HISTORY OF TAYMAʾ AND HEJAZI TRADE DURING THE FIRST MILLENNIUM B.C.

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Trade, loosely defined as peaceful, uncoerced, and reciprocal exchange of materials and therefore also of cultural ideas between two independent territorial groups, has of late enjoyed considerable popularity in some archaeological quarters as a concept of great explanatory power, e.g. as a motive force in the emergence of complex societies of western Asia and the eastern Mediterranean. Studies of the interrelationships of trade and social evolution have proliferated1), due in part to the very pragmatic fact that identification of exotic materials and products are among the tasks to which archaeology is best suited, especially with the post-war possibilities of chemical characterization, and in part to theoretical models of how societies are constituted borrowed from anthropology or sociology2). Just as earlier with the subject of domestication and the origins of food production, trade studies have become a 'bandwagon', leading Lamberg-Karlovsky to dismiss their excesses as "merchant madness"3). Certainly excessive claims have been made—trade cannot, and should not be asked to, account for every facet of change in evolving societies—and reaction against these excesses is a welcome thing4). But even while welcoming such reservations and cautions, the swing of reaction should not be allowed too far in the other direction. The fact of trade and the centrality of exchange to many social conditions, if only as the necessary link between production and consumption of commodities, demands that trade retain explanatory significance as

1) See, for example, Adams 1974, Kohl 1978, the volume of papers edited by Sabloff and Lamberg-Karlovsky 1975, Alden 1982; the work of Johnson and Wright on early Khuzistan is distinguished by its focus on administration of intra-regional production and exchange; Wells 1980 provides a provocative study from another geographical region being reshaped by center-periphery relations analogous to those examined in the present study.
2) Thus Renfrew 1975: 3-4.
4) E.g. the reservations expressed by Shaffer 1982 and Tosi 1982.
a social force whose ramifications in social change must be worked out in a reasoned and balanced manner.

The present study seeks that balance by limiting the field of inquiry to the relation of overland trade to settlement history at Taymā', i.e. a historical inquiry into the relationship between the two forces of interregional commerce and of local land-use, during the 1st millennium B.C. The inquiry starts with the broad analytic category of land use as a complex manifestation of basic productive forces at work in a society, in the belief that changes in land-use over time are more directly approachable archaeologically than are the underlying social configurations. The first task of this study is therefore a presentation of a history of land-use at Taymā' during the 1st millennium B.C. with the understanding that such a history traces in broad outline the economic fortunes of the town during that period. The local history of land-use is then interpreted by the changing conditions of interregional overland trade of the 1st millennium.

This inquiry into the effects of interregional relations on local conditions readily conforms to a center-periphery explanatory paradigm. This paradigm, particularly in hands of a historically oriented sociology most systematically represented by Wallerstein's world-economy school, sets up spatially defined structures of social, political, and economic inequalities such that societies occupying the position of center benefit materially at the expense of societies in position of the periphery; center and periphery thus refer both to geographical and to social realities. The structure of inequalities may be coextensive with a given political structure, a world-empire\(^5\)), or may unify many politically autonomous societies, a world-economy. Centers also exert a cultural or ideological action on peripheries. "Civilization", as the style or ideology of center polities, acts as the ideological umbrella of the tributary mode of production, thus tying periphery to center with mental as well as material bonds\(^6\)). Regional structures of inequalities profoundly condition local communities, whether these be central or peripheral, since the political or economic forces that define the inequalities become the dominant fact around which local communities construct themselves.

In the present study, the essential economic structure is that of the world-empire, distinguished in general by its tributary mode of production. The tributary mode of production is characterized by what Diakonoff\(^7\) calls forcible exchange, that is, the expropriation by the center of the production of

6) See Wolf 1982: 82-83 for a general statement of this field of action of world-empires, and Liverani 1979 for the concrete example of the Assyrian empire.