

Mulayḥ Ibn al-Ḥakam: The Man Through His Poetical Output

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[I]

The Poet and His Life in Classical References and Modern Research

1.1 Classical References and Modern Studies Concerned with Mulayḥ

Among the large numbers of Old Arabic *dīwāns* that the Kūfī scholar, Abū ‘Amr ash-Shaybānī (d. ca. 206/821), once gathered,¹ were the poems of the Hudhali poet Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam. A Baṣri scholar, Abū Sa‘īd as-Sukkarī (d. 275/888), transmitted them among the other poems that he had transmitted of the Hudhayl tribe and ‘Abd as-Sattār Aḥmad Farrāj, depending on a manuscript of the year 539/1145, published them at the beginning of the third volume of as-Sukkarī’s compilation *Kitāb Sharḥ ash‘ār al-hudhaliyyīn*. There were eleven poems by Mulayḥ, most of them long texts.² Decades later, Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002) composed a treatise in which he made supplementary notes on the commentary of as-Sukkarī on the poetry of the Hudhayl tribe; Ibn Jinnī dedicated the last chapter of his book to the poetry of Mulayḥ.³

Unfortunately, modern scholars were not interested in studying either the biography or the poetical output of this poet. The reason is not known, but one may assume that this was due to the difficult vocabulary and vague images that the poet uses. It may be due to the fact that Mulayḥ was almost totally ignored by classical scholars. Classical authors do not often quote his poetry, nor do they provide any important data about his biography, except to mention his full name according to a certain authority, and the fact that he was an Islamic poet according to another one. Both authorities will be discussed later.

Thanks to the efforts of Hans Hermann Bräu, the poems of Mulayḥ were

¹ See Ibn an-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Riḍā Tajaddud (Tehran: Maktabat al-Asadi and Maktabat al-Ja‘farī t-Tibrizī, 1971), 75; Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1943), 1:119.

² As-Sukkarī, *Kitāb Sharḥ ash‘ār al-hudhaliyyīn*, ed. ‘Abd as-Sattār Aḥmad Farrāj; revised by Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākir (Cairo: Maktabat Dār al-‘Urūba, 1965), 3: 999-1063.

³ Ibn Jinnī, *at-Tamām fī tafsīr ash‘ār hudhayl mim mā aghfalahū Abū Sa‘īd as-Sukkarī*, eds. Aḥmad Nājī l-Qaysī, Khadija ‘Abd ar-Razzāq al-Ḥadīthī, and Aḥmad Maṭlūb (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-‘Ānī, 1962), 227-259.

translated into German. He believes that this poetry is very interesting and important and that it deserves to be translated. In the very short introduction of his two-sectioned article, which was published about eight decades ago, Bräu discusses a certain statement by J. Wellhausen who translated a certain part of the Hudhali poems believing that other parts, such as those of Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam, were not worth translating. The reason is, according to Wellhausen, that they were very easy poems and one could understand them in their original language without too much effort, and that they were also unimportant with regard to their contents.⁴ Bräu believes as I do, that such a statement, however applicable to some of the other Hudhali poems, does not apply to the case of Mulayḥ. His poems are very difficult to understand, but at the same time they bear important and interesting characteristics both on the content and language levels. After discussing Wellhausen's statement, Bräu refers very marginally to the biography of Mulayḥ and finally expresses his astonishment about the fact that Mulayḥ was not given appropriate evaluation in the writings of the classical Arab scholars, especially by the philologists.⁵

A year later, C. Brockelmann published a short article in which he made some corrections and notes concerning Bräu's translation. Brockelmann introduces his article with a short paragraph in which he alludes to Mulayḥ's poetry as Bedouin poetry that had been influenced by urban Arabic love poetry.⁶

Thomas Bauer, in his study on the Onager-episode, discusses a certain short passage composed by Mulayḥ in which the onager is described. Bauer notices that this passage mentions many unique descriptions of the onager that do not appear in other Old Arabic poets. He also considers the passage in question a disordered literary work; one to which the poet did not give much attention or planning while composing it. The only thing on which the poet cast some attention was the musical wordings of the passage.⁷

The sole article, to my knowledge, dedicated to the study of poetry of Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam is that of Salāma 'Abd al-Lāh as-Suwaydī. In this article, as-Suwaydī discusses the main themes and motifs found in the poetry of Mulayḥ. The author prefaces his article with some notes on the biography of

⁴ Wellhausen, *Abriss der Geschichte Israels und Judas / Lieder der Hudhailiten* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1884; Photomechanischer Nachdruck, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1985), 168-169.

⁵ Bräu, "Die Gedichte des Hudailiten Mulaiḥ b. al-Ḥakam", *Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete* 5 (1927), 69-94; 262-287; cf. 69-70.

⁶ Brockelmann, "Zu den Gedichten des Hudailiten Mulaiḥ b. al-Ḥakam", *Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete* 6 (1928), 5-9.

⁷ Bauer, *Altarabische Dichtkunst: eine Untersuchung ihrer Struktur und Entwicklung am Beispiel der Onagerepisode* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 2: 320-321.

the poet. As in the case among the above-mentioned researchers, as-Suwaydī is also astonished that Mulayḥ was ignored by Old Arabic scholars. The reason, as the author suggests, is that at the beginning of the Islamic period the Hudhayl tribe was one of the tribes that were very hostile to Prophet Muḥammad and to the new religion. This perhaps was the reason that caused many classical authorities to avoid dealing with many Hudhali poets among them Mulayḥ himself. However, this reason seems unconvincing since Mulayḥ composed two poems in which Islam and the Prophet are praised. If the main motive for Muslim scholars for dealing with the biography and the poetry of a certain poet was purely an Islamic one, then the two poems by Mulayḥ should have been a serious reason for not neglecting him. Another reason given by the author is that the tribe was scattered after the advent of Islam. It left its original abodes and its members were separated and scattered among the Muslim cities outside the peninsula. This also does not seem to be a convincing reason, since there are some Hudhali poets, such as Abū Dhu'ayb (d. ca. 27/648) and Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī (d. ca. 80/700), who lived in such cities and whom the classical authorities did not neglect.⁸ As-Suwaydī discusses some other biographical data to which reference will be made below.⁹

This article by as-Suwaydī is very important, but it does not deal with two important issues. The first issue is that the author makes very brief references to the biography of Mulayḥ and the article lacks certain important facts regarding the places in which Mulayḥ lived except for an allusion to Egypt as one of those places. As shown in the present paper, defining these locations is possible through the poetry of Mulayḥ. The second issue is that the article deals with the most prominent motifs in Mulayḥ's poetry, but does not discuss many other motifs and, more importantly, it ignores making any textual analysis for complete poems. Such an analysis may shed more light on the poetics of Mulayḥ rather than by discussing the prominent motifs separately.

⁸ As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam shā'ir min hudhayl", *Majallat Markiz al-Wathā'iqa wa-d-Dirāsāt al-Insāniyya* 8 (1996), 63-64. About the classical resources on Abū Dhu'ayb and Abū Ṣakhr see Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967-2000), 2: 255-256, 405; Von Grunebaum, "Abū Dhu'ayb al-Hudhalī", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, I: 115; Blachère, "Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, I: 148. About the classical resources on Abū Dhu'ayb see also Ḥusayn, *ash-Shakl wa-l-maḍmūn fī sh-shi'r al-'arabī l-qadīm: dirāsāt al-ma'ānī wa-l-mabānī fī ash'ār Sā'ida b. Ju'ayya wa-Abī Dhu'ayb al-Hudhaliyyayn* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Haifa, 2002), 14, footnote 3.

⁹ As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 63-93.

In order to shed more light on both Mulayḥ's biography and Mulayḥ's poetry, there is a great need for two further studies that may complement as-Suwaydī's article. The first should be a detailed study on the biography of this poet and the second should be a textual analysis of Mulayḥ's poems. In the present paper, I shall attempt to study the biography of Mulayḥ, and another study was dedicated to studying the extant poetic output by this poet¹⁰.

1.2 *Biographical Data in Classical Resources and Modern Studies*

As-Sukkarī, quoting Abū 'Amr ash-Shaybānī, mentions the full name of this poet. He is Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam b. Ṣakhr b. Uqayṣir b. 'Umayr b. Zayd b. Iyās b. Sahn of the Qird clan, a branch of Mu'āwiya b. Tamīm b. Sa'd b. Hudhayl.¹¹ Nothing is mentioned by either scholar regarding the biography of Mulayḥ.

It was al-Marzubānī (d. 384/994) who added some biographical data on this poet. In his biographical dictionary he entered his name as al-Mulayḥ, with the definite article; he mentioned that Mulayḥ was a member of the Qird clan, and noted that he was an Islamic poet. But al-Marzubānī did not quote even one verse of his poetry.¹²

In contrast to al-Marzubānī, al-Bakrī (d. 487/1094) mentions the name as Mulayḥ b. Ḥakīm instead of al-Ḥakam,¹³ while Abū 'Alī l-Hajarī (d. ca. 300/912-913) mentions the name al-Mulayḥ b. Ḥakīm and adds that he is known by the nickname Abū Manẓūr. This author also refers him to the same aforementioned clan. According to him, Mulayḥ was an Islamic poet who was known because of his love affair with a certain Laylā (*ṣāhib Laylā*). The author quotes a *lāmiyya*, *ṭawīl* meter, of 63 verses¹⁴ and he adds at its end that Mulayḥ composed only two *qaṣīdas* in addition to this poem: the first is a *dāliyya* of *basīṭ*,¹⁵ while the second is a *rā'iyya* of *ṭawīl*. This latter poem, of which only the first hemistich is quoted, does not appear in the *dīwān* of Mulayḥ. Abū 'Alī l-Hajarī mentions another poem that is ascribed to a certain al-Mulayḥ b. Burayḍ, of the Fahm tribe, and he notes that some authorities ascribe it to al-Mulayḥ al-Hudhalī. The poem is a *fā'iyya*, *basīṭ*,

¹⁰ Ali Hussein, "A Unique Pattern in the Love Poetry of Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam", *Middle Eastern Literatures* 15/1 (2012), 20-54

¹¹ As-Sukkarī, *Kitāb Sharḥ ash'ār al-hudhaliyyīn*, 3: 999.

¹² Al-Marzubānī, *Mu'jam ash-shu'arā'*, ed. F. Krenkow (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1991), 398.

¹³ Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā stu'jim min asmā' al-bilād wa-l-mawāḍi'*, ed. Jamāl Ṭalba (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998), 2: 107.

¹⁴ It is poem no. 4, 60 verses, in as-Sukkarī, *Kitāb Sharḥ ash'ār al-hudhaliyyīn*, 3: 1020-1029.

¹⁵ It is poem no. 3, 39 verses, in as-Sukkarī, *ibid.*, 3: 1013-1019.

with 26 verses.¹⁶

Modern researchers did not have much to deal with besides the classical scholars. Sezgin considers Mulayḥ an early Islamic poet whose life continued until the Umayyad era.¹⁷ Hell considers him the youngest poet among all the Hudhali poets, one who lived in the late Umayyad era and also under 'Abbāsīd rule.¹⁸ This statement should be very carefully examined. Ibrāhīm considers him as an Umayyad poet,¹⁹ while as-Suwaydī suggests that he lived in the time of the Prophet but that he was very young in that period. His suggestion that Mulayḥ was born about the first year after the Hijra is also a reasonable one, as will shown below.²⁰

However, Bräu, Régis Blachère, Sezgin and also as-Suwaydī, concluded, depending on a certain poem by Mulayḥ, that this poet participated in an early Muslim invasion of Egypt.²¹ This might include an allusion to the fact that he was among the people who settled in Egypt after its conquest. Other books, especially biographical dictionaries, also give short biographies of Mulayḥ, but unfortunately none of these resources provides any new data beyond the bare information given above.²²

[II]

Towards a Biography of Mulayḥ through his Poetry

Since the sources that deal with the biography of Mulayḥ are very scarce, there is great need to derive relevant data through his extant poems. However, to obtain biographical data through a poetical text is dangerous and to some degree fallacious, since it would not always be possible for the modern researcher to determine with full certainty whether incidents expressed in a

¹⁶ Abū 'Alī l-Hajarī, *at-Ta'liqāt wa-n-nawādir*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir (Riyad: Ḥamad al-Jāsir, 1992-1993), 2: 868-872.

¹⁷ Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, 2: 263.

¹⁸ Hell, "Der Islam und die Hudailitendichtungen", *Festschrift Georg Jacob zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Theodor Menzel (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1932), 88, 92.

¹⁹ Ibrāhīm, *al-Binā' al-fannī fī shī'r al-hudhaliyyīn, dirāsa taḥlīliyya* (Baghdad: Dār ash-Shu'ūn ath-Thaqāfiyya l-'Āmma, 2000), 53.

²⁰ As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 65-67.

²¹ Bräu, "Die Gedichte des Hudailiten Mulaiḥ b. al-Ḥakam", 69-70; Blachère, *Histoire de la Littérature Arabe* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1952-1966), 2: 280-281. Blachère mentions that classical authorities were confused between the present Mulayḥ and al-Mulayḥ b. Ṭarīf al-Asadī. See also Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, 2: 263; as-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 66-68.

²² See for example 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, *Mu'jam ash-shu'arā' min al-'aṣr al-jāhili ḥattā nihāyat al-'aṣr l-umawī* (Beirut: Dār al-Manāhil, 1996), 261; an-Natsha, *Ash'ār Hudhayl wa-atharuhā fī muḥit al-adab al-'arabī* (Amman: Dār al-Bashīr; Beirut: Mu'assasat ar-Risāla, 2001), 2: 273-274.

poem composed more than a millennium ago, such as the poetry of Mulayḥ, were historically true or whether they were only a work of the writer's imaginative mind. For this reason, the following conclusions regarding Mulayḥ's life should not be blindly adopted, but should be considered carefully.

2.1 *When did Mulayḥ Live?*

There is no doubt that Mulayḥ lived in the Islamic era. Not only do classical prose sources and modern researchers mention this, but two of his poems express this fact very clearly. The first is his *qāfiyya*, *ṭawīl*, including 70 verses, while the second is his odd *urjūza*, also a *qāfiyya*, of 94 hemistiches.²³ In the first poem, Mulayḥ eulogizes the fact that his tribe supported the Prophet in his quarrel against the non-Muslims [MbḤ1:55-63]; in the second, he praises the fact that God chose Muḥammad, who belongs to them, to be a Prophet [MbḤ9:87-94]. However, it is not clear whether in this second poem Mulayḥ praises the Hudhayl tribe which is a kindred tribe to the Prophet's clan, Quraysh,²⁴ or whether he alludes to the Muḍar tribe, the north Arabian one to which both Hudhayl and Quraysh belong and which is mentioned clearly in the poem [MbḤ9:57]. It seems that the second possibility is the one to which the poet alludes in his praise. In any case, both poems show very clearly that what classical authorities said about Mulayḥ being an Islamic poet was true. It is not unlikely that these authorities came to such a conclusion on the basis of these two poems and not on other prose material they possessed on the poet.

Unfortunately, none of the classical authorities define in which period of the Islamic era the poet Mulayḥ lived. It seems that this period can be suggested through the examination of another poem composed by the poet. In his poem no. 10, *lāmiyya*, *ṭawīl* (42 verses), he narrates about a love affair between him and a certain Umm ʿĀbid. It seems that this was a Yemenite woman [MbḤ10:1]. The lover recalls her apparition one night. To be more accurate, he does not recall the apparition, but recalls a certain night in which he recalled the apparition of Umm ʿĀbid, his beloved.²⁵ He recalls

²³ These are poems nos. 1 and 9 in Mulayḥ's *dīwān* in as-Sukkari's *Kitāb Sharḥ ash'ār al-hudhaliyyīn*. In the present paper, only the number of the poem will be mentioned, without making any reference to the pages in which the poem appears. The abbreviation MbḤ will be mentioned before the number of the poem, which indicates the first letters of the poet's name. In addition, the number of verses in the poem, to which a certain analysis refers, would sometimes be mentioned after the number of the poem itself.

²⁴ Rentz, "Hudhayl", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, III: 540; an-Natsha, *Ash'ār Hudhayl*, 1: 157; Ibrāhīm, *al-Binā' al-fannī fi sh'ar al-hudhaliyyīn*, 8.

²⁵ As-Suwaydī assumes that this woman may be Mulayḥ's wife, and he hints at the fact that ʿĀbid, which is mentioned in verse 8 is their son. In another place, he

that he was in a certain place that was very distant from her abodes. In order to describe the long distance separating both lovers, he lists the places between them. He mentions Hayyām al-Ma‘āšim, al-Liwā, Bāb al-Yūn, the sea and the coast, the heights of al-Muqaṭṭam mountain and also Mountain ‘Ābid [MbḤ10:6-8]. Bāb al-Yūn, or Babylon, according to C.H. Becker was a city near Fustāṭ which was the first Muslim city built in Egypt. During the 1st/7th century a distinction between the two cities was still made, but after that such a distinction disappeared. At a certain stage Bāb al-Yūn was extended to include also Fustāṭ and Cairo.²⁶ Al-Muqaṭṭam is also a very famous mountain in the same country, close to the cemetery of Fustāṭ.²⁷ ‘Ābid is a mountain near al-Muqaṭṭam.²⁸ Mulayḥ, when tormented by the apparition, is presented during a night's rest in the desert where he and his comrades were travelling [MbḤ10:9-15, 19-21]. However, there is not even one mention of the destination that the group of travellers attempted to reach throughout their journey. As previously mentioned, Bräu, Blachère and as-Suwaydī assumed that this poem apparently describes the visit of Mulayḥ to Egypt together with the Muslim armies during the conquering attack made against it.²⁹ This incident occurred around the years 19-22/640-643.³⁰ However, there is not even one clue that this journey implied that the Muslim armies were approaching Egypt. If we accept this assumption, then one should assume that during that year, or even after the year 20/641 in which

mentions that this woman may be the woman with whom Mulayḥ wanted to get married. See “Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam”, 66-67. With regard to Umm ‘Ābid being Mulayḥ's spouse or the woman with whom he desired to get married, there is no indication in the poem itself that could support such an assumption. However, the assumption that ‘Ābid in verse 8 is the name of Mulayḥ's son is mistaken. As shown later, ‘Ābid in this verse is a name of a mountain in Egypt, it is not the same ‘Ābid mentioned in the nickname of the beloved.

²⁶ Becker, “Bābalyūn”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, I: 844. See also Bräu, “Die Gedichte des Ḥudāiliten Mulaiḥ b. al-Ḥakam”, 283, footnote 1.

²⁷ Al-Bakrī, *Mu‘jam mā stu‘jīm*, 4: 110; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, ed. Farīd ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Jundī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1990), 5: 204-206.

²⁸ Al-Bakrī, *Mu‘jam mā stu‘jīm*, 3: 174; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, 4: 72. Regarding al-Liwā, it is not known whether it indicates a certain place, apparently in Egypt, or whether it indicates its literal meaning which is a *desert*. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī states that since this place occurs too frequently in classical Arabic poetry, it is quite difficult to determine with certainty in a certain verse whether al-Liwā is a name of a place or whether it indicates a desert; see *ibid.*, 5: 27. Regarding Hayyām al-Ma‘āšim, I failed to determine its location.

²⁹ See the references in footnote 20.

³⁰ Ḥittī, Jurjī, and Jabbūr, *Tārīkh al-‘Arab* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-‘Ulūm, no date), 218-224; Jomier, “al-Fustāṭ”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, II: 958.

Bāb al-Yūn was conquered³¹ (the poem gives the impression that Bāb al-Yūn had already been conquered), Mulayḥ was allowed to participate in the wars. If we assume that the age of a warrior should be around 20 years old, and this is the same age suggested by as-Suwaydī, then this may show that Mulayḥ was born before the year 1/622.³² It seems that as-Suwaydī believed Mulayḥ composed his poem while he was in Egypt, and consequently concludes he had already become a poet by that time.³³ But this assumption is fallacious, since as shown above, when Mulayḥ composed the poem he was not in those Egyptian places mentioned in the poem. He was only recalling an incident that occurred there, being aware of his present miserable condition while he remembered his beloved and imagined her apparition. This perhaps shows that Mulayḥ composed his poem some time after his return of Egypt.

However, it will be shown below (pp. 315-316) that it is possible that Mulayḥ also took part in the attacks of Islamic troops on ash-Shām that were made years before the conquest of Egypt. A suggestion will therefore be made for two other dates of birth for Mulayḥ.

In an additional poem, the aforementioned poem no. 1, Mulayḥ praises his grandfather Ṣakhr in a certain unnamed war between the two tribes Hawāzin and Tamīm [MbḤ1:32-38]. However, it seems here that the Tamīm is not the famous Tamīm b. Murr tribe. Although several wars did occur between these two tribes, none of them included the share of the Hudhayl tribe, or at least the Hudhali chiefs, as Mulayḥ claims.³⁴ It seems that Tamīm here is Tamīm b. Sa'd b. Hudhayl, the known branch of the Hudhayl tribe, to which Mulayḥ and his grandfather Ṣakhr belong.³⁵ The name of the war is not mentioned in the poem and in the books that deal with the Hudhayl tribe, and I failed to find its name or the year of its occur-

³¹ Becker, "Bābalyūn", I: 844.

³² As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 67.

³³ *Ibid.*, 67.

³⁴ See for examples the wars of Raḥraḥān, Shi'b Jabala, Dhū Najab, an-Nisār, Jifār, as-Sullān. All occurred between the two sides. About these wars see Jād al-Mawlā, al-Bijāwī, and Ibrāhīm, *Ayyām al-ʿArab fī l-jāhiliyya* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' at-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1961), 107-108, 344-367, 378-381; Ḥusayn, *Qabilat Tamīm ʿabr al-ʿuṣūr: an-nasab, al-mawṭin, al-ʿlām* (Damascus: Dār an-Numayr, 2000), 151-152, 157-160, 164-165, 167-172; adh-Dhahabī, *Mawsūʿat qabilat banī Tamīm: tārikhuhā, ansābuhā, ʿlāmuhā* (Beirut: ad-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-l-Mawsūʿāt, 2004), 1: 341-342, 354-362; at-Ṭayyib, *Mawsūʿat al-qabāʾil al-ʿarabiyya, buḥūth maydāniyya wa-tārikhiyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 2002-2005), 8: 58; Shahīd, "Shi'b Djabala", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, IX: 424.

³⁵ See the genealogical line of Mulayḥ in p. 296. In addition, about the genealogy of the Hudhali Tamīm see Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī, *Jamharat ansāb al-ʿArab*, ed. ʿAbd as-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1971), 197.

rence. If we knew the year, it would be possible to know when Ṣakhr lived and to calculate the year in which Mulayḥ was born.

This induces us not to accept Hell's assumption that Mulayḥ was the youngest poet among the Hudhalis, a poet who lived during the later years of the Umayyad era and who perhaps lived also in the 'Abbāsīd era.³⁶ It is worth mentioning that Mulayḥ, in one of his poems, mentions clearly that he has gray hair [MbḤ3:29]. As-Suwaydī states, the description of gray hair does not necessarily indicate that Mulayḥ is old. As he says, youths may also become gray-haired.³⁷ However, it seems that Mulayḥ was really old aged, because in another poem he mentions a certain love affair which occurred during his youth, which implies that he is now no longer a youth [MbḤ9:18]. The two poems, consequently, show that Mulayḥ was old aged. However, an estimate of the number of years he lived is impossible throughout his poetic output.

2.2 Where did He Live?

2.2.1 Analysis for the Places Mentioned in his Poetry

Joseph Hell assumes that Mulayḥ was a town dweller. But he does not provide any clear proof to support his assumption.³⁸ It seems that the best way to surmise in which regions Mulayḥ probably lived, and consequently to determine whether he was a desert Bedouin or a town citizen, is to examine the places mentioned in his poetry, especially those which are said to be the dwellings of his beloved ones. It would be reasonable to assume that Mulayḥ lived in the same places, or at least not too far off from where his beloveds had once dwelt. In the following pages, an attempt will be made to define the geographical locations of the places where the beloved lived, according to Mulayḥ's poems, or through which they marched and journeyed, and also the places where Mulayḥ marched or which he visited. Conclusions can then be made regarding these places or regions based on such definitions.

Among the places mentioned in this regard is 'Amq, where Nā'ila, his beloved, spent the spring period [MbḤ2:3]. 'Amq is a name of one of the *wādīs* of aṭ-Ṭā'if. It is also the name of a place, apparently a source of water, near al-Madīna belonging to the Muzayna tribe.³⁹ From 'Amq, the beloved and

³⁶ Hell, "Der Islam und die Hudailitendichtungen", 88, 92.

³⁷ As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 67.

³⁸ Hell, "Der Islam und die Hudailitendichtungen", 93.

³⁹ Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā stu'jīm*, 3: 225-226; al-Ḥāzīmī, *Mā tafaqa lafzuhū wa-ftaraqa musammāh fi l-amākin wa-l-buldān al-mushtabiha fi l-khatt*, ed. Fuat Sezgin (Facsimile edition, Volume 35; Frankfurt: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University), 282-283; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 4: 176.

her tribe departed to another unnamed place near the sea coast, apparently the coast of the Red Sea [MbḤ2:4]. In another poem, Su‘dā, another beloved, departs together with her tribe to a certain place marching through al-Qā‘ān [MbḤ5:23]. However, I failed to find in the geographical books in hand which place has the same name mentioned by Mulayḥ. A similar name which bears the singular form al-Qā‘ indicates a place in al-Madīna, and another one in al-Yamāma.⁴⁰ It is not known whether this place is the same al-Qā‘ān mentioned by Mulayḥ, but one would tend to believe so, and one may tend even to believe that the second al-Qā‘, that in al-Yamāma is the one intended in the poem. This is because Mulayḥ mentions that he and his comrades rode their camels in pursuit of the beloved’s camel train. He compares his camel and those of his comrades to onagers which are running towards Falj and Tawwaj in order to reach the water [MbḤ5:27].⁴¹ These are two places close to al-Yamāma. Tawwaj is a name of place in the desert where falcons lived, and it is also a city in Persia, but this second location does not fit the case in the poem.⁴² Although it is not mentioned in which of the deserts of Arabia this Tawwaj can be found, it may be in the desert of ad-Dahnā’ in southeast Arabia, between al-‘Arūḍ (i.e. al-Yamāma and al-Baḥrayn), ‘Umān and al-Yaman, because this place, according to the poem, seems to be close to Falj which is a name of a long *wādī* begins in the western part of ad-Dahnā’ and continues towards the northeast until it reaches close to the Gulf.⁴³ However, mentioning specifically these two places in order to describe the onagers may have been done arbitrarily or it may be used as a cliché. It seems that the second possibility is less acceptable. If these two places are conceived as clichés, then one should assume that they must frequently occur in the Old Arabic onager episodes. In the corpus gathered by Thomas Bauer the place Tawwaj does not occur. The second place, Falj, is mentioned only once in a ‘*ayniyya* of *wāfir* by the *mukhaḍram*

⁴⁰ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *ibid.*, 4: 338.

⁴¹ Bräu believes that even in verses 28-29, Mulayḥ continues describing the onagers, see Bräu, “Die Gedichte des Huḍailiten Mulaiḥ b. al-Ḥakam”, 264. Brockelmann in his article “Zu den Gedichten des Huḍailiten Mulaiḥ b. al-Ḥakam” does not make any corrections to Bräu’s translation of the two verses. It is worth mentioning that in the two verses Mulayḥ does not make any reference to the onagers, but merely describes the women with whom Mulayḥ and his comrades met. The women are his beloved and other women of her tribe.

⁴² Al-Bakrī, *Mu‘jam mā stu‘jim*, 1: 292; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, 2: 65-66.

⁴³ Al-Jāsir, *al-Mu‘jam al-jughrāfi li-l-bilād al-‘arabiyya s-su‘ūdiyya, al-miṭṭaqa sh-sharqiyya (al-Baḥrayn qadīman)* (Riyad: Dār al-Yamāma li-l-Baḥth wa-t-Tarjama wa-n-Nashr, 1981), 3: 1315-1330, cf. 1328. The author discusses many definitions of the location of this place as they appear in classical Arabic books and geographical lexicons, and comes to the above-mentioned conclusion.

poet Tamīm b. Ubayy b. Muqbil (d. after 35/656 or shortly after 70/690).⁴⁴ However, it would still be difficult to know why Mulayḥ specifically chose these two places to describe the trip of the onagers. Old Arabic poetry mentions other places in which onagers were found. The reason for mentioning the two places may be that they are close to where the lover and his comrades were travelling at that moment. It may be also the destination of the beloved's tribe. If so, this may indicate that al-Qā'ān were somewhere near Falj and Tawwaj. This may also indicate that the beloved had dwelt in or near (west or northwest of) al-Yamāma, and then departed eastwards or to the northeast of these two places.

However, even if al-Qā' is the place in al-Madīna and not the one in al-Yamāma, this would not be unacceptable. In this case, it would be assumed that the beloved's tribe lived in or near al-Madīna, then departed eastwards, if Falj and Tawwaj were not chosen arbitrarily, in the direction of al-Yamāma, towards the east or north east of it. However, according to this second case, one should assume that the voyage of the beloved's tribe was very long, since the distance separating between al-Madīna and al-Yamāma is about 1200 km.⁴⁵

In another poem, the lover presents himself in Zizā' or Zayzā' [MbḤ7:1] which is a big village in the al-Balqā' region in Jordan; the pilgrimage route used to pass through it.⁴⁶ Mulayḥ mentions that he was in that place in his return journey home (*qāfil* literally means coming back from travel). There he recalled Laylā, his beloved. He then mentions that he marched through Sharqī 'Ammān (eastern of Amman), which is also a part of al-Balqā' region.⁴⁷ There he recalled the same beloved [MbḤ7:3]. Between both lovers there were two separating places, the first was ash-Sharā which in this poem, according to several classical authorities, is a place near Makka,⁴⁸ while

⁴⁴ Bauer, *Altarabische Dichtkunst*, 2: 212, v. 10.

⁴⁵ The distance between both was calculated depending on the locations of the two places according to the map by Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien bis zum Tode des Propheten (632/11h)", *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients (TAVO)* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1987)", points 25/40 and 25/48.

⁴⁶ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 3: 184; al-Baghdādī, *Khizānat al-adab walubb lubāb lisān al-'arab*, ed. Imil Badī' Ya'qūb (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998), 10: 171.

⁴⁷ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 4: 170; Sourdel-Thomine, "al-Balqā'", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, I: 997.

⁴⁸ Al-Ḥāzimi, *Mā tafaqa lafẓuhū wa-ftaraqa musammāh*, 241-242; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 3: 374. Both scholars quote the verse by Mulayḥ, but they mention Na'mān instead of 'Ammān, which is a mountain in Najd belonging to the Ṭayyi' tribe. It seems that the version they mention is less correct, since it is shown in the poem that the lover was, while recalling his beloved, in the Balqā' region which includes both Zizā'/Zayzā' and 'Ammān.

the second was al-Mu'arrāf which is a place where the pilgrims stand in the famous 'Arafa mountain near Makka.⁴⁹ This shows that the beloved lived to the south of these two places; it is not likely therefore that she lived in al-Yaman, or even between it and Makka.

The lover in the same poem mentions that he travelled very hastily, going through the Aghlab mountain which is in the region of Taymā' in north-western Arabia and also through al-Ḥijāz and al-Ghawr (Tihāma) [MbH7:4-5].⁵⁰ Apparently, through this voyage, he alludes to the fact that he made his way through these places to reach his tribe's abodes, which seem to be near the aforementioned ash-Sharā and al-Mu'arrāf; i.e. near Makka.

The lover also alludes to certain places in which Laylā dwelt. In the spring season, she dwelt between A'yār and al-Birk, while in the summer she dwelt in al-Qafā [MbH7:10]. An exact determination of these three places is a bit difficult. Al-Birk is either a place or a *wādī* in al-Yamāma, or a place in al-Yaman or a place in Najd or a place near al-Madīna, or a passage way (*naqb*) between it and Yanbu' which is a port on the Red Sea coast of al-Ḥijāz (Yanbu' is about 480 km northwest of Makka and about 240 km southwest of al-Madīna).⁵¹ It seems that al-Birk in the poem of Mulayḥ is either the place near al-Madīna or the one in al-Yamāma. It may be assumed that it is in the same direction of A'yār which is also the name of two places: one in the direction of al-Madīna while the other is near al-Yamāma. It is worth mentioning that Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229) states that A'yār is the name of several mountains all of them are near al-Madīna; but he then alludes to the fact that, in the poem of Mulayḥ, A'yār is not any of these mountains. Unfortunately, the author does not define the location of such a place intended by Mulayḥ.⁵² Al-Bakrī mentions this place and states that it is a name for more than one location, one of them is in Ḥarrat Laylā which is about 280 km southeast of al-Madīna. In addition, al-Bakrī quotes a verse in which A'yār is mentioned as another place near an-Naqī'a, somewhere in

⁴⁹ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *ibid.*, 5: 181.

⁵⁰ Buhl and Bosworth, "Taymā'", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, X: 401.

⁵¹ Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā stu'jim*, 1: 224-226; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, 1: 415-416, 476; al-Jāsir, *Fī shamāl gharb al-jazīra: nuṣūṣ, mushāhadāt, inṭibā'āt* (Riyad: Manshūrāt Dār al-Yamāma li-l-Baḥṭh wa-t-Tarjama wa-n-Nashr, 1970), 522; idem., *al-Mu'jam al-jughrāfi li-l-bilād al-'arabiyya s-su'ūdiyya, al-miṭṭaqa sh-sharqiyya (al-Baḥrayn qadīman)*, 1: 226; adh-Dhahabī, *Mawsū'at qabilat banī Tamīm*, 1: 245; Van Donzel, "Yanbu'", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, XI: 281. See the location of Yanbu' in Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien", points 24/39.

⁵² Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 1: 264-265.

the aforementioned ad-Dahnā'.⁵³ This means that A'yār should be either southeast of al-Madīna or east of al-Yamāma. Thus, as mentioned above, al-Birk in the poem of Mulayḥ should be either near al-Madīna or in al-Yamāma.

As for the third place mentioned in the poem, al-Qafā, al-Bakrī states that it is a mountain belonging to the Hilāl tribe, but he does not mention its exact location.⁵⁴ In another place of his book, the same author alludes to the fact that al-Qafā is between as-Sitār and 'Ukāz. As-Sitār is a mountain very close to the western border of the middle part of the aforementioned Ḥarrat Laylā; it is about 320 km southeast of al-Madīna. 'Ukāz is near Makka and it is located about 240 km southwest of as-Sitār.⁵⁵

From this it appears that in the summer, the abodes of the beloved were near Ḥarrat Laylā, between its middle western border and 'Ukāz in the south; while in the spring period, there are two possibilities for the route taken by the tribe, either in the direction of a certain location between the same Ḥarrat Laylā and al-Madīna, or perhaps towards eastern Arabia between the eastern borders of al-Yamāma and ad-Dahnā'. However, the lover mentions that the beloved move away to live in very distant places in the autumn [MbḤ7:9].

A very problematical point is that when he was in Jordan, the lover alluded to the fact that the areas surrounding Makka separates him from the present abodes of his beloved. Such an assertion meant that the beloved's abodes were positioned south of Makka and very far from it, perhaps in al-Yaman or to the north of it. It is interesting that the lover, when talking about the exact places where his beloved lived, mentions places that are not south of Makka. However, it seems that these places which were defined above, al-Qafā and the place between A'yār and al-Birk, are not the present abodes of the beloved. They seem to be her old abodes, where she once lived in the past and where the lover fell in love with her. Mulayḥ himself, after mentioning these places, alludes to the fact that he fell in love with Laylā during the distant past [MbḤ7:11]. This may support what was assumed here, that the three places are those of the beloved in the past but not her present abodes. Apparently, her current abodes should be located south of Makka.

In one of his verses, the lover mentions that he is unable at the present

⁵³ Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā stu'jim*, 1: 27. See Ḥarrat Laylā and the distance between it and al-Madīna in the map by Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien", points 23, 24/42.

⁵⁴ Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā stu'jim*, 3: 322.

⁵⁵ Al-Bakrī, *ibid.*, 3: 12-13; Shahīd, "'Ukāz", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, X: 789. See the locations and distances of as-Sitār and 'Ukāz in the map by Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien", points 23/41, 22/41.

time to know in which places his beloved is now living [MbH7:8]. This may show that in the mean time he can define the general region where Laylā lives; i.e. south of Makka, but he does not know exactly in which place she lives. Today he cannot define, as he had done with the places of the past, the names of the locations where Laylā is now to be found.

In the same poem, the lover mentions two other places in which he met his beloved: Arāka and Qarn.⁵⁶ The first is in al-Yamāma,⁵⁷ while the other is a name of more than one place; one of them is in or near Makka, another is in al-Yamāma, a third is south of Makka, between it and al-Yaman.⁵⁸ Mulayḥ mentions that he almost died in these two places because of his great love. In both places he watched the camel train of his beloved [MbH7:14-15]. It is not known whether Mulayḥ alludes here to one or to two different times of departure by his beloved. In the first case, both Arāka and Qarn should be nearby places, i.e. in al-Yamāma. In the second case, Arāka and Qarn should not necessarily be nearby. The beloved here, while being in Arāka, should have been on her way towards al-Yamāma; in her second departure, her destination is not clear: it could be towards al-Yamāma, but it could be also towards Makka or al-Yaman. If this third possibility, the voyage towards al-Yaman, is the one intended in the present poem, then this may support what was concluded above, that the present location of Laylā is somewhere in or north of al-Yaman. This, in turn, may show that Mulayḥ perhaps alludes to the last time he saw Laylā; to the last voyage of Laylā with her tribe to the southern place about which Mulayḥ knows nothing. After such a voyage, though it is not known how much time passed since then, Mulayḥ left the Arabian Peninsula to visit a certain place in or even beyond Jordan.

The final place mentioned in the same poem is al-Junayna [MbH7:43]. Mulayḥ describes himself at night while traveling in the company of his comrades. They are asleep but he is not. He wonders whether he should awake them in order to continue their journey and try as quickly as possible to reach al-Junayna where they can find water. It appears that Mulayḥ is describing himself and his comrades after he had met his beloved during her journey towards Qarn or Arāka. He separated from her [MbH7:33], let-

⁵⁶ Salāma as-Suwaydī believes that in these two places, Mulayḥ alludes to two different wars in which he was almost killed while seeking his beloved. This interpretation seems to be mistaken, since it is clear through the poem that Mulayḥ is describing his pursuit of the departed tribe, but he does not describe any war in which he took part. See his article "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 69.

⁵⁷ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, 1: 164.

⁵⁸ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *ibid.*, 4: 377-378; al-Ḥarbī, *al-Muʿjam al-jughrāfī li-l-bilād al-ʿarabiyya s-sūʿūdīyya, minṭaqat ʿasīr al-idāriyya* (Abhā: No publisher, 1997), 3: 1327-1336.

ting her continue on her journey, while he decided to visit another unnamed destination, riding through al-Junayna, the place from which they needed to get water. If this assumption is correct, then one should assume that al-Junayna should be either near al-Yaman or near al-Yamāma or near Makka, since it was shown that Qarn and Arāka are in these three regions. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī mentions al-Junayna, and he states that it is a name for different places, one of them is a desert in al-Yamāma; another is in Najd; a third is near wādī l-Qurā which is about four or five days journey from al-Madīna.⁵⁹ None of the locations mentioned for this place was in or near Makka or al-Yaman. This may show that the aforementioned Qarn in this poem perhaps should not, as mentioned above, be a place in or near Makka or near al-Yaman. Al-Junayna is most probably in al-Yamāma and, consequently, one should consider Qarn as also being in al-Yamāma. Yet it is not unlikely that al-Junayna is the place in Najd or the one near wādī l-Qurā. In this case it would be assumed that the journey of Mulayḥ towards al-Junayna did not occur immediately after he left his beloved in Qarn, but some time later. It may be that after leaving his beloved, he began taking a long journey. After a certain time, perhaps days or even weeks, he reached the place from which he wanted to approach al-Junayna.

Moving to another region, Mulayḥ mentions in a certain poem the two places an-Nir and Ḍariyya (the two sides of it: *janbayy Ḍariyya*) [MbḤ8:2]. Mulayḥ, as a sleepless lover, spends all night watching the lightning that was gleaming behind these two places. Then it moved, together with the clouds, to the right side (*tayāmana*) towards Ḥurrayāt and Aghrub [MbḤ8:6]. Ḍariyya is a village and a watering place in Najd. In this poem, it seems that the lover alludes to Ḥimā Ḍariyya which was a wide district including this village. An-Nir, as mentioned by Phebe Marr, was the name of the mountains on the confines of this Ḥimā Ḍariyya. Both places are about 520 km east of al-Madīna (Ḥimā Ḍariyya itself, according to al-Bakrī, extends from Ḍariyya to al-Madīna).⁶⁰ Regarding the other two places in the direction of Ḥurrayāt and Aghrub, there is almost no detailed information about them in the geographical books. Al-Bakrī mentions that Ḥurrayāt is near al-Kawr, and he defines the latter as a place in the direction of Najrān which is a city in northern al-Yaman. It is about 1200 km southeast of

⁵⁹ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, 2: 202. About wādī l-Qurā see Lecker, “Wādī l-Qurā”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, XI: 18.

⁶⁰ Marr, “Ḍariyya”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, II: 159. Both places appear in points 25/44 in Rebstock, “Das islamische Arabien”. About Ḍariyya and an-Nir see also al-Bakrī, *Muʿjam mā stuʿjīm*, 3: cf. 134; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, 3: 519-521; 5: 381.

Ḍariyya.⁶¹ Regarding Aghrub, no data was found except for that statement by al-Fayrūzābādī (d. 817/1415) that it was a certain mountain in Damascus, or in al-Madīna, or in another unnamed place.⁶² However, if Ḥurrayāt is really in the direction of Najrān, then it seems that Aghrub should also be in the same direction. Neither al-Madīna nor Damascus are found in that direction. However, since Mulayḥ mentions that the clouds and the lightning moved from behind an-Nīr and Ḍariyya towards the right in the direction of Ḥurrayāt and then Aghrub, most likely the lover was positioned somewhere west of the region between the first two places in the north and the second two places in the south. In other words, Mulayḥ should be in some region in the southwestern part of the peninsula. However, at the end of the poem, he decides to leave his place and to visit his beloved in her abodes [MbḤ8:15-17].

In his *urjūza (qāfiyya)* no. 9, Laylā's *aṭlāl* are positioned between Shibāk al-Khāniq (the wells of al-Khāniq)⁶³ and al-Buḥayr [MbḤ9:1-2]. Here, the first, al-Khāniq, is a name for many places,⁶⁴ one of them is a village in the Tihāmat 'Asīr which is the lowlands of 'Asīr, a region bordering the Red Sea, between al-Ḥijāz and al-Yaman, in the southwestern part of Arabia.⁶⁵ It is also a name of a mountain and a *wādī* in the eastern part of Tathlīth which is in al-Ḥijāz near the southern part of the peninsula, about 320 km northern of Najrān, and about 700 km southeast of Makka.⁶⁶ As for the second place, al-Buḥayr, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī states that it is a water source in

⁶¹ Al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā stu'jim*, 2: 77; 4: 28-29. About Najrān see Shahīd, "Nadjrān", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, VII: 871; Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien", points 17/45.

⁶² Al-Fayrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1995), 1: 146.

⁶³ The word *shibāk*, pl. of *shabaka*, has many indications. Among these indications is: wells close together, or wells that are numerous and close together in a tract of land, or a tract of land in which there are many wells, see Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1997), 4: 1498. Shibāk is also a place between al-Baṣra and al-Baḥrayn in the eastern part of the peninsula, but this is too far from al-Khāniq and therefore is not available for the poem, see al-Jāsir, *al-Mu'jam al-jughrāfi li-l-bilād al-'arabiyya s-su'ūdiyya, al-miṭṭaqa sh-sharqiyya (al-Baḥrayn qadīman)*, 2: 907-908.

⁶⁴ See a list of these places in al-Ḥarbī, *al-Mu'jam al-jughrāfi li-l-bilād al-'arabiyya s-su'ūdiyya*, 2: 589-591.

⁶⁵ Al-Ḥarbī, *ibid.*, 2: 590. About 'Asīr and Tihāmat 'Asīr see Headley, Mulligan and Rentz, "'Asīr", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, I: 707. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī mentions that it is a place in Tihāma, see Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 2: 389.

⁶⁶ Al-Ḥarbī, *al-Mu'jam al-jughrāfi li-l-bilād al-'arabiyya s-su'ūdiyya*, 2: 590. About the location of Tathlīth see Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien", points 19/44.

Yalyal, which is a *wādī* in Yanbu'. It is historically known that Yanbu' is connected to Hudhayl. In the region of Yanbu', in a place called Ruhāt, which includes a *wādī* from the Red Sea to al-Madīna, the idol Suwā' that was worshipped by the Hudhayl tribe was positioned.⁶⁷ However, it reminds us of the place from which the beloved departed in poem no. 2 (p. 301-302), supposedly the coast of the Red Sea. This may indicate that the beloved departed from 'Amq to a certain place near Yanbu'. But the distance between al-Khāniq and al-Buḥayr seems to be enormous. It therefore seems that in this poem, the lover does not mention the exact location where the *aṭlāl* of his beloved were found. He only mentions the region itself, which is the western part of the peninsula, between a place north of al-Yaman and Yanbu' which is almost in the middle of Western Arabia.

However, it is very interesting why Mulayḥ does not mention the accurate location where the *aṭlāl* were found, despite the fact that he knows it. Since he describes the *aṭlāl*, this shows that he has visited them. The verses of Mulayḥ that include a mention of these two places read:

yā dāra Laylā min shibāki l-khāniqi
ilā l-buḥayri n-nā'imi l-ḥadā'iqi
 O, the abode of Laylā from the wells of al-Khāniq
 to al-Buḥayr, which has green gardens/meadows⁶⁸

A contemplation in these two *rajaz*-verses may show that Mulayḥ used the expression *min - ilā* (i.e., *from - to*) in order to define the location of the abode of his beloved. It is interesting that he uses the singular form *dār*, which means an abode. However, it is not known whether he alludes here to one abode only or whether, despite using the singular, he alludes to more than one abode of the beloved. However, the expression *min - ilā* may have one of three indications, and according to these indications one can define whether the word *dār* indicates one abode or several abodes:

1. The first is to understand the expression as a substitution for the word *bayna* (i.e., *between*). Here, Laylā has one abode only. In other words, it is not unlikely that Laylā dwelt somewhere between al-Khāniq and al-Buḥayr. This indication seems to be less likely, since as was shown that there was an enormous distance between them. Mulayḥ is supposed to make a more precise definition of the location of the *aṭlāl*, rather than that mentioned in the poem itself.

⁶⁷ Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums* (2nd ed.; Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & CO., 1927), 18-19; Van Donzel, "Yanbu'", XI: 281; Fahd, "Suwā'", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, IX: 908.

⁶⁸ The word *ḥadiqa* indicates a walled garden, or a round piece of land surrounded by a fence or by elevated land, or a meadow or a garden having trees, or a garden having palm-trees, or grape-vines, or any other trees, see Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2: 532.

2. The second is to consider the expression as indicating that the abodes of the beloveds are spread out between these two places. It is possible that Mulayḥ is not describing one abode only but alludes to different places located between al-Khāniq in the south and al-Buḥayr in the north. His beloved moved among these places in the past, but today she is not found in any of them. This may show that the lover is so depressed since he realizes that after his beloved had been living throughout this wide region, she has now gone away to dwell in a very distant region and that he has lost his beloved for ever.
3. The third is that Laylā has two abodes and when using the phrase *min - ilā* that means that she left the first place and went to live in the second. Here, two assumptions may be made. The first is that both places include the *aṭlāl* of the beloved. In other words, the beloved has once dwelt in each of the two places: the first was in al-Khāniq and then she moved to al-Buḥayr and, consequently, she left the second place as well and moved to another unnamed new destination. The lover thus has visited them both. The second is that the two places do not indicate the *aṭlāl* only but also the new abodes of the beloved. By using the formula *from - to*, it is possible that the lover implies that the beloved had once dwelt in al-Khāniq but has moved in the present time to live in a very distant place, al-Buḥayr, which may be the new abode of the beloved. Since this abode is described in the poem as a place that has green gardens, then it is possible that the lover means that the place is prosperous and, therefore, this may suggest that it is not any *aṭlāl*, but that it is the new place to which Laylā had gone together with her tribe.

In poem no. 10 (*lāmiyya, ṭawīl*, 42 verses), which was mentioned previously (pp. 298-299), Mulayḥ states clearly that his beloved is a Yemenite woman [MbḤ10:1]. It is not certain whether she really was a Yemenite woman who lived in al-Yaman itself, or if she was a Yemenite Hudhali woman. It is known that some part of the Hudhayl tribe dwelt in 'Asīr northern of al-Yaman, and they were called Hudhayl al-Yaman (the Hudhayl of al-Yaman), to distinguish between them and the other Hudhalis who were called Hudhayl ash-Shamāliyyūn or the northern Hudhalis.⁶⁹ As was shown, in this poem Mulayḥ mentions that he was once in Egypt. However, there is a very problematic and ambiguous motif that Mulayḥ mentions in connection with his beloved when her apparition visited him while he was in Egypt. He says that when this occurred, he could smell the sweet odour of the *khuzāmā* plants that the apparition carried with it from Falj which is, as shown in p. 302, a *wādī* to the east and northeast of al-Yamāma

⁶⁹ Rentz, "Hudhayl", C.D. edition, III: 540; Zakī, *Shī'r al-hudhaliyyin fī l-'aṣraḥ al-jāhili wa-l-islāmī* (Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-'Arabī li-ṭ-ṭibā'a wa-n-Nashr, 1969), 14-20; an-Natsha, *Ash'ār Hudhayl*, 1: 135-138.

[MbḤ10:16]. The reason why the lover chose the *khuzāmā* of Falj and not that of any other place in Arabia or outside it is not known. It is possible that Falj was one of the most famous places because of its *khuzāma* flowers. Although this is quite possible, it does not seem to be the case since the *khuzāmā* of Falj would have been mentioned frequently by other Old Arabic poets. Among the 20 poets, from the pre-Islamic era until the Umayyad one, in whose poetry the word *khuzāmā* was mentioned, none of them mentioned the *khuzāmā* of Falj except Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ See v. 30, poem 490 by Abū ‘Adī ‘Āmir b. Sa’d an-Namrī l-Azdī (no date of death is given), *qāfiyya, ṭawīl*, in Ibn Maymūn, *Muntahā ṭ-Ṭalab min ash‘ār al-‘Arab*, ed. Muḥammad Nabil Ṭarīfī (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1999), 9: 87-91. See also a verse by al-Ḥārith b. Maryam al-Wādī‘ī (no date of death is given), rhyme letter *b, ṭawīl*, in al-Khālidiyyān, *Kitāb al-Ashbāh wa-n-naẓā‘ir min ash‘ār al-mutaqaddimīn wa-l-jāhiliyya wa-l-mukhaḍramīn*, ed. Muḥammad Yūsuf (Cairo: Maṭba‘at Lajnat at-Ta’lif wa-t-Tarjama wa-n-Nashr, 1958), 1: 79. A verse by Imru’ al-Qays b. ‘Amr as-Sakūnī, a pre-Islamic poet (no date of death is given), v. 9 in poem no. 466, *bā‘iyya, ṭawīl*, in Ibn Maymūn, *Muntahā ṭ-Ṭalab*, 8: 368-373. V. 17, poem xv, *lāmiyya, ṭawīl*, by ‘Abīd b. al-Abraṣ (d. ca. 600 A.D.) in ‘Abīd b. al-Abraṣ, *Diwān ‘Abīd b. al-Abraṣ*, ed. Charles Lyall, introduced by Muḥammad ‘Awnī ‘Abd ar-Ra‘ūf (Cairo: Maṭba‘at Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Wathā‘iq al-Qawmiyya, 2003), 47-49. V. 7 in a *lāmiyya* of *ṭawīl* by Abū ṭ-Ṭamaḥān al-Qaynī (d. ca. 11/632 or 30/650-1) in Mulūḥī, *Ash‘ār al-luṣūṣ wa-akhbārūhum* (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥadāra l-Jadida, 1993), 1: 81-86; V. 9, poem 425 by al-Kumayt al-Awsaṭ (d. ca. 60/680), ‘*ayniyya, ṭawīl*, in Ibn Maymūn, *Muntahā ṭ-Ṭalab*, 8: 127-132. V. 22, poem 12, and v. 45, poem 13, both *ḥā‘iyyas* of *ṭawīl*, by ar-Rā‘ī n-Numayrī (d. 90/709), in ar-Rā‘ī n-Numayrī, *Diwān ar-Rā‘ī n-Numayrī*, gathered and ed. by Reinhard Weipert (Beirut: al-Ma‘had al-‘Almānī li-l-Abḥāth ash-Sharqiyya Fī Bayrūt; Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1980), 34-51. V. 8, a poem by al-Akḥṭal (d. before 92/710), *lāmiyya, basīṭ*, in al-Akḥṭal, *Sharḥ Diwān al-Akḥṭal at-Taghlībī*, ed. Iliyyā Salīm al-Ḥawī (Beirut: Dār ath-Thaqāfa, 1968), 341-351. V. 5 in a poem by Jarīr (d. ca. 110/728-729), *mīmiyya, basīṭ*, in Jarīr, *Diwān Jarīr*, ed. Yūsuf ‘Īd (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1992), 638-640. V. 3, in a poem by al-Farazdaq (d. ca. 110/728-729), *rā‘iyya, ṭawīl*, and v. 2 in a poem by him, *lāmiyya, ṭawīl*, in al-Farazdaq, *Diwān al-Farazdaq* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir and Dār Bayrūt, 1960), 1: 320-322; 2: 80-82. V. 24, poem 24, *mīmiyya, ṭawīl*; v. 28, poem 37, *rā‘iyya, basīṭ*; v. 33, poem 68, *kāfiyya, ṭawīl*; and v. 19, poem 42, ‘*ayniyya, ṭawīl*, by Dhū r-Rumma (d. 117/735), in Dhū r-Rumma, *Diwān Dhī r-Rumma Ghaylān b. ‘Uqba al-‘Adawī l-mutawaffā sanat 117 h. sharḥ al-imām Abī Naṣr Aḥmad b. Ḥātim al-Bāhili ṣāhib al-Aṣma‘ī, riwāyat al-imām Abī l-‘Abbās Tha‘lab*, ed. ‘Abd al-Quddūs Abū Ṣāliḥ (Beirut: Mu‘assasat ar-Risāla, 1993), 2: 745-776, 1144-1166, 1273-1299; 3: 1710-1743. V. 19, in poem 15, ‘*ayniyya, ṭawīl*, by al-‘Arjī (d. ca. 120/738), in al-‘Arjī, *Diwān al-‘Arjī riwāyat Abī l-Faḥ ash-Shaykh ‘Uthmān b. Jinnī al-mutawaffā sanat 392 h.*, ed. Akḥḍar aṭ-Ṭā‘ī and Rashīd al-‘Ubaydī (Baghdad: ash-Sharika l-Islāmiyya li-ṭ-Ṭibā‘a wa-n-Nashr al-Maḥdūda, 1956), 47-50. V. 17, poem 18, *lāmiyya, basīṭ* by an-Nābigha

The *khuzāmā* plant is mentioned also by two other Hudhali poets who lived in the Umayyad era, but they do not ascribe it to Falj.⁷¹

However, mentioning the *khuzāma* of Falj may also be considered an indication that Falj is the place where the lover used to visit or even where he used to live. By recalling the sweet odour of the plants of this place, the lover does not express his yearning for his beloved only, but also for the place where he used to live before he moved to Egypt. It is clear, however, that he must have lived or been present there with his beloved, otherwise her apparition would not have been able to carry the sweet odour of the *khuzāma* of Falj. It seems that both Mulayḥ and his beloved had once lived or been together near Falj. Since the beloved is said to be a Yemenite, it is not unlikely that she had moved to a place near Falj.

In the last poem, poem no. 11 (*jīmiyya, basīṭ*, 14 verses), Mulayḥ mentions a certain voyage in which he took part. He alludes to a camel train of women. It seems that Mulayḥ was not alone in his voyage, since he uses the plural first person pronoun and mentions more than one camel on such a voyage [MbḤ11:7, 9]. They were in Minā near Makka when the women started looking at them through the veils of their howdahs [MbḤ11:7]. Since the lover describes the *aṭlāl* of his beloved at the beginning of his poem [MbḤ11:1-6], and then describes these traveling women, this may indicate that the travelers were the tribe of his beloved, and the women included the beloved herself and other maidens of her tribe. It seems that they were departing from their desolate abodes, which were mentioned later as the *aṭlāl*, and were approaching new ones. The meeting between the lover and his comrades on the one hand and the maidens on the other was in Minā. Minā, therefore, should be a place through which the tribal camel train was passing to reach their new abodes. The old abodes of this tribe, therefore, should be in some place close by, or not too far, from Minā. It seems that the lover and his comrades decided to follow the traveling wom-

sh-Shaybānī (d. 125/743), in an-Nābigha sh-Shaybānī, *Diwān an-Nābigha sh-Shaybānī*, ed. ‘Umar Fārūq aṭ-Ṭabbā‘ (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1996), 127-136. V. 53 in poem 8, *dāliyya, kāmil*, by aṭ-Ṭirimmāḥ (d. ca. 125/743), in aṭ-Ṭirimmāḥ b. Ḥakīm, *Diwān aṭ-Ṭirimmāḥ*, ed. ‘Izzat Ḥasan (2nd ed.; Beirut and Aleppo: Dār ash-Sharq al-‘Arabī, 1994), 108-120. V. 13, poem 25, *lāmiyya, kāmil*, and v. 16, poem 57, *fā’iyya, ṭawīl*, by Ibn ad-Dumayna (d.130/747) in Ibn ad-Dumayna, *Diwān Ibn ad-Dumayna ṣan‘at Abī l-‘Abbās Tha‘lab wa-Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb*, ed. Aḥmad Rātīb an-Naffākh (Cairo: Maktabat Dār al-‘Urūba, 1959), 45-47, 134-140. V. 14, poem 3, *bā’iyya, ṭawīl*, by ‘Urwa b. Udhayna (d. ca. 130/747), in ‘Urwa b. Udhayna, *Diwān ‘Urwa b. Udhayna* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1996), 11-19

⁷¹ See v. 10 by Umayya b. Abi ‘Ā’idh (d. ca. 75/695), in poem no. 7, *lāmiyya, ṭawīl*, in as-Sukkarī, *Kitāb Sharḥ ash‘ār al-hudhaliyyīn*, 2: 524-526; and also v. no. 10 by Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, in poem no. 4, *dāliyya, ṭawīl*, in *ibid.*, 2: 931-933.

en in order to have a last look at them before they continued their journey. Pursuing the beloved while she was traveling with her tribe is mentioned directly in other two poems by the same Mulayḥ.⁷²

2.2.2 Concluding Remarks Regarding the Places Mentioned in the Poetry of Mulayḥ

A summary of the above-mentioned analyses of the places in Mulayḥ's poetry would lead to the following conclusions:

1. A certain beloved, Nā'ila, used to spend the spring period in 'Amq which is either a *wādi* in aṭ-Ṭā'if or a source of water near al-Madīna [MbḤ2].
2. Another beloved, Su'dā, traveled through al-Qā'ān which apparently is a place in al-Madīna or in al-Yamāma. It is possible, but not certain, that she approached Falj, east and northeast of al-Yamāma, which is connected to ad-Dahnā' desert, and Tawwaj which is apparently also in the same region. Here, the beloved's abodes, from which her tribe departed, should be either in or near al-Madīna or in western al-Yamāma. The journey in both cases should have occurred in an easterly or northeasterly direction, towards eastern or northeastern Arabia [MbḤ5].
3. The abodes of a third unnamed beloved are not clearly mentioned, but they are alluded to through the lightning-scene. The lover watches the lightning gleaming behind Ḍariyya and an-Nir, which is a mountain chain bordering Ḍariyya. Both places are in Najd, between al-Ḥijāz and al-Yamāma, apparently about 420 km east of al-Madīna. The lightning then moved southwards towards Ḥurrayāt and Aghrub, which seem to be two neighboring places located in the direction of Najrān, a place in southern Arabia, about 1200 km southeast of Ḍariyya. This may show that the beloved's abodes were near that Yemenite place or at least were between Najrān in the south and Ḍariyya in the north. Mulayḥ at that moment should be somewhere in western Arabia, to the west of these places. Since, as described in the map by Rebstock, al-Madīna is almost in the same line west of the village of Ḍariyya, one should assume that the lover was standing in a certain place south or southwest of al-Madīna [MbḤ8].⁷³
4. The abodes of Laylā, another beloved, were either in al-Khāniq which is in Tihāmat 'Asīr or in Tathlith, in the southern or southwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula; or in al-Buḥayr, a place in the *wādi* of Yalyal in

⁷² See poem no. 5: 26-39; in this poem the lover visits the *aṭlāl* of his beloved, then recalls her voyage and how he followed her with his comrades. See also poem no. 7: 14-40 and perhaps also verses 41-58. Here, the lover recalls his beloved and her *aṭlāl*, then her voyage and the days in which he followed his beloved.

⁷³ Rebstock, "Das islamische Arabien", points 25/40 (al-Madīna) and 25/44 (Ḍariyya).

Yanbu', on the coast of the Red Sea, about 480 km northwest of Makka and 240 km southwest of al-Madīna. Or the abodes were scattered between both places [MbH9].

5. Another unnamed beloved passed through Minā while traveling with her tribe. This shows that she lived somewhere near Minā and near Makka [MbH11].
6. Mulayḥ mentions many places where Laylā used to dwell. Her present abodes seem to be in a certain place south of Makka and north of al-Yaman. In the past, she used to spend the spring period with her tribe between A'yār and al-Birk. This intermediate place should be either between al-Madīna and Ḥarrat Laylā, which is about 280 km southeast of al-Madīna; or east (perhaps in ad-Dahnā') or northeast of al-Yamāma.

In the summer she used to dwell in al-Qafā, midway between the western border of Ḥarrat Laylā and 'Ukāz, which is about 240 km southwest of it. On one of her journeys, the beloved passed through Qarn, which seems to be a place in al-Yamāma.

The poet recalls these incidents while he was in the Balqā' region in Jordan, or more accurately east of 'Ammān. He describes his return journey from that place, passing through al-Ḥijāz and al-Ghawr in western Arabia until he reaches his home, apparently near ash-Sharā and al-Mu'arrāf in Makka [MbH7].

7. Umm 'Ābid, another beloved, is a Yemenite maiden. It was concluded that she, and perhaps her lover as well, may have once lived for a certain unknown period near Falj. The lover was also in Egypt.

In other words, the summary also shows that the beloveds in the poetry of Mulayḥ lived in four regions:

1. Several poems make the impression that there were some abodes in western Arabia: it is possible that there was a spring abode near aṭ-Ṭā'if, and an abode near Minā, while a third seems to be in or close to Tihāmat 'Asīr in southwest Arabia. A fourth place seems to be south of Makka and north of al-Yaman. Mulayḥ mentions that he has never visited this place. North of these places, and also in the west, close to Yanbu', another abode was mentioned.
2. Many indications show that there is an abode near al-Madīna. Another one seems to be between al-Madīna and Ḥarrat Laylā, and still another between Ḥarrat Laylā in the north and 'Ukāz in the south.
3. In the south, but not really in the west, close to the middle part of the Arabian Peninsula, there was another abode between Ḍariyya and Najrān, which seems to be closer to Najrān than to Ḍariyya. Mulayḥ was not in that place, but was rather in western Arabia, south or southwest of al-Madīna, but at the end of the poem he states that he will leave his place and visit his beloved.

4. It is also possible that in eastern Arabia, there was also an abode west of al-Yamāma. Indications show that the beloved also migrated to the east or northeast of al-Yamāma, along the Falj *wādi*.

Since all the beloveds mentioned in the poem are nomad Bedouins, and since Mulayḥ mentions clearly that he knew most of the different places in which the beloved lived or through which she passed, it is not unlikely that even Mulayḥ was a dweller of these or at least of neighboring places. Consequently, Mulayḥ seems to have been a Bedouin who dwelt in each of the aforementioned four regions.

In keeping track of where the Hudhayl tribe lived during that early period, one may notice that scholars mention some places that are located mainly in Sarāt Hudhayl, which is a mountain chain east of the Tihāma region in western Arabia and continues southwards to reach a certain point close to al-Yaman in the southwest. This Sarāt is connected to Ghazwān mountain which is near aṭ-Ṭā'if. On its eastern and northern side, it extends between Makka and al-Madīna and continues in the direction of Najd. Some of their abodes are on the eastern, southern and western sides of Makka. They also dwelt between Makka and the modern port of Judda which is on the Red Sea, about 72 km northeast of Makka and 419 km southwest of al-Madīna.⁷⁴ Some part of this tribe dwelt in 'Asir north of al-Yaman.

It has been shown that nearly all of these regions are alluded to in the poetry of Mulayḥ. In addition, Mulayḥ has alluded to other locations that are not defined as abodes of the Hudhayl tribe. These are mainly the region which is on the eastern and southeastern sides of al-Madīna, namely those places between al-Madīna and Ḥarrat Laylā and between Ḥarrat Laylā and 'Ukāz and those places which are located on the western, eastern or north-eastern sides of al-Yamāma along the Falj *wādi*. If Mulayḥ and his kinsfolk really lived in these regions, then one may conclude that the abodes of the Hudhayl tribe extended to these regions as well. In this regard, the poetry of Mulayḥ should be considered of great importance, since it reveals new regions in which the Hudhayl tribe dwelt, regions that have not been noticed in the prose materials related to this tribe.

In addition to these places, Mulayḥ also spent an unknown period of time in Egypt and Jordan. With regard to Egypt, it was assumed above that he perhaps took share in this country's conquest. As for Jordan, the reason for such a visit is not mentioned in Mulayḥ's poetry, but it is not unlikely that this also occurred during the conquest of this country. If this was the case, then Mulayḥ may have described his return journey after the attack made on Jordan and the other parts of ash-Shām region (of which Jordan is considered a part). However, there were two attacks made on that region.

⁷⁴ Hartmann and Marr, "Djudda", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, II: 571.

The first was in the time of the Prophet, in the year 8/629. This attack failed and the Muslim warriors, who were around 3000 in number, came back to al-Madīna. This attack was in Mu'ta which is east of the Balqā' region in which Mulayḥ was positioned. Another attack, which was successful, was carried out after the Prophet's death, in the years 12-19/633-640.⁷⁵

If Mulayḥ really alludes to his share in one of these two battles, then this may lead us to reconsider the year of birth suggested in this paper and which was also suggested by as-Suwaydī in his aforementioned article. In this case, assuming that Mulayḥ was at least 20 years old during his participation in the battles, then Mulayḥ must have been born before the official year of the beginning of Islam. If he took part in the first raid, then his year of birth should not be after the year 12 B.H./about 611 A.D. If he took part in the second war, then his year of birth should not be after the period 8-1 B.H./615-621.

2.3 Was Mulayḥ a Nomad Bedouin or a Villager/City Dweller?

Some modern researchers have noticed that the branches of the Hudhayl tribe dwelt in different geographical regions which included mountains, deserts, and even villages. The life of most the branches of this tribe was a nomad Bedouin one.⁷⁶

Joseph Hell in his article "Der Islam und die Hudāilitendichtungen" assumed that Mulayḥ was a town citizen.⁷⁷ As-Suwaydī did not deal in detail with this issue, but he alluded in his article to the fact that Mulayḥ lived in a desert environment.⁷⁸ An-Natsha too, alluded to the description of the camel, in addition to mentioning gazelles and ravens, in Mulayḥ's poetry as indicating a Bedouin life, and believes that the love poems he composed are

⁷⁵ Ḥittī, Jurjī, and Jabbūr, *Tārīkh al-ʿArab*, 203-209.

⁷⁶ An-Natsha, *Ashʿār Hudhayl*, 1: 135-136, 141, 274-275; Ibrāhīm, *al-Bināʾ al-fannī fī shīʿr al-hudhaliyyīn*, 9. This latter scholar alludes in another place of his book that the Hudhali poets did not live in the desert and, therefore, mentioning the camel in their poetry rarely occurs, see *ibid.*, 49, 83. This contradictory statement by the author seems to be a generalizing one and is also inaccurate. Nāṣir ad-Dīn al-Asad alluded to the fact that the Hudhayl tribe dwelt both in deserts and in villages and towns, see his book *Maṣādir ash-shīʿr al-jāhili wa-qīmatihā t-tārīkhīyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif bi-Miṣr, 1962), 6-8. Zakī mentions that the life of this tribe was both a Bedouin and a village one, but he does not mention which of the two lives characterized the majority of the branches of this tribe, see Zakī, *Shīʿr al-hudhaliyyīn*, 94-97.

⁷⁷ Hell, "Der Islam und die Hudāilitendichtungen", 93.

⁷⁸ As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 82. The separation between the poet and the literary persona was discussed in modern times by Ronald Barthes in his book *The Rustle of Language*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1986), 49-55.

an excellent reflection of desert life.⁷⁹

It was mentioned at the beginning of this paper that it was impossible to determine whether or not the lover in Mulayḥ's poems really portrays the personality of the poet. In other words, it is impossible to know whether Mulayḥ expresses in his poetry the incidents that really historically happened to him or whether he expresses only literary figures that do not represent any historical reality. Qudāma b. Jaʿfar (d. 337/948), more than two centuries after Mulayḥ's period, discussed this issue in his famous critical work without dealing specifically with the poetry of Mulayḥ, and noticed that a poet is not and should not be a truth-teller. Perhaps we can regard such a statement as a recognition of the fact that the main persona in a certain poem should not be conceived, according to this classical scholar, as a reflection of the poet's real life. In other words, Qudāma recognizes the importance of making a separation between the poet and the literary persona in his works.⁸⁰ Despite this fact, since the poems of Mulayḥ are the only extant material through which one can derive some data regarding Mulayḥ the poet, I shall attempt to deduce such information through the content of Mulayḥ's poems. Judging the truth or the falseness of these conclusions is quite impossible.

2.3.1 Many indications in the poetry of Mulayḥ show that both as-Suwaydī's and an-Natsha's views are very reasonable. Mulayḥ, i.e. the lover, mentions clearly in some of his poems that he dwelt in the same places where his beloved has dwelt and from which she departed. He uses the word *khalīṭ* in order to describe the beloved and her tribe on the day of the departure [MbḤ3:1; 4:1]. This word means a neighbor and, quoting Lane's own paraphrasing, "a people, or company of men, whose affair, or case, or state, is one. It occurs frequently in the poems of the Arabs because they used to assemble in the days of the fresh herbage, sundry tribes of them congregating in one place, and familiar intercourse took place between them, and when they separated and returned to their homes, it grieved them".⁸¹ Since almost all the beloveds⁸² in Mulayḥ's poetry are described as nomad Bedouins, one should assume that Mulayḥ was the same.

⁷⁹ An-Natsha, *Ash'ār Hudhayl*, 1: 283-284, 289; 2: 90-91; 274.

⁸⁰ Ibn Ja'far, *The Kitāb Naqd al-shi'r*, ed. S. A. Bonebakker (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1956), 6.

⁸¹ Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2: 789.

⁸² To exclude poem no. 8, *bā'iyya* of *ṭawīl*, 17 verses, in which the departure and the *aṭlāl* of the beloved are not mentioned. However, this does not prevent the possibility that the beloved here is a desert dweller, but this is not mentioned in the text.

2.3.2 In addition to the word *khalīṭ*, Mulayḥ uses the word *ḥarā* which means “vicinage, quarter, tract, or region, of a man, or of a people”.⁸³ Mulayḥ in a certain verse of a *lāmiyya* of *ṭawīl*, mentions that his Yemenite beloved has departed from his vicinage (*na’ā min ḥarāhu*) [MbḤ10:2]. However, it is not known whether Mulayḥ uses this phrase literally or perhaps metaphorically to indicate that the beloved severed her relationship with him. If the literal meaning is indicated here, then this phrase shows that the two lovers used to live for a certain period in the same place. This perhaps provides an additional support for the view that Mulayḥ was a desert dweller.

2.3.3 In another poem, Mulayḥ wishes that his tribe and that of his beloved Laylā would depart together to the same place [MbḤ4:31]:

Jazītu bi-qawlin layta Laylā wa-ahlahā

wa-jāmilahum ajlaw bi-ahli wa-jāmīlī

[I [expressed my] fear by saying: [I wish] Laylā and her folk (or her family)

and their camel herd, took with them, when they departed, my folk and my camel herd]

The verse shows that both tribes lived together and that, in this verse, Mulayḥ’s folk are presented as owners of camels. This may also be another proof that he was a Bedouin, since owning camels was one of the main means of livelihood in the Bedouin life, especially the nomadic one⁸⁴. The verse shows too that both tribes lived together, but that the tribe of the beloved departed alone to a new abode.

2.3.4 Mulayḥ, in another poem, mentions that he lived together with his beloved in a certain place, and that he once saw a bad omen; two days later his beloved and her tribe departed. The image that Mulayḥ uses in this poem is interesting [MbḤ6:3-8, cf. v. 8]:

fa-mā kāna ‘an yawmayni ḥattā taṣadda‘ū

li-baynin kamā nshaqqa r-ridā‘u l-muṣayyahū

[And after two days they were separated;

like a cloven cloth when it is ripped]

A similar, but not identical, image is found in another poem [MbḤ3:5]. The ripped cloth is apparently a symbol of the lovers’ two tribes. The two tribes were like the cloth before it was ripped, they were almost one entity. After the departure of the beloved’s tribe this entity was ripped apart. However, the reason for mentioning that the cloth was already cloven (*ridā‘ muṣayyah*) before it was totally split, may be a further allusion to the rela-

⁸³ Lane, *ibid.*, 2: 557.

⁸⁴ Ḥusayn, *ash-Shakl wa-l-maḍmūn fī sh-shi‘r al-‘arabī l-qadīm*, 163.

tionship between the two tribes. Although they constituted one entity, the bond was not firm and constant, and it was like a cloth that could be ripped at any moment. In the light of this simile one may conclude that both tribes were temporarily related to each other like neighbors, but that this relationship, like the cloven cloth, was apt to be torn apart in any moment.

2.3.5 Another issue that supports the assumption that Mulayḥ was a nomad Bedouin is the careful watching by the lover - Mulayḥ - of the preparations for departure made by the beloved and her tribe. Mulayḥ makes a detailed and punctilious description of the camels being prepared by the tribe before departing, and he describes the women at the moment they were approaching to their howdahs. He then describes the movement of the camel train setting out on their way [MbḤ1:1-21; 2:1-25; 3:3-12; 4:5-34; 5:13-25; 6:1-3, 8-15]. In one of the poems he even describes his beloved when she was riding away on her camel [MbḤ1:19-21]. In another, Mulayḥ describes how his beloved departed without to saying word to her lover, because she feared a relative of hers [MbḤ2:30-33]. In all these poems, Mulayḥ gives the impression that he was in the same place as his beloved before her departure, and that he is describing what he was really seeing.

2.3.6 As other disappointed lovers would do, Mulayḥ attempts in many of his poems to recover. As other old Bedouin poets used to do,⁸⁵ he praises his own courage in passing through the fearful desert on his fast and strong camel [MbḤ1:64-70; 3:30-39; 4:45-60; 5:39-47; 9:30-54; 10:22-42; 11:12-14; possible also poem 6:28-29]. It is clear that by praising such courage, the lover declares that he also has the courage and ability to stop thinking about his beloved and to forget his painful love. Mulayḥ mentions in one of his poems that with his camel he can stop seeking his beloved, and can leave her to choose a life with other people. Mulayḥ states also that by riding his camel and by wandering in the desert, he will always succeed in overcoming his agony and gloom [MbḤ1:68-70; 5:39-47; 10:22-42]. Mulayḥ does not use any other means for self recovery except for praising his tribe in two of his poems [MbḤ1:30-63; 9:55-94]. In addition, he reminds himself in another poem that he was able to forget other previous love affairs and that he can even now succeed in forgetting his beloved in one poem [MbḤ4:43-44]. Finally, he recalls a successful relationship with a certain very beautiful maiden in another poem [MbḤ4:43-44]. If this is not per-

⁸⁵ See Jacobi, "The Camel-Section of the Panegyric Ode", *Journal of Arabic Literature* xiii (1982), 4-6; eadem, "The Origins of the Qasida Form", *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa. Volume One: Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*. Eds. Stefan Sperl and Christopher Shackle (Leiden, New York, Köln, 1996), 27-29.

ceived as cliché, then the dependence on desert travel as the best means to forget the sadness of lost love is an indication that the desert was Mulayḥ's abode.

2.3.7 Some of the animals and birds mentioned in the poetry of Mulayḥ were known to the Arabians through the deserts of Arabia. Thus, in addition to the camel which is mentioned very frequently in his poetry, and which is almost a purely desert animal, Mulayḥ mentions the gazelle [MbḤ3:19], the *rī'm* which is a white antelope (called *Gazella Leptoceros*) [MbḤ7:26], the ostrich [MbḤ3:37; 4:55] and the *qaṭā* or the sand-grouse [MbḤ4:54, 60]. Although it is possible to find such animals and birds in different geographical regions through the world, in Arabia they were especially familiar to desert and nomad dwellers.⁸⁶ A certain bird of the desert (‘*uṣfūr al-falāt*’), which, according to its name, is supposed to live only in deserts, is mentioned too [MbḤ10:19]. If Mulayḥ does not mention these animals and birds as clichés, this may support the assumption that Mulayḥ was personally acquainted with these creatures and, consequently, with the environment in which they mainly used to live.

In addition to these animals and birds, Mulayḥ mentions some other creatures that are familiar to the same degree for both desert and non-desert places. Among them are the rabbit (*umm khirniq*) [MbḤ1:57],⁸⁷ the raven (*ḥumm al-khawāfi, shahḥāj*, etc.) [MbḤ2:27, 28; 5:12; 6:5]; the eagle (‘*iqbān*, pl. of ‘*uqāb*’) [MbḤ7:52], and a kind of bird called *mura'* (pl. of *mura'a*) [MbḤ8:5]⁸⁸. He also mentions the falcon very frequently using different names for it: *ṣaqr* [MbḤ2:41], *ajādil* (pl. of *ajdal*) [MbḤ4:7], *ḥurr akḥṭab* [MbḤ8:11]. All these creatures cannot give any precise indication of the environmental arena in which Mulayḥ lived. However, Mulayḥ also mentions horses (*khayl*) in a certain simile associated with the beloved [MbḤ8:10]. The horse was an animal well known in Arabia to both nomad and non-nomad Arabs.⁸⁹ Mulayḥ's mentioning this animal very rarely in comparison to camels that occupy a central place in his poetry, may be an indication of

⁸⁶ Ad-Damīrī, *Kitāb Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā* (Egypt: Maktabat wa-Maṭba'at Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣubayḥ wa-Awladihī, no date), 1: 550. Ad-Damīrī (808/1405) mentions that the *rī'm* lives in deserts. See also Shakar, *al-Ḥayawān fī l-adab al-'arabī* (Beirut: Maktabat an-Nahḍa l-'Arabiyya and 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1985), 2: 279; al-'Ānī, *Mawsū'at al-ḥayawān 'ind al-'arab* (Irbid: Maṭba'at al-Bahja, 1998), 97, 208; Viré, “Ghazāl”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, II: 1037; idem., “Kaṭā”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, IV: 743-745; idem., “Na'ām”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, VII: 828.

⁸⁷ Al-'Ānī, *Mawsū'at al-ḥayawān 'ind al-'arab*, 160-161.

⁸⁸ Ad-Damīrī, *Kitāb Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*, 2: 455.

⁸⁹ Viré, “Khayl”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, IV: 1144.

two aspects regarding Mulayḥ. The first is that it is possible that Mulayḥ was not a rich person, since owning horses was a mark of wealth because of their high prices. The second is that Mulayḥ must have spent most of his time in the midst of the desert. Horses, though known to nomad Bedouins, were only found among those living in zones of steppe vegetation, such as a certain zone in Najd watered by the *wādī r-Rumma*, while camels were mostly found in semi-desert terrains and could live on spiny shrubs and arid pastures.⁹⁰

However, the only bird that does not live in the desert and which is mentioned by Mulayḥ is the *gharāniq* (pl. of *ghirnayq* or *ghurnayq*, i.e. flamingo) [MbḤ9:10]. This is an aquatic bird.⁹¹ We do not know whether Mulayḥ was acquainted personally with such a bird or whether he uses it also as a cliché, since it is mentioned by other Hudhali poets.⁹² If the first assumption is correct, then Mulayḥ may have known this bird during his sea travels.

2.3.8 With regard to the plants mentioned in Mulayḥ's poetry, some of them such as the *ghaḍā* [MbḤ1:50; 10:35, 39] and the *artā* [MbḤ4:45] are those found only in the desert.⁹³ Mentioning these plants, if not used merely as clichés, may indicate that Mulayḥ was also acquainted with the desert environment. In addition, some plants mentioned by the poet were found both in deserts and in other locations such as mountains, plateaus, and near valleys. These plants are the *arāk* [MbḤ3:20], the *khuzāmā* [MbḤ3:16; 9:24; 10:16], and the *uḡhuwān* [MbḤ5:33].⁹⁴ It is difficult to determine, according to the poetry of Mulayḥ, in which environment these plants were found and, consequently, to conclude about the environment in which the poet himself lived.

It is interesting to note that there is mention of some plants in al-Ḥijāz, one of the regions where Mulayḥ and his tribe lived, such as the *ḍāl* [MbḤ8:9; 10:35] and *nabʿ* [MbḤ10:13]. The latter is said to be found in the

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, IV: 1143.

⁹¹ Al-ʿĀnī, *Mawsūʿat al-ḥayawān ʿind al-ʿarab*, 196; Ibn Faḍl al-Lāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār fī l-ḥayawān wa-n-nabāt wa-l-maʿādin*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥamid Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān (No place: Maktabat Madbūlī, 1996), 111.

⁹² See v. 20, poem no. 11, by Abū Dhuʿayb, *jimiyya*, *ṭawīl*, in as-Sukkarī, *Kitāb Sharḥ ashʿār al-hudhaliyyīn*, 1: 128-139. V. 3, poem no. 33 by Abū Dhuʿayb (ascribed also to another non-Hudhali poet called Junāda), *ʿayniyya*, *wāfir*, in *ibid.*, 1: 231-232. See also v. 2, poem no. 5 by Abū Qilāba (no date of death is given), *jimiyya*, *wāfir*, in *ibid.*, 2: 720-721.

⁹³ Al-Aṣmaʿī, *Kitāb an-Nabāt*, ed. ʿAbd al-Lāh Yūsuf al-Ghunaym (Cairo: Maktabat al-Mutanabbī, 1972), 21; Abū Ḥanīfa d-Dīnawarī, *Qitʿa min al-juzʿ al-khāmis min kitāb an-nabāt*, ed. Bernhard Lewin (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz; Uppsala: A. B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1953), 24-25.

⁹⁴ Abū Ḥanīfa d-Dīnawarī, *ibid.*, 4-8, 30, 157-158.

Sarāt which is, as shown previously, a mountain chain, and where the abodes of the Hudhayl tribe were found.⁹⁵ However, it is not known whether this indicates that Mulayḥ also lived in the Sarāt itself. If this was the case, then it may be assumed that Mulayḥ lived in the desert, but perhaps during a certain period in the year he also used to dwell in the Sarāt or near it. It is known that nomad Bedouins used to leave the desert in certain periods, such as hard winters, in order to seek pastures near villages and other non-desert places.⁹⁶

In addition to these plants, Mulayḥ mentions other plants which grow almost everywhere, such as the *barwaq* [MbḤ1:51], which is a plant similar to the leek, found in every place except in the desert; the palm trees (*nakhl*) which are planted mainly where Arabs live [MbḤ1:13; 3:12; 4:28; 6:21], and also the banana trees (*mawz*) [MbḤ2:9] which, according to as-Sijistānī (d. 248/862), are grown in the places where the palm trees are planted.⁹⁷ These plants, except for the *barwaq*, could not provide any definite evidence regarding the surroundings in which Mulayḥ lived. Regarding the *barwaq*, since it does not grow in the desert, this may show that Mulayḥ either knew this plant during one of his voyages outside the desert, or perhaps may indicate that Mulayḥ used to live for a certain period of the year not in the desert but close to the villages and other non-desert places. However, the *nakhl* shows that Mulayḥ alludes to palm trees that were planted in or near certain villages or towns. Where he mentions this plant, he also alludes to a certain method of irrigating it. Thus, in one poem he mentions ditches or trenches (*khandaq*) found near the palm trees [MbḤ1:13]; in another poem he mentions that the trees were planted each near the other, and they were watered by irrigating ditches (*sharab*) [MbḤ3:12]; in a third, they were near creeks [MbḤ4:28]. In a fourth poem, this assumption is supported by his mentioning a place – called Khaybar – where the *nakhl* were found [MbḤ6:21], which was an oasis and settlement about 150 km north of al-

⁹⁵ Al-Aṣmaʿī, *Kitāb an-Nabāt*, 23, 36.

⁹⁶ Ḍanāwī, *Athar aṣ-ṣaḥrāʾ fī sh-shiʿr al-jāhili* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Lubnānī, 1993), 151, 153.

⁹⁷ See Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī, *Kitāb ash-Shajar wa-l-kalaʾ*, ed. Anwar Abū Suwaylim and Muḥammad ash-Shawābika (Amman: Dār al-Abjadiyya, 1995), 100-101; al-Aṣmaʿī, *Kitāb an-Nabāt*, 15; Abū Ḥātim as-Sijistānī, *Kitāb an-Nakhl*, ed. Ibrāhīm as-Sāmīrāʾī (Riyad: Dār al-Liwāʾ; Beirut: Muʾassasat ar-Risāla, 1985), 43-46; Abū Ḥanīfa d-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb an-Nabāt: al-juzʾ ath-thālith wa-n-niṣf al-awwal min al-juzʾ al-khāmis*, ed. Bernhard Lewin (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974), 253. The *mawz* plant is mentioned by another Hudhali poet, Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhali, an Umayyad one, v. 7, poem 1, *bāʿiyya*, *ṭawil*, and v. 12, poem 2, *dāliyya*, *basīṭ*, in as-Sukkarī, *Kitāb Sharḥ ashʿār al-hudhaliyyin*, 2: 915-926.

Madīna.⁹⁸ We do not know whether Mulayḥ lived for a certain period of his life in that place, but it has been previously shown that Mulayḥ lived or even visited places close to al-Madīna. It is not unlikely, therefore, that he knew Khaybar and its palm trees either through a certain visit he made to this place or perhaps because he heard about the palm trees of that place. This could occur without the poet living personally in it.

2.3.9 The most noticeable element in the poetry of Mulayḥ is the reference to sea and ships. Normally, he compares the camel train of the beloved's tribe to a fleet of ships paving their way across the sea [MbḤ2:22; 3:7, 11; 5:13]. In a poem, he compares the chest of the beloved's camel to a ship and its movement [MbḤ5:30]. In the same poem, the beloved makes an oath to her lover that if he remains loyal to her, then she would remain loyal to him as long as ships travel on the sea [MbḤ5:37]. Mulayḥ in another poem compares his own camel traveling amidst the desert to a huge ship traveling in the sea [MbḤ10:36]; while in another one he mentions sea and waves but without making any mention of the ships [MbḤ9:62, 92].

H. Kindermann and C.E. Bosworth note that Arabs in the Arabian peninsula, before Islam and until the time of the first three Orthodox Caliphs, had only a very marginal familiarity with the sea and ships. These included some of the people of al-Ḥijāz who were acquainted with the Red Sea, and also the inhabitants of the southern coasts of the Persian Gulf. Residents of Arabia, and especially pure Bedouins, normally were very scared of the sea. Mentioning the sea and ships in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, therefore, was very rare and occurred normally in similes, especially when the poets used to describe a camel train. Unlike I. Goldziher, who says that mentioning ships does indicate an acquaintance of the old Arabs with the sea and navigation, Kindermann and Bosworth discuss this issue and conclude that mentioning the sea and ships in Old Arabic poetry does not, necessarily, show that the poets themselves had a personal acquaintance with the sea, and may be used by them merely as clichés. It was only in the time of ʿUthmān (re. 23-35/644-656), that Muʿāwiya, the ruler of Syria, asked his permission to build a fleet for use in the war against the Byzantines.⁹⁹ Since then, and within an astonishingly short time, the Arabs became very well acquainted with the sea.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Vaglieri, "Khaybar", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, IV: 1137.

⁹⁹ Ḥittī considers Muʿāwiya and ʿAbd al-Lāh b. Saʿd b. Abi Sarḥ (ca. 25-34/645-655) the first two Muslim princes of the sea, since both used the sea almost in the same time in order to fight the Byzantines. See Ḥittī, Jurjī, and Jabbūr, *Tārīkh al-ʿarab*, 225.

¹⁰⁰ Goldziher, "Das Schiff der Wüste", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* (1890) XLIV, 165; Kindermann and Bosworth, "Safīna", *The Encyclopaedia*

It is not known whether the almost intensive mention of the sea and ships in the poetry of Mulayḥ is an indication that Mulayḥ had personal experience with sea and ships or whether he imitated other pre-Islamic poets who mentioned these motifs as clichés. Ibrāhīm believes that they are clichés¹⁰¹ while as-Suwaydī says that Mulayḥ's mention of the ships was because the abodes of his tribe Hudhayl were near the Red Sea.¹⁰² This perhaps may be a reasonable interpretation of this phenomenon in Mulayḥ's poetry. However, if Mulayḥ's motifs associated with the sea and ships were not clichés, then an additional interpretation may be suggested. It is possible that Mulayḥ's experience with the sea may have been acquired through his participation in the expeditions of Muslim troops outside Arabia. It has already been shown that Mulayḥ apparently took part in the expedition to Egypt, and since historically it is known that after that expedition, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarḥ, governor of Egypt, sent his armies through the sea to attack the Byzantines, in the war of *Dhāt aṣ-Ṣawārī* which occurred about the year 34/655 and in which ships from Alexandria and also from the Syrian coastal port were engaged and the Roman fleet was totally destroyed, it is possible that Mulayḥ was also among these troops and that he participated in that naval attack.¹⁰³

2.3.10 In his poetry, Mulayḥ uses foreign words, normally of Persian origin. Thus, he mentions the word *yarandaj* [MbḤ5:19] which means a black dye or a black leather which is used to shoe camel's hooves.¹⁰⁴ This word, which has another variation *arandaj*, according to al-Fayrūzābādī, is an Arabized word. Al-Fayrūzābādī does not mention the original language from which it was taken.¹⁰⁵ Mulayḥ also mentions the word *qahramān* [MbḤ10:29] which means a commander and has other meanings as well. As Ibn Sīdah (d. 458/1066) states, it is a Persian word.¹⁰⁶

*dia of Islam*², C.D. edition, VIII: 808-809.

¹⁰¹ Ibrāhīm, *al-Binā' al-fannī fī shi'r al-hudhaliyyīn*, 48-49.

¹⁰² As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 84.

¹⁰³ Bosworth, "Dhāt al-Ṣawārī", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, XII: 221; Becker, "'Abd allāh b. Sa'd", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, I: 51; Ḥittī, Jurjī, and Jabbūr, *Tārīkh al-ʿArab*, 225.

¹⁰⁴ Lewin, *A Vocabulary of the Hudāilian Poems* (Göteborg: Kungl. Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets-Samhället, 1978), 483.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Fayrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, 1: 259.

¹⁰⁶ Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam wa-l-muḥīṭ al-a'zam*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamid Hindāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000), 4: 459. See also al-Azhari, *Tahdhīb al-lughā*, ed. Muḥammad 'Awaḍ Mur'ib (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' at-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2001), 6: 267. The latter mentions that this word is Arabized but without mentioning from which original language is it taken. See also Lewin, *A Vocabulary of the Hudāilian Poems*, 362; Dozy, *Takmilat al-ma'ājim al-ʿarabiyya*, trans. Muḥammad Salīm an-

In addition, Mulayḥ mentions other Arabic words of Persian origin. These are: *surādiq* which means a curtain and has additional meanings [MbḤ9:89];¹⁰⁷ *barāziq* [MbḤ9:90], pl. of *birziq* or *barzaq* or *birzāq* and means horsemen, or a group of people or a group of horses;¹⁰⁸ and also the word *rasātiq* [MbḤ9:91], pl. of *rustāq*, meaning a district.¹⁰⁹

According to the index attached to the third volume of *Kitāb Sharḥ ash‘ār al-hudhaliyyīn*, other Hudhali poets do not mention any of these words mentioned by Mulayḥ. It is not known whether or not Mulayḥ’s use of these words in his poetry shows a certain connection between him and Persia or at least Persians. In other words, it is not known whether he had contact with some Persian people or whether he perhaps visited certain places that were under the control of the Persian regime, as for example al-A‘shā (d. ca. 7/629) did. In this case, it is not unlikely that Mulayḥ himself fought in some battles during the conquest of the lands under the control of Persia. These battles began in the year 15/636 or 16/637 under the command of ‘Abd al-Lāh b. Abī Waqqāṣ (d. between 50-58/670-678).¹¹⁰

It is worth mentioning that al-Aṣma‘ī (d. 216/831) says that ‘Amr b. Aḥmar (d. ca. 65/685) used the aforementioned word *yarandaj* without knowing its real meaning.¹¹¹ It would not be reasonable to say that Mulayḥ also used words without understanding their meanings, but it is possible that he did so because they were being used by the Arab community of his time without having himself having any direct connection either to Persian people or to Persia itself.

Final Word

An attempt has been made through the present paper to reveal all possible biographical data on the Old Arabic poet Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam: his name;

Nu‘aymī (Baghdad: Dār ash-Shu‘ūn ath-Thaqāfiyya l-‘Āmma, 1997), 8: 403.

¹⁰⁷ Az-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs min jawāhir al-qāmūs*, ed. ‘Abd as-Sattār Aḥmad Farrāj and others (Kuwait: Maṭba‘at Ḥukūmat al-Kuwayt, 1965-2001), 25: 441-442; Lewin, *A Vocabulary of the Hudāilian Poems*, 191; Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 4: 1348.

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Durayd, *Kitāb Jamharat al-luḡa* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, no date), 3: 305; Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam*, 6: 618; al-Fayrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, 3: 288; az-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 25: 75-76; Lewin, *A Vocabulary of the Hudāilian Poems*, 21.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-luḡa*, 9: 297; Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam*, 6: 612; Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1990), 10: 116; al-Fayrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, 3: 319; az-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, 25: 342-343; Lewin, *A Vocabulary of the Hudāilian Poems*, 154; Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 3: 1076.

¹¹⁰ Ḥittī, Jurjī, and Jabbūr, *Tārīkh al-‘Arab*, 212-217. Conquering Persia lasted about a decade. See also Vaglieri, “al-Ḳādisiyya”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, IV: 385; Hawting, “Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqāṣ”, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², C.D. edition, VIII: 696-697.

¹¹¹ Al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-luḡa*, 1: 170-171.

the period in which he is supposed to have lived; the places in which he dwelt or to which he traveled; and also his possible share in Muslim conquests outside Arabia. In addition, the paper deals with the controversy among modern researchers about some of these issues and also as to whether he was a nomad Bedouin or a city dweller, which are discussed and determined through an analyzing of Mulayḥ's poetry. Other issues that have not been discussed in modern research concerning Mulayḥ's biography, have also been studied in the present paper.

The only issue that has not been studied is Mulayḥ's romantic life, and it was discussed in detail in another paper.¹¹² These poems mainly concern his love affairs. An attempt to discuss this issue has already been made by as-Suwaydī. However, his conclusions in this regard were too contradictory. He first concludes that Mulayḥ fell in love with only one maiden whom he describes in all of his poems and to whom he gave different names, at least a name in each poem, in order to confuse his audience and to hide her real identity. Among these names he mentions the nickname Umm ʿĀbid (lit. the mother of ʿĀbid). In one place, the author assumes that she was Mulayḥ's beloved who was far away from her lover. The main reason for the separation between both is twofold: her migration with her tribe, and also the hostility between her tribe and Mulayḥ. In another place, as-Suwaydī mentions that this woman might not be his beloved but his real wife. Here it would be difficult to understand how such a wife, because of the migration of her tribe, was separated from her husband. The author assumes that ʿĀbid is the name of Mulayḥ's son. Elsewhere as-Suwaydī assumes that this woman is married and has a son, and that Mulayḥ desired to have unlawful relationship with her, which caused hostility with her tribe.¹¹³ These conclusions made by as-Suwaydī are not accurate.

A final note concerns the supposed participation of Mulayḥ with Muslim troops in their conquests. It is astonishing that Mulayḥ indirectly alludes to these incidents but does not praise his own share in them. A precise answer to this perplexing phenomenon is unobtainable through the material in hand. However, it is possible that Mulayḥ really extolled such incidents, but that for some reason his poetry did not survive. However, not praising the share in Muslim expeditions does not seem to characterize Mulayḥ's poetry alone. It is known that there was another poet of the same tribe, Abū Dhuʿayb al-Hudhalī, who took part in the Muslim expeditions, but his extant poetry also does not include any passage eulogizing them.

¹¹² Hussein, "A Unique Pattern in the Love Poetry of Mulayḥ b. al-Ḥakam", 20-54.

¹¹³ As-Suwaydī, "Mulayḥ b. Ḥakam", 67-70.

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