



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Thy Name is Deer, Animal names in Semitic onomastics and name-giving traditions : evidence from Akkadian, Northwest Semitic, and Arabic
Dirbas, H.

Citation

Dirbas, H. (2017, February 14). *Thy Name is Deer, Animal names in Semitic onomastics and name-giving traditions : evidence from Akkadian, Northwest Semitic, and Arabic*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/45994>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/45994>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/45994> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Dirbas, H.

Title: Thy Name is Deer. Animal names in Semitic onomastics and name-giving traditions : evidence from Akkadian, Northwest Semitic, and Arabic

Issue Date: 2017-02-14

5 Animal Names in Arabic

5.1 The onomastic evidence

The Ar. onomasticon (CAr. Bed., and CAO) contains a large proportion of animal names. Since this study is concerned with the distribution of these names in the pre-Islamic times (for motivation, see ↑1.4.1.3; 1.4.1.4) and their survival in the Islamic sources (both narrative and epigraphic), the table below exhibits them (some are by-forms) in view of their counterparts in the AAr. onomasticon. The rightmost column gives the corresponding paragraph number in the appendix (App.):

Element	Meaning	AAr.								App.
		Saf.	His.	Tham.	Dad.	Sab	Min.	Qat.	Had.	
‘adabbas-	camel									53
‘aḍal-	gerbil									83
‘alas-	tick									133
‘anbas-	lion									9
‘ankab-	spider									132
‘ans-	(strong) she-camel									53
‘anz-	goat	*			*					64
‘aqrab-	scorpion	*	*	*	*	*		*		131
‘ara/āḍ-	wild ass	*			*		*			39
‘arandas-	lion									9
‘atūd-	kid	*								75
‘awf-	bird	*			*	*	*	*	*	93
‘āwī/mu‘āwī(yat)	howler, jackal	*		*		*				19
‘aylān	male hyena	?	?							23
‘iḡl-	calf	*		*						56
‘ikrim(-at)	pigeon									111

<i>‘ikriš-</i>	she-hare									87
<i>‘u(k)kāš-</i>	spider									132
<i>‘ukbur-/‘akbar</i>	jerboa	*	*	*			*	*	*	79
<i>‘uqāb-</i>	eagle									100
<i>‘uṣfūr-</i>	finch									106
<i>af‘ā</i>	viper									118
<i>aḥyal-</i>	kind of bird	*								109
<i>anūq-</i>	raptor									94
<i>arbad-</i>	viper									118
<i>arnab-</i>	hare								*	86
<i>arqam-</i>	diadem-snake									118
<i>arw-</i>	mountain goat	*				*				29
<i>asad-</i>	lion	*	*	*	*	*	*			2
<i>ašras-</i>	lion		*	*		*				9
<i>aswad</i>	huge black snake									118
<i>ayya/il-</i>	deer									30
<i>azraq-</i>	falcon									100
<i>ba‘īr-</i>	camel	*	*	*				*		50
<i>badan-</i>	old ibex	*								32
<i>baḡl-</i>	mule	*								48
<i>bahdal-</i>	a kind of green bird									117
<i>bahnas-</i>	lion									9
<i>bakr-</i>	young camel	*	*	*			*		*	51
<i>baqar-</i>	large cattle, cow	*		*		*		*		57
<i>baqq-</i>	gnat	*	*							127

<i>baṭṭ-</i>	duck	*								103
<i>bayhas-</i>	lion									9
<i>bāz</i>	falcon									95
<i>birqiš-</i>	fringilla		*							109
<i>buhṭ-</i>	oryx					*		*		38
<i>bulbul-</i>	nightingale ²⁴⁵									109
<i>būm-</i>	owl									114
<i>burgūt-</i>	flea									124
<i>bVss-</i>	cat	?								13
<i>ḍab(u)ʿ-</i>	hyena	*	*	*			*	*		22
<i>dabāt</i>	locust									126
<i>ḍabb-</i>	lizard	*	*							119
<i>dabbūr-</i>	wasp									122
<i>dağāğ-</i>	hen									116
<i>dağfal-</i>	young elephant									85
<i>dalahmas-</i>	lion									9
<i>ḍamḍam-</i>	lion									9
<i>ḍarr-</i>	red ants									134
<i>darrāğ-</i>	hedgehog		*							89
<i>dawsar-</i>	(she) camel									53
<i>ḍaygam-</i>	lion	*								9
<i>diʿbil-</i>	(large) camel									53
<i>diʿliğ-</i>	hedgehog									89
<i>ḍiʿb-</i>	wolf	*	*	*		*		*		18
<i>ḍifdaʿ-</i>	frog					*				136

²⁴⁵ Against the historical assumption that Ar. *bulbul* is an Iranian loanword, SED 2 (No. 60) considers it Sem. by listing it beside Akk *bulilu* “crested bird” and some other Modern South Arabian and Ethiopian terms under the root *bVL- “kind of small bird”.

<i>dīk-</i>	rooster									116
<i>ḍirgām-</i>	lion									9
<i>ḍu'āl-</i>	wolf	*				*				19
<i>dubb-</i>	bear	*	*	*						20
<i>dV'il-</i>	weasel, jackal	*	*	*						91
<i>fa'r-</i>	mouse	*				*	*	*	*	81
<i>fahd-</i>	cheetah	*			*	*		*		12
<i>fāḥit(-at)</i>	ring-dove	*	*							111
<i>fahl-</i>	stallion, camel									48
<i>far'(-at)</i>	louse									128
<i>far'-</i>	wild ass	*								45
<i>faras-</i>	horse, mare	*	*		*	*				46
<i>farḥ-</i>	chick, brood	*								116
<i>farīr-</i>	young oryx									59
<i>farqad-</i>	calf (of a wild cow)									38
<i>farrūḡ-</i>	hen									116
<i>fazār-</i>	leopardess									11
<i>fīl-</i>	elephant									85
<i>filw-</i>	foal, colt		*	*						48
<i>fizr-</i>	lamb									75
<i>furāfiṣ-</i>	lion									9
<i>furfur-</i>	sparrow									117
<i>furhūd-</i>	lion cub									9
<i>ḡ/'Vfr-</i>	young of ungulate, fawn	*	*			*				34
<i>ḡaḍanfar-</i>	lion									9

ḡady-	kid	*	*	*		*				65
ḡafr-	kid									75
ḡaḥl-	chameleon	*		*						119
ḡaḥš-	young ass, gazelle	*	*		*					41
ḡamal-	camel	*	*	*		*		*		52
ḡarād-	locust	*								126
ḡazāl-	gazelle	*			*	*		*		33
ḡu'al-	black-beetle	*								130
ḡudḡud-	cockroach									123
ḡurāb-	crow, raven	*	*							104
ḡuraḍ-	rat	*	*			*				80
ḡurnūq-	crane									103
ḡVḥdVb-	locust									126
ḡVndV'-	beetle									130
ḡVndVb-	locust									126
ḡVrw-	puppy, whelp									26
ḥabtar-	fox									17
ḥaḍaf-	small black sheep/goat									75
ḥaḡal-	partridge	*	*	*						113
ḥalam-	tick									133
ḥamal-	lamb	*	*	*		*				75
ḥamām-	dove			*						111
ḥamn-	tick	*	*	*				*		133
ḥanaš-	reptilian, viper									118
ḥansā'	oryx									38

<i>ḥaraš-</i>	fly									125
<i>ḥarḡal-</i>	locust		*	*						126
<i>harṭam-</i>	lion			*						9
<i>ḥarūf-</i>	(young) sheep	*							*	66
<i>ḥašram-</i>	wasp									122
<i>hawbar-</i>	cheetah									12
<i>hubayr-</i>	little hyena									23
<i>hawḍ-</i>	sandgrouse									115
<i>ḥawla(t)</i>	she-gazelle									38
<i>ḥawta'-</i>	fly									125
<i>hawzan-</i>	a kind of bird									112
<i>ḥaydar-</i>	lion									9
<i>hayq-</i>	male ostrich									112
<i>hayṭam-</i>	eaglet									100
<i>ḥayya(t)</i>	snake					*		*		118
<i>ḥaz'al-</i>	male hyena							*		23
<i>hiḡris-</i>	fox cub									17
<i>ḥimār-</i>	donkey	*	*		*	*		*		42
<i>ḥinzīr-</i>	pig									77
<i>hiql-</i>	young ostrich	*								112
<i>ḥirbiš-</i>	rattlesnake									118
<i>ḥirdawn-</i>	lizard									119
<i>hirmās-</i>	lion									9
<i>ḥirniq-</i>	she-hare									87
<i>hirr-</i>	cat	*		*						13
<i>ḥiṣf-</i>	fawn								*	38

<i>ḥisl-</i>	young lizard	*								119
<i>hizabr-</i>	lion									9
<i>ḥamʿ-</i>	male hyena						*	*		23
<i>ḥubāb-</i>	a kind of snake	?	?	?						118
<i>ḥubšiya(t)</i>	big ant									121
<i>hodayla(t)</i>	dove									111
<i>ḥuḍayr-</i>	greenfinch									109
<i>ḥuld-</i>	mole	*	*							88
<i>ḥurqūṣ-</i>	tick									133
<i>ḥuṣaynī</i>	fennec									17
<i>ḥuṣṣāf-/ḥuffāṣ-</i>	bat									92
<i>ḥūt-</i>	fish, whale	*	*	*					*	137
<i>ḥuwār-</i>	young camel	*	*	*	*					53
<i>ḥuzar-</i>	male hare	*								87
<i>ḥuzaz-</i>	young/male hare		*							87
<i>ḥVnṭVb-</i>	locust, beetle									126
<i>ibil-</i>	camel	*						*		49
<i>kabš-</i>	ram					*				67
<i>kalb-</i>	dog	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	14
<i>kawdan-</i>	mule									43
<i>kudr-</i>	sandgrouse									115
<i>laʿā-(at)</i>	wild bull/cow				?	?				58
<i>labuʿ-</i>	lion	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		4
<i>layṭ-</i>	lion	*	*							5
<i>maʿz-</i>	goat	*	*							70
<i>maḍraḥī</i>	vulture,									100

	falcon									
<i>miṣḥal-</i>	ass									48
<i>muhr-</i>	foal	*								44
<i>muṣʿab-</i>	camel, stallion									53
<i>naʿām-</i>	ostrich	*				*			*	112
<i>naʿġ-</i>	ewe									75
<i>naʿtal-</i>	male hyena									23
<i>nabbāḥ-</i>	dog (lit. bark- ing)					*		*		15
<i>nāhis-</i>	lion									6
<i>naḥl-</i>	bee									122
<i>naḥšal-</i>	wolf									19
<i>namir-, nimir-</i>	leopard	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	10
<i>naml-</i>	ant(s)	*							*	121
<i>nasr-</i>	vulture	*	*	*	*	*		*		97
<i>nawṣ-</i>	wild ass	*	*							48
<i>nims-</i>	mongoose	*	*	*						24
<i>nūn-</i>	fish	*								137
<i>nuhām-</i>	owl									114
<i>qa/uṭāmī</i>	falcon									100
<i>qahd-</i>	lamb					*				75
<i>qalūṣ-</i>	young she-camel									53
<i>qarm-</i>	stallion									48
<i>qaml-</i>	louse	*		*				*	*	128
<i>qamqam-</i>	tick									133
<i>qašʿam-</i>	old vulture									100
<i>qaṭāt</i>	sandgrouse									115

<i>qird-</i>	ape									84
<i>qitr-</i>	a kind of snake									118
<i>qumriya(t)</i>	turtledove									111
<i>qunbur-</i> <i>qubbur-</i>	lark									109
<i>qunfuḏ-</i>	hedgehog	*	*	*						89
<i>qurad-</i>	tick			*						133
<i>raʿl-</i>	she-ostrich								*	112
<i>raʿl-</i>	ostrich offspring	*	*		*			*		112
<i>raḥam-</i>	Egyptian vulture	*	*				*			99
<i>raqāš-</i>	speckled snake									118
<i>rašaʿ-</i>	fawn			*		*				38
<i>riʾm-</i>	gazelle, white antelope	*		*					*	35
<i>riḥl-</i>	ewe	*	*	*						71
<i>š/saqr-</i>	falcon	*		*		*				100
<i>šaʿda(t)</i>	donkey mare		*							48
<i>saʿdāna(t)</i>	dove									111
<i>sāʿid-</i>	lion									9
<i>šaʿw-</i>	kinglet	*								109
<i>sab(V)ʿ-</i>	lion, beast of pray	*				*				7
<i>saband/tī</i>	leopard									11
<i>šabaṭ-</i>	sun-spider		*							132
<i>šabw-</i>	scorpion									131
<i>šadā</i>	owl									114

<i>šādīn-</i>	fawn									38
<i>saḥl-</i>	kid, lamb		*	*						75
<i>samak-</i>	fish									137
<i>sandarī</i>	a kind of bird									117
<i>šāt</i>	ewe									74
<i>šibl-</i>	lion cub	*		*		*				8
<i>sīd-</i>	wolf	*	*							19
<i>sirḥān-</i>	wolf									19
<i>šūḡā'-</i>	large-headed snake									118
<i>sulk-</i>	partridge									113
<i>summān-</i>	quail	*				*			*	111
<i>sunūnū-</i>	swallow									110
<i>ṣurad-</i>	shrike									109
<i>ṣurṣur-</i>	cricket									123
<i>ṣūṣ-</i>	brood									116
<i>tawlab-</i>	foal, young ass	*			*					48
<i>ṭawr-</i>	bull	*	*	*					*	60
<i>tays-</i>	male goat, buck							*		74
<i>ṭu'bān-</i>	viper									118
<i>ṭurmula(t)</i>	she-fox			*						17
<i>ṭV'al-, ṭ'lab-</i>	fox	*	*	*	*	*		*		16
<i>usāma(t)</i>	lion					*				9
<i>wa'l-</i>	ibex	*	*	*					*	37
<i>wa'wa'-</i>	jackal									19
<i>wabr-</i>	hyrax	*	*	*						90
<i>wahm-</i>	camel									53

<i>waḥṣ-</i>	wild beast	*	*	*						138
<i>ya'sūb-</i>	drone									122
<i>yu'yu'-</i>	merlin									100
<i>yamām-</i>	pigeon	*								111
<i>yarbū'-</i>	jerboa									82
<i>zabāb-</i>	shrew									83
<i>ḡaby-</i>	antelope	*					*	*		36
<i>zaġlūl-</i>	brood									116
<i>ḡalīm-</i>	male ostrich	*				*		*		112
<i>zandabīl-</i>	elephant									85
<i>zarzūr-</i>	starling									108
<i>zuġb(-at)</i>	dormouse									83
<i>zunbūr-</i>	hornet									122
<i>zurayq-</i>	jay									109
<i>zurraq-</i>	kite	*								100

The table shows that ca. 115 of these elements are also found in the AAr. onomasticon, particularly in Saf. Such a high number reflects a continuity in name-giving traditions in the Arabian Peninsula and the Syro-Jordanian steppe and supports the reliability of the classical narrative sources (at least as far as name-giving is concerned).

5.2 Suffixes and endearment forms

5.2.1 -ān

This suffix indicates an infinitive or adjectival form (Fischer 2002: §65; Wright 1896 1: 133ff). The latter function probably applies to the following names: CAr. *Fahdān* “Cheetah-like” (§12), *Farān* “Wild-ass-like” (§45), *Labwān* “Lion-like” (§4), *Nimrān* “Leopard-like” (§10), *Ra'lān* “Little-ostrich-like” (§112), *Sab'ān* “Lion-like” (§7), *Wa'lān* “Ibex-like” (§37), and *Ḥa'ibān* “Antelope-like” (§36); CAr. *Ḍi'bān*/Bed. *Ḍibān* “Wolf-like” (§18); Bed. *Baqqān* “Gnat-like” (§127), *Ġaḥṣān* “Young-ass-like” (§41), *Nemsān* “Mongoose-like” (§24), *Ra'ēlān* “Ostrich-like” (§112), *Rimān* “White-antelope-like” (§35), and *Šiblān* “Lion-cub-like” (§8).

In some instances the suffix *-ān* indicates a specifically masc. form (Ibn Al-Tasturī Al-Kātib 1983: 66, 91): *Ḍib‘ān* “Hyena” vs. fem. *Ḍabu‘* (§22), *‘Uqrubān* “Scorpion” vs. fem. *‘Aqrab* (§131), and *Ṭu‘lubān* “Male fox”, whereas the unmarked *ṭa‘lab-* indicates both genders (§16). In other masc. names, this suffix is considered a radical, e.g., *Ṭu‘bān* “Huge (male) snake” (§118) and *Sirḥān* “Wolf” (§19).

5.2.2 *-a(t)*

This suffix functions as a hypocoristic-diminutive in masc. names (Littmann 1948: 52), and it is mainly found in CAr.: *Bahdala* “Little (green) bird” (§117), *Ḍabba* “Little lizard” (§119), *Ḡaḥla* “Little chameleon” (§119), *Ḡurwa* “Puppy” (§26), *Ḥarūfa* “Little sheep” (§66), *Kabša* “Little ram” (§67), *Kalba* “Little dog” (§14), *Namira* “Little leopard” (§10),²⁴⁶ *Ṭa‘laba*, *Ṭu‘āla* “Little fox” (§16),²⁴⁷ *Ḍi‘ba* “Little wolf” (§18),²⁴⁸ *Wa‘la* “Little ibex” (§37),²⁴⁹ and *Wa‘wa‘a* “Little jackal” (§19). Remarkably, this suffix is also widely used in names/by-forms indicating lion: *Asada*,²⁵⁰ *‘Anbasa*, *Dirḡāma*, *Usāma*,²⁵¹ *Furāfiša*, *Ḥaydara*, and *Harṭama* (§9).

The suffix *-a(t)* is absent from animal names in Bed. and CAO, but it is found in other types, like *Ḥamāda* and *Ḥammūda* < *Aḥmad* or *Muḥammad* and *‘Abbūda* < *‘Abd-DN* (Ḥittī 2003: 36; Allen 1956: 76).

5.2.3 *-ī*

This suffix occurs mainly in CAr.: *Arnabī* “Hare” (§86), *Ḍubay‘ī* “Hyena” (§22), *Farḥī* “Brood” (§116), *Raqāšī* (f) “Serpent” (§118), and *Waḥšī* “Wild beast” (§138). Its function is unclear, however. It could be the *nisba* ending (*ī* < *iy*), like *arḍī* “earthy” < *arḍ*, *šamsī* “solar” < *šams*, *qamarī* “lunar” < *qamr*, and so on.²⁵² Alternatively, it may indicate a hypocoristicon which is similar to the suffix *-a(iy(a))* in the ancient Sem. languages (↑3.2.2, ↑4.1.2.3-4), for it similarly occurs in two types of names: (1) shortened names in CAr. and CAO, e.g., *Šamsī* < *Šams al-dīn*, *‘Izzī* < *‘Izz al-dīn* and *Niḡāmī* < *Niḡām al-dīn/al-mulk* (Al-Sāmirrā’ī 1983: 267-68), and (2) one-word names in CAO, e.g., *Šukrī* (SAR 2, No. 4092), *Bakrī*, and *Ḥamdī* (Ḥittī 2003: 31, 36). A less likely hypothesis is that the ending *-ī* is the possessive pronoun suffix 1 sg.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Tham. *Nmrt* and Dad. *Nmrh*.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Tham. *Ṭ‘lt*.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Saf. *Ḍ‘bt*.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Saf. *W‘lt*.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Tham., Min., Qat. *‘s‘dt*.

²⁵¹ Cf. Sab. *‘s‘mt*.

²⁵² More examples are available in Wright (1896 1: 149D).

5.2.4 Diminutive

Two diminutive forms are found in animal names: (1) *fu'ayl* (CAr.) > *f'ayl/f'ēl* (colloquial Ar.), and much less (2) *fu'ayyil* (CAr.) > *f'ayyil* (colloquial Ar.):

CAr.: *Uğayl* “Little calf” (§56), *Buğayl* “Little mule” (§48), *Bukayr* “Little young camel” (§51), *Dubayb* “Little bear” (§20), *Ḥumayr* “Little donkey” (§42), *Hurayr* and *Hurayra* (f) “Little cat” (§13), *Ḥusayl* “Little lizard” (§119), *Ḥuzayr* “Little male-hare” (§87), *Ğu'ayl* “Little black-beetle” (§130), *Ğudayy* “Little kid” (§65), *Ğunaydib* “Little locust” (§126), *Lu'ayy* “Little wild bull” (?) (§58), *Nusayr* “Little vulture” (§97), *Suḥayla* (f) “Little kid” (§75), *Sumyaka* (f) “Little fish” (§137), *Şuqayr* “Little falcon” (§100), *Tu'aylib* “Little fox” (§16), *Tuwayr* “Little bull” (§60), *Usayd* (m + f) and *Usayda* (f) “Little lion” (§2), and *Zubayya* (f) “Little antelope” (§36).

Bed.: *Gērib* “Little scorpion” (§131), *Önayze* (f) “Little she-goat” (§64), *Bsēs* (f) and *Bsaysa* (f) “Little cat” (§13), *Brayğit* “Little flea” (§124), *Ḍbayb* “Little young lizard” (§119), *Ḡḥayš* “Little young ass” (§41), *Ğraybī* “Little jerboa” (§82), *Ğraydī* “Little rat” (§80), *Gmēle* (f) “Little louse” (§128), *Gnēfid* “Little hedgehog” (§89), *Ḥmayyir* “Little donkey” [fu'ayyil form] (§42), *Ḥşayin* “Little horse” (§48), *Ğzayyil* (f) “Little gazelle” [fu'ayyil form] (§33), *Fhayde* (f) “Little she-cheetah” (§12), *Srayḥān* “Little wolf” (§19), and *Mway'iz* “Little goat” (§70).

CAr./Bed.: *Du'ayb/Ḍwēb*, *Ḍwayibe* (f) “Little (she) wolf” (§18), *Ğuḥaydib/Ğḥaydib* (f) “Little locust” (§126), *Ğuḥayš/Ğḥayš* “Little ass” (§49), *Ğurayy/Ğrēw* “Little puppy” (§26), *Kulayb/Tslēb < Kulēb* “Little dog” (§14), *Numayla/Numēle* (f) “Little ant” (§121), *Numayr/Numēr* “Little leopard” (§10), and *Šubayt/Šbayte* (f) “Little sun-spider” (§131).

In some instances, the diminutive is the original form of the animal term itself, e.g., CAr. *Haytam* “Eaglet” (§100) and *Zurayq* “Jay” (§109).

Two hypocoristic suffixes occur in names of *fu'ayl* form:

(1) *-a(t)*, which is mainly found in CAr.: *Du'ayba* “Little wolf” (§18), *Ḍubay'a* “Little hyena” (§22), *Ğunda'a* “Little *ğunda*-beetle” (§130), *Ğurayya* “Little puppy” (§26), *Ḥumayla* “Little lamb” (§75), *Kudayra* “Little sandgrouse” (§115), *Ruḥayla* “Little ewe” (§71), and *Tuwayra* “Little bull” (§60).

(2) *-ān*, which is confined to Bed. names: *Fhaydān* “Little cheetah” (§12), *Ğ'ēlān* “Little black-beetle” (§130), *Klēbān* “Little dog” (§14), *Shēlān* “Little kid” (§75), and *Twaysān* “Little buck” (§74).

In addition, Bed. colloquial uses the reduplication of the second radical in diminutive: *Bšēbiš* < *Bšayš*/*Bšēš* “Little cat” (§13) and *Klēlib* < *Klayb*/*Klēb* “Little dog” (§14).

5.3 Animal names in theophoric names

Animal terms are found in three types of theophoric names:

(1) *Kalb-DN* (§14), which survived in the Islamic onomastic tradition until a recent time (ca. 1st half of the 20th c.) as we can see in *Ch/Ġellālāh* < *Kalb Allah* “Dog of God”, found among the Bedouins of Ḥawrān, Syria, and more among the Shiites of Iraq and Iran. According to Littmann (1948: 8), a Bedouin bore this name because his father wanted him to be as loyal as a dog to the god. The same explanation is mentioned by Schimmel (1989: 65) concerning a man from a rural area in southern Iraq. In addition, there are some names in which the element *kalb*- is added to one of the Shiite imams’ names: *Kalb ‘Alī/al-Ḥusayn/al-‘Abbās* (Abū Zayd 1995: 56), the diminutive *Ġlēb ‘Alī* (< *Klēb* < *Kulayb*),²⁵³ and *Kalb al-a‘imma* “Dog of the imams” (Schimmel 1989: 36). One can also refer to the title of Shah ‘Abbas I [d.1629] *Kalb-i astan-i ‘Alī* “Dog of the Threshold of ‘Alī”, which reflects the Shah’s servility towards the Shiite imamate (Rizvi 2013: 381). Semantically, *Kalb-DN* type parallels other Shiite names of ‘*Abd-X*: ‘*Abd ‘Alī/al-Ḥasan/al-Ḥusayn/al-‘Abbās/al-Zahra* (f) or *al-Zahrā*’ (the nickname of *Fāṭima*, the daughter of the Prophet) (Al-Sāmīrrā’ī 1983: 266). In general, the Islamic *Kalb-DN* type appears to have no relation with the healing-dog cult known in ancient Mesopotamia (↑3.3.2).

(2) The honorific nickname *Asad Allah* “Lion of God” (§2; ↓5.4.6.1.1.2), which parallels Heb. *’Ārī’ēl* “Lion of El” (↑4.2.3) and, probably, Nab. *Šb[’]lhy* “Lion of (my) god” (?) (§7).

(3) The problematic name ‘*Abd al-Asad*, lit. “Servant of the lion” (CIK 2 122). For Robertson Smith (1907: 224), this name denotes the pre-Islamic god Yağūtī, who was worshipped under the form of a lion. Nöldeke (1913: 662) is more cautious about this hypothesis, for the element *asad* is a comparatively modern word for lion, not the old word common to the various Sem. languages. The association with Yağūtī seems unlikely, for a certain ‘*Abd Allāh* b. ‘*Abd al-Asad* was a companion of the Prophet (Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 4: 170; 3: 506), and the latter is reported to have changed many names that do not agree with Islam, especially the ones referring to idols (↑2.3.2.2), but there is no Hadith concerning the name of ‘*Abd al-Asad* or the cult of Yağūtī in the form of a lion, even though the idol is mentioned in the Qur’an (71: 23). Given this information, I suggest three alternative hypotheses concerning ‘*Abd al-Asad*: (1) it is an archaic type related to the Old Sab.

²⁵³ This name was known among the low-educated population of Shiite Iraqis (Al-Sāmīrrā’ī 1983: 275).

DN ʾs¹d “warrior”, which is quite well-attested in ASAr. theophoric names (§2), (2) it designates the constellation ‘Leo’ (*al-asad*) in view of two parallel theophoric names, i.e., ‘*Abd Šams* “Sun” (CIK 2 131; also Saf. ‘*bdšms*, HIn 399) and ‘*Abd al-Ṭurayyā* “Pleiades” (CIK 2 554), or, more probably, (3) it is based on a tribal/eponymic name in view of AAr.²⁵⁴ and late pre-Islamic counterparts, like ‘*Abd al-Aws* (CIK 2 123), ‘*Abd Ġaṭafān* (CIK 2 124),²⁵⁵ and ‘*Abd al-Muṭṭalib* (the grandfather of the Prophet).²⁵⁶ In any case, thus, ‘*Abd al-Asad* appears to have no association with the lion or the worship of Yağūt in the form of a lion.²⁵⁷

5.4 Animal names: reasons for their use

Having discussed the linguistic features of animal names in Ar., I will now deal with their cultural aspects. The examination involves six theories and practices, that is, (1) totemism, (2) the classical Arabic theory, (3) apotropaic names, (4) affective names, (5) alternative names, and (6) naming after famous people

5.4.1 Totemism

As mentioned above (4.3.4), Robertson Smith (1912) was the first scholar to draw upon anthropological data in his treatment of ancient Sem. cultures. His application of totemism to Sem. religions resulted in his concept about the totemic origin of the slain god, or ‘totemism as sacrament’. Since this concept was extensively analyzed by Jones (2005: 59-104), I will exclude it from my discussion and limit myself to the question of animal names. Robertson Smith’s central argument is that animal names belonged to sub-tribes or stocks, but they were considered individual by the Ar. genealogical system, which is inspired by the patriarchal theory. The latter, of course, does not match the system of totemism, where kinship is reckoned through the mother. Through a complex process the totem name was transmitted through the mother as a natural result of a system of exogamy, and this explains the attestation of the same animal name among sub-tribes from dif-

²⁵⁴ Milik’s assumption (1959-60: 150) that His. ‘*bdmnnw*, ‘*bd’dnwn*, ‘*bd’mnw*, and ‘*bd’mrw* are based on tribal names is very probable, for ‘*mnw* and ‘*mrw* are evidenced as such in Saf. in the forms ‘*mn* and ‘*mrt* (Al-Jallad 2015: Index of Tribes).

²⁵⁵ Both *al-Aws* and *Ġaṭafān* are independently attested as tribal and individual names (CIK 2 213, 274).

²⁵⁶ A report concerning this individual mentions that his birth name was *Šayba* “Gray-haired” and that he was called so because he was fatherless and brought up by his paternal uncle, i.e., al-Muṭṭalib. Arabs in the pre-Islamic times used to name the fatherless boy ‘*Abd-PN* after the man who took care of him (Al-Ḥalabī 1875 1: 4-5).

²⁵⁷ The literal approach of theophoric names is quite hazardous and can easily lead to fanciful conclusions. The pre-Islamic name ‘*Abd Bakr* (CIK 2 123) would evoke a camel cult if we treat the element *bakr* literally as “young camel” and not as an individual or tribal name.

ferent groups, as is the case in North America, where a Bear tribe existed among the Hurons, the Iroquois, and so on (Robertson Smith 1912: 466-67). As for names in the plural form, i.e., “Dogs” (*Kilāb*), “Panthers” (*Anmār*) and “Lizards” (*Ḍibāb*), they are originally names of tribes, each member of which would call himself a Dog and a Panther, and thus “the idea of an ancestor bearing the plural name is plainly artificial, invented in the interests of a system” (Robertson Smith 1912: 462).

5.4.1.1 *Individual or tribal names?*

A counter-argument for the totemistic origin of animal names was held by Nöldeke, who gave more examples of them from all Sem. languages known to him. His view is that the Ar. names emerged as individual and cannot be a trace of totemism, for they are only found among clans and sub-tribes (eponymic names) but not among large tribes. It was natural for a nomad living in the open air to name his children after the beasts of the field, without the necessity of totemism, and some names could be merely nicknames (Nöldeke 1886: 156ff; Beiträge 73ff). This point seems correct if we consider the following examples listed by Robertson Smith (1912: 459ff):

Asad “Lion” (a number of tribes), *Tawr* “Bull” (a sub-tribe), and *Dabba* “Lizard” (a sub-division).

From a sociological point of view, except the fact that all these names refer to animals, there is nothing common among them which would allow one to put them in one category (i.e., originally tribal names). Apparently, Robertson Smith’s categorization is based on the fact that all these names appear in *nasab* (i.e., *banū-x* “sons/descendants of x”) or *nisba* (i.e., with the gentilic suffix *-ī*). To further illustrate the question of *nasab/nisba*, tribal names, and totemism, I will shortly draw on the ANAr. evidence. Names of social groups are easily recognized in Saf. and His. through the phrase *q-ʾl* “of the people/group/tribe of X”, e.g., *l sʾhm bn ʾdm bn bhʾ q-ʾl ḏf* “by Sʾhm son of ʾdm son of Bhʾ of the people of Ḍf”. Less frequent is the gentilic suffix *-y*: *l rsʾl bn qdm h-ḏfy* “by Rsʾl son of Qdm the Ḍf-ite”. Names other than those of peoples usually appear without the definite article, except for some cases, e.g., *ḥrb h- mdy ʾl rm b-bšr* “the Persians plundered the Romans near Bšr” (Al-Jallad 2015: 60). Of all the names of the nomadic tribes in Saf. inscriptions only three refer to animals, that is, *Dʾb* “Wolf”, *Fʾrt* “Mouse”, and *Nmrt* “Leopard”²⁵⁸ (Al-Jallad 2015: Index of Tribes). In view of the high proportion of animal names in Saf., it seems probable that these are originally individual (eponyms). Interestingly,

²⁵⁸ Most likely, both *Fʾrt* and *Nmrt* are masc. names ending in the hypocoristic suffix *-(a)t* (↑5.2.2).

quite similar to Saf. inscriptions, the Qur'an uses two terms in reference to social groups. The first term is *Āl* (the same 'l), which is used in a theological sense in relation to the adherents of a certain figure (an adversary, prophet, or eponym), e.g., *Āl Fir'awn* (2: 49) against *Āl Mūsā* and *Āl Hārūn* (2: 248); *Āl Ibrāhīm*, *Imrān* (3: 33), *Ya'qūb* (12: 6), and *Lūṭ* (15: 59). The second term is *banū* "descendants of", which occurs in two cases: *Banū Isrā'īl* (10: 90; 20: 40, 47, and so on) and *Banū Ādam* (7: 26-7; 17: 50). When referring to big nations, the Qur'an, like Saf. inscriptions, also mentions them in the pl. form: *al-Rūm* "The Romans" (30: 2). Thus, in most cases the tribal (or group) name is eponymic, a fact which Robertson Smith denied because it does not match the idea that the totem is assigned by the mother.

Lastly, from an anthropological point of view, an animal name cannot be taken as evidence of totemism in itself, unless we are certain about the association between the tribe and the animal it is named after (↑4.1.4.1).

5.4.1.2 *Animal names in the plural form*

An examination of narrative sources yields more names in the pl. form than the ones mentioned by Robertson Smith: *Arwā* (f) "Mountain goats", pl. of *urwiyya* (§29), *Darr* "Red ants", pl. of *darra* (§134), *Gizlān* (f) "Gazelles",²⁵⁹ pl. of *gazāl* (§33), *Ġihāš* "Young asses", pl. of *ḡaḥš* (§41), *Riyām*, probably pl. of *ri'm* "white antelope" (§35), and *Zabāb* "Shrews", pl. of *zabāba* (§83). All these names are individual, and according to the genealogical and gentilic works (i.e., CIK; Iṣṭiqāq; Al-Sam'ānī 1980-84), none of them is attested for any tribe or social group. Importantly, the pl. form is not confined to animal names; it is also found in other types, like CAr. *Riyāḥ* "Winds" (CIK 2 488), and much more in CAO: *Am-wāḡ* (f) "Waves", *Ansām* (f) "Breezes", *Anhār* (f) "Rivers", and *Saḥāb* (f+m) "Clouds", etc. (Hittī 2003: 6, 34, 74, 75). Such forms reflect an ancient onomastic tradition²⁶⁰ which can be explained through two hypotheses: (1) circumstantial/omen-names, i.e., the birth-giving was accompanied by the presence of a group of certain animals or the like (↓5.4.2), or (2) metaphoric designations of amplification.

To sum up, an investigation of tribal names as well as names in the pl. form suggests that animal names emerged as individual and later became tribal (eponymic), which makes the totemistic origin unlikely.

²⁵⁹ <http://www.s-gabriel.org/names/juliana/alandalus/femism.html> [accessed on 8/9/2015].

²⁶⁰ AAr. names in 'QTL pattern could reflect the elative *af'al* or the pl. *af'ul*, *af'āl*, e.g., Saf. *'s'd* (§2), *'d'b* (§18), *'klb* (§14), *'m'z* (§70), *'nmr* (§10), and His. *'s'ṣr* (§38).

5.4.2 The classical Arabic theory: animal names as metaphors and omen-names

According to Ibn Durayd (↑2.3.2.1), Arabs in the pre-Islamic time used to give their children animal names for two reasons: (1) after the animal first encountered, (2) to horrify their foes. An earlier comprehensive argument concerning this practice is presented by Al-Ğāhiz, but with more focus on *al-zağr* “augury”:

One said: the Arabs used to give their children names like *Kalb* (Dog), *Ĥimār* (Donkey), *Ĥağar* (Stone), *Ğu‘al* (Black beetle), *Ĥanžala* (Colocynth), and *Qird* (Ape) considering these things as good omens. The custom was that when a man had a male son, he would leave the tent to augur from birds and to seek omens. If he heard somebody saying ‘stone’ or he saw one, he would choose it as a name for his son thinking that he would be strong, dense, long-lived and patient and that he would be able to destroy anything confronting him. If he heard somebody saying ‘wolf’ or he saw one, he would think of keenness, slyness, and gaining. If it was a donkey, he would think of long age, nerviness, strength, and patience. If it was a dog, he would think of precaution, attentiveness, strong voice, gaining and so on..... (Al-Ğāhiz 1965 1: 324-6).²⁶¹

In order to analyze the two major concepts of the classical Arabic theory, i.e., omen-names and naming against foes, I will approach them separately below.

5.4.2.1 Omen-names and augury

Naming after the animal first encountered or heard is not confined to the Ar. tradition; comparative anthropological data shows that it is cross-culturally attested. In Gujarat, India, for example, an infant may be called by the name of the animal (cat, dog, crow, etc.) which is heard to utter a cry at the time when the infant is born (Enthoven 1924: 211). Among the Mbeere people of Kenya, we find the following methods (maternal vision):

- If an animal, especially a frog or a snake, enters the house of a pregnant woman frequently, a baby is named after it.
- If a pregnant woman encounters a wild animal, a baby is named after it. They are thought to be manifestations of the God.
- If a wild animal attacks a pregnant woman, a baby is named after it (Katakami 1997: 205-06).

²⁶¹ The same passage with a little modification is found in Al-Ta‘ālibi 2000: 408.

All these examples suggest that the animal in question is considered a divine sign. Yet the connection between this idea and naming after the birds or animals used in *zağr* “augury” described by classical Arab scholars seems to be based on a confusion. Ibn Durayd and the others mostly confused the decisions following from the behavior of animals in augury with the application of the names of the animals themselves.

5.4.2.2 *Names against foes*

Presumably, this type of names belongs to a wider concept, that is, ‘*names decisive of fate*’. On his study on name-giving among the Turkish people, Rásonyi writes: “This category is based on the idea that the animal name has changed into a symbolic one, according to what characteristic features they possessed which the parents considered desirable with regard to the infant, such as braveness, temperament, power, speed, while in the case of one or the other domestic animal its size is the symbol of the appreciated or useful feature” (Rásonyi 1976). An examination of the applicability of this concept to Ar. requires highlighting three relevant topics: (1) animal imagery, (2) animal names as individual names of other animals (i.e., horses), and (3) name-giving among modern Bedouins.

5.4.2.2.1 Animal imagery and animal names

Given that animal imagery in Ar. literature is a broad topic, I would like to focus on one sample, i.e., classical proverbs and expressions available in Al-‘Askarī’s encyclopedic work *mağma‘ al-amṭāl* [Collection of Proverb] (1988). A quite considerable proportion of this collection refers to all sorts of animals as representations of human characteristics in negative, positive, descriptive, or mocking connotations, especially the proverbs/expressions of the comparative formula *aḥḥalu min* followed by an animal name, e.g., *aḥḥalu min tu‘āla/al-dī‘b* “(someone is) more deceitful than a fox/wolf” (Al-‘Askarī 1988, No. 763, 759), *ākalu min ḥūt/sūs/al-fa‘r/al-fīl* “greedier than a whale/moth/mouse/elephant” (No. 250-52), *aḥqadu min ḡamal* “more malevolent than a camel” (No. 663), *ašaddu min al-asad/faras/al-fīl* “stronger than a lion/mare/elephant” (No. 1085-87), and so on.²⁶² The qualities illustrated in the table below explicitly feature in this type of proverbs/expressions:

²⁶² All the proverbs/expressions are alphabetically listed in vol. 2, appendix 1: 343-365.

vulture			*	*								*						
wolf		*				*	*		*				*			*		*

It is clear from this table that animal connotations somehow agree with the classical Ar. theory regarding the function of animal names (whether being given names or nick-names). However, it can in no way cover all the motivations behind naming, for, on the one hand, animal connotations are changeable and contextual, and on the other hand, naming is influenced by other factors, such as social status, degree of urbanism, and family values, subjects I will deal with in the coming sections (↓5.5, 5-6).

5.4.2.2.2 Animal names as individual names of other animals: horses

The book of *Asmā' ḥayl al-ʿarab wa ansābuhā* [*Horses of Arabs: Their Proper Names and Genealogy*] by Ibn Al-Aʿrābī (2007) gives information on 837 horses with ca. 590 proper names (several names are borne by more than one horse).²⁶³ Many of the horses mentioned here are named after other animals: *Tawr* “Bull”, *al-Ġarāda* (f) “Locust”, *Ġirwa* “Whelp”, *al-Ḥamāma* (f) “Dove”, *Ḥumayl* “Little lamb”, *al-Ḥuzar* “Male hare”, *Dawsar* “Large camel”, *Diʿba* (f) “She-wolf”, *al-Ruḥayl* “Little ewe-lamb”, *Zahdam* “Falcon”, *al-Sirḥān*, *al-Sīd* “Wolf”, *al-Ḍubayb* “Little lizard”, *Zabya* (f) “Antelope”, *al-Ẓalīm* “Male-ostrich”, *ʿAqrab* (f) “Scorpion”, *al-Uqāb* (f) “Eagle”, *al-Ġurāb* “Crow”, *al-Ġazāla* (f) “Gazelle”, *al-Fahd* “Cheetah”, *al-Kalb* “Dog”, *Kahmas* “Lion” (epithet), *al-Naʿāma* (f) “She-ostrich”, and *al-Yaʿsūb* “Drone”. Strikingly, all these names are also used as anthroponyms. Given the usual application of animal imagery (↑5.4.2.2.1), such names were likely given to horses in order to reinforce certain qualities. The majority seems to denote speed and agility (cheetah, hare, lizard, ostrich, dove, falcon, gazelle, and eagle); others indicate physical strength (camel, lion, and bull). One name could be considered affective (i.e., ewe). *al-Ġurāb* “Crow” could refer to the color of the horse (i.e., black) or be taken as an ominous name that aims to bring evil upon the enemy in view of the bird connotations (see ‘crow’ in the table ↑5.4.2.2.1). *al-Kalb* “Dog” is of interest here, for it gives us an idea about the animal connotation and helps us understand the reason for its use as a PN as well. It is unlikely that a Bedouin would give his horse (which occupies a notable place in his life) such a name if the dog was considered an inferior or humble animal. The name mostly indicates fidelity towards the owner and aggressiveness towards the enemy and thus emerged in a time where the dog occupied a high status.

²⁶³ All the names are listed alphabetically in the index of the book.

5.4.2.2.3 Modern Bedouins²⁶⁴

Theoretically, some ancient naming methods may have survived among modern Bedouins, for their pastoral economy and culture did not witness radical changes. The Najdi *Ġimel* “Camel”, *Tslēb* < *Kulayb* “Little dog”, and *Sirḥān* “Wolf” were named so because their parents wanted them to be like the animals mentioned (Hess 1912: 7, 28). Names which are not related to animals can also support the concept of names against foes. For example, Littmann (1948: 8) mentions that he met a Bedouin from Ḥawrān (Southern Syria) called *Sakrān* (also Saf. *S'krn* in HIn 323 and CAr. *al-Sakrān* in CIK 2 503), so he immediately thought of the literal meaning “Intoxicated”, but the man explained that his father named him so because he wanted him to be drunk from the blood of his enemies. Names referring to combat and braveness fit here, too: *Dāmiġ* “He who destroys the head [*dimāġ*]” (i.e., of his foe), *Ḥnišīl* “Desert rider”, *Ġāsir* “Brave”, *Mṭā'in* “He who stabs (his foe)” (with a spear/sword), *Miġhim* “He who sends (his foe) to hell”, *Baṭṭāḥ* “He who knocks people down”, *Ġabbār* “Mighty”, *Dahḥām* “Attacker”, *Ṣaddām* “Clashing”, *Ḍārī* “Fierce”, *Ġāzī* and *Muġīr* “Conqueror, Rider”, *Mṣārī* “Gladiator”, and so on.²⁶⁵ Such powerful names clearly show the influence of raiding and revenge on name-giving and reflect a kind of individuality and independence compared to religious names which are based on confession, confidence, and trust. The individual in this case has to struggle and face his fate in order to survive in a rough environment, where hostility could be manifested through other social groups as well as nature itself.

To conclude, our analysis of animal imagery, individual names of horses, and names of modern Bedouins supports the classical theory on name-giving in general and animal names in particular in the sense that they were given in order to express a wish and terrify foes, provided we expand the notion of ‘foes’ to include both outsiders (enemies from other tribes) and insiders (ill-wishers and such: ↓5.4.4).

5.4.3 Animal names as terms of affection and endearment

Gazelle designations are widely associated with women in poetry and dream literature. For example, a female gazelle in a dream represents a beautiful woman. Capturing a female gazelle in a dream means taking advantage of a woman, or it could mean marriage. Hunting a gazelle means profits. Shooting a gazelle with arrows means slandering a woman, and slaughtering it indicates deflowering a female servant (Al-Akili 1992: 185). Such

²⁶⁴ For a general perspective of their name-giving, see ↑2.3.2.3.

²⁶⁵ These names are mentioned in Beduinen 4; Hess 1912; Littmann 1949: 9ff, but not all of them are translated.

connotations can explain the frequency of gazelle names, especially among concubines (↓5.6.1). Similarly, names denoting doves/pigeons (i.e., metaphors for beauty and love)²⁶⁶ are quite commonly attested for women (§111). Until recently, fish names used to be appreciated in Iraq and thus given to both males and females as pet names (Al-Jumaily and Hameed 2014). As for Bedouins, names of rodents seem to have no negative connotations: a Najdi *Ġraydī* “Little rat” was called so because he was born with a little body and red skin (Hess 1912: 15). Although descriptive, the name reflects a notion of tenderness.

5.4.4 Apotropaic names

As indicated above (2.3.2.4.1), among some populations of the Arab world (namely low-educated people, rural population, and Bedouins), there was a belief that certain names can protect the children from the evil eye, jinn, and sorcery. This practice also applies to animal names, as is clear in the following classical report:

The expression *naffara* ‘*anhu* means to give him a *laqab* (nickname) that can protect him from the evil eye and jinn. A Bedouin said: when I was born, my father was told to *yunaffir* ‘*annī*, so he named me *Qunfuḍ* (Hedgehog) and gave me the *kunya* (teknonym) *Abū al-‘Addā*’ (lit. “Father of the quick-runner”) (Ibn Fāris 1979 6 459; Lisān 14: 233).²⁶⁷

The choice of the hedgehog’s name in particular is perhaps related to its attributes as an immune and quick animal. This practice has survived in modern Ar. name-giving. According to Doughty (1908), names of wild animals were awarded to keep disease and death away: “In all the Arabic countries there is a strange superstition of parents, (and this as well among the Christian sects of Syria,) that if any child seem to be sickly, of infirm understanding, or his brethren have died before, they will put upon him a wild beast’s name (especially wolf, leopard, wolverine) – that their human fragility take on as it were a temper of the kind of those animals” (Doughty 1908: 159). Indeed, a review of an onomastic sample from the Levant, i.e., the West Bank students list (WB), shows that the names of the two first animals (wolf and leopard) were common among the grandfathers, that is, the first half of the 20th c.:

Name/meaning	Sons	Fathers	Grandfathers
<i>Nimir</i> “Leopard”	11	27	91
<i>D/Dīb</i> “Wolf”	2	18	74

²⁶⁶ A famous classical book on love by Ibn Ḥazm is known as *Ṭawq al-Ḥamāma* “Ring of the Dove”.

²⁶⁷ An earlier report attributes the same event to a woman who miscarried several times. Her son, *Qunfuḍ* survived and cited poetry (Ṭa’lab 1960: 466).

It is worth mentioning that the wolf was considered a counter-jinn animal. If a child falls down because of the jinn, women say “wolf, wolf” (Al-Ṣarrāf 1927: 339; 1928: 346). If a jinni takes the form of any animal and sees a wolf, it will not be able to go back to its original nature; hence, the wolf comes and eats it (Al-Sahli 2009).²⁶⁸

In the same context, there is still a belief among the rural population of southern Iraq that snakes and scorpions are capable of preventing miscarriage and scaring the jinn and evil eye away. Hence some families tend to keep these animals at their houses. It is reported that a twenty-six years old woman from the countryside of the town of Kut used a snake as a belt around her body in order to keep the embryo fixed in her womb. She mentions “I tried it with the first child who is five years old now. Having lost two babies before, I named him *Tu'bān* (Viper) considering the snake a good-omen”.²⁶⁹

5.4.5 Naming after famous people

The frequency of some animal names in the onomasticon can be attributed to their association with famous people. Two popular examples of this custom in CAO are *Fahd* “Cheetah” (§12) and *Arwā* (f) “Mountain goats”, pl. of *urwiyya* (§29). The former is attested in all periods but has become much more popular in the Arab world in general and in Saudi Arabia in particular after the Saudi king Fahd b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (1923-2005). An onomastic survey of the students of the University of the King Sa‘ūd, Saudi Arabia, shows that the name *Fahd* ranks third (569 times) after ‘*Abd al-‘Azīz*’ (718 times) and *Ḥālid* (1104 times) (Al-Šamsān 2005: 28). Two other samples reflecting the frequency of this name outside Saudi Arabia are the student lists from the UAE (ca. 80 times) and WB (21 times). Regarding *Arwā*, it is the name of six notable women from the early Islamic time, three of them being relatives of the Prophet.²⁷⁰ There is also a Yemeni queen called *Arwā al-Ṣulayhī* (d. 1138 CE) (Al-Zarkalī 2002 1: 289). A review of any onomastic list or dictionary shows that the name is quite popular in all the Arabic countries. In Syria, for example, where the lists provide us with the names of the daughters and their mothers, it is found among both.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Far from the Arab world, a wolf’s name is given in Slovenian tradition to prevent a child’s death (cited in Hand 1984, fn. 14).

²⁶⁹ *Al-afā’i li-man’ al-’iḡhād wa dar’ al-ḥasad wa tard al-ḡinn fī al-’irāq* “(The Use of) Snakes against Miscarriage, Evil-eye, and Jinn in Iraq”, 19/6/2008, online in Alghad: <http://alghad.com/>.

²⁷⁰ *Arwā* bt. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, A. bt. al-Ḥārīt b ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, and A. bt. al-Muqawwim b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib (Ibn Sa’d 2001 10: 42, 49, 50, 217, 374).

²⁷¹ SAR 2, No. 328, 18013, 18991-92, 33464.

5.4.6 Animal names as alternative names: nicknames, *kunya*, *nasab*, and matronyms

5.4.6.1 Nicknames and honorific titles

5.4.6.1.1 Classical sources

Animal names are quite frequent as titles and nicknames in CAr., where one finds them for all kinds of people: caliphs, leaders, scholars, poets, and so on. From a classificatory viewpoint, they can be subdivided into honorific titles (political and religious) and nicknames derived from physical or psychological properties, events or accidents, ‘delocutives’, or occupations.

5.4.6.1.1.1 Honorific titles

This type of titles falls apart into political and religious. Political titles were generally bestowed by the Abbasid caliphs on military and political leaders (↑2.3.4.2.1). All the ones listed below are based on lion appellations, mostly due to the traditional association between the animal and kingship:²⁷²

- *Asad al-dawla* “Lion of the state”, Šāliḥ b. Mirdās (d. 1029 CE), the founder of the Mirdāsī dynasty in Aleppo (Al-Zarkalī 2002 3: 196) and his son Naṣr, known also as *Šibl al-dawla* “Cub of the state” (Al-Zarkalī 2002 8: 24).

- *Asad al-dīn* “Lion of the faith”, Širku b. Šādī, a Kurdish military commander and the uncle of Saladin (d. 1169 CE) (Ibn Ḥallikān 1972 2: 479). His given name in Kurdish means “Lion of the mountains”.

- *Hizabr al-dīn* “Lion of the faith”, al-Ẓāhir al-Rasūlī, a Yemenite king (d. 1438 CE) (Al-Zarkalī 2002 8: 138).

As for religious titles, they are quite popular in the Islamic onomastic tradition, especially among Shiites and Sufis. Of the ones referring to animals we have *al-Bāz al-ašhab* or *Bāz Allāh al-ašhab* “White falcon (of God)”, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ġilānī, a jurist and Sufi (d. 1166 CE) (Schimmel 1989: 52) and *Ya’sūb al-mu’minīn* “Guide of the believers” (from *ya’sūb*, lit. “drone”) for ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (the forth caliph) (Lisān 9: 189).

²⁷² For more information on this association, see ↑3.3.1.

5.4.6.1.1.2 Metaphoric nicknames derived from physical or psychological properties

Given the high number of such nicknames, I will give instances about which some explanations are available:

- *Abū al-ḍubbān*, lit. “Father of the flies”, ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, the Umayyad caliph. According to the ‘humorous’ explanation, people nicknamed him so because he had a strong and smelly breath so flies fell dead when they passed by his mouth, and from this nickname came the saying *abḥaru min abū al-ḍubān* “More stinking in breath than Abū al-ḍubbān” (KN 74; Lane 952).
- *al-Ḍiʿb* “Wolf”, al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-‘Adawī, a Hadith transmitter (b. 210 AH), presumably because he was sly and adroit (MAAM 120).²⁷³
- *al-Faʿr* “Mouse”, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Šaṭaranḡi al-Qāhirī, a poet and famous chess player (d. 1340 CE), because he was huge eater (MAAM 71, 237).²⁷⁴
- *al-Ġazāl* “Gazelle”, Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥakam, an Andalusian poet (b. 773 CE), for he was healthy and handsome (MAAM 232).
- *al-Kalb* “Dog”, Šāliḥ b. Ishāq al-Ġarmī (d. 840 CE), a grammarian who used to shout when arguing or debating about any linguistic issue (MAAM 273).
- *Asad Allah* “Lion of God”: two persons are reported to have been called so by the Prophet due to their braveness at war: Ḥamza b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (MAAM 26).²⁷⁵
- *Asad al-baḥr* “Lion of the sea”, Aḥmad b. Māḡid al-Sa’dī, an Andalusian navigator (ca. 1498 CE), for the same reason as above (MAAM 26).
- *Baqarat Yūnus* “Yūnus’ cow”, Muḥammad b. Idrīs b. al-Aswad (ca. the 2nd c. AH), was called so because he narrated on the authority of Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-A’lā (KN 112).
- *Da/uḥrūḡat al-ḡuʿal* “The black beetle’s filbert”, ‘Āmir b. Mas’ūd al-Qurašī, a Hadith transmitter (the 1st c. AH), due to his little body (Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 4: 141; Ibn Ḥaḡar 1421 AH, No. 3126).

²⁷³ On the association between the wolf and adroitness, see ↑5.4.2.2.1.

²⁷⁴ Mice are reported to be huge eater, e.g., the proverb *ākalu min al-faʿr* “(someone is) greedier than the mouse” (↑5.4.2.2.1).

²⁷⁵ This honorific nickname seems to have been more popular among Shiites (e.g., Ṭehrāi 2009 7: 20), and it is still in use as a given name in CAO (e.g., UAE, No. 70069602).

- *Dābbat ‘Affān* “Affān’s mount”, Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kisā’ī, a Hadith transmitter who used to accompany the *hafiz*²⁷⁶ ‘Affān b. Muslim (MAAM 110).
- *Ḥimār al-‘Uzayz* “al-‘Uzayz’s donkey”, Aḥmad b. ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Ṭaqafī, a Hadith transmitter (d. 926 CE), was called so by the famous poet Ibn al-Rūmī, for he was a complaining person (MAAM 92). The nickname derives from the Qur’an (2: 259).²⁷⁷
- *Sūsat al-‘ilm*, lit. “Weevil of knowledge”, Ziyād b. Yūnus al-Ḥaḍramī, a Hadith transmitter who spent his life seeking knowledge in different areas (KN 271).²⁷⁸
- *Ṭa’lab* “Fox”, Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Šaybānī (b. 816 CE), a grammarian who was dodger in his answers (MAAM 66).²⁷⁹

5.4.6.1.1.3 Nicknames derived from an event or accident

- *Anf al-nāqa* “The she-camel’s nose”, Ġa’far b. Quray’, a pre-Islamic individual. The story tells that when he was a child, his father slaughtered a she-camel and divided it among his wives; Ġa’far’s mother sent him to bring her her portion, but what remained was only the head and the neck. The boy pulled the head by the nose and was therefore nicknamed after this event (MAAM 44).
- *Su’r al-asad*, lit. “The lion’s remaining food”,²⁸⁰ Muḥammad b. Ḥālīd al-Ḍabbī, a Hadith transmitter (d. 768 CE), for he survived a lion’s attack (MAAM 165).

5.4.6.1.1.4 Nicknames derived from ‘delocutives’

A special case is the uttering of a word or expression that struck the name giver as typical or peculiar. As a rule, such an expression is uttered by the name bearer. This type of metonymical nicknames is called ‘delocutive’, ‘retrolocutive’, or ‘echo-name’ (Van Langendonck 2007: 281-2 and the references therein). Our classical sources show that ‘delocutives’ are particularly common for poets. For example:

- *‘Ā’id al-kalb* “He who visits the dog”, ‘Abd Allāh b. Muṣ’ab b. Ṭābit b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr (b. 729 CE), for he mentioned in one of his poems:

²⁷⁶ A term used by Muslims for people who have completely memorized the Qur’an.

²⁷⁷ In classical poetry, the domestic donkey is used in a derogative way, which is certainly the opposite with its wild counterpart (Stetkevych 1986: 104-05).

²⁷⁸ In Levantine Ar., the term *sūsa* is used for people who are addicted to certain things or hobbies (‘Abd Al-Raḥīm 2012 2: 1250). In my area (Neirab, Aleppo countryside), for example, people say *sūsit kutub* for a booklover.

²⁷⁹ On the association between the fox and cunning, see §5.4.2.2.1.

²⁸⁰ See also *Su’r al-sab’* (§7) and *Su’r al-ḡi’b* (§18).

What is the matter that none of you visited me when I was sick

While I visit you even if your dog is sick? (KN 316-7).

- *Mukallim al-ḍi'b* “He who talked to the wolf”, an early Islamic poet whose name is debated. He is reported to have been called so due to a line of poetry in which he mentions that a wolf told him about the coming of the Prophet (Al-‘Ānī 1982: 223).

5.4.6.1.1.5 Nicknames derived from an occupation or skill

- *Du‘mūṣ al-raml/al-‘Arab* “Larva of the sand/Arabs”, Rāfi‘ b. ‘Umayr al-Tamīmī, a pre-Islamic individual who was a professional guide in the desert (‘Alī 2001 17: 388).

- *al-Ta‘ālibī* “The dealer in fox furs”, ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Naysābūrī, a famous grammarian (b. 916 CE) (MAAM 66).

5.4.6.1.2 Modern and contemporary sources

Nicknames in modern and contemporary Ar. do not differ that much from the classical ones in that the majority derives from physical or psychological properties or events. A Bedouin was nicknamed *Bu ‘Öğēle*, lit. “Father of the she-calf” because his face was so (Hess 1912: 39). From Jordan we have *el-Ġidiyy* “Kid”, for a man who in his childhood was weak and spindly-legged like a newborn goat (Antoun 1968: 165). Among Kuwaiti teenagers we find *al-Fīl* “Elephant” for a very huge boy, *Tūna* (f) “Tuna fish” for a girl with fishy smile, and *Malikat al-naḥl* (f) “Queen bee” for a girl who cares about other people (Haggan 2008: 87-8). An adroit and sly person is often called *Nims* “Mongoose”,²⁸¹ while people with feline characteristics might be called *al-Quṭayṭ* “Little tom-cat” or *Mašīš* “Cat” (colloquial Ar.); elegant and flighty persons, *Fartūt* or *Farfūr* “butterfly” (colloquial Ar.) (Schimmel 1989: 51ff). Other nicknames are based on animal sounds in colloquial Ar., e.g., *Qāq* and *Abū Ṣāwī* “Chicken’s clucking” (family names from the West Bank) (Atawneh 2005: 154). Names of singing birds are often used for poets and singers. Three Lebanese poets, for example, bore the nicknames *Bulbul al-balad* “The nightingale of the country”, *al-Bulbul al-ḥazīn* “The sad nightingale” (pseudonym), and *Bulbul Sūriya* “Nightingale of Syria” (MAAM 57). Among singers we find *al-‘Andalīb al-asmar* “The brunet nightingale” for the Egyptian singer ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Ḥāfiẓ, *Bulbul al-ḥaliġ* “Nightingale of

²⁸¹ An Egyptian movie bears the title *al-Nims*: https://www.elcinema.com/work/wk1004112/details_all/ [accessed on 12/01/2015]. Another comic Egyptian movie is *Nims Bond*, a word-play on the name of the well-known film series James Bond: <http://www.elcinema.com/work/wk1010199/> [accessed on 12/01/2015].

the Gulf (area)” for the Kuwaiti Nabil Šīl, and *al-Šuḥrūra* (f) “Blackbird” for the Lebanese Šabāḥ.²⁸²

An aspect of nicknaming which is not observed in the classical sources is the word-play on the given name. This can be done through different methods, such as metathesis, replacement of one or two consonants by keeping the rhyme, reduplicating of certain letters, or reinterpreting the name as a phrase, and adapting it slightly to that. Below are some examples from different Arab countries, where the ones based on animals are in bold:

Given name	Nickname	Reason	Country/reference
<i>Ġamāl</i> “Beauty”	<i>Ġā al-māl</i> “The money arrives” (reinterpretation)	he is generous	Morocco (Rayḥānī 2001: 42)
<i>Ġalīl</i> “Glorious”	<i>Ġā al-līl</i> “The night arrives” (reinterpretation)	he has a hateful face	Rayḥānī 2001: 42
<i>al-Muḥtār</i> “The selected one, mayor”	<i>al-Muḥ ṭār</i> “The brain flew” (reinterpretation)	he is stupid	Rayḥānī 2001: 42
<i>Amal</i> “Hope”	<i>Qamla</i> “Louse” (replacement)	derogatory nickname	Oman (Al Aghbari 2010: 349)
<i>Raḥma</i> (f) “Mercy”	<i>Šaḥma</i> “Fat” (replacement)	derogatory nickname	Al Aghbari 2010: 349
<i>Nu‘ma</i> (f) “Blessing”	<i>Nuqma</i> “Crisis” (replacement)	derogatory nickname	Al Aghbari 2010: 349
Sa‘īd “Happy”	<i>Qa‘īd</i> “Crippled” (replacement)	derogatory nickname	Al Aghbari 2010: 349
<i>Aḥmad</i>	<i>Ḥamāma</i> “Dove”	pet name	Egypt (Allen 1956: 76)
<i>Fāṭima</i> (f)	<i>Baṭṭa</i> “Duck”	pet name	Allen 1956: 76
<i>Nabīl/Nabīla</i> (f) “Noble”	<i>Bulbul</i> (reduplication)	pet name	Allen 1956: 77
<i>Hudā</i> (f) “Guidance”	<i>Hudhud</i> “Hoopoe” (reduplication)	pet name	Kuwait (Haggan 2008: 89)

Over time, certain nicknames developed into surnames. For example, the wealthy Mosulī family of *Ḥarūfa* “Sheep” is reported to have inherited this nickname from their great

²⁸² <http://gate.ahram.org.eg/User/Topicsm/10387.aspx> [accessed on 20/01/2015].

grandfather, who was called so by an Ottoman ruler because of his hairy body. Another family from the same city, *Dabdūb* “Little bear” (*Dubyab* in CAr.) bore this name because the grandfather was fat and short.²⁸³ Similar examples from Lebanon are *al-Fīl* “Elephant”, *al-Ḥūt* “Whale”, and *Timsāḥ* “Crocodile”²⁸⁴ (all being expressions of largeness); from Palestine: *‘Uṣfūr* “Sparrow”, *Arnab* “Hare”, *Barāḡīt* “Fleas”, *Dūda* “Worm”, *Hardūn* “Large lizard”, *Ġāḡe* “Hen”, *Sa’dān* “Monkey”, etc. (Tushyeh and Hamdallah 1992: 243-44); from Egypt: *al-Gaḥṣ* “Young ass”, *al-Baḡl* “Mule”, and *al-Ġurāb* “Crow”.²⁸⁵ Other surnames are formed with two elements: *Sab’ al-‘Arab* “Lion of the Arabs”, *Sab’ al-Dīr* “Lion of the city of Deir ez-Zor”, and *Sab’ al-līl < layl* “Lion of night” (§2), all probably indicating bravery, as is the case with the classical honorific nickname *Asad Allah* (§5.4.6.1.1.2). *Kunya*-like surnames are also quite frequent, e.g., *Abū Ṭīr* “Bird” (WB, No. 18741), *Abū Ġazāla* “She-gazelle” (WB, No. 19024), *Abū al-Ḍab’āt* “Female hyenas” (WB, No. 19077), *Abū al-Kalbāt* “Bitches”, *Abū al-Ḥayyāt* “Snakes”, *Abū Samak* “Fish”, *Abū Qamīl* “Lice”²⁸⁶ (Tushyeh and Hamdallah 1992: 243-44), *Abū al-Ni’āḡ* “Ewes” (UAE, No. 1270), *Abū ‘Uṣfūr* “Sparrow” (SAR 3, p. 10).

Since surnames referring to animals with negative connotations often cause embarrassment to their bearers (especially children in schools), people tend to change them officially. An Egyptian member of the family of *al-Gaḥṣ* “Young ass” (figuratively denotes a stupid and bullheaded person)²⁸⁷ is reported to have changed it to the given name of his great grandfather (not mentioned).²⁸⁸ A man from my area (Neirab, the countryside of Aleppo) changed his surname from *Ṣarṣūr* “Cricket” (a derogatory term) to *Manṣūr* “Aided (by God)”, i.e., a powerful name with the same rhyme. Indeed, people almost forgot the former.

5.4.6.2 *Kunya*

Al-Ġāḥiẓ (1965 3: 508) mentions that there was a *faqīh* (jurist) in the town of Kufa known as *Abū al-Ḥanāfis* “Black beetles” and that this was his real *kunya*, neither a *laqab* “nickname” nor a *nabz* “pejorative, deprecation”. Unlike another *Abū al-‘Aqārib* “Scorpions”,

²⁸³ <http://www.algardenia.com/maqalat/8953-2014-02-18-07-58-49.html> [accessed on 21/7/2014].

²⁸⁴ <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=54&article=568086&issueno=11480#.U6YTiY8g8o> [accessed on 21/7/2014].

²⁸⁵ <http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=54&article=475154&issueno=10794#.U M5ubs8g8p> [accessed on 21/7/2014].

²⁸⁶ As far as I know from my area (Neirab, the countryside of Aleppo), *Abū qamīl* is a mocking term meaning “dirty person”.

²⁸⁷ In Egyptian Ar., the verb *gaḥḥaṣ* means “to behave brusquely” (Hinds and Badawi 1986: 149b).

²⁸⁸ <http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=54&article=475154&issueno=10794#.U M5ubs8g8p>

whose *kunya* was traditional in his family, *Abū al-Ḥanāfīs* was the first person to adopt it. Remarkably, animal names are widely represented among *kunyas* of Hadith transmitters from the early Islamic period; it is unclear whether they are based on the given name, nickname, or *nabaz* “pejorative”:

<i>Abū/Umm</i> “Father/Mother of” + an animal name	found as PN	as nickname	reference
‘ <i>Aqrab</i> “Scorpion”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 79
‘ <i>Ikrima</i> “Pigeon”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 41
‘ <i>Uqāb</i> “Eagle”	Yes	Yes	Ikmāl 6: 247
(<i>al-</i>) <i>Hayṭam</i> “Eaglet”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 341ff
<i>al-Arqam</i> “Diadem-snake”	Yes	Yes	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 3: 83
<i>al-Aswad</i> “Huge black snake”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 206ff
<i>al-Fīl</i> “Elephant” [mostly a nickname], for he also appears as <i>Abū Ḡaʿfar</i>	?	Yes	Al-Ḡāḥiẓ 1965 7: 85
<i>al-Ḡamal</i> “Camel”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 288
<i>al-Ḥubāb</i> “Serpent”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 303
<i>Arwā</i> (f) “Mountain goats”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 31
<i>Asad</i> “Lion”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 204
<i>Ḍarr</i> “Ants”	Yes	Yes	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 1: 376
<i>Ḍiʿb</i> “Wolf”, <i>Ḍiʿba</i> (f) “She-wolf”	Yes	Yes	Ikmāl 2: 395
<i>Fāḥita</i> “Ring-dove”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 154
<i>Fazāra</i> “Leopardess”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 157
<i>Ḡaḥṣ</i> “Young ass”	Yes	Yes	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 6: 47
<i>Ḡarw</i> “Puppy”	Yes	?	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 294
<i>Ḥamal</i> “Lamb”	Yes	Yes	Ibn ‘Asākir 1995-2000

			66: 157
<i>Ḥamāma</i> “Dove”	Yes	-	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 6: 332
<i>Ḥanaš</i> “Viper, Reptilian”		Yes	Ibn Ḥallikān 1972 7: 20
<i>Ḥayya</i> (f) “Snake”	Yes	?	Ikmāl 2: 325
<i>Ḥusayl</i> “Young ḍabb-lizard”	Yes	?	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 3: 109
<i>Kabša</i> “Ram” (hypoc.)	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 88
<i>Kulayb</i> “Little dog”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 175
<i>Layṭ</i> “Lion”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 181
<i>Na‘āma</i> (f) “She-ostrich”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 2: 300
<i>Namla</i> “Ant”	Yes	?	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 102
<i>Nimrān</i> “Leopard-like”	Yes	-	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 1: 501
<i>Sibā’</i> “Lions”	Yes	-	Ibn ‘Asākir 1995-2000 66: 258
<i>Ṭa‘laba</i> “Fox”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 38ff
<i>Ṭawr</i> “Bull”	Yes	Yes	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 38, 116, 274
<i>Ẓabya</i> (f) “Antelope”	Yes	-	Al-Dawlābī 1999 1: 74, 497
<i>Umm al-Ẓibā’</i> “Antelopes” [sounds like a nickname]	No	-	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 7: 35
<i>Umm Ġandab</i> “Locust”	Yes	?	Ibn Ḥaḡar 1421 AH, No. 8809
<i>Umm Ġurāb</i> “Crow” [given name]	Yes	Yes	Ikmāl 7: 13
<i>Umm Ẓalīm</i> “Male ostrich”	Yes	-	Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 2: 92

The table suggests that some of these *kunyas* could be nicknames or *nabz* because around one third of the animal names they are based on are used as such. If we move to the Ab-basid period, a review of any biographical work on people from the 4th c. AH onward

(e.g., Ibn Al-Dubayṭī 2006; Ibn Rāfi‘ 1982) shows that such *kunyas* disappeared, although a few animal names are found as given names (↓5.6.1). This disappearance can be attributed to the establishment of the ‘Islamic name’ (↑2.3.2.2) and the rise of the metaphorical *kunya* (↑2.3.4.2.2).

5.4.6.3 *Nasab*²⁸⁹

Animal names are wildly found in *nasab* (*Ibn-X*), but it is unclear whether the ones from the pre-Islamic/early-Islamic period are based on given names or nicknames. The former option seems possible in view of the high proportion of animal names in the onomasticon. The situation is different, however, in the classical period (2nd c. AH onward). An investigation of biographical works on scholars and notable individuals from the Abbasid period (ca. 4th-6th c. AH) yields the following examples of nickname-*nasabs*:

- (1) *Ibn al-Baḡl* “Mule”, Abū al-Faraḡ, Aḥmad b. ‘Umar b. ‘Uṭmān (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 5: 482).
- (2) *Ibn Baṭṭa* “Duck”, Abū ‘Abd Allah, ‘Ubayd Allah b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-‘Ukburi (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 12: 100).
- (3) *Ibn Bulbul* “Nightingale”, Abū ‘Abd Allah, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 3: 466). *Bulbul* is also mentioned as a nickname of a certain Aḥmad b. al-Qāsim (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 5: 573) and as a given name (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 7: 641).
- (4) *Ibn al-Duwayda* “Little worm”, Abū Sālim, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, who is also known as *al-Aqāq* “Cackle” [nickname] (Ibn Ḥallikān 1972 4: 440).
- (5) *Ibn al-Filw* “Foal”, two persons bore this *nasab*: Abū ‘Umar, al-Ḥasan b. ‘Uṭmān b. Aḥmad (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 8: 348) and his relative Abū Bakr, ‘Abd Allah b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (Ibn Ḥallikān 1972 11: 372).
- (6) *Ibn Ġaḥṣawayh* “Young ass” (plus the hypocoristicon *-wayh*), Abū Muḥammad, ‘Abd Allah b. Abī Bakr b. ‘Umar (Ibn Al-Dubayṭī 2006 3: 534).
- (7) *Ibn Ġarāda* “Locust”, three persons bore this nickname (Ibn Al-Dubayṭī 2006 2: 313; 3: 426; 5: 131).
- (8) *Ibn Nu‘ayḡa* “Little ewe”, three persons were called so after their ancestor (Ibn Al-Dubayṭī 2006 3: 63, 329).

²⁸⁹ On this type in general, see ↑2.3.4.2.2.

(9) *Ibn al-Šāt* “Ewe”, Abū Bakr, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allah, also known as *Ibn al-Qazzāz* (Ibn Al-Dubayṭī 2006 1: 364).

(10) *Ibn Zurayq* “Jay”, Abū Bakr, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 2: 118). *Zurayq* also appears as a given name and as a nickname of three persons (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 2: 47; 4: 393; 11: 80).

The fact that these *nasabs* occur beside the real patronyms (all being traditional-religious names) makes it explicit that they originated as nicknames. Over time, two of them (No. 1, 2) became *nisba* (i.e., gentilic/surname): *al-Baṭṭī* and *al-Baḡlī* (Al-Sam‘ānī 1980-84 2: 243, 252).

5.4.6.4 Matronym

This type has the same form as the *nasab*, but with the (nick)name of the mother/female ancestor, and it occurs frequently among poets. Some matronyms are reported to have been based on the real name: *Ibn al-‘Uqāb* “Eagle”,²⁹⁰ *Ibn Ġazāla* “She-gazelle” (MAAM 232), and *Ibn Ḥamāma* “Dove” (Ibn Ḥaḡar 1421 AH, No. 786). Two other examples are certainly nicknames: *Banū al-Kalba* “Bitch” (Iṣṭiqāq 20, 319) and *Ibn al-Dī‘ba* “She-wolf” (MAAM 120).

5.5 Animal names within the family

As mentioned above (2.3.3), naming within the family is reflected by two practices: harmonic names and naming after a family member. In this section, I will examine the applicability of these practices to animal names.

5.5.1 Harmonic names

The concept of harmonic names is that two family members or more bear names which are etymologically, morphologically, or semantically related. An examination of the distribution of animal names within the family suggests that some instances belong to this practice. A classical report mentions that ten of the sons of Wabara b. Taḡlib bore animal names, nine of them referring to beasts of prey: *al-Namir* “Leopard”, *Dubb* “Bear”, *Fahd* “Cheetah”, *Ḍabu‘* “Hyena”, *Kalb* “Dog”, *Asad* “Lion”, *Sirḥān*, *al-Dī‘b*, and *al-Sīd*, all meaning “Wolf”, *al-Ta‘lab* “Fox”, and *al-Bark* “Herd of camels” (CIK 1 279). Another report concerning the same family/sub-clan adds other names: *Ḥaṭ‘am* “Hyena”, *al-Fizr* “Male

²⁹⁰ Grammatically, *‘uqāb* is a fem. word in CAR. (Wright 1896 1: 180C), but it is used as a masc. name in colloquial Ar. (cf. App. §100).

young leopard”, *Hirr* “Cat”, *Nims* “Mongoose”, and *Dysam* “Little wolf or bear” (Yaqūt 1977 5: 344). Despite the ‘mythical’ aspect of these two reports, especially the latter, they do reveal a naming practice that was known at a certain time. This practice is supported by other examples from the genealogical schemes: five out of the nine sons of Rabi’a b. Nizār appear with names of carnivorous animals, three of them derived from the root *klb*: *Aklub* (pl.), *Kilāb* (pl.), *Maklaba*, *Ḍubay’a* “Little hyena”, and *Asad* “Lion” (CIK 1 141). The same holds for three out of the four sons of Wālība b. al-Ḥārīt: *Usāma* “Lion”, *Du’ayba* “Little wolf”, and *Numayr* “Little leopard” (CIK 1 52). A certain *Mu’āwiya* “Howler, Jackal” b. *Kilāb* “Dogs” was nicknamed *al-Ḍibāb* “Lizards” (pl. of *ḍabb*), for he gave his sons names of lizards: *Ḍabb*, *Muḍibb*, and *Ḥisl* “Young-ḍabb” (Ibn Ḥabīb n.d.: 75).

In addition, there are some examples where the son bears a name matching that of his father, mother, or brother in that it denotes a by-form of the same animal or is based on the diminutive or plural form:

Name/period/meaning	Reference
<i>CAR. (1) pre-/Early Islamic times</i>	CIK
<i>Anmār</i> “Leopards” b. <i>al-Namir</i> “Leopard”	216
<i>Asad</i> “Lion” b. <i>Usāma</i> “Lion” (epithet)	307
<i>Du’ayba</i> “Little wolf” b. <i>al-Sīd</i> “Wolf”	90
<i>Ġandab</i> “Locust” br. <i>Ġunaydīb</i> “Little locust”	113
<i>Ġunaydīb</i> b. <i>Ġandab</i>	215
<i>Kilāb</i> “Dogs” br. <i>Kulayb</i> “Little dog”	92
<i>al-Namir</i> “Leopard” b. <i>Nimrān</i> “Leopard-like”	277
<i>Sab’</i> “Lion” b. <i>al-Subay’</i> “Little lion”	228
<i>CAR. (2) Classical Islamic period</i>	
<i>al-Haytam</i> “Eaglet” b. <i>‘Uqāb</i> “Eagle”	Al-‘Aqīlī 2000 4: 1471, No. 1967
<i>Ḥubāb</i> “Serpent” b. <i>Af’ā</i> “Viper”	Ikmāl 2: 142
<i>Ġurayy</i> “Puppy” b. <i>Kulayb</i> “Little dog”	Ikmāl 2: 75
<i>Layt</i> “Lion” b. <i>Sībā’</i> “Lions”	Ibn Al-Faraḍī 2008 1: 479

<i>al-Muhr</i> “Foal” b. <i>al-Faras</i> “Mare”	Ibn Ḥaldūn 2000 1: 820
<i>Sibāʿ</i> “Lions” b. <i>Šibl</i> “Lion cub”	Ibn Ḥaldūn 2000 6: 575
Bed.	
<i>ʿUg/qāb</i> “Eagle” b. <i>Ṣagr</i> “Falcon”	Beduinen 3 413
<i>Dīb</i> “Wolf” br. <i>Dwēb</i> “Little wolf”	(Druze) Littmann 1948: 12
<i>Dyāb</i> “Wolves” br. <i>Dībān</i> “Wolf-like”	Littmann 1948: 12
<i>Ṣhaylī</i> “Little lizard” b. <i>Ḍubayb</i> “Little lizard”	Hess 1912: 7, 28
CAO	
<i>Asad</i> “Lion” b. <i>Sabʿ</i> “Lion”	WB, No. 10344
<i>Dyāb al-Dīb</i> (family name)	Gaza, No. 14725
<i>Dīb Sarḥān</i> “Wolf” (family name)	Gaza, No. 20280
<i>Haytam</i> “Eaglet” b. <i>Ṣagr</i> “Falcon”	SAR 2, No. 3110
<i>Layṭ</i> “Lion” b. <i>Usāma</i> “Lion”	SAR 3, No. 3893; WB, No. 6177
<i>Layṭ</i> “Lion” b. <i>Dīb</i> “Wolf”	SAR 3, No. 8628
<i>Nimr</i> “Leopard” b. <i>Fuhayda</i> (f) “She-cheetah”	SAR 1, No. 23942
<i>Ṣagr</i> “Falcon” b. <i>ʿUqāb</i> “Eagle”	WB, No. 14621
<i>Ṣagr</i> “Falcon” b. <i>Qaṭāmī</i> “Falcon” (epithet) b. <i>Ṣagr</i> “Falcon”	UAE, No. 7354

All these names appear to have been given purposefully in order to create a kind of onomastic harmony and express power (cf. ↑5.4.2.2). In general, they belong to the following categories: carnivorous animal (the majority), raptors, reptilians, and insects. The latter two categories are not found in our contemporary data (CAO), for presumably they are considered unpleasant.

There are also some instances where names of animals from different categories occur across two or three generations of the same family:

Name/period/meaning	Reference
CAr.	-

<i>al-Dīl</i> “Weasel” b. <i>Ḥimar</i> “Donkey”	CIK 92
<i>Ḥimār</i> “Donkey” b. <i>Ṭaʿlaba</i> “Fox”	CIK 332
<i>Ġaḥš</i> “Young ass” b. <i>Ṭaʿlaba</i> “Fox”	CIK 296
<i>Ġandab</i> “Locust” b. <i>Kulayb</i> “Little dog”	CIK 137
<i>Ġuʿayl</i> “Little black beetle” br. <i>Qird</i> “Ape” b. <i>Muʿāwiya</i> “Jackal”	CIK 58
<i>Ḥuḍayr</i> “Greenfinch” b. <i>Zurayq</i> “Jay”	Ikmāl 2: 482
<i>Kabša</i> (f) “She-ram” bt. <i>al-Arqam</i> “Diadem-snake”	Ikmāl 7: 156
<i>Kulayb</i> “Little dog” b. <i>Nasr</i> “Vulture”	Ibn Saʿd 2001 4: 395
<i>Šayṭān</i> “Snake” b. <i>Anmār</i> “Leopards” b. <i>Šurad</i> “Shrike”	CIK 83
<i>Ṭaʿlab</i> “Fox” br. <i>Ġazāl</i> “Gazelle”	Al-Šafadī 2000 11: 12, No. 2263
<i>Ẓabya</i> (f) “Antelope” bt. <i>ʿIḡl</i> “Calf”	Ikmāl 5: 251
CAO	
<i>Dyāb</i> “Wolves” b. <i>Nimr</i> “Leopard”	Gaza, No. 20392
<i>Šaqr</i> “Falcon” b. <i>Nimr</i> “Leopard”	Gaza, No. 14802
<i>Šaqr</i> “Falcon” b. <i>Usāma</i> “Lion”	WB, No. 14172.
<i>Usāma</i> “Lion” b. <i>Nimr</i> “Leopard”	Gaza, No. 18780
<i>Usayd</i> “Little lion” b. <i>Fahd</i> “Cheetah”	WB, No. 22272

The fact that some of these examples may go beyond chance is supported by a report about name-giving among modern Bedouins: a wife of a Rwala slave said when delivered of a girl “Thy father’s name is Donkey, *Ḥimār*, so thou shalt be called *Baqara*, Cow” (Musil 1928: 244).

5.5.2 Papponymy

A review of onomastic works from different periods yields the following examples of papponymy derived from animal names:

1. Pre/Early Islamic (CIK 1)

Bakr b. *Ṭaʿlaba* b. *Bakr* “Young camel” (223)

al-Ḥubāb b. *Ṭābit* b. *al-Ḥubāb* “Serpent” (184)

Mu‘āwiya b. *Ṭawr* b. *Mu‘āwiya* “Howler, Jackal” (107)

Sab‘ b. *al-Sabī‘* b. *Sab‘* “Lion” (228)

Ṭa‘laba b. *Mālik* b. *Ṭa‘laba* “Fox” (55)

Ṭa‘laba b. *Šaybān* b. *Ṭa‘laba* (142)

Ṭa‘laba b. *Mas‘ūd* b. *Ṭa‘laba* (307)

2. Classical period

Asad b. *‘Ammār* b. *Asad* “Lion” (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 7: 474)

Asad b. *al-Ḥārīt* b. *Asad* (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 7: 475)

Fahd b. *Ibrāhīm* b. *Fahd* “Cheetah” (Ikmāl 7: 76)

al-Haytam b. *Ġābir* b. *al-Haytam* “Eaglet” (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 16: 97)

al-Layṭ b. *Muḥammad* b. *al-Layṭ* “Lion” (Al-Baḡdādī 2001 14: 543)

al-Layṭ b. *Ḥabrawayh* b. *al-Layṭ* (Ikmāl 2: 351)

al-Layṭ b. *Ġa‘far* b. *al-Layṭ* (Ikmāl 1: 131)

Ṭa‘lab b. *Abī al-Ḥusayn* b. *Ṭa‘lab* “Fox” (Al-Šafadī 2000 11: 12, No. 2667)

Yarbū‘ b. *‘Abd al-Ġalīl* b. *Yarbū‘* “Jerboa” (Ibn Al-Faraḍī 2008 2: 261)

3. CAO

Dīb b. *‘Abd al-Bārī* b. *Dīb* “Wolf” (Gaza, No. 3260)

Dyāb b. *Sālim* b. *Dyāb* “Wolves” (Gaza, No. 14620)

Dyāb b. *‘Imād* b. *Dyāb Abū Dyāb* (family name) (WB, No. 50)

Ḍīb b. *Sa‘īd* b. *Ḍīb* (WB, No. 18644)

Fahd b. *Muḥammad* b. *Fahd* “Cheetah” (WB, No. 25516)

Nimr b. *Fāyīq* b. *Nimr* “Leopard” (Gaza, No. 12889)

Nimr b. *Ḥasan Abū Nimr* (family name) (Gaza, No. 5842)

Nimr b. *Rašād* b. *Nimr* (Gaza, No. 143)

al-Nimr b. *Ġāzī* b. *Nimr Nimr* (family name) (WB, No. 25467)

Šaqr b. *Tawfīq* b. *Šaqr Abū Šaqr* “Falcon” (Gaza, No. 9051)

Şaqr b. Walid b. Şaqr (WB, No. 17600)

These examples show that papponymy has played an important role in the survival of some animal names. Remarkably, all the names from the latter group (CAO) are related to honorific animals in modern Ar. culture, which allows us to classify them as ‘prestige names’, unlike some others, which are found in the older generation (the grandfathers and the great-grandfathers) but not in the younger one (the fathers and the sons). Here are two instances from the UAE:

- *Ġamal* “Camel”, six times (No. 2861, 2997, 3262, 4043, 11977, 15846).

- *Kulayb* “Little Dog”, three times (No. 2535, 15078, 15085).

These did not survive as papponyms because of their unpleasant or derogatory connotations, which indicates that the connotations that go with certain animals tend to overrule the principle of papponymy as such.

In relation to papponymy, it is worth mentioning some contemporary compound names with the element *dīb* “wolf”, i.e., *Muḥammad-Dīb*, *Aḥmad-Dīb*, *Šiḥ-Dīb*, and *Sālim-Dīb* (family name), of which the former being the most popular one, especially in Syria (§18). Similarly interesting examples are *Muḥammad-Layṭ* “Lion” (WB, No. 6079), *Muḥammad-Ġazāl* “Gazelle” (WB, No. 20512), and *Aḥmad-Fahd* “Cheetah” (WB 17253). Such names, about which no explanation is available, appear to have no reference to the animal itself. Alternatively, they could be related to a kind of papponymy-like custom. According to this custom, the son may bear a non-theophoric compound name (known as *ism murakkab*) formed with that of his father (especially in Egypt), e.g., *Aḥmad-Amīn* and *Sayyid-Aḥmad* (Arna’ūt 1989: 12) or grandfather, e.g., *Muḥammad-Nāyif* b. *Ḥalīl* b. *Nāyif* (WB, No. 40). The opposite is also known, i.e., the son could be given a one-word name taken from the compound name of his grandfather: *Ramaḍān* b. *Wā’il* b. *Muḥammad-Ramaḍān*, *Sulaymān* b. *Munḍir* b. *Muḥammad-Sulaymān*, and *Mūsā* b. *Ibrāhim* b. *Muḥammad-Mūsā* (WB, No. 89, 111, 125). Given this papponymy-like custom, especially the former pattern, it seems likely that if the ancestor’s/father’s name refers by chance to an animal, it would be automatically added to the son’s compound name.

5.6 Animal names in society: Islamic instructions, status, and milieu

Animal names were quite frequent in the pre-Islamic times, and some of them are attested for notable figures, like *Kulayb* “Little dog” (the chieftain of Banū Taglib)²⁹¹ and *Aklub* “Dogs” (the chieftain of Banū Ḥaṭ'am) (Ibn Ḥazm n.d.: 391). *Ġahš* “Young ass” is the name of the Prophet's father-in-law (Ibn Al-Aṭīr 1996 1: 143). One can also refer to many individuals called *Mu'āwiya* “Howler, Jackal”, the most famous among them being the first Umayyad caliph.

As mentioned above (2.3.2.2), the Prophet is reported to have endorsed Muslims to choose pretty names and avoid those which indicate paganism, negative attributes, and arrogance. In line with this, some animal names were changed by him: *Du'ayb* “Little wolf” (b. *Kulayb* “Little dog”) to 'Abd Allāh (Ibn 'Abd Al-Barr 1992: 464, No. 707), *Ġurāb* “Crow” to *Muslim*, *Ġu'ayl* “Little black beetle” to 'Umar. *Kalb*, *Kulayb*, and *Ḥayya* “Snake” were disliked, but there is no Hadith regarding them (Ibn Qayyim n.d.: 175, 191).²⁹²

To which extent have these instructions influenced the use these names? And how have people from different backgrounds responded to them? In order to answer these two questions, I will examine the distribution of animal names in sedentary and Bedouin populations.

5.6.1 Sedentary population

Presumably, the movement from one lifestyle to another involved not only a cultural and behavioral adjustment but also an onomastic one. Since animal names do not agree with Islamic instructions and consequently the upper class, people from a Bedouin or rural background tended to change them to more ‘suitable’ ones, like the Hadith transmitter known as Abū al-Faṭḥ al-Šaybānī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 434 AH), whose birth name is *Qutayṭ* “Little cat” (Al-Baġdādī 2001 3: 50, No. 672). Another example is *Ta'lab* “Fox” b. 'Alī b. Naṣr al-Baġdādī, who adopted the name *Naṣr* “Victory” (Al-Šafadī 2000 11: 12, No. 2665).

²⁹¹ Kulayb is the symbol of pride and arrogance in Ar., as is reflected in the adage *a'azzu min kulayb wā'il* “Mightier than Kulayb of Wā'il” (Al-'Askarī 1988, No. 1354). According to the etiological myth of the name, he was called so because he took a puppy and whenever he came upon good pastureland he threw it down and claimed as his precinct the entire area over which the puppy's howling could be heard (Al-Iṣbahānī 1932 5: 34).

²⁹² This negative attitude towards these kinds of animals is mostly due to their harmfulness and uncleanness, as one infers from another Hadith (Al-Buḥārī, no 3087): “Five kinds of animals are harmful and could be killed in the Haram (Sanctuary). These are: the crow, the kite, the scorpion, the mouse, and the rabid dog”.

To further illustrate the impact of Islamic instructions in their relationship to social status, I will analyze below five onomastic samples from different areas covering a period between the 2nd and 14th c. AH.²⁹³

- The first sample is *Tārīḥ ‘ulamā’ al-andalus* [The History of Andalusia Scholars] by Ibn Al-Faraḍī (2008), a two-volume biographical dictionary of 1650 figures (ca. 250-400 AH). The dictionary contains a relatively high number of animal names: *Asad* (No. 237-39, one of them being a *mawlā*), *‘Anbasa* (No. 1011), and *Layṭ* (No. 1089), all meaning “Lion”, *Ġandab* “Locust” (No. 322) whose *kunya* is *Abū Ḍarr* (after his namesake, the famous companion Abū Ḍarr al-Ġifārī), *Ḥubāb* “Serpent” (No. 331-32),²⁹⁴ *Ḥanaš* “Viper” (No. 389),²⁹⁵ *Ḥuzar* “Male hare” (No. 419), *Ḍu’āla* “Wolf” (No. 433-34), *Zurayq* “Jay” (patronym, No. 570), *Ḍubayb* b. *Ḍubayb* “Little lizard” (No. 613), *‘Ikrima* “Pigeon” (No. 1008), *Namir* “Leopard” (No. 1501), and *Yarbū’* “Jerboa” (No. 1650). An interesting comparison is *Kulayb* b. *Muḥammad* b. *‘Abd al-Karīm* (No. 1086), an animal name with two religious patronyms and *‘Abd al-Salām* b. *Kulayb* b. *Ṭa’laba* (No. 848), a religious given name with two patronyms referring to animals. All these examples imply a long-term persistence of traditional names vis-a-vis Islamic names. Significantly, except for *Ḍu’āla* “Wolf” and *al-Layṭ* “Lion”, none of others is found afterward according to Ibn Baškawāl’s biographical dictionary regarding the Andalusian scholars who lived in the period between the death of Ibn Al-Faraḍī and the late 6th c. AH (Ibn Baškawāl 2010: index of PNs). The only possible interpretation of such a change in name-giving is that the Arabs who lived in Andalusia until the time of Ibn Al-Faraḍī were quite attached to their tribal culture as new immigrants.

- The second sample is *Ḍayl tārīḥ madīnat al-salām* by Ibn Al-Dubayṭī (2006), a five-volume work which gives biographies of 2899 figures, particularly *faqīhs* and Hadith transmitters who lived in Baghdad or visited it (ca. 560-630 AH), among them being some women and *mawlās*. It also covers political figures and elite (caliphs, ministers, governors, etc.). The book contains ca. 300 names, only six of them derive from animals: *Ṭa’lab* “Fox” (No. 1136-37, 2549), *al-Layṭ* “Lion” (No. 2567), *al-Hayṭam* “Eaglet” (No. 2766),

²⁹³ General biographical works which cover a long period (e.g., Ibn Ḥallikān 1972; Al-Šafadī 2000; Ibn Al-‘Imād 1986; and Al-Ḍahabī 2004) are excluded here because they do not allow us to trace the change in naming methods within certain areas/milieus.

²⁹⁴ The name *Ḥubāb* is reported to have been changed by the Prophet to ‘Abdallah, for it is the name of the Devil (Ibn Qayyim n.d.: 172; Kister 1975: 6).

²⁹⁵ On the occurrence of this name in the classical onomasticon, see Marin (1982-84).

Asad “Lion” (patronym, No. 1954), *Subayʿ* “Little lion” (patronym, No. 2563), and *Šuġāʿ* “Huge large-headed serpent”²⁹⁶ (No. 1542-50).

- The third sample is *al-Wafayāt* [Deaths] by Ibn Rāfiʿ (1982), a two-volume book which gives short biographies of 953 religious and notable figures (*faqīhs*, judges, physicians, historians, poets, governors, sultans, etc.), among them being 26 women. All the individuals mentioned in the book died between 737 and 774 AH in the territory of the Mamluk Sultanate, but the majority is from Damascus and its neighborhoods. Of all the names only two refer to animals: *Asad* “Lion” (No. 485) and *Taʿlab* “Fox” (patronym, No. 480).

- The fourth sample is *The Arabic Papyrology Database (APD)*,²⁹⁷ which contains documents written on different materials such as papyrus, parchment or paper (2022 texts, up to the 16th c. CE).²⁹⁸ The texts vary from administrative and personal correspondence to legal (marriage, divorce, emancipation) and business affairs (selling, debts, etc.). Unlike the previously examined biographical dictionaries, this database helps us to trace names of *mawlās* and ordinary people who were not involved in religious scholarship. A review of examples from the 2nd -8th c. AH yields the following names (mainly act as witnesses): *Asad* “Lion” (patronym),²⁹⁹ *Kalb* “Dog” (patronym),³⁰⁰ *Nimr* “Leopard”,³⁰¹ *Numayr* “Little leopard” (patronym),³⁰² *Nimrān* “Leopard-like”,³⁰³ *Tawr* “Bull” (patronym),³⁰⁴ *Ḥamāma* “Dove” (patronym),³⁰⁵ *Fahd* “Cheetah” (patronym),³⁰⁶ *Ḥarūf* “Lamb” (patronym),³⁰⁷ *Abū Ġuʿayl* “Black beetle” (*kunya*),³⁰⁸ *Taʿlab* “Fox”,³⁰⁹ *Ġazāl* “Gazelle” (a male³¹⁰ and a female³¹¹), *Ġarād* “Locust”,³¹² and *Qūṭayṭ* “Little cat” (patronym).³¹³ In general, these examples are few compared to the high number of other names, without ruling out the possibil-

²⁹⁶ The word also means “brave”.

²⁹⁷ <http://www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de:8080/apd/project.jsp>

²⁹⁸ <http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/project.jsp>

²⁹⁹ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_APEL_234&line=12

³⁰⁰ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Khan_Khalili_I_9_a&line=3

³⁰¹ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_APEL_135&line=4;

http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Sijpesteijn_Profit_re&line=24

³⁰² http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Khan_Khalili_I_9_a&line=3

³⁰³ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Ragib_Pressoir&line=18

³⁰⁴ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_EBU_17&line=4

³⁰⁵ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_APEL_39_3&line=9

³⁰⁶ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Abbott_Marriage010&line=75

³⁰⁷ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_TWAe_5&line=3

³⁰⁸ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Grohmann_APEL_394&line=2

³⁰⁹ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Thung_CPR_310&line=12

³¹⁰ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Khan_Khalili_I_17&line=13

³¹¹ http://orientw.uzh.ch:8080/apd/show2.jsp?papname=Little_TwoPetitions_01&line=5

³¹² Khoury 1993 88: 1.

³¹³ Khoury 1993 33: 9.

ity that some of the patronyms are nicknames. It is also clear that animal names were more common among males than among females.

- Our fifth and last sample is *Fayḍ al-malik al-wahhāb al-muta‘ālī* by Al-Dahlawī (2009), a three-volume biographical dictionary of 1770 notable figures from the 13th-14th c. AH (religious, administrative, military, and political figures, plus intellectuals, artists and writers). The individuals listed in the book, Muslim and Christian males and females, are from different countries: Syria, Hejaz, Maghreb, and India. The majority, however, are from Egypt. Of almost 270 given names two are related to animals: *Tu‘aylib* “Little fox” (*faqīh*, No. 194) and *Šiblī* “Lion cub” (plus the suffix *-ī*) (two Christians, a poet No. 496, and a physician, No. 506).

To conclude, our analysis shows that the earlier the sample is, the more examples of animal names it contains. They as well as the other traditional pre-Islamic names hardly survived in the urban population, especially the more religious milieus.

Regarding concubines and slaves, names denoting gazelles are quite frequent among the former, e.g., *Mahā* (f) “Oryx” (Al-Iṣbahānī 1984: 205), *Rīm* (f) “White antelope” (Al-Iṣbahānī 1932 13: 300), *Šādīn* (f) “Fawn” (Al-Waššā’ 1953: 223), and *Ẓabya* (f) “Antelope” (also borne by free women) (Ikmāl 5: 248-52).³¹⁴ Of the typical names of *mawlās*, *ḥadam* (pl. of *ḥādīm*) and *ḡulmān* (pl. of *ḡulām*) “servant, catamite, eunuch” few are related to animals: *Zu/arāfa* “Giraffe” (Ibn Ḥallikān 1972: index) and *‘Unayza* “Little she-goat”, a *mawlā* who acts as a witness (Khoury 1993 19: 6).

5.6.2 Bedouins

When we turn to Bedouins, the image is quite different from what we have examined above. An excellent work which provides us with information on Bedouin tribes in the late Middle Ages is *Tārīḥ* [History] of Ibn Ḥaldūn (2000), namely, the first chapter of the sixth volume, in which the author treats the immigration of Banū Hilāl and Sulaym to North Africa and their impact on the socio-political scene. The available genealogical schemes yield the following animal names: *Kulayb* “Little dog” (p. 36), *Si/arḥān* “Wolf” (p. 22), *Abū al-Dī‘b* “Wolf” (p. 67), *D/Dyāb* “Wolves” (p. 61), *Ḥunayš* “Little viper”, *Sibā’* “Lions”, *Šibl* “Lion cub”, *Ta‘lab* “Fox” (p. 86), *Ḥurqūš* “Tick”, and *Numayr* “Little leopard” (p. 110). In general, these examples are much less than what we find among modern Bedouins (18th-20th c.) whose names are well-documented in the Ottoman Archives. An important record, and one of the earliest documents concerning modern Bedouins is a

³¹⁴ On the association between gazelles and women in Ar. culture, see ↑5.4.3.

1778/1192 record of funds (*Surre*) to ‘*urbān ʔariq al-ḥağğ al-šarīf* “the tribesmen of the holy Hajj’s road”, that is, the tribes of Northern Arabia and the Syrian Desert (from Hama in the north down to Mecca in the south) in return for security, food, and camels for the Hajj caravans (Šābān 2008). The document provides us with more than two hundred names, among which the Islamic ones are much less frequent than the others (i.e., animals, plants, personal peculiarities, etc.). Many of these names are in the diminutive form *f‘ēl/f‘ayl* < CAr. *fu‘ayl* (often with the suffix *-ān*),³¹⁵ e.g., *Klēlib* < *Kulayb* “Little dog” (reduplication of the second radical), *Ḍbē‘ān* “Little hyena”, *Ġrēdī* “Little rat”, *Ta‘lab* < *Ṭa‘lab* “Fox”, *Šēfir* “Little sparrow”, *Ġḥēš* “Young ass”, *Dīb* “Wolf”, *Dwēb* and *Srēḥān*, both meaning “Little wolf”, *Ġarbū’/Ġrēbī’* “(little) Jerboa”, *Ġarw* “Puppy”, *Shēlān* “Little kid”, etc. (Šābān 2008). Another work on modern Bedouin, *Die Beduinen* by Oppenheim shows that such names are also found among notable individuals, i.e., chieftains from the 19th and early 20th c.:

Sheikh’s name + patronym or surname	Beduinen/vol.	Sheikh’s name + patronym or surname	vol.
‘ <i>Ugāb</i> “Eagle” b. <i>Šager</i> “Falcon”	3: 413-14	<i>Ḥanaš</i> “Viper” el-Ḥamūd	1: 177
<i>Barğas</i> “Flea” b. Dhām	3: 48	<i>Ġerād</i> “Locust” el ‘Aqqār	2: 284
<i>D/Dyāb</i> “Wolves” b. ‘Ammār	2: 281	<i>Ġrēbī’</i> “Little jerboa” b. Swēlem	2: 351
<i>Dīb</i> “Wolf” el-Ḥalaf	2: 205	<i>Kulēb</i> “Little dog” el ‘Awn	1: 383
<i>Ḍab‘ān</i> “Hyena” Abā-’l Wukl	1: 122	<i>Nimr</i> “Leopard” b. ‘Abd el-‘Azīz b. Šeḥāde	1: 375
<i>Ḍafda’</i> “Frog” el-Šebekī	2: 250	<i>Šibl</i> “Lion cub” el Ġarallah	1: 219
<i>Fahad</i> “Cheetah” b. Menwer	1: 122	<i>Wāwī</i> “Jackal” el Šawwāš	1: 247
<i>Fḥēd</i> “Little cheetah” b. Ḥšēfān	3: 116		

As for slaves, Bedouin tended to avoid naming them after carnivorous animals. If they name a slave *Kalb*, he would be like the dog against them (Hess 1912: 7). However, a name of a useful and obedient animal could be given, like *Ḥimār* “Donkey” (↑5.5.1).

Thus, except for names involving paganism, Islamic instructions on name-giving in general and animal names in particular did not have strong influence on the Bedouin onomastic tradition owing to the latter’s adherence to pre-Islamic criteria.

³¹⁵ On the diminutive and the suffix *-ān*: see ↑5.2.1, 5.2.4.

5.6.3 Contemporary Arabic: the sedentary population

A review of animal names in CAO suggests that whereas names referring to honorific and elegant animals, e.g., lion (§2, 5, 7, 8, 9), leopard (§10), cheetah (§12),³¹⁶ and gazelles (especially for females, §29, 33, 35-37),³¹⁷ are still in use, the ones denoting ‘unpleasant’ animals almost disappeared as given names (equids, rodents, insects, and so on)³¹⁸ but survived as nicknames (§5.4.6.1.2). This change can be attributed to two factors: (1) the significant impact of urbanization on name-giving (through education and media), and (2) state interference and fatwa issuing. For example, on 29/6/1971 the Saudi Council of Ministers issued a decree (No. 331) which forbids bestowing names from the latter group (i.e., unpleasant animals) as being ‘inappropriate from a social and religious point of view’ (Al-Šamsān 2005: 44).³¹⁹ This decision is based on a Saudi policy aiming at forbidding names that are against Islamic instruction, like any of ‘*Abd-X*’ type which is not formed with Allah’s names: ‘*Abd ‘Alī/al-Ḥusayn*’ (confined to Shiites) and ‘*Abd al-Nabī/al-Rasūl*’ “Servant of the Prophet” (used by both Shiites and Sunnis) (Al-Šamsān 2005: 43).³²⁰ Similarly, a recent fatwa (No. 7616) by *Dār al-Iftā’ al-Miṣriyya* ‘Egyptian Fatwa Centre’ forbids giving names that may cause insult to the bearer according to common sense, some of them denoting animals: *Kalb* “Dog”, *Ḥimār* “Donkey”, *Baqara* “Cow”, and *Ḥarūf* “Sheep”.³²¹

In summation, our examination of Islamic name-giving (Hadith and fatwas) in its relationship to milieu and status shows that despite the strict instructions regarding ‘disliked’ names, including animal names, the latter have survived in the Ar. onomasticon. The closer the milieu is to the urban religious circle, there are less attestations of such names. They are largely found among Bedouins, including notable figures, relatively among the rural population, but hardly among the elite. This survival can be attributed to the belief

³¹⁶ On the connotations of these animals, see §5.4.2.2.1.

³¹⁷ For more information on the association between gazelles and women, see §5.4.3.

³¹⁸ In the Baghdadi dialect, for example, the term *baḡl* “mule” is used for a balky person, *ḡarbū* “jerboa” for an insignificant person, *ḥimār* “donkey” and *ḥarūf* “sheep” for stupid and dumb people (Al-Šālḡi 1979: 72, 107, 125).

³¹⁹ Unfortunately, the text is not available to me, but similar information is found in the recent decision: <http://www.alarabiya.net/servlet/aa/pdf/79dd4f46-79bd-418e-8ff1-9e3cd67b9953> [accessed on 14/5/2014].

³²⁰ There has been a historical debate on the lawfulness of ‘*Abd al-Nabī/al-Rasūl*’. The more extreme scholars (i.e., Wahhābī and Ḥanbalī) deem them unlawful (for example, Ibn Al-‘Uṭaymin’s fatwa No. 196 in Al-Sulaymān 2008: 260), while some Šafi’ī *faqīhs* permit them. For more information on this debate, see fatwa No. 4241 issued by the state body *Dār al-Iftā’ al-Miṣriyya* ‘Egyptian Fatwa Centre’, which permits them with evidence from Šafi’ī literature: <http://www.dar-alifta.org/viewfatwa.aspx?ID=4241> [accessed on 25/5/2014].

³²¹ <http://www.dar-alifta.org/ViewFatwa.aspx?ID=7616&LangID=1>

in the capability of such names of expressing power and protection over the children from the jinn and evil eye (↑5.4.4). Rarity or disappearance from the urban milieu is not explained only by the influence of Islam, it is also correlated with the decline of animal symbolism caused by an increasingly negative attitude toward the Bedouin culture.