After the collapse of the Assyrian Empire the Syrian Desert power of Qedar continued that process of expansion which it had begun at the end of the 8th or the beginning of the 7th century. Assyria had never succeeded in more than temporarily checking in several campaigns this rising desert power and we may suppose that the power vacuum until the firm establishment of Babylonian control after the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.) enabled Qedar to make firm its hegemony over those tribes which had comprised the confederacy which it led.

After Carchemish Syria and Palestine fell under firm Babylonian control and there was thereafter an annual campaign to the west until 601 B.C. In 601 B.C. the Babylonians were checked on the Egyptian border and most likely it was this rebuff which prompted Jehoiakim of Judah to rebel (2 Kings 24:1). In 598 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar, after necessary preliminaries which we shall describe in this paper, was once more ready to march west to Jerusalem and the city was captured in 597 B.C.

It is to be supposed, from the evidence to be presented, that Nebuchadrezzar found it first necessary to deal with the Qedarite led Arabs who probably at this time posed a real threat to the access routes from the Fertile Crescent to the west as a result of a period of free expansion, relatively unchecked owing to the disordered political conditions mentioned above. We may deduce as much from the British Museum Text 21946, the relevant details of which are as follows:

Rev. 9. šattu(MU) VIKam ṩtu Kislimi(GAN) šâr(LUGAL) Akkadi(URI)kl ummân(ERIM.ME)-šu id-ki-ma ana kurHat-tû iliK(DU) ultu(TA) kurHat-tû ummâni (ERIM-ni-ME)-šu š-pur-ma

2. Qedar in the late Assyrian period led a desert confederacy, styled in the Assyrian Annals luj'-lu šá dA-tar-sa-ma-a-a-in. cf. op. cit. note 1 above p. 209ff.
4. Published in Wiseman, Chronicles, Text Plate XVI; Transliteration, p. 70.
“In the sixth year in the month of Kislev the king of Akkad mustered his army and marched to the Hatti-land. From the Hatti-land he sent out his companies, (10) and scouring the desert they took much plunder from many Arabs, their possessions, animals and gods. In the month of Adar the king returned to his own land.”

The meaning of the extract seems clear enough as we put it in its historical context. From a north Syrian base Nebuchadrezzar had sent detachments against Qedarite encampments, and it seems also evident from the brief account that the foray was the typical containment action which is familiar enough from the Assyrian Annals. The grazing context of these semi-nomads as they gradually press in upon the Palestinian fringes is made all the clearer by the use of the West-Semitic loan word madbaru, a word which is normal in biblical Hebrew in the sense of the semi-cultivated or grazing land bordering on the desert. The policy of removal of patron deities, depopulation of herds, etc., is again one with which the Assyrian Annals have made us familiar as they have previously dealt with action against the Qedarites.

On the basis of the course of events which we have sketched above we are now able to proceed with the consideration of the oracle in Jeremiah 49:28-33, which almost certainly refers to the same campaign, though there are some historical allusions within the poem which have no doubt found their way there when the Jeremianic collections were initially committed to canonical form. The reconstructed text is first presented, then textual and philological notes are appended:

v. 28. lqdwr a lmmrkwt b ḫsr c kh ’mr YHWH
qwmw c’lw c l d Qdr 7 a b c
wšddw o bny qdm 7 b C

v. 29. ’hlyhm ws’nm yqhw 10 a b c
yryw’tyym wkI klkym 10 a B
wgmlyhm ys’w lhym 10 b c d

5. Wiseman (Chronicles, pp. 31ff) suggests Hamath, Riblah or Kadesh.
6. The syllable count indicated in the presentation is based upon what we may assume to have been the 6th century position; i.e. vocal shews are taken to have been unreduced at that stage and the later ‘segolate’ nouns are taken to have been monosyllabic at that stage.
Strophe II

v. 31. qwmw unlikely
        4 a a 1
        cl gwy šlyw
        4 b c
ywšb lbṭh
        4 d c 1
l’ dlṭym
        4 C
l’ br[y][[h lw
        4 C 1
bdd yšknw
        5 c d 2—1—

v. 32. whyw gmlyhm lbz
        9 a b c
whmn w mnyhm lšll
        9 B c 1

v. 33. whyth
        ḫṣr lmśwn tṇym
        7 a B
šmmḥ őd őwlm
        6 b C

l’ yšb ṣm ő yš
        6/5 a b c
l’ ygwr bh bn ‘dm
        7 a b c 1—1—1—

Translation:

v. 28. To Qedar, to the kings of the encampments,
thus saith YHWH.
Rise up, advance against Qedar
Destroy the people of the east.

v. 29. Their tents and their flocks
shall be taken
their (tent) curtains and all their
goods
and their camels shall be borne
away from them
Proclaim against them
Terror on every side!

v. 30. Flee, wander far away,
dwell in the depths,
O inhabitants of the encampments.
For he has made a plan against you
he has formed a purpose against you.

Strophe II

v. 31. Rise up, advance,
against a nation at ease
that dwells securely
that has no gates
that has no bars
that dwells alone.

v. 32. Their camels shall become a booty,
their herds of cattle a spoil.
I will scatter to every wind those
who crop their hair,
and I will bring their doom from
every side of them.

v. 33. The encampments will become a haunt of
jackals
an everlasting waste;
no man shall dwell there
no man shall sojourn there.

Notes: a. For exegetical reasons, we follow the LXX here in the omission of the waw before lmmlkwt.

b. On the basis of comparison with cognates, it is now admitted that the noun HSR in the Old Testament is the product of two different roots and that the original distinction is preserved by the Arabic roots ḥadara “to dwell” and ḥazara “to fence in”, (Arabic ḥaṣara “confine”, “restrict” has a more passive sense; the equivalent Ethiopic root is, however, used to translate Heb. HSR in the Ethiopic version). This same distinction is actually preserved in Hebrew by the differing plurals ḥāṣērîm, which derives from Proto-Semitic *HDR and ḥāṣērōt which derives from Proto-Semitic *HZR (this latter Hebrew word is used frequently for the Tabernacle or Temple courts; cf. Aramaic Ḥuṭrā’, “enclosure” “fold” and the Ugaritic root HZR, “Gehöft”, cf. Joseph Aisleitner, Wörterbuch der Ugaritischen Sprache, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin (3rd edition) 1967, p. 106). By specific definition (Lev. 25:31) the ḥāṣērîm are unwalled settlements; “But the houses of the villages (ḥḥṣr̡ym) which have no wall around them shall be reckoned with
the fields of the country," and frequently in the Old Testament the hšyrm are unwalled villages dependent upon larger settle­ments (cf. Josh. 19:8; Is. 41:11; I Chron. 9:16; Neh. 12:28, etc.). In Is. 42:11 ִכִּר is used in parallelism with hšrym; "Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits," and some, contending that the hšyrm (there and else­where) are more substantial than we have argued, appeal to this parallel and reinforce their appeal by pointing to the Ktib (hšy) Qere(hšr) distinction of II Kings 20:4. There, however, if HSR is read, it must, in view of the context, stem from Proto-Semitic *HZR, while the reference at Is. 42:11 (by its plural form) is from Proto-Semitic *HDR. No argument can be built upon the use of ִכִּר in any of these contexts, since in its frequent Old Testament sense of a collection of people living in one place it is not uncommon in association with hššerim (cf. Josh. 13:23, 21:12). It is to be noted that in the Mari corpus HSR occurs in three attestations, the text of one of which is doubtful. Of the other two, one refers to an assault upon an haššarum (ana haššarim šahātim) in the vicinity of the city of Rasama, and in the other there is a description of the haššaratim of the nomadic tribes (for the references and their discussion cf. The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago, Glückstadt, 1956- , H, Vol. 6, p. 130. (I. J. Gelb et al. eds.). The entry there has followed the Mari editors in suggest­ing that the meaning of the Akkadian word is "enclosure for sheep", but A. Malamat, "Mari and the Bible: Some Patterns of Tribal Organization and Institutions," Journal of the American Oriental Society 82 (1962), 143-150, p. 147, more probably relates the Mari occurrences to Heb. hššerim. For a fuller dis­cussion of the point involved in this note cf. H. M. Orlinsky, "'Haššer' in the Old Testament," Journal of the American Oriental Society 59 (1939) 22-37, and "The Kings-Isaiah Recension of the Hezekiah Story," Jewish Quarterly Review 30 (1939-40), 33-49, esp. p. 35. Note that our assumption that the original MT reading was simply hšr is supported by the LXX a'ulēs at v. 28a.

c. The phrase ֶר hwkdr ֶשׁwr mlk Bbl is obviously sub­sequent to the original delivery of the oracle. It is therefore an editorial insertion. We also note that the proper name Nbwkdr ֶשׁr of v. 30 is not in the LXX and it is possible that the whole phrase Nbwkdr ֶשׁr mlk Bbl is an explicative editorial note. We have omitted it in that place, metri causa. John Bright (Jeremiah. Introduction, translation and notes, 2nd ed. (Garden City, New York, Anchor Bible, 1965), p. 336 suggests that the prose heading to the poem and the further reference to Nebuchadrezzar
in v. 30 were editorial adaptations inserted at a time when the older poem was first applied to Nebuchadrezzar’s later campaign. But we have pointed out that the content of the poem is perfectly consonant with Qedar’s position at this period and thus the suggestion than an older poem was adapted to fit a later campaign seems hardly apposite here.

d. We replace MT 'l with 'l. Professor F. M. Cross, Jr., has suggested in a private communication that the interchange between 'l and 'l in Mss. revisions is common in the Old Testament and the LXX e'pi may suggest that 'l was original, particularly also in view of the assonance thus provided with the preceding 'lw.

e. The accusative particle 't is omitted as inappropriate in an old poetic context.

f. We omit the waw before qt'w metri causa to provide a balanced syllable count.

g. Nd.t is omitted in the LXX at v. 30a but is retained in the Syriac and Vulgate. It is required for metrical purposes and we must thus ascribe its LXX omission to haplography. For the use of the double imperative in Old Testament poetry to add staccato effect to the passage cf. Is. 51:9, Judges 5:12, etc.

h. It is suggested by some commentators that the call to “dwell in the depths” of v. 30 is more appropriately applied to the Dedanites at Jer. 49:8 (from which context it is thought it may have been borrowed). Cf. F. Nötscher, Das Buch Jeremias übersetzt und erklärt (Die Heilige Schrift des alten Testaments VIII, 2; Bonn: Hanstein, 1934), p. 329. Hugo Winckler, Altorient-alische Forschungen, 6 vols. Leipzig, 1893-1906, Vol. II, p. 246, regarded the application of he'miqû to Bedouin as “unsinn”. He preferred to read, by emendation, h'r=qw lšbt, “in die Wüste gehen zu wohnen” (cf. Syriac срq. But the injunction is addressed to the Qedarites in a crisis situation to secrete themselves temporarily and for the topographical possibilities at their disposal cf. Alois Musil, Arabia Deserta, a topographical itinerary. American Geographical Society Oriental Explorations and Studies No. 2, New York, 1927, p. 495, who mentions the numerous deep basins bounded on all sides by high cliffs in the Hawrân area in which Bedouin in such situations as the Qedarites addressed have sought refuge for thousands of years.

i. Heb. n'm YHWH is omitted by the LXX here and in v. 31. It is probably thus to be omitted. Cf. J. G. Janzen, Studies in the Text of Jeremiah (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1966), pp. 153ff esp. p. 171 for his remarks on the textual position here (and at v. 28 supra). It is further likely that
the similar phrase which occurs at the end of v. 32 ought to end the poem as a whole. While there is no textual warranty for omitting it, we have in v. 32 left it out of consideration, considering it in any case a rubric and thus extra-metrical.

j. Omit the waw before ḫsb metri causa.

k. For reasons of symmetrical balance, it seems preferable to adopt the reading of the Qere, some LXX versions, the Targum and Vulgate and read here ężlykm for the MT ężlyhm.

l. The MT vocalization of šélīw may be an Aramaism as some commentators have noted. For the change from 'l gwy to él gwy see note d. above.

m. Omit the waw before l'-bryḥ metri causa.

n. Omit the waw before zṛtym metri causa.

ô. Kl preceding rwh may be an expansion but there are no textual grounds for its omission.

p. MT ębryw is read ębryhm by all the versions and we adopt this reading. We have also omitted the accusative particle 't before 'ydm in this colon; cf. note e. above.

q. Prof. F. M. Cross, Jr., has suggested (privately) that there was free traffic in different orthographical traditions between the forms šmh and šm. The longer form if adopted would provide a better syllable count here. It is also suggested by the assonance it would provide with the šmmh of the previous colon.

r. Omit the waw before l' metri causa.

This oracle is a fine example of a prophetic war poem and it has been very well textually preserved permitting of a neatly balanced metrical structure. The syllable count between the cola is remarkably regular and the word boundary analysis which the poems permits is an obvious earmark of authenticity. There is a clear strophic division by the call to attack in vv. 28 and 31 and thus we have two strophes, each of three verses. There are certain exegetical difficulties associated with the oracle and these are now taken up.

The superscription of the poem has occasioned some difficulty and the usual translation of the Hebrew text as it stands is: "Concerning Qedar and the kingdoms of Hazor which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote." The Septuagint versions are solid in their

7. My thanks are due to Mr. Duane Christensen, Harvard graduate student, for his helpful comments regarding the metrical structure of this oracle.
omission of the copulative waw of ḫmmlkwt (though it is retained by the Syriac and Vulgate) and this textual witness of now very high authority⁸ makes it possible to interpret ḫmmlkwt as epexegetical of Qedar, with the translation as indicated in our reconstruction. As to the meaning of the word ḫmlkwt opinions have oscillated, but since the word was not infrequent in Phoenician in the sense of “prince” or “ruler”⁹ this is its probable meaning here. We may take the form, orthographically, as singular or plural but in view of the present context of a tribal hegemony in a confederate society, as the Qedarite society certainly was,¹⁰ it is better to consider the form as plural.

The noun ḫṣr(ḥṣwr) is thrice mentioned in this context (i.e. in the superscription, in v. 30 and v. 33) in references which seem to make a place name inapplicable, and there has been, as a result, a disposition to see the term as a collective, referring here to desert settlements.¹¹ We are helped in reaching this conclusion by the prior reference of the term to the Ishmaelites at Gen. 25:16, among whom Qedar was numbered, where the genealogical list of twelve is given according “to their villages

---

8. The Harvard Ph.D. dissertation of Dr. J. G. Janzen, referred to in note 1 to the metrical structure above, has put this question, in our opinion, beyond doubt.

9. Cf. Charles F. Jean and J. Hoflijzer; Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l’ouest. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1965, p. 155. The LXX has Basilisse, i.e., a later form of, Basileia, “Queen”. The orthography of the old text from which the LXX translation was made where ṣ (as opposed to ṣ from etymological aw) was not represented by a mater made this translation possible. Hugo Winckler (AOF, Vol Il, pp. 245/6) advocates the translation “Queen of Hazor”, having in mind the Arab queens encountered in the Assyrian Annals, and suggested that the translation “kingdoms of Hazor” was “zum mindesten sinnlos” (cf. Rudolph, W. Jeremia (HAT; HAT = Handbuch zum Alten Testament); Tubingen, 1958), p. 270 who takes namlekōt as the construct plural of mamlākāh). Most, however, have preferred to read the construct of the abstract noun mamlākūt here (cf. Paul Volz, Der Prophet Jeremia übersetzt und erklärt (Kommentar zum alten Testament; Leipzig, 1928)) p. 420, but this noun is a rare attestation in the Old Testament and like the later malkūt bears the note of sovereignty exercised (cf. Jer. 26:1) rather than that of “realm”. Nötscher (Jeremia, p. 328) and others have advocated a reading of mamlekēt (i.e., the construct singular of mamlāḵāh but this does not take into account the orthography here, and thus the persistent Massoretic preservation.

10. It is true that the Assyrian Annals consistently speak of a “king of Arabia” but the sense of šarru in such a context is difficult to discern and not only are the Annals too imprecise in this matter of internal Qedarite arrangements to be of much help, but they also know of competing and contemporary figures.

11. Cf. Alois Musil, Arabia Deserta, p. 490; Rudolph, Jeremia, p. 271, who refers to this view as “die alte 9uffassung.
and by their encampments (bēfīrōtam),"12 i.e., the tribal chieftains are listed by their desert holdings. We may safely take it that ḫṣr in the oracle now under review is a collective for "tent encampment(s)" or the like, and this is further supported by the references of v. 31 where the dwellings of Qedar (if our reconstruction of the whole is correct) are said to be without door, bolts or bars (i.e., unwalled, and thus, as tents, transient). This is again supported by the type of booty which Nebuchadrezzar is supposed to have carried off, i.e., flocks, tent covers13 as he despoils these "Sons of the East".14

We may, then, regard this finely balanced old war poem, of two strophes each largely dealing with the same subject matter, as having been originally uttered by the prophet on the very eve of Nebuchadrezzar's campaign against the 'Arabs' in 599 B.C. If this poetic balance to which we have referred is borne in mind, then the frequent dilemma of the commentators as to who is speaking (and the problem of dating it) is removed. Rudolph had regarded the original oracle as having begun at v. 30 and as having ended at v. 32, yet v. 33 in which the mention of ḫṣwr troubled Rudolph,15 contains the concluding element which might

12. G. Dalman (Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina I-VI, Vol. 6 (Gütersloh, 1928-1939), p. 41 suggested that ḥrāh "bedeutet . . . den von einem rohen Steinwall eingeschlossenen Viehkrall, in welchem auch der Hirte übernachtet", and he went on to associate this noun quite correctly with HSR (though his references which include Is. 42.11 show a confusion between the two roots mentioned above in the metrical notes). Musil (Arabia Deserta, p. 496) remarks that the "Tür or tejrān . . . of the inner desert denotes a moderately high slope rising to a flat crest and likewise a small wall enclosing the place where herds sleep at night." The ḥrōtām of the Midianites (Nb. 31.10) were distinct from their cārēhem, yet ḥr can also be used in poetic parallelism with such terms as miškān (Ez. 25.4) and 'ōhel at Ps. 69.26. There is obviously a close association of this term with sheep or cattle (etc.) stalls (probably the meaning at Nb 31.10—cf. Syr. ʾâyārā) which may then in a transferred poetic sense be used of "dwelling(s)". Musil (Arabia Deserta, p. 496) suggests that the use at Ez. 46.23 is of a low wall enclosing a space or yard with the outer-court of the Temple, while the use at Canticles 8.9 appears to be metaphorical in the sense of "protection or battlement". We note that the word is used in connection with the Ishmaelites, the Midianites and the Bēnē Qedem.

13. For the metonymous use of ʾerēqāh, "tent flap", as 'tent'. cf. Hab. 3.7, Cant. 1.5, Is. 54.2, in all of which the word is in direct or indirect parallelism with ʾōhel.

14. As so often in the Old Testament the Bēnē Qedem seems used as a generic term for the people of Eastern Transjordania, and is used in the text in poetic parallelism with Qedar. Perhaps the prophet was alluding to the hegemony of Qedar over the confederacy of which he was aware.

have been expected to round off the prophecy. R. Bach, more recently, 16 has rejected Rudolph's rather arbitrary division of material at v. 29ff and has agreed that Yahweh's speech is continued in v. 31. Whereas Rudolph had argued for a difference in speaker, Bach, much more plausibly argues for a distinction between *Gattungen*. 17 The older view of Cornill that the oracle as a whole was dependent upon similar Ezekiel material must be summarily rejected, 18 and in view of the metrical regularity of the piece when structured it is curious that he could have remarked; “Übrigens ist auch metrisch das Orakel arg verwahrlost und man muss schon zu starken Mitteln greifen, um einigermassen correcte Strophen zu bekommen.” 19

The stature of Qedar may be inferred at this period, not only from the significant fact that she is included among the foreign nations against whom Jeremiah inveighs but also from the relatively many references to this desert power at about this time. Thus at Jer. 2:10 Qedar appears to stand for a synonym for the east as do the ’iyēu kittyyyin (Cyprus) for the west. At Ezekiel 27:21 w̸e kol-n̸e s̸iyyē Qēdar are linked in the “traders catalogue” there with ‘Arabia’, no doubt as the most prominent member of that regional grouping, and a reference to Dedan precedes the verse, just as one to supplies from Sheba and Raamah follow it. These prophetic references may be added to by that from Isaiah 42:10ff where there is a directive to sing Yahweh’s praises from the “end of the earth” and the “end(s)” are then further delimited by a reference to the ’iyyim in the west and to “the villages that Qedar inhabits” in the east, while the reputed flocks which have been referred to in Ez. 27:21 are again on view in parallelism with the “rams of Nebaioth” at Is. 60:7. To conclude this survey, the famed black tents of Qedar are mentioned at Canticles 1:5, while there is an allusion to the desert savagery of these people as “haters of peace” at Ps. 120:5ff.

In view of the cumulative weight of these references extending into the late Babylonian period, it is hardly conceivable that Nebuchadrezzar was able to do anything more than administer

17. I.e., the *Aufforderung zur Flucht* in 28b-29 and the *Aufforderung zum Kampf* in v. 31.
a temporary check to this growing desert power and this sup-
position is confirmed by the advent of Qedar as a presence in
the Delta region in the Persian period.\textsuperscript{20} It is certain that the
immediate post-exilic period was one of constant encroachment
upon the Palestinian border kingdoms. This much seems clear
enough from Ezekiel 25:1ff. There the demise of Ammon and
Moab is threatened and in each case their former territories are
about to become a domain for the \textit{bēnê qedem}, who, as we have
noted, have been used in close poetic parallelism with Qedar at
Jer. 49:28 and are probably thus a synonym for them. Since we
know from Josephus\textsuperscript{21} that Nebuchadrezzar conducted a campaign
against the Ammonites and the Moabites in his 23rd year (i.e.
582 B.C.), following directly upon an expedition to Cole-Syria,
it is extremely probable that Ezek. 25:4 and 25:10 refer to
Qedarite dominated Arab infiltrations into these subjected areas,
an infiltration which would have been made all the easier by
Nebuchadrezzar's probable policy of deportation.\textsuperscript{22} From
epigraphic evidence we are aware of the growing influence exer-
cised upon the Ammonite kingdom by Arab elements from at
least the beginning of the 6th century B.C.\textsuperscript{23} and we adopt that
view which holds that by the mid-sixth century B.C. these border
states had ceased to be effective entities.\textsuperscript{24}

In short, the somewhat enigmatic oracle of Jer. 49:28-33
draws our attention to a proud desert power, who having main-
tained her position established in the later Assyrian period was to
go on to an even stronger position of influence in the Persian
period. When we reflect upon her position and stature during
the Babylonians period it is no wonder that she found a place
in the oracles against the foreign nations in the Book of the
prophet Jeremiah.

W. J. DUMBRELL,
Moore College,
Newtown, N.S.W. 2042.

\textsuperscript{20} The course of subsequent Qedarite expansion is traced in William J.
Dumbrell, "The Tell el Maskhuta Bowls and the 'Kingdom' of Qedar
in the Persian Period", \textit{Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental
Research} 203 (1971), 33-44.
\textsuperscript{21} Cf. Antiquities X 9 7.
\textsuperscript{22} On this point, cf. the unpublished Johns Hopkins University disserta-
tion, \textit{A History of the Ammonites}, by G. M. Landes (1956), p. 320,
\textsuperscript{23} Cf. W. F. Albright, "Notes on Ammonite History" in \textit{Miscellanea
Biblica}, B. Ubach (Montserrat, Spain, 1954), pp. 131-136, where it is
shown that Thamudic type proper names are appearing on Ammonite
royal seals from the beginning of the 6th century B.C. onwards.
\textsuperscript{24} So van Zyl, \textit{Moabites}, p. 157, for Moab and Landes. \textit{Ammonites}, p.
320 for Ammon.