http://apps.fao.org.

Najd, Hijaz and the Hajj

Whatever hardships or occasional windfalls may have resulted from the First World War, the Qasim region once again became centrally important in the camel trade in the 1920s and 1930s. And just as before the war, Egypt was one of the principal destinations of the camels produced in northern Arabia. In addition, the 'Agayl were certainly involved in supplying camels for the boom in demand in

Palestine during the period. An account from the early 1920s by Ameen Rihani attests to the vitality and size of the camel market at Burayda.

> ...camels of every quality and colour, from Oman as well as from Iraq, the best and the worst, are brought to it for sale or for barter. ...Camel Square during business hours suggested in its babble and tumult the Stock Exchange. Instead of hands in the air, however, there are bamboo sticks; and instead of clerks running in every direction there are men riding up and down the Square, at a walk, at a gallop, to exhibit the qualities of the animal they would sell or buy.[99]

As in earlier periods, transactions were carried out in a number of ways in the camel market itself. A common method was for the dallals to sell animals by auction.

> Another camel I saw dragging its owner behind it – he held to its tail – while he continued to cry: 'Twenty, twenty!' Those who were bidding cut off its line of retreat, and the sound of the switches on its hide was like the patter of rain. 'It is not worth a bamboo!' a boy exclaimed. 'Twenty, twenty reals!' persisted the owner. 'Twenty! Allah bless thee with it' (which is the Arab auctioneer's equivalent for Sold).[100]

Nonetheless, this period was marked by great waves of internal conflict, with the forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz eventually conquering Hijaz and Asir, and the Akhwan rising in opposition against the Saudi ruler, his allies, and tribes in neighbouring countries. Just as during earlier times of conflict, transport was an important factor for the contending forces, and in the Hijaz-Najd arena, the camel continued to be the most important pack animal in the 1920s. When the forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz could not collect adequate numbers of camels from among their own tribes, they purchased them on the open market. According to a report from 1926, 'Abd al-'Aziz purchased 500 camels in central Arabia and used them to transport military supplies and materiel used in his conflict with Hijaz.[101] On a later occasion, an official motorcade with some 19 vehicles reportedly arrived in Jauf bringing the new governor and other officials with "bags of money" to buy "as many riding camels as possible from the tribes immediately, on condition those purchased be all in good condition."[102] The officials were said to be paying "very

high prices, 25 to 30 liras per camel in good flesh, and seemed to be in a great hurry, and scarcely bargained at all." This rare windfall gave great pleasure to the bedouin, "as they were coining money and selling their riding camels like hotcakes."[103]

The demands of the annual pilgrimage throw into high relief the ways in which the camel market was affected by the coming of modern transportation. Certainly, the situation around the Holy Cities was unique: no other place in the region received such a large and sudden influx of travelers at once each year. Nonetheless, the evolution of transport systems in Hijaz was illustrative of other locales in several ways. First, the arrival of motor transport in some ways pitted urban groups against nomads. Second, even as the use of motor transport increased, camels continued to be used, especially as a lower-cost alternative; and when the price for camel transport was raised to nearly equal that of motor transport, the camel was often the safer, if slower, method. Finally, as in other regions, non-economic factors, such as drought, had a large impact on camel transport.

Motor transport appears to have first been utilized for the pilgrimage on a limited basis in 1926, when authorities granted permission for an Egyptian company to establish service on the Jedda-Mecca route. In the following year, "any Moslem company or car owner" could apply for permission to carry pilgrims. By the end of the 1927 season, then, there were about 200 motor cars and lorries used for this purpose. In the early years of motor transport, as in other places, a *modus vivendi* had to be worked out between camels and cars. For example, the departure of motor transport was scheduled so as not to interfere with camel caravans. "Camels in the Hejaz are yet shy of mechanically propelled vehicles, and the track is in places too narrow to permit of passing."[104] The coming of the modern transport seems not to have had an adverse affect on camel transport during the first years.

> This season [1927] the number of pilgrims was so great and the difference in price between camel and motor hire so considerable that there were no signs of falling off in the demand for camels, but a time will presumably come, and that at no distant date, when the camel-men will either have to be satisfied with smaller profits or change their occupation for that of chauffeur.[105]

In fact, when faced with "smaller profits," the camel men went on strike. When they deemed their share of a return fare (50 rupees out of a fare of 100 rupees, the other half going to the government) for the trip Mecca or Jedda to Medina as insufficient, "they refused for some days after the Haj to provide camels and pilgrims were held up at Mecca for about fifteen days."[106]

By 1928 the number of motor vehicles had increased to more than 600, and the bedouin camel owners showed "active resentment at the introduction of cars in such large numbers." The government, in response, sanctioned an increase in the fares for camel hire, which was reported to have allowed the bedouin to make, "in spite of the competing car, as much profit as in previous years."[107]

Even during the 1930 hajj, when the number of motor vehicles passed 1,000, camels were used in significant numbers because they were required to carry pilgrim baggage. It was also reported that fewer pilgrims traveled by camel, but this may have resulted from *mutawwifin* (pilgrim guides) discouraging pilgrims from using camels in favor of cars because the mutawwafs could earn more money that way. Ironically, this sort of pressure was brought to bear in the opposite direction the following year, when the mutawwafs protested a change in car-hire rules issued by the government by coercing pilgrims to use camels instead. As a result, "some 2,000 pilgrims yielded to this persuasion."[108]

The world depression affected the pilgrimage seasons of the early 1930s in a number of ways. First, the number of overseas pilgrims dropped precipitously from

about 80,000 per year in the late 1920s to 20-30,000 through the early and middle 1930s. Second, the pilgrims had less money to spend once in Hijaz. As a result, "a considerable number of pilgrims used camels for the sake of economy."[109] Third, despite increased use of camels, the local bedouin economy was under such stress, that when drought and high fodder prices struck around Medina in 1934, "camels practically starved, becoming too weak to carry their loads. Pilgrims therefore often had to walk long distances."[110] The situation seemed to have improved somewhat in 1937, which was characterized "a good pilgrimage for camelmen." The reason given was that in contrast to the previous year, the "pilgrimage to Arafat was done usually on camel-back, not in motors." It should be noted, however, that along other routes, motor vehicle use increased, especially as the world economy and the spending ability of the pilgrims improved through the decade. Giving the camel men a monopoly on the route to Arafat may have reflected their ability to gain an important economic concession from the government, but it also illustrated how desperate their situation had become since the arrival of motor transport. During the 1930s, in the battles between the camel and the car, there were no lopsided victories on either side. The use of camels for transport by pilgrims declined, but even by the 1938-39 season, they offered the least expensive (if slowest) way to make the circuit from Jedda to Mecca, Arafat, Medina and back.[111] Camel transport persisted for a variety of reasons -- religion, economy, tradition -- and its eventual demise was to come only after the spreading of oil wealth to the pilgrimage routes of the Hijaz.

Finally, transport was not the only use for camels around the Holy Cities. As was mentioned earlier, animal sacrifice was an integral part of the pilgrimage. In 1939, for example, some 400,000 animals were reportedly sacrificed at Mina.[112]

Most of these were sheep, with smaller numbers of goats, cows and camels. A study of the 1982 hajj season found that fewer than one percent of the 500,000 animals slaughtered at Mina were camels.[113] Even so, an annual demand of perhaps 4,000 camels or more could be assumed.

Raiding, the Market and the Case of the 53 Camels

Just as the raiding and theft of animals played an integral role in bedouin society for many years, so did the laws and customs relating to the return of purloined animals. Under the tribal law of *'arafa*, a claimant with credible evidence that his animal was stolen could recover the beast from a third party who purchased it legally from someone else (presumably the raider or thief).[114]

Such cases arose frequently, and one was recorded by the British Political Agent in Kuwait, H.R.P. Dickson. It involved 53 camels claimed by Najdi owners but which found their way into the hands of Kuwaiti tribesmen. After a considerable amount of negotiations, which involved representatives of 'Abd al-'Aziz and the Ruler of Kuwait, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Jabar al-Sabah, the matter was resolved in 1930. Al Sabah agreed to allow the Najdi claimants to come to Kuwait and identify their animals. Once a Najdi owner identified a camel as his own, the Kuwaiti owner would have to prove that he had bought it. If unable to do so, the Kuwaiti would have to relinquish the animal without compensation. On the other hand, if the Kuwaiti could give proof of the sale, then the camel would be turned over to the shaykh of Kuwait, who would return it to the Najdi claimant only after having received payment from the seller identified by the Kuwaiti. These payments, then, would be turned over to the Kuwaiti buyers.[115] In the end, 43 camels were returned to the Najdi claimants (the remaining ten being found to be dead, beyond Kuwaiti borders, or erroneously claimed).

This case illustrates several important aspects of the camel market in the interwar period. First, despite official efforts, raiding and theft continued, as will be shown in chapters Three and Four. In fact, with the emergence of new states, a government official's attitude toward raiding was now coloured by whether his state or that of a neighbour was the victim. Second, while many raided camels wound up in the region's camel markets, it is clear that a large number was sold as well to other bedouin. Third, the list of prices in Table 2.12 provides a unique and detailed snapshot of the range of prices at the time. It should be pointed out as well that one buyer on the list (Wasmiyah bint Falah) was a woman, and that the commerce in camels was not the exclusive domain of men. Finally, it is somewhat striking that even though the early 1930s was a period of economic hardship on the peninsula the trade in camels seems to have been brisk.

As for the prices, several features stand out. As one would expect from the evidence of earlier periods, there was a large difference between the lowest (23 riyals) and the highest (120 riyals) price per animal. The average price was 69 riyals, and most animals fell close to this amount. Another notable feature is that the prices are not dramatically lower than before the war. Dividing by 10 converts the prices to pounds sterling, and the resulting figure of about £7 for what one would expect to be an "average" quality animal compares favorably with prices for earlier periods, when a "good" quality animal was worth about £10. This large sample of prices for animals of varying quality provides a strong counter-arguement against the widely accepted premise that camel prices throughout the region had collapsed after the war, resulting in a "catastrophic" disintegration of the economy

Table 2.12

Camel Purchases by Kuwaiti Bedouin from Najdi Bedouin, 1930

List No. 1			
Buyer	***Seller***	***Camels***	***Value, S.Riyals***
Mu'idh al-Utaibi	Ali bin Badr of Zilfi	1	50
Qadhdhab bin Juraidhi	Abdur Rahman as-Suw ailmi Al-Anezi	1	77
Dhubaib ash-Shaimmari	Muhummad bin Fuhaid al-Ajman	1	50
ditto	Mish'il bin Ghuraisah	1	110
ditto	Mishkhat al-'Affasi	1	70
Abdullah ash-Shamali	Fahad bin Muhammad al-Maimuni	1	88
Falah bin Khasw an	Abdul Hadi bin Dakhil adh-Dhaini	1	60
Slave of D. ash-Shammari	Ibn Batran Shukhaitir an-Naji'i	1	60
Abdullah al-Marzuq	Nasir al-Kulaib ar-Rashidi	1	55
'Ubaid al-Mutalaqqim	Majid bin Abdullah al-Majid	1	35
Nahar al-Mutalaqqim	Juhaish fin Subaih bin Za'ab	1	80
Haif bin Hajraf	Abdullah bin Khalf al-Maimuni	1	45
Sa'udan	Sa'ad bin Dafi	1	40
Wasmiyah bint Falah	Mut'ib bin Lasqah	1	23
'Ubaid al-Mutalaqqim	'Id ash-Shuqaw i ad-Dausari	1	85
Mid'aj bin Nasir	Muh. bin Khuzail of the Hitlan	1	45
'Utaiyiq bin Nasir	A follow er to Muh. al-Hitlani	1	43
Radhan	Ghunaim bin Khafrah	1	44
Sa'ud bin Mansur	Lail bin Lail	1	60
Al-Khammash	Faisal bin Dhumaid	1	65
Abdullah al-Marzuq	Hasan bin Dubais al-Jibili	1	52
ditto	Miqdhal bin Haiyin	1	62
Hamud ad-Duw ailih	Suw ailim ar-Rashidi	1	80
Butaihan al-Muw aiziri	Sa'ad bin Julaighim	1	38
Dhmaid bin Nayim	Bidah bin Hamad of the Salih	1	80
Hasan bin Arbid	Husain bin Shaufan al-'Utaibi	1	120
Dhubaih ash-Shammari	Salih al-Mutairi	1	80
Musab bin Qatw an	Ibn Fulaih of the Jauw i	1	70
Hasan al-Muraikhi	Mushi'ib al-Affasi	1	110
Sa'id al-Hajri	ghazi bin Basma	2	230
	Subtotal	**31**	**2107**
List No. 2			
Buyer	***Seller***	***Camels***	***Value, S.Riyals***
Hazza' bin Hamad	Faraj bin Mashur	2	220
Zaid al-'Aru	Mutlaq as-Sur	2	150
Sa'ud bin Shilash	ditto	1	50
Sa'ud bin Qaranis	ditto	1	40
Hazza' bin Hamad	Faraj bin Mashur	1	70
The heirs of al-Hubait	Farhan bin Mashur	1	40
Falah bin Khasw an	Mutlaq as-Sur	1	40
Miz'il ash-Shammari	Raja ar-Rufidi	2	200
'Aw adh bin Suw arij	Farhan bin Mashur	1	40
	Subtotal	**12**	**850**
	TOTAL	***43***	***2957***

Source: R/15/1/48, Dickson to Political Agent, Bushire, 24 January 1931. All names are rendered as in the original.

of the camel nomads.[116] Scattered prices from the 1920s are equally strong; for example, two riding camels in Kuwait in 1925, one valued at £10, the other 300 riyals (about £30).[117] Examples from 1936 appear in Table 2.13 below.

Table 2.13
Value of Camels Owned by Two Kuwaitis, 1936

Age (yrs.)	*Description*	*Value (MT$)*
5	yellow she-camel	80
6	grey she-camel	95
8	grey he-camel	100
8	yellow she-camel	120
6	red she-camel	85

Source: R/15/1/534, Ruler of Kuwait to Political Agent, Kuwait, 6 June 1936. The camels belonged to two Kuwaitis who were arrested by Iraqi officials on smuggling charges. The officials confiscated the camels.

World War Two and Afterward: Last Caravans of the 'Agayl

By the coming of World War Two, the use of camels for transport in the settled zone had declined markedly, but had not disappeared. For example, as a result of wartime inflation, some camel owners in Palestine reportedly earned a rate of return of 134 percent for hiring their camels in 1943.[118] In addition, while the export market of camels for slaughter in Egypt began to seriously dwindle, the price per animal rose, as seen in Table 2.14. (Palestine continued to be the route through which northern Arabia's camels were exported to Egypt, so its imports give a rough indication of this trade.) This may have resulted from general scarcity; more probably it reflected a general increase in prices during wartime.

By the 1950s, camel exports from Saudi Arabia dwindled to almost nothing. After 1948, the traditional route the 'Agayl used to take from Gaza to al-'Arish was closed off by the creation of Israel. According to customs statistics for 1951, for example, only 337 camels valued at 148,645 Saudi riyals were exported to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, and Egypt. Nonetheless, a large number of camel skins were exported the same year: 13,307 skins valued at SR 63,578.[119] This is indicative of the large market in Saudi Arabia for camel meat, since most of the skins were the

Table 2.14
Palestine: Camel Imports, 1921-44

Year	Camels	Value (P£)	Per Animal
1921	10,866		
1930	18,115		
1932	7,155		
1934	26,138		
1937	19,554		
1942	31,262	316,232	10.11
1943	20,078	360,289	17.94
1944	5,266	125,795	23.88

Sources: Himadeh, *Economic Organization*, 177; and *A Survey of Palestine* (London: HM Printing Office, 1946), 471.

by-product of camels slaughtered for meat. Figures for the town of 'Unayza for 1964, for example, show that camel meat was more popular than mutton or beef.[120]

The 'Agayl, who for decades had engaged in long-distance commerce in camels, would continue their trading operations in other commodities, often over the same networks. The bedouin who used to gain most of their sustenance from camel's milk and income from the sale of camels, would find other sources of income. Most of them took advantage of the opportunities offered by the nascent oil industry in Saudi Arabia in the 1950s, but even as former caravan trails were paved over and thousands of vehicles imported into the country, the herds of camels would not disappear. In fact the herds would increase in size and in value.

In Summary

The data presented in this chapter indicate that the trade in camels was affected by a complex array of factors, and while many camels were used for transport purposes, there existed also a large market for camel meat. For example, Egypt appears to have been one of the largest single markets for northern Arabian camels from about 1892 until 1916. The trade resumed at a somewhat lower level after the First World War, and gradually diminished by 1948, when the land route to Egypt was cut off. During this period, the prices of camels and the volume of trade seem to have been influenced by such factors as the level of cotton exports from Egypt, relations with Sudan, and the level of conflict affecting overland trade.

In addition, the evidence suggests that demands for local transport could drive demand for camels (and thus their price) up at certain times. World War One appeared to be one such period of high camel prices, and some years of economic expansion (especially involving construction and increased trade) in Mandatory Palestine were another.

Finally, the data on camel populations demonstrate that drought played a major role in the pastoral economy. However, the evidence also suggests that camel populations could recover from such calamities. After serious drought in the 1930s, the Transjordan camel population witnessed a gradual, if incomplete, recovery in subsequent years. On the other hand, the camel population in Syria appeared to increase during the 1950s, and decline precipitously in the wake of drought (and political turmoil) in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In Iraq, major declines in the number of camels seem to have occurred in the 1970s or early 1980s. In all these cases, it appears that factors other than developments in transportation affected the number of camels herded by the bedouin. The fact that camel herds persisted and prospered in some places suggests strongly that the camel retained some of its importance among the populations of northern Arabia.

Not all camels changed hands in commercial transactions. Before the 1930s, thousands of camels were taken by force each year as a result of intertribal raiding. This type of transfer was also important to the bedouin, and changes in the pattern of raiding are examined in Chapter Three.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

[1] Richard Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel* (New York: Morningside Press, 1990), 36-7.
[2] C.G.F. Simkin, *The Traditional Trade of Asia* (London: OUP, 1968), 11.
[3] "Within Bedouin society, however, camels are not bought and sold, and this is a point which cannot be overemphasized. Within Bedouin society camels are distributed by kinship mechanisms, and never by commercial mechanisms." Sweet, "Camel Raiding of North Arabian Bedouin," *American Anthropologist* 67 (1965): 1137.
[4] For example, see Anne Blunt, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd* (1881; London: Century, 1985), 180, for an account of a Ruwayli buying 12 young "scraggly" camels from the Shammar. While many camels were indeed "distributed by kinship mechanisms" as well as by raiding, it stands to reason that bedouins also bought camels from each other, if not for cash, then in exchanges in kind, as noted in Antonin Jaussen, *Coutumes des Arabes au Pays de Moab* (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1908), 259: "For example, in the camps, a mare is exchanged for five or six camels, a fine dhalul for two strong camels. In the transactions among the Arabs, it is *bedel* [exchanges in kind] that replaces the use of silver in buying and selling." Finally, see the section in this chapter below: "Raiding, the Market and the Case of the 53 Camels."
[5] Jibrail S. Jabbur, *Bedouins of the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, eds. Suhayl Jabbur and Lawrence I. Conrad (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), 7. The author does not give a date for these events, but it can be assumed they occurred in the period between the two world wars.
[6] Soraya Altorki and Donald P. Cole, *Arabian Oasis City: The Transformation of 'Unayzah* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 71-72.
[7] PRO, Air Ministry Records, AIR 23/292, Reports of Special Service Officer (henceforth, SSO) Ramadi, 26 June 1925.
[8] Plaisted in *The Desert Route to India*, ed. Douglas Carruthers (1928; Nendeln, Germany: Kraus Reprint, 1967), 63, 68-9, 93. It is not clear what these mainly "young camels" were eventually used for. Since younger animals tended to have more tender meat, it is possible they were used for slaughter. However, there is no reason to exclude their use as transport animals or breeding stock, either.
[9] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 1:70.
[10] The one-humped Arabian dromedary was bred with the two-humped Bactrian camel of Central Asia to produce a hybrid which was used mainly for transport in those parts of Anatolia (east and southeast) that were closest to camel-producing regions. See Richard Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel* (New York: Morningside Press, 1990), 231-35.
[11] References to the 'Agayl in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Iraq refer principally to their activities as fighters and caravan guides. It is only in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that the group is closely identified in the sources as camel merchants, agents, and petty traders. 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani Ibrahim, *Najdiyun wara' al-hudud: "al-'Uqaylat"* (London: Dar al-Saqi, 1991), 68-192.
[12] Ibrahim, *Najdiyun*, 19-25; 69. Information on the organisation of the early 'Agayl groups is scarce. Burckhardt, oversimplifying, no doubt, stated that in Baghdad, the leader of the 'Agayl was "always some native of Derayah, chosen from among themselves and confirmed by the Pasha." Burckhardt, *Notes*, 2:29-30.
[13] Ibrahim, *Najdiyun*, 227. See also Ibrahim al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat* (Riyadh: Dar al-Asasalah li al-thaqafah wa al-nashr wa al- 'alam, 1985), 32-43, who notes that the period was also marked by violent competition among leaders in Qasim and Jabal Shammar for control of the hajj and trade caravan routes between Iraq and the Holy Cities.
[14] When the deserts of northern Arabia were safe for caravans thanks to the strong rule of Muhammad Ibn Rashid (1869-97), several Damascene families worked as camel buyers alongside the 'Agayl. However, when insecurity in the badia increased after the ruler's death, only one Damascene family, the Ma'rawi, continued to work as buyers. Great Britain, Admiralty War Staff, *A Handbook of Arabia*, 2 vols. (London: 1916), 2:17.

[15] Alois Musil, *Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928), 279. Al-Musallam recounts a purchase of 182 head of camel made by his father, an 'Agayli, who subsequently lost a great deal of money because the price dropped. Al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*, 85. See also the section on 'Agayl agents in Ibid., 87-8.
[16] W. Tweedie, *The Arabian Horse* (1894; Beirut: Librairie du Liban, n.d.), 83, 296.
[17] Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2: 18.
[18] For a description of the components of an 'Agayl caravan, see al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*, 63-6.
[19] On the hospitality of the 'Agayl in Amman and their exchanging of information, and on the practices of 'Agayl brokers, see Ibid., 71-2, 89.
[20] Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2:18. According to Doughty, while he was traveling between Hail and Qasim he was mistaken by some Banu 'Ali bedouin for a camel broker "from the border lands", which they called *mushowwam.* Charles Montague Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, 2 vols. (New York: Random House, 1936), 2:331.
[21] Al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*, 70.
[22] Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 280.
[23] For example, see Jaussen, *Coutumes*, 259-60.
[24] Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2:19.
[25] Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 314-5.
[26] Musil, *Northern Negd* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928), 46. In addition, I encountered a similar reaction when passing through the Saudi town of Turayf in 1994. When I asked a bedouin taxi driver whether he knew of the 'Agayl, he replied in a somewhat sneering manner, "Ah, yes. They are all rich merchants."
[27] Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 280-1. "The 'Akejl have in every large clan their brother, *ah,* to whom they pay, *jehih*, from four to five Turkish pounds ($18 to $22.50), one good riding camel, and two or three good cloaks annually."
[28] "...[T]he trader is one of the chief sources of income of the bedouin chief. On all camels bought at his tent, the chief receives a small bonus, usually a [Maria Theresa] dollar per camel. This is termed the '*haqq al aqal'* or the 'dues of the knee hobble,' alluding to the camels that are purchased and hobbled in front of the tent." Private Papers Collection, Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford, (henceforth, SAC) Glubb Papers, "Ships of the Desert," (undated typescript, c. 1926), Iraq S. Desert. The price received by the sheikh (c. 1909) was one-half or one *mejidi*, according to Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 280.
[29] Musil, *Northern Negd*, 135-6. The reference is to 'Agayl staying with the Wuld Sulayman, c. 1915.
[30] According to SAC Glubb, "Ships of the Desert," many merchants would stop at the tent of each shaykh whose dira they crossed and amicably negotiate the khuwa. "But at other times the dealer may endeavor to slip through unperceived. If the sheikh hears of it, he will ride in pursuit and demand his tolls, or, if they be refused, he will seize a number of the camels as his surety. ... Even should the merchant evade his pursuers, the chief will not abandon his claim, but will lie in wait for the same dealer in succeeding years, until he obtains his rights."
[31] Musil, *Manners and Customs,* 280, referring to the Rwala c. 1910.
[32] The relatives of the merchants traced the two Singara to Iraq, where they had emigrated to the Shammar and hidden the gold. A tribal judge decided the two should lick a piece of red-hot iron as a trial of their truthfulness. Rather than do this, the Singara confessed and the merchants' families recovered 200 Turkish pounds in gold. Musil, *Northern Negd*, 132. The story was related to Musil on March 3, 1915. For an account of a raid on an 'Agayl caravan by the Hukaysh section of the Bani Sakhr in 1893, see Eugene Rogan, "Ottomans, Merchants and Tribes in the Syrian Frontier (1867-1900)," in *Histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman et de la Turquie (1326-1960)*, ed. Daniel Panzac (Paris: Peeters, 1995), 257-59.
[33] G.E. Leachman, "A Journey in North-Eastern Arabia," *GJ* 38 (March 1911): 265-274.
[34] Al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*. 84.
[35] "The main markets for sheep are Aleppo and Homs. ...In all, the city of Damascus consumes each year not less than 100,000 sheep and 150,000 lambs; most of the latter are raised in Syria itself." A. Ruppin, [describing the situation c. 1914] *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet,* in Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent, 1800-1914: A Documentary History* (New York: OUP, 1988), 326-7. Also: "The total yearly wool trade of Aleppo, Homs, and Hama may amount to an average of 5 million francs, of

which Aleppo's share is 60 percent, Hama's 25 percent, and that of Homs 15 percent. In addition, there is not insignificant wool trade in Damascus, to which the beduins of Hauran and Transjordan bring their wool and wash it in the Barada river." Ibid, 327.

[36] For an examination of the horse trade from Arabia to India, see Hala Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf: 1745-1900* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), "The Horse Trade" (Ch. 6), 159-183.

[37] A mosque of the Sakhana is recorded during this period. See Brigitte Marino, *Le Faubourg Du Midan à Damas à l'Époque Ottomane, Espace Urbain, Société et Habitat (1742-1830)* (Damascus: Institut Française de Damas, 1997), 94. The author noted that there were inhabitants of Maghrebi and Egyptian origin living in Midan, but did not mention inhabitants of Najdi origin. Having based her research on the records of the Sharia court in Midan, it is also noteworthy that the author did not find any information on the camel trade or on camel merchants. (In fact, she stated in a footnote that the commerce in camels by the residents of Qubaybat, a section of Midan, is better documented in the fifteenth century.) It thus appears that persons involved in hiring or selling camels did not used the court system during the period of Marino's study. My survey of records from the same court for the latter half of the nineteenth century also failed to bring to light any material on these subjects.

[38] According to Doughty, the 'Agayl were "Arabs of the blood..., lean lithe bodies of swarthy and sorry aspect, unlike the broad white faces and sleek persons of Damascus citizens. The Damascenes hold them for little better than Beduw, they also accounting all the Nejd country people of the purer Arabian speech, and rightly Beduins..." Doughty, *Travels,* 1:49

[39] A *dallal* in 'Unayzah in the 1920s received a quarter riyal per camel. Altorki and Cole, *Arabian Oasis*, 72.

[40] Al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*, 75. The days of operation for these markets were: Gaza: Thursday and Friday; Dayr Balah: Saturday; Khan Younis: Sunday; and Beersheba (Bi'r Saba'): Tuesday and Wednesday.

[41] Scarcity is not the only problem. The lack of consensus on the state of the market is reflected in contemporaneous reports. For example, according to one report, about 12,000 to 14,000 camels were exported from Mesopotamia each year. FOCP 9324, George Lloyd, "Report on ... British Trade in Mesopotamia," 1908, 97, in Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt general eds., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print* (University Publications of America, 1984) Part I, Series B, Vol. 16. And in Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2: 20: "The 'Iraq yields no camels."

[42] René Tresse, *Le Pèlerinage Syrien aux Villes Saints de l'Islam* (Paris: Imprimerie Chaumette, 1937), 145.

[43] Ruppin's *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet* was published in 1916, *A Handbook of Arabia* in 1917. Thus we can assume that data from these sources refers to the period 1900-1916.

[44] While most camels were taken to market on overland routes, some were transported by ship. According to a nineteenth century account, camels were shipped from al-Wajh across the Red Sea to Egypt. Doughty, *Travels*, 1:322. Camels were shipped from other Arabian ports as well.

[45] It is likely that this was a continuation of the trade mentioned by Burckhardt in the beginning of the nineteenth century, in which Arabian camels were used for breeding purposes in Anatolia. According to one estimate for 1913, there were 314,810 camels in Turkey, presumably used mainly for transport. In addition, there were 339,432 horses, 1,375,715 mules and donkeys, and 2,397,348 oxen. Philip Ernest Schoenberg, "The Evolution of Transport in Turkey (Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor) under Ottoman Rule, 1856-1918," *Middle Eastern Studies* 13:3 (October 1977): 362, citing Ahmed Emin Yalman, *Turkey in the World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 88-9.

[46] A. Ruppin, "Trade with the Beduins, 1914," in Issawi, *Fertile Crescent*, 327; Ibrahim, *Najdiyun*, 162; and Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2:17, 20.

[47] Julius Euting, *Tagebuch Einer Reise in Inner-Arabien* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1896), 32.

[48] Homer Davenport, *My Quest for the Arab Horse* (London: Grant Richards, 1911), 239.

[49] "If rainless years follow rainless years there comes in the end a murrain. It was not many years since such a season, when a camel was sold for a crown by the nomads, and languishing thelûls, before worth sixty in their health, for two or three reals, (that was to the villagers in Kasîm,) sooner than the beasts remaining upon their hands should perish in the khála.... The price of camels in Arabia had been nearly doubled of late years after the great droughts for Egypt, the Abyssinian wars, and for Syria ." Doughty, *Travels,* 1:665-6.

[50] The trade was interrupted not only by political unrest in Sudan, but also by British authorities in Egypt who wished to prevent the smuggling of arms into Sudan. Yitzhak Nakhash, "Reflections on a Subsistence Economy: Production and Trade of the Mahdist Sudan, 1881-1898," in *Essays on the Economic History of the Middle East,* ed. Elie Kedouri and Sylvia G. Haim (London: Frank Cass, 1988), 62-3. (When he does mention trade passing from Sudan into Egypt, Nakhash does not mention camels.)
[51] Terence Walz, *Trade between Egypt and Bilad as-Sudan, 1700-1820* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1978), 34. In the eighteenth century, some records show that 4,400 camels from Sudan per year were sold in Egypt.
[52] "But it must be supposed that in the first instance the bulk of the proceeds from the sale of their cotton -- some £40 to £50 million between the years of 1861 and 1866-- went to the cultivators themselves." E.R. Owen, "Egyptian Cotton and the American Civil War," in *The Economic History of the Middle East 1800-1914: A Book of Readings*, ed. Charles Issawi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 425.
[53] Musil, *Manners and Customs*, 348-9.
[54] This conclusion was based on the following: first, camels indeed were imported into Egypt during the period from "Turkey" (i.e., from Arabia via the Ottoman lands of Syria and Palestine) and were recorded on other government reports (see Table 2.6). Second, there is no indication in any source that animals other than cattle, sheep and camels were imported from this region in large numbers. Third, it can be assumed that because the Egyptian customs administration was patterned on a European model which did not have an established category for "camels," they were simply counted as "other live animals."
[55] Prices for 1902-3 were obtained by dividing numbers of camels in Table 2.6 with the values of camel imports in Chart 2.1.
[56] Epstein, "The Economic Situation of the Transjordan Tribes," *JRCAS* 26 (January. 1939): 179.
[57] Musil, *Arabia Deserta: a topographical survey* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1927), 438.
[58] Egypt, Ministry of Finance, *The Import Trade of Egypt, 1912-1916* (Cairo: Government Press, 1918), 1-2.
[59] *Arab Bulletin*, 110 (April 30, 1919), 44.
[60] Admiralty, *Handbook*, 2:21.
[61] Musil, *Arabia Deserta*, 438. The period referred to is December 1914.
[62] Great Britain, *Gazetteer of Arabia* (Simla: Government Monotype Press, 1917), 3:1720.
[63] According to one source, quoting the British consul in Damascus, Bassam "made himself a millionaire during the war supplying Allenby with horses and camels..." E. Alexander Powell, *By Camel and Car to the Peacock Throne* (Garden City, NY: Garden City Publishing Co., n.d.), 63. For a contemporary account of the smuggling of commodities between Damascus and Kuwait during the war, see *Arab Bulletin* 86 (21 April 1918).
[64] *Arab Bulletin* 45 (23 March 1917). The report was signed "Bimbashi Garland."
[65] H.B. St. John. Philby, *The Heart of Arabia,* 2 vols (London: Constable, 1922), 1:8.
[66] PRO, Foreign Office records, FO 684/1, Reports from the British consul in Damascus, 1924.
[67] Great Britain, *Economic Survey of Saudi Arabia*, 1936. 9. It is not clear why livestock were not exempt from customs duties.
[68] See, for example India Office Records, R/15/1/48, Intelligence Summary by H.R.P. Dickson, 15-30 April 1931, 3.
[69] R/15/1/48, Confidential Dispatch from A. Ryan, Jedda, 11 January, 1932. "...I can no longer disregard the reiterated statements made to me regarding hunger and increased mortality. To give one example, possibly exaggerated, I am told of Bedouin dying in Medina at the rate of thirty-five a day." More details regarding this situation appear in Chapter Five.
[70] Ibid., Intelligence summary by H.R.P. Dickson, 15-30 April, 1931.
[71] Glubb, "The Bedouins of Northern 'Iraq," *JRCAS* 22 (1935): 17.
[72] Ibid., 16.
[73] FO 905/38, Transjordan monthly report, August 1936.
[74] SAC Glubb, Transjordan monthly report, November 1932.
[75] Ibid., July 1935.

[76] Egypt, Ministry of Finance, Customs Administration, *Rapport sur le Mouvement Commercial de l'Egypte pour l'Année 1923* (Cairo: Government Press, 1924), 4.
[77] Ibid., 1926, 12; and 1927, 7.
[78] Ibrahim Hussein Kabil, *Le Commerce Extérieur de l'Egypte* (Paris: Librairie de la Cour d'Appel et de l'Ordre des Avocats, 1934), 79.
[79] Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 134-5.
[80] Al-Musallam, *al-'Uqaylat*, 71-2.
[81] Great Britain, *Report... on the Administration of Palestine and Transjordan for the year 1925* (London: HMSO, 1926), 40.
[82] FO 905/15/34, Monthly Report, Transjordan, June 1934.
[83] Emanuel Marx, *Bedouin of the Negev* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 10.
[84] Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract, 1940* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1942), 105.
[85] FO 905/15/34, Monthly Report, Transjordan, June 1934. If we conservatively postulate one return journey per week, this salt caravan would require at least 385 camels. Salt production at Azraq was carried out mostly by Syrian Druze. This reports states that the industry became possible only after the establishment of a desert police post there in 1931, before which it is said that the inhabitants of Kaf, wishing to maintain their salt monopoly in the region, would prohibit salt production in Azraq. However, Burckhardt mentions bedouins bringing salt from Azraq to Damascus in the early nineteenth century. Burckhardt, *Notes*, 1:192.
[86] National Archives, Record Group 59, Review of press for states of the Levant under French mandate, Nov. 1-15, 1935, American Consulate General, Beirut. The transport of camels by ship for military uses in distant theatres of operations was not unprecedented. For example, Britain shipped more than 3,500 camels from its Indian possessions in 1885 to Suakin to bolster camel fighting and transport groups. See IOR L/MIL/7/6933. Other imported animals included horses, mules, ponies and sheep. During World War One, British forces used Indian as well as local camels in various camel brigades. See PRO, War Office records, WO 95/4403-4 and 4723. Importing camels was not without its particular risks, however. During World War One, imported camels were reported to have suffered a variety of maladies. Camels were also shipped out of the region. In 1935, according to the American report from Beirut, a single female camel accidentally was shipped with the 800 males, "and when covered by one of the male camels, havoc ensued on board, the remaining camels moaning and howling jealously, and going into a stampede in which several were bruised." Italian buyers were also reported in Saudi Arabia during the same period, offering £15 gold and more per animal. They eventually exported only about 1,000 animals via Yanbu after being promised 12,000 by Saudi authorities. *Saudi Arabia Annual Report 1935*, 20, 38.
[87] SAC Glubb, Iraq (4), Monthly reports from Ramadi, n.d. [circa April 1923].
[88] Himadeh, *Economic Organization*, 425; and Norman. Burns, *The Tariff of Syria 1919-1932* (Beirut: American Press, 1933), 97.
[89] Ahmad Wasfi Zakariyya, *Asha'ir al-Sham* 2nd ed. (1945, 1947; [Damascus]: Dar al-Fikr, 1983), 244. It is doubtful that all these animals were used locally, and it is unclear why they were said to be sold in the Golan, where no other sources mention a large camel market.
[90] For example, according to a British official in Basra, the Dhafir raided some 300 camels in 1925 from the Dahamshah, and the following day "the Dhafir brought in some camels for sale in Zubair, amongst which were eleven of those looted." The official suspected that the raiders were planning to "dispose of the remainder of the looted camels in the Muntafiq area and Kuwait." AIR 23/271, Reports of SSO Basra, 18 August 1925.
[91] Great Britain, *Report... on the Administration of Iraq for 1927*, (London: HM Printing Office, 1928), 55.
[92] PRO, Colonial Office records, CO 732/37/2, Extract from Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, March 1929. The report also noted that "No merchant would risk his capital in buying camels, were they likely to be seized from him without compensation by any bedouin who claimed them as once having been his property."
[93] Jabbour, *Bedouin*, 35.
[94] Syria, *Recueil des Statistiques Syriennes Comparées (1928-1968)* (Damascus: Arab Office of Press and Documentation, 1970), 53. Camels were doubtless slaughtered by private individuals as well.

[95] SAC Glubb, Monthly reports from Transjordan, December 1937. No figures were kept for the number of travellers, but Glubb reported that "many hundreds" of Syrians were using the land route annually, despite the Syrian government's refusal to recognize it as a legal pilgrimage route. Ibid., March 1938.
[96] Ibid., February 1939.
[97] Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 194-5.
[98] Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf* (London: 1944), 339.

> The bedouin of Iraq are willing to work as mechanics for the oil companies, or as policemen, or in the Camel Corps. Formerly they all despised agriculture and the fellahin, but the decline in the value of the camel as a means of transport is forcing a change upon them and apparently some bedouin have accepted lands in the Abu Ghuraib canal zone.

Unfortunately, the writer offers no evidence of lower camel prices, and the same volume notes on page 476 that the number of camels for which koda was paid was increasing.
[99] Ameen Rihani, *Ibn Sa'oud of Arabia, His People and His Land* (London: Constable, 1928), 302-3. The author stated that 15,000 camels, "a conservative estimate," were sold each year at Burayda.
[100] Ibid., 302.
[101] AIR 23/302, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 12 June 1926.
[102] SAC Glubb, Reports from Transjordan, G/283, 15 February 1931. Although the Bani Sakhr tribesman who witnessed the scene and carried the report to Glubb did not mention what the camels were to be used for, Glubb suspected that they may have been for a possible attack or a visit by an official.
[103] Ibid., G/325, 24 February 1931. This report came from a different informant than the above.
[104] FOCP 13439/28(i), "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1345" by F.H.W. Stonehewer-Bird, 24 September, 1927, in Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt, ed., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*, Part II, Series B, Vol. 14, *The Pilgrimage in the Reign of Ibn Saud, 1927-1939*, 5.
[105] FOCP 13439/28(i), "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1345" by F.H.W. Stonehewer-Bird, 24 September, 1927, in Bourne., *British Documents*, 6.
[106] Ibid. The camel men also went on strike in 1939, when the government increased camel hire and the entire increase went into its coffers. FOCP 15875/31(i), "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1357," by A.C. Trott, 5 Sept., 1939, in Ibid., 425.
[107] FOCP 13548/33(i) "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1346," by F.H.W. Stonehewer-Bird, 12 Sept., 1928, in Ibid., 35.
[108] FOCP 14088/61(i) "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1349," by Andrew Ryan, 26 Nov., 1931, in Ibid., 131.
[109] FOCP 14518/19(i) "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1351," by Andrew Ryan, 29 July, 1933, in Bourne, *British Documents*, 228.
[110] FOCP 14934/23(i) "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1353," by A.S. Calvert, 3 Aug., 1936, in Ibid., 305.
[111] The costs for this route were: motor car, £34; omnibus, £24; and camel, £16. A. McKie Frood, "Recent Economic and Social Developments in Sa'udi Arabia," *Geography* 24:125 (Sept. 1939): 165.
[112] FOCP 15875/31(i), "The Pilgrimage of A.H. 1357," by A.C. Trott, 5 Sept., 1939, in Robin Bidwell, ed., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*, Part II, Series B, Volume 14, *The Pilgrimage in the Reign of Ibn Saud, 1927-1939*, 425.
[113] Angelo Pesce and Elvira Garbrato Pesce, *Marvel of the Desert: The Camel in Saudi Arabia* (Jedda: Immel, 1984), 24. The study, which was aimed at eliminating wasted meat during the sacrifices, was carried out by researchers at Umm al-Qurah University in Mecca.
[114] For a detailed explanation of *'arafa*, see H.R.P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949), 434-9.
[115] R/15/1/48, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 2 November 1930.
[116] A.I. Pershits, "The Economic Life of the Nomads of Saudi Arabia," *Sovietskaya Etnografia* (Moscow) 1 (1959): 104-12, in Issawi, *EHME*, 343-49. Pershits used as evidence for his argument the camel prices in Aref El-Aref, *Bedouin Love, Law, and Legend*, (Jerusalem, 1944). (The subtitle of El-Aref's book, at least in English translation, is "Dealing exclusively with the Bedouin of Beersheba.") El-Aref's prices for a "good pack camel" were £20-30 before WWI, £50-100 during the war, and £3-6 after the war. While the prices may have been valid in part of Palestine at some

points in time, they most definitely did not reflect prices in the region as a whole.

[117] IOR, R/15/5/38 No. 62-S.

[118] Ya'akov Firestone, "Production and Trade in an Islamic Context: Sharika Contracts in the Transitional Economy of Northern Samaria, 1853-1943 (II)," *IJMES* 6 (1975): 319. The case referred to was in 1943.

[119] Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Finance, General Directorate of Customs, *Ihsa'iyyat 'am 1370H, 1951M*, (Riyadh, n.d.) 221. It is highly probable that more camels (as well as other products) reached external markets outside the control of customs.

[120] 'Abd al-Rahman Sadiq al-Sharif, *Mintaka 'Unayza: Dirasa 'Iqlimiyya* (Cairo: Matba'a al-Nahda al-'Arabiyya, 1969), 170. While camel meat continues to be consumed in the country, the trend has been for beef and mutton to increase in popularity. Thus while annual per capita consumption of camel meat was estimated at 5.4 kg. and beef was 1.7 kg. in the period 1974-76, the figure fell to 2.7 kg. for camel meat in the 1980-82 period while the amount for beef rose to 5.6 kg. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Agriculture and Water, Dept. of Economic Studies and Statistics, *Saudi Arabian Food Balance Sheets (1974-76) (1983-86)* (Riyadh, n.d.), 72-5.

CHAPTER THREE

BRITISH POLICIES, RAIDING, AND THE BEDOUIN OF IRAQ AND TRANSJORDAN, 1921-1940

The Shammar have a saying that raids are their agriculture. As the fellah *devotes himself more or less to his fields and crops all year round, so the Bedouin spends his year in raids.*[1]

> *"If you stop us raiding, you stop our source of life," says the Badawin, "for we have neither crops nor palm trees, nor are we shopkeepers able to sell goods and make money."*[2]
>
> "Ahna al-badu, ya sahib," *shouted Rai'an,* "rizqna al allah wa thumma min hel ghazwan." *["We are the bedouins, o Sahib! Our livelihood depends on God and secondly on raiding."]*[3]

One of the thorniest issues town powers had to contend with was that of bedouin raiding. This chapter will focus on how the British authorities in Iraq and Transjordan grappled with such questions as how and when to control raids. More importantly, it will show that raiding was a complex phenomenon that was motivated by a number of impulses. Finally, the chapter will analyze a large sample of data on raids and examine how new security regimes in the badia affected the economic situation of the tribes. It will provide details on the amount of property taken in raids and the cost in human casualties.

Raiding and its Role in Bedouin Society

The raid (*ghazzu*) was a complex and extensive institution among the bedouin of northern Arabia, and it functioned on a number of levels, motivated by varied impulses. Most simply, it could be called the primary occupation of most adult males in camel-herding tribes. Raiding was distinguished from thefts carried out by small groups or individuals, usually on foot, as well as from operations related to actual war involving large numbers of mounted troops. Sweet, whose

analysis of camel-raiding continues to be valuable for its detail and insight, divided raiding into two kinds. "Unilateral raiding" involved attacks on the livestock and other property of "non-Bedouin tribes or communities," while "reciprocal raiding" (the focus of her study) involved the taking of camels from "noble" tribes.[4]

In both cases, widely observed rules and conventions regulated the activity. For example, raids usually were not carried out between two friendly tribes. Instead, a declaration of hostilities normally had to be in place before raids were permissible. In addition, the prime motive for most raids was to obtain property rather than to inflict injury upon the victims. Finally, groups or individuals could reduce the likelihood of being raided while in a tribe's dira by paying a fee of "brotherhood" (khuwa) to a member of the tribe. (If raided by a tribe from outside the dira, the party paying the khuwa could have a better chance of recovering looted property.) As Sweet has pointed out, this system ensured the dominance of the most mobile (and therefore most militarily powerful) group, the camel-herding bedouin, among the other populations in northern Arabia. In addition, raiding provided a mechanism for the widespread circulation of camels in a variable environment which made camel-herding a boom-or-bust enterprise.

Basing his analysis on interviews and observations of the Rwala tribe, William Lancaster has added another dimension to our understanding of raiding. From the perspective of bedouin men themselves, raiding was a principal means to enhance their reputations by obtaining camels to give away to others.[5] Thus, the practice was closely intertwined with matters of "honour."

One role played by raiding that has not been dealt with explicitly in the literature is its educational and socializing functions. A boy's first raid was seen as

part of his passage into manhood. In this setting, where there were no formal schools, the more senior members of the expedition could, in word and action, pass on the wealth of their experience, not only in matters of taking camels by stealth, but also in being a man in bedouin society. Raiding was thus an educational process *par excellence* that could provide young men a vital body of information, including the location of water sources, camping places, pastures, and hiding places that the broad expanses of the badia contained. In addition, engaging in raiding as a regular activity provided life-and-death knowledge about riding, fighting, and surviving under harsh conditions. A successful raider had to be able to navigate the complex system of social and political relationships among the residents of the badia. He also had to be able to navigate over expanses of land by gaining detailed knowledge of the terrain, using these natural features by day and the stars by night. Survival also relied on being able to track and hunt game, and to use tracking skills to divine the meaning of camel and horse tracks on the ground. Finally, the institution of raiding providing a sort of military academy, with the potential of producing bedouin with the personal qualities of confidence, wisdom and leadership necessary to survive threats from nature, other tribes and the often aggressive peoples of the settled zone.

Raiding also had political significance. For example, raids could serve as a punitive expedition, an effective means short of war to punish a political rival, or the rival of an ally.[6] In short, while raiding tended to follow certain patterns, and the institution played important economic, social and political roles in the region, the bedouin who engaged in the activity were motivated by a wide range of human

impulses, including ambition, greed, curiosity, the quest for honour and glory, abject need, family vengeance, fear, jealousy, and even love, just to name a few.

Evidence suggests that while raiding in the period before the mandates went on fairly continuously (from season to season and year to year), outside factors such as the environment, the economy, and the political situation (in the badia as well as in the settled lands) played important roles in influencing the frequency, intensity, motivation and targets of raids.

What has been lacking in most past examinations of raiding is an analysis of a particular time and place based on a large pool of sources. In order to better understand the rapid changes in bedouin society during the interwar period, this chapter will examine the so-called "tribal policies" of the British in Iraq and Transjordan to see how they affected the practice of raiding and the economic conditions of the bedouin population.

Tribes and States in Zones of Contention

One of the most striking aspects of the relations among the emerging states surrounding the badia of northern Arabia was the prominence of matters relating to the tribes. Three factors contributed to this unusual situation. First, the diras of the camel-herding tribes often straddled the newly imposed borders of the emerging states. The tribes ranged across open lands which were being carved up over map tables in Paris and London. Second, the bedouin were extremely mobile, and the movements which for centuries had permitted them to survive by engaging in grazing, raiding and trade over a broad area now could have international ramifications. Another factor was the military capability of the bedouin. No political leader could ignore the implications of having large groups of armed and

mobile fighters in potentially vulnerable borderlands. Related to the military capability of the bedouin was their potential to become actors in the political struggles between town powers, such as the Hashemites and the Al Saud.

Two broad areas concerned the state authorities. The first could be grouped under the rubric of the "allegiance" of bedouin populations, for lack of a better term. (In later years the rubric would be "citizenship/nationality," but during the mandate period, especially in dealing with bedouin, who were seen as a special category of population, the language of politics was by necessity different than during the years after statehood and independence.) The authorities wanted to know to whom the various tribes "belonged." This had practical reasons, such as taxation and legal status, but the question also had territorial and strategic implications. In the early years of the mandates, each political entity had conceptions of its boundaries that often conflicted with that of its neighbours.[7] In the badia, the concept of boundary had for centuries been inextricably linked to tribal diras. Therefore, if a ruler could claim the allegiance of a tribe, he could make a stronger case for adding the tribe's territories to that of his state.[8] The question of allegiance, or who "owned" which tribe, also had a bearing on legal and security matters, such as raiding, crime, and extradition. A ruler who "owned" a tribe was theoretically responsible for ensuring its safety and for overseeing the payment of compensation for any transgressions of the tribe against foreigners.

This leads to the second area where the concerns of the state intersected the actions of the bedouin: security. With new political entities taking over the lands of the Ottoman Empire and claiming tribes within their territory as their "own," what had formerly been tribes raiding each other now could be treated as acts of

aggression among peoples of different states – or international incidents. As systems of tribal control and administration gradually evolved, and the bedouin were urged to settle disputes through government-appointed shaykhs, the question of raiding and compensation became a bureaucratized matter, with records being kept, reports being written, and tribunals and conferences called to "solve" the problem. What must be remembered in all this is that while the states of the region negotiated treaties amongst themselves in order to regulate their relations (and thus the relations of their respective tribes), it was never the interests of the tribes that took first priority but that of the state. Agreements aside, anti-raiding measures and other rules regulating bedouin life were only implemented when they coincided with the aims of the authorities. Therefore, the story of tribal policy in the region is checkered and uneven, with practice rarely coinciding with rhetoric. For this reason, the focus of this study is not on the pronouncements and debates of high officials but on what was actually happening in the badia.[9]

The Evolution of Britain's Tribal Policies in Iraq

As political power and institutions evolved in Iraq after the First World War, so did policies and practices emanating from Baghdad regarding the country's tribes: settled, semi-settled and nomadic. Because of the unique political structure of Mandate Iraq, three principal foci of authority competed and coexisted in the capital: British officials, members of the Iraqi government (representing various segments of society), and King Faysal. For a variety of reasons, the British were most involved with tribal affairs. For example, because of their treaty obligation to conduct the foreign relations of the country and provide for its defence, British officials played the largest role in formulating and implementing tribal policy. In

addition, British officials saw tribal leaders as a potentially important domestic political constituency that could counterbalance the various other groups supporting Iraqi government officials and the king. As this chapter will demonstrate, the king, too, attempted to employ tribal support in order to further domestic and foreign (mainly anti-Al Saud) aims. At the same time, members of the Iraqi government, according to one author, had "little time either for the nomads of central Arabia, or, indeed, its own bedouin desert dwellers."[10]

The general pattern of British policy vis-á-vis the bedouin of Iraq was to make adjustments in a piecemeal fashion as the situation and British interests warranted. With their focus and meagre resources aimed at the urban and agricultural populations of the country[11], British officials could be said to have treated the nomadic peoples at some times with a somewhat benign neglect. Thus, some types of raiding were immediately outlawed, other types were ignored, and in one period raiding was explicitly allowed by the authorities.[12]

Many of the tribal policies and practices of Mandate Iraq originally were formulated by the British officials who had arrived in the country during the First World War. These men, mainly the Political Officers of the districts, saw a need to establish a system of law separate from those civil and military systems put in place in the settled parts of Iraq that were under British occupation. In order to make the administration and control of tribal populations as simple and inexpensive as possible, these officials adapted techniques used in India. Thus, they used the Indian Frontier Crimes Regulations as one of their models. The Iraqi version of this tribal code, instituted in February 1916, was known as the Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation, and was "periodically revised in the light of experience."

While a great deal of autonomy was granted to tribal leaders in adjudicating disputes and crimes (most cases would be referred to a council of tribal elders, a *majlis*), the British gave each Political Officer the power to "add his own penalty to the decision of the Majlis" when the judgement of the shaykhs was not deemed "severe enough to have the necessary deterrent effect."[13]

Certainly there were other antecedents of tribal policy, not least being the long experience of the British in the Persian Gulf region. In addition, some practices employed by the Turkish administration were continued under the British. One of these was the delegation of large amounts of administrative responsibility to officially recognized and paid shaykhs. In return, during World War One, these shaykhs were expected to preserve peace on the borders, assist the British against their enemies, and cooperate with commercial blockades.[14]

While the rules governing tribal populations were based on traditional customs and practices, the absolute authority they gave to government shaykhs was a novelty which was often a source of friction between tribes and the government. The guiding principle was that the areas inhabited by tribes – whether settled or nomadic – were best treated separately from non-tribal (mostly urban) areas, and as long as the activities of the tribes (such as raiding) did not harm British interests or disturb non-tribal populations they need not be interfered with. During World War One, for example, British officials actually accompanied some tribes under their control on raids against tribes under Turkish control.[15]

In addition, Iraq was to become a laboratory for a new method of tribal control. British officials decided during the Cairo Conference of March 1921 that the recently formed Royal Air Force would not only be a rapid and cost-effective

way to attack tribal targets, it would also be more risk-free compared to the use of ground forces.[16] And so the RAF played a very large role in tribal matters during the mandate, not only by projecting military power, but by establishing a network of Special Service Officers (SSOs) from its intelligence branch throughout the country.

> Each of these was assigned an area of the country with which it was his duty thoroughly to familiarize himself on the ground. In the event of a sudden uprising in his area, this officer would then be available to fly in the leading aircraft and point out which villages or encampments were hostile and which friendly.[17]

In the course of familiarizing themselves with the realities on the ground, the SSOs gathered voluminous intelligence on tribal activities, including raids, and helped formulate and implement tribal policy.[18]

The British policy of promoting and protecting certain shaykhs could alter the normal system of bedouin leadership, and had an impact on the practice of raiding. While it is true that the Ottomans, too, had used this tactic, under the mandate the practice seems to have spread into tribal areas formerly remote from government interference, most notably among nomadic camel-herding tribes such as the Dhafir and Shammar. In the traditional system of tribal politics, a shaykh would normally win the loyalty and trust of his tribe by acting as a mediator and leader with such qualities as courage, wisdom, fairness and generosity. If members of a tribe did not agree with a decision of their shaykh, they could simply ignore him, since he did not have means of coercion. If a shaykh's actions over a period of time caused him to lose the support of his "constituents," tribes, sections or smaller groups "fissioned off" (using Sweet's term) and joined other tribes or simply moved away on their own. With official shaykhs being given large salaries, military

support and many privileges by the British, their power (and occasionally their capriciousness) grew, frequently causing resentment among "rank-and-file" bedouin as well as rival shaykhs. While bedouin who were not satisfied with the behaviour of their shaykhs could still "vote with their feet,"[19] the new powers of the official shaykhs, the military support given them by the government, and the new restrictions on movement imposed during the mandate made this option less viable in many cases.

One of the most notorious examples of the policy of favouring certain shaykhs was the appointment of Yusuf Beg al-Mansur (also known as Yusuf al-Sadun, a shaykh of the Muntafiq tribal confederation) as commander of the newly formed Iraqi Camel Corps in 1922. Several problems arose from this move. First, Yusuf set himself up as ruler of the southern desert and of the Dhafir, in direct challenge to the Sadun family's traditional rival, Dhafir shaykh Hamud ibn Suwait. Secondly, Yusuf used his newly gained power and prestige to forward his own agenda and to settle personal scores. In the end, he was dismissed by the Iraqi government and for a while raided against Iraqi tribes using dissident Akhwan bedouin, and, in fact, collected taxes on behalf of the Najdi ruler, 'Abd al-'Aziz. The episode resulted in bitter resentment on the part of the Dhafir and others. According to one SSO, "Indeed, long after the dismemberment of Yusuf Beg's force, the Government was hampered in its relations with the desert tribes by the prejudice with which they had been imbued at the period when Yusuf Beg was the local representative of Government forces."[20]

In some cases, official shaykhs augmented their growing personal wealth by skimming off the property raided by members of their tribes. For example, Ajil al-

Yawir, official shaykh of the Shammar tribes of Iraq, was reported to have caused dissention because he would confiscate the booty his tribesmen brought back from raids. In an effort to get out from under his heel, some Shammar moved from the Jazira region of Iraq (the steppe between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers) to the Hilla-Diwaniyya area.[21]

Tribes sometimes used raiding as a means to express dissatisfaction with shaykhs appointed by the British. Formerly powerful tribes or sections, for example, would seek revenge for the usurpations of newly-appointed shaykhs amenable to British policies. A case involving the Fid'an tribe is illustrative. Before the war, the Bin Muhayd were a dominant section of the Fid'an, but with the coming of the British the Bin Qayshish section was given "certain government favours." The resulting resentment and jealousy caused the Bin Muhayd to engage in raids against the Bin Qayshish in December 1921.[22] The British, in turn, often had to use force or the threat of force to maintain their new political arrangements among the tribes. For example, a rebellion by Shammaris opposing Ajil was put down in 1926 with the aid of British armoured cars and aeroplanes.[23]

On occasion, tribesmen found ways to use raids to assert their demands in indirect ways. A section of the Dulaim stole camels from 'Agayl camel merchants, and their shaykh was jailed. When authorities sent the shaykh back to the guilty section to recover the camels, he succeeded only after promising the raiders the revenue from a number of his water pumps. Glubb surmised that obtaining this revenue – or any other concession from the shaykh – was the actual motive of the tribesmen all along, not the desire for camels.[24]

Three trends regarding government policy toward raiding emerged in the early years of the mandate. The first was that raids against non-tribal targets would not be tolerated, with harsh and swift punishments often meted out by authorities. The second was that intertribal raiding within Iraq, while a potential nuisance, did not need to be checked.[25] Finally, it became clear early on that any type of raiding into neighbouring countries posed threats to security and potentially major irritants to the foreign relations of Iraq. Therefore, cross-border raiding was one of the principal issues affecting the country's relations with Syria and Najd.

Early efforts at control, however, were uneven and ineffective. One problem was the political tensions between the British High Commissioner (who was looking out for imperial interests) and King Faysal (who was attempting to expand his authority at every turn). In many cases, Faysal pursued one tactic among the tribes and the British another. The British sought stability and peace on the frontiers and an eventual end to cross-border raids. Faysal, on the other hand, frequently tried to hurt his family's enemy (and Britain's protegé), 'Abd al-'Aziz, by sheltering refugees from Najd and sending bedouin raiders into Najd, or at least not exerting himself overmuch to prevent them from raiding.[26]

Glubb, an officer who was to become closely identified with British relations with the bedouin, summarized one aspect of government policy succinctly: "Raids between tribes are one thing, the robbing of the property of townspeople another."[27] One method of control employed by authorities (a continuation of Ottoman practice) was to take hostages from guilty tribes as a guarantee of payment of losses. Another was to make shaykhs responsible for the transgressions of their tribes, demanding that they maintain order and punishing them when culprits could

not be caught.[28] Since these thefts and attacks were seen as internal security matters, local Iraqi administrators and police were responsible for controlling them. For example, the *qaimaqam* (administrative head of a district) of Ana was reported to have had marked success by seizing the men and property of tribes accused of highway robberies. Faced with such sanctions, tribes often found a way to recover stolen property.[29] This was particularly true for settled and semi-nomadic tribes, which by necessity had to develop some sort of *modus vivendi* with local authorities.

Sometimes the actions of government officials could seem arbitrary and unnecessarily harsh. Glubb described an incident in which the authorities at Nasiriyya decided to bomb both the Dhafir of Ibn Suwayt and the Najd bedouin following Yusuf Beg al-Sadun because each refused an official demand that they present themselves in the town in order to clear up a complaint that Yusuf Beg's men had raided the Dhafir and taken many camels.[30]

Swift and harsh punishments were meted out to tribesmen found guilty of attacking Europeans. In March 1925, the wife of the French vice-consul was killed when the Baghdad-to-Damascus motor convoy in which she was travelling was attacked by Dulaim bedouin raiders. The police and Desert Force caught the perpetrators, who were condemned to death and hanged. In addition, the British High Commissioner intervened and ordered the tribe to pay Rs. 10,000 compensation.[31]

As far as raiding across borders, there was often confusion and misunderstanding between nomads and officials, because tribal policy was evolving and because the two groups often had little previous exposure to each other.[32]

Bedouin were slow to appreciate official disapproval of raiding, and officials had trouble dealing with tribal practices and traditions. In January 1922, for example, a leader of a raid by the Shammar Jarba of Iraq returned with a flock of sheep taken from Syrian 'Anaza and, when refused passage across the Euphrates by a boatman above the town of al-Qa'im, went to the police for assistance. Unaware he had committed any crime, the man was arrested. In attempting to plead his case, he said he'd been 32 days in the saddle in the desert carrying no food or water. The man added it was not fair for the Iraqi government to imprison its shaykhs for raiding tribes under French protection when the latter were freely permitted by their authorities to raid the tribes of Iraq.[33] This was to be a recurring argument.[34]

In a similar incident, a raiding party of Shammar Jarba arrived on the banks of the Euphrates opposite al-Qa'im, claiming that since they were from the troops of the official shaykh of the Shammar, Ajil al-Yawir, "they regarded the Desert Force as their fellow soldiers and could they arrange for them to be ferried across so they could raid the Anazah?" When their request was refused, they swam across.[35] In the early years of the 1920s there was often an atmosphere of "business as usual" for bedouin raiding parties, especially with regard to British (as opposed to Iraqi) officials. One Shammar raiding party in the winter of 1923, thinking a pair of Europeans travelling by car toward Aleppo was British, saluted them with a friendly "*Marhaba, ya sahib!*" In general, according to Glubb in that report, the Shammar appeared friendly to the government.[36]

In an effort to quell cross-border raids between Syria and Iraq, local British and French officials occasionally met. (Not surprisingly, the British reports tend to portray these meetings as originated by British officials, with the French often

showing reluctance to do anything to stop their tribes from raiding Iraq. Nonetheless, there were periods of cooperation.) Government shaykhs also attempted to resolved disputes arising from raids by contacting shaykhs or officials in neighbouring countries. A pair of Shammar Abda from the Jazira was returning from a raid near Jauf and stopped at the sentry post of Fahd ibn Hadhdhal, official shaykh of the 'Anaza tribes, at Muhaywir. The shaykh's men took possession of the 30 raided camels, as well as two camels and two rifles from the raiders. They contacted 'Abd al-'Aziz's representative in Jauf, who sent two men to recover the looted camels.[37] When such tribal diplomacy failed, government shaykhs sometimes sanctioned raiding as a means to recover looted property.[38] This sort of official permission to raid occurred on the other side as well, with neighbouring officials permitting their tribes to raid into Iraq in order to recover property that Iraqi shaykhs were unwilling to relinquish.[39]

Government-Sanctioned Raiding

In August 1925, the Iraqi government instituted a new kind of tribal policy which would permit raiding between certain tribes under certain conditions. The 'Anaza and Shammar tribes of Iraq could carry out reciprocal raids on each other, as could the 'Anaza and Dhafir. According to the rules, raids were to take place within Iraq's boundaries, and the raiders were not to interfere with other tribes (within or without the country) or with the non-bedouin population.[40] The policy was said to have been suggested by a "very reluctant" British High Commissioner, who feared that if it were not implemented, the fragile hold of the official shaykhs of the Shammar (Ajil al-Yawir) and the 'Anaza (Fahd ibn Hadhdhal) on their respective tribes would break, resulting in widespread disturbances and the

emigration of Iraqi tribes to neighbouring countries, especially Syria, where restrictions on raiding were reportedly not so harsh.[41]

During August, Ibn Hadhdhal met on several occasions with British officials in order to plead his case. He complained of repeated raids by the Shammar, as a result of which he said he had personally lost 2,000 camels and £700 in cash. In addition, according to Ibn Hadhdhal, the 'Anaza had incurred losses as well, and were becoming restive. The shaykh feared that soon he would be forced to declare that he could not control his tribe, especially the sections in Syria, just as shaykh Ajil of the Shammar "apparently disclaims responsibility for Shammar raiding." In his report on one meeting, an SSO noted that although Ibn Hadhdhal was "doubtless out to further his own ends, he also has a sense of proportion and foresight unusual in an Arab leader." In addition, the report added, "The mere fact that he has over 2,000 camels tends to make him favour quiet tribal conditions, and his tactful friendship with 'Abd al-'Aziz is a useful and convenient channel of approach between the governments of Iraq and Nejd."[42]

In order to placate his tribes and obtain some sort of restitution from the Shammar, Ibn Hadhdhal had sent his son, Mahrut, to Baghdad with a list of losses from recent raids. Table 3.1 shows the contents of that list, and illustrates the problem of obtaining accurate and complete data on raiding during this period. The SSO noted, for example, that while the list was "thought to be reasonably accurate," the reports from which it was made up were "seldom sufficiently detailed to gain any reliable information as to the exact amount of camels or property looted, or the whole area in which the raiding parties operated." The government in turn sent a message to Ibn Hadhdhal stating that it would demand return of all looted camels,

whether in Syria or Iraq, and "if not acceded to, Anize would be permitted to carry out counter raids to make good their losses."[43]

Table 3.1
Ibn Hadhdhal's List of Raids Carried Out By the Shammar in Iraq, July-August 1925

Shammar Section	*Men in raid party*	*Camels Taken*	*Victims*
Abdah	35	20	'Anaza
Sinjara	80	--	'Anaza
Abdah	100	--	'Anaza
Al Saiyah	--	270	Al Suqur
Abdah	20	15	'Anaza
--	30	100	'Anaza
Sinjara	50	--	Rwala
Al Saiyah	30	--	'Anaza
--	60	--	'Anaza
Abdah	30	50	'Anaza
Abdah	--	--	'Anaza
Al Saiyah	35	54	Al Suqur

Source: AIR 23/292, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 13 August 1925. The contents of the table, including blank spaces, are as they appear in the source.

By allowing the camel-herding tribes to resume raiding, the British had given way to growing discontent among many bedouin who were threatening to undermine the authority of the government shaykhs. One SSO acknowledged in a report what was widely apparent: "the Iraq Government has never as yet been in a position to prevent inter-bedouin raiding." He added that there were two reasons for this: "financial stringency," and a lack of officials with "sufficient bedouin experience."[44]

From the outset it was clear that there would be negative consequences, with some viewing the British as weak and indecisive. According to a report from October 1925, "With the waning influence of the British… many incline to look for future stability from the Sultan of Najd, who is frequently spoken of as the only Arab leader with any sense of justice. He is much feared, but also admired, and

looked up to as the greatest leader among tribal peoples."[45] According to another report, the policy produced a "bad moral effect," especially in Najd, where the Akhwan were saying that while 'Abd al-'Aziz was able to control inter-tribal raiding, "the Iraq authorities are driven to countenance it."[46] In addition, it became clear that even when they were permitted to raid, some tribes were unwilling to abide by the new rules. In October 1925, police were ordered to intercept some Shammar in order to suspend their permission to raid as a result of "misbehaviour."[47] By May 1926, there was a report that raiding between the 'Anaza and Dhafir was "proceeding on an increasingly large scale" and that the new policy was having a very bad impression across the border in Najd.[48]

The Experiment Fails: Raiding Proscribed

Eleven months after its inception, the policy of sanctioned raiding was scrapped. On 29 July 1926, the Ministry of Interior sent a memorandum to the *mutasarrifs* (provincial governors) of Iraq ordering them to inform all shaykhs of the termination of the policy.[49] Despite efforts by the authorities to inform the tribes of the "rules," many raids, intentionally or inadvertently, contravened them. For example, Iraqi tribes on several occasions did not observe the provision against raiding Syrian and Najdi tribes, and there were several cases of raiders interfering with caravans, settled tribesmen and "peaceful travellers."[50] In addition, some unintended consequences of sanctioned raiding forced officials to retract their policy. Semi-settled sections of Dulaim and Kubaysa tribesmen, for example, reportedly succumbed to the "irresistable attraction" of joining raiding parties. Additionally, casualties among raiding parties had been "extremely high and the ferocity with which some of the recent inter-tribal conflicts have been waged,

shows that the old sporting spirit of raiding is becoming submerged by violent feeling…" Because ever more accurate rifles helped combatants kill each other more effectively from a distance, occasionally cases of mistaken identity resulted in "bitterness of feeling between erstwhile friends."[51] As a result of the large number of deaths, a "welter of blood feuds" erupted. Finally, settled and semi-settled tribes had complained about the "unbearable burden of [having to extend] hospitality" to passing raiding parties, some of which numbered as many as 800. Just as the government's failure to control raiding resulted in a loss of prestige, so did its policy of sanctioned raiding. Nonetheless, with the bitter lessons learned, it seemed that new policies would be more stringent and uncompromising.[52]

In the same memorandum that told mutasarrifs to inform shaykhs of the end of sanctioned raids, the Ministry of Interior laid out a set of specific anti-raiding regulations. These new rules reflected an increased determination on the part of Baghdad to bring the badia under control. If the raiding prohibition was ignored, the rules stated, the government would "use every means in its powers" to restore looted animals and extract fines. Tribesmen found to have raided cultivators, cars, caravans, or private persons "will be treated as highway robbers and arrested and tried accordingly" (i.e., the tribal regulations will not be employed). In addition, tribes or sections harbouring raiders henceforth would be liable for punishment. The government would seek cooperation from neighbouring governments in Najd, Transjordan and Syria in preventing their tribes raiding Iraqi tribes, and in restoring looted property.[53] Finally, the new regulations called for the establishment of a tribunal consisting of senior government officials and tribal representatives to settle claims of blood money, loot, and other consequences of raiding.[54]

It was with some frustration and anxiety, then, that many shaykhs received word of the latest government reversal. For their part, the options for earning a livelihood and maintaining their age-old traditions dwindled with each passing season. It was with humility and a touch of desperation that the Dhafiri shaykh, ʻAjaymi ibn Suwayṭ, addressed the SSO in Nasiriyya in a note:

> We [had] received letters from the Government prohibiting all the Iraq tribes from raiding Syrian, Jazirah, Akhwan and Trans-Jordan tribes, which order we were ready to comply with. Now we are prohibited from raiding the Anaizah too, and raiding between the Anaizah and the Dhafir is hereditary. We beg you to help us to start raiding against the Anaizah again. It was the Anaizah in the presence of Captain Moore [the SSO Nasiriyya] last year who preferred our raiding each other and it is now difficult for me to prohibit the Dhafir from raiding them. I leave it to you to look into this matter. From Captain Glubb's protection we have now fallen under your own and we beg you to come here and see the ideas of your servants and make the necessary arrangements for us.[55]

Despite the fact that the British presence in Iraq, including the military, was declining through the second half of the 1920s in preparation for the eventual devolution of authority to the Iraqis, control of the desert gradually increased. This was in part a result of the impetus provided by a series of devastating attacks by the Akhwan on Iraqi tribes and facilities which commenced in the winter of 1924-25. British authorities responded by putting Glubb in charge of security in the Southern Desert, establishing police posts near desert watering holes, providing more motor vehicles for patrols, increasing air patrols, and improving the system of intelligence-gathering.[56] This last involved not only utilizing paid informers from among the bedouin themselves, but opening something as straightforward and common in bedouin society as a guest tent. According to Glubb,

> My two or three retainers were active in intercepting travellers or passing camel-riders who came near to Abu Ghar [a newly established police post], and in inviting them to coffee, a meal or a night's rest and a good exchange of gossip, thereby daily checking the reports of the locations of the ever-moving tribes.[57]

Glubb was an insightful observer of bedouin society and an articulate and persistent advocate of his views on how not only to control them, but to make the badia a more productive place for its inhabitants.

> The bedouin is afraid only of the occupation of his home deserts by the Government. If his home grazing grounds are safe from the Government, as was so more or less until 18 months ago [c. winter 1927], his raiding parties are prepared to risk encounters with patrols. But if the Government is finally installed in the heart of his dira, he is paralyzed forthwith. To control the Dhafir, it is necessary permanently to hold Busaiyah and Sulman, to control Anaizah, Sulman, Shabicha, Nukhaib and Ritbah. With his wells and grazing grounds controlled, the bedouin can do nothing....[58]

Raiding could be a blessing or a curse to the bedouin. For the poor tribe, it offered a way to ensure survival. For those rich in camels, it posed the constant threat of danger and loss. Glubb was aware of both possibilities, and more than any other British official informed his superiors in detail of not only the political implications of British tribal policies, but the social and economic ones as well.

In support of his effort to convince his superiors that it was important to maintain and improve security measures in the badia, Glubb forcefully argued that improvement of grazing for the bedouin was one positive outcome of the complete cessation of raiding (a bit of an exaggeration) due to improved police enforcement in 1928-9. Glubb pointed out that tribes in areas hit by drought could now freely bring their animals to graze in areas with greener pastures. Whereas in previous years tribes may have been hindered from moving out of their traditional pasture

lands into those of other tribes for fear of reprisals, the absence of raiding provided a welcome new option. As a result, "thousands of camels and hundreds of thousands of sheep were this year saved from loss… To ensure good grazing to nomads is as much a productive measure as to ensure good irrigation for crops."[59]

On other occasions, Glubb pointed out that anti-raiding policies could have severe negative consequences for the bedouin. He argued that with the signing of agreements with neighbouring countries (Glubb had Syria and Transjordan in mind) to prevent cross-border raiding, Iraqi tribes were proscribed from raiding into those countries. However, since the anti-raiding measures (by the late 1920s and early 1930s) in Iraq had become more effective than in neighbouring countries, Iraqi tribes were raided but had no opportunity to recoup their losses, often putting them in extreme hardship. Glubb suggested that the best method for Iraqi officials to recover loot on behalf of their tribes was to descend on enemy tribes in force, in a sort of "official" raid.

In fact, he described such an incident involving the Rwala in March 1930. Glubb arrived in the Rwala camp, which was in Iraqi territory, with police armoured cars and two aircraft. The Rwala had previously raided several hundred camels from Iraqi tribes, and Glubb told shaykhs Khalid and Mujhim al-Shalaan that their people would not be permitted to move unless they returned the looted animals. Khalid was "at his wit's end," according to Glubb, when the shaykh ordered a car and 30 horsemen to set out and seize the camels of one section of his tribe. However, when it came time to select camels to be handed over to the Iraqi authorities, some Rwala grew hostile. Fighting broke out, and the "police fought back with machine guns and other guns, killing perhaps three Ruwalla." After

order was restored, the police drove the camels to Rutba and the Rwala were invited to settle the claims. Compared to the other method employed to obtain the return of raided property – contacts through government channels, which could go back and forth for months – this "official" raid was completed eleven days after the police arrived at the Rwala camp. In the same fashion, Glubb then went into Transjordan to recover loot taken by tribes in that territory. This tactic was clearly aimed at winning the loyalty of tribes who frequently saw nothing but harm come from government interference in bedouin affairs. In bedouin society, as Glubb so well knew, reputation was as important as actions. And he saw these strong government efforts at recovering raided property as an unmistakable sign "to the bedouin world" that the Iraqi government was willing and able to obtain justice for their own tribes.[60]

An Analysis of Data on Camel-Raiding Involving Iraqi Tribes

This section will focus on an analysis of data on raids in and near Iraq during the 1920s in order to determine the effects of British policy and to assess the economic impact of these activities. While economic issues are the principal concern of this study, it must be recognized that during the 1920s in Iraq there were many examples of raids ostensibly motivated by non-economic factors. For example, Glubb described the raiding in the early 1920s between the Dulaim of Iraq and the 'Agaydat of Syria as so intense that it had become a "scourge" of the frontier areas of both governments. The state of conflict between the two tribes could in itself justify the raiding, but other motives entered into the equation. The impetus for one Dulaim raid on the 'Agaydat during this period was attributed to the wealth of the target shaykh rather than to mere tribal enmity. Other raids were

fueled by intra-tribal rivalries and dissent. Glubb reported that four Dulaimis who took refuge with the ʻAgaydat around 1919 (presumably as a result of a falling out with their own tribe) were said to be responsible for the success of a number of ʻAgaydat raids on the Dulaim in 1921.[61]

Blood feuds also were severe irritants to inter- (and intra-) tribal relations. This motivation apparently extended outside of tribal society. Ibn Dindil of the Al Hasun section of the ʻAgaydat was reported to have been motivated in his raids by hostility to the British and Iraqi governments because his favourite brother was killed in action against British troops during the First World War. Financial obligations imposed by the authorities were another factor. One shaykh stated that he hoped God would favour him on a raid so that he could "bring back a flock of fat sheep with which to pay the taxes which he owes to the Government."[62]

In the final analysis, however, raiding and its suppression had important economic consequences for the raider and the raided, whether the *motivation* for the raids was primarily political (attacking an enemy), social (gaining honour and prestige), or personal (avenging a grievance). In all cases, a successful raider obtained valuable material assets, while the victim was deprived of these same assets. A poor bedouin (or section or tribe) always had greater overall incentive to raid than a richer one. As Glubb noted, in the Iraqi context, "The ʻAnaza are always richer in camels and flocks than the Shammar. The Shammar are more given to raiding, the ʻAnaza to defence."[63] In addition to material losses and gains, raiding could result in injury or death to the perpetrators and victims. Writers such as Lewis and Lancaster have pointed out that raiding became more lethal with the increasingly widespread use of ever more accurate firearms starting in the latter part

of the nineteenth century. While support for this observation hitherto has come principally from anecdotal evidence, the following section demonstrates in concrete terms that many lives were lost as a result of raiding and especially counter-raiding.

Sources, Parameters and Criteria

The data for this analysis were culled from hundreds of raid reports by SSOs in Iraq during the 1920s.[64] The first reports are from December, 1921 and the last from May 1930, with the largest number of reports from the 1924-25 period. The amount of detail in the reports and their accuracy depended to a great deal on the individual SSO, as well as on the accounts of the informants. Some reports may have benefited from the policies put into place during the period of "authorized raiding," during which "raiders were instructed to report at a police post where possible, and to give full details of their enterprise and its objective."[65] Reports covered raids in all parts of the country and beyond its borders, but most focused on activity in the Jazira, and the Hamad (the steppe that connects Iraq to Syria and Transjordan). The reports from Basra and the Southern Desert administration, of course, mainly covered the Shamiyya, or the badia linking Iraq with Kuwait and Najd.

The sources contained more than 400 reports of raids. Of these 173 were used as the basis for analysis in this section. Since another chapter will deal with Akhwan-related attacks, those were excluded from this section. Two other criteria for exclusion of raid reports were credibility and accuracy. There is every reason to believe that the SSOs attempted to collect and record as much accurate information as they could about tribal organization, movements, and activities, particularly raiding.[66] Thus, while their cultural backgrounds and biases may have coloured

their views of the bedouin themselves, they had no personal or professional reason to distort what was perceived as important information of political and strategic importance.[67] This cannot be said for some of the persons who provided some of the information. While the SSOs obtained some information from interviews with raiders and victims themselves, and from other British officials, they also received reports from Iraqi officials and government shaykhs, from paid and un-paid bedouin informers, and from travellers. Thus the SSOs attempted to judge the accuracy of reports based on a source's personal background and biases, and on corroboration from other sources.[68] Occasionally, SSOs included an assessment of a source's reliability in their reports, or they noted that a report was "unconfirmed." Such reports were also excluded from this sample.

Another criterion for exclusion was vagueness or lack of information. Thus, if a raid report did not identify the raiders or the victims, as well as provide details on such other matters, for example, as strength and amount of raided property, then it was not used. While some reports met all other criteria, they were excluded because they were not connected to Iraq (i.e., if there was no involvement by an Iraqi tribe and the raid occurred outside Iraq). In addition, since the focus of this study is principally camel-herding tribes and the role of camels in the region's economy, raids which did not involve camels or camel-herders were excluded.

There is no way to ascertain how many raids actually took place during the period in question, however, the sample of data is large enough and accurate enough to permit the drawing of conclusions which have been hitherto impossible. Notes on the 173 raids which met the criteria for inclusion were individually recorded in a database which contained 29 possible variables, including the tribe

and section of the raiders and the raided, amount and type of property taken, whether there was a counter-raid, and whether there were casualties or property recovered as a result. Not surprisingly, the amount of information in the individual reports varied a great deal, but because many reports contained a fair amount of detail, it was possible to add results from a large number to obtain a better picture of what was happening in the Iraqi badia.

Results

As seen in the compilation of data in Table 3.2, raids were carried out throughout the period: during the early years of the mandate, when the military and police presence in the badia was minimal and tribal policies were in the process of being formulated, and during the late 1930s, when authorities claimed that raiding had practically disappeared. This is not to say the government policies and practices did not curtail or reduce raids during some times and in some places. It only means that despite increased government penetration into their lands, the creation of new borders and agreements, and the deadly threat of new weapons such as aircraft and armoured cars, bedouin tribes continued to engage in all manner of raiding. It is noteworthy in this regard that only in three instances is there a mention of pursuit of raiders by police or military forces. In one of these instances, however, the RAF attacked Shammar raiders who had attempted to take loot from Kuwait territory. Nine raiders were killed and 23 were taken prisoner.[69]

One surprising finding is that more raiding parties in this sample used horses than camels. Of the 80 raid reports that contained details on the strength of the raiding party, 45 had horsemen, 26 had camel riders, and 9 used both. Most of the

Table 3.2
Losses and Cash Equivalents
From 173 Raids Involving Tribes of Iraq, 1921-30

Category	*Losses*	*(Recovered)*	*Net Loss*	*Value, each (in rupees)**	*Value, total (in rupees)*	*Value, £***
Men killed	46		46	1,000	46,000	3,833
Men wounded	12					
Camels	20,000	(4,000)	16,000	150	2,400,000	200,000
Sheep	15,000	(1,400)	13,600	10	136,000	11,333
Horses	40		40	250	10,000	833
Donkeys	14		14	10	140	12
Tents	44		44	500	22,000	1,833

Sources: SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 26 December 1921 to 13 April 1923; AIR 23/291-295, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 30 October 1924 to 16 April 1927; and CO 730/168/8, Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, 1 May 1929 - 16 May 1930, (n.d.).

*Cash equivalents in this column were ones used by British officials for calculating losses from Akhwan raids; see AIR 23/62, List of Akhwan Attacks on 'Iraq Tribes from 1st July, 1928 to 31st May, 1929. The 1,000 rupees amount per man killed was the blood money payment used for the list. The use of blood money to compensate the relatives of those killed meant that in tribal society it was common, and certainly not disrespectful, to put a value (initially in camels, but increasingly in cash in the twentieth century) on human life. The British followed this practice in calculating losses from raids. The placement of blood money equivalents alongside values of animals lost in raids in this and subsequent tables in no way implies a moral equivalence among the different species, but simply reflects the practices of the British officials making the calculations.

**Exchange rate: 12 rupees/£ sterling.

parties (72 percent) that used either camels or horses exclusively had fewer than 100 raiders per party, while parties using both animals were much larger, averaging 383 riders, with the largest party having 800 camel riders and 30 horsemen. From this it is evident that raiding employed a large number of men, and since raids could take from a few days to weeks or months, a huge amount of man-hours, occupying much of the male human capital of the region's bedouin population for long periods. The data also show that the horse and the camel continued to be very important militarily to the bedouin during these years. Thus, while motor vehicles were in the process of taking over most transport functions in the settled lands, the economic importance of camels and horses held steady in the badia. Even government troops used both motor vehicles and camels for desert patrols. Nonetheless, the motorcar was making sporadic inroads among the bedouin as well.

In one report, Ajil al-Yawir's men responded to a raid by 120 camel riders of the Dahamshah by pursuing them with two cars. In another, the Rwala used three Hudsons to recover most of the camels raided from them by the Fid'an.[70]

What is not surprising is that raiding could be very remunerative. Following the traditional pattern, camels and sheep were the principal targets. At least 20,000 camels were reportedly taken by raiders and 15,000 sheep. (Counter-attacks by raided tribes recovered some 4,000 camels and 1,400 sheep.) In contrast, only about 36 horses, 14 donkeys, 44 tents and miscellaneous clothing, cash and other property were listed as looted in the reports. In only 20 of the 173 raid reports was there no mention of any looted property. An additional 12 raids in the sample were aborted for one reason or another before reaching their target. Considering the large number of incidents, human casualties were low on the part of the raided tribes, with 46 reported killed and 12 wounded.[71]

Another unexpected finding, as shown in Table 3.3, was the high level of raider casualties. In the 53 reports in which the raided tribe mounted a counter-attack (*fizza*), 149 raiders reportedly lost their lives and 41 were wounded. In addition, many raiders lost camels and horses. Many more horses were lost by raiders (232) than by the raided (36). Despite the violence of the counter-attacks, only 22 were reported to have been successful in recovering all stolen property, and recovery of part of raided loot took place in five cases. The sources do not offer information on exactly why counter-attacks produced more casualties than the raids themselves, but two factors may help explain the apparent anomaly. The first involves the tactical realities of raids and counter-raids. Raiders relied on stealth and surprise to successfully take herds of animals, ideally undetected. However,

once the alarm was raised, the raiders lost the element of surprise and often were forced to mount a rapid retreat in the face of superior numbers, putting them in an extremely vulnerable position. The second factor, mentioned earlier, was the spread of increasingly accurate weapons – rifles and even machine guns. This enabled mounted pursuers of raiding parties to inflict more casualties than previously possible.[72]

Table 3.3
Losses Incurred by Raiding Tribes
From Data on 53 Counter-Attacks, 1921-30

Category	*Losses*	*Value, each (in rupees)**	*Value, total (in rupees)*	*Value, total (in £ sterling)***
Men killed	149	1,000	149,000	12,417
Men wounded	41			
Camels	343	150	51,450	4,288
Horses	232	250	80,750	6,729

Sources: SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 26 December 1921 to 13 April 1923; AIR 23/291-295, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 30 October 1924 to 16 April 1927; and CO 730/168/8, Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, 1 May 1929 - 16 May 1930, [n.d.].
*Cash equivalents in this column were ones used by British officials; see AIR 23/62, List of Akhwan Attacks on 'Iraq Tribes from 1st July, 1928 to 31st May, 1929. The 1,000 rupees amount per man killed was the blood money payment used for the list.
**Exchange rate: 12 rupees/£ sterling.

Finally, the reports put to rest the commonly held belief that certain groups, such as the Solubba and 'Agayl camel merchants, were immune from raids.[73] Some Shammar Jarba took three camels from a Solubba and 12 camels from a "Dulaim merchant," according to one report. On two occasions the reports state that "a caravan of camels" was raided from 'Agayl merchants, once by Dulaimis in the Jazira and once by Shammaris near Tadmur. It is improbable that these isolated incidents signalled a general breakdown in the "rules" of raiding. It is more likely that they reflect the normal deviation from societal "ideals" that is found in every human activity.[74]

As mentioned, the policies on raiding had mixed results. When tribes were not permitted to respond to raids, they could face severe hardship, causing death and disease at worst, or shifts to other forms of livelihood, or emigration from Iraq. On the other hand, when authorities were successful in preventing widespread raids, tribes could benefit not only from the increased security but from the ability to graze their flocks and herds over wider areas, a crucial benefit in the region whose climate spreads rain unevenly in time and space. As far as the British were concerned, the crucible of conflict in the Iraqi deserts formed for them an able and often sympathetic administrator of bedouin lands in the person of Glubb, who later brought his skills to bear on the tribes of Transjordan.

Transjordan: British Tribal Policy in Fits and Starts

Transjordan differed in significant ways from Iraq. Its bedouin population, like its total population, was much smaller than Iraq's, but there was a higher proportion of nomads to the settled peoples. While Iraq was seen early on by the British as possessing a large degree of intrinsic strategic importance, Transjordan's value evolved more slowly in British eyes. It was initially noted mainly for its proximity to Palestine and its role as a possible buffer to French and Saudi interests. Only later did it become clear that it could form an important link between Iraq and Palestine. Thus, while British officials were posted in or near the Iraqi badia immediately after the war, such was not the case in Transjordan, where the establishment of police, military and desert control forces proceeded slowly and in response to the changing political realities on the ground.[75]

Indeed, the badia of Transjordan was remarkably free of town influence in postwar years. Vatikiotis described the years 1920-21 as "marked by strong

parochialism, tribal conflict, and widespread factionalism."[76] According to the few accounts dealing with activities in the badia during this period, it can be safely assumed that all manner of raiding was carried out with little or no outside interference.[77] Thus, just as in those periods of the Ottoman era when town-based powers were relatively weak or in disarray, shaykhs and their tribes could reign supreme in the badia and have strong influence over settled populations.[78] In addition, also unlike Iraq, some tribal leaders were involved from the outset in the political life at the centre of the nascent amirate, due, in part, to the involvement of Transjordan's tribes with the Hashemites and British during the Arab Revolt, but due as well to the important social and economic importance of bedouin-town interactions. When Abdullah proceeded from Maan to Amman in the first step that would lead to his control of Transjordan in March 1921, it is noteworthy that Mithgal al-Fayiz, shaykh of the Bani Sakhr, joined the mayor of Amman and British representative Alec Kirkbride in the reception committee.[79]

In order to begin to provide regular policing in the settled zone and on the road to connecting Amman with Palestine, a Mobile Force that had been established in Amman by Capt. C. Dunbar Brunton in the autumn of 1920 was taken over in 1921 by Capt. Frederick G. Peake. This would evolve to become the famous Arab Legion (or *jaysh al-'araby*). Peake was explicit in his assessment of the potential threat to the new state. He said that his policy "was to raise a Force from the sedentary, or village, Arabs, which would gradually be able to check the Beduin and allow an Arab government to rule the country without fear or interference from the tribal chiefs."[80] In the coming years, there were a number of incidents which no doubt served to reinforce this perception. There were raids from across the frontier

by Akhwan and other tribes, and there were internal raids, feuds and revolts.[81] Nonetheless, Transjordan's tribes could retaliate against raiders and carry out their own operations with relative impunity.

Just as in Iraq, the recurring threat of Akhwan attacks (1922 and 1924) precipitated a forceful intervention by British authorities in the policing of Transjordan, who feared the Mobile Force was inadequate to its task. The Trans-Jordan Frontier Force (TJFF) was formed in April 1926, and a year later established its headquarters and garrison at Zarqa.[82] Under the control of the RAF, its task was to patrol the badia and in particular to prevent large-scale incursions across the border. In addition, a detachment of the RAF was stationed in the amirate. Part of the Imperial Service Force, the TJFF was under the ultimate control of the British High Commissioner for Palestine, causing resentment on the part of Abdullah. Though controlled by the British and better equipped than the Mobile Force, the TJFF was officered by British-trained men and staffed by town Arabs. Its institutional antipathy to the bedouin and its use of tactics inappropriate to desert operations made it just as ineffective against raids and just as resented by the bedouin as the Mobile Force. The inadequacy of the force was even acknowledged by an Air Vice Marshall in 1930.[83]

The Bedouin Control Board

Interestingly, matters concerning the bedouin under Abdullah's government were separated administratively from matters dealing with the settled population, just as in Faysal's Iraq. Amir Shakir ibn Zaid became Minister of Tribal Affairs in April 1923. Disputes were to be handled in mixed courts containing tribal shaykhs and officials, but the Department of Tribal Affairs was abolished in 1924 because

British officials were not happy with the system.[84] A new set of laws dealing with the bedouin was promulgated in 1929. Among the provisions was the creation of a Bedouin Control Board (BCB, also called the Tribal Control Board), which was supposed to contribute to the anti-raiding effort by trying raiders and imposing punishments. (The board also had the power to control the movements of tribes.) Although the BCB was under the leadership of Shakir, a cousin of Abdullah, who had long experience dealing with the bedouin, the board had only mixed success.[85] One problem was lack of resources and staff. In addition, although the board was intended to deal principally with cross-frontier raiding, it became enmeshed in many local tribal disputes.[86]

In October 1929, the British Resident in Transjordan, C.H.F. Cox, reported that there was a "recrudescence" of raids from Hijaz, and that the Hijaz government was not able to control its tribes. He also observed that Transjordan's bedouin were being pinched between the enforcement actions of the board and raids from across the frontiers. "The Trans-Jordan tribes are becoming increasingly restive under the present conditions whereby they are punished if convicted of raiding and made to disgorge the loot whereas no reciprocal action is being taken by the authorities of the Hejaz or Nejd," noted Cox. He added that the tribes realized that the government was bound to stop them from raiding, but they pointed out that the government also had a duty to "afford them adequate protection from hostile raids and to recover their lost property." Since this was not being done, and the tribes were forced to refrain from counter-raiding, Cox said his government was "failing to fulfill [its obligations] to its own subjects," and he feared trouble with the tribes unless a solution were found. He suggested that one option might be to defend the

tribes using armoured cars, as was done in Iraq.[87] In the following months, the Transjordanian tribes carried out a number of raids which the board was either unwilling or unable to stop.[88] There was some acknowledgement even in Whitehall that such raids were inevitable, since "those who are fined by the T.C.B. have all the more need to counter-raid in order to make up not only the losses due to raids from Nejd, but also fines for raids in which they happen to be caught."[89]

Claims, Counter-claims and Tribunals

Like Iraq, Transjordan had negotiated agreements with its neighbours aimed at determining borders, guaranteeing the rights of bedouin to graze in their customary rangelands and preventing them from raiding. Transjordan and Najd signed the Hadda Agreement, which dealt with the aforementioned matters and called for the establishment of a tribunal by mutual agreement of the two governments,

> …which shall meet from time to time to enquire into the particulars of any aggression committed across the frontier between the two States, to asses the damages and losses and to fix the responsibility.[90]

Needless to say, raiding continued despite the high aims of the agreement. British officials in Transjordan and 'Abd al-'Aziz perceived, protested and dealt with raids in fundamentally different ways, based in large part on their domestic political situations and relationships with "their" tribes. The British often saw raiding in legalistic terms, and behaved as if agreements, laws, tribunals and impartial officials could evenhandedly punish the guilty and provide recompense for the victim. 'Abd al-'Aziz, on the other hand, struggling to gather in tribal populations from surrounding areas and consolidate his hold on those tribes in the lands under his control, saw raids against Najdi and Hijazi tribes as mainly political threats, and

raids by "his" tribes as necessary evils. He was thus often unwilling regularly and forcefully to prevent raiding into neighbouring lands or agree to cooperate with tribunals fully, because doing so could jeopardize his often fragile influence over certain tribes.

One of the provisions of the Hadda Agreement was to establish a tribunal to adjudicate responsibility for raids and oversee the payment of compensation to victims. The first of these met in 1927 during the months of February (Maan), March (Jericho) and May (Jerusalem), and was presided over by A.H. Webb.[91] British officials often expressed frustration at the lack of progress by these tribunals.[92] After stalling and temporizing for two months, repeatedly getting new instructions from 'Abd al-'Aziz, the Najdi delegation finally submitted a memorandum calling the claims of losses due to raids from Najd "fraudulent and fictitious," and stating that "no useful purpose would be served by continuing the sittings of the Tribunal." Webb belatedly came to the realization that "the Nejd government never had any intention of allowing the claims of the Trans-Jordan tribes to be considered, still less to be satisfied.[93]

The Assistant British Resident in Amman, Alec S. Kirkbride, was to oversee another tribunal, but Saudi opposition to what was perceived as a too pro-Transjordan stance forced the appointment of another British official, M.S. MacDonnell. This commission met September to November 1930 in Amman, but it, too, was disbanded because the parties were unable to come to an agreement.[94] In fact, Transjordanian shaykhs submitted a joint letter to the British Resident protesting a raid by the Shararat on the Nuwasra section of the Huwaytat while the tribunal was sitting. Said the shaykhs:

> We are astonished that this raid should take place during a time which is for conciliation and settlement and not a truce – a thing not in conformity with the rights of nations nor compatible with tribal customs. Therefore, there is no more meaning to the discussions now taking place and no use for arbitrations since raiding continues to be carried out.[95]

What is noteworthy about these efforts is that when the economic well-being of the bedouin raid victims fell into the hands of officials, the restitution of looted property (amounting to significant numbers of camels and sheep) was usually the last priority of the negotiators. In order to regularize the political situation, officials and rulers employed the customary bedouin practice of "burying" claims for looted property on both sides. In the past, this method had offered a practical way for two tribes to make peace without having to sift through (often numerous and complex) claims on each side for the return of looted animals, and it undoubtedly had been employed when the losses of the two sides were relatively even. However, when claims between 'Abd al-'Aziz and his neighbours were buried, the persons making the decisions were usually not the ones who had lost property, and the balance of losses was anything but even. And the fact that it was always 'Abd al-'Aziz's obstructionism that kept the tribunals from making judgements and awarding compensation, it is likely that it was the Transjordanian tribes who had the most to gain.

Raiding between tribes of Transjordan and the subjects of 'Abd al-'Aziz provided an important source of irritation of the relations between the two countries. On occasion, efforts to control the raiders also became an issue of contention. For example, 'Abd al-'Aziz wrote to the British representative in Jedda in October 1928 to complain that overflights by aircraft from Transjordan of his territory were "contrary to undertakings and an infraction of covenants." In

addition, 'Abd al-'Aziz protested that some 1,600 camels were looted from his people by Transjordanian tribes between Ramadan and Dhul Hijja 1346 (February to June 1928), and that men, women and children were killed and property was looted. In subsequent accounts of raids that were forwarded to the British, these initial claims do not seem to have been substantiated. (If the claim of women and children being killed were actually true, it would have been unusual, since such casualties were not a normal result of intertribal raiding.)[96]

Not surprisingly, many diplomatic despatches describing raids portrayed the sender of the protest as the aggrieved party. In 1925, 'Abd al-'Aziz wrote to the British resident in the Persian Gulf regarding complaints of the raids of Najdi tribes into Iraq and Transjordan. He stated that because he had submitted numerous complaints to the British regarding raids on Najd, it proved that he had "never, even for a day, assumed the attitude of an encroaching transgressor, but on the other hand, have always been on the defensive."[97] This posture continued year after year. In June 1929 the Foreign Ministry of Hijaz-Najd complained to the British representative in Jedda that protests against raids were left without reply, raided property was not returned, raiders were not punished, and attacks did not cease. In that month alone Hijazi tribes were reported to have been raided twenty times and had lost all patience, according to the note. The ministry went as far as to threaten punitive expeditions to Hijaz and Najd against the raiders unless the British permitted the pursuit of raiders into Transjordanian territory.[98]

Another report, on a series of raids by Transjordanian tribes into Hijaz compiled by officials in Hijaz-Najd, demonstrates that both sides attempted to use protests against cross-border raids as a political weapon. On the other hand, the

British analysis of these claims illustrates the seriousness with which they approached the problem of raiding and the efforts they expended in order to assure an accurate record. The Hijaz-Najd summary included details about eight raids, dating from May to July 1930, and were sent to Andrew Ryan, the British representative in Jedda by Fuad Hamza, 'Abd al-'Aziz's deputy minister of foreign affairs. While it is clear that on many occasions British officials attempted to verify raids they wished to include in diplomatic correspondence, leaving out or noting those which were uncorroborated, it is not known how rigorous this vetting of information was on the Hijaz-Najd side, though some British officials characterized many of 'Abd al-'Aziz's claims as inflated or fictitious.[99] Certainly the rhetoric of the Hijaz-Najd correspondence was more florid. Hamza attributed political motivations to the attacks, hinted at the intended or unintended culpability of the Transjordanian authorities for the raids, and made a veiled threat to the effect that if nothing were done to remedy the situation the Hijaz-Najd authorities could not be held responsible for the consequences. In the discourse concerning cross-border raids, a subtext of Hashemite-Saudi rivalry was never far from the surface. In one note to Ryan, Hamza stated:

> …[S]uch raids are outside the category of mere raids intended for plundering and robbing, but are a series of hostile attacks conducted on a large scale with a view to aggressing against Nejd and its tribes.[100]

Of the eight raids, five were said to have been carried out by the Huwaytat, one each by the Bani 'Atiyya and al-Tuwayha (a section of the Huwaytat), and one by "Bedouin of Transjordan." Camels were stolen in each incident, with a total of some 1,300, and an average of 170 per raid. In only two raids were there reports of casualties: 12 dead in one raid and one wounded in another.[101]

A somewhat different picture of the raiding picture appears in a British analysis of these raids that appeared in a remarkably detailed accounting of Transjordan's anti-raiding efforts compiled under the signature of Cox in order to respond to 'Abd al-'Aziz's frequent protests. For example, Cox stated that he had "no information to confirm" four of the eight raids in the protest by Hamza. The other four raids were "unidentifiable" from the details given, according to Cox, meaning they did not match the British records of raids. Nonetheless, by looking for similarities in time and place, Cox suggested that these four raids may have been actually ones in their files. Even so, the identity and number of raiders, and amounts of loot differed from the Hijaz-Najd list. Of these four possible matches, the Hijaz-Najd reports had some 642 camels as well as some sheep looted while the British version had 207, with loot collected in two cases by Transjordanian authorities. Also, while the Hijaz-Najd version of events tended to describe the raiders as Huwaytat, according to the British records they were Bani 'Atiyya and Shararat, which held obvious political connotations.[102] An additional indication that the British wanted to be complete and fair was Cox's admission, with "regret," that he had to report two additional raids originating in Transjordan which occurred after Hamza had sent his protest.

Cox had his own complaints regarding 'Abd al-'Aziz's policies and behaviour regarding raiding, which were responsible for the dissatisfaction of Transjordan's tribes and hindered the work of the board. As mentioned, there was the intransigence of 'Abd al-'Aziz in the negotiations at Maan and Jericho aimed at resolving outstanding claims for raiding losses by both sides. In addition, while Transjordan was regularly returning looted property (see following section), 'Abd

al-'Aziz's officials were not. Finally, even when Shakir, through the BCB, attempted to prosecute Transjordanian bedouin who raided over the border, he was forced to abandon cases because the lack of contact with 'Abd al-'Aziz's officials meant that important witnesses from Hijaz-Najd did not appear.[103] In a highly critical analysis of 'Abd al-'Aziz's policy, Glubb stated that the Najd ruler attempted to use false or highly exaggerated claims of raids by Transjordanian tribes as a club with which to beat the Transjordanian government and the British, while denying or playing down raids by Najd tribes. In addition, Glubb surmised that it would not serve 'Abd al-'Aziz's purposes to permit his shaykhs to testify at the anti-raiding tribunals.

> If the owner of the looted animals were to be sent over, the true number of camels actually stolen would be immediately revealed, and Ibn Saoud's method of blackening Trans-Jordan with his Majesty's Government would be checkmated.[104]

Raiding and Punishments: Data from 1926-1930

This same report signed by Cox also contains two lists containing data about government efforts to punish raiders and restore looted property. One list enumerates restitutions extracted from Transjordanian bedouin caught raiding, and forms the basis for Table 3.4. The other shows punishments meted out to convicted raiders.

The list showing restitutions goes from February 1926 (since the Hadda Agreement) to August 1930. It contains information on 23 cases, and is described as "not exhaustive," since it does not include those cases in which the tribes made arrangements amongst themselves to return looted property.[105] Most noteworthy is the fact that the vast majority of restored animals (1,388) were camels. Most property was returned to tribal owners, but in two cases it was returned to

merchants (an ʻAgayl caravan and Wahba al-Kubaysi, presumably an Iraqi merchant), and in four cases to officials of ʻAbd al-ʻAziz. In three cases cash was restored, 517 Turkish pounds in all. The policy was meant to show the tribes that, on the one hand, they could not hope to gain from raiding, and on the other that the board was a potential way to obtain redress for any raid victims.

Table 3.4
Restitutions by Transjordanian Government Of Property Taken in Raids, 1926-28

Date	*Camels*	*Animals*	*Items*	*Seized from:*	*Returned to:*
Feb. 1926	210			Audah al-Atnah	Najd Authorities
March 1926	8			Mitaab b. Jazi	owners
April 1926	164			Towayha	Gov. of Jauf
1 May 1926	167			Hamd b. Jazi	owners
10 June 1926	116			Hamd b. Jazi	owners
15 June 1926	230			Hamd b. Jazi	owners
July 1926	9			Hamd b Jazi	owners
July 1926	28			Zaal b. Motlaq	owners
14 April 1928	30			Towayha	Moswil al-Hawi
16 April 1928	49			Atoon	Moswil al-Hawi
16 June 1928	66		4 rifles	Dhamaniyyah	Moswil al-Hawi
6 July 1928	6			Towayha	Moswil al-Hawi
6 July 1928	49			Bani ʻAtiyya	Moswil al-Hawi
28 July 1928			£T 360 gold		Najd caravan
July 1928	4	3 mares	sundry items	Atoon	Wahba al-Kobaysi
Aug. 1928	57			Jowazi	owners
Oct. 1928	7		£T 67 gold	Dirdeh b. Fayez	ʻAgayl caravan
May 1929	5			Zaal b. Motlaq	owners
June 1929	21	3 donkeys		Zowayda	Howaytat al-Tihama
4 Aug. 1929	56			Tagatga	Howaytat al-Tihama
15 March	50		£90 gold	Shararat	Gov. of Jauf
1 Aug. 1929	6				Fahameen, Howaytat
12 Aug. 1930	50				Gov. of Kaf

Source: CO 831/7/8, Enclosure to Acting High Commissioner's Secret despatch dated 23 August 1930. Names are rendered as they appear in the source.

The list showing punishment of raiders has details on 40 individuals from July 1928 to June 1930. The penalty for raiding could be time in prison, a fine (most paid in cash but two paid in animals), or both. Nine of the 35 men who served time in prison were sentenced to two months or less, and 20 served seven-month terms. Only one person was jailed for the longest term listed, 12 months,

with the average sentence being just over five months. Cash fines averaged 40 Turkish pounds. The punishments may not have stopped raiding entirely, but they certainly created a stark disincentive. There appears to have been little or no recidivism, because no name appears more than once on the list.[106]

The arrests and restitutions were the results of a stepped up effort at curtailing raiding by the TJFF and RAF. The lengths to which the forces went was probably unprecendented. According to Glubb,

> The military forces acted with a thoroughness really remarkable. The camps and grazing grounds were criss-crossed by patrols and reconnaissances. They even went so far as to make nominal rolls of the tribesmen, count all their tents and even attempted to count their camels in order to be able to check at will whether any men were absent on raids or whether their flocks had suddenly been increased by loot. Many men were arrested for raiding, some of them guilty others innocent, sent into Amman, tried, arrested and sometimes imprisoned or fined.[107]

That such measures would cause resentment among the bedouin under normal conditions is self-evident. But this energetic anti-raiding effort came as Transjordanian tribes were in the process of attempting to recoup their massive losses from Hijaz-Najd raids. The Huwaytat were among those who protested.

> "Why," they asked, "if the Government has so many forces to spare and are so determined to prevent raiding did they not prevent Ibn Musa'ad and Al Nashmi raiding us? Why do they not compel Ibn Saoud to return our flocks?"[108]

The widespread frustration and anger of the bedouin was expressed vividly by a member of the Huwaytat quoted (or, more probably, paraphrased) by Glubb:

> "The [Transjordan] Government is joined to Ibn Saoud in their determination to destroy us. Ibn Saoud has massacred us and taken all our flocks and the Government has searched us, imprisoned us and fined us. But (with a look of hatred and triumph) THEY HAVE NOT AND WILL NOT

PREVENT US FROM RAIDING." [Emphasis in original.][109]

Glubb's Carrots and Sticks in the War on Raiding

During the 1930s, British tribal policy bore the imprint of Glubb, who took control of the administration of the southern desert of Transjordan. His success in implementing government policies among the bedouin of Iraq made Glubb the logical candidate of British officials who were anxious to stabilize the badia of Transjordan. He arrived on November 9, 1930, bringing with him years of experience in dealing with the suppression of raiding and a reputation for sympathy as well as firmness in dealing with the bedouin.[110]

One of Glubb's first actions was to call for the removal of the TJFF and the RAF from the desert. Authorities in Amman and Jerusalem agreed to the proposal, and by February 1931 these Imperial Forces were withdrawn from their patrols in the badia to their bases in the settled zone. Glubb had several reasons for the move, the first being practical. As the new responsible officer in the desert, it would have been awkward for both him and the other forces (over which he had no authority) to be operating in the same area, the lack of coordination causing potential confusion. In addition, while Glubb acknowledged that the TJFF and the RAF probably had prevented large Akhwan raids from attacking the Huwaytat, they had not been able to keep small raiding parties of the Transjordanian tribes from slipping across the border.[111]

There was also a question of tactics. The Imperial Forces (the TJFF and RAF) used what Glubb described as "direct prevention" of raids. This involved, as mentioned above, intercepting raiding parties or keeping camps under watch to ensure that no one left them to raid. These operations usually took place in the

summer, when tribes were clustered around water sources. In the winter, when the tribes spread out to find grazing, this method was useless. In contrast, Glubb used "indirect methods," which relied to a large degree on the cooperation of the bedouin themselves in the anti-raiding effort.[112] In order to do this, Glubb had to win the hearts and minds of the tribes. By "going from camp to camp," he attempted to convince the bedouin that further raiding would be useless because they would suffer counter-raids from across the border and would be punished by the Transjordanian government. It would be better for all concerned, he told them, if they worked with him in protecting their tribes

There was a period between the time the Imperial Forces withdrew from the desert and Glubb was able to put together a new force. In the interim, he hired bedouin, many of them "destitute" Huwaytat, as scouts who stationed themselves near the wells in Wadi Sirhan and south of Tubayq in order to gather intelligence on tribal movements and give alerts upon sighting raiding parties.[113]

As part of his philosophy that "self-policing" among the bedouin was a desirable solution to preventing raids, Glubb encouraged the bedouin to join his newly formed Desert Force. Initially, there was no desire by most bedouin to work for a government which many of them felt had been more of an enemy than a protector. It was only after Glubb had built a small core of soldiers with bedouin from Najd and Iraq that local tribes began to sign up for service.[114]

In addition to promises of jobs, protection and a sympathetic attitude, Glubb offered cash inducements of between £10 and £50 sterling to some Huwaytat shaykhs, with a promise of "favours to come," should members of the tribe "mend their ways." One condition for receipt of this cash was the signing of a document

spelling out Glubb's new policies. The tribes were expected to observe a broad range of restrictions on their freedom of action. The agreement would force bedouin leaders to refrain from visiting or corresponding with any foreign government, or to cross the Transjordanian frontier without permission. In addition, the tribes would have to camp, move, collect and march as ordered by the government. Finally, the shaykhs were to cease raiding, and to prevent their followers from raiding, and if a fellow tribesman still insisted on raiding, to report the fact to the government immediately.[115]

Along with the carrot of money and promises of favours, Glubb employed the stick of punishment. On December 20 he went to the camp of some Tuwayha who had just returned from a raid in Wadi Sirhan with 11 looted camels. Although Glubb acknowledged that the party had set out before its shaykhs had signed the anti-raiding agreement, he felt this was a "clear case of which to make an example." He took back the booty and confiscated the party's riding camels. Said Glubb: "The effect of this small operation was excellent." On another occasion, Glubb was more flexible. A leader of the Nuwasra section of the Huwaytat approached Glubb upon returning from a raid with 25 camels asking for leniency, since members of the section were considering moving permanently to Najd if the Transjordanian government continued to treat them harshly. Because the raid leader expressed remorse and agreed to hand over the booty, Glubb did not impose a fine.[116]

Glubb's application of force was subtle but effective. In March 1931 he received reports of a 30-man Huwaytat raid across the Hijaz-Najd border. He set out to collect the names of the raiders (sometimes offering bribes for the information), and then went to the tents of the named individuals with an armed

escort and confiscated all the camels he could find. Glubb acknowledged that his methods were imperfect ("Perhaps we took a few camels of innocent people. A few of the raiders we missed.") and indeed illegal ("…I had no legal power to seize the two hundred and fifty camels…"). Moreover, when the raiders came back without any loot he was forced to return the camels he had seized.[117]

Glubb Loses Control: Raiding and the Ibn Rifada Revolt

In spring and summer of 1932 some Transjordanian tribes became swept up in the unrest surrounding a revolt against Saudi rule in Hijaz led by a Billi bedouin named Ibn Rifada.[118] Although the uprising was put down with relative ease, the episode is illustrative of a number of aspects of the rapidly evolving system of bedouin control. First, it was perhaps the last example of how Britain's goals regarding tribal and regional policy could come unravelled when local officials pursued conflicting aims. In this instance, it was Shakir (still head of the BCB) and Abdullah who recruited Transjordanian bedouin in order to support the Hashemite hope of toppling – or at least irritating – 'Abd al-'Aziz. Just as they had been for centuries past, bedouin fighters, and tactics such as the raid, were employed by town powers to advance their political designs. According to Glubb, Abdullah summoned Bani 'Atiyya shaykhs to Amman, gave them money, and told them to "raise as many men as possible to operate in conjunction with Ibn Rufada." In addition, there were rumours circulating that the amir had said Glubb would not punish those who took up the call and raided tribes in Hijaz (a rumour Glubb was eager to quash). As a result of the payments, incitements and general sense that raiding would not be punished, some tribes felt free to raid across the border. Glubb reported on one large Bani 'Atiyya raid in which some 400 camels were

taken from an ‘Aṇaza tribe in July. He also noted a handful of smaller raids during the month, including one in which the police post at Bair was attacked by none other than 14 of Abdullah’s personal guard.[119]

The revolt also revealed how tenuous Glubb’s hold on the tribes was at this juncture, and how it continued to be necessary to resort to force when the tribes asserted themselves.[120] As the apprehensions of British officials about the revolt increased, they once again sent Imperial Forces (named Souforce for this operation) into the desert. Their principal tasks were to prevent raiders from entering Hijaz and to establish a blockade between Transjordan and Hijaz in order to cut supply lines of the rebels. The forces not only hindered the rebel effort, but also prevented the regular movement of tribes. In addition, the TJFF, RAF and police detained several individuals, and confiscated many camels and the loads they were carrying.[121] Even after the revolt, the Bani ‘Atiyya continued to be seen as a tool that Shakir could use to harass the tribes of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz. Glubb employed the same method against the Bani ‘Atiyya as was used against the “refugee Shammar” in Iraq: forced transfer. While the Shammer were made to move further into Iraq and away from the Najd border, the Bani ‘Atiyya, some of whom were so poor that they did not have camels to carry their goods, were pushed into Hijaz.[122]

Political intrigues were not the only impetus for raids during this period. As noted elsewhere, the early 1930s was a period of intense hardship, poverty and suffering among the bedouin of Hijaz and parts of Transjordan.[123] Throughout history such conditions have been associated with increased bedouin raiding for the sake of survival.

The End of Raiding?

A notable feature of Glubb's voluminous writings is that his unpublished government reports show, on the whole, remarkable detail, candor and subtlety. On the other hand, his published works, while serving as important and persuasive accounts of his years of duty in the region, occasionally exhibit lapses in precision, tending more toward self-justification than accuracy. One example is his account of the end of raiding in Transjordan.

In one of Glubb's many books, he wrote: "The last raid affecting the Trans-Jordan tribes took place in July 1932, when raiders from Saudi Arabia looted several flocks of camels from the Howeitat."[124] No government (much less any one person) had the capability to monitor bedouin activities with such certainty. In fact, Glubb's own monthly reports recorded raids for several years afterward, usually with Transjordanian tribes as the victims, sometimes while grazing outside their borders. The Bani 'Atiyya raided frequently into Transjordan. According to a September 1933 report, there were seven raids, all of them involving small numbers of camels.[125] While it is true that the number of reported raids certainly declined, it is also clear that they did not disappear. Nonetheless, following Glubb, scholars have repeated his statement in one form or another.[126]

In the final analysis, pinpointing a the definitive end of raiding is less important than how raiding ended. Here again Glubb embellishes his record. Contrasting the methods of "most Arab countries," where the task of ending raids "was carried out forcibly, after repression and imprisonment," Glubb stated that in Transjordan raiding "was abolished in a few months without inflicting a single casualty on the tribes and without putting a single tribesman in prison."[127] And

again, there are echoes of Glubb among modern scholars. Bocco and Tell, citing two unpublished Glubb reports, stated "Payments by *shaykhs* to their tribal clients provided partial compensation for the inability to rebuild flocks through raiding, and allowed the relatively peaceable curtailment of raiding by 1932."[128] As earlier examples in this chapter amply demonstrate, the bedouin of Transjordan gave up raiding reluctantly, sometimes defiantly. On several occasions, the lack of protection by Transjordanian forces from external attacks resulted in massive losses to Transjordanian tribes. And when these same forces prevented them from mounting counter-raids to recover lost animals the consequences could be catastrophic. Although the arrival of Glubb and his new methods of control brought a degree of insight into the bedouin predicament (not to mention genuine sympathy) absent from earlier implementers of British policy, even he employed "repressive measures" to stop raiding, most notably the threat and use of force, and the confiscation of not only looted animals but the property of raiders' kin and of innocent bedouin. Here is Glubb himself in an unpublished report from about a year into his tenure:

> "…the Trans-Jordan tribes have ceased to raid, not only owing to the *severe repressive measures adopted* [emphasis added], but because they have definitely come to hope that the times have changed. There is a definite limit to what can be done by repressive measures alone. A desperate man, completely destitute, can defy punishment. He cannot be fined because he owns nothing. In prison, he will at least be fed. The Atoon, the owners of the 200 camels raided, are now in this position. They own absolutely nothing in the world. Either their camels must be recovered, or they must be compensated in cash, or they will take to raiding or highway robbery. There is nothing else they can do.[129]

While he may have been attempting to contrast his own methods of bedouin control to the "repressive" ones of his predecessors, Glubb at least paints a more accurate

picture in this passage: repressive measures were employed to change bedouin practices.

Another way to do away with raids was to call them something else, and Glubb appears to have done this as well. In January 1933 Salim al-Saad of the Bani Sakhr was stabbed to death and robbed of 42 camels by two men of the Bani 'Atiyya who had been evicted from Transjordan. Although the victim and perpetrators were both bedouin, Glubb pressed murder charges against the arrested men in civil court, "not as bedouin raiders, in view of the brutal nature of the murder."[130] In June 1935, four men of the Bani Sakhr were reported to have stolen three camels from 'Agayl camel merchants near Rasayfa. Again imposing a civil penalty more in line with theft than raiding, the animals were recovered and "the culprits were imprisoned." At least in this instance the case could be made that the victims were non-bedouin.[131] What most likely happened was that large-scale raiding faded away and what remained was the small-scale theft of animals that had been going on since time immemorial.

Certainly there were many causes for disputes between bedouin even in the years following the "end of raiding," and the justice system forced the bedouin to use a venue for settling them other than the raid and counter-raid. In 1936, two years after the death of Shakir, the BCB was reorganized with Glubb at its apex. In addition, bedouin cases were dealt with according to the 1936 Tribal Courts Laws, which provided for the establishment of four tribal courts in the settled zone and one in the desert, with shaykhs themselves trying cases. In 1937, 251 cases between tribesmen were settled in the Desert Area Tribal Court. It is more than likely that some involved the lifting of a camel or two.[132]

In Summary

The reports on intertribal raids presented in this chapter show that they could be motivated by a wide range of impulses: a search for honour and prestige; a desperate attempt to stay alive; a desire to obtain vengeance or political advantage; or merely a wish to have more camels or sheep.

While it is clear that Sweet's hypothesis that raiding evolved in order to ensure the dominance of camel-herding tribes and to assure that camels could be redistributed over a wide area, what is often ignored is the bedouin's own explanation for the activity: "If you stop us raiding, you stop our source of life." This can be taken in the literal sense: without raiding, bedouin who found themselves, as a result of drought, disease, theft, or other reasons, with too few camels would not be able to obtain enough to stay alive.

What is more likely is that the institution of raiding was for bedouin men, not only a way to obtain honour, dominate others, and capture camels. It was also an important way to obtain the knowledge and skills that would ensure the survival of the tribe. The chapter also has shown that the British did not see the badia as central to their administrative concerns during the first years of the mandates. As long as the settled population, traders, travellers and government facilities and officials were left in peace, most British officials saw no reason to prohibit raiding. In Iraq, the government itself instituted a period of sanctioned raiding, with rules and regulations, so that its officially recognized shaykhs would not lose control over the tribes they claimed to represent and control. The situation, of course, changed when the bedouin refused to "play by the rules," and when British officials

felt greater control in the badia was becoming imperative in order to lessen the growing problem of cross-border incidents.

How did the bedouin themselves fair as a result of anti-raiding measures? Because raiding was prevented and punished in an inconsistent and piecemeal manner by the states around the badia, some tribes suffered great hardship. This was certainly the case in Transjordan, when raided tribes were not permitted to mount counter-raids to regain their flocks. In some cases, tribes or individuals were punished unjustly. And government efforts to protect their own tribes from being raided were of uneven effectiveness, and attempts to recover looted property were largely unsuccessful, leaving many bedouin feeling that the governments taking control of their diras were condemning them to poverty and subjugation. On the other hand, when the level of raiding gradually subsided, it could benefit camel-herding bedouin by giving them a more secure environment that was conducive to herd growth.

Raiding was a double-edged sword, offering the potential of material and social gains for the raider and holding out the possibility of impoverishment for the victims. For the destitute it could offer the prospect of redemption; for the wealthy it threatened ruin. While intertribal raids resulted in deaths, injuries, and lost property, they often paled in comparison to the devastating effects of large Akhwan attacks on bedouin society. The costs and consequences of these attacks are explored in Chapter Four.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

[1] Alois Musil, *Northern Negd* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1928), 10.
[2] H.R.P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949), 342.
[3] SAC Glubb, undated MS, Box 205, Folder 6, "Various writings Iraq crossing desert."
[4] Louise E. Sweet, "Camel Raiding of North Arabian Bedouin," *American Anthropologist* 67 (1965): 1140.
[5] William Lancaster, *The Rwala Bedouin Today*, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 139-141.
[6] One shaykh in the nineteenth century was reported to be readying a ghazzu against some nephews as punishment for raiding a merchant under the shaykh's protection. Anne Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates* (London: John Murray, 1879), 1:322.
[7] For a discussion of conflicting views held by British officials and 'Abd al-'Aziz, see John C. Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert* (London: Tauris, 1991), 143-46.
[8] "The setting of the frontiers and the various states' attempts to rally tribal allegiance generated a continuous struggle along the newly established frontier areas." Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916-1936* (New York: OUP, 1993), 79.
[9] For example, the treaties signed by the states of the region are full of provisions relating to bedouin affairs. Between Iraq and Syria, agreements on border matters were reached in 1923 at Dayr al-Zor and 1924 at Albu Kamal; between Iraq and Najd, at Muhammara and 'Uqayr (1922), and Bahra (1925), and a Treaty of Friendship and Bon Voisinage and Extradition (1931). For details on these and other treaties, see Stephen Helmsley Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900-1950* (London: OUP, 1953), 160-1, and Great Britain, *Iraq Administration Reports,* 1921-1930.
[10] Clive Leatherdale, *Britain and Saudi Arabia, 1925-1939: The Imperial Oasis* (London: Frank Cass, 1983), 112-113. "Ever since the granting of the mandate the inclination of the Iraq Government had been to avoid interference with inter-bedouin raiding, and to keep clear of the desert generally to avoid unnecessary commitments and expenditure."
[11] "Britain's strategic and economic interests in Iraq concentrated attention on the populous urban areas, which offered most benefits for transport and communications." Ibid., 96.
[12] Glubb painted a yet more dire picture. He noted that while 'Abd al-'Aziz's foreign policy revolved around raiding and the seduction of neighbouring tribes, such matters were "an irritating irrelevance" to the Iraqi government. "Bent on transferring [sic] their country into a modern state, the Iraqi Government regarded tribes and tribal raiding with aversion and resentment. They disliked their own bedouins almost as much as they did those of Ibn Saud, and desired a plague on all their houses." John B. Glubb, *War in the Desert* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), 142.
[13] Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of the Occupied Territories of Al-'Iraq, 1914-1918* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1918), 47. The text of the original regulation appears in IOR, L/P&S/10/617, "Report on the Administration of Civil and Criminal Justice in the "Occupied Territories" from 1st June to 31st December, 1915," 18 April 1916. For an overview of how tribal justice was carried out in the settled zone, see Muhammed Fadhel Jamali, *The New Iraq: Its Problem of Bedouin Education* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934), 143-45.
[14] Great Britain, *Review*, 15. The "propping up" of nomadic and settled tribal shaykhs of course had political motivations and implications as well. See, for example, Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 24, 92-99. It should be noted as well that tribal policy, like other matters, were not the exclusive domain of British officials. Iraqi officials also took part in formulating and implementing policy toward the bedouin, often at cross-purposes with the British. One manifestation was that some government-appointed shaykhs were pro-British and others were loyal to the king and his officials.
[15] IOR, L/P&S/10/617, Reports for the year ending March 31, 1917, Administrative report by D. Willey, 26.
[16] For a more detailed analysis of the development of tribal policy, especially among settled tribes, see Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq, 1914-1932* (London: Ithaca Press, 1976), 231-272. On the genesis of the expanded responsibilities for the RAF in the region, see Jeffery A. Rudd, "Origins of the

Transjordan Frontier Force," *MES* 26:2 (April 1990): 164-5. For a top-down perspective of the RAF's role in Mandate Iraq, see Jafna L. Cox, "A Splendid Training Ground: The Importance to the Royal Air Force of its Role in Iraq, 1919-32," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 13:2 (January 1985): 157-84.

[17] John Glubb, *Arabian Adventures* (London: Cassel, 1978), 32.

[18] British policy had also been strongly influenced by the huge material and human cost of putting down the uprising of 1920 in Iraq. An improved intelligence network in the tribal areas was no doubt seen as a way to prevent small-scale disturbances from spreading.

[19] Most of the Dhafir, for example, did just that when the government appointed Lizzam aba Dhra' official shaykh of the tribe. "As an instrument by means of which the government could control the Dhafeer, Lizzam was not a success. [Shortly after his appointment,] the tribe had moved southward to the Nejed frontier with Hamood Ibn Suwait. Lizzam was afraid to follow them, lest they vent their resentment on him for his usurpation." Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 79-95.

[20] PRO, Air Ministry records, AIR 23/300, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya 18 February 1926. For more details, see Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 70-80. For the implications of these activities for 'Abd al-'Aziz's policies, see Kostiner, *Saudi Arabia*, 80-7.

[21] AIR 23/291, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 25 December 1924. In one case, Ajil al-Yawir ordered the arrest of a shaykh of the Shammar Abdah. While the arrested man was in jail, Ajil confiscated all 85 of the camels raided by the Abdah shaykh from the Akhwan.

[22] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 28 January 1922.

[23] Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 94.

[24] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 28 January 1922.

[25] Glubb observed in April 1925 that an unofficial "working arrangement" existed between the camel-mounted Desert Force in the Dulaim Division and the local bedouin. "The Desert Force did not attempt to arrest raiders, on the condition that they did not molest non-bedouins, farmers or travellers." Glubb, *Arabian Adventures*, 85. According to another official, the first anti-raiding measures were aimed at "those raids carried out across the border and the small affairs between the Iraq tribes themselves were allowed to pass unnoticed." AIR 23/298, Samawah Air Staff Intelligence, 8 June 1925.

[26] For example, it was reported that small-scale raids into Najd by sections of the Mutayr and Utayba tribes (formerly of Najd) could not be stopped by the local administration because as long as they were camped in the Shamiyyah desert between Iraq and Najd, they would "continue to raid under directions from the palace." AIR 23/296, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 21 November 1924. Some Shammar refugees from Najd were also reported to be engaged in similar raids. AIR 23/292, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 27 August, 1925. See also, Kostiner, *Saudi Arabia,* 87. While Faysal attempted to use refugee tribes from Najd against 'Abd al-'Aziz, he fought domestic battles against the British-supported shaykhs of Iraqi tribes. Batatu, *Old Social Classes,* 99-101. On Faysal's purported anti-British and anti-Saudi "intrigues" during the Akhwan revolt, see Leatherdale, *Britain and Saudi Arabia*, 113-114.

[27] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, report dated 7 March 1923,

[28] Some examples appear in Ibid., 26 December 1921.

[29] Ibid., 26 March 1923. Two stolen sums of money were recovered according to this report.

[30] Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 76-8. The time period is not clearly spelled out in the text, but appears to be the winter of 1922-3.

[31] Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Report By His Majesty's High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration and Condition of 'Iraq* (henceforth, *Iraq Administration Report*) (London: HM Stationer's Office, 1926), 23.

[32] As security forces expanded their presence into the desert itself, inexperienced troops occasionally made errors in dealing with the bedouin. For example, the alarm was raised 24 April 1926 at Abu Ghar fort when the troops thought they were being attacked by Akhwan camelmen. In fact, the riders were members of the Dhafir tribe who "decided that Abu Ghar aerodrome was a beautiful clear space to try the speed of their camels, and came racing across the open towards the fort." The soldiers opened fire. "A cool and experienced hand might have noticed that the raiders had no banners, that many of them were riding at a slow walk, and that instead of returning fire they began to wave their cloaks and arms [a sign that they meant no harm]." Fortunately, only one camel was wounded. AIR 23/302, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 30 April 1926.

[33] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 18 January 1922.
[34] See, for example, Ibid., 26 March, 1923. Nijris ibn Gaoud (Dulaim) had promised the Division Advisor that his tribe would abstain from raiding. The DA had told him that Syrian authorities would try to prevent raids from the Syrian 'Agaydat on the Dulaim. Despite this, Gaoud claimed that the Dulaim had been raided about once a week ever since by the 'Agaydat, and so he could scarcely be blamed for considering himself absolved from the promise.
[35] Ibid., 13 April 1923.
[36] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 22 March 1923. Glubb recounts this episode, with colourful embellishments, in *Arabian Adventures* (89) and, perhaps aiming to add interest for potential North American readers of the book, changed the two Europeans to "a pair of American commercial travellers."
[37] AIR 23/292 Reports of SSO Ramadi, 7 June 1925. For a case involving the return of camels to Sulayb who were raided by Shammar near Jauf, see Ibid., 20 June 1925.
[38] For example, the Rwala raided the Dahamshah Suwailimat and took 60 camels that belonged to one man, who went to Ibn Hadhdhal to say this was robbery since Rwala and Amarat were not *gom* (in a state of formally declared hostilities). Ibn Hadhdhal sent a letter to Nuri al-Shalaan of the Rwala, who said the raiders belonged to Mujhim bin Muhammad al- Shalaan, who was in Najd. Nuri claimed he had not much influence with the Rwala and so Ibn Hadhdhal was reported to have made it known that future claims of the Amarat against the Rwala would best be resolved by means of the raid. AIR 23/292, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 18 April 1925.
[39] When a Dahamshah shaykh refused the request of the governor of Hail to return camels his section raided from the Suqur tribe, the governor gave permission for the Rwala and the Shammar Sinjara to raid the offending Dahamshah section. After the shaykh was thus raided of almost all his possessions, he "went to Baghdad to put these claims before King Faisal." AIR 23/295, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 3 May 1927.
[40] AIR 23/375, Memorandum to all Mutasarrifs Iraq from Ministry of Interior, 29 July 1926. Glubb, in his *Arabian Adventures*, devotes a chapter to "Authorized Raiding" (pp. 84-91). In it, he notes that a booklet of "rules for raiders" was printed up by the government and "the R.A.F. was asked to fly all over the desert and drop bundles of the leaflets on every nomad camp." He added wryly that in all of the Syrian Desert, only the clerks of the two major shaykhs of the 'Anaza and the Rwala could read, making this leaflet-dropping a "remarkable example of the genius of beauracracy." 86.
[41] Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 98.
[42] AIR 23/292, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 13 August 1925.
[43] Ibid.
[44] AIR 23/300, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 18 February 1926.
[45] AIR 23/293, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 9 October, 1925.
[46] AIR 23/300, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 18 February 1926.
[47] Ibid., 22 October, 1925.
[48] AIR 23/272, Reports of SSO Basrah, 29 May, 1926.
[49] AIR 23/375, Memorandum to all Mutasarrifs Iraq from Ministry of Interior, 29 July 1926.
[50] This is not to say that there were no recorded instances of civility. An SSO stopped an 'Anaza raiding party after it had raided 100 camels from the Shammar and he suggested that they were "giving possible cause for complaint by proceeding along a main road," to which the leader of the party "expressed regret, saying that this was only done because the party was very tired, and needed food and water." AIR 23/293, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 24 September 1925.
[51] From his Rwala informants, Lancaster reconstructed the following interpretation of the effect of modern rifles on the practice of raiding. "The killings that arose out of these new raiding techniques inflamed passions, because the killer could only rarely be positively identified. The category for legitimate revenge became larger, not in formal terms, but in practice.... Such uncontrolled revenge under the guise of raiding developed into virtual warfare, with retaliation being taken for damaged prestige as much as for booty." Lancaster, *Rwala*, 141-43.
[52] AIR 23/375, Memorandum to all Mutasarrifs Iraq from Ministry of Interior, 29 July 1926.
[53] It stands to reason that the British were able to expeditiously implement such measures in the areas under their control. For example, on 30 July 1927 a conference of tribal shaykhs from Iraq and Transjordan was convened at Ramadi, and it was agreed that claims for compensation for past raids would be waived (or "buried," in the bedouin argot). The attendees included Muhammad Abu Taya

and Hamad ibn Jazi (Huwaytat); Mithgal al-Fayez, Haditha al-Kharaysha and Khalaf al-Hurr (Bani Sakhr); Marzuk ibn Dughayim and 'Arif al-'Arif (Transjordan Government); Ajil al-Yawir (Shammar Jarba); Mahmud al-Hadhdhal ('Amarat 'Anaza); and 'Ali Sulayman (Dulaim). AIR 23/295 Reports of SSO Ramadi, 10 August 1927. In contrast, efforts at negotiating the settlement of claims arising from raids between Transjordan and Najd, for example, were characterized by delays and lack of cooperation, as will be shown in the following sections.

[54] AIR 23/375, Memorandum to all Mutasarrifs Iraq from Ministry of Interior, 29 July 1926.

[55] AIR 23/375, Telegram from SSO Nasiriyya to 'I' Branch Air Staff, 25 August 1926.

[56] These measures, particularly those aimed at Akhwan raiding, are described in detail in Glubb, *War in the Desert*. For an example of the effectiveness of improved security with regard to other raiding, see AIR 23/295, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 13 June 1927. In response to Huwaytat raiders entering Iraq, a force of four armoured cars, three armed Fords and two Rolls tenders left Ramadi for Rutbah on 7 June. The raiders were intercepted three days later and forced to relinquish their weapons: 205 rifles, 50 daggers, 40 revolvers, and 31,000 rounds of ammunition. The leaders were detained and their 205 followers were told to mount and depart.

[57] Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 144.

[58] CO 730/140/8, Note on the causes which make it essential to establish and maintain a permanent administration in the desert, Glubb to Iraqi Ministers, n.d (c. June 1929; henceforth, Note on Desert).

[59] CO 730/140/8, Note on Desert, June 1929.

[60] CO 730/168/8, Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert of Iraq, 1 May 1929 – 16 May 1930.

[61] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 26 December 1922. This type of raiding was common in northern Arabia, and other examples abound. Mention has already been made, for example, of the raids by so-called "Akhwan refugees," at Faysal's encouragement and support, of Najdi tribes.

[62] Ibid., 9 January 1922.

[63] Ibid., 22 March 1923.

[64] Specifically: Ibid., 26 December 1921 to 13 April 1923; AIR 23/291-295, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 30 October 1924 to 16 April 1927; and CO 730/168/8, Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, 16 May 1930.

[65] Glubb, *Arabian Adventures*, 86. According to the author, "the police post at Al Qaim… opened a special register for raiders." There were columns on each page for date, number of raiders, name of leader, tribe, objective, and results. This is the same format followed by many SSOs – from before and after the period as well.

[66] A more complete discussion of attempts by British officials to improve the accuracy of these reports and the way information was gathered appears in Chapter Four.

[67] At least one SSO felt Iraqi officials occasionally were biased in their reports. "…There is a tendency amongst local officials to exaggerate the reports [on raids], in the hope of additional police being apportioned to their areas…." AIR 23/292, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 16 July 1925.

[68] For example, the SSO Ramadi noted that the list of Shammar raids on the 'Anaza (see Table 3.1) was "compiled from a much larger number of reports, many of which were eliminated as being without sufficient confirmation." Ibid., 13 August 1925.

[69] AIR 23/295, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 27 October 1926.

[70] AIR 23/291, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 7 November 1924, and AIR 23/295, 27 October 1926.

[71] In some cases, raid reports gave a figure for the number of animals raided; in others, there was only "*x* flocks" of sheep and "*y*" herds of camels. When this was the case, an amount was derived by using 48 as the multiplier for each herd of camels and 100 as the multiplier for each flock of sheep. Although some sources use higher numbers for camel herds, 48 was used in this case because it was employed by at least one of the SSOs (AIR 23/292, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 26 June 1925). Obviously, it was impossible to use a multiplier when the report stated that "a large number" of camels were raided. In any case, these numbers can only be taken as crude estimates which hint at a probable order of magnitude. With regard to human casualties, the traditional protection given to women during bedouin raids seems to have survived in this period. The only case of a woman killed in this sample involved (non-bedouin) Milli Kurds attacking the Shammar Jarba. AIR 23/291, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 20 March 1925.

[72] The use of increasingly sophisticated rifles by the bedouin starting in the nineteenth century is discussed in Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 210.
[73] On the Solubba (Sulayb), including references to their immunity from attack, presumably because of their low status, see Jibrail S. Jabbur, *Bedouins of the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, ed. Suhayl Jabbur and Lawrence I. Conrad (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), 421-73. On the other hand, the 'Agayl reportedly could "cross the desert in complete security" because they took an akh or rafiq from each local tribe. Great Britain, Admiralty War Staff, *A Handbook of Arabia,* 2 vols. (London: 1916), 2: 18.
[74] AIR 23/293, Reports of SSO Ramadi, 8 October 1925; SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 28 January 1922, and 7 March 1922.
[75] For a compact and erudite account of the evolution of Transjordan's military, see P.J. Vatikiotis, *Politics and the Military in Jordan: A study of the Arab Legion, 1921-1957* (London: Frank Cass, 1967). A summary of British rationale for taking control of Transjordan (p. 38) is particularly useful. Also worthy of attention is C.S. Jarvis, *Arab Command: The Biography of Lieutenant-Colonel F.G. Peake* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1946), and Uriel Dann, *Studies in the History of Transjordan, 1920-1949* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1984), especially Ch. 2, "The Beginnings of the Arab Legion," 17-30. For a recent study focusing on political aspects of desert control, see Ricardo Bocco and Tariq M.M. Tell, "*Pax Britannica* in the Steppe: British Policy and the Transjordan Bedouin," in *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, ed. Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell (London: British Academic Press, 1994), 108-127. Finally, for a somewhat ponderous and quirky account, with some information on tribal policy (peppered with acidic subaltern observations about the British), see Syed Ali El-Edroos, *The Hashemite Arab Army, 1908-1979* (Amman: Publishing Co., 1980), especially 206-213.
[76] Vatikiotis, *Politics*, 39.
[77] Much of what we know of the early 1920s revolves around tribal conflict in or near the settled zone. For example, a series of tribal raids, attacks and killings in 1923 in Trans-Jordan and Palestine is briefly described in Ma'an Abu Nowar, *The History of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Volume 1: The Creation and Development of Transjordan: 1920-1929* (Oxford: Ithaca Press, 1989), 58.
[78] Although Peake was said to have achieved some popularity among the tribes, his attitude toward the hegemony of bedouin over settled populations was far from sanguine: "When I first came to Trans-Jordan the nomads were beginning to encroach on the cultivated areas. The Arab Government in Damascus was too weak to force back the Beduin; and had not the British stepped into Trans-Jordan and the French into Syria there is little doubt that both countries, with the possible exception of Lebanon, would soon have reverted to tribal rule and poverty." Jarvis, *Arab Command*, 61.
[79] For all the putative "tensions" between nomad and townsman, it is ironic to note that al-Fayez was the mayor's son-in-law. In Transjordan, as in the realms of 'Abd al-'Aziz, the gulf that separated town and badia was crossed by many bridges.
[80] Jarvis, *Arab Command,* 61.
[81] According to one account, Peake himself was briefly held involuntarily by Mithgal al-Fayez in the course of a land dispute involving the Bani Sakhr shaykh. Jarvis, *Arab Command,* 73-4. In addition, there were other disturbances, including a revolt by the settled tribes of Kura in 1921-22, of the 'Ajlun area in 1922 and by the 'Adwan tribes in 1923. Abu Nowar, *History*, 58, 71-2, 104-109; and Vatikiotis, *Politics*, 40, 63-4. Akhwan activities, including attacks from 1922 onwards, will be covered in Chapter Four.
[82] On the high-level decision-making which surrounded the creation of the TJFF, see Rudd, "Origins."
[83] CO 831/7/8, Report on the Raiding Situation on the Transjordan-Nejd Frontier, Air Vice Marshall Dowding, 25 January 1930, (henceforth, Report on Raiding.)
[84] Abu Nowar, *History*, 164, notes that this did not mean that tribal law ceased to operate among the bedouin, and that Cox and Peake were "unaware of the details of tribal law and did not realise its value for the administration of the tribal communities of T.J."
[85] British and bedouin interests were also represented on the board. In 19 October 1930 meeting of the board, it consisted of Abdullah, Shakir, E.R. Stafford of the Arab Legion, and Mithgal al-Fayiz. CO 831/7/8, Enclosure to Trans-Jordan despatch Confidential of 1/12/1930.

[86] By no means did Abdullah or Shakir (or the British, for that matter) deal with bedouin affairs wholly through administrative, formal channels. On the contrary, most of the interactions between these parties took place on an informal level, with personal relationships with shaykhs, for example, playing a much more important role in "tribal control" than laws, courts, troops and forts. For an enlightening explication of the importance of this point, see Abu Nowar, *History*, 162-3. "It was loyalty and obedience to 'Abdullah and his ability to influence the tribes of T.J. more than the physical power of the Arab Legion that maintained law and order."
[87] CO 831/7/8, Cox to HC Transjordan, 8 October 1929.
[88] Ibid., Report on Raiding, 25 January 1930.
[89] CO 831/6/11, H. Beckett to Williams, 19 December 1929. Minutes of a Dec. 18 meeting at the Foreign Office dealing with raids on the Najd-Transjordan frontier.
[90] IOR, L/P&S/18/B386, Text of Hadda Agreement, Article 6, signed at Bahra Camp 2 November 1925.
[91] Abu Nowar, *History*, 194.
[92] Here, for example, is a long broadside from C.H.F. Cox, the British Resident in Transjordan: "Ibn Saoud has made no restitution for all the damage done by his tribesmen, it was entirely due to his intransigence that the Maan and Jericho Tribunals came to naught, he has declared his inability to trust anything or anybody, including the British officials connected with Trans-Jordan and has rudely resisted all attempts made by me and by Col. Peake to get in touch with his Frontier Officers so that some understanding of the unintelligible stream of complains which pass through Jeddah might be arrived at." CO 831/7/8, Enclosure to Acting High Commissioner's Secret Despatch dated 23 August 1930, Cox to Acting HC Transjordan, 19 August 1930, (henceforth, Enclosure).
[93] R/15/5/106, A.H. Webb to Chief Secretary for Palestine, 13 May 1927. It is likely that 'Abd al-'Aziz felt compelled to go through the motions of participating in the tribunal, if only to appear to succumb to British pressure. Nonetheless, he no doubt was also under pressure from Najdi tribes whose loyalty he was attempting to win during the violent struggles involved with state-building. Thus, it was more important for him to make certain that accused shaykhs of these tribes not be called before the tribunal to defend themselves. 'Abd al-'Aziz's shifts in policy, pulled on the one hand by the exigencies of British interests and on the other by local constituencies appears to have been one of the predominant dynamics of this period, especially with regard to bedouin policy.
[94] Bocco and Tell, "*Pax Britannica*," 116-7. The commission did not distinguish between Akhwan attacks and intertribal raids coming from the lands of 'Abd al-'Aziz. However, since most losses to Transjordan tribes came at the hands of the Akhwan, the commission's findings appear in the following chapter.
[95] CO 831/7/8, Translation of letter to British Resident from Hamad Bin Jazi, Zaal Bin Mutlaq, Mohammad Bin Dhaylan, Salim Abu Damark, Sabah Abu Nuwayr, Rafayfan Bin Diab, and Bakhit Abu Darwish, 24 September 1930.
[96] FOCP 13548/39, Ibn Saud to Stonehewer-Bird, 2 October 1928, in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part II Series B, Turkey, Iran and the Middle East, 1918-1939, Vol. 4, 98-9. Interestingly, the list of raids in this letter (covering raids from 24 July – 13 August 1928) noted only 25 men killed in raids (no women and children) and 269 camels looted. Another protest note, sent by Fuad Hamza to the Stonehewer-Bird, in February 1929, protested seven raids into the lands of 'Abd al-'Aziz by Transjordan tribes, mainly Bani Sakhr and Huwaytat, which looted over 800 camels and killed three men. Victims included the Shararat, villagers, and 'Agayl (transcribed as "Aqilat" in the British translation). FOCP 13785/29, Stonehewer-Bird to Chamberlain, Jedda, 10 February 1929, in Ibid., 146-7.
[97] R/15/5/106, Translation of letter from Ibn Saud to F.B. Prideaux, 1 March 1925.
[98] FOCP 13785/84, Jakins to Henderson, Jedda, 12 June 1929 in Bourne, *British Documents*, Part II, Series B, Vol. 6, 170.
[99] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 33. In his lengthy and impassioned exposition of the plight of the Huwaytat in the early 1930s, Glubb noted that "Ibn Saoud at present finds an occasional Howeitat raid a useful diplomatic weapon. On this sub-stratum of truth he bases the wildest accusations, multiplies the numbers of camels stolen by ten and adds half a dozen quite fictitious raids which never occurred."
[100] CO 831/7/8, Hamza to Ryan, 28 July 1930.

[101] This pattern appears to fit that of the intertribal raiding of Iraqi tribes more than the larger and more deadly attacks of the Akhwan. In a conversation with Hamza about his protest, Ryan assured him that the Transjordan authorities were not "incompetent or culpably negligent" in allowing the raids. Ryan also "stressed the gravity" of Hamza's disclaimer of responsibility were the raids not stopped. CO 831/7/8, Ryan to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 7 August 1930.
[102] "[The Bani 'Atiyya and Shararat] are really Nejdian tribesmen who have been allowed to come into Trans-Jordan for grazing and are now living here under guarantee of good behaviour," Cox noted. "in view of their continued bad behaviour I intend to insist with the Amir that they should be compelled to return to Nejd." CO 831/7/8, Enclosure, 19 August 1930.
[103] Cox cited eight cross-border raiding cases from May 1929 to February 1930 that the board had to drop because it was "precluded from any direct touch with the Frontier authorities in Nejd and are thus debarred from hearing evidence of the most important witnesses." CO 831/7/8, Enclosure, 19 August 1930.
[104] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 34.
[105] For example, during a period of raiding in 1927 across the frontiers of Transjordan by the Bani Sakhr and Huwaytat, Abdullah and Shakir were reported to have gone "in the depth of the desert and persuaded the sabre-rattling tribes to accept peaceful settlement with Iraqi and Syrian tribes while Peake remained with his files in his office." Abu Nowar, *History*, 193-4. (The quote is a somewhat subtle example of the author's occasional polemical proclivities, showering praise on Abdullah and his allies, and tossing (occasionally justifiable) barbs and brickbats at the British.)
[106] CO 831/7/8, Enclosure, 19 August 1930. Two listings give numbers of accused rather than names, so the possibility of a repeat offender among these exists.
[107] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 8.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid., 9.
[110] For a rare account by a bedouin of his reaction to the new style of rule Glubb brought to the desert, see Godfrey Lias, *Glubb's Legion* (London: Evans Bros., 1956), 75-77. In it, a Bani Sakhr bedouin recounted how surprised he was upon returning from a raid into Iraq and Syria that instead of being imprisoned, his party was given a lecture by Glubb and the loot of his party was handed back with the admonition that the next time they were raided "by the Wahhabis" they were not to counter-raid, but instead call the Desert Patrol.
[111] Glubb, *The Story of the Arab Legion* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1948), 91-2.
[112] SAC Glubb, Monthly Report on the Events in the Southern Desert of Transjordan for the Month of December 1930 (henceforth, TJ Monthly Report).
[113] SAC Glubb, Reports from Transjordan, G/388, 13 March 1931. Although he overspent his intelligence allotment by 300 pounds, Glubb said the employment provided to the Huwaytis kept them from raiding in order to survive.
[114] Glubb, *Arab Legion*, 92-3.
[115] SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, December 1930.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Glubb, *Arab Legion*, 95-7.
[118] For a summary of the political implications of the affair, see Kostiner, *Saudi Arabia*, 158-62.
[119] Glubb acidly noted that having to pursue raiders sent by the amir was "making His Majesty's Government look exceedingly foolish." He also expressed dissatisfaction with Shakir's performance as head of the BCB. The report also contains details regarding a handful of other raids. SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, July 1932.
[120] When he wasn't able to prevent raiders from leaving, he punished those staying behind. Having missed a departing Bani 'Atiyya party on June 28, Glubb arrested two of the tribe's shaykhs and confiscated many camels and property of those who went on the raid. SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, June 1932.
[121] SAC Glubb, Air Headquarters, Palestine and Transjordan, Intelligence report, week ending 25 June 1932.
[122] SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, November 1932. A 60-year-old member of the tribe, Hamud ibn Farhan, was permitted to remain behind in a "miserable tent" near the Bayr police post, where he had to check in every day. His camels and other property had been taken as payment for fines. The man's only son, Zahir, became depressed and one day walked into the desert, ate a poisonous fruit,

and died. Glubb was moved by the story, but seemed to blame 'Abd al-'Aziz for forcing the expulsion of the Bani 'Atiyya. Ibid., August 1933.

[123] In the first months of the year, for example, Glubb reported that some bedouin women and children were in such straits that they scraped through the droppings of the camels at Mudawwara police post in order to gather a handful of undigested barley each day. Elsewhere, Huwaytat were seen "eating weeds or bushes." At the Rum police post, an average of 50 local bedouin per night were given a meal. Even Glubb's car was surrounded at one post by bedouin who demanded money or food, "and refused to let go" until they were driven away by the sticks and fists of the police. SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, February 1932. See also Bocco and Tell, "*Pax Britannica* in the Steppe," 120-22.

[124] Glubb, *Arab Legion*, 112.

[125] SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, September 1933. See also Ibid., March 1933, in which Transjordan tribes lost 108 camels and 121 sheep to mainly Sba'a raiders who were driven to their victims the night before their raids in the American motorcar of Sba'a shaykh Raykan ibn Murshid. In March the same year a caravan of 58 Sirhan camels (55 of which were loaded with provisions) was looted in Iraqi territory by Fid'an, who escaped into Syrian territory. Ibid., April 1933. Four horsemen from Syria were reported to have raided 30 camels from the Sirhan near Deraa on September 21, after which the Desert Patrol pursued the raiders and recovered the camels. Ibid., August, September, October 1934.

[126] In his characteristically prudent and cautious fashion, Lewis uses Glubb's date but qualifies his blanket assertion by stating, "...by July 1932 both trans-frontier raids and raiding within Trans-Jordan had *virtually* ceased." (Italics added.) Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 133. Less circumspect was Wilson, when she said, "Aided by armoured cars, modern weapons and radio communications, the desert patrol was able to bring raiding to an end by 1932." Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), 99.

[127] Glubb, *Arab Legion*, 113.

[128] Bocco and Tell, "*Pax Britannica* in the Steppe," 122.

[129] FO 967/42, Glubb, Situation on the Nejd Frontier, n.d. (c. December 1931).

[130] SAC Glubb, TJ Monthly Report, February 1933.

[131] Ibid., May 1935.

[132] Ibid., January 1938. The number of cases handled by the tribal courts was: 1937, 441; 1938, 587; 1939, 568. Ibid., January 1940. See also Bocco and Tell, "*Pax Britannica* in the Steppe," 119-29.

CHAPTER FOUR

AKHWAN ATTACKS IN KUWAIT, IRAQ AND TRANSJORDAN, 1921-30: COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES

Ikhwan atrocities while serious and regrettable were distinguished more by the intenseness with which they were perpetrated and by the break with traditional nomadic traditions of combat than by the number of victims involved or the frequency of their recurrence. ...The Ikhwan swept through Arabia much like a surgeon's knife, deftly cutting out the "malignancy" and leaving the healthy parts intact.[1]

The convoys of donkeys were urged on by the women, running bare-footed behind them, frantic with fear, many carrying babies at the breast, pushing and beating their tiny donkeys, constantly glancing over their shoulders and moaning: "O Ali, Thy protection! O Husain! O God save us!"

To be overtaken by those [Akhwan] camelmen meant not only the loss of everything they owned in the world, but death to their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons.[2]

Wars and other forms of conflict have taken a large human and material toll from the peoples of the Middle East, the economic costs of which until recent times have been largely unquantifiable. This chapter begins to provide data on the losses inflicted as a result of attacks and threats of violence on the bedouin of northern Arabia by the Akhwan and their allies during the interwar period. Some writers, like Habib – displaying an anti-bedouin, pro-urban bias – have downplayed the results of Akhwan actions because "no areas were economically ruined, or crops maliciously or otherwise destroyed, and no cities or towns burned or devastated."[3] Others, like Glubb and Dickson, have provided first-hand accounts of the attacks and of British responses, but have not recorded precise details of the human and material costs to the victims, the bedouin. In addition to charting the economic impact of Akhwan attacks, this chapter will also analyse how British officials came

to devote increasing amounts of energy to the collection of information regarding Akhwan-inflicted losses in human life and property.

Before examining Akhwan attacks, however, it would be appropriate to explain why these forms of violence and plunder are being examined separately from intertribal raiding. The overarching justification for this is that Akhwan attacks differed from raids in significant ways. First, because the Akhwan operated as a *de facto* military force, often in the service of 'Abd al-'Aziz, their attacks tended to be larger, more organized and disciplined, and better supplied than intertribal raids. While most tribal raids were comprised of no more than 100 men, Akhwan forces typically numbered several hundred and on occasion several thousand. In addition, according to a British official writing in 1928,

> The Akhwan are carefully organized into groups or bairaqs, on a clan basis. The paramount Sheikh of a tribe is their commander, and each section has its own subsidiary chief and banner. These chiefs have, for the past fifteen years, been strengthened, equipped and supplied by Ibn Saud…
>
> To ensure that the orders passed to the tribesmen through the Sheikhs are obeyed, the Sheikhs are given money, arms, riding animals & tents to maintain bairaqs, or nuclei of paid retainers, who enforce their orders.[4]

A second factor that set Akhwan attacks apart was the great physical, material and psychological impact they had on the victims. As shown in Chapter Three, bedouin on a raid were intent mainly on taking animals and not inflicting undue human casualties; whereas Akhwan attacks took the form of all-out war, with the objective being to crush their targets, killing men (and sometimes children) and looting as much property as possible, including weapons, tents, household

possessions, food and clothing. Here, for example, is a description of Akhwan tactics by a British official.

> It must always be remembered that there are raids and raids. The method of fighting employed by the Nejd [Akhwan] tribes is the result of twelve years of experience and improvement. Moreover, it involves the supply of money, arms, ammunition and animals to the tribes by Ibn Saoud and it also necessitates control or discipline. With these aids the Akhwan are able to gather two or three thousand men and launch them against scattered and unorganized Bedouin camps. It is only by this means that really great quantities of loot can be obtained including not only the camels but the camps, tents and all their contents, and that really considerable casualties can be inflicted, including the massacre of prisoners and non-combatants, officially ordered by Ibn Saoud.[5]

The ferocity, size and efficiency of Akhwan attacks had the psychological effect of instilling terror among tribes within their range of operations who had not submitted to their authority by paying zakat. Thus, the disruptions of normal herding routines caused by the threat of attack were reported to have resulted in as much loss in livestock as the attacks themselves. This was because the mere rumour of an Akhwan advance could send sheep-herding tribes fleeing frantically toward the relative safety of the settled zone, and camel-herders to more distant pastures in the badia. Another response was for herding groups scattered in the badia to come together in one location in order to be able to mount a more effective defence. In either case, animals were lost on account of rapid, uncoordinated movements, often over long distances, or by scarcity of forage and water.

> Fear of petty thefts does not cramp the freedom of movement of the tribes.... But fear of massacring attacks by two thousand men does, and often results in the tribes being obliged to remain camped in areas without grazing, involving enormous mortality to live stock. There are many times of the year when flocks are in poor condition or in the lambing

> or calving seasons when a forced march involves almost as great losses as a raid. Similarly a direct and hasty retreat may often necessitate crossing waterless areas with similar disastrous results.[6]

Finally, Akhwan attacks often had a strong political dimension, with geopolitical motivations driving many of them. On many occasions, they were set in motion by 'Abd al-'Aziz's desire to gain territories by winning over (or defeating) the populations living in them. The attacks also played an important part of his tribal ingathering policy, giving tribes on the edges of his domains an almost irresistable incentive to join the movement.[7] Clearly, there was a religious dimension as well, with the language and mores of the Muwahhidun[8] playing an important part in the political dynamic. Some Akhwan occasionally pursued their own policies, and mounted attacks that were contrary to the wishes of the Najdi ruler. This was the case during the Akhwan rebellion of 1927-30, when some Akhwan groups openly split from 'Abd al-'Aziz, and fought not only the tribes of Iraq, Kuwait and Transjordan, but those of Najd and the forces of its ruler. Though these attacks tended to be as large and destructive as previous Akhwan attacks, they were done as part of an open rebellion against the authority of 'Abd al-'Aziz.

All of the above reasons made Akhwan attacks unique, but they also caused British authorities to take a serious look at what was happening in the badia and to implement stepped up anti-Akhwan military measures. These included the establishment of military posts in the badia itself, with increased air and land patrols, and diplomatic attempts to end Akhwan attacks and to provide economic compensation for the victims. According to one official, "The question of raiding came into prominence on account of the Akhwan and when the defence system was

organized attempts were made to put a stop to raiding generally. Attention, however, was mainly directed to those raids carried out across the border and the small affairs between Iraq tribes themselves were allowed to pass unnoticed."[9]

Kuwait: Large Losses in the 'Cold War' with 'Abd al-'Aziz's Forces

There are several published accounts of the Akhwan attacks on Kuwait in the 1920s, and while they provide a good narrative of the military and political matters, they fail to present details concerning losses and casualties.[10] Therefore, rather than recapitulate these events, this section will focus on the scale of the losses. Since Kuwait was not dealt with in the previous chapter, it may be fruitful to devote a few lines at the outset to some factors which set it apart from Iraq and Transjordan, particularly in regard to its relations with the British and with 'Abd al-'Aziz. These differences, in turn, affected the ways in which Kuwait was defended, how attacks were reported, and how compensation was sought.

First, the relationship between the Al Sabah and the British was based on the so-called "Trucial system," which gave Britain responsibilities with regard to defense and foreign relations, but left other government functions in the hands of the local ruling family. Thus, instead of positioning troops and a large cadré of officials in Kuwait (as was done in the lands under British mandate), the British relied on the presence of a Political Agent, the payment of subventions to the ruler, the funding of certain defensive measures, and the deployment of British forces only when the security of the amirate was deemed unusually precarious.[11]

Size was another important difference. Kuwait had a fraction of the population of Iraq, and its territory could fit several times even within Transjordan's none-too-extensive frontiers. Thus it had to engage in a delicate

balancing act, using the survival tactics of small states everywhere: attempting to remain nominally neutral, cultivating a powerful patron (Britain), and making accommodations with its larger neighbours, Iraq and Najd. Thus, while the Hashemite rulers of Iraq and Transjordan were generally hostile toward 'Abd al-'Aziz, Kuwait's ruler during the 1920s, Ahmad al-Jabir Al Sabah, was nominally at peace with him, and made several overt gestures of support, despite 'Abd al-'Aziz's attempts to swallow the tiny amirate.

Because Kuwait's economy relied on trade, pearling and fishing, the percentage of bedouin in the amirate's population was much smaller than Iraq's or Transjordan's.[12] However, because trade with the hinterland was so important to the town, many bedouin tribes from Iraq and Najd marketed (or attempted to market) in Kuwait. Thus, while the number of bedouin who claimed allegiance to the Al Sabah was relatively small, many more tribes spent time in Kuwait territory.

Although Kuwait often made overtures to 'Abd al-'Aziz backed by significant financial inducements in the hope of winning true peace and an end to the blockade,[13] two issues stood in the way: territory and trade. The 1920s saw several disputes arise over territorial matters, and some of the attacks on Kuwait, especially before the British began to insist on the demarcation of definite frontiers, were based on conflicting claims for land. Trade was another point of contention. As part of the background needed to understand 'Abd al-'Aziz's attacks on Kuwait, it is necessary to sketch an outline of the blockade imposed by the ruler of Najd. Before the First World War, tribes and traders from Najd carried on a large volume of trade with the merchants of Kuwait. After the war, however, as part of his drive to increase revenues, 'Abd al-'Aziz attempted to find a way of collecting customs

on the Najdi trade passing through Kuwait. When he was unable to obtain an agreement from the ruler of Kuwait, the Najdi ruler imposed a blockade on Kuwait and deployed his forces (sometimes within territory claimed by Kuwait) in order to intercept people of Najd who attempted to trade at the port town. (Chapter Five will deal in greater detail with the blockade of Kuwait.) Thus, although Al Sabah and 'Abd al-'Aziz were nominally at peace, conflicts arising from the blockade were emblematic more of a state of "cold war."

The ruler of Kuwait and the British Political Agent, H.R.P. Dickson, compiled a detailed list of claims for losses suffered by the people of Kuwait and the ruler personally for which Al Sabah sought compensation from the Kingdom of Najd and Hijaz. The claims, sent to the British Political Resident in Bushire on 18 March 1930, appear in Appendix B. Claim I (A) is for losses arising from Akhwan attacks, and Claim I (B) is for losses inflicted by 'Abd al-'Aziz's paid forces, the *siriyya*. (Those claims dealing with 'Abd al-'Aziz's blockade of Kuwait will be dealt with in Chapter Five.) In the covering letter, Dickson noted that the claims were only for the period 1921-29, when Ahmad al-Jabir Al Sabah was ruler and Kuwait and Najd were nominally at peace. Thus, Dickson added, although there were large losses in men and property from such attacks as those at Hamudh and Jahra, since they occurred during the reign of his predecessor, Shaykh Salim, al-Jabir would not submit claims for them.[14]

It was not until 14 months after Dickson submitted the claims that J. Briscoe, the Political Resident in Bushire, forwarded them to London. Briscoe wrote that since treaty negotiations between Najd and Kuwait were going on at the time the claims were originally submitted, he thought it "preferable first of all to

arrange machinery for the settlement of claims and subsequently to submit the claims." Eventually, Briscoe decided that the negotiations would not lead to this outcome in any reasonable time.[15]

As shown in Table 4.1, Akhwan and siriyya forces extracted a heavy toll from the people of Kuwait, most notably its bedouin. The claims called for compensation for the deaths of 135 men, and the theft of 2,254 camels, one horse, 12,440 sheep, six

Table 4.1
Losses from Akhwan and Siriyya Attacks 1921-28
Claimed by Kuwait from 'Abd al-'Aziz

Deaths or losses	***Number***	***Value, Rupees***	***Value, Sterling****
Men	135	216,000	16,000
Camels	2,254	676,200	50,088
Sheep	12,440	435,400	32,252
Horses	1	500	37
Donkeys	6	240	18
Rifles	135	20,250	1,500
TOTALS		1,348,590	99,895

Source: CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 15 March 1930. *Exchange rate: £1: Rs. 13.5. SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1930.

donkeys and 135 rifles.[16] The total cash value of Kuwaiti losses from ten Akhwan and six siriyya attacks between 1921 and 1928 submitted for compensation was Rs. 1,348,590 (£99,895). It is quite probable, however, that because of reporting deficiencies, which are elaborated below, the actual losses were at least double the amount in the formal compensation claim.[17] To give an idea of the scale of the claimed losses, more was lost in Akhwan and siriyya attacks in nine years than the total sea-borne exports for Kuwait during 1932-33, Rs. 1,111,881 (£82,361).[18]

The Akhwan attacks listed in the claim were carried out by large groups, and were violent and effective. Only one group of attackers listed in the claims

numbered fewer than 100 men, with most groups ranging between 300 and 600 fighters. Men from the raided tribes were killed in all but two of the operations, and large numbers of camels and sheep were taken.[19] Kuwaiti forces sometimes were able to mount counterattacks, often employing a fleet of motor cars. For example, on 27 January 1928, 'Ali ibn 'Ashwan's section of the Brayh Mutayr with some 350 camel men and 50 horsemen attacked *'uraybdar*, herders of mixed tribal origin loyal to the Kuwaiti ruler, at Umm Ruwaysat, killing some men and driving away many camels and sheep. When news reached Kuwait, a force of the ruler's armed retainers (*fidawiyya*) raced out in 25 motorcars (some carrying nine men) to cut off the retreat of the Akhwan force.[20]

> Although numbering 75 rifles, the Kuwait force was better armed than the raiders, to whom moreover the motor car was an entirely new factor in war. The result was that the Kuwait force inflicted very heavy casualties on the enemy, and forced them to abandon a considerable portion of the booty, their own casualties being light, although they included their commander, Shaikh 'Ali al-Khalifah, who was severely wounded. Kuwait casualties were 11 killed and 11 wounded, of whom one subsequently dies. The Mutayr most certainly lost over 35 killed.[21]

While much of the defence of Kuwait was carried out by the fidawiyya, the British became involved whenever the threat of Akhwan attack was great. In February 1928, for example, fearing that Kuwait Town was in danger of being attacked by the Akhwan (who had recently wrecked havoc on the shepherd tribes of Iraq), the British ordered their warships *Emerald*, *Lupin* and *Crocus* to Kuwait, and a landing party went ashore. In addition, "a temporary airbase was also established, and a flight of aeroplanes and a section (later temporarily increased to two sections) of armoured cars ordered to Kuwait."[22]

The siriyya operations, by contrast, were considerably smaller in both the number of attackers and the amount of damage inflicted.[23] Dickson described how the siriyya operated.

> … I am assured that in every case, H.M. Ibn Saud's regular troops (Sariya) not only invaded Kuwait territory, but moved about at will and for considerable period, spoiling, robbing and killing Kuwait subjects and carrying off sheep, camels, etc., whenever they could. Their avowed object was to prevent supplies of all kinds entering the Town of Kuwait, whether from Nejd subjects or Kuwait's own nationals of the shepherd or tribal class. By a process of confiscating everything seen, the blockade was tightened up considerably.[24]

It should be noted as well that the siriyya also confiscated the property of those leaving Kuwait, and Akhwan forces participated in the blockade of Kuwait.[25]

Dickson, in his administrative reports during the 1920s, listed a number of Akhwan attacks that did not appear in the claims. This is one indication that the claims reflect a very conservative estimate of the actual losses and casualties, one that could be sufficiently documented. It also reflects the complicated political situation inherent in a "cold war" situation. In some instances, for example, Akhwan forces attacked Kuwaitis and made off with their property, but later were compelled by 'Abd al-'Aziz to disgorge the loot. According to one report, a party of Ajman and Mutayr killed 11 and wounded more than 20 Kuwaitis, and "took a number of sheep, donkeys and camels" on 25 April 1924. The Kuwaiti ruler wrote a protest to 'Abd al-'Aziz, who replied that he regretted the raid and that he would make enquiries. Some animals were eventually returned in August, less "the considerable number" that had died during the interim. That this was not an unusual occurrence is demonstrated by the fact that 'Abd al-'Aziz's son, Faysal,

went that same year to the village of Qarya "to try and settle various tribal disputes on behalf of his father."[26]

There were other reasons for the incomplete claims, particularly with reference to attacks and depredations by 'Abd al-'Aziz's siriyya. According to Dickson, "official details of the damage done had not been properly recorded," partly because "few reliable witnesses of events at the time were allowed to reach the Town." Another reason was that the Kuwaiti ruler "was for ever hopeful that H.M. King Ibn Saud (who throughout appeared friendly and pretended to be ignorant of the excesses committed by his subordinates) would listen to his protests."[27] Dickson himself was confident that the Kuwaiti claim for losses from siriyya incidents was conservative.

> Actually from personal knowledge and as a result of having made many inquiries from the Bedouin of the interior, both Kuwaitis and Nejdis, I am quite satisfied that the damage done by Bin Saud's paid forces on Kuwait tribesmen and shepherds during the period under review came to quite as much as that claimed under I(A) if not more.[28]

While Kuwait's losses at the hands of the Akhwan and siriyya were significant (probably greater on a per capita basis than losses by tribes in Iraq or Transjordan), the suffering of the victims who survived must have been somewhat mitigated by the fact that Ahmad al-Jabir paid (presumably full) compensation after each attack.[29] However, even after the defeat of the Akhwan, the tribes and merchants of Kuwait were subjected to harassment and attacks not only by 'Abd al-'Aziz's forces, but those of Iraq as well, with trade and "smuggling" continuing to be sore points.

Iraq: Escalating Akhwan Attacks Draw Britain into the Badia

A number of new factors contributed to making the situation in the badia of Iraq more unsettled than usual in the early 1920s. First, the uprising of 1920 had a large degree of tribal involvement. While most of the tribes that rose up were settled, riverain groups, some bedouin sections (such as the Shammar) also participated, and the after-effects of this unrest lingered.

Secondly, the defeat of the Rashidi amirate by 'Abd al-'Aziz in November 1921 had a number of consequences which altered the status quo. One was the influx of a large number Shammar groups, escaping Saudi control or retribution, into Iraqi territory. Another was the spread of Najdi tribes, including Akhwan, into the former dira of the Shammar. This put the tribes of southern Iraq in closer contact with those of Najd, which resulted in increased raids. This proximity also meant that 'Abd al-'Aziz's policy of bedouin ingathering could more strongly affect tribes in northern parts of the Iraqi badia, and not just those in the Muntafiq region in the south. By a combination of diplomacy and force the Najdi ruler attempted to remove such bedouin tribes as the Dhafir, 'Amarat and Dahamsha from the sphere of Iraq.[30]

In addition, because many shepherd tribes herded their flocks each winter in the Shamiyya and northern Najd, they had to make arrangements with the bedouin or authorities in control of those areas. According to a British report, when the Ottomans controlled Iraq, these shepherd tribes paid khuwa in sheep to Ibn Rashid and his Shammar. However, when Ibn Rashid was defeated, some of these tribes made overtures to 'Abd al-'Aziz's representatives, "with a view to the payment of this toll." But because of its "anti-Akhwan bias," Faysal's government imposed

penalties on those shaykhs who made agreements with Najdi officials. To make matters worse for the shepherds, during these years the Iraqi government "was not in a position to defend its subjects against Akhwan aggression." The most that the authorities were willing to do was to send aircraft in pursuit of raiders after a report was received, which did not offer protection to the victims and gave the raiders plenty of time to escape.[31]

Thus, forced by necessity, some Iraqi shepherd tribes regularly put themselves under Akhwan protection during the grazing season. That this system operated fairly well is demonstrated by a report which stated that "Iraq tribes moved out with a certain amount of confidence, and mingled with Akhwan subjects in the vicinity of the frontier" during the start of the 1923-24 grazing season (i.e. after the first rains of autumn 1923).[32] And although 'Abd al-'Aziz sent his representatives into Iraq in order to coerce or cajole those who stayed within their "own" frontiers, not all of the tribes succumbed to these blandishments and threats.[33]

Finally, the evolving political system in Iraq itself had repercussions in the bedouin domain. As noted in the previous chapter, shaykhs vied for control of tribes and for the favour and recognition of government officials. Faysal and his officials attempted to use the tribes for their local and regional political ambitions, most of which revolved around thwarting 'Abd al-'Aziz.[34] And British officials slowly and haltingly spread military control from the towns to the steppe, utilising such novelties as the wireless, armoured cars and aeroplanes.

As noted earlier, the use of bedouin as a fighting force by settled powers had a long history, and it continued in the 1920s. Faysal and 'Abd al-'Aziz became the

two principal poles of such attractions. A characteristic of tribal politics of this period, like earlier periods, was the constant shifting of alliances and allegiances on the part of bedouin tribes, depending on what suited them at the moment. The motivations for these shifts varied, as did the frequency of tribal re-alignments, but one constant was the gradual dimunition of bedouin options as the developing states permitted fewer and fewer avenues of political and physical maneuvering.

With the arrival of the defeated Shammar into Iraq (the so-called "refugee Shammar"), Faysal had a new tribal weapon to employ in his skirmishes with 'Abd al-'Aziz. Rather than submit to 'Abd al-'Aziz as many Shammar had, the refugee Shammar offered allegiance to Faysal, who reportedly paid some of these groups to "raise *bairaqs* [large bodies of fighters under war banners] in order to fight the Akhwan." In addition to the Shammar, there were other tribal groups, including sections of the Mutayr, 'Ajman, Harb and 'Utayba tribes, who had moved from Najd to Iraq, and carried out relatively small-scale raids against Najdi tribes.[35] These disaffected former Akhwan tribal sections departed their home diras for a number of reasons. An important motivation for many of them was generational. According to Glubb, this group included the younger sons and cousins of shaykhly families,[36] a group for whom it was traditionally difficult to rise in the family ranks past a certain level, with elder sons being favoured. When some of these younger sons and cousins had carried out unauthorized raids, they faced punishment by 'Abd al-'Aziz and fled. Other Najdis who moved to Iraq may well have been merely opportunistic, and saw the protection and occasional payments offered by Faysal as a convenient incentive to carry out raids against former tribesmen and allies. In any case, disaffected Akhwan ("Akhwan refugees") who sought sanctuary

in Iraq were a constant destabilizing factor on the frontier with Najd, and their disposition was debated at the highest political levels during the 1920s, with 'Abd al-'Aziz insisting on their extradition, and the Iraqi authorities refusing to evict them.[37]

The Iraqi police and RAF responded to Akhwan attacks during these years on a case-by-case basis because there was no overall co-ordinated policy or system. For example, Akhwan forces mounted a massive attack in March 1922 on an Iraqi shawiyya tribe, which lost at least 209 men and "all their tents and animals." Aircraft bombed retreating Akhwan camps on successive days.[38]

Frequent Akhwan refugee attacks into Najd during the autumn and winter of 1923-24 "began to cause considerable resentment among the Akhwan." This resentment grew to the point that 'Abd al-'Aziz permitted Faysal al-Duwish to carry out a series of raids into Iraq near Unsab in March 1924. The victims included the Bani Salama and Al Yajib tribes, and the losses were devastating: several hundred men killed, thousands of sheep looted, along with many donkeys, tents and personal property. Although the RAF had received warning of the attack and improvised a "hasty system of aerial patrolling of the desert," it was unable to prevent the carnage.[39] In addition, those increased patrols that flew afterward were, by Glubb's account, rather ineffectual. Glubb stated that while air operations in March and April 1924 "completely failed" to protect Iraq's tribes, the raid impressed upon the Iraqi Government and the RAF that more effective measures were called for. Government officials also may have been influenced by the angry members of the shepherd tribes who besieged their offices, demanding to know what the government was going to do to protect them.[40] British officials were frustrated as

well by the fact that the Iraqi shepherds were said to direct their resentment against the British, who were, after all, 'Abd al-'Aziz's ally and protector.[41]

Hoping to prevent future catastrophes, Glubb sent a scheme for Akhwan defence to his superiors which he hoped would lead to the establishment of a system of intelligence, warning and patrols. It was only by December – in the midst of a new grazing season – that officials in Baghdad instructed a party of officers to go out into the badia on a reconnoitering mission. By this time, too, they had appointed Glubb to the new position of SSO for Akhwan Defence, but, as he would state later in a report, "in the absence of other defensive preparations" he found himself "almost helpless."[42] Past experience had shown that the Iraqi shepherd tribes who were streaming into the desert with their flocks to find grazing were not safe.

Massive Akhwan Attacks in the Winter of 1924-1925

As a succession of early rainstorms drew shepherd tribes into the badia in the winter of 1924, Akhwan forces were massing across the frontier, poised to attack. The magnitude of these preparations, involving thousands of men and animals, meant that it was impossible to keep them secret, improving the likelihood that reports would reach Iraq. Glubb's account of his experiences in the Shamiyya during this troubled time appears in his *War in the Desert* and contains some of the most compelling descriptions of tribal conflict in the literature of the desert. The Akhwan attacks came in three waves. The Ghalidh, Budur and Zayyad tribes were struck December 25 near Jau Hadiyya. On the following day, Muhsin al-Firm of the Harb Akhwan attacked the Zayyad near Sulman. And the Bani Salama were

overwhelmed by the Mutayr fighters of Meshari ibn Busayyis near Shabicha on December 28. According to Glubb:

> Along the whole length of the Nejed frontier from Basra to near Nejef the shattered and terrified remains of the Iraq shepherd tribes arrived back in panic and confusion on the banks of the Euphrates. In these three heavy inroads, several hundred Iraqis had been massacred, and many thousands of sheep had been looted, not to mention donkeys, tents, clothing, food, utensils and money. It was a devastating blow.[43]

It was only due to Glubb's fortuitous presence near Jau Hadiyya in the first attack's aftermath that the RAF was able to get early enough notification to mount counter-attacks with aircraft. The attacks not only jolted the Iraqi authorities, they left a strong impression on Glubb himself, who vowed that he would "devote all [his] energies to put an end to such abominations."[44]

All during this period, other British officials in the field also became frustrated and angered by what they saw as the mischief caused by raids of Akhwan refugees. The Brayh Mutayr under 'Ali abu Shuwayribat were singled out by one official, who noted that they didn't raid their own tribes in Najd, but paid "friendly social calls" and gave information on the location of Iraqi shepherd tribes. In addition, the refugee Mutayr in Iraq would provide information that would assist advancing Akhwan Mutayr raiding parties, and after a raid, the refugees "would come in and clean up any leftovers." One example of this type of symbiosis occurred in the wake of the above-mentioned Akhwan attack in December 1924. According to one report, Abu Shuwayribat and his men collected some 400 head of sheep after the attack and immediately sent them to Kuwait and Zubayr for sale before they could be recovered. Despite their role in helping Akhwan who attacked

Iraqi shepherd tribes, the refugees nonetheless received gifts of horses, weapons and money from Faysal, and the refugee raids resulted in Akhwan counter-attacks.[45]

The raids were also successful in driving some shepherds into the arms of 'Abd al-'Aziz and swelling his coffers. Some tribes sent delegations to the Najdi ruler "imploring mercy and protection," according to Glubb, and 'Abd al-'Aziz shortly thereafter sent his tax-collectors among them, "in some cases within Iraq territory."[46]

Large-scale Akhwan attacks began to take a political toll. Because British officials started to perceive them as a strategic threat, and because the massive losses created hardship and political turmoil within Iraq, they began to take steps to prevent them and to attempt recouping losses. This led the officials begin to collect more detailed records so that claims for compensation could be credible and effective. Treaties between Iraq and Najd called for an end to raids and the establishment of tribunals to settle claims on either side, and by the middle 1920s there appears a growing sophistication in recording losses and casualties. Table 4.2, for example, shows how officials modified reports of losses as they received more information. The initial estimates of March are much higher than those for June. Thus, one can assume that a certain amount of sifting, vetting and corroboration took place in the interim in order to obtain more solid figures.

Even when officials attempted to exercise due care, the task of collecting reliable information on losses was difficult. In the end, they often had to satisfy themselves with the best estimates that circumstances would allow. Table 4.3 nonetheless demonstrates how devastating Akhwan attacks were during the early

years of the 1920s. Two aspects stand out: the large number of men killed and the high proportion of looted sheep and donkeys as opposed to camels. Clearly, the

Table 4.2
Estimates of Losses by Muntafik Tribes From Akhwan Attacks, 1922-25

	March Estimates	*June Estimates (Revised)*
Men Killed	724	235
Rifles		181
Tents	806	340
Camels	692	1,596
Deluls		66
Sheep	35,624	12,946
Donkeys	2,460	1,395
Horses		12

Source: AIR 23/301-2, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 14 March and 12 June, 1926.

shawiyya of Iraq bore the brunt of most Akhwan attacks. Compared to the camel-herding bedouin, sheep-herding tribes were much less mobile and thus more vulnerable to attack, especially when the attackers were mounted on camels and horses. In addition, some shawiyya tribes were no doubt subjected to Akhwan attack because they were Shia: unwilling to take on Akhwan protection for religious reasons, and seen by the Akhwan as more abhorrent "unbelievers" than Sunni opponents.[47] Finally, as the following section will show, 'Abd al-'Aziz's policy of tribal ingathering clearly favoured camel-herders such as the Dhafir and 'Amarat.

Table 4.3
Estimates of Losses by Iraqi Tribes
From Akhwan Attacks, 1922-25

		Value, Rs.*	Pounds Sterling**
Men Killed	1,300	1,300,000	83,871
Tents	1,350	675,000	43,548
Camels	1,800-2,000	285,000	18,387
Sheep	60,000-70,000	650,000	41,935
Donkeys	3,500-4,500	40,000	2,581
TOTAL		2,950,000	190,322

Source: AIR 23/301, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 12 June, 1926.
*The value columns were added by the author. Rupee values were calculated using cash equivalents in FO 967/21, List of Akhwan Attacks on 'Iraq Tribes from 1st July, 1928 to 31st May, 1929.
**Sterling equivalents were derived using a rate of Rs. 15.5:£1, an average for the period taken from SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration reports, 1922-25.

From Masses to Faces: Official Reports Begin to Show Greater Detail

Increased official interest in what was happening in the badia of Iraq, more effective intelligence methods, and the growing local knowledge of officers in the field meant that the number and quality of reports on raids and bedouin politics as it related to security matters increased in the late 1920s. While the growth of British interest in such matters as raids and tribal alliances coincided with the desire to better control the badia, the almost microscopic detail which characterized many later reports on Akhwan raids can be attributed as well to the British desire to create solid records of losses which could then be used in claims for compensation in tribunals or other negotiations with the Saudi government. One senses that the British legal traditions regarding evidence that could stand up in a court of law influenced the collection and recording of information on Akhwan raids.

The new ways in which British officials dealt with losses and casualties from Akhwan attack can be summarized as follows. First, officials placed a greater reliance on obtaining information from multiple sources. Second, they increased

their efforts at corroborating the testimony of victims and witnesses with written records such as tax registers. Third, they attempted to obtain even the names of individual victims, with the result that the losses of hundreds of individual bedouin were recorded. Finally, officials in Baghdad collected, tabulated and updated reports from the field, taking great pains to produce accurate and well-documented estimates of raiding losses.

This dramatic increase in the amount of detail in the reports of British officials provides an unprecedented and unique view into some aspects of bedouin society during the mandate period. Government officials before and since have rarely included in their reports the names of individual bedouin, for example, who lost sheep in a raid, or who were killed. The following section analyzes how the reports of British officials went from treating bedouin raid victims as faceless groups to individuals with names.

Before 1927, reports by British officials concerning Akhwan attacks were similar to reports on intertribal raids in that they ran the gamut from very vague to very precise. Poor quality reports could be attributed to a number of factors: the relative inexperience of many officers reporting on bedouin affairs; the lack of interest in Baghdad and London in the occurrences of the badia; the absence of a system of intelligence-gathering; and a general lack of resources devoted to the task of monitoring the badia. Perhaps most importantly, the uneven quality of reporting reflected an absence of diplomatic/legal means for compensating the victims of raids. With no such mechanisms in place, officials had no motive for providing solid evidence for officially submitted claims. The following two examples show

the types of reports that were typical of the period – precise in some respects but vague in others.

Using such vague terms by British officials as "all" and "most" in reference to the number of animals lost by Iraqi shepherds in a raid at Umm Rahal on 26 December 1924, it is impossible to gauge the effect of this raid, except to say they were devastating for the victims. Table 4.4 thus offers an insight into the lack of detail in early raid reports.

Table 4.4
Losses by Iraqi Shepherd Tribes
From Umm Rahal Raid, 26 December 1924

Section	*Tents*	*Deaths*	*Animals*	*Other Losses*
Al Fartus	30	50	all	all possessions
Al Matowwaq	15	10	all but 300 sheep	all possessions
Al Hashaysh	8	6	all	all possessions
Albu Ghanaymah	6	1	most	most possessions

Source: AIR 23/297, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 11 January 1925.

While the following report on the Ghazalat raid contains more detail, it does not reach the level of specificity concerning individual losses available in later reports.

> Raid by Fraih Al Hamzi. Al Hamzi, with a force of about two hundred camel men and twenty-five horsemen, raided two tents of the Ghazalat tribe near Samit on 19/2/25. On 24/2/25, he was about to attack another camp of the same tribe near the Wadi Ubaiyidh (west of Najf), when a patrol of D.H.9.A's [aircraft] passed close by. Although the machines failed to locate the raiders, yet the latter immediately broke off the fight and beat a hasty retreat, taking only five tents and about seventy sheep as loot.[48]

After the Iraqi government began to present claims to 'Abd al-'Aziz, it was a only a matter of time before there were counter-claims. For example, Iraq claimed that between 1923 and 1927 its tribes lost 1,146 camels, 6,987 donkeys and 76,268 sheep to attacks from Najd. (It is unclear why human losses were not

included in this set of figures.) For their part, Najdi officials estimated losses to their tribes of some 24,389 camels and 3,355 sheep to raiders from Iraq.[49] Since it is not known what methods were used to collect and compile data for the Najdi claims, it is difficult to make a judgement as to their accuracy. As noted in Chapter Three, however, what little evidence there is suggests that the British employed more effort, care and impartiality in their gathering and analysis of data on losses and casualties. At the very least, it must be recognized that whatever the claims were for Iraqi losses, they generally did not reflect net losses. That is, the gains of Iraqi tribes from raids on Najdi tribes were not factored in. In addition, the gains and losses which came about because of raids were not evenly distributed. For example, the so-called Akhwan refugees, as well as Iraqi bedouin such as the Dhafir and Dahamsha, raided frequently into Najd for camels, but the victims of many of the large counterattacks by the Akhwan were Iraqi sheep-herding tribes, who were not known to engage in long-range raids. This may explain why, if the above claims are taken at face value, Iraqi shawiyya were net losers of animals while tribes the herded and raided camels came out ahead. In any case, negotiations between the two governments for the settlement of these claims was underway when the a small force of Akhwan attacked the Iraqi police post at Busayya.

Busayya: Turning Point in Britain's Policies Toward Akhwan Attacks

The attitude of British officials toward the Akhwan changed dramatically in the grazing season of 1927-28 after the attack on 5 November 1927 on the Busayya police post and several other larger incursions by the Akhwan into Iraq soon afterwards.[50] The Busayya attack was carried out to protest what the dissident Akhwan perceived as 'Abd al-'Aziz's inadequate response to British moves to

control the desert between Iraq and Najd. This was not their only grievance, but the most recent in a long list that included opposition to the blockade of Kuwait, the Najd ruler's toleration of the Shi'a populations of al-Hasa and al-Qatif, and the introduction of such novelties as the telegraph and telephone.[51] When it became clear to the British that Mutayr Akhwan leader Faysal al-Duwish, who orchestrated the attack, was in rebellion against 'Abd al-'Aziz, they redoubled their efforts to bolster the defence of the Iraqi badia. Whereas in the past, Akhwan incursions could to a certain extent be mediated by combinations of military and diplomatic responses, 'Abd al-'Aziz's loss of control of this most important Akhwan faction meant that force was the only alternative.[52]

The following accounts, descriptions and information, some taken directly from eyewitnesses to the attack on Busayya, demonstrate clearly how critical the episode was, and how the early reports of the attack itself evolved into a formal claim for compensation. In addition, they provide an insight into the sorts of primary material upon which this chapter is based. Finally, although the reports are somewhat fragmented, like a shattered mirror whose shards each reflect only a portion of "reality," their depth of detail, almost novelistic at times, provides a rare and eloquent testament of the horrors of Akhwan attacks as seen through the eyes of the victims.

The first account was taken down by Iraqi police from one of the Camel Corps policemen (also called "Hejanis"), Shafi ibn Milham, who survived the Busayya attack. Ibn Milham was from the Suwayt section of the Dhafir.

> ...[T]he sentry, Hejani Atshan al Zaghair No. 484, who was standing outside the tent, said he could hear voices, and he moved out to one side and shouted, "Who goes there?"

> Immediately there were about 40-50 shots fired and the sentry fell. I had grabbed my rifle at the first word of the challenge and when the shots rang out I kicked my brother who was asleep in the tent, to awaken him then ran outside. About 40-50 Ikhwan were coming round the corner of the building firing as they ran and the Hejana [camel policemen] who had run out at the first shot were falling riddled with bullets, so I ran off round the back of the building and though pursued by four or five Ikhwan who kept firing at me, I was not hurt and succeeded in escaping and reaching a camp of shepherds between Abu Ghar and Busayah but found they had neither horse nor camel, so I ran on to the next camp and got a horse which took me to Abu Ghar, where I arrived at dawn and gave the news to the Officer in charge to pass on by wireless.[53]

The description is unique among reports of raids and attacks because for the first time it offers a dramatic and detailed picture of events as recounted shortly afterward by a victim. In addition, the Busayya reports appear to be the first ones in which individual casualties were named.[54] An RAF officer who arrived the morning after the attack recorded more details, adding poignancy and depth to what one scholar has described as a "clean operation."[55]

> A little boy child, about 4 months old, son of Hejani Atshan al Zaghair, was found near the dead body of his mother in a small tent at the back of the building. The child was alive and was given milk by Officers of 84 Sqd. and brought by air to Abu Ghar where he was handed over to Ghaitan ibn Showkan of al Tarachi section of Bedoor Tribe whose camp and family were near.[56]

The fate of the surviving infant points to another unexamined effect of conflict in tribal areas: the high social cost to bedouin tribes, who frequently served as their own "social services agency." Thus, when men, women and children lost relatives and possessions, they had to rely on members of their tribe to help them survive, often spreading scarce resources.

Another survivor, Hejani Mattar Ibn Mubarak, was interviewed by the SSO Basra. The camel policeman reported that he was shot in the right thigh when the attackers fired into his tent. In order to appear dead, he took blood from his wound and smeared his face and clothes. He recognized the dialect of the attackers as Mutayri, and saw that they had beards, with their upper lips shaved, and wore the *'imma*, the white headdress of the Akhwan. The attackers killed the members of the Public Works Department construction crew by cutting their throats. According to the SSO's report, "The attacking party then peered into the faces of those who had been killed or wounded, and finished off the latter."[57]

An account of the attack that appeared in the annual report of the Muntafiq Liwa police revised the number of attackers to 100 and listed the name of the leader as Misyar ibn Abdullah. One additional detail provided by this report shows that these Mutayr were interested only in sending a strong message to the Iraqi government and the British, not to the tribes of Iraq.

> The raiders held some tribesmen they found on the way and released them afterward. They took arms, ammunition and the clothing of the dead policemen. They ignored the few small camps in the vicinity and had no difficulty making their escape.[58]

It could be argued plausibly that a major reason so much detail is available on the Busayya attack is because the target was a government installation and the victims were mainly police and other government employees. Nonetheless, it is clear that Iraqi and British officials were also motivated by a desire to have at hand strong evidence when it came time to make a claim against the government of Najd. (Table 4.5 contains the figures presented by the Iraq government to 'Abd al-'Aziz as part of the claim for compensation.) This interpretation is supported by the fact

that the increased attention to recording losses from attacks and raids on the part of British officials was continued in the aftermath of subsequent Akhwan attacks on the tribes of Iraq.

An example of this increased vigour in collecting information is the work of Flying Officer E. Howes, SSO Nasiriyya. In a letter which accompanied his report on losses from the Akhwan attack at Thulayma on 17 December 1927, he noted that "particulars have been collected from various sources: agents, Police reports, refugees &c…" He added that because all the reports were conflicting, "those submitted are extracted chiefly from Police reports as guarantees have been given by [tribal] section leaders that the figures are correct." (At least one reader of the

Table 4.5
Claim for Compensation against Najd Government for Losses and Casualties Resulting from the Attack on Busayya Post

Police	*Claim (Rupees)*	Pounds Sterling*
Head Constable	2,000/-	149
6 Constables @ 1,000 ea.	6,000/-	448
6 Camels @ 250 ea.	1,500/-	112
5 rifles @ 80 ea.	400/-	30
1,000 rounds ammunition	100/-	7
Equipment	1,260/-	94
Building Staff, Public Works Dept.		
Overseer	2,000/-	149
11 labourers @ 1,000 ea.	11,000/-	821
Tribesman		
Sanad ibn Muthlain	1,000/-	75
1 camel	250/-	19
1 rifle	80/-	6
35 rounds ammunition	7/-	.5
2 abbas	50/-	4
TOTAL	**25,647/-**	**1,914.5**

Source: AIR 23/62, H. Dobbs, High Commissioner for Iraq to LCNS Amery, Secretary of State for Colonies, 7 March 1928.
*This column added by the author. The exchange rate used was Rs. 13.4: £1, taken from SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1928.

letter viewed these guarantees with a jaundiced eye because the word "guarantees" was underlined in pencil and the notation "valueless" was written above it.) Howes, too, was skeptical about the accuracy of the reports, stating that they were "exaggerated," and suggested that the figures "be checked with the Koda [Livestock] Tax registers for 1927."[59] And this is exactly what he did. Table 4.6 contains details from a January 1928 report on an Akhwan attack at Ghuraybiyyat in the Neutral Area on 9 December 1927. It also contains koda records for the raided section that were included in a report one month later. The two have been placed in the same table for ease of comparison.

Table 4.6
Claims of Losses by the Al Busal, Ghazzi Section and Koda Tax Records for 1927

	Sheep	*Donkeys*	*No. of Sheep on Koda rolls*
Killed			
Fadhil ibn Jubara	150	15	60
Muhammad al Muhanna		5	18
Hazza al Muhanna			47
Faisal al Muhanna			not on list
Ubayd al Annad	200	15	60
Ghadhban al Wiria	80	22	not on list
Dhahir al Shumran	50	15	not on list
Akhras ibn Hassan			not on list
Sustained losses but not killed			
Kurayyim al Thajib	90	32	not on list
Jabbar al Annad	80	20	70
Aziz al Salhum	100	8	not on list
Muhammad al Jabbar	170	10	not on list
TOTALS	920	142	255

Source: The original claim of losses appears in AIR 23/61, Howes to Air Staff Intelligence Baghdad, 25 January 1928. The information from the koda records is from *ibid.*, 23 February 1928, and is drawn from the register for Nahiyyat Sadanawiyyah. The two sets of figures have been placed together in tabular form by the author for the sake of easy comparison.

Not every member of the Al Busal who sustained losses appeared on the koda registers. And the number of sheep listed for those who did appear is at variance with the claimed losses, which, presumably, were their entire herd. It would stretch the laws of probability to the breaking point to expect both sets of numbers to be identical. However, the table illustrates the lengths to which some officials were willing to go in order to gather corroborating evidence for claims of lost herds. It also shows, once again, that keeping track of large numbers of animals is problematic even under the best of conditions, much less under the pressures of life in the open badia.

Table 4.7 is another conflation of data on raid losses. It demonstrates that several sets of estimates were collected after some raids, and that these often (as one would expect) varied, sometimes widely. The last column on the table contains estimates of losses from a larger table assembled by officials in Baghdad using reports from the field as their raw material. In this instance, it is clear that the data in the first three columns on the number of men killed was used in the final estimate. As for the losses in sheep and donkeys, it does not appear that any set formula was used, such as averaging the estimates from the police, agent and Nucol sources. However, the final numbers are clearly in the same order of magnitude as the estimates from other sources. That the final estimates contain information on additional losses suggests that the authors used sources other than those listed in the table. Again, it is obvious that a great deal of effort went into collecting and collating a large amount of scattered and complex data on Akhwan raid losses in order to have a solid claim to present to the Saudi government.[60]

Table 4.7

Estimates of Casualties and Losses by Three Shawiyya Sections during the Akhwan Attack on 22 December 1927 near Jokha

	Special Nucol	*Police Samawa*	*Agent Reports*	*Final Estimate*
Al Barakat, Al Kab section				
Men Killed	8	10	12	11
Sheep	1,000	1,340	1,690	1,450
Donkeys	273	240	265	277
Tents				22
Rifles				10
Al Zayyad, Darawsha section				
Men Killed	2	2	2	2
Sheep	2,850	1,850	940	1,700
Donkeys	231	159	96	109
Tents				10
Rifles				2
Camels				1
Al Zayad, Albu Hamad section				
Men Killed	7	7	7	7
Sheep	1,890	4,580	1,280	2,785
Donkeys	373	438	184	455
Tents				26
Rifles				5
Camels				3
Mares				1

Sources: Figures in the first three columns are from AIR 23/62, Casualties and losses, Akhwan raid – Al Thulayma, 17 December 1927, [n.d.] This report contains the names of individual tribesmen alongside their losses. Estimates in the final column appear in CO 732/32/5, Statement of raids carried out by Akhwan tribes against Iraq tribes since Busayya raid, [n.d.]. This report, in tabular form, provides a summary of five raids. While it gives more categories of losses (e.g., tents, camels, rifles, etc., in addition to men killed, sheep and donkeys), it does not break them down by individuals but by tribal section only. It should be noted that while the location and date of this raid differ from the original report (they appear in the summary as "near Jokha, 22/12/27"), the tribal sections match up exactly in the two documents, strongly suggesting they both refer to the same raid.

Table 4.8 presents the fruits of these labours. It contains a compilation of losses and casualties from Akhwan attacks on Iraqi bedouin and merchants from the raid on Busayya in November 1927 to August 1929. In content, Table 4.8 is similar to the "master lists" compiled in Baghdad from SSO reports and other sources (it only lacks the identity and size of the attackers, as well as the location of the attack), and is, in fact, drawn from several of these. The pattern of losses and casualties is similar to that of the 1922-25 period summarized in Table 4.3. The

shawiyya continued to lose large numbers of their men, sheep, donkeys and tents, although the number killed dropped from 1,300 in the earlier period to about 377 in the 1927-29 period. Similarly, losses in camels were relatively light in the later period, reflecting a greater ability to retreat from attack as well as an unwillingness to target camel-herding bedouin for political reasons.

One feature which emerges from the greater detail in Table 4.8 is the losses suffered by merchants and traders. The most significant of the three recorded was the 19 February 1929 attack by Sultan ibn Humayd of the 'Utaybah Akhwan on a group of 'Agayl camel merchants. The 80 men killed is the largest loss of life by a single group during the period, and the 1,600 camels looted accounted for more than half of the total number of camels listed in British sources.[61]

Table 4.8

Losses to Iraqi Tribes and Others from Akhwan Attacks, November 1927 to August 1929

Date	*Victims*	*Killed*	*Wounded*	*Sheep*	*Donkeys*	*Rifles*	*Camels*	*Horses*	*Cash TL*	*Other property*	*Tents*
11/5/27	Busayya Police Post	21	0	0	0	6	7	0		1035 rounds of SAA, 2 abbas (Rs 50), Govt. property. (Rs 1260)	0
12/9/27	Ghalidh; Mashala, Basal (Dhafir)	74	0	9,600	1,637	83	0	6			180
12/9/27	Dhafir	13	0	1,100	0	0	100	0			0
12/22/27	Al Zayyad, Shammar, Dhafir, Dahamsha	53	0	13,203	1,431	33	186	6		Cloth (Rs 100), watch	107
2/19/28	Juwarin, Solubba	28	1	5,795	696	29	0	0			46
3/8/28	Jadaan al Mishari (Dhafir)	0	0	0	0	0	14	0		20 loads rice; women's clothing, ornaments (TL 40)	0
7/17/28	Dahamsha	0	0	0	0	0	13	0			0
12/16/28	Dahamsha	0	0	0	0	0	12	1			0
1/21/29	Bani Malik, Budur, Juwarin, Jumayyan	19	0	5,290	810	0	0	12	150		0
2/19/29	Zayyad	13	1	10,000	0	0	0	0		contents of 20 tents	20
2/19/29	'Agaylis	80	0	0	0	0	1,600	0			0
2/28/29	Dahamsha	14	0	600	9	0	150	0			16
3/3/29	Bani Malik	27	5	6,386	670	0	0	9			30
3/14/29	Iraqi traders	3	0	70	4	0	2	0	70		0
4/14/29	Dahamsha	20	0	60	0	0	400	0			40
8/25/29	Shammar, 'Agayli	12	0	0	0	0	300	0		much household property	0
TOTAL LOSSES		**377**	**7**	**52,104**	**5,257**	**151**	**2,784**	**34**	**220**		**439**
Value each, Rupees[62]		1,000		10	10	80	150	250	13		500
TOTAL CASH VALUES		**377,000**		**521,040**	**52,570**	**12,080**	**417,600**	**8,500**	**2,860**		**219,500**

Sources: AIR 23/62, AIR 23/291; CO 732/32/5, CO 732/46/8, CO 732/168/8; FO 967/21; IOR, R/15/5/38.

Taken together, the losses and casualties listed in Tables 4.3 and 4.8 add up to a staggering total, some Rs. 4.6 million (£340,740). According to these figures, at least 1,677 men were killed; many were probably also wounded, but no records were kept of these. Reported animal losses included some 4,784 camels, 132,104 sheep, 9,757 donkeys and 34 horses. Families also lost personal possessions, including their tents. The brunt of the attacks fell on the sheep-herding tribes of Iraq, who clearly suffered as a result. Admittedly, the reckoning of such losses was not an exact science. However, the evidence suggests that these figures can be confidently used to indicate a minimum number of losses and casualties. This assumes that the British officials tended to be conservative with their estimates, and that some losses were not reported or were not recorded because of inadequate information.

The magnitude of the losses is clear indication that a hitherto unappreciated source of economic change was at work in the badia during the interwar years. While Akhwan attacks appear to have caused the most hardship for the shawiyya, they also had an impact on the camel-herding tribes of Iraq.

The Case of the Dhafir Tribe

The Dhafir were one of the camel-herding tribes that 'Abd al-'Aziz was attempting to bring under his authority in the early 1920s as part of his policy of tribal ingathering. In order to accomplish this, 'Abd al-'Aziz employed representatives, Akhwan forces and personal contacts in efforts that could include blandishments, the presentation of gifts, insults, threats and crushing, lethal raids. In addition, the ruler and his officials pursued their goals through direct diplomacy with the British.

For their part, the Dhafir were in a precarious situation. Their dira encompassed lands claimed by either Iraq or Najd or both. The tribe's marketing towns and summer water sources were in Iraqi territory, but its camels were taken to graze in the winter months across the emerging frontier line, into the far reaches of the Shamiyya and northern Najd.[63] Some sections of the tribe had permanently gone over to Najd and joined the Akhwan, but others, reluctant to lose their prime assets (markets, water and grazing) and customary way of life, attempted to maintain an existence between the two emerging states.[64]

A somewhat overblown explication of the process was presented by Glubb in one of his long despatches. While there appears to be a degree of exaggeration, the essentials of the narrative hold up to scrutiny. He stated that in the early 1920s the Dhafir were subjected to a series of crushing Akhwan raids, to which they replied with petty counter-raids. Ignoring complaints against Akhwan raids, 'Abd al-'Aziz "made the heavens re-echo with his shouts and complaints at the constant raids by Iraq." Thus spurred on by the British, the Iraqi government "sallied forth into the desert and commenced to arrest, fine, imprison and confiscate." 'Abd al-'Aziz's emissaries approached the Dhafir, pointing out the injustice and oppression suffered by the tribe under "infidel" government, which at the same time could not protect them from the Akhwan. As a result, the whole of the Dhafir went over to Najd.[65] According to Glubb, "They were received with open arms, all the Shaikhs were allotted regular pay, camels looted from them were returned, and in a few months they rose from penury to prosperity. But on condition that they took an oath of allegiance to Ibn Saud and abjured Iraq. Such as refused were given nothing and told to make themselves scarce."[66]

That the loyalty of the Dhafir was coveted by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz is clearly demonstrated by the way in which they were treated by the ruler after a massive raid in June 1925 by sections of Mutayr Akhwan under ‘Ali ibn ‘Ashwan in which the Dhafir lost some 1,800 camels. Instead of denying knowledge of the raid, as ‘Abd al-‘Aziz often was used to doing, he promised to return the looted camels in relatively short order, demonstrating his willingness to mollify the Dhafir.[67] Six shaykhs of the tribe went to Riyadh in February 1926. Although ‘Abd al-‘Aziz professed willingness to arrange for the return of the looted Dhafir camels, the actual results of the episode demonstrated that the ruler was also intent on asserting his authority. First, only 980 camels were recovered from the Mutayr, and of these, just 590 were counted over to the Dhafiris, with 16 of these taken back to “pay” the men who had been looking after the flocks. Second, the group of returned animals was made up of mostly very young or very old camels and did not contain any of the 110 riding camels looted from the Dhafir.[68] The 390 camels that had been collected but not returned “were appropriated by the slaves, servants and officials through whose hands they passed,” according to a British report obtained from the Dhafiris themselves. When the Dhafiris complained to ‘Abd al-‘Aziz that they had seen their camels among the flocks of the ruler’s retainers, he took the denial of his accused servants and officials at face value and refused to give the camels to the shaykhs. Nonetheless, the Najdi ruler presented cloaks, shirts and coffee to the shaykhs upon their departure.[69]

It is not known whether ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ordered the raid in the first place, but the results were certainly to his advantage. The Mutayr and ‘Abd al-‘Aziz’s retainers were permitted to retain the best animals from the large herds, and the

Dhafir shaykhs were induced to venture to Riyadh and to receive the ruler's hospitality and gifts.[70] Needless to say, there was also much discussion among the parties regarding the question of secession.

In one conversation, the Dhafir were reported to have demanded land from 'Abd al-'Aziz so that they could build a settlement and regularize their relations with the Akhwan, of whom they were reportedly afraid. 'Abd al-'Aziz was said to have been hesitant to make such a commitment to the group until the whole tribe was able to join them. One Dhafiri shaykh, Hazza ibn Igab, reportedly was insistent, saying his section was determined to build "whether the remainder of the Dhafir followed them or not."[71]

Some exchanges between the Dhafir and 'Abd al-'Aziz appeared to have been more balanced, although the ruler always held the upper hand. Asi ibn Suwayt was reported to have visited 'Abd al-'Aziz in late 1926 and after a stay of several weeks returned to Iraq with 100 riyals, 5 camels and one rifle. Other Dhafiri shaykhs, encouraged by the success of Asi, set off soon after, some taking horses as gifts for the Najdi ruler. According to the report, the shaykhs saw the gifts from the ruler as valuable income during a time when other sources of livelihood were drying up.[72]

Being allied with the Akhwan had its advantages. Dhafir shaykh Ajaymi ibn Suwayt was reported to have visited Faysal al-Duwish before the Akhwan leader's raid in November 1927 at Ghuraybiyat. As a result, al-Duwish sent a messenger before the raid to Mirwi ibn Suwayt of the Dhafir to warn him to move his camp a safe distance from the intended targets, the Ghalidh and Busal shepherd tribes.[73] Afterward, although the shepherd tribes suffered enormous losses, and the

Dhafir themselves lost 10 men, most of the "considerable number of camels and sheep" that were looted from the Dhafir were returned after the representations of Mirwi to the Akhwan leader.[74] The attempts by the Dhafir to maintain their position and assure their security were not unique. Other bedouin tribes, feeling threatened whenever the Akhwan made large attacks, concluded agreements with the Najdi leader.[75] According to one British official, in the wake of the waves of Akhwan attacks in November and December 1927, shaykhs of Iraq's bedouin tribes were saying "quite openly that they must become Ikhwan as the British and 'Iraq Governments cannot protect them. They are already paying *zikat* to Dawish's tax collector, some have put on the *'immah* [turban worn by the Akhwan] and openly denouce the British. Sooner or later the 'Anizah who stretch right across the desert route are bound to become Ikhwan." If this were to occur, the official concluded, "I shall soon be forced to advise that the projected desert railway and pipeline follow the northern route through Syria, as the chief advantage of the southern route, to wit greater security, is going."[76]

The tactic apparently was not always as successful. In December 1927, the Dhafir were reported to have lost some 282 camels, 1,356 sheep and 14 men as a result of Akhwan raids on the 9th and 17th. However, Ajaymi was only able to recover about 150 camels afterward.[77] On another occasion, the Dhafir sought immunity from Sultan Ibn Humayd of the 'Utaybah Akhwan at Ajibba in 1928. Ibn Humayd was said to reply categorically that if the Dhafiri shaykh promised on the spot that he would build (i.e., settle and become Akhwan), he would promise the shaykh protection, and if he didn't it would mean "that he would be harried all his life." According to the report, which came from an agent who had spent several

months in the Dhafir camp, Ibn Humayd told Ibn Suwayt: "At present we call you 'shepherds' [a term of contempt amongst camel-herding bedouin], but if you build we shall call you Ibn Suwait, a pillar of the religion."[78]

When diplomacy did not succeed, the Dhafir resorted to time-tested methods such as raiding to get their camels back, but were often frustrated by the improved patrolling of the badia by the RAF and Iraqi police. For example, a minor shaykh of the tribe was reported to have received a report that camels that had been raided from him were grazing in Najd with a party of Mutayr. He set out in April 1928 with about 30 men to carry out a raid to recover them, but was intercepted by an RAF plane and forced to turn back. An armoured car arrested the party and turned them over to civil authorities.[79] Another Dhafir party was arrested on its return from a counter-raid against Mutayr Akhwan in the summer of 1929, with several sent to prison for more than three months. Glubb viewed such punishments as far too heavy, "in view of the poverty, ruin and massacre suffered by the Iraq tribes at the hands of the Akhwan."[80]

In 1929-30, the power of the Akhwan rebelling against 'Abd al-'Aziz was waning; its tribes harried by the forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz, the British, and their erstwhile victims. Ajaymi ibn Suwait participated in a raid with Muhsin al-Firm and Mishal ibn Tawala against Faysal al-Duwish, killing some 50 men and boys and taking about 5,000 camels. In the confusion of the battles along the Iraq-Najd frontier, a party of horsemen raided 45 camels from the Said section of the Dhafir in January 1930. Two Iraqi police cars pursued the raiders, who were able to slip away through rain and mud. Iraq protested to 'Abd al-'Aziz, who sent a letter of apology the following morning along with 37 camels.[81]

As the Akhwan rebels were overrun by British forces, there arose optimism among the Iraqi tribes that they would at last receive some sort of restitution for their many losses in previous years. A British Administrative Inspector suggested to Baghdad that 2,000 camels be taken from the rebels immediately and handed over to the Iraqi tribes. While authorities in Baghdad temporized over the matter, some shaykhs became impatient. Jada'an ibn Suwayt, Mishal al-Timyat, Hawwaj ibn Hallaf and others were reported to have joined 'Abd al-'Aziz's army, where the Dhafiri shaykh received "a cash present of one thousand rupees, a suit of clothes and twenty-five camels."[82] The story of the Dhafir's relationship with the Akhwan, of their occupation of a place hovering between the growing power of the Iraqi and Saudi states, stands in stark contrast to that of the tribes of Transjordan.

Political Concerns Prevent Full Compensation

With the defeat of the Akhwan rebels, the path was cleared for Iraq and the Kingdom of Hijaz, Najd and Dependencies to iron out matters that had caused friction during the previous years. Most of these matters had to do with changes in the badia between the two countries, including compensation for raids and attacks, the extradition of "criminal" tribal refugees and the status of armed posts. Faysal and 'Abd al-'Aziz met in February 1930 on the British warship H.M.S. *Lupin* and initiated discussions to resolve these differences.

After all the efforts expended by British and Iraqi officials to gather, corroborate, collate and summarize information on casualties and losses suffered by Iraqi bedouin and merchants as a result of Akhwan attacks from Najd, Faysal fixed the total sum for compensation at £30,000, taking into consideration counter-claims by 'Abd al-'Aziz. In 1930, the Hijaz-Najd government paid Britain £10,000 as a

first installment against the compensation claims, with the money split 70/30 between Iraq and Kuwait, respectively. The balance was to be paid when other matters outstanding had been settled.[83] At the close of the year, arrangements were being made for an Iraqi delegation to travel to Jeddah in order to discuss the final disposition of a *bon voisinage* treaty with Hijaz-Najd, as well as the issues of extradition and compensation. By the token amount paid by 'Abd al-'Aziz, it is clear that the improving relations between Iraq and its neighbour had taken precedence over pressing for a full and just compensation to the thousands of bedouin who had been victimized by the Akhwan.

Transjordan: Attacks Contribute to Misery of Local Tribes

As mentioned in Chapter Three, there is very little documentation for life in the badia of Transjordan in the early 1920s. However, several Akhwan attacks were of such size that they were fairly widely reported. The first occurred on 14 August 1922, when an Akhwan force of some 1,500 fell upon the towns of Umm al-'Amad and Tunayb, killing some 42 Bani Sakhr residents, including four women. In a strong counterattack by the Bani Sakhr, the Akhwan were said to have lost about 200 men. In response, Abdullah "moved his camp to Muwaqqar and organized a bedouin force for defence." Later, the Transjordan Reserve Force was sent to Kaf in order to prevent future attacks.[84]

The Akhwan carried out a larger attack in August 1924, with 5-6,000 fighters coming within a few miles of Amman before a counterattack could be mounted. Once again, the tribes were first to respond, with participation by the Bani Sakhr and Belqa' bedouin. In addition, because they were able to get timely notification from Peake, who witnessed people fleeing the attackers, RAF aircraft

and armoured cars also participated in a strong counter-attack. According to Abu Nowar, Akhwan casualties included about 500 dead (and an unknown number wounded), 300 prisoners, 600 camels and 1,000 rifles captured. Among the Transjordanians, some 197 were killed, mostly Bani Sakhr and 21 from the Arab Legion. In addition, two RAF armoured car officers were slightly wounded. According to Abu Nowar, "The military and political consequences of the invasion could be regarded as a landmark in the history of T.J..."[85] According to Peake, the reason for the attack was that "Ibn Saud was planning to attack Hejaz, so he sent Akhwan raids to Iraq and Transjordan. Both raiding parties were defeated, but Ibn Saud gained his object, and neither country made any serious effort to interfere in the Hijaz War."[86] It should also be noted that the attack came on the heels of a period in July of mutual raiding between Transjordanian and Najdi tribes.[87]

Because the war in the Hijaz occupied 'Abd al-'Aziz's and the Akhwan's attention and energies from 1925 to 1927, the period saw no large-scale attacks in Transjordan. But toward the end of 1927, the situation changed dramatically. In the autumn, Farhan ibn Mashhur, a "restless and discontented" young member of the Sha'laan shaykhly family of the Rwala tribe, joined the Akhwan and led a bloody raid against Transjordanian tribes. Ibn Musa'ad, the governor of Hail, reportedly recovered all of the loot, but kept most of it and returned a small portion to the victims (as was his custom). This left the Transjordan tribes "with a sense of bitter resentment, firstly at receiving back only a fraction of their property and secondly at the fact that large numbers of their men had been killed, and, they claimed, even their women violated."[88] In November and December, moreover, when they learned of the Akhwan attacks on Busayya and the Iraqi shawiyya, "the

Sirhan, Huwaytat and Bani Sakhr moved from their traditional grazing grounds to the west in T.J. territory," according to Abu Nowar. This undoubtedly created hardship for the animals. In addition, shaykh Hamad bin Jazi mobilized the Huwaytat in the south and the RAF and TJFF increased their readiness and patrols.[89]

One of the most notorious attacks of this period involved a number of groups from Najd. On 13 February 1928, two Akhwan forces led by Ibn Mashhour and Durzi ibn Dughaymi, and a group of Shararat led by Misnid ibn Frayh, attacked a camp of the al-Zabn and Huqaysh sections of the Bani Sakhr, killing the al-Zabn shaykh, Hatmal, and at least 162 of his men. In addition to looting almost all the Bani Sakhr property (some 4,162 camels, 8,590 sheep, tents and household property), the attackers reportedly raped four girls.[90] In another raid, the Rwala joined Ibn Mashhur and some 'Utayba in an attack on the Nuwasra section of the Huwaytat south of Jabal Tubayq. Huwaytat losses were estimated at 31 men, 300 camels, 600 sheep and 60 tents.[91] During the same period, some Hejaz 'Anaza delivered two or three raids against the Huwaytat, driving off a number of camels. The victims of these attacks felt justified in retaliating. Glubb believed "firmly and genuinely that Najd was the aggressor."[92]

Because the Huwaytat counter-raids in the winter of 1929-30 struck mainly tribes around Jauf and not Ibn Mashhur's Rwala, who regularly fled into Syria after their attacks, 'Abd al-'Aziz saw them as "efforts to threaten him in the area around Jauf," according to Glubb. In retaliation, 'Abd al-'Aziz gave Ibn Musa'ad and Ibrahim al-Nashmi permission to attack the Huwaytat, which they did in the spring of 1930. These were "two crushing raids in response to larger number of smaller

raids around Jauf" in Glubb's accounting, and differed from Ibn Mashhur's raids because they were carried out by Saud's lieutenants, "undoubtedly" on his orders.[93]

In the spring of 1930 a mechanized company of the TJFF came into being and was sent into the desert to restore order. The tribes of Transjordan continued to feel the need to recoup their losses, while 'Abd al-'Aziz had ordered his tribes to stop raiding into Transjordan. It is not surprising, then, that the Transjordan tribes felt ill-served by the sudden increase in and aggressiveness of the TJFF and RAF patrols.[94]

The tribes of Transjordan lost not only livestock and possessions, they also complained bitterly of incidents which related to matters of honour and prestige. For example, al-Nashmi and Ibn Musa'ad raided the Huwaytat again in February 1930, and later in the year three Shararat raids captured large numbers of Huwaytat camels and escaped without detection by TJFF patrols. Al-Nashmi was promoted to the governorship of Jauf, and his personal share of the camels from the Huwaytat raid ran to 700-800 head. He reportedly gloated over having the tent of shaykh Bakhit ibn Darwish pitched outside his fort in Jauf to accommodate guests. In addition, there was the "humiliation" of being raided by the Shararat, who were perceived as being inferior by many bedouin tribes because they did not possess a "noble" genealogy. To be defeated and taunted by the Shararat was to tribes like the Huwaytat a double blow. For example, during one Shararat raid on the Huwaytat,

> …the raiders seized small Howayti boys and cut off their hair, telling them, "go back, you fellahin… and show that to your Government, and tell then that this time we cut off your hair but next time we shall cut off your heads." This incident must have been related to [Glubb] twenty times with forcible comments when [he] recently visited the Howayat for a

> week. It was always emphasized that the message was primarily to the Government, His Britannic Majesty's Government.[95]

Finally, some of these attacks took place at the very moment that the Transjordanian shaykhs were gathered at the MacDonnell arbitration with Najdi delegates and British officials in an attempt to settle mutual claims for raiding losses and casualties. Thus the timing of the attacks had "a tremendous interest and significance."[96]

Should raids by groups such as the Shararat also be included in the analysis of attacks by Akhwan and 'Abd al-'Aziz's forces? It appears so, since they seemed to serve the Najdi ruler's ends by this time. Glubb stated that the "principal raiders in the Najd have been the Sherarat." It is not clear what their relationship was with the Akhwan. According to one source, they were among the tribes targeted by the Akhwan for conversion.[97] However, they seem to have had a strong connection to the Najdi government, through the person of the governor of Jauf. The tribe was reportedly provided with supplies and support by Najdi officials, "in order to make them into a kind of irregular militia on the frontier." And the Shararat were said to have given shares of the camels they looted from the Huwaytat in September 1930 to the governor and soldiers of Jauf.[98] Certainly the size and degree of official support for these Sharari attacks were equivalent to those by the Akhwan, even if human casualties do not appear to have been significant, since none were reported.

Some raids by the Shararat, of smaller size, seem to have been sanctioned by the local governor but not by 'Abd al-'Aziz. "All informants coming from Jauf state that raiding is forbidden, except that al-Nashmi gives his especial sanction to certain small parties," stated Glubb. The leader of one party was said to have

received a riding camel and rifle from al-Nashmi, who in turn received a share of the leader's loot.[99]

Moreover, the large losses incurred as a result of Shararat attacks, together with British anti-raiding measures which prevented counter-raids from recouping these losses, were crushing blows large numbers of Transjordan's bedouin. For example, Glubb visited the Darawsha section (50 tents) of the Huwaytat, which had been raided twice by the Shararat and al-Nashmi during the MacDonnell arbitration. He found that the average number of camels per tent was two and a half. The Darawsha told Glubb that during the previous year they had 1,600 camels, an average of about 32 per tent, but Glubb thought this an exaggeration. In addition, Glubb noted that,

> The Shaikh himself was said to own 200 camels. (I think now he has 12)... However that may be, I must confess that I cannot see how the occupants of these fifty tents can long keep alive. If they sell all the camels they now possess they might subsist for a year but would then be faced with starvation. The section has recently been accused of stealing camels from Nejd and the Sheikh has been in prison. Can he be blamed? The whole tribe is not in such distress as the Darawshah section. The Nawasra, parts of the Tuwaiha section and parts of Beni Atiyah are in much the same condition. Other sections have suffered partial losses and a few have suffered scarcely any. Probably about one third of the tribe will, as far as I can see, be faced with starvation within a year.

Other Akhwan-related factors contributing to large losses in animals and income, according to Glubb, were forced marches, restricted grazing, and the annual payment of double taxes (to both Transjordan and Najd).[100]

That some bedouin sections were now faced with the prospect of starvation was stark evidence not only of their losses of livestock, but the absence of other economic options, such as raiding. Stated Glubb,

> Two years ago, when the Howeitat raided into Nejd as a reprisal for Ibn Mashhur's attacks, they were a warlike tribe seeking revenge by their own methods. Bitter experience has certainly taught them a lesson. Many said to me, almost with tears "We only want to be left alone; we never want to raid again but what are we to do? If we are in any case condemned to die, it is best to be killed raiding or by the Government than to die slowly and shamefully of hunger."[101]

Many of the bedouin of Transjordan were in dire straits during the late 1920s and early 1930s. In addition to suffering from the consequences of more stringent anti-raiding measures and devastating attacks from the lands of 'Abd al-'Aziz, they had to endure years of drought, disease, financial effects of the world depression and a painful transition away from camel-herding to agriculture, sheep-herding and employment in the Arab Legion.[102] At one point, Glubb was moved to recommend that the British government compensate the Huwaytat for losses from the Shararat with £6,000.[103] Officials in London turned down the suggestion, and Glubb was forced to cobble together a piecemeal, under-funded relief scheme for the tribes, which included employment in road projects, cash grants for use in agricultural production, and other small emoluments.

Some could not wait for relief, government-promised compensation schemes, or a change in the weather. Hardship in Transjordan pushed some bedouin into the strong arms of 'Abd al-'Aziz. For example, Peake noted in 1930 that a Huwaytat shaykh had

> returned from Nejd, where he swore allegiance to Ibn Saoud and received presents. He was then told to go back to Transjordan and bring his tribe over, their safety being guaranteed, if they came; and I have little doubt that the tone of the message conveyed the reverse meaning if they refused.[104]

As has been shown, attacks by the Akhwan and their allies drove many Transjordan bedouin families into poverty and hardship.[105] According to claims examined by the MacDonnell tribunal, the Transjordan bedouin had lost 50 men, 3,662 camels, 5,270 sheep and £1,020 in property to raiders from Najd between the signing of the Hadda Agreement in November 1925 and 1 August 1930. In addition, they had suffered net raiding losses of about 474 camels in two of the Shararat raids mentioned above between 1 August 1930 and 1 February 1931.

Glubb summarized the situation thus:

> On the total therefore, the Transjordan Bedwins, in about 5 years, have suffered a net loss to Nejd of about 4,236 camels and 5,270 sheep. The average Bedwin family can live on 20 to 25 camels, or, alternately, on 200 sheep. This loss is therefore equivalent to the reduction of about 185 to 225 Bedwin families to complete destitution. The Bedwin family which owns 20 to 25 camels owns nothing else in the world.[106]

And when those 20 to 25 camels are taken away, what will that family do? A serious drought during this period, as well as the effects of the world depression combined with losses from Najdi raids to push many bedouin away from camel-herding. As Lewis, has pointed out, some tribal sections moved into other occupations, such as agriculture, sheep-herding or military service.[107] In any case, the high goals of the Hadda Agreement to provide a mechanism for the restitution of losses from cross-border raids and the punishment of the perpetrators proved bitterly unattainable.

In Summary

This chapter has presented a stark picture of the suffering and loss inflicted on the bedouin of the region by massive Akhwan attacks. In the words of the victims and in the painstakingly documented reports of British officials, it is clear

that these were far from operations carried out with the precision of a "surgeon's knife." Total losses, according to the published and unpublished sources analyzed, amounted to about 2,200 men and women killed, and 11,200 camels and 140,000 sheep looted from Kuwaiti, Iraqi and Transjordanian tribes between 1921 and 1931. Add to this other animals and property, including hundreds of tents and the household possessions they contained, and the cost to the bedouin of the region becomes clear. In fact, actual losses were probably higher, considering the growing tendency of British officials to treat reports of losses conservatively, and the fact that many raids went unreported.

But these costs of conflict tell only part of the story. The tribes under threat from the Akhwan also lost large numbers of livestock when rumours of approaching forces impelled them to take up defensive positions in areas with little or no grazing. In addition, many bedouin permanently or temporarily succumbed to Akhwan duress and moved into the political sphere of 'Abd al-'Aziz, agreeing to pay taxes and even settle rather than face continued harassment and attacks.

As with intertribal raids, the British were not overmuch exercised about Akhwan activities until they seriously threatened settled populations or imperial interests. Thus, while it has often been assumed that states moved into the badia as a matter of course and instituted military control over the bedouin as a normal part of national development, the principal impetus for building desert police posts in Iraq and Transjordan, at least, was to defend against Akhwan attacks so that a trans-desert pipeline and transportation schemes could proceed unhindered.

Government interference with raiding and long periods of inattention and unconcern with Akhwan attacks were not the only consequences of state-formation

during the 1920s and 1930s. Chapter Five shows how tribes and states fought, negotiated and acquiesced over issues involving trade.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

[1] John S. Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors of Islam: The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Sa'udi Kingdom, 1910-1930* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 158.
[2] John B. Glubb, *War in the Desert* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), 126.
[3] Habib, *Warriors*, 158.
[4] PRO, CO 730/137/9, Administrative Inspector, Southern District, to Adviser to Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, 6 September 1928. The official added that other factors that helped make Akhwan attacks successful were their use of horsemen, "who have a great advantage over foot or camel men in a meleé," and the fact that all fighters were guaranteed equal shares of booty (after the leaders took theirs'), so they had less incentive to break off an attack in order to gather loot. 'Abd al-'Aziz's customary share of looted property was one-fifth and was called "*haqq al-'imam*." AIR 23/270, Reports of SSO Basra, 9 July 1925. See also Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors*, who notes that the Akhwan relied mainly on camels, and that many fighters went on foot (66-7), but these were probably for campaigns closer to the *hujar* than the often long and swift raids into Iraq and Transjordan. He also discusses the size and organization of Akhwan forces (70-5), and the collection and distribution of plunder (77).
[5] CO 831/11/1, Note on the Situation on the Southern Frontier of Transjordan by Capt. J.B. Glubb, 3 January 1931, (henceforth, Note on Frontier), 13.
[6] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 14, 15.
[7] This policy is well elucidated by Christine Moss Helms, *The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia: Evolution of Political Identity* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 225-6, and elsewhere. "If the allegiance of a tribe could be secured, then rights to the tribe's territory were also gained and, in this way, a ruler could continue to extend his authority as long as tribes could be induced to pledge such allegiance. … [B]etween 1917 and 1925, 'Abd al-'Aziz procrastinated in all treaty negotiations while he encouraged Ikhwan raids and 'tribal conversions' on his frontiers." This policy could also result in the physical movement of a tribe to Saudi territory and settlement.
[8] The Islamic reform movement led by the Al Saud and the '*ulama*, also referred to as Wahhabis.
[9] AIR 23/298, Samawah Air Intelligence Staff, 8 June 1925.
[10] See, for example, H.R.P. Dickson, *Kuwait and Her Neighbours* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956), 285-330, who covers the attacks and responses in some detail. Glubb, *War in the Desert*, while focusing on the Iraq area of conflict, also deals with attacks on Kuwait.
[11] Increasingly larger and more deadly Akhwan attacks after the winter of 1927-28 drew Kuwait and Britain into closer defensive arrangements. For example, on 23 June 1929, the ruler of Kuwait and British officials held a conference "to improve the defense of the state." It was agreed that RAF forces stationed in Iraq would come to the amirate's aid if it were "in danger of serious attack, by strong and organized forces from the direction of Nejd" which local forces could not deal with adequately. Thus, British officials made a clear distinction between large Akhwan attacks and "all ordinary Bedouin raids, large and small," the latter being the responsibility of Al Sabah's forces. SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for 1929.
[12] Estimates for Kuwait's population in 1918 were 65,000 and in 1932-33, 60,000, with a bedouin population in both years around 10,000. SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for the year 1918; and Ibid., Report on the trade of Kuwait for the year 1932-3.
[13] For example, see Appendix B, claims II and V.
[14] CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 18 March 1930.
[15] Ibid., Briscoe to Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 13 May 1931.
[16] See Appendix B. These totals differ from those in Claim I (A) because they do not include losses suffered by Iraqi tribes in Kuwait. Inexplicably, the original claim does not list the cash value of Iraqi losses, but does list Iraqi losses of life and property.
[17] Ibid.
[18] SAC Dickson, Box 3, File 8, Report on the Trade of Kuwait for 1932-33.
[19] Appendix B, Claim 1(A).
[20] For more details about the fidawiyya and 'uraybdar, see Appendix C.
[21] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for the year 1928.

[22] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for the year 1928.
[23] In the six incidents for which there were adequately detailed reports, the official forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz were accused of killing six Kuwaitis and taking 78 camels, 400 sheep and ten rifles. The claim mentions eleven other incidents, but notes that for each of them "no exact record was kept of losses." Appendix B, Claim 1(B).
[24] CO 732/46/5, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 18 March 1930.
[25] On 25 September 1922, for example, a small party of Awazim was stopped by the Akhwan forces (300 camel riders and 50 horsemen) of Ibn Ashwan at Subayhiyya. Ibn Ashwan asked the Awazim what they had been doing in Kuwait, "in contravention of Ibn Saud's orders." When they replied that they were just "collecting debts," the Akhwan said that was no excuse and took the money and camels of the Awazim, who then returned to Kuwait on foot. SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration reports, 1922.
[26] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative reports, 1924. For another case of recovered loot, see Ibid., 1925. This raid report is also one of the few in which special mention is made of children killed. Of the 20 dead from a section of the Awazim tribe, five were said to have been children.
[27] CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 18 March 1930.
[28] Ibid., 7 May 1931.
[29] CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 18 March 1930.
[30] For details regarding this aspect of the Iraq-Najd conflict, see Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916-1936* (New York: OUP, 1993), 79-95.
[31] R/15/5/38, Report on Defensive Operations against the Akhwan, Winter 1924-1925. n.d.
[32] Ibid., Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925.
[33] A representative of Ibn Musa'ad sent messengers to Luqtan al-Azzara, shaykh of the Bulham section of the Zayyad in January 1926, asking him to join other members of the Zayyad across the frontier, pay the sheep tax and place themselves under the protection of 'Abd al-'Aziz. Luqtan replied: "I am camping within the frontiers of the [Iraqi] government and am under their protection. If you want to take my sheep by force you can do so here, but I am not going to cross the frontier." The representative was said to have responded indignantly, saying that he washed his hands of the matter and that the Zayyad section and the Akhwan were "at war from today onwards!" AIR 23/300, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 12 February 1926. It should be noted that by this time, Iraqi authorities were able to offer a greater degree of security than in the early 1920s.
[34] Said one British official: "It cannot be cause for surprise that the arrival of King Faisal imparted to the Iraqi Government an anti-Akhwan bias which would not otherwise have existed. There was, at bottom, no cause whatever for hostility between the Akhwan and the new Iraq State." R/15/5/38, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925.
[35] AIR 23/296, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 21 November 1924. According to another report, the king may have also authorized air support for some of these raids. Ibid., 28 November 1924. There was even a report of Faysal intending to "move out and camp in the Shamiyah desert, to organize hostilities against the Akhwan" to be carried out by refugee Harb and 'Utayba. R/15/5/38, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925.
[36] They included 'Ali abu Shuwayribat and Shurayan ibn Lami of the Mutayr; Fayhan al-Dhuwaybi of the Harb; and Naif ibn Humayd of the 'Utayba. The group was said to have gathered around Yusuf ibn Sadoon in the summer of 1923 with the blessing of the Iraqi government. Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 107. Compare this to the situation of Farhan ibn Mashhur, a young member of the Sha'laan shaykhly family of the Rwala, who, as will be shown in the following section on Transjordan, joined the Akhwan, where he developed a reputation as an aggressive raider.
[37] Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 78. Glubb reported that after the death of Faysal in 1934, the money formerly given to refugee shaykhs was halted, "perhaps as a result of the influence of the new Saudi consul in Baghdad, Ibn Ma'ammar." The shaykhs were thus "reduced to the verge of starvation," and two of them went to Amman asking for subventions from Abdullah, who refused. SAC Glubb, Monthly Reports from Transjordan, January 1935.
[38] Elizabeth Burgoyne, *Gertrude Bell, From her Personal Papers 1914-1926*, 2 vols. (London: Ernest Benn, 1961), 2:266. According to Bell, Faysal was so upset over the indecisive response of his cabinet to the attacks that he asked five ministers to resign.
[39] R/15/5/38, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925..
[40] Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 109-10, 113.

[41] R/15/5/38, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925. "For the past ten years, Ibn Saud has been universally reputed to be an ally of the British. Thus, when raided by his followers, the Iraq nomads were universally convinced that these attacks were being connived at, or even encouraged, by the British. Considerable bitterness was aroused by this illusion, a feeling which was sedulously fostered by certain anti-British propagandists. These sentiments reached their climax after the Dowish's raid of March 1923."
[42] R/15/5/38, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925.
[43] Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 135.
[44] Ibid., 132.
[45] AIR 23/297, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 4 and 5 January 1925. The British officials concluded, "It is therefore submitted that steps be taken to evict these pests."
[46] SAC Glubb, Box 203, "The Iraq-Nejd Imbroglio," [n.d.].
[47] A tactic of the Muwahhidun was to characterise various opponents as non-believers. This hostility manifested itself starkly in connection with the region's Shia populations. For example, the *ulama* of Riyadh issued a *fatwa* in 1927 calling for the conversion of the Shia of Al-Hasa, or, barring that, their expulsion. They also demanded that 'Abd al-'Aziz forbid Iraqi Shia tribes from grazing their flocks in "Muslim territory." Vassiliev, *History*, 274. The Akhwan, too, frequently singled out Shia tribes as deserving of their attacks.
[48] R/15/5/38, Reports of SSO Akhwan Defence, 8 March 1925.
[49] Great Britain, *Report... on the Administration of Iraq for 1927*, (London: HM Printing Office, 1928), 55.
[50] See Map 3 for locations of Akhwan raids from November 1927 to February 1928.
[51] For a more complete description of grievances, see Vassiliev, *History*, 272-75.
[52] A detailed account of the debates among British officials over how to respond to the Busayya attack and to the Akhwan rebellion in general appears in Clive Leatherdale, *Britain and Saudi Arabia, 1925-1939: The Imperial Oasis* (London: Frank Cass, 1983), 99-118.
[53] CO 730/125/1, Inspecting Officer of Police, Muntafik Liwa to Inspector General of Police, Baghdad, 7 November 1927.
[54] The list of names appeared in Ibid. and included: "Killed: Hejani No. 484 Atshan al Zaghair; Hejani No. 599 Shuraida Dhlmawi; Hejani No. 594 Faraj al Mubarak. Foot Police -- F.C. No. 340 Hassan ibn Ali al Talib; F.C. No. 305 Khalf Araiyed; F.C. No. 104 Khumais Jabul. P.W.D. [Public Works Department] Supervisor Yousif Eff. Saad; 12 labourers. One woman (wife of Hejani Atshan al Zaghair). Wounded: Hejani No. 583 Muttar al Mubarrak. Head Hejani Mansoor Hamed not found."
[55] Kostiner, *Making of Saudi Arabia*, 121.
[56] CO 730/125/1, Inspecting Officer of Police, Muntafik Liwa to Inspector General of Police, Baghdad, 7 November 1927.
[57] AIR 23/274, Reports of SSO Basra, 19 November 1927.
[58] CO 730/130/3, Extracts from Annual Report of Muntafiz Liwa 1927, by C.H. Gowan, Administrative Inspector, [n.d.; c. January 1928].
[59] AIR 23/62, E. Howes to Air Staff Intelligence, Baghdad, 24 January 1927.
[60] Officials in Baghdad maintained large summary tables containing data on losses and casualties from Akhwan attacks. It stands to reason that these figures were only as definitive as the most recent report from the field. Evidence of this updating process is manifested in several tables which cover the same period and attacks, but vary in the details they contain. See, for example, AIR 23/62, Air HQ Iraq to the Secretary of the High Commissioner, Baghdad, 5 April 1929 and attached list. An updated version covering the same period appears in FO 967/21, Gilbert Clayton, HC for Iraq, to Sidney Webb, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 17 June 1929, and its enclosure, List of Akhwan Attacks on Iraq Tribes from 1st July, 1928 to 31st May, 1929. Clayton noted that the list had been "checked by Air Headquarters and compared with information obtained from independent sources" and was believed to be "substantially correct." Clayton had prepared the list in order that it could form the basis of a claim for compensation from 'Abd al-'Aziz "in accordance with the spirit of Article 2 of the Bahra agreement...."
[61] The attack also had political significance, with 'Abd al-'Aziz coming under strong domestic pressure to punish the offenders. CO 730/168/8, Report on Administration of Southern Desert, March 1929. "After the massacre in al-Jumaima, Ibn Saud arrived in Qasim and mobilized a double

quota of Najdi fighters." Vassiliev, *History*, 278. See Map 4 for the locations of the Jumayma raid as well as other Akhwan attacks in February and March 1929.

[62] Values from FO 967/21, List of Akhwan Attacks, 1st July, 1928 to 31st May 1929; and for rifles, AIR 23/62, Dobbs to Amery, SecState for Colonies, 7 March 1928.

[63] In July 1926, for example, there were 116 to 136 tents from five sections of the tribe camping in Najd territory. AIR 23/305, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 22 July 1926. For a detailed description of the Dhafir dira, see Bruce Ingham, *Bedouin of Northern Arabia: Traditions of the Āl-Dhafīr* (London: Kegan Paul, 1986), 21-32.

[64] Hamud ibn Suwayt, shaykh of the Dhafir, told Glubb in 1922-3 that he wanted to be reconciled with the Iraqi government, and that although 'Abd al-'Aziz was attempting to win over his tribe, "he could not leave Iraq for Nejed or elsewhere, because his tribe depended on Iraqi markets, both for the sale of their livestock and for the purchase of their supplies." Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 103.

[65] In another source, Glubb stated 'Ajami ibn Suwayt and half the Dhafir had gone over to 'Abd al-'Aziz in the summer of 1927. Glubb, *War in the Desert*, 192. In addition, some Dhafir had become part of the Akhwan and had established a *hijrah*. Habib, *Ibn Saud's Warriors of Islam*, 165, 174, quoting *Umm al-Qura*.

[66] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 19-20.

[67] After the British protested to 'Abd al-'Aziz about the raid on the Dhafir, the Najdi ruler sent contradictory claims stating that the Dhafir raided his tribes first. According to a British account of one message, 'Abd al-'Aziz implied reciprocity if the Dhafir returned the camels they supposedly looted. Later, 'Abd al-'Aziz seems to have quietly dropped his accusation and agreed to return the Dhafir camels. See FOCP 13028/124, Jordan, Acting British Agent in Jeddah to Chamberlain, 29 July 1925; and FOCP 13028/128, Jordan to Chamberlain, 3 August 1925.

[68] Some calves were so young and weak that they had to be slaughtered on the long return journey.

[69] AIR 23/300, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 1 March 1926.

[70] The retention by 'Abd al-'Aziz's officials of the best portion of raided animals they had recovered was a common practice, known as *khidma*. The practice was a source of frustration and friction between Transjordan and Najd, and was formally banned, due to British insistence, in the Treaty of Friendship and Bon Voisinage between Transjordan and Saudi Arabia, signed 27 July 1933 in Jerusalem. Nonetheless, some officials continued skimming prize animals even after the ban on *khidma*. See, for example, SAC Glubb, Monthly Reports from Transjordan, December 1932; January 1933; November 1933 and April 1934. Khidma was also the term used to describe the fee paid to a government official by a party judged to be at fault in a dispute over stolen, hidden or wandering camels. Dickson, *Arab of the Desert*, 439-40.

[71] AIR 23/305, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 22 July 1927.

[72] CO 732/32/4, C.H. Gowan, Admin. Insp., Muntafik Liwa to Advisor, Min. of Interior, 18 March 1928.

[73] AIR 23/61, Extract from Report of SSO Basra, 24 December 1927.

[74] Ibid., Extract from Report of SSO Nasiriyya, 21 December 1927. Nonetheless, the Dhafir still lost about six camels and 200 sheep, as well as household property and grain. At the same time, 30 tents of the Awazim, who had for years camped with the Dhafir but did not obtain immunity from Akhwan attack, were unable to obtain the return of their camels from al-Duwish.

[75] See, for example, CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 20, which noted efforts to draw the Dahamshah, Kuwaiti tribes and the Huwaytat of Transjordan into 'Abd al-'Aziz's orbit.

[76] R/15/5/106, Telegram: Highcoma, Baghdad to Colonial Office, 29 December 1927.

[77] AIR 23/62, Extract from telegram of SSO Nasiriyya, 18 April 1928.

[78] AIR 23/305, Reports of SSO Nasiriyya, 1 May 1928.

[79] CO 730/136/4, Report on the Situation on Iraq-Nejd Borders, Nov. 1927 – May 1928, Air HQ Iraq Command, Baghdad, 12 June 1928.

[80] CO 730/168/8, Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, 1 May 1929 - 16 May 1930, [n.d.].

[81] SAC Glubb, Box 205, Report on the Operations on the Iraq-Nejd Frontier, 1 December 1929 – 15 January 1930.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Great Britain, *Iraq Administration Report for 1930*, 35; and CO 732/46/8, extract from Kuwait Intelligence Report No. 4, 18 February 1931.

[84] Abu Nowar, *History of Jordan*, 77. Benjamin Shwadran, *Jordan: A State of Tension* (New York: Council for Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1959), 149. In 1923, a small party of Akhwan killed four lineseman working on rails south of Amman. Two of the attackers were killed and 11 were captured, taken to Amman, tried and executed. C.S. Jarvis, *Arab Command: The Biography of Lieutenant-Colonel F.G. Peake* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1946), 105.
[85] Ma'an Abu Nowar, *The History of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Volume 1: The Creation and Development of Transjordan: 1920-1929* (Oxford: Ithaca Press, 1989), 139-42. Jarvis, *Arab Command*, 115-18. The figure of 500 dead Akhwan seems quite high, considering only about 377 Iraqis were estimated to have been killed in about 16 Akhwan attacks between November 1927 and August 1929 (see Table 4.8).
[86] Peake Pasha, (Lieutenant-Colonel F.G. Peake) *A History of Jordan and its Tribes* (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1958), 108.
[87] Kostiner, *Making of Saudi Arabia*, 95.
[88] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 2.
[89] Abu Nowar, *History of Jordan*, 195. On Ibn Mashhur's raids, see also Ricardo Bocco and Tariq M.M. Tell, "*Pax Britannica* in the Steppe: British Policy and the Transjordan Bedouin," in Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell, eds., *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, (London: British Academic Press, 1994) 115.
[90] CO 831/5/69421/ 1929, p. 2. Letter by British Resident, 7 January 1929, cited in Mustapha Hamarneh, "Social and Economic Transformation of Trans-Jordan, 1921-46," Ph.D. (Georgetown, 1985), 143-44.
[91] Abu Nowar, *History of Jordan*, 198; and CO 831/13/11, Intelligence Report, General Bedouin Situation after the War, [n.d., c. 1931].
[92] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 3.
[93] Ibid., 6. See also Bocco and Tell, "Pax Britannica," 115-17.
[94] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 7, 8.
[95] Ibid., 12.
[96] Ibid., 9-12.
[97] Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors of Islam*, 72. The author quotes al-Madani, who wrote in 1923 that the Akhwan leaders Ibn 'Aqil and Ibn Dughmi, based in al-Juba, also were responsible for bringing tribes of Syria and Transjordan "into the Ikhwan fold."
[98] FO 967/42, Situation on the Nejd Frontier, undated Glubb report, [c. 1931]. Glubb later reported a conversation with a member of a Shammar shaykhly family, who stated that the Shararat "all have their rations and ammunition issued to them by As Sudairi [the governor of Jauf] before leaving [on raids]. A fortnight ago when I was in Jauf, Dhirwan As Sarab of the Sherarat was drawing rations for a raiding party from the governor's store." SAC Glubb, Reports from Transjordan, G/502, 4 April 1931. The governor of Jauf, Ibrahim al-Nashmi, was also reported to have distributed cash and clothing as inducements for Sharari leaders to come under his influence. Ibid., G/318, 24 February 1931.
[99] SAC Glubb, Reports from Transjordan, G/327, 24 February 1931.
[100] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 16-17. There are numerous reports of livestock losses due to grazing activities being altered by conflict or the threat of danger. See, for example, SAC Glubb, Transjordan Monthly Report, December 1930.
[101] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 18.
[102] The severe financial and ecological crises of the late 1920s and early 1930s forced some of Transjordan's tribal shaykhs and large landholders to sell options on their lands to representatives of the Jewish Agency. Sulayman Bashir, *Juthur al-wisayah al-'urduniyya* (Jerusalem, 1980), 9-22.
[103] CO 831/11/1, Note on Frontier, 3 January 1931, 31-2.
[104] SAC Glubb Papers, Peake to British Resident, Amman, 24 December 1930.
[105] On hardships of the Transjordan bedouin during the period, see also Bocco and Tell, *"Pax Britannica,"* 120-22; and Norman N. Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), 131-6.
[106] FO 967/42, Situation on the Nejd Frontier, undated Glubb report, [c. March 1931].
[107] Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 131-36.

CHAPTER FIVE

TRIBES, STATES, TRADE AND SMUGGLING BETWEEN THE WARS

> *"Two big Saluqi dogs were worrying a small Jerboa, each intent on devouring it, the latter by wriggling and turning was trying to save itself, but where was Great Britain, who was supposed to be the protector of the Jerboa?"* [Kuwait's Ruler describing to the British political agent in 1933 the predicament of his amirate vis-à-vis the aggressive moves of Iraq and Saudi Arabia.][1]

This chapter will explore how states in the region became involved in controlling trade between the towns and the bedouin, and how these efforts could result in conflict, negotiation or accommodation. For example, the chapter will show that attempts by Saudi Arabia and Iraq to curtail or control the flow of trade resulted in armed confrontations and political tensions, often with small merchants and bedouin caught in the middle. Clearly, access to markets continued to be a crucial economic imperative for bedouin during this period of dramatic political and economic change. When tribes were denied their traditional or economically favourable markets, especially in Kuwait, they made their wishes known to political leaders and on occasion were able to prevail. In other cases, they circumvented restrictions on trade and engaged in smuggling in order to supplement their pastoral activities, to assert their traditional rights, or merely to survive.

Just as in earlier periods, the trade that was carried out between the bedouin and the settled populations was regulated to a greater or lesser extent in all the states emerging around the badia of northern Arabia.[2] The sources provide only scattered and incomplete data on trade and exchanges between bedouin and merchants. However, the sources do allow us to examine the following questions:

How was trade regulated by states? Did state control change trading patterns? How were the bedouin affected by changes in the trade/customs regime?

British officials paid close attention to the market town of Kuwait, its blockade by the forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz, and attempts by Iraq to curtail smuggling. Because the blockade caused severe economic hardship for those reliant on trade with Kuwait, and was a source of political and economic problems for the amirate's ruler, British officials attempted to calculate the losses in trade. Thus, it is possible to get a general idea of the size of overland trade.

The frontiers between Iraq and Kuwait also were areas where trade, smuggling and the assertion of military power created inter-state conflicts. When merchants and bedouin attempted to circumvent Iraq's attempts to regulate the flow of goods across its borders, British officials investigated the incidents and attempted to resolve the resulting political tensions. As this chapter will show, some of Iraq's "anti-smuggling" patrols were so aggressive as to cross into Kuwaiti territory, harass and attack bedouin (who were often innocently going about their normal business) and confiscate their possessions.

Before exploring these subjects, however, it would be well to briefly discuss what is meant by musabila, bedouin journeys to buy provisions. Exchanges between merchants and nomads were carried out throughout the course of the year, but they intensified as the herders and their flocks approached the settled areas in the springtime. Sometimes the merchants went to the bedouin; at others the bedouin went to the towns for their marketing. Bedouin tribes made most of their purchases in the towns near their summer camping places. However, they also organized special trips during those months they spent in the badia, often to more

distant markets, to purchase mainly staple foods such as grain, rice and dates, but also items such as coffee, tea, sugar, matches, weapons, textiles, and spices. To make such a marketing trip was to *sabil*, and the term for this bedouin trade was musabila. Other terms were also used. For example, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the Huwaytat tribe was said to embark each year from around Aqaba with 4,000 camels in a caravan called the *khalayt* to Cairo, "where they purchased wheat, barley and articles of dress...."[3] In the twentieth century, when bedouin went on a grain-buying trip from the steppe to the settled zone of Transjordan, "word would go around that *hum rahu yiktalu* (they went to measure grain)…" The term comes from *katala*: to pour out something.[4] These trade caravans could number a few camels or many hundreds, and as noted in Chapter One, formed an important portion of the internal trade of the region.

The Saudi Blockade of Kuwait

As a small amirate with almost no military force, Kuwait on several occasions has had to succumb to the whims of its more powerful neighbours and protectors. One area in which the British, 'Abd al-'Aziz and Iraq all attempted to interfere, with varying degrees of success, was in controlling the amirate's trade. During World War One, for example, British officials believed there was "considerable evidence" that Kuwaiti merchants were importing large quantities of supplies by sea and sending these via camel caravans to Turkish forces. The British therefore pressed the Kuwaiti ruler to acquiesce to a British-run blockade in 1918. The British assigned a blockade officer and four other military personnel to oversee the trade passing through Kuwait, and they worked for several months, attempting

to prevent Kuwait's merchants from trading with "enemy elements or traders with the enemy."[5]

In 1921, 'Abd al-'Aziz instituted a policy of economic and military pressure on Kuwait, the "cold war" discussed in Chapter Four. Had Britain not been its protector, it is quite possible that Kuwait would have been swallowed by the emerging Saudi state.[6] Indeed, Dickson reported in 1931 that the purpose of the blockade "would still appear to be to force Kuwait to acknowledge ['Abd al-'Aziz] as suzerain, by the simple process of strangulation."[7] At the very least, 'Abd al-'Aziz was able during the interwar years to deprive Kuwait of territory, tribes and trade.

As noted in Chapter Four, 'Abd al-'Aziz's siriyya and Akhwan groups were used to regulate, and often harass and plunder, the Kuwaiti bedouin and traders who traveled to and from Kuwait. However, Kuwaiti subjects were not the only victims of this armed presence. Najdi tribes and merchants were also subjected to these enforcement measures.

There were many incidents that demonstrated that the forces of 'Abd al-'Aziz enforced the blockade selectively or were ineffective against persistent attempts to defeat it. Goods and cash continued to pass between Kuwait and Najd, like sand through a sieve. There were at least three broad types of exceptions.

First, 'Abd al-'Aziz himself maintained an agent in Kuwait, whose principal duties seem to have been to supervise any official trade that 'Abd al-'Aziz desired from the port town. According to one account, 'Abd al-'Aziz's agent, Abdullah al-Nafisi, sent 350 camel loads of tents and 400 camel loads of grain and other foodstuffs from Kuwait to Najd in early January 1925. In addition, some 1,000

camels carrying rice, grain and other foodstuffs destined for 'Abd al-'Aziz's representatives in Hail were expected to arrive from Kuwait at that time.[8]

Second, the blockade was open to negotiation. The people living under 'Abd al-'Aziz's rule, nomad and townsman alike, who used to obtain goods from Kuwait, felt the economic consequences of the blockade and petitioned their ruler over and over to lift it. According to one report, the residents of Riyadh and other towns of Najd, citing the rise in prices of imported goods, made strong demands that the blockade be lifted in the winter of 1921-22. Predictably, the merchants of al-Hasa, who had experienced an increase in traffic as a result of the blockade, opposed any change. At the same time, 'Abd al-'Aziz had incentive to ignore these demands: he was receiving increased revenues for his coffers. For example, the customs fees charged at the small port of 'Uqayr allowed the Najdi ruler to farm the custom collection there for Rs. 1,100,000.[9] The bedouin also asked that they be permitted to trade freely with Kuwait, especially when drought, famine, or high prices created hardships for them.

Third, merchants and bedouin found a number of ways to get around the blockade. While Akhwan groups played a part in maintaining the blockade, some of these groups also attempted to circumvent it.[10] One method, apparently, was to trade with the Iraqi Shammar tribes. Since Iraqi tribes were not usually prevented from trading with Kuwait, they could, in turn, bring goods to the Akhwan, presumably in areas relatively free of 'Abd al-'Aziz's patrols.[11]

Merchants and small traders from Najd also attempted to continue their traditional trade with Kuwait while the blockade was in force, sometimes in league with Kuwaiti merchants. One method was for Kuwaiti merchants to carry goods by

camel to the coastal town of Jubayl, where they would transfer the loads to the camels of Najdi merchants.[12] Other merchant caravans simply attempted to slip past patrols through stealth. For example, a party of some 40 men and 200 camels arrived at Kuwait from Shaqra in June 1926 in order to buy coffee, sugar, cloth and other supplies. On its departure from Kuwait, the party was intercepted by the forces of Ibn Shuqayr, whose Mutayr frequently patrolled the Kuwait frontier and carried out raids on Kuwait tribes.[13] In the ensuing fight, the merchants lost all their camels and merchandise and 16 of their men, while the Mutayr reportedly lost 6 men. Ibn Shuqayr's patrol captured the surviving merchants and their jammamil, and sent them to Ibn Jiluwi, the governor of al-Hasa, for trial.[14] On 11 January 1927, another Najdi caravan, consisting of 19 men and 35 camels laden with merchandise and cash, with a reported value of Rs. 60,000 (including MT$ 15,000 in silver), was on its way to Kuwait when a detachment of 45 men sent by Ibn Jiluwi confiscated the entire caravan and took the men prisoner to al-Hasa.[15]

Another way in which the blockade affected bedouin trade in the region was to deflect some of it to Iraq. Some merchants and tribes from Najd (and as far as Hijaz) used the Iraqi town of Zubayr for marketing as an alternative to Kuwait. Basrah was Iraq's main port, and the commerce of Zubayr, just inland of Basrah, was dominated to a large extent by migrants from Najd. The town had been at least since the late Ottoman era Basrah's "desert port," facing the badia and serving the commercial needs of the bedouin.[16] At times, 'Abd al-'Aziz and his officials reportedly permitted trade with Iraq. For example, two Akhwan caravans, totaling about 150 camels, made the sabil from the area of Hafar al-Batin to Zubayr on 15 October 1926 "bringing camels for sale and to purchase food." Although they

stated that along the way they met a patrol of Ibn Lami, "they were allowed to continue their journey to Zubair and told that they could do this as often as they liked," with restrictions being for Kuwait only, not Iraq.[17] A smaller group of Akhwan coming from the Hail area arrived in Zubayr on 18 January 1927, and stated that 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Musa'ad, the Hail governor, had given permission to the Shammar and Harb Akhwan to make the journey.[18]

The Akhwan Revolt and the Blockade

The blockade of Kuwait seemed to have been particularly burdensome to the 'Ajman, Mutayr and Awazim, tribes that had longstanding economic links with Kuwait, but that 'Abd al-'Aziz was attempting to pull into his own orbit in the 1920s. By breaking the economic links between these Akhwan tribes and Kuwait, 'Abd al-'Aziz hoped to put pressure on Kuwait and to integrate the Akhwan more into Najdi markets, and thus into the emerging state.[19]

The Kuwait blockade was an important issue discussed by 'Abd al-'Aziz with leaders from Najd and Akhwan shaykhs in a major conference held at the end of September 1928 in Riyadh (a conference avoided by the Akhwan rebels). 'Abd al-'Aziz reiterated his demand that the Akhwan not trade with Kuwait, but only with those places that were sanctioned by him. Ibn Jiluwi, in his attempt to improve the trade of al-Hasa, had during that time restricted the trade with Jubayl and Qatif, but this resulted in greater trade with Kuwait, and according to a British report, "by October the Mutair and other tribes were ignoring the embargo and coming into the town quite openly." This apparently diminished greatly after the conference, "and was further prevented by a detachment sent for the purpose by Ibn Jiluwi."[20]

The 'Ajman and Mutayr who rebelled against 'Abd al-'Aziz had a number of grievances, and the matter of trade with Kuwait was certainly an important one.[21] In direct defiance of 'Abd al-'Aziz's orders, they made their separate arrangements to sabil in Kuwait. For example, Mutayr leader Faysal al-Duwish reportedly concluded an agreement in the autumn of 1928 with Ibn Sabah stipulating that the Mutayr would not raid the 'uraybdar if they were permitted to "replenish their supplies in Kuwait." That this agreement was, for at least a while, carried out was supported by the fact that the 'uraybdar "began soon to cooperate with the Akhwan, spying and raiding."[22]

Another Akhwan rebel, Naif ibn Hithlayn, shaykh of the 'Ajman, was reportedly able to carry out a small amount of trade with Kuwait in 1929 "through the medium of relatives and well-wishers of the 'Ajman residents in Kuwait....", despite the British belief that the shaykh of Kuwait was "loyally carrying out the wishes of H.M. Government" to prevent this activity.[23]

For their attempt to escape from 'Abd al-'Aziz's authority, the Akhwan rebels paid a terrible price in human lives and livestock after their defeat by Saudi forces. Because the surviving families were in such straits, 'Abd al-'Aziz permitted members of the Mutayr, 'Ajman and 'Awazim to sabil in small parties to Kuwait throughout the summer of 1930.[24] The predicament of the 'Ajman and Mutayr worsened in the autumn and winter, to the point that they were threatened by famine. As a result, according to Dickson, 'Abd al-'Aziz reportedly acquiesced to their pleas that they "be allowed to make one more journey to Kuwait to get their autumn and winter supplies."[25]

According to Dickson, during the winter months of 1930, Kuwait had been "visited by many Harb, Awazim, Mutair, Shammar, Dhafir caravans and the trade of the town in rice, dates and bedouin requirements generally has been brisk." He added that no "*hathar*" caravans (those carrying goods for town merchants) were permitted, since 'Abd al-'Aziz apparently was "determined to allow no trade intercourse with the interior towns of Nejd or Qasim."[26] There are no figures to show the relative importance of the desert trade compared to that with the towns, but in Kuwait at least, the perception was that the caravans from central Arabian settlements were potentially more lucrative.[27]

Ibn Sabah's Compensation Claim

In early 1930, Ibn Sabah and Dickson put together estimates of the amount of trade and customs revenues Kuwait lost from 1921 to 1929 as a result of 'Abd al-'Aziz's blockade. (The claims for losses from Akhwan attacks have been discussed in Chapter Four.) The ruler of Kuwait and the political agent were not always in agreement, either on the types of items which constituted an actionable claim, and the amounts of the claims themselves. For example, Dickson stated in the letter accompanying the original claim, submitted to the Political Resident in Bushire in March 1930, that "it may be thought rather ridiculous" to submit claims for lost customs revenue and lost trade with the Arabian interior, since "there would appear little hope of [Al Sabah] ever getting any 'change' out of Ibn Saud in this respect." But the ruler of Kuwait insisted on submitting the claims in order to convince Britain of the "enormous damage that has been done to Kuwait, a friend and an ally, by Ibn Saud, that they will have no other course open but to compel him to call 'halt.'[28]

Claim III in Appendix B contains the estimated loss of customs revenues caused by the blockade, Rs. 3,200,000, or an average loss of Rs. 400,000 per year for eight years. Dickson noted that he used his own figure because he thought it more accurate than the ruler's estimate, which was Rs. 40,000,000 total, a significant discrepancy, and there is no way to ascertain which is closer to the actual figure.

The compensation claim offers a glimpse at the magnitude of at least a small portion of the interior trade of Arabia, that between Kuwait and the towns of Najd. Both Dickson and Al Sabah appeared to be in general agreement on Claim IV, the estimated loss of trade by Kuwait merchants "who deal exclusively with the inland cities of Nejd in normal times." Ibn Sabah estimated this loss to average Rs. 800,000 per year, for a total loss of Rs. 64,000,000. Dickson stated in the claim that although the figure was approximate, it was "probably not far short of the correct figure." In his accompanying letter, Dickson stated that "there is no doubt that the past eight years' Blockade has very greatly damaged Kuwait trade, the heavy export business with the interior having been practically extinguished."[29]

The desire for expediency and considerations of practicality on the part of British officials eventually won out. The political resident in Bushire suggested to the Kuwaiti ruler and to the Colonial Office that it was "far better to submit only those claims of which the Kuwait authorities had strong proof, and to accept any reasonable sum that Ibn Saud was prepared to offer in settlement," than to put forward additional claims that could "open the way to endless discussions." Therefore, Al Sabah agreed to drop claims III and IV, as well as claim V, the cost

of the "peace offering" Al Sabah had sent to 'Abd al-'Aziz in 1923 on the understanding that the blockade was soon to be lifted.[30]

A Negotiable Blockade

As in the 1920s the blockade of Kuwait varied in its effectiveness during the following decade. In order to soften the blows caused by drought, famine and the effects of the world depression, 'Abd al-'Aziz continued to permit some trade to some tribes. At the same time, he attempted to keep up the pressure on Kuwait and to put in place forces on the ground that would be ever more effective in patrolling the frontier between the two states.

In February 1931, 'Abd al-'Aziz was said to be considering re-instituting the blockade with increased severity after the 'Id. Tribes were warned that Ford cars would be used to aid patrolling efforts by driving along "the well-known line of wells 80 miles south of the Kuwait frontier and which would scour the country daily up to the Kuwait frontier in search of those breaking the order." However, the failure of adequate winter rains had by April caused "serious famine" among the 'Utayba, whose normal dira lay west of Qasim. In addition, locusts had ruined much of what was left of the plants that camels grazed on around Qasim. As a result, large numbers of bedouin, with some 6,000 camels, reportedly moved *en masse* to regions around Kuwait for the grazing, and entered the town for musabila. A principal attraction of the Kuwait market was its lower prices. Rice that cost 13 rials in Kuwait was reportedly 50 rials in Najd. [31]

Some tribes came from as far as Hijaz. Members of the Harb once again headed toward Zubayr, while "a number" of the Bani 'Abdullah, who were related to the Brayh Mutayr, joined the 'Utayba around Kuwait. A Mutayri shaykh who

spoke to Dickson said the reasons for this migration included great scarcity in the Hijaz as well as the depression of the riyal (Maria Theresa thaler). The shaykh added,

> [It was] definite that the Ataiba, Bani Abdillah and the tribes of North-East Arabia who are drawing supplies from Kuwait, were today doing so in spite of Bin Saud, and that the latter was only acquiescing, because he felt powerless today to prevent this mass movement.[32]

In addition, according to some of the Bani 'Abdullah to whom Dickson spoke, another reason for their leaving Hijaz was the fact that 'Abd al-'Aziz confiscated many of the best grazing lands in the region and turned them into private reserves for the royal family. As many as 80 such reserves were said to exist in Hijaz alone at the time.[33] This practice buttresses the contention that camel herds retained their economic and social value during this period and beyond. The appropriation of choice grazing lands by government officials was a crucial but largely undocumented way that power and resources were taken from the tribes of northern Arabia.[34]

The drought and famine in Hijaz and Najd also may have provided the impetus for an increase in trade with Iraq during this period. An April report, for example, stated that "caravans of 100-300 camels, chiefly from Qasim, have been arriving at Zubair almost daily for the past six weeks and have loaded large quantities of rice and wheat," and that "Nejdi merchants have been reaping a rich harvest." And Zubayr, like Kuwait, offered lower prices for staple foods, making it a lucrative opportunity for the Najdi traders. In March 1931, a maund (about 60 kgs.) of rice was 10 riyals, and the same measure of wheat was 8 riyals in Zubayr, but these items could fetch 25 and 23 riyals, respectively, in Burayda. The

jammamil who carried this trade picked up the grain on the accounts of the Qasim merchants, and were paid for their transport services one sack of grain for every two transported. The grain was apparently marked up again, since "large quantities" were said to have been transported from Qasim to Hijaz.[35] According to another report, although "no official figures of exports from Zubair are recorded… prominent merchants estimate that during the period 20 February to 30 April between 50,000 and 70,000 sacks of wheat (apart from rice and dates) were taken by Nejd caravans from Zubair alone." The report added that Iraqi merchants had not made great profits on account of price-cutting, which was spurred by an effort to "dispose of last year's stocks of grain."[36] Kuwait's protests of hardship notwithstanding, it appeared that the blockade was dying the death of a thousand cuts.

'Abd al-'Aziz Attempts to Tighten the Blockade

In response, 'Abd al-'Aziz sought to prevent his tribes from trading in non-Saudi market towns by making a renewed effort to strengthen the blockade. A British report stated that on 6 May 1931 'Abd al-'Aziz's officials in Riyadh, Hail and Hofuf "had each issued proclamations to the effect that no more Nejd tribesmen were to be allowed to go up to Kuwait or even to Iraq to buy food."[37] Another report, however, had the Saudi ruler forbidding "further trade with Kuwait and Iraq except for the Dhafir and Shammar." Not surprisingly, some tribes took issue. A caravan of Harb tribesmen who had arrived in Iraq from Hijaz early in the month reportedly protested "loudly that nothing would prevent them from trading with Iraq if they wanted to." They said that the introduction of motor transport into Hijaz by 'Abd al-'Aziz had already deprived them of their means of livelihood, and

"therefore they would not submit to this new order." Nonetheless, the report stated, the number of caravans stopping to trade in Zubayr had "greatly diminished."[38]

This was no doubt the result of what Dickson termed the blockade's "most stringent form," which was set in place the day after 'Abd al-'Aziz's announcements on May 6. Four armed motor cars reportedly arrived in the Kuwait neutral zone from Jubayl and the occupants informed the head of Kuwait's fidawiyya and 'uraybdar that no more al-Hasa tribes would be permitted to sabil in Kuwait, and that "the penalty for breaking this new order was confiscation of all camels and loads, and imprisonment for the offenders." Subsequently, the Kuwaiti-Saudi frontier was patrolled by armed cars, and "many small groups of bedouin were captured returning from Kuwait with supplies, and these were made to suffer accordingly."[39]

During August, Saudi blockade enforcers went a step further in their efforts, actually crossing into Kuwait on at least three occasions. While ostensibly attempting to "catch Nejd tribesmen coming out from Kuwait close to the Town and before they reached the border," the Saudi forces attacked servants of the Kuwaiti ruler's cousin, Kuwait tribesmen, and a Najdi living in Kuwait. These apparently mirrored the types of incursions by the siriyya, which Al Sabah and Dickson protested throughout the 1920s. Efforts were made to recruit bedouin to assist in blockade measures. In September, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muharib, head of the Saudi blockade force, recruited the "discontented" Dhafir shaykh Jadaan al-Suwayt and convinced his tribesmen to camp on the Kuwait frontier and assist with the blockade patrols. In early October, the Dhafir reportedly caught several small parties of Mutayr who had attempted to slip through to trade with Kuwait, and

turned them over to Ibn Muharib. However, when 'Abd al-'Aziz's tax gatherers began to take zakat from the Dhafir, the rank and file panicked and "began to melt away and disappear into Iraq." As other shaykhs before him who failed to keep the loyalty of his tribesmen, Jadaan was called to task in Riyadh by 'Abd al-'Aziz.[40]

Behaving with increasing boldness, Ibn Muharib crossed into Kuwait on 29 October and "made extensive and secret reconnaissance of routes converging on Kuwait Town." His activities were observed and reported, and official protests were lodged, resulting in Ibn Muharib's removal as blockade chief. On 22 December, 'Abd al-'Aziz ordered the establishment of a blockade post of 18 men at Riqai, at the southwest corner of Kuwait, the first of its kind in the area, which "effectively prevented tribal caravans however small from slipping into Kuwait from the southwest."[41]

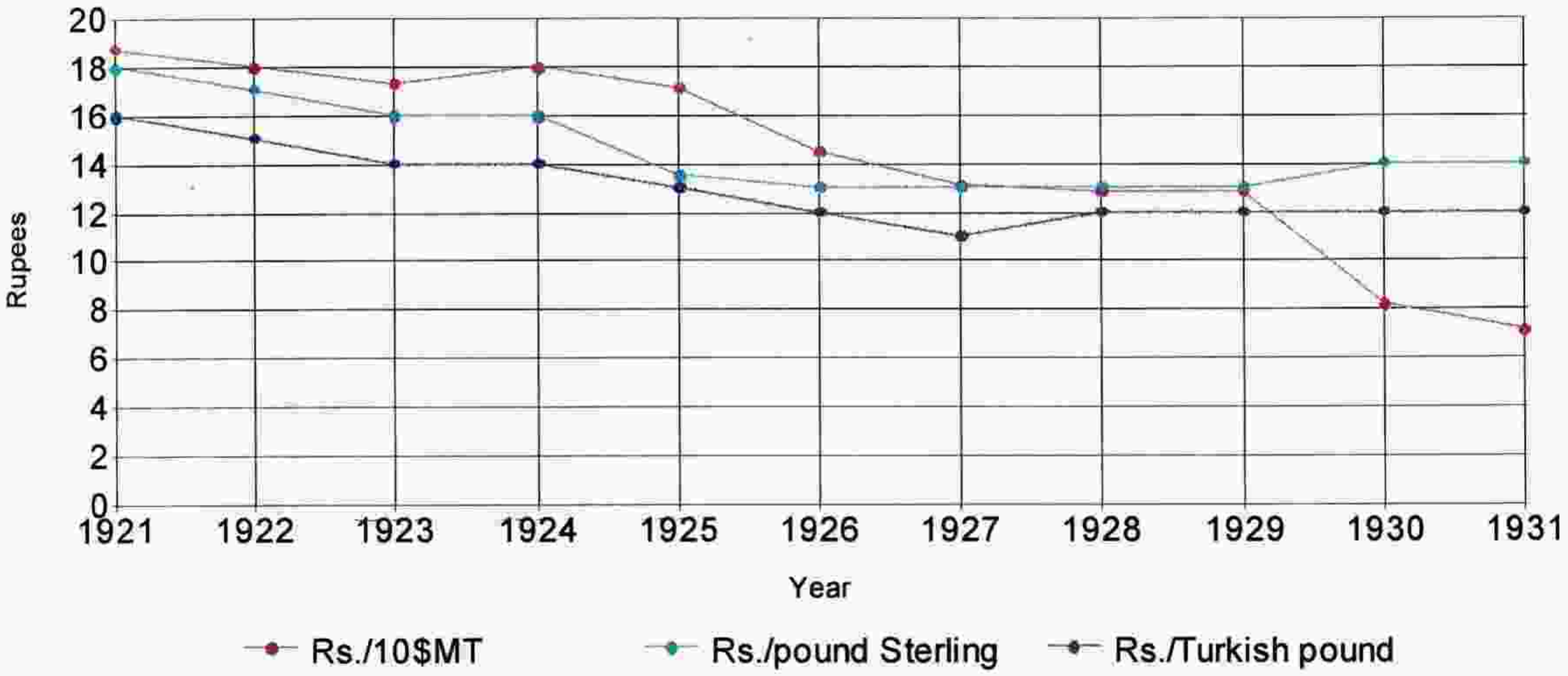
Even as the blockade measures became more sophisticated and effective, 'Abd al-'Aziz was continually forced by the exigencies of tribal politics to occasionally part this economic "sand curtain." For example, around October the Harb reported that "they are now authorized to purchase their supplies in Iraq until the 1st Sha'aban (11th December)." As a result, the caravan traffic in Zubayr increased.[42] In addition, 'Abd al-'Aziz used trading privileges in Iraq as one way to keep Jedaan of the Dhafir as well as some northern Shammar from returning to Iraq for good. According to Dickson, however, "All other tribes of North-East Arabia had still to get their food from Jubail and Hoffuf, and at the end of [1931] this was still the order."[43]

A Crisis in Bedouin Purchasing Power

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, yet another factor was attracting bedouin caravans to the relatively cheaper markets of Kuwait and Iraq: the precipitous fall in the value of the riyal. A number of different currencies were being used in the region during this period, the principal ones being the Indian rupee, Maria Theresa dollar (riyal), the Turkish pound and the British sovereign. The riyal was the principal currency used by the bedouin during this period. They were paid in these large silver Austrian coins for their pastoral products, and they used the riyal to pay for their requirements bought from town merchants. As can be seen in Chart 5.1, the riyal followed a gradual downward trend in value against the Indian rupee in Kuwait during the 1920s. However, between 1929 and 1931, the annual average exchange rate for 100 riyals went from Rs. 128 to about Rs. 72, a loss of 44 percent of the riyal's purchasing power against the rupee.[44] This had obvious dire consequences for bedouin, and meant that finding the lowest prices for staple foods was not just a matter of economy but of survival.[45]

At the same time, other currencies such as the British sovereign (£ sterling) and Turkish pound (T£), used by the region's town-dwellers amongst themselves and for the purposes of non-desert trade, while also losing purchasing power against the rupee, did not fare as badly as the riyal. While the riyal lost about 63 percent of its value during 1921-1931, the sovereign and the Turkish pound lost only about 25 percent during the same period. In addition, neither the Turkish nor British pound were battered on the Kuwait market in the aftermath of the world depression, with both currencies remaining stable against the rupee in the 1929-31 period.[46]

Chart 5.1
Exchange Rates of Three Currencies Against the Rupee in Kuwait, 1921-31



Source: SAC Dickson, Kuwait annual administration reports for 1921-31. Rates from the source have been rounded. When a high and low rate were given for a year, the two figures were averaged. Rates for the Maria Theresa dollar ($MT, known locally as the riyal) were calculated in the source at 100 $MT/rupee. In order to more readily display the rate for this currency alongside those for the British and Turkish pounds, the rate was re-calculated at 10$MT per rupee.

The Saudi blockade continued into the 1930s, despite the Al Sabah's repeated offer to withdraw any claims for compensation if 'Abd al-'Aziz lifted the embargo. However, the decline in the number of reports by British officials on the blockade and smuggling appears to indicate that the number of serious incidents declined, and the political importance of the issue faded.

Still, merchants and bedouin continued to find ways to carry goods along routes that avoided the authorities. This trade/smuggling continued for economic and political reasons. In addition to the other sources of economic hardship mentioned, the 1930s saw a collapse of the once lucrative trade in Gulf pearls. Many Kuwaiti residents had survived and prospered on this trade, and when it withered away, the only other principal source of income was the importing and exporting of goods. According to Dickson, "Kuwait would die a natural death if

this one remaining outlet for her desert trade were denied her." In addition, the shaykh of Kuwait would have faced political repercussions if he had attempted to curtail the flow of goods. According to Dickson, "Any attempt of the Shaikh to control what the Bedouin bought or took out would be playing directly into the hands of 'Abd al-'Aziz, and would be a deadly blow to his prestige."[47]

Not all smuggling into Saudi Arabia went overland from Kuwait.

According to Dickson,

> The most common method is for dhows to take cargoes down the coast to the vicinity of Jinnah Island and Abu Ali [north, northwest of Jubayl], where there are a host of convenient shoals and hiding places. From there cargoes are landed on the mainland, where the starving Awazim, Bani Khalid, Ajman and Mutair, who incidentally all have relatives in Kuwait to put them wise, are only too ready to cooperate if they safely can.[48]

In this way, 'Abd al-'Aziz's frontier patrols could be avoided, through cooperation between merchants, dhow owners and bedouin, who in this instance provided camel transport to the final destinations.

Negotiations between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia regarding trade began in 1935, in part as a prelude to co-operation in the exploitation of oil reserves. As the talks that would eventually end the blockade slowly progressed, it appeared to become easier for bedouin to make the trading journey from Najd to Kuwait. According to Gerald de Gaury, Dickson's successor as political agent, in 1936 there was still "a fairly extensive trade with the Bedouin who come to Kuwait annually. This restocking (Musabila) is not now, by Ibn Saud anyway, called smuggling."[49] A draft agreement was signed in 1936, easing tensions between the two countries, and a final agreement was signed in 1943.[50]

Kuwaiti Tribes Suffer at the Hands of Iraqi 'Anti-Smuggling' Measures

After 1932, the interest of British officials shifted from the Saudi blockade of Kuwait to Kuwaít's role in the illicit trade with Iraq. Here, too, smuggling and forceful efforts to control the frontier resulted in violent incidents and protests on both sides of the border. For this reason, British officials began to report on the matter in increasing detail.[51]

At the outset, Dickson told his superiors that there was no smuggling problem. He stated in a report in March 1933 that "in dozens of conversations with Bedu, I've learned that very little smuggling goes on the land side to Iraq from Kuwait." He added that what goods were brought between the two countries amounted to nothing more than "small quantities" of provisions bought by the Muntafiq tribes on their annual migration for their own use.[52]

However, two months later, presumably after making more inquiries, Dickson painted a very different picture in an extensive report. He observed, for example, that smuggling was being carried out between the Gulf coast and Iraq, Persia and Saudi Arabia because of the high customs tariffs in the latter countries, with duties on some items as high as 100 per cent in Saudi Arabia.[53]

As far as the traffic into Iraq, some, according to Dickson, was carried out under the cover of annual tribal migrations, by both sheep- and camel-herding tribes. The ruler of Kuwait, speaking to Dickson in 1934, stated that during the period that Britain was largely in control of Iraq (from after the war to 1932), Iraq's tribes did not carry on much trade with Kuwait, preferring to market in towns supplied by the port of Basrah. However, with nominal independence, Iraq "gradually raised its tariffs on certain items; thus a bag of sugar in Kuwait is Rs.

10/- and Rs. 40/- in Iraq."[54] Consequently, there arose a strong economic incentive for Iraq's merchants and tribes to trade in Kuwait.

Each year, during the months of cooler weather, occasional rains and the pasturage that grew in their wake, large portions of Kuwaiti territory were used for grazing by the sheep herds of tribes from the Muntafiq and Hammar Lake regions of Iraq – some 15,000 persons, by Dickson's reckoning. During this period, the tribes would do their marketing in Kuwait Town, selling sheep, wool and samn, and buying food, clothing and other necessities. However, living among the tribes would be "confederates" (presumably petty traders or the agents of merchants) who would fund purchases through the bedouin, and then return to Iraq to sell the goods. Dickson stated that these smugglers were "all tough and well armed customers who dress and look like shepherds. They come with lots of money and buy themselves or depute shepherd tribal women to buy for them." The bedouin took goods back to Iraq as well, but Dickson stated that this amounted to far less than the smuggling carried out by "their friends, the gentry." These petty traders were able to carry much more because they reportedly used camels (not donkeys, like the sheep-herders), which were supplied by such tribes as the Dhafir, Jasha'am and others of the Muntafiq region.[55]

Smuggling worked in a similar way through the camel-herding tribes. These included the Dhafir and Shammar, who camped in Kuwait territory upon the arrival of summer, just as the shepherds were leaving. Numbering anywhere from 30 to 300 tents, these tribes would summer near the area's wells and make regular trading trips into Kuwait Town, some on behalf of the smugglers. According to Dickson, these were "more often than not, paid agents of merchants in the towns

along the Euphrates." If the bedouin were stopped and asked where they were taking the goods, "they invariably reply, 'for ourselves and our friends, we are engaged in *musabilah*: Iraq is too expensive for us to-day, and we are forced to come and buy our daily needs from Kuwait.'"[56]

More details regarding the methods used by smugglers with camels emerged in a report concerning a 1935 incident. In August, a group of Shammar, Dhafir, Rashayda and Mutayr bedouin carried bales of tea, sugar, coffee and other items to a "dump" near Jahra. Once all the goods were assembled, the bedouin carried the goods into Iraqi territory in groups of four and five so as not to attract the attention of Iraqi patrols. The next step was to have been the loading of the goods onto some 200 camels and transporting them to the shores of Hammar Lake, where boatmen were waiting. However, the desert police and three armoured cars surprised the party before it could complete its task, arrested half of the men and seized all the goods. One Rashayda was reportedly killed. According to the report, the authorities confiscated 93 camels from the bedouin and took them to Zubayr, where they were sold (a common practice with the animals of smugglers).[57] The Dhafir were said to have been involved in a similar incident the following year, in which Iraqi police exchanged gunfire with the 100-man smuggling caravan, and killed five of them (many camels were reportedly killed as well). The surviving bedouin escaped, but the police captured about 100 camels and retrieved 445 bales of goods, including tea, sugar, matches, coffee, saccharine, tobacco and cigarette papers.[58]

Iraqi police armoured car patrols and camel-mounted desert police were a formidable presence on the Kuwaiti frontier during the 1930s, ostensibly to curtail smuggling.[59] However, while some of their activities could be characterized as

legitimate anti-smuggling measures, such as stopping and searching laden caravans travelling from Kuwait to Iraq, others were either illegal or at best of questionable legality. British officials in Kuwait reported many examples of Iraqi police patrols moving at will within Kuwaiti territory and harassing and harming innocent Kuwaitis. These cases betrayed the tendency of some Iraqi officials (with the acquiescence of their superiors) to disregard Kuwait's territorial sovereignty and intimidate and harm Kuwaitis and plunder their property. The British political agent in Kuwait stated in April 1936 that while Iraq claimed its moves into Kuwait were in response to the "grievance aroused by smuggling," this activity had moved the *de facto* frontier of Iraq into half of Kuwait territory, which had become "an Iraq sphere of action."[60] Iraq put into force anti-smuggling measures on the water as well. While Kuwait complained of violations of its territorial waters and attacks on innocent Kuwaitis by Iraq's police boats, this section will only deal with such activities on the land.[61]

Appendix D contains a list of some reported Iraqi incursions, with brief descriptions. The cases run the range of routine patrols and searches to beatings, arrests and confiscations of property. For example, police patrols, upon sighting a suspected party of smugglers in Kuwait territory, frequently opened fire from a distance, often causing the party to flee without its property. On other occasions, Iraqi police attempted to obtain confessions or information from suspected smugglers by means of severe beatings. Not every encounter was hostile. For example, the amir of Kuwait's fidawiyya visited one Iraqi patrol and reportedly had an amicable chat and coffee with the commandant. What is clear is that the incursions were not aberrations, but constituted a definite policy, and those

recorded by British officials no doubt made up a fraction of the actual number of incidents.[62]

Just as in the detailed reports on raids by British officials in the previous chapters, the interviews with the bedouin who had contact with Iraq's anti-smuggling patrols offer a small but fairly direct window into some aspects of bedouin society. They bring to light details about their daily lives and items of trade, and hint at the adjustments they had to make to their normal grazing and trading patterns in order to avoid the more aggressive and violent Iraqi police patrols that occurred in the 1930s.

Following are several accounts by Kuwaiti bedouin, some recorded by British officials, others sent to the Kuwait political agent by the ruler of Kuwait. The first account illustrates that not all incidents were violent or rapacious.

Abdullah al-Sumayri told Dickson that he was in a camp on 14 May 1934 with four other tents when four armoured cars "with Iraqi soldiers" arrived. The Iraqis aimed their guns at the tribesmen and told them to leave their tents, "whereupon they entered and examined them." After inquiring about someone named "Marshad," and being told that the man had come and gone, the Iraqis "took their rest, during which they had their luncheon which they had brought with them." Al-Sumayri and the others then made coffee for the soldiers, after which they drove off.[63]

While this incident was relatively routine and caused no harm, other incidents reflected a darker aspect of anti-smuggling tactics. For example, on 4 August 1934, two Kuwaiti bedouin with six camels were met near Jabal Sanam by Iraqi police cars, "whose occupants opened fire without warning." One of the Kuwaitis fell wounded, and both men were taken into custody, during which time

the police beat the man who wasn't wounded "mercilessly in order that he should say that it was he and his companion that first opened fire, and thus they [the police] would get themselves rid of this painful crime." The beaten man promised to say what the police wanted, but when he was brought before the authorities, he "told the truth and what had befallen him at the hands of said policemen and the torture they inflicted upon him to make him say that it was he and his companion who fired first." The wounded man was taken to hospital in Basra, where he died, while the other was put in jail. The brother and relatives of the dead Kuwaiti approached the British Political Agent in Kuwait with a complaint for their dead relative and his camels, which had been sold at Zubayr.[64]

An official Iraqi account of this incident, prepared no doubt in response to the protest from Kuwait, differed from the above version in a number of respects. It stated that the event took place on July 17; that the two men had different names than the ones in the Kuwaiti account; that one of them was killed in a police shootout; that the survivor admitted to smuggling; and that their camels were sold as contraband. There was no mention of beating administered by the Iraqi police.[65] According to one analyst of the situation, the difficulties arising from smuggling "were exacerbated since British authorities in Kuwait and the (generally British) officers employed by the Iraqi customs department tended to view the problem quite differently."[66]

Following are some accounts by camel-herding bedouin who lost property to Iraqi confiscations, or, as in the next case, were simply interrogated and beaten. According to an account sent from the ruler of Kuwait to the political agent, some Kuwaiti tribesmen had arrived at the ruler's residence at the end of August 1936.

There were three men driving 12 unladen camels who had been on their way to buy dates, rice and other requirements. On August 26, they reported that two Iraqi armoured police cars came upon them, and the occupants asked what tribe they belonged to. They responded that they were Kuwaiti tribesmen on their way to buy provisions, to which the police replied:

> "You are lying. You want to buy goods for smuggling." The tribesmen said, "What is your proof against us for this charge? We are poor bedouins and do not know how to smuggle goods."
>
> The Police started beating them without mercy, causing them much pain and telling them at the same time to admit they were smugglers. Thus the police tried to extract the poor tribesmen's admission but failed at last and realized the truth of their first statement. …[67]

Here is an unusual case in which the bedouin were not even carrying any goods, yet they were harassed and beaten by Iraqi police. The incident provides a good example of how the balance of power, and the concomitant ability to coerce, had changed in the badia. In the following attack, the Iraqi police did not leave their victims empty-handed.

On 29 July 1936, Shuqayr ibn Farhan and three others were leaving Kuwait Town with 13 camels loaded with provisions on their way to their camp at Hinibiyya. The provisions consisted of

10	bags of rice
7	bags of sugar
4	bags of flour
3	maunds of dates
12	waqiyas of coffee[68]
6	waqiyas of tea
3	waqiyas of coir ropes
3	water skins

According to Shuqayr, of the above, two bags of rice, one bag of sugar, and six waqiyas of tea belong to his tribal chief, Majid bin Jumay'an. In addition, two bags of rice belonged to Shuqayr bin Farhan, and "the rest belonged in common to many families of the tribe, from one bag down." Before reaching its camp, the party was attacked by four cars of the Safwan Police Post, which opened fire "from a distance of about 50 Fathoms." The Kuwaitis fled, and left behind their pack camels and the provisions they were carrying, which the police confiscated.

According to Shuqayr,

> After a few days we heard that the authorities in Iraq were going to sell our camels in public auction at Zubair. So, everyone who had lost a camel went to Zubair and bought it at Rs. 42/- including the auctioner's commission.[69]

The fact that the caravan was travelling in daylight on a track within Kuwaiti territory clearly should have marked the bedouin as engaged in routine musabila. It is also clear that the items were provisions for their own use. If they were truly smugglers, they would not have been carrying bulky staples such as rice, or dates, which originated in Iraq. Instead, smugglers had the highest profit potential for compact, more expensive imported items such as cigarette papers, matches, and weapons.

In this statement by 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Dayri, we see another example of the Iraqi camel police as the beneficiaries of Kuwaiti "contraband."

> On Thursday the 24th September I and two of my fellow tribesmen were proceeding from Kuwait to Hinnabiyah. We rode three camels, which also carried the provisions we bought from Kuwait for our families. I myself was going to get married at Hinnabiyah, and besides the provisions I had with me clothes for my bride. When we passed Hinnabiyah just after sunset, a party of five camels of the Iraqi camel police came upon us. They ordered us to alight from our camels. We had no firearms. The police were armed and

they forced us to get down and leave our camels and what they carried. They were not satisfied with this, but took even the clothes we were wearing. Our losses are as follows with value as bought from Kuwait:-

3 bags sugar @ Rs. 10/-	30
4 waqiyas coffee @ Rs. 1-6	5-8
1 waqiya cardamom @ 12/-	12
1 ½ waqiyas tea @ Rs. 3-4	4-14
one lady's aba, one gown and one garment all new for my bride	45
different pieces of white and red cloth	35
3 cloaks @ Rs. 15/-	45
1 he-camel	80
1 he-camel	100
1 she-camel	100
TOTAL	457-6-0[70]

It should not be assumed that British officials blindly accepted the testimony of all victims at face value. Just as with raiding inquiries, they scrutinized witnesses and attempted to obtain as much first-hand information as possible before passing judgement. Regarding the above incident, for example, de Gaury stated that although the man was convinced he was "most wrongfully treated," de Gaury was unconvinced of his innocence. He stated that "it is clear that as he was carrying a present of three pieces of new material for his friend across the border the Iraqi Police action was justified." Hard-headed judgements such as this lend weight to the credibility of de Gaury and others regarding their other reports.

The exchange of conflicting claims and counterclaims has a familiar ring. As seen in previous chapters, a similar pattern emerged when British officials began to seriously pursue questions regarding raiding losses and Akhwan attacks. Just as before, one way the British hoped to sort out conflicting claims was to take detailed statements from witnesses. Another method was to send a group of officials from both sides on a tour of the region to investigate claims of smuggling and incursions.

One such group held a series of meetings in Iraq and Kuwait during the winter of 1937, and concluded that of the eight cases of alleged Iraqi incursions investigated, five were proven and three were inconclusive on account that the witnesses were "absent due to migration."[71]

The British political agent in Kuwait said he "long suspected that the Iraqis were not genuinely anxious to bring smuggling to an end," and that they were "not averse to its continuance since it gave them a stick with which to beat Kuwait." He added that most of the smuggling was initiated by Iraqi merchants and transported by Iraqi tribes. For example, when Major Sargon, the British Inspector of the Fourth Police Area in Iraq, gave the actual license numbers of the motor cars and the names of the drivers transporting goods from dumps to the Iraqi police, they did not take any action.[72]

In addition to the political dimension of these incursions, there was a simple economic one as well. The confiscation of goods, whether smuggled items or legitimate provisions of bedouin, formed a lucrative source of income for the Iraqi police. For example, in the course of explaining the actions and motivations of Iraqi customs police who went to Idayrat al-Khulla in Kuwait territory in October 1937 and attacked and confiscated the goods of a caravan both sides conceded to be smuggling, de Gaury cast doubt on the official Iraqi version of events, which had the attack take place in Iraqi territory (with the smugglers shooting first, of course), because of the "patrol's respect of the inviolability of the frontier." The Kuwait Political agent stated that the respect for frontiers mentioned in the Iraqi version may, "... in the case of junior Customs police officials on the frontier, be offset by the temptation to capture contraband, for which a reward is offered, and in the sale

of which at Zubair, if I am not misled by informants, there is considerable financial profit to the Customs Police."[73] Appendix E contains a detailed description by Dickson of the smuggling system on the Kuwait/Iraq frontier as it operated in the 1940s. By that time, Iraqi customs police routinely told smugglers that if they didn't surrender half the value of their goods, the entire caravan would be confiscated and they would be imprisoned. According to Dickson's analysis, the police were not interested in stopping smuggling, but in making certain they received a share of the proceeds of this trade. It is not known when this system had evolved to this advanced stage, but it certainly must have begun to develop during the 1930s.

Controlling Bedouin Trade in Iraq, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia

In the brief sections on Iraq and Transjordan that follow, it is possible to see how on the one hand, musabila was used to bolster official shaykhs, and on the other, how changes in customs fees had important consequences for tribal trading and labor migrations.

According to a 1923 report by Glubb, the economies of the "sister towns" of Rahaliyyah and Shithatha, with their extensive date gardens, depended to a large extent "on the sale of dates to bedouin tribes."[74] During this period, these were the northernmost towns along the Euphrates that produced large amounts of dates, so "monster caravans" of camels from tribes as distant as the Fid'an near Dayr al-Zur and the Rwala near Aleppo arrived regularly. Among the privileges granted to Fahd ibn Hadhdhal (also called "Fahd Beg") as the government's shaykh of the 'Anaza was the right to issue passes to the 'Anaza tribes to buy dates and grain. According to one report, "the bulk of the trade, it is stated, is now directed by Fahad

Beg to Shetata instead of Rahaliyah, while a number of former purchasers are said to have ceased buying, preferring to go without, sooner than submit to the indignity of soliciting permission from Fahad Beg."[75] Sometimes disputes arose over the refusal to pay the marketing tax (baj). In December 1925, Ibn Hadhdhal appealed to authorities in Baghdad when the mutasarrif of Karbala refused to pay the tax on some 3,500 camels of various tribes (Dahamshah, Sba'a, Fid'an) that had come to Shithatha for supplies. (The tax was Rs. 2-8, or about one mejidie.)[76]

The practice of issuing and withholding of marketing privileges, carried over from at least the late Ottoman period, permitted the government to exert a degree of control on some tribes who depended on these markets. This was exercised in 1923, when the Shammar shaykh Daham al-Hadi, known to "give trouble in Iraq territory and the crossing of the frontier," was not permitted to buy dates near Hit.[77]

Toward the end of the 1920s, as government forces helped extend state control farther and farther into the badia, some officials saw the establishment of new markets in the desert as a beneficial development of their work. "Control of the desert promotes trade to and from the bedu. Already several merchants have applied to build khans and open shops at Sulman and Shabicha."[78]

In Transjordan, too, the growth of state power enabled officials to extend political and economic control into the field of trade. The main bedouin market towns in Transjordan – Maan, Karak, Amman and al-Salt – were not as large or as numerous as those in Iraq, but they were an important source of provisions and supplies for local tribes, as well as those from northern Najd and Hijaz. Maan, in particular, was an important market, where bedouin from Saudi Arabia traded with

local and Palestinian merchants. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Amman was an important camel and livestock market. There is no evidence that bedouin had to obtain passes for the right to sabil in a town, as they did in Iraq, and this is perhaps a reflection of the differing systems of tribal control and organization. However, one aspect of trade was the same here as it was elsewhere: the attempts by states to control the flow of goods.

After agreement among the states in the region on borders, there also evolved customs posts along officially sanctioned trade routes.[79] This permitted authorities to monitor legitimate trade more easily and to apprehend those attempting to circumvent the new laws. Even though these new customs rules were put into place, the collection of statistics on bedouin trade did not appear to be a priority, judging from the dearth of published statistics. Nonetheless, it is possible to get a general idea about some aspects of the musabila that took place between Saudi tribes and Transjordan markets.

According to a British report which acknowledged that "there are no reliable statistics" regarding musabila, "the following figures [Table 5.1] are given as a gauge of this tribal trading between Saudi Arabia and Transjordan, an exiguous trickle, but of first importance to the economic life of the tribes of northern Saudi Arabia." More important than samn and dates, animals, too, were brought from Saudi Arabia to Transjordan. The numbers in Table 5.2 can only be considered rough estimates, but they illustrate the fact that goats and sheep grew to be important sector of the animal import market, in addition to camels.

Just as for Iraq, the British sources are not eloquent on the factors affecting musabila in Transjordan. However, the security situation was an important factor

for those engaging in overland trade, whether bedouins or merchants. Thus, periods of intensified Akhwan attacks and of defensive measures by British forces had a dampening affect on trade. Other outbreaks of unrest also strangled the movement of goods. For example, it has already been noted that British Imperial Forces, constituted as Souforce during the Ibn Rifada revolt (see Chapter Three), sought to cut off all traffic between Transjordan and Hijaz in order to starve the rebels of supplies, weapons and fighters. In addition to stopping the movement of potential combatants, the blockade also had the effect of cutting off the flow of goods that usually went from Palestine/Transjordan into northern Hijaz. In some cases the forces confiscated camel loads and questioned and detained individuals. In others, they turned back entire caravans. In addition, it became illegal in June 1932 to export grains and provisions to Najd and Hijaz, the penalty for offenders one year in prison and confiscation of goods.[80]

Table 5.1
Overland Exports from Saudi Arabia to Transjordan

1 April 1932 – 31 March 1933	
Samn	17,000 kg.
Dates	1,160 kg.
Hair tents	300 kg.
1 April 1933 –31 March 1934	
Samn	84,050 kg.
Dates	10,960 kg.
Hair Tents	150 kg.
1 April 1934 – 31 March 1935	
Samn	33,850 kg.
Dates	2,762 kg.

Source: *Economic Survey of Saudi Arabia, 1936*, 25.

Table 5.2
Livestock Exports from Saudi Arabia to Transjordan, 1932-35

	Camels	*Goats*	*Sheep*
1932	3,127	538	491
1933	7,931	771	3,053
1934	10,790	2,957	10,175
1935 (Jan.-June)	3,318	1,452	7,893

Source: *Economic Survey of Saudi Arabia, 1936*, 25.

During the 1930s, the consolidating Saudi state manifested its growing power and search for revenue sources by imposing new customs regimes and duties on goods brought from Transjordan. From about 1930, only merchants had to pay customs duties on goods they brought into Saudi Arabia, but in 1935, bedouin, too, had to pay, causing great discontent. In the summer of 1935, for example, Saudi bedouin returning from the markets of Karak and Maan, were reportedly complaining that the government demanded customs fees on all town articles, even though they were intended for private consumption.[81] Such staples as rice and flour were reportedly exempt from duties, but coffee, sugar, and all cloth and clothing were not. The bedouin found ingenious ways to reduce their customs liability. One British observer thought it "amusing to see ragged bedouins of both sexes sitting outside the police post at Mudawara, hastily snipping and stitching some lengths of new cotton material into shirts, in order to don their purchases before approaching the Saudi frontier. …"[82]

By the following spring, the new customs regime had seriously reduced the number of musabila caravans. According to one report:

> Whereas last year literally hundreds of camels a day passed Mudawara carrying food stuffs and piece goods from Transjordan to the Hejaz, scarcely a single caravan has passed for the last two months. The plain outside Mudawara fort, usually a scene busy with the activities of loading and

> unloading, and covered with groups of couched camels, is now completely silent and deserted.[83]

One of the principal tribes affected by the new tariffs was the Bani 'Atiyya. According to the same report, poorer members of the tribe had customarily traveled to Karak during the summer in order to help bring in the grain harvest. The farmers paid the bedouin in sacks of grain, which the Bani 'Atiyya used to carry across the frontier in the autumn and use "as their winter food supply when they return to Hejaz." Thanks to the financial burden of new customs duties, no members of the tribe were to be found in Karak during harvest time in 1936.[84]

The shaykhs of the tribe petitioned 'Abd al-'Aziz to lower the duties, but he refused. After some weeks, however, with the Bani 'Atiyya threatening to secede *en masse* to Transjordan, the Saudi government cancelled the customs fees on food, but not on clothing. By the end of June, bedouin caravans began once again to sabil in Transjordan, eager to buy grain.[85] The threat of tribal secession continued to be an effective tool in the negotiating process between the bedouin and the Saudi ruler.

Saudi tribes continued to trade in Transjordan even up to 1940, and the Saudi government continued its attempts to increase its revenues from the traffic. In February of that year, Saudi customs officials once again imposed new fees. And once again the tribal shaykhs protested to 'Abd al-'Aziz, but this time they sent their grievances via the wireless.[86]

In Summary

While many have written in general terms about the adverse effects of newly drawn borders on the bedouin of northern Arabia, this chapter offers concrete examples of how some tribes responded to these new political and economic realities. For example, officials, merchants and bedouin all became involved in

struggles over the control of trade. It has been demonstrated that blockades, new customs regulations, and other trade barriers, while frequently protested, ignored or circumvented, tended to reduce the freedom of action of the bedouin in the economic sphere. This could result in their being forced to shift from traditional markets, paying higher prices for town goods, and even being harassed or attacked when they were not violating any laws.

How did the bedouin respond to this? While no figures exist, doubtless the vast majority went along with the new rules. However, there are several examples of bedouin in dire circumstances who opposed restrictions that would serve to punish them further. Thus, the blockade of Kuwait by 'Abd al-'Aziz was not ironclad, but rather open to negotiation. In other cases, some bedouin attempted to circumvent trade restrictions by engaging in smuggling. It should be noted that in many cases they could not have succeeded without the assistance of merchants and officials. Merchants supplied the capital and the means of selling the smuggled goods; while the complicity of border police and customs officials, who skimmed a portion of the trade, allowed the passage of contraband goods.

While the overall picture is rather grim, the example of the Bani 'Atiyya shows that the tribes were not entirely powerless. When they were prevented by new regulations from carrying on their traditional trade from Saudi Arabia to Transjordan, they threatened to move *en masse* to Transjordan. Faced with this prospect, the trading restrictions were modified. During a period when bedouin livelihoods were being threatened, eliminated and transformed, some tribes still had the weapon of secession in their dwindling arsenals.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

[1] IOR, R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 8 March 1933.
[2] This type of control was also exercised in the lands of 'Abd al-'Aziz. For example, during the Akhwan revolt, 'Abd al-'Aziz instituted a trade blockade against the forces of Faysal al-Duwish. PRO, CO 732/32/4, 'Abd al-'Aziz to Political Agent, Bahrain, 18 March 1928. In the following year, when the government wanted to retaliate against 'Utayba attacks on lorries filled with cash and arms, the "Governor of Jeddah received strict instructions from Mecca to prevent the sale of food-stuffs to Arabs of this tribe, and to exercise strict control over sale to other visiting tribes." FOCP 13842, Bond to Henderson, Jeddah, 10 September 1929. On the nineteenth century, see Chapter One.
[3] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 1:9, 30. Clearly, with the aid of the camel, "regional" transport could involve travel of several hundred miles.
[4] Raouf Sa'd Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan: The Frontier of Settlement in Transjordan* (London: Tauris, 1989), 102.
[5] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1918.
[6] For example, see Joseph Kostiner, *Saudi Arabia, 1916-1936: From Chieftancy to Monarchical State* (New York: OUP, 1993), 180.
[7] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1931.
[8] AIR 23/269, Reports of SSO Basrah, 8 January 1925.
[9] *Political Diaries of the Persian Gulf*, vol. 7 (Farnham Common: Archives Editions, 1990), Summary of Persian Gulf news, Bushire, 19 February 1922, 8.
[10] See AIR 23/272, Reports by SSO Basrah, 20 March 1926, for a report, called "barely reliable" by the SSO, of 'Abd al-'Aziz's efforts to prevent Akhwan musabila in Kuwait. See also, AIR 23/273, Reports of SSO Basrah, 31 July to 4 August 1926.
[11] Ibid., 27 March 1926.
[12] Ibid., 14 August 1926. The report added that "Abdullah al-Nafisi, 'Abd al-'Aziz's agent in Kuwait, is cognizant of this business but finds it to his advantage to appear ignorant of it."
[13] Appendix B, Claim 1 (A).
[14] AIR 23/273, Reports of SSO Basrah, 10 July 1926.
[15] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1927.
[16] Halah Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745-1900* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 71-2; 195-7.
[17] AIR 23/273, Reports of SSO Basrah, 17 October 1926.
[18] AIR 23/274, Reports of SSO Basrah, 22 January 1927.
[19] Kostiner, *Saudi Arabia*, 124.
[20] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1928.
[21] Ibid., 1929. According to this report, "one of the chief objects of the Ajman and Mutair during their recent rebellion, was to throw off the Nejd yoke and once again come under the control of Kuwait."
[22] CO 732/37/2, Extract from Report on the Administration of the Southern Desert, March 1929.
[23] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1929.
[24] Ibid., 1930. "The late rebels in particular were in a very bad way owing to having lost most of their livestock, and found it impossible to fetch supplies from Hofuf or Jubail as the King would have liked them to do." See also R/15/1//481, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 11 June 1930, which gives specific details. On June 5, Brayh Mutayr tribesmen with 60 camels arrived in Kuwait to purchase supplies; on the 7th, 'Ajman and 'Awaynah with 25 camels arrived; on the 10th, 15 Mutayr arrived, and a "large number of Awazim tribesmen managed to reach Kuwait in the last three weeks."
[25] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1931.
[26] R/15/1/481, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 11 December 1930.

[27] "The trade which Kuwait is anxious to recover is the heavy caravan traffic that used to ply between the coast and the Nejd province of Qasim. This is the one trade that will bring recovery to her, not the supplying of the bedouin with their petty needs of dates and rice." SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1930.
[28] CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 18 March 1930.
[29] Ibid.
[30] CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 18 March 1930, Political Resident, Bushire, to Passfield, Colonial Office, 13 May 1931. In order to provide some perspective on the estimated trade of Kuwait, let us look at Dickson's figures for the year 1932-33. He estimated that total imports by sea amounted to Rs. 3,114,689 (2.1 per cent higher than the previous year), and total exports by sea were Rs. 1,111,881 (a decrease of 30.3 per cent from 1931-2). SAC Dickson, Report on the trade of Kuwait for 1932-2.
[31] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration report for 1931.
[32] R/15/1/48, Kuwait Intelligence Summary, 17 April 1931.
[33] Ibid., 2 May 1931. The practice was one of the perquisites of high officials and members of the royal family. "…[I]t is a custom in Nejd for the local amir to select a particularly succulent piece of grazing, and forbid tribes to enter it, reserving it solely for the use of his private animals or those of his retainers." SAC Glubb, Transjordan monthly report, March 1933.
[34] This phenomenon also appears to have heralded a growing modern trend toward raising camels in a ranch-like environment rather than through long migrations over open rangelands.
[35] AIR 23/277, Reports of SSO Basrah, 11 April 1931.
[36] Ibid., 25 May 1931.
[37] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for 1931.
[38] AIR 23/277, Reports of SSO Basrah, 25 May 1931.
[39] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for 1931.
[40] Ibid. Later in this same report, Dickson stated that on July 26 some Brayh Mutayr from Najd who had been attempting to slip into Kuwait to purchase supplies were raided by the Dhafir under Jedaan, suggesting that Dhafir cooperation with blockade efforts started earlier than September.
[41] Ibid.
[42] AIR 23/277, Reports of SSO Basrah, 1 November 1931.
[43] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for 1931.
[44] This decline may have had a number of causes. Certainly an important one was the world depression. However, the late 1920s and early 1930s also were years during which 'Abd al-'Aziz was attempting to reduce the number of currencies used in his domains, which could have created fluctuations in the exchange rates. See Kiren Aziz Chaudhry, *The Price of Wealth: Economies and Institutions in the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1997), 65-8.
[45] R/15/1/48, Kuwait Intelligence Summary, 2 May 1931. It also had political consequences. According to this report, "There is a growing tendency on the part of the tribes in the hinterland to put all the blame on Bin Saud for the way the Rial has lost its purchasing power."
[46] SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration reports for 1921-31.
[47] R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 30 May 1933.
[48] Ibid.
[49] R/15/1/534, de Gaury to Political Resident, Bushire, 12 June 1936.
[50] Kostiner, *Saudi Arabia*, 180-1.
[51] While the focus of this section will be on the involvement of bedouin in smuggling, it should be noted that this activity provided Iraqis yet another opportunity to threaten to absorb Kuwait. Some examples of this rhetoric appeared in Iraqi newspapers. For one excerpt, see R/15/1/534, Kerr to Rendel, 20 May 1936. "In our opinion the most successful method [for dealing with the problem of smuggling from Kuwait] would be for the Iraqi Government to act for the striking of the name of Kuwait off the list of Arab principalities and try to annex Kuwait to Iraq." *Al Karkh*, 18 May 1936. There are many other examples of this same sentiment in other publications. See Ibid., de Gaury to Political Resident, Bushire, 12 June 1936.
[52] R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 8 March 1933.
[53] Ibid., 30 May 1933.
[54] R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 31 January 1934.
[55] Ibid., 30 May 1933.

[56] R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 31 January 1934. Citing another report by Dickson, (FO 371/16852, "A Note on the Contraband Problem of Iraq with her Neighbours, and in Particular How it Affects Kuwait," 1933), one author has stated that "smugglers based on the Hasa coast of Saudi Arabia" used the migrations of the Shammar and Dhafir as cover for their activities. Richard Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1993), 67.
[57] R/15/1/534, Extract from Kuwait intelligence summary no. 15, 1-15 September 1935. The merchant who bought the camels was reputed to be involved "with various smuggling organizations and is reported to have secretly sold the camels back to their respective Bedouin owners at cost price."
[58] Ibid., Batemen, British Embassy, Baghdad, to Anthony Eden, 9 July 1936.
[59] "Smuggling had a significant impact both on the border question and on Kuwait-Iraq relations more generally during the 1930s." Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, 66.
[60] R/15/1/534, Political Agent, Kuwait, to Political Resident, Bushire, 19 April 1936.
[61] According to a report from Iraq, there were 535 cases of smuggling in 1933. In 1934, this amount rose to 1,041 cases, of which 87 were by sea. The value of the smuggled goods captured in Iraq in 1934 was about £15,000, reflecting a potential loss of customs revenue of £10,000. R/15/1/533, British Ambassador, Baghdad, to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 19 February 1935. For examples of Kuwaiti complaints against Iraqi violations of territorial waters and attacks on Kuwaitis, see R/15/1/534, Political Agent, Kuwait to Political Resident, Bushire, 19 April 1936.
[62] One bedouin, Murshid al-Shammar, counted at least seven incursions by Iraqi desert police in just the first two weeks of May 1934. R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 15 May 1934.
[63] R/15/1/531, Dickson to Political Resident, Bushire, 15 May 1934.
[64] R/15/1/532, Translation of a letter from the Ruler of Kuwait to the Political Agent, 6 August 1934, in Watts, Political Agent, Kuwait, to Political Resident, Bushire, 11 August 1934.
[65] R/15/1/533, Ministry of Foreign Affairs to British Embassy, Baghdad, [n.d.].
[66] Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, 66.
[67] R/15/1/535, Ruler of Kuwait to Political Agent, Kuwait, 29 August 1936. (The text has been edited for clarity.)
[68] In Kuwait there were three kinds of waqiyas, depending on what was being bought. All were based on the weight of the riyal. The waqiya used for "imports from the desert" had the weight of 80 riyals, or nearly 5 lbs. SAC Dickson, Report on the trade of Kuwait for 1932-33.
[69] R/15/1/535, de Gaury, Political Agent to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 September 1936.
[70] Ibid.
[71] R/15/1/536, de Gaury to Political Resident Bushire, 11 February 1937. As part of the investigation, an Iraqi police commandant attempted to trick and denigrate bedouin witnesses. According to the British report, "A particular success [of the commandant] was to ask the witnesses to describe the Police uniform. [The bedouin] it appears are unable to do so. They just said 'The Police were dressed like Police,' or 'in coat and trousers,' which was always a triumph for the Commandant.

"The bedouin told their stories and maintained their dignity in most cases. One did not. Luckily the Commandant failed to understand the meaning of the abuse [of the bedouin witness] and the threat to 'make him as emasculated as he looked,' if he was ever seen on the frontier again. (Not that he himself had ever crossed it without leave.) He recoiled from the vehemence of the man, until I stopped it.... It was obviously in his mind a match of Iraqi versus Kuwaiti and of town versus country, that the Commandant was attending – rather than an impartial investigation."
[72] R/15/1/536, de Gaury to Political Resident, Bushire, 19 February 1937.
[73] R/15/1/537, Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs to British Embassy Baghdad, 23 March 1938; and Ibid., de Gaury to Political Resident, Bushire, 26 May 1938.
[74] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 28 February 1923. On the richness and quality of the dates in these towns see Musil, *Arabia Deserta; a topographical survey* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1927), 364.
[75] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 28 February 1923.
[76] AIR 23/293, Reports of SSO Ramadi, December 1925.
[77] SAC Glubb, Reports from Ramadi, 22 March 1923.

[78] CO 730/140/8, W.G. Botolph, Inspecting Officer of Police, Southern Desert to Adviser, Inspector General of Police, Ministry of Interior, 29 August 1929.
[79] In Transjordan, the accepted routes of trade with Saudi Arabia were established in 1928-29. They included the routes Jawf-Jafr-Maan, Tabuk-Maan, and Qariyat al-Milh-Umari al-Muwaqqar-Sahb-Amman. *Economic Survey of Saudi Arabia, 1936*, 9.
[80] SAC Glubb, Air HQ Palestine and Transjordan, Intelligence report, week ending 25 June 1932.
[81] SAC Glubb, Transjordan monthly report, July 1935. Even Najdi tribes that normally marketed in Iraq were reportedly coming to Transjordan that season, drawn to the area by good grazing near the Red Sea coast.
[82] FO 905/38, Transjordan monthly report, November 1935.
[83] Ibid., May 1936.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid., June 1936.
[86] SAC Glubb, Transjordan monthly report, February 1940.

CONCLUSION

It is not possible to understand the economic history of the Middle East without coming to terms with the major modes of production, the principal items of trade, and the most significant social groups. An underlying motivation for writing this thesis was to shed some light on certain aspects of the economic transformations endured by the bedouin of northern Arabia, thus helping to broaden the scope of current narratives on economic history and to deepen our understanding of bedouin society, especially during the crucial years between the First and Second World Wars.

In the nineteenth century, pastoral nomads were the source of economically important products, and they consumed large quantities of the goods sold in towns, such as grain, rice, dates, textiles and weapons. The producers and sellers of these town goods – peasants, craftsmen and merchants – played a major role in the economies of the settled zones of the Middle East. Pastoral products, too comprised a large portion of the region's internal trade, and were major export items as well. As noted, the wool sheared from the sheep of bedouin and other pastoralists provided an important raw material for local textile production, and it was one of the main exports from such cities as Aleppo, Basra, Damascus and Mosul. In addition, the inhabitants of the cities and towns of Egypt, Iraq, Palestine and Syria consumed large quantities of mutton and lamb, and used semn as one of their principal cooking oils. The Arabian horses bred by bedouin formed yet another source of income. The examination of the trade in camels that appears in

this thesis, then, illuminates just a portion of the trade activities with which the bedouin were involved.

By looking at the trade in camels, I have sought to answer the question that originally set me off on my doctoral research: "How did the coming of modern transportation affect the camel-herding bedouin of northern Arabia?" Influenced by the somewhat sparse literature on the subject, I assumed that I would be able to document, in a fairly straightforward manner, the end of camel caravans and the rise of modern transport. I thought I would see a gradual decline in the number of camels sold each year, with a concomitant drop in prices, resulting in economic crisis for camel-herding tribes and desperate efforts to alter their modes of subsistence in order to survive. Charting the trade in camels proved to be much more complex and difficult than I had anticipated.

Nonetheless, the evidence I have been able to collect by casting a wide net into a variety of sources clearly shows that factors such as war, drought and the demand for meat were the most important factors affecting the trade in camels and their cost. The effect of modern transport on this trade, on the other hand, seemed to be limited, localized and unpredictable. First, there is the question of the relative importance of camels compared to other pack animals, such as donkeys, mules and horses. There was clearly a continuum ranging from areas that relied mainly on donkeys, mules and horses to areas where the camel predominated as the preferred mode of transport. Because camels tended to be used in locales remote from cities and towns, and because modern modes of transport were first employed to served the needs of cities, where capital was most concentrated, it stands to reason that demand for donkeys, mules and horses declined before demand for camels was

affected. In addition, as we have seen, whether it was for carrying coal for Red Sea steamships, or oranges for export from Jaffa, or water to workers digging the Suez Canal, the demand for camels very often increased (if temporarily) where modern transport was introduced. However, the most convincing arguement in support of the contention that the transport role of the camel was relatively minor, is the fact the large-scale camel herding persisted throughout the period, at times in the face of great hardship.

While it is true that camel herding persisted, there were large variations from region to region and from country to country. For example, the data show that camel populations declined in Syria and Iraq, sometimes quite dramatically. The causes for this decline were varied, with drought, politics and economic conditions coming into play. Certainly combinations of these factors proved insurmountable to many herding groups. However, in Saudi Arabia, where the percentage of bedouin population was the largest, and which had the longest history of political connections with nomadic tribes, the story is the opposite.

The role of the camel as a provider of milk and a repository of prestige and status, then, appears to have been more important than its role as pack animal in merchant caravans in those regions where it continued to be herded. In the Saudi case, for example, ʻAbd al-ʻAziz was reported to have a personal herd of nearly 5,000 camels in the early 1930s.[1] It is more than likely that only a small percentage of these was used exclusively for transport, and that the rest were milch camels and thoroughbred riding camels, providing him with an important symbol of prestige in Arabian society and a reservoir of wealth readily converted among his bedouin subjects. Writing of the late 1960s, by which time camel transport had all but

disappeared in Saudi Arabia, Cole has noted that all the old men of the Al Murrah tribe "own very fine herds of purebred milk and riding camels, a sign of well-being in the pre-oil economy."[2] Even when aged camels had outlived their usefulness for the purposes of milk production, breeding and status, there continued to be a steady market for their meat and hides. Into a social and political climate that favoured the values and traditions of bedouin society came the factor of oil wealth, adding another boon to the possibilities of camel ownership. Between 1975 and 1985, the kingdom's camel population increased more than four-fold, from 104,999 to 436,755, according to official statistics.[3] The country's oil-based wealth has fueled the camel market, with thoroughbred racing camels today routinely fetching tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars.

This thesis has highlighted other aspects of change in bedouin society. During the twentieth century, the badia and its inhabitants underwent dramatic social, political and economic transformations. In many cases, these were the result of forces that had their origins in the nineteenth century and earlier. Some of the factors affecting these changes emanated from the settled zone – such as efforts to control nomads through taxation, agreements, military power, land registration and forced sedentarisation. The revolution in technology also began in the nineteenth century, as did the use of this technology by people in the settled zone to increase their control over the badia, or to provide faster transport through or around the deserts. Some processes for change came from within bedouin society itself. These included the decisions of members of tribes to move their dira, alter their mix of pastoral flocks (reflected mainly in a shift from camel- to sheep-herding), or adopt or increase agricultural production (and thus move toward a fully settled existence).

While many processes and forces had their origins before the twentieth century, this study acknowledges that the 1920s and 1930s marked a definite watershed for the bedouin of northern Arabia. First, the mobility of the tribes was gradually reduced as borders were drawn for the first time in the heart of the badia. Watering places deep in the badia were occupied by police and army posts, and new states thus were able to lay claim not only to the loyalty of the tribes, but their diras as well. Restrictions in mobility affected the ability of tribes to survive in a marginal environment, causing losses in animal and human life; and it meant that tribes could no longer maintain their long-held wide range of marketing options. Second, the technological balance shifted dramatically and decisively in favour of the forces in the settled zone, not only in the area of transportation and weapons, but also in communications. Third, probably for the first time ever, the historically important economic option of raiding was severely suppressed. Finally, the period saw the end of the autonomous military power of the bedouin as they became incorporated into states. The revolt of some Akhwan sections against the authority of 'Abd al-'Aziz, in addition to causing losses in human lives and livestock, marked the dying gasp of independent tribal power in the badia.

The extension of military control and the restriction of bedouin activities, however, were not seen by all government officials as immediate and inevitable consequences of their state-building efforts. Indeed, as this thesis has shown, British authorities in Iraq were willing to permit a great deal of intertribal raiding during some periods after the First World War. This flowed, in part, from their desire to undertake the admittedly large task of first establishing control (military, political and administrative) in the settled zone. Second, the authorities felt that as

long as intertribal raiding did not affect people from the settled zone, it need not be controlled. It was only when massive attacks by Akhwan forces caused extensive losses of life and threatened imperial plans in the badia that British officials made a coordinated and sustained effort to bring a halt to all forms of raiding.

Once it was decided to halt raiding, how did it affect the bedouin? Because authorities could not monitor all raiding parties in all places, enforcement of raiding bans was not uniform. As a result, as was seen in Transjordan, a tribe could be raided of most of its livestock and be prevented by British authorities from recouping the losses by means of counter-raids. This could throw tribes or sections of tribes into destitution, and reliance on the state for assistance. If no aid was forthcoming, tribes could and did shift their allegiance from one state to another. In general, one effect of the ban on raiding was to "freeze" the economic status of the tribes, helping tribes rich in livestock to maintain their animal wealth and prevent poor tribes from gaining animals through successful raids. In the long run, camel herds could thrive more easily without the threat of attack, but this abundance of animals could also lead to overgrazing and degradation of rangelands.[4]

Before the badia came under the control of the states of the region, widespread losses were inflicted by Akhwan attacks. Hundreds of lives were lost and thousands of animals taken, during periods when the Akhwan were fighting for ʻAbd al-ʻAziz as well as when they were fighting against him. British efforts to defend against Akhwan attacks may have prevented additional losses, but they also had dire consequences for the tribes of Iraq and Transjordan. British defensive measures in these areas of conflict often required bedouin tribes to remain

concentrated in areas of scarce water and grazing, resulting in countless animal deaths.

Trade was another area in which the imperatives of the new states clashed with the interests of the bedouin. The blockade by 'Abd al-'Aziz of Kuwait, when it could be enforced, forced tribes to use other markets, often resulting in economic hardship due to higher prices. The efforts of the Iraqi government to control the flow of goods across its frontier also caused hardship for bedouins. In both of these cases, bedouin, merchants and officials often joined forces to engage in smuggling.

From antiquity to well into the twentieth century, perceptions of a bedouin's identity, by outsiders as well as by bedouin themselves, were inextricably linked to what he did (herd camels and raid), where he lived (the badia), and how he governed his relations with others (tribal law and customs). This thesis has shown that numerous factors placed great pressure on these aspects of bedouin identity, forcing many bedouin stop raiding, give up camel-herding and settle in towns and cities. These factors were particularly pronounced during the interwar period. To a greater or lesser extent, each state in the region has attempted to marginalize, or at least rein in, the bedouin populations within their territories. The interests of town-based political and social groups – government officials, merchants, religious leaders, property-owners – by and large guided state policies, frequently at the expense of the interests of nomadic bedouin. Despite these wholesale transformations in their modes of production, however, bedouin society survives, and bedouin identities continue to find new ways to manifest themselves.

NOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

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[1] Dickson, *Kuwait and her neighbours*, 325. During the same period, the sources also repeatedly refer to the large personal herds of 'Abd al-'Aziz's officials, including the governors of Jauf and Hail.

[2] Donald P. Cole, "The Enmeshment of Nomads in Sa'udi Arabian Society: The Case of the Al Murrah," in *The Desert and the Sown: Nomads in the Wider Society,* ed. Cynthia Nelson (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1973), 118-19. The political value of camels and other livestock to the Saudi state even became enshrined in government policy during the 1960s, when a subsidy programme paid herders about US$9 for each sheep and $17 for each camel annually in order to help owners recover from drought-induced losses. Cole, "Pastoral Nomads in a Rapidly Changing Economy: The Case of Saudi Arabia," in *Social and Economic Development in the Arab Gulf*, ed. Tim Niblock (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 113.

[3] Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Central Dept. of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook* (Riyadh, 1976, 1987).

[4] One analyst, in fact, has described the period 1930-1960 as the propitious years of traditional nomadism in Saudi Arabia, owing to increased security, freedom of movement, and government financial assistance. Paul Bonnenfont, "L'evolution de la vie Bedouine en Arabie Centrale," *Revue de l'Occident et de la Mediterranee Musulmane* 23 (1977): 126-7.

APPENDIX A

Table A.1
Caravans, Animals and Passengers Entering Egypt via Al-'Arish, 1873-77

	Caravans	*Camels*	*Horses*	*Mules*	*Asses*	*Sheep*	*Goats*	*Cattle*	*Passengers*
1873	781	9,245	1,365	922	495	49,331	--	--	3,577
1874	577	4,558	1,105	250	171	24,085	63	--	4,157
1875	210	2,303	3,175	787	150	21,224	15	--	2,146
1876	605	2,485	1,275	1,022	520	28,771	269	40	2,903
1877	766	5,392	3,750	772	1,483	16,108	463	724	6,543
Totals	2,939	23,983	10,670	3,753	2,819	139,519	810	764	19,326

Table A.2
Caravans, Animals and Passengers Leaving Egypt via Al-'Arish, 1873-77

	Caravans	*Camels*	*Horses*	*Mules*	*Asses*	*Sheep*	*Goats*	*Cattle*	*Passengers*
1873	577	2,153	--	--	--	--	--	--	2,697
1874	359	1,419	22	--	111	--	--	--	2,503
1875	111	448	7	--	80	--	--	--	387
1876	180	590	9	3	67	--	--	--	491
1877	235	563	12	--	57	--	--	--	632
Totals	1,462	5,173	50	3	315	--	--	--	6,710

Source: Tables A.1 and A.2 are adapted from: Egypt, Ministry of Interior, Bureau of Statistics, *Essai de Statistique Générale de l'Égypte* (Cairo: Typogrophie de l'État-Major Général Égyptien, 1879), 40-41. Errors in the sums in the "Totals" column in the original text have been corrected, and columns listing gazelles and dogs removed.

Table A.3
Net Gain to Egypt of Caravans, Animals and Passengers Passing via Al-'Arish, 1873-77

	Caravans	*Camels*	*Horses*	*Mules*	*Asses*	*Sheep*	*Goats*	*Cattle*	*Passengers*
1873	204	7,092	1,365	922	495	49,331	--	--	880
1874	218	3,139	1,083	250	60	24,085	63	--	1,654
1875	99	1,855	3,168	787	70	21,224	15	--	1,759
1876	425	1,895	1,266	1,019	453	28,771	269	40	2,412
1877	531	4,829	3,738	772	1,426	16,108	463	724	5,911
Totals	1,477	18,810	10,620	3,750	2,504	139,519	810	764	12,616

Source: Table A.3 was derived by subtracting the figures in Table A.2 from those in Table A.1. The results do not take into account the possibility that animals or passenger might leave Egypt via a point other than Al-'Arish. However, while this may be a possibility for passengers, it is an unlikely scenario for animals, which most likely stayed in the country once they entered it.

APPENDIX B[1]

TABLE A.4

Kuwaiti Claims against Ibn Saud for Damage Done between 1921 and 1929

Claim I (A). -- Arising from "AKHWAN" Raids in Kuwait Territory

By whom committed and where	Men killed	Camels Stolen	Horses Stolen	Sheep Stolen	Rifles Stolen	Donkeys Stolen	Total Value, Rupees	Rate; Value, £**
Value each (Rupees)	*1,600*	*300*	*500*	*35*	*150*	*40*		
1) 400 Mutair under Ibn Shuqair on Kuwait camels 8 mi. N.W. Jahra in Jamadi 1340 (1921).	--	80	--	--	--	--	24,000	Rs. 17: £1 1,412
2) 100 Ajman under ibn Hithlain at Qusur and Malah, 15 mi. S. of Kuwait on 20th Ramadhan 1342 (1923).	33	80	--	6,000	33	6	291,990	Rs. 15.5: £1 18,838
3) 20 Awazim under Faraj ibn Durai at "Bitana," opposite Kuwait on N. side of bay, on 15th Rabi II 1342 (1924).	--	1	--	40	--	--	1,700	Rs. 15.5: £1 110
4) 350 Braih (Mutair) under Ibn Busaiyis at "Idairi" in al-Yah, 16 mi. N.W. of Jahra, on 10th Jumada II 1343 (1924).	26	165	--	4,000	26	--	235,000	Rs. 15.5: £1 15,161
5) 250 Braih (Mutair) under Ibn Ashwan at "Lughait," 25 mi. S. of Kuwait, on 2nd Ramadhan 1343 (1924).	16	500	--	2,000	16	--	248,000	Rs. 15.5: £1 16,000
6) 280 Jiblan (Mutair) under Ibn Lami at Ruhaiya, 6 mi. S.W. of Jahra, on Jumada II 1344 (1925).	7	300	--	--	7	--	102,250	Rs. 14: £1 7,304
7) 300 Mutair under Ibn Shuqair and al-Fuqm at "al-Khuwaisat," 5 mi. E. of Jahra, on Rajab 1344 (1925).	12	200	--	--	12	--	81,000	Rs. 14: £1 5,786
8) 400 Mutair under Ibn Shuqair at Zaglah, 3 mi. N. of Jahra, on 10 Jumada II 1346 (4 Nov. 1927).	5	350	1	--	5	--	114,250	Rs. 13.3: £1 8,590
9) 300 Braih (Mutair) under Ibn Ashwan at "Um al Ruman," 7 mi. N.E. of Jahra, on 9th Rajab 1346 (2 Dec. 1927).	14	150	--	--	14	--	69,500	Rs. 13.3: £1 5,226
10) 600 Braih Mutair under Ibn Ashwan S.W. end of al-Yah, on 5th Sha'ban 1346 (21 Jan. 1928).	12	350	--	--	12	--	126,000	Rs. 13.3: £1 9,474
11) 600 Jiblan (Mutair) & Ajman under Ibn Lami & Ibn Hathlain at Rothatain, 50 mi. N. of Jahra, on 9th Sha'ban 1347 (21 Jan. 1929).	17	--	--	4,500	--	500	[see note]*	
12) 600 Mutair under Ibn Shuqair and Al-Fuqm at "Sutaibikhat," 4 mi. from Kuwait on 21st Ramadhan1347 (3 March 1929).	30	--	--	7,000	30	--	[see note]*	
TOTALS	**172**	**2,176**	**1**	**23,540**	**155**	**506**	**1,293,690**	**87,901**

* Since the victims were Iraqi tribes, no compensation was claimed. ** The last column, with exchange rates and values in Sterling, was added by the author. Exchange rates were derived for each year from SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration reports, 1921-29.

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[1] The following tables are derived from claims compiled by Dickson and Shaykh Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah. CO 732/46/8, Dickson to Political Resident, Persian Gulf, 18 March 1930. Tables for Claims I (A) and (B) have been slightly edited for brevity and clarity; the remainder (Claims II to V) are exact transcriptions of the originals.

Table A.5

*Claim I (B). -- Arising from Direct Attacks by H.M. King Ibn Saud's Paid Forces (Siriyya) inside Kuwait Territory***

By whom committed & where	*Men Killed*	*Camels Stolen*	*Horses Stolen*	*Sheep Stolen*	*Rifles Stolen*	*Donkeys Stolen*	*Value, Rupees*	*Rate; Value, £****
1) Forces under Moh'd bin Abdul Aziz Muzakki took many sheep from Kuwait shepherds on 18 Dhil Qadah 1348 (1921).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
2) Forces under Hamid al-Baqawi carried off 180 sheep in Jamad II 1341 (exact date not recorded).	--	--	--	180	--	--	6,300	Rs. 17: £1 371
3) Said al Faisal attacked Kuwait tribes and carried off many sheep on 11th Shawal 1341 (1922).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
4) Abdul Aziz al Shaikh Muzakki carried off many sheep on 19th Dhil Qadah 1341 (1922).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
5) [Beginning on?] 1st Safar 1342 (1923), a force under Fahad ibn Jaluwi camped at Jahra for several weeks and took everything.	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
6) Forces under Abdullah bin Adwah seized and killed two Nejdis outside "Bab Naif" in cold blood though guests of Shaikh of Kuwait in 1342 (1923).	2	--	--	--	2	--	3,500	Rs. 15.5: £1 226
7) Forces under Moh'd al-Sahali & Mohamed bin Mansur attacked Kuwait shepherds on 3rd Dhil Qada 1342 (1923).	3	20	--	--	3	--	11,250	Rs. 15.5: £1 726
8) Forces under Moh'd al Sahali & Ibn Mansur attacked Kuwait shepherds on 17th Muharram 1342 (1924).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
9) Forces under Moh'd al-Sahali attacked Kuwait shepherds on 13th Dhil Hajjah 1343 (1924).	1	--	--	180	1	--	8,050	Rs. 15.5: £1 519
10) Fahad ibn Jaluwi with 30 men crossed the border and committed many depredations, stealing camels, sheep, &c.	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
11) Forces under Ibn Jabir crossed border and ill treated Kuwait shepherds on 28th Shaban 1344 (1925).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
12) Forces under Sadd al Saaqubi crossed border and ill treated Kuwait shepherds on 23rd Muharram 1345 (1926).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
13) Forces under Ibrahim ibn Asfaj crossed border and ill treated Kuwait shepherds on 25th Rabi I 1345 (1926).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
14) Forces under Jabir ibn Hadfah seized camels and much money from peasants on 8th Rajab 1345 (1926).	--	18	--	--	--	--	5,400	Rs. 13.5: £1 400
15) Forces under Mutlaq ibn [space blank] seized camels and much money from peasants on 12th Shawal 1345 (1926).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
16) A large force under Mohamed al Mansur raided Kuwait shepherds south of Kuwait on 12th Rabi I 1346 (8 Aug. 1928).	4	40	--	40	4	--	20,400	Rs. 13.3: £1 1,534
17) Forces under Mohamed al Mansur entered Kuwait territory on 5th Rajab 1347 (17 Feb. 1928).	No exact record was kept of losses.						No claim is made.	
TOTALS	**10**	**78**	--	**400**	**10**	--	**54,900**	**3776**

** The last column, with exchange rates and values in Sterling, was added by the author. Exchange rates were derived for each year from SAC Dickson, Kuwait administration reports, 1921-28.

Claim II.

"1. Loans, without interest, made to His Majesty King Ibn Saud by His Excellency the Shaikh of Kuwait when engaged in operations which ended in the capitulation of Hail and the final overthrow of the Ibn Raschid Dynasty in 1919-20. 60,000 Rials @ Rs 2/- Rs 120,000/-

"2. Rice supplied on credit for the same purpose and at same period (without interest).*

Bags 1000 @ Rs 18/- Rs 18,000/-

Total Rupees 138,000/-

"*This figure has been given by the Shaikh of Kuwait as approximately only, as no record of the actual number of bags has been kept.

Claim III.

"Loss of 'Customs' Revenue due to 8 years Blockade of Kuwait on the land side by His Majesty King Ibn Saud's forces. This has resulted in very greatly diminished imports and marked drop in Customs 'Receipts', the shrinkage being from 7 lacs p.a. approximately in 1921 to 1 ¾ lacs in 1929, or an average loss to the Shaikh of say 4 lacs per annum. *Rs 3,200,000

Total Rs 32,00,000

"*This figure is my [H.R.P. Dickson's] own, and I think is more accurate than that of H.E. the Shaikh who states that 40 lacs is nearer the correct figure.

Claim IV.

"'Loss of Trade' suffered by the merchantile community of Kuwait who deal exclusively with the inland cities of Nejd in normal times. The loss is entirely due to the Blockade and is calculated at 8 lacs per annum spread over a period of 8 years. *Rs 64,00,000/-

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Total Rs 64,00,000/-

"* This figure has been furnished by H.E. the Shaikh and must be regarded as approximate only as exact statistics do not exist. The amount is probably not far short of the correct figure."

Claim V.

Table A.6

'Peace offering made by H.E. Shaikh Ahmad in Shawal 1342 (1923) to H.M. King Ibn Saud, and conveyed to Nejd by the hand of Shaikh Abdullah as-Salim and made it is stated after the King had given him to understand that the blockade was about to be raised.'

1000 bags of rice @ Rs 18/-	Rs 18,000/-
200 bags of coffee @ Rs 100/-	20,000/-
200 bags of coffee @ Rs 40/-	8,000/-
10 blood mares @ Rs 2000	20,000/-
15 blood dromedaries @ Rs 400	6,000/-
Total	72,000/-

TOTALS

Total of claims under I (A) and I (B).	Rs 1,348,590/-
Total of claim II.	138,000/-
Total of claim III.	3,200,000/-
Total of claim IV.	6,400,000/-
Total of claim V.	72,000/-
GRAND TOTAL OF CLAIMS FROM I TO V.	11,158,590/-

APPENDIX C

Local Fighting Forces in Kuwait, 1929

Source: SAC Dickson, Kuwait administrative report for 1929.

Fidawiyyah: Numbering about 300 men from bedouin tribes, the force was paid by the ruler and had its headquarters in Jahra. Among the tribes represented among its ranks were the Ajman, Mutayr, Rashayda and Awazim. Led by their own amir, the force could be counted on to repel any fairly strong raid. Their role was mainly "to protect shaikhly property rather than guard the frontier."

'Uraybdar: This unpaid conglomeration of families with tribal background that had settled in Kuwait during the nineteenth century could field 700 well-armed fighters. While they could defend themselves and their flocks "in a pinch," they were considered "of little use" by Dickson for repelling organized raids or guarding the frontier. The 'Uraybdar subsisted by herding sheep and camels in the winter, "keeping always more or less near the Fidawiyah for protection," and diving for pearls in the summer, when "[t]heir tents, women and children are brought into Kuwait, and form the large camps which one sees round the walls of the Town and near the various wells in the vicinity."

APPENDIX D

Table A.7

Selected Iraqi Incursions into Kuwaiti Territory, 1934-36

Date	*Location*	*Description*	*Source*
8/5/34	Kuwait	'Uraybdawi and his tents and women searched by Iraqi patrol	R/15/1/531, Dickson to Bushire, 16 May 1934
11/5/4	Kuwait	Kuwaiti bedouin stopped by Iraqi patrol, searched, and struck after protesting	R/15/1/531, Dickson to Bushire, 16 May 1934
14/5/34	Umm al-Madafi'i	five tents of Kuwaiti bedouin searched by patrol of 4 armed cars	R/15/1/531, Dickson to Bushire, 16 May 1934
5/34	Kuwait	Amir of Fidawiyyah visited camp of Iraq patrols; was offered "friendly" hospitality	R/15/1/531, Dickson to Bushire, 24 May 1934
4/8/34	Jabal Sanam	2 Kuwaiti bedouin shot by Iraqi patrol without warning; one wounded (died in Basra hospital), other arrested and severely beaten	R/15/1/532, Watts to Bushire, 11 Aug. 1934
1/436	Rawdha al-Janubiyya	Iraqi patrol car driving in Kuwait territory	R/15/1/534, Political Agent to Bushire, 19 April 1936
4/436	Kuwait	Iraqi patrol car driving in Kuwait territory	R/15/1/534, Political Agent to Bushire, 19 April 1936
29/7/36	Umm al-'Aysh	Iraq police in 4 cars shot at Kuwaiti bedouin returning to their camp with provisions bought in town. Bedouin fled and police seized their 13 camels and goods valued at Rs. 800	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
18/8/36	Hissu al-Dhabi	2 police cars patrol in Kuwait territory	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
n/d [c. 8/36?]	al-Liyah	3 men with 12 unladen camels beaten by Iraq police	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
26/8/36	Umm al-Qasr	Iraq police seize 17 donkeys and loads worth Rs. 535/-	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
19/9/36	Shaqq and Umm Amarah	Iraq police patrol in Kuwait territory	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
20/9/36	Batiyyah	Iraq police beat, arrest 2 Kuwaitis, confiscate their goods and camels; Kuwaitis jailed for 40 days	R/15/1/536, Ruler of Kuwait to Political Agent, Kuwait, 27 Dec. 1936
24/9/36	Hinnabiyyah	Iraq camel police take camels and goods worth Rs. 457-6-0.	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
12/11/36	Hissu al-Dhabi	Iraq police took 14 camels of 2 Kuwaitis	R/15/1/535, Ruler of Kuwait to Political Agent, Kuwait, 17 Nov. 1936
14/11/36	al-Liyah	2 police cars take 13 camels and loads valued at Rs. 1,400	R/15/1/535, de Gaury to Political Resident, Kuwait, 29 Sept. 1936
14/11/36	al-Liyah	2 police cars stopped and inspected 2 Kuwaitis and 5 camels and left	R/15/1/535, Ruler of Kuwait to Political Agent, Kuwait, 17 Nov. 1936

APPENDIX E

'A note on the activities of the Iraq Customs Police in the vicinity of Jahara'

Source: SAC Dickson, Box 3, Dickson to C.N. Jackson, Political Agent, Kuwait, 30 December 1944.

The writer recently met among some Kuwait Badawin an Iraqi tribesman who, on his own admission, was till fairly recently engaged in the smuggling trade into Iraq, but who today was engaged in buying and selling sheep, also a lucrative business, but less arduous.
Among the things the man said were the following.

(a) The Customs Posts especially told of to watch Kuwait were those located at Safwan, Rafi'iyeh and Khadar al Ma (west of the Batin).

(b) The posts at Safwan possessed armed cars and vanettes of different types, whilst those at Khadar al Ma and Rafii'iyeh worked on camels.

(c) All these posts worked in close co-operation, and for all practical purposes shared the proceeds gathered in through their activities, and only allowed an infinitesimal amount of captured contraband to reach the Iraqi authorities.

(d) Small hauls went to individual members of the posts which seized same, whilst larger hauls went into a single fund which was shared by the staffs of all three posts. The ramp was well organized.

(e) Actually contraband cargoes as such, were rarely seized as the method of levying money blackmail on the contrabandists and allowing them to pass into Iraq with their stock in trade was the easiest and most paying method for themselves, and involved little risk. All they had to guard against was treachery among themselves.

(f) Speaking generally contraband cargoes were small, and consisted nearly always of goods carried on three to four camels at most. The story of large caravans of camels etc etc was moonshine. Obviously three or four camels moving at night, or even by day, would attract far less attention than a number of camels moving together.

(g) The common technique employed by the Iraqi Customs Police was to maintain paid spies in Jahara, and to vary the procedure by sending policemen into Jahara disguised as common Badu. Both mixed with the crowd sitting in the coffee shops and gathered information that was wanted.

(h) Under the second method, a police vanette or two left Safwan after dark and timed themselves to reach the vicinity of Jahara about 8 p.m. (winter). The cars usually halted at the top of the Mutla pass overlooking Jahara, and the occupants hid them in side nullahs out of sight of prying eyes. Certain of the police then

changed into Badawin clothes and made their way down into the village. There they either made themselves known to smugglers whom they knew to be as such and took 50% of the value of the goods to be smuggled off them in cash and gave them a laissez allez or guarantee that they would not be interfered with by the occupants of the cars at the top of the pass, or they ingratiated themselves with innocent looking Badawin whom they believed were waiting the opportunity to run small caravans of contraband goods across the border and fixed things up. Both methods were more or less identical.

(i) In the case of the more cunning smugglers (mostly Saudi Arabian and Iraqi Badawin) who could neither be blackmailed or were too wary to give themselves away, the paid spies came into play. The latter watched for midnight moves of loaded camels and reported the direction they were going to the disguised customs policemen. These quickly made their way to their friends at the top of the Mutla pass, and as the laden camels came along about midnight or in the early hours of the morning, they were rounded up and the owners either told that they must pay 50% of the value of the cargo in cash, or surrender their camel loads. If they paid up, they were allowed to pass, if they refused, or asked permission to go back and collect some money, their cargo was confiscated put on the vanette or vanettes lying in wait and taken to Safwan where the goods were handed over to their customs officers. Eight times out of ten money passed hands and the vanettes got back to Safwan by dawn and report was made that no contrabandists were found.

(j) A rather similar but less common procedure was adopted by camel men working from Khadar al Ma, whose special job was to watch the Al Araf pass ten miles west of the Mutla pass, the only other direct route leading over the Al Zor escarpment.

(k) The informant stated that on average, one Iraqi Customs police car from Safwan visited the top of the Mutla pass each week reaching there after dark and returning back to Safwan before it was light. Sometimes however no car came for a whole ten days, and then was followed by two or three visits to the Mutla in one single week.

(l) The informant who knew most of the Safwan police by sight and had himself paid his blackmail on several occasions declared that he had seen and recognized three disguised customs men in Jahara only the previous week.

(m) When asked how it was that these disguised men were not seized or report made of their activities to the Shaikh of Kuwait's Government, the informant declared that (a) in the main fear of reprisals prevented the inhabitants doing this, but (b) so many of the starving villagers of Jahara kept themselves alive today by dabbling in the contraband business or winking their eyes to it, that they felt it was sounder policy to go shares with the Iraq customs police rather than oppose them. They argued that if they paid half the value of the small cargoes they were interested in, profits at the Iraq end were so large as to easily compensate them for the money paid out on the share and share basis.

(n) When asked what the most profitable cargoes were today the informant replied cotton goods and tea but it was naturally a case of what was wanted most in Iraq.

(o) The informant emphasized that by far the largest quantity of cotton goods today came up to Iraq from Saudi Arabia and took the route just beyond the Batin. The Khadar al Ma police dealt with these and passed people and caravans freely as long as they paid their quota of blackmail.

(p) The Badawin and the villagers of Jahara were of course not the exporters of contraband from Kuwait town. They were merely the forwarding agents who had the camels and were prepared to take the risk of carrying the goods across the border. The goods they contracted to get into Iraq were surreptitiously got out to them at Jahara by powerful persons, both Iraqis and Kuwait merchants working together inside Kuwait town. These usually got the stuff past the gate guards in private cars belonging to one or two junior members of the Al Sabah, who desperately hard up as a result of the war easily fell victims to the bribes offered them for the task.

(q) The informant insisted very strongly that His Highness the Shaikh of Kuwait and the senior members of the Al Sabah, were entirely innocent of these underhand transactions and were doing all in their power to stop the traffic, as witness the harsh treatment and stringent search made at the city gates of all Badawin buying goods in the city and trying to take them out to their families in the desert.

(r) To sum up the informant laughingly said the Iraqi Customs police were up to the neck in this blackmail racket, and were all working hard to make their fortunes while the going was good. They served their own pockets and interests all the time under the excuse of serving their Government.

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