

THE SHEPHERDING NOTION OF *AL-IMĀRAH*:
ABSTRACTING THE AUTHORITATIVE WORLDVIEW OF
THE SEMITIC ROOT 'MR OF PRE-ISLAMIC AND
ISLAMIC ARABIA

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Abstract

The normative impression of al-imārah often epitomizes this concept as an Islamic invention. Viewed from this particular epistemic standpoint, the authoritative worldview of al-imārah and its Arabic root 'mr (أمر) invariably symbolizes human-political order, essentially and practically throughout Islamic history. Semantically, however, the root 'mr in itself seems to offer a greater understanding of its authoritative worldview, particularly in consideration of the fact that it is a common root attested within many Semitic languages, transcending the Arabic semantical field of that root. With a comparative aim, this study seeks to examine the authoritative worldview of al-imārah semantically through its Semitic root 'mr, attested within two specific temporal frames: the pre-Islamic Arabia period and the Islamic Arabia period. For pre-Islamic Arabia's attestation of the root, this study utilizes documentary and literary sources, while the Islamic-Arabic lexicon is the main source for the latter period. Attestations of this root in the documentary sources are indicative of two particular worldviews, either solely for the divination context (Ancient South Arabian) or secular-shepherding context (Ancient North Arabian), while the literary sources of Jāhiliyya poetry hinted at an early combination of both contexts. Meanwhile, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also indicates the same fusion

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but differs from the literary sources in terms of its Islamic influences and its semantical range, which are more extensive. In many ways, all of them share the essential authoritative-shepherding worldview of guiding and protecting the interests of their respective dominions of either the divine, the secular, or the combination of both.

Keywords: *Al-Imārah*, Semitic Root 'mr, Semantic, Worldview, Pre-Islamic Period, Islamic Period.

1. Introduction

Al-imārah has often been linked to the Islamic legal-political concept. A.A Duri argued that it is a product of the Islamic-Arabic language, most often *via* the word *amīr*, a known derivation of the former that often came in early Islamic tradition to convey meanings symbolizing the head of certain political structures (commander, governor, or prince).⁴ Pushing through this exclusivity, some would even deny the existence of this concept before the arrival of Islam, locating other political institutions that were purportedly more suitable for the segmental society of pre-Islamic Arabs. Such institutions employed other titles instead, such as *sayyid al-qawm*, *za'īm al-qabīlah* (leader of the clan/tribe), or *shaykh* (elder).⁵ The most common definition for *al-imārah* found mainly within Islamic legal-political literature also points to the same trajectory, suggesting this concept as collateral that came along with the advent of Islam. At its most evolved form, this literature associated this concept with the caliphate system, continually as the appointment of reign to a person (*amīr*) by the Caliph in a certain province or town.⁶ Such a detailed

⁴ A. A. Duri, "Amīr" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, edited by H.A R Gibbs, H. Kramers, E. Levi Provençal, J. Schacht (Leiden: E.J Brill, 1986) Vol. 1, 438.

⁵ Arab Encyclopedia, "Al-Imārah", <<https://arab-ency.com.sy/ency/details/1502/3>> (accessed 16 June 2024).

⁶ It often comes as part of the classical Islamic state structure delegating the caliph in reigning the latter's territory. See for example Al-Māwardī, Abu al-Hasan 'Ali b. Muhammad, *Al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah wa al-Wilāyat al-Dīniyyah* (Cairo: Dār al-Hadīth, n.d) 62. See also Al-Qādhi al-Farrā', Abū Ya'la Muhammad b. al-Farrā', *Al-Ahkām Al-Sultāniyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2000) 34. See also Al-

association of *al-imārah* to the latter seems to suggest the specific and intricate position of the former within the whole Islamic legal-political compendium, securely positioning its place as part of the Islamic political concept and institution – no more and no less.

This study offers another angle of postulation of *al-imārah*, a kind that bypasses this normative Islamic-legal political framework through the utilization of semantics as the discursive strategy. Although *al-imārah* is beyond any doubt a word of Arabic origin, the semantics we propose here are not restrictive to a discussion of that exact Arabic word. This study instead deals with a deeper semantical analysis of the trilateral root of *al-imārah* - the root 'mr (Arabic: أمر). Such an aim stretches the semantical analysis beyond the Arabic language border, enabling one to traverse a comparative journey of the root between Arabic and other Semitic languages of the past. This is because the root 'mr is a known Semitic root,⁷ attested in a vast range of interrelated derivations within the East, North, and Central hemispheres of Semitic languages. Such attestations reflect those three consonantal forms 'mr,⁸ either through the verb form of the root with the meanings of either 'to say', 'to see', and 'to command',⁹ or

Qalqashandī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Alī, *Ma'āthir al-'Ināfah fī Ma'ālim al-Khilāfah* (Kuwait: Matba'ah Hukūmah al-Kuwait, n.d) Vol.1, 75.

⁷ G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT)*, s.v. "āmar" (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1974), 328.

⁸ By consonantal, it means restrictive vowel expression. For example, such a condition along with the void of oral tradition in Ancient South Arabian (ASA) script has disabled the possibility of its precise pronunciation, and can only be reconstructed through comparison with other Semitic languages. In another term, Peter T. Daniels referred to this system as the 'abjad'. According to him, this was the norm before the devising of vowels notation occurred in some Semitic languages like Ethiopic, Syriac, and Arabic. This is of course excluding the Akkadian, which is the earliest Semitic language that had employed a cuneiform writing system – syllabic and already incorporated vowels together with the consonants. For reference on ASA and its restrictive vowels, see Norbert Nebes & Peter Stein, "Ancient South Arabian", in *The Ancient Languages of Syria Palestine & Arabia*, edited by Roger D. Woodard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 146. For abjad writing system, see Peter T. Daniels, "Writing System" in *The Handbook of Linguistics*, edited by Mark Aronoff and Janie Ress-Miller (n.p: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2003), 43-58.

⁹ Such claim transpires through the shared attestation of the root within these

through a proto-Semitic derivation of the concrete noun *immeru* (tr. lamb).¹⁰ Specifically within these vast attestations, however, this study chooses to analyse the Semitic root 'mr in Arabia within its two temporal and spatial frames of pre and Islamic Arabia, with an aim of extracting the root's authoritative worldview through the semantic abstraction as the framework of analysis.

It is imperative to understand firstly that the attempt to perceive *al-imārah* through its root derivations is not essentially a new feat. The previous claim by A. A. Duri is one of the examples, despite its limited time range, which is only within the extent of the Islamic period. A similar but untimely view that perhaps transcends the Islamic timeline came from Ibn Khaldūn, who asserted the concept in its most evolved form as having its forerunner in the pre-Islamic Arabia period. Similar to A.A. Duri, Ibn Khaldūn located *al-imārah* not in its exact morphological form, but through the derivation *amīr*, which he contends to have symbolized military leadership in the pre and early Islamic period, before evolving to a much more complicated political designation (*amīr al-mu'minīn*) during the reign of the second Four-Rightly Guided Caliph (*al-khulafā' al-rāshidūn*), 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.¹¹ A modern take with a similar manner to Ibn Khaldūn came from an Iraqī-born historian,

meanings in many Semitic languages, such as Phoenician, Hebrew, Imperial Aramaic, Hebrew-Bible, Ugaritic, Arabic and many more. See Sulaiman b. Abd Rahman al-Dhīb, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufradāt al-Arāmiyyah*, (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Malik al-Fahd al-Waṭaniyyah, 2006), 35.

¹⁰ Apart from the verb form, Sulaymān al-Dhīb also listed its shared noun form with its concrete meaning of lamb, which has also been attested in Arabic, Phoenician, Punic, Hebrew-Bible, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Palmyrene-Aramaic, Syriac, and even Akkadian. The pronunciation varies from Arabic *immaru*, Akkadian *immeru*, Hebrew *immer*, and many more. In lexical reconstruction discourses of Semitic languages, Alexander Militarev & Leonid Kogan would even include the word *immar* as part of the Proto-Semitic lexicon, indicating its prevalence throughout the history of Semitic languages. See Sulaiman b. Abd Rahman al-Dhīb, 35. See also Leonid Kogan, "Proto-Semitic Lexicon", in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, edited by Stefan Weninger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 179-258. See also Alexander Militarev & Leonid Kogan, *Semitic Etymological Dictionary: Animal Names* (Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2005), Vol. II, 7.

¹¹ Ibn Khaldūn, Abū Zayd 'Abd ar-Rahmān b. Muḥammad, *Al-Muqaddimah*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2004), 240.

Jawwad Ali, who has argued for the similarity between the word *amruhum* used among pre-Islamic Arabs of the Jāhiliyya period to the Islamic period *amīr*.¹²

The *sui generis* of both Ibn Khaldūn and Jawwād's assertions materialize through their attempts to unveil *al-imārah* to its barest sense before being draped with the whole Islamic legal-political tenets. A quick affirmation of that is through their switch of focus from understanding *al-imārah* in its exact morphological form to the other derivational morphological formation generated from its root 'mr. Far from being original in their approach, it was perhaps the corollary assertions of Qur'anic attestations of this concept, which also have not attested to the idea of *al-imārah* in its exact morphological form but through the range of other derivations of the root; *amara - ya'muru - amr*.¹³ The Qur'ān conveys the human and political authority theme similar to the conventional *al-imārah* through the term *ūlī al-amr*, which reflects the meaning of 'those who have the authority',¹⁴ or 'those who are in charge of the affair'.¹⁵ Interestingly, the Qur'anic phrase conveys a predominantly general human authority in its understanding. This is in contrast to how A. A. Duri, Ibn Khaldūn, Jawwād, or the already-evolved Islamic legal-political definition above have associated *al-imārah* and their related derivations with specific political designations, respectively.

Although the Qur'anic attestation of *al-imārah* remains closer to all of them conceptually in terms of reverberating the same

¹² Jawwad Ali, *al-Mufaṣṣal fi Tārikh al-Arab Qabl al-Islām* (n.p: Dār al-Sāqī, 2001), Vol. 9, 219.

¹³ For the list of attested derivations of the root, see Muhammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li al-Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (al-Qāherah: Dār al-Hadīth, n.d), 76-79.

¹⁴ "O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority....". [al-Nisā': 59]. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qur'ān*, translated by Taqī al-Dīn al-Hilālī & Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Madīnah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of Holy Qur'ān, n.d), 118.

¹⁵ Muhammad Hashim Kamali translated the term *ūlī al-amr* in the same verse as 'those in charge of the affairs.' See Muhammad Hashim Kamali, "The Ruler and the Ruled in Islam: A Brief Analysis of the Sources", in *Justice and Rights: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*, edited by Micheal Ipgrave (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2009), pp 3-12.

meaning of human political authority, the variation is nevertheless evident morphologically. This refers to how all of them *-except the Islamic legal-political framework-* have resided on divulging the concept or at least what is morphologically near to that concept through other derivations and not through the exact morphological form *al-imārah*. A probable argument, for now, would suggest that the gist of the meaning and morphological differences between those derivations above bespeak derivational-based technicalities, which refer to the differentiation of meanings based on the generated morphological derivations in the Arabic language. Moreover, despite coming from the same Arabic root *'mr*, the temporal and environmental factors have moulded those terms to be specific in their particular definitions terminologically. Regardless of any of its possible conclusions, all attestations above share the same root *'mr* as well as their rudimentary understanding of the root that seems to project meanings related to human political authority. This point here is the main interest of this study, which involves exploring the attestations of this root's authoritative meanings and its worldviews.

2. The Root 'MR in Pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabia: A Methodological Quest

This is a descriptive qualitative study that mainly employs thematic analysis. By theme, we mean the root *'mr* itself, which acts as the independent variable determining the dependent variables that often come across as the root derivations and their meanings peculiar to those two temporal periods.

In place of secondary assertions concerning pre-Islamic Arabia's *'mr*, this study has instead relied directly on the primary sources of pre-Islamic Arabia, namely the documentary and literary sources.¹⁶ The documentary sources refer particularly to the epigraphic inscriptions discovered around Arabia.¹⁷ They comprise

¹⁶ Ikka Lindstedt classified the primary sources for this period into three; archaeology, documentary, and literary. This study only utilizes the latter two. See Ikka Lindstedt, "Pre-Islamic Arabia and Early Islam" in *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam*, edited by Herbert Berg (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), 160.

¹⁷ Epigraphy is the study of written matter recorded on hard and durable material. The term is Greek in its origin; *epigraphēin* (to write upon, incise) and *epigraphē*

two groups of inscriptions: the Ancient South Arabian (ASA) and the Ancient North Arabian (ANA).¹⁸ Tapping into these sources did not necessarily entail a fieldwork study, as most of these inscriptions have already been documented and gathered within existing corpora of pre-Islamic Arabia inscriptions. The two most important corpora referred to by this study are the Corpus for South Arabian Inscription (CSAI) in the Digital Archive for the Study of Pre-Islamic Arabia Inscription (DASI),¹⁹ and Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA).²⁰ Apart from these two corpora, we also utilize other secondary studies in deciphering related inscriptions attesting to this root, which comprise individual corpora, related Semitic dictionaries, academic articles, edited and authored books, and others.

On the other hand, the literary sources of pre-Islamic Arabia mostly refer to the written literary corpus of this period, which includes the Arabic and non-Arabic literary corpus. The former are the statements coming from the Islamic period, such as classical Islamic prose,²¹ genealogies, and pre-Islamic collections of poetry.²² By that scale, the Arabic literary corpus itself is already a vast resource, not to mention the non-Arabic literary corpus that comprises the foreign observations and statements on the Arabs of that period.²³ Between those two, this study opts to utilize the Arabic

(inscription). See Jaan Puhvel, “*Epigraphy*”, *Britannica*, <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/epigraphy>> (accessed on 4 March 2025).

¹⁸ Micheal C.A Macdonald, “Reflection on the Linguistic Map of Pre-Islamic Arabia”, *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy*, 11 (2000): 28-79.

¹⁹ For an introduction, see DASI, “*Corpus of South Arabian Inscription (CSAI)*” <<https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=42&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=0&rl=yes>> (accessed on 15 June 2024).

²⁰ For an introduction, see The Khalili Research Centre, “*Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia*” <<https://krc.web.ox.ac.uk/article/ociana>> (accessed on 25 May 2024).

²¹ Harry Munt et al., “Arabic and Persian Sources for Pre-Islamic Era” in *Arabs and Empire Before Islam*, edited by Greg Fisher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 434.

²² Micheal Lecker, “Pre-Islamic Arabia”, *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, edited by Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 154.

²³ They mainly comprise Assyrian, Greek, Babylonian, Roman, Persian, and Israelite literary corpus. See Robert G. Hoyland, *Arabia, and the Arabs: From the Bronze*

literary corpus, focusing solely on pre-Islamic Arabian poetry. The rationale stems from the essence of the poetry itself, which embodies the codification of literary prowess, knowledge, and values of the Arabs of that period, not merely statements or observations from outsiders, Arabic or non-Arabic alike. Secondly, since pre-Islamic Arabian poetry is largely attributed to the 6th century and associated with areal diffusion across the Central and North Arabian regions,²⁴ it is both temporally and spatially proximate to the advent of Islam. This makes it ideal for comparative analysis with the 'mr of the Islamic-Arabian period, or as a central link connecting the latter with the 'mr of classical antiquity as preserved in documentary sources.²⁵

In the case of the Islamic-Arabic period, this study mainly utilizes the Islamic-Arabic lexicon. Considering that it is purely an ingenuity of the Islamic-Arabic culture,²⁶ it could at least summarize how Islam has influenced the construction of authoritative meanings for the root 'mr in comparison with those two previous sources. It is imperative to note that the phrase Islamic-Arabic lexicon is pertinent to this study, which refers to any form of Arabic monolingual dictionary or lexicon compiled after the emergence of Islam, including both the pre-modern and modern ones. By that definition, a limitation is necessary due to the wide scale of sources that may be reflected through this expression. We would argue, however, that positioning a limitation is possible through the extent of the information, description, and example of the entry related to the root

Age to the Coming of Islam (Routledge: London, 2001), 9. See also Jan Retso, *The Arabs in Antiquity: Their History from the Assyrian to the Umayyads* (Oxon: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 8.

²⁴ Robert G. Hoyland, 9.

²⁵ It spans earlier from the classical antiquity period as early as the 4th century BC, such as this one South Arabian inscription (Najrān 1), which CSAI asserted to have come from period B (4th-1st century BCE). To put it into perspective, the Jāhiliyya period was around the 5th-6th century CE. See CSAI, *Najrān 1*, <<http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=9961&mark=09961%2C009%2C006>> (accessed on 20 June 2024). For the classifications of the period, see CSAI, *Editorial Criteria*, <<http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=109>> (accessed on 15 August 2024).

²⁶ Tilman Seidensticker, "Lexicography: Classical Arabic", in *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, edited by Kees Veersteegh (Leiden: Brill, 2006), Vol. 3, 31.

'*mr*' that these lexicons may have provided. The reason stems from the nature of these lexicons themselves, which tend to repeat the same information in their entries, possibly rooted in their methodology that has a propensity to recompile material from earlier lexicographic literature.²⁷

3. Semantical Abstraction of Semitic Root: A Brief Theoretical Note

Semitic languages are nonconcatenative, where they have their unique root-pattern morphology, often indicative of semantic abstraction. Janet C.E. Watson, for example, argued that the Semitic root has its semantical abstraction conveyed within two, three, or four consonants.²⁸ Words are derived from this root through the superimposition of templatic patterns using vocalism or the insertion of any consonantal affix.²⁹ Take the Arabic root *ktb* and its semantical notion of writing. An entrance of two vowels /a/ forms the root into a word that now procures both morpheme and lexeme values. It transforms into *K/a/T/a/B/a* with a pattern of CvCvCv, which carries the lexeme meaning of 'he wrote'.³⁰ If a vowel /i/ and a consonantal affix *alif* (/ā/) enter, it transforms into *K/i/T/ā/B* (tr. book), with another templatic pattern of CvCvC. Despite these changes, the notion of writing remains within the same root.³¹

²⁷ Tilman Seidensticker, Vol. 3, 35.

²⁸ See Janet C.E. Watson, *The Phonology and Morphology of Arabic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3.

²⁹ Muayad Abdul Halim Ahmad Shamsan & Abdul Majeed Attayyib, "Inflectional Morphology in Arabic and English: A Contrastive Study", *International Journal of English Linguistics*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2015): 140.

³⁰ Note how a single wording of the Arabic word *kataba* carries two morpheme values of (he + wrote). This is due to the nature of the Arabic language as a non-concatenative language, where it lacks the ability to divide the morpheme. In detail, the root *ktb* in *kataba* expresses the semantic notion of 'writing', while the vowel /a/ at the end of the word represents the cumulative exponent of a 3rd person singular-masculine. See Janet C.E. Watson, "Arabic Morphology Inflectional and Derivational", in *The Cambridge Handbook of Arabic Linguistics*, edited by K.C. Ryding & David Wilmsen (Cornwall: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 406.

³¹ See Janet C.E. Watson, *The Phonology*, 3.

Beyond this intra-Semitic domain of Arabic, however, some scholars argue for distinctive measures between Semitic languages.

In Arabia of antiquity, the same groups of inscriptions under the Ancient South Arabians (ASA) and Ancient North Arabian (ANA) are also interchangeably used as the unit in bifurcating the linguistic formation apart from the Arabic language.³² Between the two, scholars are much more lenient in establishing the distinction between ANA to Arabic and its predecessors in antiquity (Proto Old-Arabic/ Old Arabic). For example, M.C.A. Macdonald touched upon the importance of recognizing the root word of Arabic as the element that can help in determining and providing clues for the possible cognate and approximate semantical field for the shared root word in ANA languages.³³ This is despite his acknowledgement of the fact that Arabic, or even its predecessor language in antiquity (what he termed as the Old Arabic) is different to other ANA languages (Safaitic, Dadanitic, Taymanitic, Hismaic, and others).³⁴ Ahmad Jallad also attentively concurred with the differentiation between the Old Arabic to ANA languages but agreed that the latter are mutually comprehensible even in comparison to Classical Arabic. He even argued ANA languages as the dialect continuum for Old Arabic, at least to the extent of Safaitic and Hismaic.³⁵ Contrarily, others like al-Farūqī disregarded this distinction and did not even mention ANA, affirming the northern Arabian of antiquity as basically Arabic speakers.³⁶ Ernst A. Knauf also went for this non-differentiation approach, arguing the ANA languages as Proto-Old Arabic, which is

³² Robert G. Hoyland, 200.

³³ Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Arabs, Arabia, and Arabic before Late Antiquity," *Topoi*, 16 (2009): 319.

³⁴ For his detailed discussion on the linguistic mapping of pre-Islamic Arabia, see Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic...", 28-79.

³⁵ Ahmad al-Jallad, "The Earliest Stages of Arabic and its Linguistic Classification" in *The Routledge Handbook of Arabic Linguistics*, edited by Elabbas Benmamoun & Reem Bassiouney (London: Routledge, 2018), 323. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, "Safaitic" in *The Semitic Languages*, edited by John Huehnergard & Na'ama Pat-El (London: Routledge, 2019), 343.

³⁶ Ismāil al-Fārūqī & Lois Lamya, *Cultural Atlas of Islam* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 20.

another term that he used in defining the first stage of the genetic development of the Arabic language.³⁷

Meanwhile, a much clearer and firmer distinction holds sway upon the umbrella term ASA of South peninsular Arabia and its four different languages, Sabaic, Minaic (Madhābic), Qatabanic, and Hadramitic.³⁸ Even Al-Fārūqī and Knauf, who did not argue for the differentiation between ANA and Arabic, agree that ASA is of different Semitic languages.³⁹ A naïve hypothesis produced from this firmer distinction would suggest that the root *'mr* shared by ASA and Arabic is then non-parallel to ANA and Arabic's relation, deploring the attempt to perform semantical abstraction within the former two languages. Such an assertion, however, must also be rejected. In a much more inclusive view, Robert Hoyland argued that all vernacular used in Arabia belongs to the Semitic family that bears close similarity to each other. The differences were only in terms of their linguistic features, such as the case of their definite article. For instance, the ANA has a definite article at the beginning of the word, while the ASA has a definite article at the end of the word.⁴⁰ On top of that, Arabic uses the article *'l* (*al*), contrasting the ANA and its definite article *h/han*.⁴¹

Nevertheless, Hoyland argued that they still bear a close resemblance to each other, especially in terms of their word structure, which is their root word system of three letters, an element that ultimately differentiates them from other non-Semitic languages. Rendsburg, Rubin & Huehnergard also argued that the differences between Semitic languages are no more than differences within a

³⁷ Ernst A. Knauf, "Arabo-Aramaic and Arabiyya: From Ancient Arabic to Early Standard Arabic, 200 CE - 600 CE", in *The Qur'ān in Context*, edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx (Leiden: Brill, 2010), Vol. 6, 7.

³⁸ Macdonald classified the ASA languages into two categories, the Ṣayhadic and non-Ṣayhadic. The former has four dialectal classifications: Sabaic, Minaic (Madhābic), Qatabanic, and Hadramitic, while the discovery and understanding of the latter is still in its infancy stage and yet to be deciphered. See Micheal C. A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic...", 28-79.

³⁹ Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic...", 28-79. See also Ismāil al-Fārūqī & Lois Lamya, 20.

⁴⁰ Robert G. Hoyland, 200.

⁴¹ Ibid. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, "The Earliest Stages of Arabic...", 323.

single group in Indo-European, of which a strong lexical correspondence from any of these languages is then expected.⁴² Conclusively, those assertions above have at least consolidated the ANA, ASA, and Arabic into a group of languages that are distinct but closely similar to each other, particularly established through the possibility of their connections within the semantical realm in their root word structure.

4. Semantical Abstraction and Worldview: Framework of Analysis

This study applies the understanding of semantics as proposed by Toshihiko Izutsu, which defines it as:

An analytic study of the key terms of a language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual grasp of the *weltanschauung* or world-view of the people who use that language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking but, more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them.⁴³

His definition entails semantics as a type of study that is not concerned only with the phenomenon of meaning as suggested by its normative etymology. It is instead a study of the nature and structure of a worldview of a nation, or speakers of a certain language, through methodological analysis of the major cultural concepts embedded within their language's key words.⁴⁴ For instance, his study on the semantics of the Qur'ān is not merely a conceptual study of several keywords contained within the scripture. Still, it extends into extracting the worldview or vision of the universe of the latter. The central pillar of his analysis revolved mainly around his selection of certain keywords of the Qur'ān, which to him had played important parts in instituting the basic conceptual structure of the Qur'anic

⁴² Gary A. Rendsburg, Aaron D. Rubin, John Huehnergard, "A Proper View of Arabic, Semitic, and More", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 128, No. 3 (2008): pp. 533-541.

⁴³ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'ān: Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung* (Tokyo: Keio University, 1964), 3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

worldview. The relation between these words in forming a certain conceptual structure is what he termed the semantical field. A quick example is his construction of the semantical field *īmān* (belief) and its relation to other keywords such as Allah (the object of belief), *islām* (giving oneself to God), *kufr* (disbelief), and others.⁴⁵ According to him, the word *īmān* is the focus word, a point of unification where all other keywords are connected in a certain semantical field, conjuring a specific conceptual sphere of *īmān*.⁴⁶

This study, however, aims to discover the semantical field through a much simpler outlook, which is through the Semitic root. Probing the semantical field provided through a Semitic root is simpler and perhaps safer than selecting certain keywords as done by Izutsu, which may require more time in determining other keywords that may or may not have a relation to this root conceptually. Even Izutsu himself admits the unavailability of ‘a certain amount of arbitrariness’ in that key-words selection phase, which he did warn as to ‘may have gravely affected at least some aspect of the whole picture’.⁴⁷ Moreover, discussions above have also pointed out the possibility of a Semitic root to embody specific abstractions that may symbolize certain semantical fields. With the root *'mr*, we specifically aim to understand its authoritative worldviews through its attestations in those three sources, which theoretically may appear in two components. One of those is the particular worldview, which is relatively peculiar to those three sources in utilizing the authoritative meaning of the root. Understanding those distinctions requires an understanding of the semantic shift, which refers to the evolutionary changes of the root’s authoritative meanings between these three profiles.⁴⁸ The second component is the shared

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴⁸ In the perspective of theoretical linguistics, semantic shift refers to any variation of meanings in a given word, either synchronic (i.e. the relation between two different meanings of a polysemous word) or diachronic (i.e. the relation between two meanings of a word in the course of semantic evolution). See Anna A. Zaliziak, “A Catalogue of Semantic Shifts: Towards a Typology of Semantic Derivation” in *From Polysemy to Semantic Change*, edited by Martin Vanhove (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co, 2008), 217-232.

authoritative worldview of the root- the point of commonality amidst those particular differences, which hopefully may further explain the nature of their shared authoritativeness.

5. The Root 'MR in the Documentary Sources of Pre-Islamic Arabia: The Distinctive Divine and Secular Contexts

CSAI has recorded the word 'mr in the ASA to be at least as early as the 4th century BC, attested within two languages: Sabaic (Najrān 1) and Minaic (GOAM 314). Both conveyed the meaning of 'authority' and 'order' respectively.⁴⁹ Following those two, other ASA inscriptions also relayed the same authoritative meaning for the root. They are mostly similar to the variation of meanings contained in Arabic *amrun*,⁵⁰ which varies from 'command', 'order', 'ordinance', 'power', or 'authority'.⁵¹ However, unlike Arabic *amrun* that designates this 'authority' either for divine or secular usage,⁵² the ASA seemed to limit it only to the former, specifically for their religious and cultic functions. It mostly signified the authoritative dispensations of their deities. The Sabaic used it mostly to depict the command and order of their deities *Hlfn*, *d-S'mwy*, and 'lmqh,⁵³ while

⁴⁹ See CSAI, "GOAM 314", *DASI* <<http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=2831&mark=02831%2C006%2C004>> (accessed on 12 August 2024). See also CSAI, *Najrān 1*, *DASI* <<http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=9961&mark=09961%2C009%2C006>> (accessed on 12 August 2024).

⁵⁰ This appears in the Sabaic, Minaic, Hadramitic, and Qatabanic inscriptions. For the full list of South Arabian inscriptions recording this word and its translation, see CSAI, "'mr", *DASI* <https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=32&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=180408446&wl_group=1&wl_subgroup=47> (accessed on 14 June 2024).

⁵¹ For the English translation and the ranges of meanings of the Arabic verb *amara* and its verbal noun *amrun*, see Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, edited by J. Milton Cowan (New York: Spoken Language Services Inc, 1976), 26.

⁵² Ibn Manẓūr, Abu al-Fadhl Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad b. Mukarram, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī, 1997), Vol. 1, 203-206.

⁵³ For the attestation of its usage to each deity respectively, see CSAI, "Haram 10" *DASI* <<https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=4018&mark=04018%2C016%2C001>> (accessed on 14 June 2024). See also CSAI, "Najran 1", *DASI* <<https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=9961&mark=09961%2C009%2C0>>

the Minaic used it mostly to symbolize the 'authority' of their two specific deities, *Wd* and *NkRh*.⁵⁴ On the other hand, the Qatabanic seemed to use it similar to how the Arabic verb *amara* (*tr.* to command/ to order),⁵⁵ usually as an epithet exclusive for *Hwkm*, one of their deities. The epithet comes with this particular phrase (*Hwkm ḡ- 'mr/ w-S²mr*), illustrating *Hwkm* as the one who 'orders' and 'gives decree'.⁵⁶

Apart from that, the root was also used to convey non-authoritative meanings related to omens and signs from their deities. They came in either of these three forms: '*mr*', *y'mr*', and *y'tmr*'. The first one corresponds to Arabic *amārah*, which generally means marks and signs.⁵⁷ The ASA, however, has specialized the source of those signs as being attainable only from their deities through cultic and divination activities. Examples of its contexts vary from being the sign from their deities in protecting them from certain things (RES 4998), leading them to do something (RES 4830), or commanding them to dedicate something (NAM 2494).⁵⁸ On the other hand, the other two were more towards portraying the act of their deity in providing the sign, which often translates to their deity

06> (accessed on 14 June 2024). See also CSAI, "Fa 123" *DASI* <<https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=5920&mark=05920%2C005%2C006>> (accessed on 14 June 2024).

⁵⁴ For the attestation of '*mr*' as the commandment of the two aforementioned Minaean deities, see for example, CSAI, "GOAM 314", *DASI* <<http://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=431991822&recId=2831&mark=02831%2C006%2C004>> (accessed on 15 January 2022). See also CSAI, "M 247", *DASI* <<https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=547345934&recId=2967&mark=02967%2C002%2C032>> (accessed on 14 June 2024).

⁵⁵ For the English translation of the Arabic verb *amara* and its range of meanings, see Hans Wehr, 26.

⁵⁶ For discussion on the translation of the phrase *Hwkm ḡ- 'mr/ w-S²mr*, see Iwona Gajda et al, "Two Inscriptions Commemorating the Construction of a Mountain Pass, by Yadaab Dhubyân son of Shahr Mukarrib of Qatabân, and by the Qayls of the Madhî Tribe", *Egitto e Vicino Oriente* (2009): XXXII, 167.

⁵⁷ For the English translation of the Arabic noun *amārah*, see Hans Wehr, 26.

⁵⁸ Sabäische Wörterbuch, "'mr'" <<http://sabaweb.uni-jena.de/SabaWeb/Suche/Suche/SearchResultDetail?idxLemma=2289&showAll=0>> (accessed on 23 June 2024).

‘agreeing and giving satisfaction’ to what the author would later do.⁵⁹ They are both attested in Minaic inscriptions. For example, in Ma‘īn 116, the author used the word *y'mr* to portray the bestowal of agreement and satisfaction of his deity *ttr d-[Qbd]* upon his journey to the north for trading purposes and as a messenger, to which he achieved it through his offering as the intermediary.⁶⁰ In M 246, the author of the inscription used the word *y'tmr* to portray the same meaning of agreement and satisfaction of his deity upon the construction of the wall and tower of his town, which was also attained through offering.⁶¹

In ANA, a more prevalent record of the root’s attestations is evident mostly in the Safaitic inscriptions, where it varied from authoritative to non-authoritative meanings. The authoritative meanings in the Safaitic were mostly in matters related to animal-herding or controlling activities. The Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA) usually depicted it in the meaning ‘to control’, specifically for controlling animal herds, or perhaps the act of camel or sheep herding itself (AMSI 31, RSIS 250 & RWQ 333/ ABMNS 2).⁶² Meanwhile, Ṣabrī Karīm al-‘Abbādī in his commentary of ABMNS 2/ RWQ 333 asserted that the phrase *t'mr/ h-wḥd* in the inscription could indicate two possibilities. Firstly, it could indicate the author was imagining him herding (*t'mr*) his pastoral animal alone (*h-wḥd*) in a region as if he was an *amīr* for that region.⁶³ This first possibility is closer to the previous OCIANA’s

⁵⁹ Mounir Arbach & Mohamed Maraqtan, “Notes on the root *L'K* ‘to send’ and the term *ml'k* ‘messenger’ in the Ancient South Arabian inscriptions” in *Semitica et Classica*, Vol. 11 (2018): 251-256.

⁶⁰ Mounir Arbach & Mohamed Maraqtan, 251-256.

⁶¹ See CSAI, “M 246”, <<https://dasi.cnr.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=924546544&recId=2966&mark=02966%2C002%2C032>> (accessed 23 June 2024).

⁶² The Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA), *The OCIANA Corpus of Safaitic Inscriptions: Preliminary Edition*, edited by Ali Al-Manaser & Michael C.A. Macdonald (Oxford: The Khalili Research Centre, 2017), 568, 8126 & 8260/ 480.

⁶³ Ṣabrī Karīm al-‘Abbādī, “al-‘Mā’ fi al-Nuqūsh al-‘Arabiyyah al-Shimālyyah al-Qadīmah: Dirāsah Tahlīliyyah li Nuqshayn Ṣafāwiyyīn Jadīdayn”, *Jordan Journal for History and Archeology*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2012): 103-123.

translation of ‘to control.’ Al-‘Abbādī’s second interpretation relayed the non-authoritative meaning of the root, particularly on how the author tried ‘to make abundance/ grow/ multiply’ (*t’mr*) his ‘sheep’ (*h-wḥd*).⁶⁴ It is expected as one of the Classical Arabic meanings of the root ‘*mr*’ is ‘to multiply/ grow/ making abundance’, specifically through the derivation *āmara* and *amira*.⁶⁵ Unlike OCIANA, which has translated the term *wḥd* as alone, Al-‘Abbādī contended that semantically, the word *wḥd* in that inscription also correlates to another Classical Arabic noun for sheep, which is specifically for the sheep that only gave birth once.⁶⁶ Within this meaning, it enables the possibility of *t’mr* as to have meant ‘to make abundance’, at least within the context of the multiplication of livestock.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Jallad also concurs with this proclivity, at least in the sense of appropriating Safaitic ‘*mr*’ through the basic semantical range of the root in other Semitic languages, which often relates to the meaning ‘to know’ or ‘to make known’, like in the Akkadian *amārum* (to see) or Hebrew ‘*āmār* (to say).⁶⁷ According to him, Safaitic’s translation of the root better accords with this basic meaning essentialized through it being ‘*apparent*’, ‘*widespread*’ or ‘*to manifest*’, which to him also corresponds to the previous Arabic words *āmara* and *amira* (*tr.* multiply).⁶⁸ This implies visibility through quantity. Interestingly, Jallād asserted this meaning of the root ‘*mr*’ for a wider subject of abundance and not being limited to the multiplication of livestock. This is evident in his translation of KRS 995 and al-Mafraq Museum 14/ HAUI 72. Both attested to phrases *t’mr/ h-s²ḥṣ* and *t’mr h-s²n*’, to which Jallad respectively translated to ‘*scarcity was widespread*’,⁶⁹ and ‘*adversity was widespread*’.⁷⁰ Unlike Jallad, however, Rafe Harahshah still translated the same

⁶⁴ Šabrī Karīm al-‘Abbādī, 103-123.

⁶⁵ Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 204-205.

⁶⁶ Šabrī Karīm al-‘Abbādī, 103-123. See also Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 15, 234.

⁶⁷ Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the Grammar of the Safaitic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill, 2015) 300.

⁶⁸ Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the...*, 300.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 344.

⁷⁰ Ahmad al-Jallad & Karolina Jaworska, *A Dictionary of Safaitic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill, 2019) 130-131.

phrase *t'mr/ h-s²ḥṣ* in KRS 995 within an animal context,⁷¹ which is 'to make abundance/ to multiply the fat sheep'.⁷² Jallad also seems to be silent on other animal-context inscriptions such as the previous ABMNS 2/ RWQ 333 and its phrase *t'mr h-wḥd*, which al-'Abbādī has translated as either 'herding the sheep alone' or 'to make abundance of/ multiply sheep (that only gave birth once).'

Meanwhile, OCIANA's translation of the same ABMNS 2/ RWQ 333 as 'to control alone' also did not adhere to Jallad's contention before on how Safaitic 'mr is much suited to follow the basic semantical range for the root 'to know' or 'to make known'. The OCIANA's translation instead seemed to have conformed more to the Classical Arabic meaning 'to command', which Jallad argued as a later development of the semantical range for the root 'mr.⁷³ Interestingly, the semantical range of the authoritative meaning 'to control' or Classical Arabic 'to command' is not precisely unrecorded in the ANA documentary sources. Beyond the Safaitic, another ANA inscription (JSLih 071) of the Dadano-Arabic language attested to this meaning in a form similar to Classical Arabic *amīr*.⁷⁴ OCIANA translation recorded a figure with the name 'nzh son of 's^l, who is the 'mr *b-lḥgr* [*amīr* of al-Higr (Hegra or Madāin Sālih)].⁷⁵ A.F.L Beeston provided a context of this *amīr* as possibly a North

⁷¹ Harahshah's translation of *s²ḥṣ* here is due to how the Arabic lexicon also indicates *shahṣu* as a fat sheep, or the one who is not pregnant and lactated, or the one who does not lactate yet. Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam wa al-Muḥiṭ al-A'zam*, Vol. 3, 100.

⁷² Rafe Harahshah, *Nuqūsh Ṣafaiyyah min al-Bādiyah al-Urdūniyyah* (al-Urdun: Dār Ward al-Urduniyyah, 2010), 89.

⁷³ Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the...*, 300.

⁷⁴ This one Dadano-Arabic inscription (JSLih 071) is part of many more inscriptions that M.C.A Macdonald classified as Old-Arabic 'Mixed' text. This refers to the inscriptions that were written in certain ASA or ANA scripts (Safaitic, Dadanitic, Sabaic, etc) and predominantly in the language normally associated with that script (Safaitic, Dadanitic, Sabaic, etc), but at the same time also contain elements that can be attributed to Old Arabic. See Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic..." 50-51.

⁷⁵ The Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia (OCIANA), *The OCIANA Corpus of Dadanitic Inscriptions: Preliminary Edition*, edited by Micheal C.A Macdonald & María del Carmen Hidalgo Chacón Díez (Oxford: The Khalili Research Centre, 2017), 451.

Arabian Bedouin, hired by some Dadanites sedentary, to protect their caravan and settlements.⁷⁶ According to Beeston, the *amīr* position here is temporary, similar to the Muslim *amīr al-hajj*.⁷⁷ This explanation helps explain the reason for the linguistic mix of Dadanitic and Old Arabic within this one single inscription.⁷⁸ As the phrase *amīr* of al-Higr is linguistically Old Arabic and not Dadanitic, it is comprehensible to assert that the usage of *amīr* in that inscription is similar to the semantical range 'to control' or the Arabic 'to command'. However, it is nevertheless also closer to the basic range of 'to know' or 'to make known' as Jallad had contended before. This is especially true in terms of the *amīr* position here acted as someone knowledgeable about the desert,⁷⁹ which entails his task to protect, as well as to guide the Dadanites in the desert. The act of guidance here then serves the same semantical range of 'to know' or 'to make known', at least in a much basal range of 'to control' or 'to command' through providing guidance and shepherding people. Conclusively, in contrast to ASA and its divination tendency, ANA's usage of the root 'mr is indicative and expressive of the socio-economic aspects of nomadic-pastoralism life, from animal-rearing activities of controlling or making abundance, the widespread scarcity, and desert-guiding services.

6. The Root 'MR in the Literary Sources of Pre-Islamic Arabia: The Early Fusion

Unlike the documentary sources that differ in terms of sourcing the authoritative power of the root 'mr to either the divine (ASA) or

⁷⁶ Beeston, A.F.L. & F.V. Winnett, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud al-Ghul, "The Inscription Jaussen Savignac 71." *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Vol. 3 (1973): 69–72.

⁷⁷ Beeston, A.F.L. & F.V. Winnett, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud al-Ghul, 69-72.

⁷⁸ Lines 1-3 that describe the name and genealogical of the person have Dadanitic orthography, while lines 4-10 are Old Arabic written in Dadanitic script. The indicator of the Old Arabic lines is clear through the use of definite article 'l, such as exemplified before in the phrase /'mr/ *b-lhgr*/. See Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Reflection on the Linguistic...", 52. See also Micheal C.A Macdonald, "Ancient North Arabian", in *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the World's Ancient Language*, edited by R.D. Woodard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 502.

⁷⁹ A.F.L Beeston, F.V. Winnett, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud al-Ghul, 69-72.

secular-shepherding (ANA-Safaitic) context, the Jāhiliyya poetry attested to the root 'mr within both contexts. The divine context of the root 'mr was evident in a poem reportedly ascribed to 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the grandfather of the Prophet, during the invasion of Abrahah.⁸⁰ One of the lines in this poem depicts the derivation of *amr* as being specific to Allah, which translates to either 'will', 'matter', or 'affair' of Allah.⁸¹ Such phrases of the will, matter, or affair of Allah were to illustrate the authoritative power of Allah in handling Abrahah and the latter's intention of destroying Ka'ba. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib also used the term *ḥilālaka* (Your Sanctuary) to portray the Ka'ba as within the sole ownership of Allah,⁸² reflecting the position of Allah among these Jāhiliyya Arabs, which was the Lord of the House (Ka'ba), the Most Supreme among other 'supposedly' deities.⁸³

On the other hand, the secular authority of the root 'mr involves three kinds of authority: shepherding, military, and non-specific authority. An example of shepherding authority was available in one of Zuhayr b. Abī Sulma's poem,⁸⁴ where it has attested to the word *amr* three times through *amr labiku*, *tukhāliju al-amr* (mixed opinions), *al-amr al-mushtaraku* (shared opinion).⁸⁵ All three narrated *amr* reflected the meaning of mixed or shared opinion or verdict, particularly specific to camel-herders and their affairs.⁸⁶ The context illustrated a disagreement among them that seems to

⁸⁰ Ibn Hishām, Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Malik b. Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1990), Vol. 1, 66.

⁸¹ Ibn Hishām, *The Prophetic Biography (Sīrah Ibn Hishām)*, translated from Arabic by Muhammad Mahdi al-Sharīf (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2013), 50.

⁸² Ibn Hishām, *The Prophetic Biography...*, 50.

⁸³ Toshihiko Izutsu, 5.

⁸⁴ He is Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā Rabī'ah b. Ribāh Al-Muzanī, is one of the seven greatest poets of the Jāhiliyya period. One of his poems was among *al-sab'at al-mu'llaqāt* (The Seven Hanging Ode). Most of his poems revolve around the topic of peace and wisdom. See al-Zirikli, Vol. 3, 52.

⁸⁵ Al-A'lam al-Shatanmari, Yūsuf b. Sulaimān b. Īsā, *'Ash'ār al-Shu'arā' al-Sittah al-Jāhiliyyin* (Al-Qāhirah: al-Matba'ah al-Minbariyyah, 1954), Vol. 1, 309-309.

⁸⁶ Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī, Abu Bakr 'Āṣim b. Ayyub, *Sharḥ al-'Ash'ār al-Sittah al-Jāhiliyyah* (Beirut: Al-Ma'had al-almānī li al-Abhāth al-Sharqiyyah, 2008), Vol. 2, 86. See also Tha'lab, Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Yahyā, *Sharḥ Shi'r Zuhayr ibn Abī Sulmā* (Damascus: Maktabah Hārun al-Rashīd li al-Tawzī', 2008), 127-128.

have resulted in the delay in returning their herd from the pasturing fields.⁸⁷ Although one of the herders who was being narrated in this poem was a *ghulām* (slave boy) of Ethiopian descent,⁸⁸ Zuhayr still suggested the decision-making quality of that *ghulām* herder, signifying the authoritative power within his opinion as someone knowledgeable in herding camels.

Meanwhile, the military context of the root 'mr also varies in its designated derivations. In some cases, it comes off as clearly specific to the military, such as *amīr al-jaysh* (army commander/general) in Abdullah b. al-Ziba'ra's⁸⁹ poem on Abraha's failed invasion of Mecca.⁹⁰ In other cases, the military context within the root's derivation was ambiguous and in need of interpretation. Such is the case with the mere *amīr* in another line by Zuhayr.⁹¹ In his commentary on the poem, Tha'lab commented that the entailed military nature is implicit yet evident through the authority and disposition possessed by Zuhayr's *amīr*, particularly in making his people leave their homes for certain cause, which Tha'lab argued as *al-masīr* (military march).⁹² On top of that, authoritative military usage is also evident in other poetry through the derivations *amr*, which is often used to indicate military matters and affairs. Similar to the derivation of *amīr*, some are militarily-specific such as the term *amr al-ḥarb* (war affairs).⁹³ Some lines require interpretation, such as the term *amr al-ra'īs* (lit. leader's command) in a poem depicting the

⁸⁷ Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī, Vol. 2, 86. See also Tha'lab, 127-128.

⁸⁸ The name of the *ghulām* is Yasār, a Habashī-Ethiopian slave belonging to Zuhayr. For the full background of this poem, see Tha'lab, 9. See also Al-Mufaḍḍal b. Salamah, *al-Fākhīr* (n.p: Dār Ihyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, n.d), 177. See also Al-Maidāni Ahmad b. Ibrahim, *Majma' al-Amthāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, n.d), Vol. 2, 363.

⁸⁹ He is Abdullah b. al-Ziba'ra b. Qays b. 'Adī, one of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). Ibn Sa'd mentioned him as one of the *Jāhili* poets in Mecca before reverted to Islam after the Conquest of Mecca. See Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, (Al-Qāherah: Maktabah al-Khanji, 2001), Vol. 6, 109.

⁹⁰ Ibn Hishām, Vol. 1, 72.

⁹¹ Tha'lab, 96.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ For a full account of the poem, see Ibn Qutaybah, Abū Muhammad 'Abd Allāh b. Muslim al-Marwazī, *al-Shi'ru wa al-Shu'arā'* (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Hadīth, n.d), Vol. 1, 196.

readiness of a cavalry waiting for their commander or chief's command before battle.⁹⁴

Another type of authority for the root 'mr in the Jāhiliyya poetry is non-specific like the other two shepherding and military authority. For instance, in another ode by Zuhayr, he used the term *amīr* without precisely specifying it in any context, except merely to illustrate that the *amīr* was in a hunting activity together with his subordinate.⁹⁵ In a commentary on this ode, Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī asserted that the *amīr* here is someone whom people are seeking advice and counsel for.⁹⁶ His assertion is true, at least in comparison to other Jāhiliyya poetry which often associates the root 'mr and its derivations with counsel, being wise, and knowledgeable. One of the Ṭarafah's lines is the most pertinent example of this;⁹⁷ "And when it comes upon you amr, then seek council from the wise, and do not disobey (his advice)".⁹⁸ Al-Qurṭubī had used this one-liner from Ṭarafah within his commentary on one of the Qur'ānic verses concerning the *shūra*.⁹⁹ Similarly, Al-Qal'ī also uses this line to assert the importance of selecting advisors for a king to seek advice from.¹⁰⁰ All these assertions on relating this line to counsel or being wise suggest that the root 'mr and its derivations may also be used to portray a kind of authority that seems epistemic in some sense. If not epistemic, the *amr* must be at least related axiologically to good values – either individually or communally, such as the Jāhiliyya

⁹⁴ For a full account of the poem, see Al-A'lam al-Shatanmari, Vol. 1, 321.

⁹⁵ For a full account of the poem, see Al-A'lam al-Shatanmari, Vol. 1, 298-299.

⁹⁶ Al-Wazīr al-Baṭalyūsī, Vol. 2, 54.

⁹⁷ His real name is 'Amr b. al-'Abd b. Sufyān. Similar to Zuhayr, Ṭarafah was also one of the poets of *al-sab'at al-mu'llaqāt* (The Seven Hanging Ode). He is considered the youngest of the *mu'llaqāt* poets, where he died in his twenties. See J. A Montgomery, "Tarafa" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, edited by P.J Bearman, TH Bianquis, C.E Bosworth, E. Van Donzel, W.P Heinrichs (Leiden: Brill, 2000), Vol. 10, 219-220.

⁹⁸ For a full account of the poem, see Ṭarafah b. 'Abd, *Dīwan Ṭarafah ibn 'Abd*, edited by Mahdi Muhammad Naṣir al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2002), 51.

⁹⁹ Al-Qurṭubī, Abū 'Abdullah Muhammad b. Ahmad, *al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām al-Qur'ān* (Al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964), Vol. 4, 251.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Qal'ī al-Shāfi'ī Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Ali, *Tahdhīb al-Ri'yāsah wa Tartīb al-Siyāsah* (al-Urdūn: Maktabah al-Manār, n.d), 143.

term *jawāmi‘ al-amr* (affairs that unite people) used by Zuhayr,¹⁰¹ or enjoining good (*bilkhayr umuri*) in another poem of Tarafah, or the act of heeding only to good *amr* (*wa kullu amrin siwā al-fahshā‘ī ya ‘tamiru*) by another Jāhiliyya poet al-A‘sha.¹⁰²

7. The Root ‘MR in the Islamic-Arabic Lexicon: The Advanced Fusion

There are two main forms of authoritative meanings provided within this Islamic-Arabic lexical compendium. The first of those two illustrates meanings related to the act of ‘negating prohibition’. The definition varies from ‘an antithesis to the prohibition’,¹⁰³ ‘the enjoining of goodness’,¹⁰⁴ ‘a phrase indicating an act of demanding in a superior way’,¹⁰⁵ and the act of ‘demanding for action’.¹⁰⁶ All of them signal the act of commanding and demanding something. It could appear in a verb form such as *amara* (tr. to command), or verbal noun *amrun* pl. *awāmīr* (tr. command).¹⁰⁷ Its active participle varies from *al-amīr*, *dhu al-amr*, or *al-āmīr*, all of whom indicate the

¹⁰¹ For a full account of the poem, see Al-A‘lam al-Shatanmari, Vol. 1, 325.

¹⁰² His real name is Maymūn b. Kays, a prominent ancient Arab poet who was born before 570 CE and died in 625 CE. His poems were mostly panegyric, circulating on political themes. See W. Caskel, "al-A‘shā" in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. 1, 690. For a complete account of the poem, see Al-Asma‘ī Abū Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Malik b. Qurayb, *Al-Asma‘iyyat* (Misr: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1993), 91. See also Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhi Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Sallām, *Tabaqāt Fuhūl al-Shu‘arā‘* (Jeddah, Dār al-Madanī, n.d), Vol.1, 210.

¹⁰³ Al-Farāhīdī, al-Khalīl b. Ahmad, *Kitāb al-‘Ayn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2003) Vol. 1, 85. See also Al-Azharī, Muhammad b. Ahmad, *Tahdhīb al-Lughah* (Beirut: Dār ‘Ihyā’ al-Turath, 2001), Vol. 15, 207. See also Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 203-206. See also Al-Fayrūzabādī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Mu‘assasah al-Risālah, 2005), Vol. 1, 344. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad, *Tāj al-‘Arūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (n.p: Dār al-Hidāyah, n.d), Vol. 10, 68.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, Mahmūd b. Qāsim, *Asās al-Balāghah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1998), Vol. 1, 33.

¹⁰⁵ Abū al-Baqā‘ al-Ḥanaḥī, Ayyūb b. Mūsā, *al-Kullīyyāt: Mu‘jam fī al-Muṣṭalahāt wa al-Furūq al-Lughawīyyah* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, n.d), 176.

¹⁰⁶ Al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, ‘*Umdat al-Huffāz fī Tafṣīr Asyhar al-Alfāz* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1996), Vol. 1, 114.

¹⁰⁷ Hans Wehr, 26.

doer, or the one who makes the demand.¹⁰⁸ Similar to Jāhiliyya poetry, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon appropriates this meaning within both divine and secular contexts. The latter is of course used for human daily context, explicating usages for the act of demanding from two different parties. Meanwhile, examples of divine context in these lexicons mostly come from the Qur'ān, indicating the authority of Allah and His dispensation for command, such as and *enjoin (wa'mur) al-salāh (the prayers) on your family*],¹⁰⁹ or [*and we have been commanded (wa'umirna) to submit ourselves to the Lord of the 'Ālamīn*].¹¹⁰

Another derivation generated from this first authoritative meaning is the verb *i'tamara*. It generally means *qabila al-amr*,¹¹¹ which is the act of receiving or obeying the command. This is like in the sayings of *i'tamara al-rajul*, which translates to a guy that has performed the command upon him,¹¹² or *amartuhu fa'tamira* (tr. I commanded him, and he received/obeyed/performed the command).¹¹³ The Qur'anic example of this form is available in one verse, which concerns the relationship of divorced spouses: [*and let each of you accept the advice (wa'tamirū) of the other in a just way*].¹¹⁴ Apart from being concerned with two parties, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also includes this form within the meaning of one submitting and heeding to his own command. This is visible in the likes of the phrase *u'tumira bikhayr* (tr. [as if] one heeded to his own command in performing goodness),¹¹⁵ or *rajulun mu'tamir wa huwa mustabiddun bi ra'yih* (tr. a *mu'tamir* man, whom a man adamant of

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 304.

¹⁰⁹ Qur'ān, Ṭāhā 20: 132. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qur'ān*, 427.

¹¹⁰ Qur'ān, al-An'ām 6: 71. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qur'ān*, 180.

¹¹¹ Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, Abu al-Qāsim al-Hussein bin Mufaḍḍal, *Al-Mufradāt fi Gharīb al-Qur'ān* (Dimashq: Dār al-Qalam, n.d), 89. See also Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 205. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 68.

¹¹² Al-Himyari, Nashwan b. Sa'īd, *Shams al-'Ulūm wa Dawā' Kalaā al-'Arab min al-Kulūm* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āsir, 1999), Vol. 1, 329.

¹¹³ See also Al-Fayyūmī Al-Hamawī, Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad bin 'Alī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr fī Gharīb al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d), Vol. 1, 22.

¹¹⁴ Qur'ān, al-Ṭālaq 65: 6. For notes on translations, see *The Noble Qur'ān*, 767.

¹¹⁵ Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 205.

his own view and opinion).¹¹⁶ From this vantage point of self-command, the Qur'ān introduces another derivation- the hyperbolic participle *ammārah*. Discussion of this word in the classical lexicography is mostly available only within the Qur'anic-oriented lexicon. The contextual examples signify the derivation as Islamic in its origin, as they are all oriented around two specific Qur'anic verses with no reference to pre-Islamic poetry or prose.¹¹⁷ Both reflect on how one's self is continuously deliberating the person to incline to evil; *inna al-nafs la ammāratun bi al-sū'* [tr. ...verily, the (human) self is inclined to evil].¹¹⁸

The second authoritative meaning is the standard etymological meaning used by Islamic political literature in defining political *al-imārah*, which most early lexicons associate with *al-wilāyah* (tr. the sovereignty, government, rule).¹¹⁹ Some argued that the terms are interchangeable between *al-imārah* or *al-imrah*, and some differentiate these two lexemes apart by specializing the former to *al-imrah* as *al-rif'ah* (tr. height, elevation), while *al-imārah* as *al-wilāyah*.¹²⁰ Muslim lexicographers also differed in specifying the correct one between the verbal sequences that vary from *amara*, *amira*, or *amura*. Nevertheless, they all equate their preferred verbal sequences with the verb *waliya* (tr. to be in charge, to rule, to govern).¹²¹ Five other derivations related to this meaning¹²² are

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 206. See also Al-Zamakhsharī, Vol. 1, 33.

¹¹⁷ Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 89. See also Al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Vol. 1, 115.

¹¹⁸ Qur'ān, Yūsuf 12: 53. See the translation in *The Noble Qur'ān*, 311.

¹¹⁹ Al-Farāhīdī, Vol. 1, 85. See also Al-Jawharī, Abu Naṣr Ismā'il b. Hammād, *Taj al-Lughah wa Ṣiḥāh al-'Arabiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malāyīn, 1987), Vol. 2, 580-581. See also Al-Ṣāhib, Ismā'il b. 'Abbād, *al-Muḥīṭ fi al-Lughah* (Beirut: 'Ālim al-Kutub, 1994) Vol. 10, 284. See also Ibn Sīdah, Abu al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'il, *al-Mukhaṣṣas* (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turath al-'Arabī, 1996), Vol. 1, 322. See also Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam wa al-Muḥīṭ al-A'zam* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2000), Vol. 10, 299.

¹²⁰ Ibn Sīdah, *al-Mukhaṣṣas*..., Vol. 1, 322. For the translation for *al-rif'āh*, see Hans Wehr, 350.

¹²¹ Al-Azharī and al-Ṣāhib specified it with *amara*, while al-Jawharī extended it into *amara* and *amura*. Meanwhile, others like Ibn Sīdah and Ibn Manzūr included all three *amara*, *amura*, and *amira*. See Al-Azharī, Vol. 15, 209. See also Al-Ṣāhib, Vol. 10, 284. See also Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 580-581. See also Ibn Sīdah, *al-Muḥkam wa al-Muḥīṭ al-A'zam*, Vol. 10, 299. See also Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 206-207.

ammara (tr. the act of appointing someone as an *amīr*),¹²³ *ta'ammara* (tr. the act of being dominant over others),¹²⁴ and *āmara/ista'mar/ i'tamara* (tr. the act of consulting and discussing with someone).¹²⁵ Although we have previously determined *i'tamara* as performing/ receiving/ and obeying the command of one's self or others, most lexicons also agree that it also means 'to consult'.¹²⁶ Al-Rāghib stipulated that it happened due to how both parties who engage in the act of issuing and receiving commands are mutually responsive to each other, where each party performs a command that is '*ashāra ilaihi*' (tr. has been pointed out to/ suggested to/ referred to), hence is indicative to consultation.¹²⁷ Other than that, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also pointed out the same non-authoritative meanings of the root in both ASA and ANA before, which include 'matter and affair',¹²⁸ 'mark and sign',¹²⁹ and 'to make abundance/ multiply'.¹³⁰

¹²² For complete verbal sequences of these five, see Hasan Sa'īd al-Karmī, *al-Hādī ıla Lughat al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār Lubnan, 1991), 85.

¹²³ Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 208. See also Hasan Sa'īd al-Karmī, 85.

¹²⁴ Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 208. See also Hasan Sa'īd al-Karmī, 85.

¹²⁵ Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also Al-Zamakhsharī, Vol. 1, 33. See also Al-Himyari, Vol. 1, 330. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 206. See also Zayn al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Muhammad b. Abū Bakr, *Mukhtār al-Şihāh* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Aşriyyah, 1999), 21. See also Al-Fayrūzabādī, Vol. 1, 344. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 76.

¹²⁶ Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 582. See also al-Rāghib, 89. See also al-Zamakhsharī, Vol. 1, 33. See also Al-Himyari, Vol. 1, 329. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205. See also al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Vol. 1, 115. See also Zayn al-Dīn al-Rāzī, 21. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 76.

¹²⁷ Al-Rāghib, 89.

¹²⁸ Al-Farāhīdī, Vol. 1, 85. See also Al-Azharī, Vol. 15, 207. See also Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 580. Ibn Fāris, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, (n.p: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), Vol. 1, 137. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, Vol. 1, 203-206.

¹²⁹ Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 208. See also al-Samīn al-Ḥalabī, Vol. 1, 116. See also Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 74.

¹³⁰ Al-Jawharī, Vol. 2, 581. See also Al-Rāghib, 89. See also Ibn Manẓūr, Vol. 1, 205.

8. The Authoritative Worldview of the Root 'MR: The Shepherding Notion

A great range of semantical dissonance is obvious in the documentary sources between the ASA and the ANA who had appropriated the root for the divine and the secular-pastoralism activities respectively. This is unlike the Jāhiliyya and Islamic-Arabic lexicon that have included both contexts together. Neither of these two contexts can confirm one another in terms of which was earlier in its semantical range. Jallād's previous contention on ANA-Safaitic 'mr and its accordance with the basic Semitic meaning of the root 'to know' or 'to make known' through the quantitative aspect of 'to be widespread/ abundance' perhaps could indicate the ANA-Safaitic as the earliest of those three profiles, hence making the secular-shepherding as the forerunner among them both. This is at least in recognizing the usage of the meaning 'to command' for the root 'mr in the ASA, the Jāhiliyya poetry, and the Islamic-Arabic lexicons, which according to Jallad is more recent in its semantical range.¹³¹

We would perhaps be able to find a much clearer explanation by assessing the previous proto-Semitic derivation of the root 'mr, which is *immeru* (lamb).¹³² The same bifurcation of the root 'mr into the divine and secular context was also evident in the usage of *immeru*, and they were particularly available as early as in the Akkadian language. The divination context of Akkadian *immeru* was used within two lexical fields, either for sacrificial offerings or a divinatory process in revealing and making visible the omens of their purported deities and divine beings.¹³³ Meanwhile, the literal usages were available within three lexical fields; 1) literary texts reflecting it as the concrete word for lamb and sheep, 2) economic texts documenting the trading process of *immeru*, and 3) the shepherding process; ranging from the aspects of its age (young sheep), size and fattening process, and others.¹³⁴ By these proto-contexts, we could

¹³¹ Ahmad al-Jallad, *An Outline of the...*, 300.

¹³² See the 'Introduction' of this study.

¹³³ The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CAD), *immeru*, edited by A. Leo Oppenheim (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2004), *immeru*, Vol. 7, 130.

¹³⁴ The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

identify the same divine context of *immeru* against which the divine contexts of the ASA's 'mr that perhaps supposedly also indicate the same basic meaning 'to know' and 'to make known' as contended by Jallad before. However, unlike most of the ANA-Safaitic that accords to this semantical range through indicating the quantitative aspect of 'to make widespread' or 'abundance' of either their pastoral animal or their scarcity physically, the ASA appropriated this range through 'making visible' the supposed command and signs from their deities.¹³⁵ In this regard, both ASA and ANA's authoritative context of the root are connected to this same semantical range, but from different standpoints.

The same notion of *knowing* or *visibility* also binds the authoritative 'mr of Jāhiliyya and the Islamic-Arabic lexicon together. Within the Jāhiliyya paradigm, however, attestations of secular activities other than animal shepherding were more prominent, namely for military and tribal leadership. That one Dadano-Arabic inscription (JSLih 071) before is perhaps the link connecting the animal-shepherding 'mr in the ANA-Safaitic to the Jāhiliyya's human-authoritative 'mr, where it had used the derivation *amīr* in a human-activities context, specifically for the person who guided the Dadanites sedentary in the desert. That kind of semantical shift adopts the notion of *visibility* not through the ANA-Safaitic's notion of animal-abundancy or widespread anymore, but either through these two possibilities: the epistemic superiority in knowing and guiding, or as the highest socio-political order specific to their environment. In Jāhiliyya poetry, the same epistemic visibility seemed prevalent mostly within their preoccupation in connecting the root 'mr with wisdom in council, warfare, or even in animal-shepherding, as well as linking the root to good societal values.¹³⁶ In Islamic lexicography, however, Ibn Sīdah addressed this visibility mainly from the second possibility, where he identified human governance in *al-imārah* or *al-imrah* from *al-rif'ah* (tr. height,

(CAD), Vol. 7, 129-133.

¹³⁵ For detailed elaboration on the mechanization of divination through *immeru*, see for example Yoram Cohen, *The Babylonian šumma immeru Omens: Transmissions, Reception and Text Production* (Munster: Zaphon, 2020) xv.

¹³⁶ See the previous discussion of the root 'mr in literary sources (Jāhiliyya poetry).

elevation) and *al-wilāyah* (tr. sovereignty).¹³⁷ To be inclusive, however, we could infer that those elevation, height, or sovereignty are not necessarily the ‘visibility’ of the root itself, but perhaps the contingencies of the epistemic visibility and superiority.

The importance of this visibility notion in coalescing the variation of this root's authoritative meanings indicates that it is indeed the shared meaning and worldview of the root. Yet it is still seemingly inadequate, particularly in further explaining the nature of those variegated authoritative paradigms of the root *'mr* within those three semantical sources. For that to materialize, it is important to grasp the rationale of this visibility. In nomadic-Safaitic, their secular-materialist consciousness in operationalizing the authoritative *'mr* for animal-shepherding could have possibly been their utmost goal, where the aim was more on multiplying, maximizing, and capitalizing the livestock to the best interest of their pastoral life. In the most profane realm, the animal-shepherding context then becomes the root's basic authoritative worldview, solely implying and aiming for visibility through material and secular abundance. Though it may seem far-fetched, it is not impossible for the Islamic-Arabic lexicon to have also pointed out this proclivity. Al-Azharī was the first lexicographer who mentioned the relationship between the Arabic *immaru* (lamb) and the economic state of the Arabs. According to him, the Arabs used to call people who were being struck with poverty and deficiency with the phrase *'mā lahu immaru wa-la immaratu'*, which translates to 'he has nothing of either a male or a female lamb'.¹³⁸ Although this phrase is indicative figuratively for a person in poverty and deficiency, it is, however, seems to be also valid literally. Such literal context manifests whenever one considers the revered status of sheep and goats among the Arabs, known as early as in the Hellenistic and Judeo-Christian literature.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Ibn Sīdah, *al-Mukhaṣṣas* Vol. 1, 322.

¹³⁸ Al-Azharī, Vol. 15, 29.

¹³⁹ In Hellenistic literature, Cicero affirmed the Arabs as those who are so acquainted with pasturing, often travelling the plains in winter and mountains in the summer. On the other hand, the Biblical historiography mentioned the abundance of flocks possessed by the people of Qedar, and how they became the merchants who mostly traded with them. The Qedarites are the confederation of Arab tribes dominating the Arabian Peninsula at that time. See Cicero, *On Divination*, translated from Latin and

For instance, although the Bedouin's nobility and strength were considered through their status as the camel-herder tribe, the possession of goats and sheep in small or large amounts, however, was the basic attribute of any Arab tribe, including the Bedouin and those sedentary communities who lived in the cities.¹⁴⁰ Thus, not having possessed anything as meagre as a male or a female lamb was indeed an indicator projecting their extreme scarcity. This was the reason why the absence of *al-immaru* could act as an indicator of poverty and deficiency, while the abundance of it then projected otherwise. Moreover, it also explains why other derivations of the root 'mr in Arabic are sometimes expressive of abundance and livestock. For example, the definition for the Arabic phrase *amira al-rajul* (*tr.* the person has become abundance, multiplied, grew) is the phrase *kathurat māshiatahu*, which translates to the abundance, multiplying or growing numbers of his livestock.¹⁴¹ Note that though these examples above are emblematic of the Islamic-Arabic lexicon, the same understanding is nevertheless applicable to the ANA-Safaitic animal-shepherding usages of the root. This is at least by following Jallad's previous contention on Safaitic as the dialect continuum of Arabic.¹⁴²

Through Jallad's contention, we could also utilize other Islamic-Arabic examples of the root against which to understand how the ANA-Safaitic animal-shepherding worldview had possibly evolved into human-shepherding activities. The link is perhaps possible firstly with the previous Dadano-Arabic inscription, where the word *amīr* is attested as the person who shepherded and guided the Dadanites' caravans and settlements in the desert. It then became

Greek with commentary by David Wardle (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 76. See also Isaiah 60: 7 & Ezekiel 27: 21. For elaboration on the people of Qedar, see Marwan G. Shuaib, "*The Arabs of North Arabia in later Pre-Islamic Times: Qedar, Nebaioth, and Others*" (PhD thesis, The University of Manchester, 2014), 139-174.

¹⁴⁰ Louise Sweet, "Camel Raiding of North Arabian Bedouin," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 67, no. 5 (1965): 1134.

¹⁴¹ Ibn Manzūr, Vol. 1, 205. See also Al-Fayrūzabādī, Vol. 1, 344. Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, Vol. 10, 72.

¹⁴² See Ahmad al-Jallad, "The Earliest Stages of Arabic...", 323. See also Ahmad al-Jallad, "Safaitic"..., 343.

more perceivable within the literary sources of the Jāhiliyya poetry with the words *amīr* and *amr* for tribal, warfare, and military functions, all of which indicated forms of human-shepherding activities. The Islamic tradition provided important insights into deciphering how this evolution had occurred. It need not be overemphasized that the notion of materialist-abundance interpreted previously from the construed relation of *al-immāru* and shepherding was not the end of the social evolution and progress of the Arabs. A more advanced Arab society that is growing exponentially may indulge in other matters and affairs that are more complicated and suited to their increasing quality of life and not be restricted to discussing or fine-tuning matters related to livestock and pastoral affairs. This could involve the more complicated legal matters, tribal war and domination, where the root *'mr* was also a subject of this sophistication.

Al-Ṭabarī, for instance, described the abundance in the derivation *amira* within two forms, ranging from the physical abundance, growth, and multiplication of clan member to the intensification and complexification of their affairs and matters from their physical abundance. The second form is the gist of this evolution, where the physical abundance leads to their societal sophistication, leading the root *'mr* to enter the phase of what the Islamic-Arabic lexicons classify as human governance.¹⁴³ Ibn Fāris also stated this evolution of shepherding to governance, where he said *min qawmin umur* (tr. from a group of people [there will be] affairs).¹⁴⁴ His phrase here indicates that whenever the physical abundance and multiplication of clan and tribe occur, there will be a lot of human affairs to tend to, hence the need for *al-imrah* and *al-imārah*, which is a type of sovereignty governing them and their affairs. Within this framework, the previous governance-related meanings of the root *'mr* attested within the Islamic-Arabic lexicon are not necessarily independent from the animal-shepherding worldview, but instead an extension of this shared worldview of shepherding within the human domain.

¹⁴³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān*, (n.p: Dār Hijr, 2001), Vol. 14, 532.

¹⁴⁴ Ibn Fāris, Vol. 1, 137-138.

The Islamic-Arabic lexicon also adduced another context of governance that seems indicative of Islamic influences, which is the previous notion of *ammārah*; a precaution for men on the ever-commanding nature of the human self that is lenient to evil and misdeeds (*al-nafs al-ammārah*). Again, such recognition of the bestial and wicked nature of one's own self is important for a person in the process of self-shepherding, proven through two other improvement stages of human-self mentioned in the Qur'ān, *al-nafs al-lawwāmah* (censuring-self/ soul) and *al-nafs al-muṭma'innah* (tranquil self/ soul).¹⁴⁵ This here is an invention peculiar to the Islamic tradition alone, which seems to deal with the metaphysical aspect of *al-imārah*, thus dispossessing this root from the previous materialist-secular-abundancy context. Elsewhere, the Islamic-Arabic lexicon also adduced other metaphysical authoritative examples of the root by associating it with the dispensation of Allah. This refers to the Qur'anic phrase *amr* Allah, which Abū al-Baqā' al-Ḥanafī asserted as having either varied in the exegesis from the *dīn* (religion) of Allah, the Qur'ān or the Prophet himself.¹⁴⁶ By associating *amr* Allah with these meanings, Islam has rejected both visibility meaning of ASA through divination or of ANA through material abundance, at once defying the domain of each shepherding function for both profiles.

For ASA, the visibility of their deities' command and signs attained through the divination and cultic communication practices used to possess the same secular-shepherding functions. The evidence is clear, particularly through how those inscriptions had associated the revelation of these alluded signs and omens as if they were *-supposedly-* in their belief, - within the governance of their deities in shepherding them to their good and interests.¹⁴⁷ Within their belief, these signs and commands became the indicators or cues for many aspects of their life, such as in building something, protecting them, dedicating statues for penance, etc.¹⁴⁸ In this regard,

¹⁴⁵ For a detailed discussion on these three types of self, see Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam...*, 121.

¹⁴⁶ Abū al-Baqā' al-Ḥanafī, 177.

¹⁴⁷ Robert G. Hoyland, 153-157.

¹⁴⁸ Sabäische Wörterbuch, "'mr'" <<http://sabaweb.uni-jena.de/SabaWeb/Suche/Suche/>

even the non-authoritative meaning of these deities' marks and signs had transformed into authoritative for these ASA cultic adherents. All these became nullified after Islam as the only accepted visibility notion of the root *'mr* is only *amr Allah*, which lies in the vicinity of those three meanings before; the *dīn* of Allah (the religion Islam), the Qur'ān, or the Prophet Muhammad. These three shared their visibility meaning through their means of deliverance as the revelation from Allah, which forms the only visibility of the root accepted in Islam that functions to shepherd and to provide the pathway and manual for mankind in guiding their life to their good interest and benefits - whether in their worldly affairs or the afterlife.

Apart from the visibility notion, the shepherding notion of the root *'mr* then also forms the abstracted authoritative worldview of the root attested in those two temporal frames. But far from being exclusively animal-related, this notion goes beyond that limitation. Interestingly, such a trait is a normative character for the Arabic conceptualization of words related to animal shepherding. One of those words is *al-ri'āyah* (tr. guardianship, custodianship, protection),¹⁴⁹ which is the most general and dynamic term that can be used within myriad domains of shepherding activities. Al-Azharī, for example, viewed *al-ri'āyah* could invoking a definition that pertains to the act of taking care and protecting the interest of livestock in animal rearing activities,¹⁵⁰ while in governance, it lies in taking care of and protecting the interest of the subject of the governance.¹⁵¹ Despite different realms of operation, *al-ri'āyah* projects one similar aim and function, which is to take care of the interest of the subject (*yahūtuha wa yahfazuha*).¹⁵² It is perhaps from within this paradigm that the shepherding notion of the authoritative *'mr* has also thrived, maintaining its shepherding essence from the most mundane domain of animal-pastoralism that strives for animal-abundancy for the better affairs of their family and clan, or even in the divination practices in making visible their deities' signs in

SearchResultDetail?idxLemma=2289&showAll=0> (accessed on 23 March 2022).

¹⁴⁹ For translation, see Hans Wehr, 346-347.

¹⁵⁰ Al-Azharī, Vol. 3, 103.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

shepherding the interest of their worldly affairs. From here it continues to evolve and transpires within the Jāhiliyya poetry and Islamic-Arabic lexicon, allowing the existence of the new socio-political institutions to emerge invariably within *amīr*, *amr*, *ūli al-amr*, *ammarah*, and so on. All of whom were authoritatively functioning in shepherding the interest of their dominions respectively.

9. Conclusion

Stripping *al-imārah* through its root *'mr* provides the barest sense of its conceptualization. In place of the normative Islamic legal-political framework, semantical analysis of the root *'mr* provides a wide array of understanding of its authoritative meanings, particularly through comparative assessment of its variegated attestations of different temporal timelines. It does not bind the root authoritatively to solely represent a specific Islamic political system. It had instead embraced a much diversified and dynamic pattern of authoritative usages, mostly amalgamated through the notion of *shepherding* for the best interest and affairs of their respective dominion. Although the means of achieving that vary respectively to each profile, this shepherding quality remains the same among them. The Islamic-Arabic lexicon is perhaps the most advanced in utilizing this root, transcending the worldly and materialist interests covered by the previous documentary and literary sources of pre-Islamic Arabia. It ventures instead into the metaphysical domain of incorporeal *shepherding* of the life after death and the *self-shepherding* of the *nafs*.

Within the materialist-abundancy paradigm, the authoritative meaning of the root *'mr* has always been involved with progress, growth, and adaptability suitable to its specific environment, particularly shown through its ever-changing semantical range. Such a statement refers to how the root's derivations had evolved from the most primordial human activity of animal shepherding into human governing that may have begun simply as guiding the sedentary in the desert to matters related to tribal and warfare. The Islamic *al-imārah* took off from the latter, further evolving into what we may have known today as the emirate. One may still question the extent of this root's authoritative evolution to be halted to that Islamic political

institution, particularly with reference to the seemingly more general Qur'anic address of this root in its human political order theme *ūlī al-amr*. This semantical perspective of *al-imārah* seems to be a good starting point for that discourse, particularly in extraditing the concept from the usual legal-political epistemic lens, and bringing it within the fore of a new spectrum of, for example- the social and political ethics discourses. Having said that, however, one must respect the terminological understanding of the concept in its normative legal-political framework. But the respect must come in unison with the quest for the realization of a more universal authoritative '*mr*', which should remain peripheral- *if not integral*- to the future theorization and operationalization of *al-imārah*.