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Patterns of Intertribal Violence in Late Antique Arabia (III-VII Century AD)

Geç Antikçağ Arabistanında Kabilelerarası Şiddetin Tezahürleri (MS III.-VII. Yüzyıl)

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ÖZ

Geç Antikçağ Arabistan'ında Bizans ve Sâsâni devletlerine tâbi merkezileşmiş politik organizasyonların yanında yarımada'nın iç kısımlarında çok sayıda merkezileşmemiş konar-göçer veya yerleşik kabile tipi politik yapılarla karşılaşmaktadır. Kabileler arasında sürekli çatışma ve savaşlar meydana gelmekteydi. Savaşların asabiyet, ganimet, kan davası, su ve otlak arayışı, oç alma ve sınır ihlalleri gibi birçok nedeni vardır. Bütün bu nedenler ve savaşların görece olarak çokluğu, İslam öncesi kabileler arası savaşların bir yaşam biçimi olduğunu göstermektedir. Savaşlar vasıtasıyla herhangi bir nedenle birbirlerinden kopmuş kardeş kabileler bir araya gelebilmekte, bir devletin tehdidine karşı güçlü bir birlik oluşturabilmektedir. Söz konusu savaşları konu edinen literatür ise eyyâmü'l-Arap olarak isimlendirilmektedir. Miladi VIII. yüzyıldan itibaren yazıya geçirilmeye başlanan bu literatür, kabileler arası savaşları, baskınları ve ganimet elde etme güdüsüyle yapılan yağma ve talanları ve katliamları; yine Arap kabileleri arasındaki ilişkileri, iktidar mücadelelerini, asabiyet duygusunu, çatışma ve savaş stratejilerini, gündelik yaşam ve savaş hukukunu içermektedir. Araştırmamız nitel paradigmaya dayalı doküman analizi yöntemiyle İslam öncesi Araplarda bir savaş stratejisi olarak baskınlar, ganimet elde etme güdüsüyle yapılan yağma, talan ve katliamlara odaklanmakta ve söz konusu dinamikler üzerinden İslam öncesi Arap kabilelerinde savaş ve çatışmaların ürettiği sosyo-ekonomik ittifak pratiklerinin analizini ele almıştır. Ulaşılan verilere göre bölgedeki kaynaklarının yetersizliği, merkezî otoritenin yoksunluğu, ganimet elde etme güdüsü gibi gerekçelerin çatışma ve ittifaklara sebep olduğu anlaşılmaktadır.

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ABSTRACT

In Late Antiquity Arabia, under the Byzantine and Sassanid states, there are many decentralized nomadic or sedentary tribal political structures in addition to centralized organizations. There are constant conflicts and wars between the tribes. There are many reasons for their wars such as booty, blood feud, revenge, and border violations. All these reasons and the relative multiplicity of wars show that inter-tribal wars are a form of life in the pre-Islamic period. Through wars, fraternal tribes that are separated from each other for any reason can come together and form a strong unity against the threat of a state. The literature that deals with these wars is called ayyâm al-Arab. This literature, which began to be written down in the 8th century AD, includes intertribal wars, raids, plundering and mass murder with the motive of looting; it also includes relations between Arab tribes, power struggles, feelings of nervousness, strategies of conflict and war, daily life and the law of war. Our research focuses on raids as a war strategy among pre-Islamic Arabs, looting, plundering and mass murder with the motive of gaining booty, with the method of document analysis based on a qualitative paradigm, and it aims to analyse the socio-economic alliance practices produced by war and conflict among Arab tribes through the dynamics. According to the data obtained, it is understood that the reasons such as the inadequacy of resources in the region, the deprivation of central authority, the motive of obtaining booty cause conflicts and alliances.

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Introduction

This paper focuses on the Arab tribal wars, known in the literature as 'ayyām al-Arab'. In order to prevent my research from being overshadowed by the complexity of the concept, I would like to clarify at this point what I mean by the term ayyām al-Arab. The word "ayyām" in the expression "ayyām al-Arab" simply means "days, events, blessings and time", but in this expression it refers to "wars" between Arab tribes. This expression has been used in Islamic literature to refer to the wars fought by the Arabs both before and after Islam. The wars fought by the pre-Islamic Arabs are called "ayyām al-Arab fi al-Jahiliya", while those fought after Islam are called "ayyām al-Arab fi al-Islam" (Ibn Manzūr, n.d., 15/466-467; al-Zabīdī, n.d., 34/143-145; Kapar, 1995, 12/14; Daş, 2019, pp. 18-19). It is quite difficult to determine the historical boundaries of Ayyām al-Arab literature. Because the Arabs, who did not use a systematic calendar, naturally did not date their memories of the past in their oral narratives. These war stories, passed down from generation to generation in the form of poetry, can be dated to about 150 years before Islam (Çetin, 2011, p. 8; Goldziher, 2016, p. 20; Kapar, 1995, 12/14). As ayyām al-Arab deals with issues of the near future, these stories have gained a vivid place in the social memory and have been passed on to the next generations in a literary form.

Information about pre-Islamic Arab tribal wars began to be written down from the 8th century onwards. Although it is known that Abu Ubaida Mamar ibn Muthanna (d. 824?) wrote a work on this subject in which he compiled about 1200 war stories, it has not survived to the present day. However, some narrations have survived from the works of scholars such as Ibn Abd Rabbihi (d. 940), al-Isfahānī (d. 967), Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233) and Yakut al-Hamawī (d. 1229). Especially the information given by Ibn al-Athir is both chronological and detailed (Kapar, 1995, 12/14).

According to early Islamic historians, between 70 and 1700 battles, large and small, are mentioned in the ayyām al-Arab (Ālūsī, 1983, 2/68-75; Kapar, 1995, 12/14). The fact that the number varies so much is related to the fact that some of the battles were reported with more than one name and even each day and night of the war was given a different name. The literature of ayyām al-Arab generally mentions large-scale wars between the Gassānids and the Lakhmids, the Arabs and the Sāsānids, as well as wars between tribal confederations such as the Qahtanīs and the Adnānīs and the sub-tribes of these tribes (Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 5/132-268; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/503-687; Cād al-Mawlā, n.d.; Alī, 2001, 5/341-387).

The wars in the literature of ayyām al-Arab have many reasons such as tribalism, booty, blood feud, search for water and pasture, revenge and border violations. It is even mentioned that some wars were fought for purely arbitrary reasons (Apak, 2016, pp. 21-25; Ögmüş, 2013, pp. 86, 92, 141-151, 138-139; Acar, 2014, p. 94; Duman & Dindi, 2022, pp. 127-134). All these reasons and the relative multiplicity of wars show that wars among the pre-Islamic Arab tribes were a way of life. The absence of a central administration in the peninsula and the prevalence of tribal-type organisation dominated by nomadic life and decentralised administration led the wars between tribes to a way of life. Thus, wars also perform a function that keeps the tribal spirit and asabiyyah alive. Through wars, brotherly tribes that have been separated from each other for any reason can come together and form a strong unity against the threat of a state. For this reason, historical sources do not mention a state organisation dominating the entire pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula. In fact, the narratives about the failure of the states that tried to establish dominance in this geography due to the pressure of the tribes have a large place in the literature of ayyām al-Arab (Söylemez, 2006, pp. 115-130; Azimli, 2008, pp. 45-55).

This research focuses on the raids, looting, plundering and mass murder that took place in the wars rather than the wars between the pre-Islamic Arab tribes. Because the most prominent strategy in these wars is raids and subsequent looting and plundering with the motive

of obtaining booty. This is a distinct characteristic of decentralised political structures organised in tribal type. Unlike the state, the tribe has not paid, full-time, regular military units. Since all members of the tribe must respond to external threats, every member of the tribe who holds a weapon is the natural warrior of the tribe. Raids in particular kept tribes on the alert and forced them to form alliances with other tribes (Boztepe Kaya, 2009, pp. 731-744). This situation makes it understandable why the pre-Islamic culture of aman, hilf, djwar and patronage was so widespread among the Arab tribes.

In this context, the forms of intertribal violence on the Arabian Peninsula in late antiquity are discussed below in relation to the dominant phenomena of looting and mass murder.

Raids

The characteristic strategy of tribal warfare is the sudden, unexpected raid at night or in the early hours of the morning. This is also evident in the wars between the pre-Islamic Arab tribes. One of the main themes of the literature of Ayyām al-Arab is this type of raiding. The most remarkable narratives in the literature are about the raids between the allies of the Kinde tribe and the Lakhmids subject to the Sasanian state. According to the narrations, in the second half of the V. century, intra-tribal conflicts broke out after the administration of the Bekr ibn Wail tribe, which was one of the sub-tribes of the Adnani tribes and lived in a dispersed manner in the Najd region of the Arabian Peninsula, fell into the hands of incompetents (rabble). Due to political instability and power struggles, when the elders of the tribe could not solve the problems among themselves, they decided to ask for help from the kingdom of Himyer. In this period, the Himyer king Hassan ibn Asad (440-448) appointed Hujr ibn Amr 'Amr 'Aqil al-Murār, the chief of the tribe of Kinde, as the ruler of Baqr ibn Wail tribe. After this appointment, Hujr ibn 'Amr organised many raids on the Lakhmīd kingdom, which had previously raided the lands of Baqr ibn Wailids and seized some of them, and inflicted great casualties on them (Ibn Hishām, 1347H, p. 310; al-Ṭabarī, n.d., 2/89; Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/78; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/399; Robin, 2004, pp. 831-908; Günaltay, 2006, p. 132).

It is observed that inter-tribal conflicts and raids intensified in Northern Arabia after the rule of Hāris ibn 'Amr, the king of Kinde and Lakhmid state. It is stated that after the death (d.528) of Hāris ibn Amr ibn Hujr, the grandson of Hujr ibn Amr, who was one of the famous heroes in the pre-Islamic literature of Ayyām al-Arab, there were struggles for the throne among his sons, and due to these struggles, raiding, plundering and pillaging movements emerged among the Adnānid tribes. While al-Hāris ibn 'Amr was alive, he appointed each of his sons as administrators of the effective sub-tribes of the Mead/Nizār tribal confederations representing the Adnānid tribes subject to the Kinde State. In other words, he divided the state of Kinde among his four sons. He appointed his sons Hujr as the ruler of al-Asad and Kināna; Shurahbil as the ruler of Baqr ibn Wail, Ribāb and Hanzala ibn Mālik and Usayyid ibn Amr from the sub-tribes of the tribe of al-Tamīm; Salamah as the ruler of Sa'd ibn Zayd Manāt and Namir ibn Qāṣit from the sub-tribes of the tribe of al-Tamīm; and his son known as Ma'dīkarib as the head of the tribes of Qays-Aylān. When al-Hāris died, the throne fights between his sons led to constant wars, raids, plundering and pillaging among all the tribes under the rule of the state of Kinde, and thus, the state of Kinda disappeared from the stage of history (al-Ya'qūbī, 2010, 1/264; al-Iṣfahānī, 2008, 9/58; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/400; Olinder, 1927; Krenkow, 1979, 6/811-812; Küçükaşçı, 2002, 26/37-38).

In pre-Islamic Arab society, tribes frequently raided each other to gain power, move out of their natural habitats, obtain food against drought, and find new grazing areas for their animals. These raids led to the outbreak of larger wars. One of these raids took place in the battle of Qushāwa. This war took place between the Shaybānids, one of the sub-tribes of Baqr

ibn Wāil tribe, and the Yarbūids, one of the sub-tribes of al-Tamīm. According to the narration, the famous Arab hero and poet Bistām ibn Qays, a member of the Shaybānites, raided the Yarbūids, who were settled in a place called Na'fu Qushāwa, in the early morning when the weather was rainy, and returned to his homeland by leading all the camel herds in their pastures. Thereupon, the Yarbūids raided the Shaybānids in order to punish the participants of the raid and to take back their camels, but they were ambushed by Bistām and his tribe who were prepared for this situation and some of them were killed and the survivors were taken captive (al-Balādhurī, 1996, 12/196-197, 201; Abū 'Ubayda, 1998, 1/177-179; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/474).

According to another narration, Bistām ibn Qays, one of the Shaybānites, together with his allies, raided the families of Sa'laba ibn Yanbu', Sa'laba ibn Sa'd ibn Dabba, Sa'laba ibn Adī, and Sa'laba ibn Sa'd ibn Zubayn from the lower tribes of the Children of Tamīm, took their property as booty and killed many people. On his way back, he also usurped the camel herds of Mālik ibn Hanzala from the sons of Tamīm. Thereupon, the sons of al-Tamīm chased after the sons of Shaybān with mounted troops and fought with them at a place called Gabītu'l-Madarah and captured Bistām ibn Qays and defeated the sons of Shaybān and took back their property. This event is known as the Battle of Gabī in the pre-Islamic literature (Abū 'Ubayda, 1998, 2/486-489; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/474-475).

The war between the sons of Tamīm and the sons of Shaybān, known as the Mubāid war in the literature of Ayyām al-Arab, also took place due to a raid. According to the narration, there were some disagreements between two brother clans named Abū Rabi'a ibn Zuhl and Murra ibn Zuhl, two sub-branches of the Shaybān tribe. For this reason, the leader of Abu Rabi'a's sons, Khānī ibn Masūd, left the region where they lived and settled his tribe in the place known as Mabāid water. However, this region was very close to where the Tamīm tribe lived. Hanzala, Sa'd and bani Amr, the sub-tribes of the tribe of al-Tamīm, united and decided to organise a great raid on the Abu Rabi'aites, who they learned were defenceless, from three arms. The Abū Rabi'aites, who were aware of this situation, planned to trap the sons of Tamīm by pretending to be defeated during the battle with the guidance of their leader Khānī ibn Masūd. When they were raided, they suffered some casualties and retreated pretending to be defeated. In the meantime, the Children of Tamim, who thought that they had defeated the Children of Abu Rabi'a, started to collect the spoils. Taking advantage of this, the sons of Abū Rabi'a gathered and came to the battlefield again and defeated the sons of Tamīm. Abu Rabi'a killed many people from three tribes of the tribe of al-Tamim and took many captives. It is said that there was no other battle in which the sons of Tamim suffered so many casualties (Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/65-66; al-Nuwayrī, 2004, 15/301).

In another narration about the raid, the raiding tribe suffered a great defeat. Hātim, who belonged to the Tay tribe, embarked on a raiding movement against the sons of Baqr ibn Wāil with a detachment formed from the members of his tribe. However, the members of the Tay tribe suffered a great defeat. Some of those who participated in the raid were killed and a significant number of them were captured (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/481-482).

Another incident related to the defeat of the raiding tribe took place between the Suleimites and the Shaybānites. According to the narration, Imran ibn Murra, one of the Salemites, prepared a cavalry unit from his tribe and set out to raid the Shaybānites, a sub-tribe of Baqr ibn Wāil tribe. Having received the news that they would be raided, the Shaybānids made the necessary preparations and waited for the attack of the Sulaymids. While the Sulaymids thought that they would get a lot of booty by raiding, they suddenly encountered a prepared tribe. The Sulaymids suffered a great defeat on the way to the raid and lost many of their members on the battlefield and gave many prisoners (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/483).

In some of the narrations mentioned in the sources about the raids, there is also information about the allies of the raided tribe rushing to help after the raid. According to the narration, a raid took place between the Shaybānids, one of the sub-branches of the Bekr ibn Wāil tribe, one of the pre-Islamic Arab tribes, and the Banu Minkar, one of the sub-branches of the Tamīm tribe. When al-Hāris ibn Sharīq (al-Hawfezān), who is understood to be the leader of the Shaybānids, gathered the tribes of Zuhd and Lahāzim and set out to raid the Banu Minkar, they planned to attack Salīt ibn Yarbu tribe, who were in the same direction and were their allies, but they made a new agreement with Salīt ibn Yarbu tribe and continued their way. However, these tribes raided the people of Rubay' ibn Khāris, who lived defencelessly away from their allies in a place called Jadūd, and captured their camels, women and children. Upon this situation, although the people of Rubay' ibn Khāris asked for help from the surrounding tribes, only Minkar ibn Ubayd tribe, one of the sub-branches of the Tamīm tribe came to their aid. Banu Minkar joined forces with Rubay' ibn Hāris tribe and defeated the raiding tribes and recovered the goods they had lost to Baqr ibn Wāil tribe due to the previous raid and the captured tribe members (Abū 'Ubayda, 1998, 1/314-316; Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/57-59; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/483-484).

Another event related to raiding in the pre-Islamic literature is the battle of Shakīqa. This war took place because the Shaybānids seized the camel herd of the tribe of Dabba ibn Udd through raiding. According to the narration, Bistām ibn Qays, one of the sons of Shaybān, took his brother Salīl with him and set out to seize the camels of the sons of Dabba, gathered the camels of the sons of Dabba, which were spreading unprotected from a high place, and joined them in front of them. The Children of Dabba, who were aware of this situation, immediately prepared a cavalry unit and chased after Bistām and his brother. With the support of the Sa'labaites, the Dabbaites killed the leader of the attacking tribes, Bistām and some of his men, and took many captives (Abū 'Ubayda, 1998, 2/408-410; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/486-488).

Another raid incident occurred in the battle of Sahūk. Probably after the battle of Rakām, the Zubyānites, one of the sub-branches of the Ghatafān tribe, decided to attack the tribe of Āmir ibn Sa'sa'a under the leadership of Sinān ibn Abī Hārisha in order to take revenge. Sinān ibn Abī Hārisha led a cavalry unit consisting of armed soldiers and raided on the sons of Āmir. In this raid, many camels and livestock of the Children of 'Amir were captured. Being aware of the raid, the sons of 'Amir followed the sons of Zubian and fought with them, but they could not avoid a great defeat (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/509).

The main purpose of the raids described so far is just raiding without any reason. Tribes could even organise raids against the tribes with whom they had an agreement. However, in the first narration, Baqr ibn Wāil's request for help from the Himyarids stems from the raid organised by the Lakhmīd state subject to the Sassanids. Even though it is not clear from the narration, the people who are described as ragtag were probably appointed as administrators by the Lakhmids. Thereupon, Baqr ibn Wāil tribe had to ask for help from the king of Himyer. Thereupon, they were freed from the pressure of the Lakhmids, but they had to accept the sovereignty of Himyer and the Kinde tribe. This shows that the raids forced the tribes to make new alliances and patronage agreements.

Looting and Plundering

I have tried to express above that the main war strategy among the Arab tribes was raiding, and here I will include looting and plundering among the common purposes of these raids, because one of the most important causes of wars in the ayyam al-Arab was looting and plundering along with raids, and wars fought for religious reasons and to gain influence generally resulted in looting and plundering. In the case of looting and plundering, mostly women and children were taken as captives in addition to the animals and valuables of the tribe.

As a matter of fact, one of the narrations related to the subject was experienced between the State of Kinde and the Sassanids in the pre-Islamic literature of Ayyām al-Arab. At the beginning of the sixth century, the administration of the Najid region was under the control of Khāris ibn Amr, one of the descendants of Hujr ibn Amr, the king of Kinde. During this period, when Kubād ibn Fīrūz (488-531) was on the throne of the Sasanian Empire, a new religious understanding emerged under the leadership of a man named Mazdak, and Kisrā Kubād adopted this new religion. Meanwhile, Munzir ibn Māūssemā III was at the head of the Lakhmids Kingdom of the Sassanids. When Kubād wanted Munzir to accept the Mazdak faith, Munzir rejected this invitation. Thereupon, Kubād appointed Khāris ibn Amr, the king of Kinde, who, like himself, had adopted the Mazdak faith, as the head of the Lakhmids kingdom. Hāris ruled the Lakhmīd kingdom until the death of Kubād. However, after Kubād, his son Unshriven (531-579), who was a staunch opponent of the Mazdak belief, ascended the Sasanian throne. During the reign of Unshriven, a great campaign was launched against Mazdak and his followers. Enūshirvān, who killed Mazdak and inflicted a heavy defeat on his followers, reappointed the former king Munzir ibn Maussamā III to the Lakhmid kingdom and marched against Hāris ibn Amr. Unable to stand against this policy change in the Sasanian administration, Hāris ibn Amr took his children, property and animals and took refuge in the lands of the Kalb tribe. Munzir III, who was reappointed as the king of Lakhmid, took action to capture Hāris with a large army formed from Arab tribes such as Taghlib, Iyād and Behrā, but he was not successful. However, the property and livestock of Hāris were plundered and nearly fifty people, including his two sons, were captured and slaughtered (al-Iṣfahānī, 2008, 9/56-57; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/399-400; Lammens, 1977, 6/6 ; Shahīd, 1986b, 5/632-634; Kapar, 2003, 27/54-55).

Another example of looting and plundering in the pre-Islamic literature is related to the attack on the Children of Asad by al-Hujr, the son of the Lakhmid and Kinde king al-Hāris ibn 'Amr and the father of Imru al-Qays, one of the poets of the muallaqa. This event triggered a series of wars between the South Arab tribes and the North Arab tribes. According to the narrations, the political instability among the Adnānīd (Maad and Nizār) tribes of the Northern Arabs prompted the tribal elders to ask for help from King Khāris, the king of the Lakhmid and Kinde states. Taking advantage of this, King al-Hāris appointed his four sons as rulers of each of the sub-tribes of the Nizār tribes. In this appointment, al-Hujr was assigned to the administration of Asad and Gatafan tribes. After being appointed to the administration, Hujr immediately decided to collect the annual tax revenues and sent tax officials to the Asadites. The Asadids, who could not accept this situation, beat the tax officials and expelled them from their homeland. Thereupon, Hujr marched on the Asadids with an army he gathered from the tribes of Rabia, Qays-Aylān and Kināna. Their property was plundered and pillaged and the prominent people of the Asadids were killed and exiled to the region of Tihāma. The Asadids, who were exiled to Tihāma, marched on Hujr to take their revenge and killed him in his headquarters. The Asadids lured the Qays-Aylān and Kināna tribes who supported al-Hujr to their side and plundered all the property and camels of al-Hujr and his family (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/401).

Another incident of raiding and looting occurred between the Gassanid king Khāris ibn Abū Shamir (529-569) and the Lakhmid king Munzir ibn Maussamā (first half of the sixth century-554 AD). During this period, there was a constant state of war between the Gassanians and the Lakhmids. According to the narrations, the Lakhmid king Munzir ibn Maūssemā took the tribes of Mead with him and came with his army to a place called Aynu Ubāg in the territory of the Ghassānids. From here, he sent an envoy to the Gassanid king al-Khāris and made an offer that included the options of ransom or war. Hāris asked for some time to think about the offer. In the meantime, he prepared a large army and confronted the Lakhmid king. The two armies began to weigh each other's strengths in mutual battles. After the exchanges were over,

they went to war. As a result, the Ghassânids won a great victory against the Lakhmids. After the war, al-Hāris marched with his army to Hīrah, the administrative centre of the Lakhmids, and had the whole city looted, pillaged and burnt (Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/108-110; Shahīd, 1986b, 2/1020-1021; Ağırakça, 1996, 13/397-398; Kapar, 2003, 27/54-55).

In pre-Islamic Arab society, the tradition of one tribe plundering another tribe's livelihoods (land and livestock) as well as plundering trade caravans was widespread. According to the narration narrated in the literature of Ayyām al-Arab in the context of the battle of Kulab II, Mushakkar or Safqa, during the Sasanian control of Yemen in the Meccan years of the Prophethood, the governor of Yemen, Bāzān (d. 632) sent a large trade caravan to be delivered to the Sasanian king Khusraw Parwiz II (590- 628). While this caravan was passing through the Najd region, it was plundered by the Tamīm tribe, Kisrā's goods were seized, and his envoys and guard archers were robbed. Because of the looting, Khusraw II invited Khawza ibn 'Ali al-Hanafī, the ruler of Yakama, one of the Arabs subject to him, to his palace, crowned him and gave him control of the Hajar region. After this assignment, he asked him to punish the sons of Tamīm who plundered his caravan. After inviting al-Hawza ibn 'Ali and his companions to the castle of Mushaqqar under the pretext of giving them grain, they behead them there (Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/69-87; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/492-493; Bosworth, 2004, pp. 115-116; Büchner, 1993, 10/244-248; Morony, 1997, 9/70-83; Fayda, 1992, 6/283-284; Pourshariati, 2008, pp. 130-160 Naskali, 2009, 36/176-177).

Another incident is narrated in the sources about the looting of the caravan of Kisrā Khusraw Pervez II by Arab tribes. According to the story narrated in the Ayyām al-Arab literature in the context of the battle of Sullan, the Sasanian king Khusraw Perviz II, under the patronage of the Lakhmid king Numan ibn Munzir (580-602?), used to send a trade caravan loaded with musk and cloth to the Ukāz fair near Mecca every year. During one such trade caravan shipment, the Aamirites, who were also allies of the Quraysh tribe, plundered the caravan and confiscated all the trade goods. Kisrā Khusraw Perviz II, who was aware of the situation, sent a military unit consisting of allied Arab tribes, including his brother, to punish the Amirids. During this period, Amir ibn Mālik Mulāib al-Asinna was at the head of the Amirids. Being aware of the situation, the Amirids made the necessary preparations and met Kisrā's army at a place called Sullān and defeated them (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/506-507).

Mass Murder

There is a lot of information about mass killings in wars that have occurred since ancient times. Especially in wars between states and empires, there are many events that can be characterised as mass murder. However, mass murder or mass killings are not very common in tribally organised political structures. This situation is basically related to quantity. In other words, tribes have fewer people compared to states. On the other hand, tribes have limited time as they mostly prefer raids as a war strategy. Therefore, they mostly fight with hit-and-run tactics. In addition, their main aim was to take the members of the enemy tribe as captives rather than killing them and to make an economic gain from this. When the literature of Ayyām al-Arab is analysed, events that can be described as mass murder are not frequently encountered in the narrations about the wars between the pre-Islamic Arab tribes. One of the narrations narrated in this context is about the battle of Ayn Ubâg. There are various narrations in the sources about this war that took place between the Ghassânids and the Lakhmids. According to one of these narrations, the Lakhmid king Munzir ibn Mâssemâ entered the territory of the Ghassânids with a large army. Hāris ibn Abū Shamir (529-569), the Gassanid king, who heard about this situation, prepared a large army and came to the place called Marj Khalima or Aynu Uba to meet the Lakhmid army that encroached on his lands. Two cavalrymen sent secretly by Hāris, who said that he had no intention of fighting at the beginning, came in front of the tent of the Lakhmid king Munzir and killed a few people. The Gassanid king Khāris pretended to

be unaware of this situation and announced that he would send his men to Munzir to determine the incident and that he would make peace and pay taxes. Because the king was planning to raid by pretending to make peace. Khāris immediately sent a delegation of one hundred or eighty men from his army, camouflaging their weapons, to Munzir. Munzir welcomed the delegation with a great ceremony, but after the delegation entered the palace, they slaughtered the king and his entourage (al-Balādhurī, 1996, 12/226-227; Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/109-110; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/431).

The sources also mention a mass murder carried out by the king of Kinde State, al-Khāris ibn Amr (490-528 A.D.). According to the narration, one of the male children of King al-Hāris was sent to the homeland of the tribes of al-Tamīm and al-Baqr to be given to a wet nurse. While the boy was with his wet nurse, he died due to a snake bite, whereupon al-Hāris had fifty people (100 persons) from the tribes of al-Tamīm and al-Baqr killed in exchange for the death of his son. This mass murder is known as the Dubay'āt incident among the pre-Islamic Arabs (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/436; Shahīd, 1986a, 5/118-120; Küçükaşçı, 2002, 26/37-38).

In the pre-Islamic period, the 1st Battle of Uwāra, which took place between Munzir ibn Imru al-Qays, the chief of Taghlib tribe, and Baqr ibn Wāil tribe, also caused large-scale mass murder. According to the narration, Salama ibn Khāris, one of the sons of Khāris ibn Amr, the king of Kinde, was the ruler of Taghlib tribe. When his father died, a struggle for the throne broke out between the brothers. In this struggle, Salama fought with his brother Shurahbil and killed him. Upon the killing of Shurahbil, Salama was expelled from the tribe of Taghlib, of which he was the ruler, and took refuge in the tribe of Baqr ibn Wail. At the cost of breaking their alliance with the tribe of Taghlib, the tribe of Baqr ibn Wa'il accepted Salama as their ruler. Although the leader of the Taghlib tribe, Munzir, asked the Baqr tribe not to break their alliance with them, the Baqr tribe rejected this request. Munzir ibn Imru al-Qays, who learnt that his proposal was not accepted, declared war on the Bekr tribe, saying that if he won, he would fill all the pits at the foot of the mountain of Uwāra with the blood of the members of the Bekr ibn Wāil tribe. A bloody battle took place in the place where the mountain of Uwāra was located between the people of Baqr ibn Walil and the tribe of Taghlib. Many people, including the elders of the Bekr tribe, were killed in the battlefield. They were taken as many captives as possible and slaughtered on the top of the mountain of Uvāra. So much so that the blood flowing from the bodies of the slaughtered people descended to the foot of the mountain of Uwāra. In addition, Munzir, the leader of Taghlib tribe, wanted the women of Baqr b. Walil to be captured and killed by throwing them into the fire, but he gave up this cruel method of punishment after someone intervened. It is said that after the battle of Uwāra II, Amr, the son of Munzir ibn Imru al-Qays, raided the tribes of Tay and Dārim and burnt to death a hundred people from the sons of Dārim (Ibn Habīb, 1985, s. 242; Ibn Durayd, 1991, p. 345; al-Işfahānī, 2008, 22/399-403; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/437-438). This is noteworthy as one of the rare records of burning to death in ayyām al-Arab.

In the wars that took place between the Arab tribes in the pre-Islamic period, it is seen that sometimes mass murder occurred in the form of killing all the members of one of the tribes participating in the war (mass killing). According to the narrations, it is understood that such a situation occurred in the war called Yahāmim or Kārāt al-Hūk. This war took place between the two brother tribes of the Tay tribe, the Jadīla and the Gaws tribe. These two tribes had been in constant conflict since ancient times. Their last dispute was finalised under the arbitration of al-Hāris ibn Jabalah, the king of Ghassan (529-569 A.D.). However, upon the death of Hāris in 569 A.D., the conflicts between the two brother tribes resurfaced. In a small-scale clash between the two tribes in a place called Garsan, the commander of the Jadīlaite, Asba' ibn Amr ibn La'm, was killed. For this reason, the elders of the Jadīla tribe, together with their allies, gathered under the chairmanship of Aws ibn Khālid and decided to fight against the Gaws tribe.

Thereupon, the Gaws tribe also entered into a great preparation with their allies. The two tribes fought a very bloody battle at a place called Kārāt al-Hūk. In this battle, almost all of Kilāb ibn Jundub tribe were slaughtered. So much so that after the battle of Yahāmim, the remaining members of the tribe took refuge with the tribe of Kalb because there was no one left to fight from the Jadīlāites (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/153-154).

Another mass murder incident among the pre-Islamic Arab tribes occurred in the battle of Rakām between the tribe of Āmir ibn Sa'sa'a and the sub-branches of the Gatafan tribes. According to the narration, the sons of 'Amir had declared war on the sons of Murra ibn Awf ibn Sa'd, Ashja' ibn Zi'b and Fazāra ibn Zubyān who lived in the valley of Rakām. Immediately hearing the news of the arrival of the Āmīroğus, the Ghatafan tribes joined their forces and started to wait for them. Finally, a fierce battle took place in the valley of Rakām. The sons of Āmīr, who were defeated in the battlefield, were captured and captured although they escaped. All of the captives (70 captives) were slaughtered and killed because of the blood feud of Ashja' ibn Zi'b tribe with the Āmirids (Ibn Abd Rabbihi, 2006, 6/26; al-Hamawī, 2011, 3/58; Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/508-509; al-Nuwayrī, 2004, 15/278).

Another mass murder incident took place between the tribes of Aws and Hazraj. There were many wars between the tribes of Aws and Hazraj who lived together in Yathrib before Islam, such as Sumayr Sara'ir, Rabi', Faari, Hâtib and Fijar. Among these wars, the 2nd Fijar war occurred due to the killing of hostages. According to the narration, the Aws tribe wanted to make an alliance with the Jewish Nadîr and Qurayza tribes against the Hazraj. The Hazraj tribe, which was aware of this situation, sent an envoy to the Nadîr and Qurayza tribes and said that if they allied with the Aws tribe, they would accept this situation as a cause for war. In response, the Jewish tribes told the Hazraj that they did not intend to make an alliance with the tribe of Aws. However, the Children of Hazraj demanded that they be assured that there would be no alliance. The Jewish tribes gave them forty young men as hostages. When some time passed after this incident, the Jewish tribes regretted that they had given hostages to the Hazraj. Because this situation humiliated them in front of the Hazraj tribe. For this reason, the Jewish tribes united with the tribe of Aws and decided to raid the tribe of Hazraj. The Hazraj, who were aware of the situation, killed all but a few of the Jewish hostages. Due to the killing of nearly forty innocent young people, this event was called the Second Fijar War. In the first Fijar war between the Aws and the Hazraj, the Aws tribe killed three young men whom they had taken hostage from the Hazraj in return for a diet (Ibn al-Athir, 1987, 1/534-537). This last narration gives important information about the Fijar wars. Because according to the general acceptance, only the wars fought during the haram months are called Fijar wars (Algül, 1996, 13/52). However, there is no information in the narrations that this war took place during the haram months. Nevertheless, the fact that these battles were called Fijar, contrary to the custom, is probably related to the killing of a large number of innocent young men who were taken hostage.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula, raids, looting and plundering were common in inter-tribal relations, while mass murder was rare. In the literature, the reasons for these wars include resource scarcity, looting, plundering, natural displacement, border violations, religious reasons and gaining influence.

One of the most striking aspects of the wars in the literature of ayyām al-Arab is that the common war strategy is in the form of sudden attacks and raids. In addition, it can be said that looting and plundering are frequent, while mass murder or mass killings are rare. One reason for this is that the aim of inter-tribal wars was not to kill, but to neutralise the other side through

raids, to seize livestock herds or to take tribal members captive. Afterwards, the captives are ransomed back to the tribe of which they are a member or sold in slave markets to make significant economic gains. One of the main driving forces of wars is the desire to obtain booty.

The fact that the wars were often in the form of raids must have contributed to the spread of the culture of aman, hilf, djwar and patronage among the tribes. On the other hand, examples in which the tribe in difficulty requesting patronage was invaded by the tribe from which patronage was requested reveal the state of uneasiness among the tribes.

Analysing tribal relations in the ayyām al-Arab will also contribute to the understanding of the basic political and social dynamics of early Islamic history. It can be said that the tradition of raiding, looting and plundering that emerged with pre-Islamic tribal wars continued in the post-Islamic period. In this context, the magâzîs, which deal only with wars in Islamic history, can be understood as the continuation of a historical narrative determined by the ayyām al-Arab.

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