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Muhannā b. ʿĪsā

Ḥusām al-Dīn Abū Mūsā **Muhannā** b. **ʿĪsā** b. Muhannā b. Mānīʿ b. Ḥudaytha b. ʿUṣayya b. Faḍl (b. c.655/1257, d. 735/1335) was the fourteenth of the Syrian Bedouin *shaykhs* who held the Ayyūbid–Mamlūk military office of *amīr al-ʿarab* (commander of the Bedouin). Holding office four times during the fifty-two years

between 683/1284 and his death, he became the paramount leader of the Arab nomads in the *bādīyat al-Shām* (the steppe between Syria, the Jazīra, Iraq, and the Hijāz) and a notable actor in the Mongol–Mamlūk confrontation.

Muhannā b. ʿĪsā was the oldest son of ʿĪsā b. Muhannā, the *amīr* who since the first Mongol–Mamlūk war in 658/1260 had carved out the office’s potential for supreme Bedouin leadership. Due to ʿĪsā’s death in early Rabīʿ I 683/May 1284, Sulṭān Qalāwūn (r. 678–89/1279–90) appointed Muhannā to the *im(ā)rat al-ʿarab* (amīrate of the Bedouin). He received the honorific title Ḥusām al-Dīn and inherited the lordship over Tadmur (Palmyra) as well as the *khubzs* (land grants) around the northern Syrian towns of Salam(iy)ya and Sarmīn. These land grants formed part of the *amīr*’s remuneration from the Mamlūk sultanate and in taking over from his father as *amīr*, Muhannā was permitted to keep them by the sultan. The bestowal of land and title added to the respect Muhannā enjoyed on account of his lineage of *shaykhs* and *amīrs*. Muhannā was of Āl Mānīʿ stock and the conferral of his status and grants as *amīr* would have been a merit for his lineage over that of rival lineages, namely, the Āl ʿAlī b. Ḥudaytha (in the hinterland of Damascus) and the Āl Mirā (var. Mirāh) b. Rabīʿa (in Ḥawrān and al-Jawlān). Together these lineages formed the Āl Faḍl clan, reputed ancestry from the “Southern Arab” Banū Rabīʿa b. Ṭayyiʿ tribe.

After years of loyalty to Qalāwūn, Muhannā also pledged allegiance to his successor al-Ashraf Khalīl (r. 689–93/1290–3). For unclear reasons, al-Ashraf seized Muhannā and several close relatives in 692/1293 at the Furqlus wells, east of Homs. Imprisoned in the Cairo

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Īsā b. Muḥannā

Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Muḥannā Īsā b. Muḥannā b. Māni' b. Ḥudaytha b. ʿUṣayya b. Faḍl (d. 683/1284) was the eighth of the Bedouin *shaykhs* appointed to the Ayyūbid–Mamlūk military office of *amīr al-ʿarab* (commander of the Bedouin). He held the *im(ā)rat al-ʿarab* (*amūrate* of the Bedouin) from 658/1260 until his death, only once briefly interrupted in 679/1280–1. In theory, he thereby commanded all Arab nomads in the *bādiyat al-Shām*—the steppe between Syria, the Jazīra (Upper Mesopotamia), Iraq, and the Ḥijāz.

Īsā was a fourth-generation descendent of the very first such *amīr*, Ḥudaytha (not Ḥudhayfa; d. after 615/1218). He so belonged to the well-regarded Āl Faḍl clan—allegedly of “Southern Arab” Banū Rabīʿa b. Ṭayyīʾ stock—and in particular their preeminent lineage (*āl*, *bayt*) who had their summer pastures between Ḥimṣ and the Euphrates valley. It is this very subgroup, called Āl Māni', that the sources refer to by the genealogically all too broad term Āl Faḍl when recounting inter-lineage rivalry.

His predecessor and second uncle Abū Bakr b. ʿAlī (d. after 659/1261)—of the more southerly lineage Āl ʿAlī b. Ḥudaytha that roamed the steppe east of Damascus—was holding the office under the Ayyūbids when in 658/1260 the Mongol invasion of Syria shattered Ayyūbid