

History and Geography of the Arabian Gulf



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Abstract There were early civilizations in Iraq, Iran, India, China and Egypt that extend from 6000 years B.C. There was a large volume of trade between these areas due to their prosperity and product surpluses. Hence, people demanded commodities from each other. The Arabian Gulf has been standing in the centre between the East-West trades. Besides, sea transportation between these civilizations was the only means.

Since small ships and boats were only vehicles available for merchants, they had to make stops more often than current giant ships of today. This required many ports along the Arabian Gulf eastern shores or islands. These ports were created by people who migrated from the Arabian Peninsula or Iraq. Such migration was in numerous waves due to natural or political reasons. Migrants formed small communities to grow gradually into entities (sheikhdoms).

During the early stages of history, those entities were blessed by trade, ship servicing and pearl industries. However, when Europe was awakened from its slumber, the Portuguese were the first to open their eyes to the profitable trade between the East and West. They took over the Arabian Gulf ports and islands. The British, Dutch and French tried to get rid of the Portuguese. Ultimately, the British eliminated their European rivals and began to infiltrate into the Arabian Gulf entities. Unlike the Portuguese cruel treatment of the Arabs, the British showed a friendly face and protective aim in being there.

This chapter gives some geographic information about the Gulf and each of its countries. It goes into the history of the Gulf including its several names and then provides the history of those countries from early ages until their independence and their oil bonanza.

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1 Introduction

The Arabian Gulf has been the trade link between the East and the West for thousands of years. Ships for merchants in the East, West or of the Arabian Gulf area used to pass through the Gulf all year round carrying cargoes or passengers since 6000 B.C. The Gulf has been the source of income and nutrition from its pearls, fish, coral, servicing ships, etc. Hence, it was the sanctuary of a large number of people who fled oppression or natural disasters, in spite of its harsh environment.

We try in this chapter to give the reader basic knowledge of the Gulf's geography and historical development since 6000 B.C. until the emergence of its countries as independent rich states. We divided the chapter in two parts; the first part deals with the Gulf in general, and the second part is devoted to discuss the individual entities separately. We shall concentrate on the main events and stop with the each country's independence, because of the limitation of space.

We should note to the reader that Dr. Al-Ejli went to Istanbul in 2011–2012 to obtain documents for his book, *Sheikh Jassim Al-Thani*. He has translated copies of those documents. We shall refer to them in the text here by their numbers. Besides, the reader may see some information without references. We think that these are common knowledge or we have lived their events.

2 The Arabian Gulf in General

The Arabian Gulf has a large surface area and is an extension of the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. It extends from the Gulf of Oman in the south to the estuary of Shatt-al-Arab River in the north. Its length is about 965 km. Its western shores are shared by Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Saudi Arabia, while its eastern shores are occupied by Iran since the Shah of Iran forced the Arabian tribes, which were there for thousands of years, to relocate to the north of Iran, replacing them with Iranians. The width of the Gulf ranges between 370 and 59 km at the Strait of Hormuz. The total area of the Arabian Gulf is about 233,100 km². The Arabian Gulf is not deep in most of its area. Its deepest point is about 90 meters. That is why the Gulf was very suitable for pearl picking (Al-Abdul Qadir et al. 2012).

A renowned traveler from Baghdad (Houqal) wrote in the tenth century that the water of the Gulf as being very clear. Any person, he said, can see the white rocks in its bottom. It has, he added, tremendous amount of pearls and corals. The Arabian Gulf has 350 islands; most of them are very small. They are dome shaped resulting from salt accumulation as well as the remnants of marine animal skeletons. There

are, however, large islands such as Abu Dhabi, Qesham, Bubiyan, Bahrain, Failaka, Greater Tomb, Lesser Tomb and Abu Musa.

Most of the western shores of the Arabian Gulf are sandy and flat with few small hills caused by sand dunes. However, the shores of Qatar and Musandam Peninsula at the Strait of Hormuz are a solid rocky type. There are several bays and small gulfs along the western shores that are good for ports, ship repair docks and fishing. The eastern shores of the Gulf are mostly narrow as the Zagros Mountains run close to the Gulf, except for estuaries of small rivers as they form sedimentation.

The Arabian Gulf has long hot summer and cold winter. Such change in the weather induces fish migration (Abdul Qadir et al. 2012).

One of the earliest civilizations in world history was in Mesopotamia. Many natural endowments were behind the rise of great civilizations: Babylonian, Assyrian, Acadian, Sumerian and Chaldean. They dated as far as 6000 B.C. The climate was moderate; land was fertile because it was formed by the two rivers' alluvium sediments; and the existence of freshwater from Tigris, the Euphrates and their tributaries carried from mountains in Turkey, Iran and northern Iraq aided agriculture in the region.

These empires succeeded each other that resulted into mass migrations either to the Arabian Peninsula or to the shores of the Arabian Gulf. People do not usually leave their land unless there is a strong reason to drive them away from it. Among the reasons for migration, we can state the following:

1. Every time an empire in Mesopotamia had a strong king, he started to expand by taking over adjacent territories. There would be mass migrations to the Arabian Peninsula or Arabian Gulf sanctuaries, especially by defeated king and his entourage, soldiers and rich families. Farmers usually stayed giving a portion of their crop to the new ruler and pay taxes. Those who fled would adapt to the new life and occupation, such as pasturing in the Arabian Peninsula or fishing and merchant trading in the Arabian Gulf area. Most of those migrants formed nomadic tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. But those who migrated to the Arabian Gulf islands or coasts formed residential communities. However, there were several mass migrations that made the marshes of southern Iraq as their sanctuary. They gradually gained strength to form an empire: the Sumerians.
2. While Mesopotamia had a moderate climate, fertile land and plenty of freshwater, every few years great flood used to happen. Some great kings used to construct flood control projects and maintained them. Others indulged into pleasure, neglecting flood control projects. Flood drove people out of their homes seeking refuge somewhere else. Most people went to the Arabian Peninsula or the Arabian Gulf. Other natural calamities, such as drought, drove Bedouins from their areas to the Arabian Gulf islands or coasts. Many Arabian tribes left their home area in the Arabian Peninsula toward the Arabian Gulf when there were several consecutive years of drought. History tells us that many Arabian tribes settled in the eastern shores of the Arabian Gulf for thousands of years. It is interesting to note that migrants to the Arabian Peninsula or to the Arabian Gulf were accepted by the existing tribes. The reason could be that the residents were

former migrants themselves. Another reason for that could be the deep-rooted custom of welcoming stranger migrants especially if they were inflicted by calamity (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998).

3. There were migrations as a result of tribal wars. There were large tribes in the central and northern regions of the Arabian Peninsula, which used to raid smaller ones. Wars used to drive weak tribes to flee to less desirable lands. Sometimes wars could happen for trivial reasons and yet continue for years. It was normal practice among tribes to invade others taking men and women as slaves and confiscating their cattle. Some of the defeated tribesmen would flee for their lives to the Arabian Gulf coasts or islands.
4. If we compare civilizations in Mesopotamia with those that existed in the Nile Valley or the Sind Valley, it is possible that farmers in Mesopotamia were producing more than their counterparts in the Nile or Sind Valleys. The reason was the fertile land was greater. Hence, more men could be spared in Mesopotamia as soldiers, weapon producers and other workers, than in the Nile or Sind Valleys. That is why kings in Mesopotamia used to expand to other territories as far as the southern region of the Arabian Gulf and westward to the Mediterranean Sea. Yet Egyptians confined themselves alongside the Nile, and the Indians remained within their Sind territory. Therefore, the transgression of Mesopotamian kings led to migrations of people.

These reasons for migration, grouping and re-grouping of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf explain the rise of settlements that developed into current Emirates of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. Those settlements started before the third millennium B.C.

The waters of the Gulf extended from currently Samarra, about 100 km north of Baghdad, and then retreated leaving behind alluvium deposits of the Tigris and the Euphrates for thousands of years to its present location. Currently the Arabian Gulf is bordered by the Arabian Peninsula from the west; Iran from the east; Iraq, Kuwait and Oman from the north; and Oman, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean from the south. The Arabian Gulf has about 3300 km of coastline. Iran has about one-third of this coastline, while the Arabian territories have two thirds of the coastline. All islands of the Arabian Gulf have Arab residents. Iran seized the three islands, Greater Tomb, Lesser Tomb and Abu Musa, which belonged to the United Arab Emirates. Besides, Shah Abbas of Persia drew a plan to take over the entire eastern coast of the Arabian Gulf, but he was assassinated before accomplishing it. His successor carried out the plan by forcing the Arabian tribes to move to the southern shores of the Caspian Sea in the north of Iran and replacing them with Persians. The British Government helped Iran to do so and later on assisted Iran to take over Arabistan that forms now southern Iran from its ruler Sheikh Khaz'al Al-Ka'bi. The British Envoy in Basrah invited the Sheikh to his yacht to sign a treaty with Shah of Iran. But they arrested him and then assassinated him. The Iranian troops were ready to take over the Sheikh's emirate. The area now is the main source of Iran's oil (Al-Ejli 2013).

Before we go into the discussion of the history of the Arabian Gulf, it may be of interest to enumerate the various names of the Gulf.

2.1 *Names of the Gulf*

The most ancient name of the Gulf was “the Sea of God’s Land”. This name remained until the third millennium B.C. when it was called the “Sea of the Grand Sunrise”. In the second millennium B.C., it was called “Sea of the Chaldean Homeland”. During that time the Chaldean Empire dominated the Middle East including most of the Gulf (Qal’achi 1992).

The Assyrians, Babylonians and Acadians called the Gulf “the Southern Sea” or “the Lower Sea” analogous to the Mediterranean Sea that they called “the Upper Sea”. The Assyrians also called it “Narmerto” that means “the Bitter Sea”. It is reported that Alexander the Great called it “Persian Gulf” based on his Envoy Admiral Nearchus who in 326 B.C. led his fleet from India alongside the eastern shores of the Gulf. The Admiral noticed the Persians were residing at the nearby mountains. Hence, he thought the Gulf belonged to the Persians. This name was used by the Romans, Greeks and other Europeans for centuries. However, when the Roman historian Pliny used the name Arabian Gulf and stated that all people who resided in both eastern and western shores of the Gulf were clearly Arabian tribes, the Greek started to use the name Arabian Gulf (Qal’achi 1992).

Nonetheless, the Arabs themselves called the Gulf other names such as “Basrah Gulf” in reference to the City of Basrah from which the Gulf starts. This name was widely used since Umar bin Al-Khattab, the second Caliph, made Basrah the main Islamic centre for the troops that carried Islam through the Gulf up to India. One can find the term “Basrah Gulf” appears in poems and writings of several renowned persons in the sixth century.

Other names such as “the Gulf of Qatif” and the “Gulf of Bahrain” were used but by the residents of these localities.

The Arabs before Islam called it “Arabian Gulf”. Several maps drawn by Europeans, except by British, used the term “Arabian Gulf”. Why has Iran since the twentieth century insisted to use the name “Persian Gulf”? Other gulfs, seas and oceans have their names fixed with no problem. Why is it that only this gulf had such serious controversy?

The Iranians go to the extent that when the *National Geographic* puts the name Arabian Gulf below the name Persian Gulf, the Government of Iran barred their publications and representatives from entering Iran. The Government also barred *The Economist* from Iran because it used the term “Gulf” only.

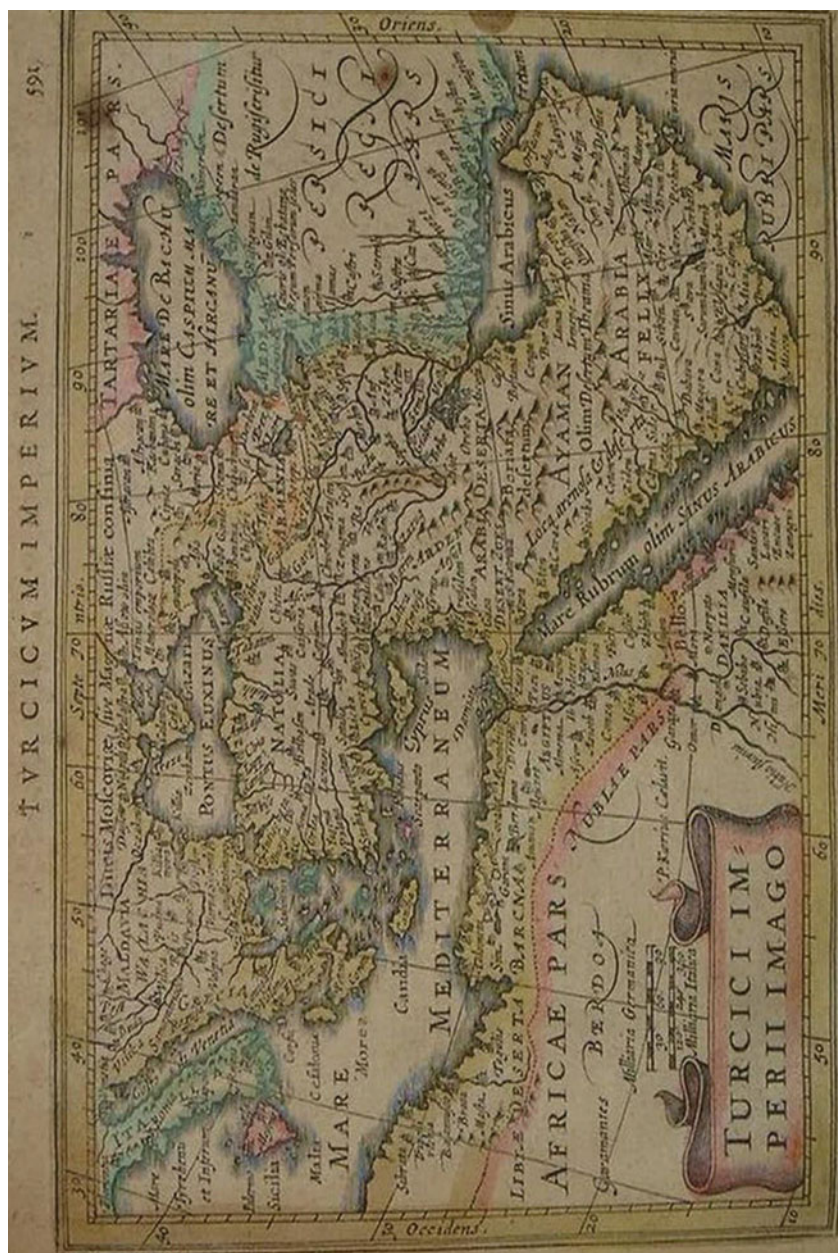
When Jean Pierre Fenon, Professor at National Institute of Eastern Languages and Cultures in Paris, wrote an article appeared in January 1990 issue of French *Le Monde* mentioned Arabian Gulf, the Iranian Embassy in Paris strongly protested as if there was great crime being committed. Prof. Fenone, however, presented a map drawn in the sixteenth century using the name in Latin “Sino Abarico” that means “the Arabian Sea”. Besides, he showed that there are several maps and documents in the National Library in Paris using the term “Arabian Gulf” (Al-Ejli 2013).

The main reason behind the insistence of Iran, perhaps, is political. By calling it “Persian Gulf”, Iran will find a reason or excuse to claim the possession of the

islands including the Kingdom of Bahrain. In fact Iran seized the three islands, Greater Tomb, Lesser Tomb and Abu Musa, from the United Arab Emirates. Residents of Bahrain with Iranian lineage always make disturbances and demonstrations against the Government of Bahrain hoping for Iran's interference and takeover. A Lebanese strategic writer said, "The difference between the Arabs and the Iranians on the name of the Gulf is not literal expression, but a difference that reflects political and nationalistic conflict". It contains some hidden strategy of who should have control over the Gulf; its waterways, islands, oil, strategic position, security and its wealth (Khalifa 2005). A French writer mentioned, "The gulf which is called 'Persian Gulf' is called so because of the strong and historical influence of Iran with the British and lately with the USA in support of the Shah" (Al-Ejli 2017b). Foucher perhaps was referring to the treaty between Iran and the British, which also brought forward the assassination of Khaz'al Al-Ka'bi to allow Iran to seize Arabistan in 1930 (Nippur 2007).

The Arabs, however, have been occupying the Gulf for thousands of years. They consider the Gulf being for the Arabs. They need no proof more than being there. The Arabs had made no attempt to claim the eastern shores of the Gulf or Arabistan. We believe that they should. On what basis does Iran claim the Gulf being theirs while Iranians occupy one-third of its shores in spite of the fact that they seized it unlawfully (Al-Ejli 2013).

The reader can see in the attached map of the Arabian Gulf the name "Sino Abarico" that means the Arabian Sea (Jullia 1667).



2.2 History of the Arabian Gulf Before Christ

Unlike Mesopotamia, the Nile Valley and the Sind of India, where great civilizations took place historically, the Arabian Gulf region is occupied by small communities, villages and small towns. They were mostly independent except for some protective tribal treaties. However, there were two kingdoms that rose to dominate most of the Arabian Gulf. The Kingdom of Hormuz expanded from the island of Hormuz to seize the current areas of the United Arab Emirates, Sultanate of Oman and all the islands in the Gulf. This Kingdom might have begun before the third millennium B.C. as the archaeological discoveries indicate (Al-Ejli 2017a). This Kingdom depended mostly on trade, fishing and agriculture. Hormuz Kingdom did not expand into the Arabian Peninsula, Mesopotamia or the Indus Valley. It perhaps did not find itself strong enough to fight them; hence it rather traded with them. The old saying states, “The cheek that could not bite, kiss it” may apply here.

The other one was the Kingdom of Dilmun. Its homeland was the Islands of Bahrain. It dated back to the third millennium B.C. Other than fishing and some agriculture, Dilmun depended mostly on trade. Dilmun did not expand into Persia, Mesopotamia or even the Hormuz areas, but went into the eastern region of the Arabian Peninsula. Both Hormuz and Dilmun had their distinctive civilizations. Their trade reached the Romans and Greeks as archaeological excavations showed some pots, stamps and other articles that were similar to those of the Romans and Greeks. There was a great amount of trade with India, China and eastern countries.

Archaeological discovery in Failaka Island and coastal areas of what is now Kuwait showed stamps and other articles that belong to the third millennium B.C. This indicates the existence of great civilizations in these areas (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998). We think that such conclusions cannot be made. First, historians did not refer to any empire or even a small kingdom in those areas. Second, communities who lived in Failaka or other Kuwaiti areas were mostly migrants who ran away from war or famine and lived on fishing and limited agriculture, offering services to traders going from East to West and vice versa. Hence, stamps, coins and articles from traders could stay with some people who offered services to traders. Finally, a civilization requires the existence of scientists, inventors and innovators supported by a strong leader, king or emperor and a prosperous economy such as what took place in Mesopotamia, the Nile Valley, the Romans and the Greeks. A community based on fishing and little services has never created a civilization in the history of the world.

It should be noted that during ancient history, prosperous civilizations in Iraq, Egypt and India depended mostly on their own produce with some imports from each other. They used small boats as compared to current giant ships. Hence those small ships needed to stop more often than today’s ships for water, food and little rest. Therefore, several islands and coastal ports used to serve ship’s merchants with what they needed. Communities of these islands and ports were very friendly and hospitable to encourage merchants to stop again in the future. That is why they were not aggressive by nature or had no desire to attack any empire.

British and Dutch documents show that the Kingdom of Hormuz as an Arabian kingdom dominated all areas that are currently the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman as well as all the islands in the Arabian Gulf. It remained in power for thousands of years (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998). Written documents that belong to the Sumerians were discovered in Oman that belong to 3000 B.C. This indicates that the Sumerians, who lived in southern Iraq, were trading with the Kingdom of Hormuz. Sumerian merchants used to import copper, agricultural produce and lumber. They exchanged those articles with their agricultural and manufactured commodities (Al-Ejli 2013).

Both Hormuz and Dilmun Kingdoms had their own merchants who used to bring commodities such as herbs, spices, olibanum, clothes, jewels, ceramic, teak, cedar and others from India, China and other eastern countries to sell them to merchants of Mesopotamia, the Mediterranean and Europe. It should be noted that these articles were of high value, thus making merchants of these two Kingdoms very rich and their economies prosperous. This was, perhaps, the main reason that encouraged the Portuguese and later the British to invade the Arabian Gulf in the sixteenth century and then after, which we shall discuss later.

2.3 History of the Arabian Gulf After Christ

During the period 320 B.C.–100 A.D., of which Alexander the Great appeared, the Arabian Gulf region was affected by the Greeks. They controlled the trade between the East and the West. Failaka Island, which is now part of Kuwait, was a Greek colony. The Greeks gradually lost control of the area that regained its independence as tribal entities. The Arabian Gulf islands and coastal ports continued with trade between the East and the West (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998).

It should be noted that there were many wars that took place in Iraq, Persia, Egypt and other Mediterranean regions, but the people in the Arabian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula stayed away from it. Hence, their trade continued with their caravans and ships.

In the year 120 B.C., there was the collapse of Ma'arab Dam in Yemen. When it happened many tribes were forced to leave Yemen to the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf area. Some of them even crossed the Gulf to settle in the eastern shores of the Gulf and its islands.

In spite of the Greek's occupation of Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Turkey, as well as the Persian occupation of Iraq, the Arabs remained in control of the trade on both land and sea. Gradually, many rich individuals or families had their own ships that were travelling through Tigris and the Euphrates and then the Arabian Gulf going to India and China or through the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea to East Africa and Europe. This feverish activity of trading between the East and the West under the control of the Arab sailors and traders continued for about seven centuries.

In the year 628, Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) sent envoys to the rulers of Bahrain, Oman and the Emirates inviting them to Islam. They accepted the new religion and became Islamic bases, which assisted Islamic troops to spread Islam to the East (Al-Ejli 2013). Kuwait, however, joined the Islamic Nation during the rule of the second Khalifa Umar bin Al-Khattab when the Islamic troops defeated the Persian Empire in Iraq. As the Islamic Nation expanded to control all the area from North Africa and Spain in the west to the border of China in the east, East Africa, Southwest India, and Turkey in the north, trade flourished not only because of this vast area conquered but also because of the development of financial intermediaries. Merchants used to sell their products, give their funds to bankers and receive it at home. Islamic history books mentioned that Zubair bin Al-A'awam, the Prophet's uncle, was among the pioneers in this banking practice.

Moreover, Muslim merchants and sailors were very honest and trustworthy in dealing with other merchants regardless of their religion, as this is one of the major precepts of Islam. Abdul Salam's father, Yassin Idrisi, who was a ship captain, told him that when they used to go to Malaysia and Indonesia, merchants gave them money to bring them some merchandise in their next trip. They trust them even though they did not have any means to get their money if the sailor did not show up next year. In fact, historians tell us that Islam spread in most Southeast and East Asia without having Islamic military occupying the region.

However, in the sixteenth century, the situation changed when the Portuguese were able to reach India through the Cape of Good Hope. The Portuguese Vasco de Gama was the first to cross the Cape with his ship. In the year 1507, their fleet led by Alfonso de Albuquerque seized Muscat, Sahar, Khor Fakkan and Hormuz. Then in 1521, the Portuguese seized Bahrain. Hence, they practically were in control of the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf and the trade therein (Anthony and Heartily 1980). It should be noted that the Portuguese treated the inhabitants of the Arabian Gulf area in an unmerciful inhumane way. Worse than that they used to seize merchant ships, take all their merchandise, mutilate the sailors' bodies and then throw them in the sea. They occupied the Arabian Gulf and the Arabian Sea until the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman Al-Qanouni ordered his Admiral Beh to go with his fleet to fight the Portuguese. The war took place in the period 1538–1557. The Ottomans were able to drive away the Portuguese from the Arabian Gulf and the Arabian Sea and their adjacent coast and islands (Al-Ejli 2017a).

After the expulsion of the Portuguese from the area, the British began with their plans to take over the Arabian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. However, the British did not send fleets or troops to seize the area, but they used gradual infiltration tactics.

The Portuguese ships continued to navigate around the Cape of Good Hope to India; the Ottoman Empire had no objection as long as they would not hijack Arab ships. The British fleet entered into war with the Portuguese and defeated the latter in 1588. The British wanted to monopolize the trade with India and the Arabian Gulf. They brought their fleet into the Arabian Gulf using two excuses: to stop piracy and prevent slave trading in the Gulf (Al-Ejli 2013).

It is interesting to note that the British did not object on the piracy of the Portuguese for decades. They closed their eyes on the European merchants taking Africans as slaves for a long time. They came to the Arabian Gulf posing as humane. Their ugly face was shown when they bombarded Ras Al Khaimah in 1806 because the Qasimi tribe did not enter into a treaty with them. The British even landed their troops to go after the Qasimi tribe. However, the latter continued their hit-and-run for quite some time. The British called the Qasimi 'the fighting pirates'. This is why they call the coasts of the Emirates the Piracy Coast. Since the British had more advance weapons and artilleries than these Arabs, they had to have treaties with the British in 1820. The British changed the name from "Piracy Coast" to "Trucial Coast" (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

The Netherlands also tried to foster a relationship with India and the Arabian Gulf region. There was some co-operation between the Dutch and the British fleets to strike their common rival: the Portuguese fleet. They destroyed the latter in 1635. But soon after that, the British and the Dutch became rivals themselves. A war began between these two rivals that continued until 1652. Then they got back as allies to face their new dangerous competitor in the trade with India and the Arabian Gulf entities: the French. French fleet reached India in 1664 and became interested in the Arabian Gulf region. The alliance of the British and the Dutch entered into war with the French from 1756 to 1763. The French withdrew from the area as they had internal turmoil.

After the French Revolution in 1789 and when the country was back to normal, they began to think about the East. Napoleon led his troops with a plan to establish a huge empire to include Egypt, Syria, Iraq, the Arabian Gulf region and India. But the British found out about his plan and began to work diligently to stop him from carrying out his plan. The British used all means at their disposal to infiltrate into the region before Napoleon got control of Egypt. There remained three rivals in the Arabian Gulf region: the British, the Ottomans and the Persians.

2.4 The Ottomans and the Desired World Powers

As we mentioned earlier, the Ottomans fought a long war with the Portuguese in the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea and the Arabian Gulf. Although the Ottomans did not eliminate the presence of the Portuguese in the region, they minimized their danger to the commercial ships of the Muslim merchants. The other rival to the Ottomans was the Persian Safavids, because they discriminated against the Sunnis in central and southern regions of Iraq and they provoked the Ottomans to keep them from their allies: the Portuguese. The Persian Safavids sympathized with the Portuguese and had a treaty with them.

In the early seventeenth century, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf played an important role in the struggle of world powers. At that time, the British entered the entire region after they had an alliance with the Iranian Shah Abbas I (1557–1628). That alliance helped the British to drive away the Portuguese from Hormuz Island at

the southern entrance of the Gulf. On the other hand, the British enabled the Iranians in their aggression on the Arab area of what is now southern region of Iran and the entire eastern shore of the Arabian Gulf (Taquosh 2009).

The British Government established commercial centres in most major ports of the Gulf. They used the East India Company for that purpose. This Company was established by British Royal Decree in 1600 and was terminated in 1858. The British were able to eliminate the competition of the Dutch and the French in the Arabian Gulf. They worked very diligently to make the Arabian Gulf as a British lake. The presence of the British in the Arabian Gulf had its political and military dimensions in addition to its pretended commercial aspect.

In the year 1764, the British set up a consulate in Basrah after the East India Company had moved its commercial activities to there a year earlier. The British moved their warship fleet to the Arabian Gulf claiming to protect their commercial ships. During that time there was an influx of British tourists, scientific researchers and merchants coming to the area actually gathering information about the area and its people, especially tribe leaders and dignitaries. They were making studies about the habits, social relations, economic conditions, etc. Some of these were spies, but others were commissioned to make studies in their fields of specialty. These studies and reports were given serious attention by decision-makers. This information was based on documents Al-Ejli has copies from the Istanbul Document Centre.

What the British were doing in the Arabian Gulf was dangerous and detrimental for the southern region of the Ottoman Empire. They considered that it was their duty to protect the Muslims of that area. Their leaders realized that they were in a long slumber while other powers were working continuously very hard to pull the rug from under the feet of the Ottomans. Now the Ottomans had to wake up in the second half of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, the British and its allies had their plan not only to expel the Ottomans from the Arabian territories but also to eliminate the Ottoman Empire entirely.

Historically, the British mixed their political manoeuvring with military power after they had studied the region and its people deeply and established its trade ties. Thus they take their time to reach their ultimate goal. Other Europeans rush in with military fleets and take over an area that they had no knowledge of. They may treat people harshly that make their stay short as what we have seen the Portuguese did in the Arabian Gulf. Hence, European colonization has its self-destructive elements in it.

British agents and employees of their consulates were instructed to develop intimate relations with chiefs of tribes and dignitaries. They were authorized to throw lavish dinners for them and give fancy gifts to the wives of their guests. They were giving special attention to the relations between tribal sheikhs and religious men. They exploit any differences they found among these sheikhs and religious men. They were excellent in using "divide-and-rule" tactic. As Bernard Shaw said, "When you see two fish are fighting, there must be an Englishman nearby". As to the European leaders, the British pretended to be defenders of civilization.

The British used their consulate in Bushehr to make contacts with sheikhs of the regional tribes and their constituents. Its employees were working very hard to gain them as friends. Its men covered both sides of the Arabian Gulf and the islands all the

way from Muscat to Basrah. It should be noted that if the British Government desired to do something, it left it to its consulate to draw the plan, because it had the knowledge of the area and the people. While it was known that the Ottoman Empire used a highly centralized decision-making tool. The Turkish Museum is full of documents related to small and important matters being corresponded between the Sultan and minor administrators:

The Turkish Field Marshal Nassrat Pasha pointed this out in a detailed report (Document No. 14/2256/126/11) about the British policy which was characterized with wickedness and deception, as he put it. He warned his Government of their danger in the region. He said:

The British Government used to establish schools run by its consulates claiming their intention to spread civilization and eliminate illiteracy. They had a school in every village and city of the Ottoman Empire. It sent tourists to stay long period of time wandering around to write books and distribute them to people which distort Islam. These books were written in Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish languages.

They tried to sway people from authentic religion of Islam. The Consulate gave its employees including high-ranked personnel long time employment; 20–30 years in the region to gain comprehensive knowledge and make intimate friendships with leaders of the region. They were required to submit daily, weekly, monthly and annual reports which were sent to certain department in the U.K. to be studied and make recommendations.

The determination of the British wicked intention and sneaky schemes can be considered more dangerous than the Russians ideology and their antagonism to our Empire.

The Russians were working in the open which indicate their courage. We can counter-part their actions. But the British used deception and duping under the umbrella of justice and civilization. They do not spare any trick to accomplish their plan.

Although this warning came somewhat late, it was good enough for the Ottomans to be careful with the British, especially that it came from a high-ranked officer.

In 1867, the British sent a high-ranking delegation to Iraq and appointed a political personality instead of the Consul as they did in India. In order to protect that political person, they requested to send a military squad for that purpose. The politician was not appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but by the British Government of India.

Hence, the Ottoman Empire was no longer a defensive barrier to protect the region. The British believed that the Ottoman Empire must be eliminated and torn off so that the British would control the Arabian territories and the Arabian Gulf in particular.

In many books written by the British about the Middle East, the authors advised the Government to take over the region by all available means and ways. Mr. Curzon, the advisor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote a book on Iran recommending that the British Government should cooperate with Iran and let it expand through the Arabian territories. He also showed in his book his hatred of the Ottoman Government. He urged his Government to stop the Ottomans from expanding southward to control Al-Ahsa'a and down to Omani territory.

Besides, the British circulated rumours among the Arabian tribes that the Ottomans were taking over their territories to exploit them and limit the freedom the sheikhs used to have. The British tried to convince those sheikhs that they were in danger of having the Ottomans conquer their areas and collect taxes from them as their saviours.

We have just mentioned Mr. Curzon's recommendation to his Government that it should cooperate with Iran to help each other's expansion to control the Arabian lands. It should be noted that Iran was only interested in expanding its territory at the east coast of the Gulf because Iran was not a maritime nation. The British were, on the other hand, interested in the Gulf and its west coast. Hence, their interests were not in conflict. Besides, the British found it logical to ally with Iran, which had historical roots of antagonism with the Ottomans (Document No. 14/255/126/8).

The British tried to trick Sh. Jassim Al Thani, the founder of Qatar, as they did with Sh. Khaz'al Al-Ka'bi we mentioned earlier. They invited him to their ship to negotiate a treaty with him. He refused to go but invited the British political Envoy in Bahrain, Francis Bevel Bride to his farm in Qatar in 1905. Sh. Jassim wanted to impress the British Envoy and to gain his respect. The British Envoy described his visit to Sheikh Jassim as follows (Al-Ejli 2013):

I was surprise to see a beautiful garden well organized with its pomegranate trees and bout 300 palm trees. In his chamber sitting a respected Sheikh just what you read about in the old religious books. He had a beard with some white hair. His face was full of vitality. Hence, he looked much younger than his actual age. He had one of his six year old children in his lap. Even though he was very strong dominating personality, he had loveable good natured features.

I noted that he showed hospitality to his guests. He was very knowledgeable about world politics. But he kept repeating that he was retiring, so their affairs do not concern him.

From this statement, we can see that Sh. Jassim was successful in making the Englishman looked at him differently than the British normally looked at other sheikhs of tribes: as naïve, greedy and disrespectful. On the other hand, we can notice how the Envoy was observant as if he would have a test.

A letter sent by an Ottoman spy working in the region (Document No. 18/553-141.93.94) described some events at the beginning of the British infiltration in the Arabian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula stating, "The British tried to utilize any event to create problems. In the Port of Aden, the largest port in Yemen, some bedouins killed the British Consul and robbed a large amount of money that was with him. The British sent several warships to the Port. After several hours of fighting that resulted into the destruction of about one third of the city, its people requested a ceasefire because they realized that they could not cope with the British. The latter demanded the equivalent of 50,000 Liras as compensation. They appointed a new Consul. He began immediately to practice trade and interfere in the Port's affairs. He also built a house in the old wrecked castle. He asked to have a section of the Port for his ships to unload his cargoes or repair his ships. The Imam (Governor) of Sana'a refused the Consul's request. He told the Consul that the Governorate was under the sovereignty of his highness the Ottoman Sultan and he as Governor cannot do anything without his order. The Consul replied that, 'This is not true. You are an independent people'. He kept repeating this statement over and over. However, the Imam and his constituents remained firm in denying the Consul's request". The spy continued to say, "But if the villagers were not supported by the Ottomans, they may have accepted the Consul's desire because they were poor, so he may bribe them with money. After the Consul completed building his house and a

warehouse for his merchandise in the castle. He renovated the castle to become his own fortress.

Sh. A'akeel the Governor of Dhufar had many slaves and Bedouins, but he needed a regular army from the Ottomans to support him against the British. Logically, the respected Ottoman Government should support the Governorate that we are talking about to ensure that these regions will remain under its sovereignty. People would have confidence in a guardian that they rely on. The British Consul's hopes will be in vain. "The spy continued to say, "I would like to point out that the British Consul asked that all ship captains to raise the British flag when going into the Arabian Gulf via Aden. He claimed that he wanted to know if the ship is friendly or not! All captains raised the British flag whether they liked it or not. He also brought into the Island soldiers to enforce his demand. He was using all kinds of tricks to show the presence and domination of the British in the Gulf".

This is an example of the British versus the Arabian Gulf tribal chiefs. To start their manoeuvre up north, the British got the approval of the Iranians to run their ships through the River Karun, which runs from central Iran to pour in Basrah's Shatt-al-Arab River. This gave them the monopoly of trade between Iran and Baghdad.

Arab Sheikhs began to have their doubt regarding the British manoeuvring that they were not for justice, civilization, security or trade in the Arabian Gulf. They noticed that when they have a treaty, they had many hidden condition or clauses.

Therefore, the sheikhs had to choose between British protection with its hidden conditions and the custodianship of the Ottomans under the Islamic banner. The problem was that most sheikhs were not religiously adherent. Otherwise the choice would have been easy. Each sheikh made his calculation on what side benefited him more. Such decision was taken by each sheikh individually, case by case, rather than collectively and consistently.

The British realized the situation that each sheikh was independent of the other sheikhs in making his decision according to his own interest without abidance or consideration to religion, nationality or even affiliation to a mother tribe. The British had their contacts with each sheikh to hop in when he was in jeopardy to offer their help and advice. One of the most significant differences in the struggle between the British and the Ottomans was that the former had their consul or his representative in the area could make decisions and act immediately in urgent matters and then reported to higher authorities because they were of high calibre. For the Ottomans, on the other hand, decision-making was in the hand of the Sultan or his ministers. Even a governor whose jurisdiction extended twice the size of England had to report to his Government in Istanbul about an event and wait for their answer of what to do. We know how bad communication was at that time as compared to the present time. Such centralized administration, perhaps, due to the fact that most governors were not knowledgeable about the area and its people. In fact, some of the governors were sent out of the capital as punishment or other reasons. They were not interested in their job except on how much wealth they could collect legally or not.

3 History of Arabian Gulf Countries

3.1 Introduction

In Part I, we discussed the history of the Arabian Gulf region in general. We shall now take the geography and history of each individual entity separately. We shall start with Kuwait and go southward until Oman and then Saudi Arabia. Since we are limited in space, we shall be brief and refer to some important events. We shall stop at the discovery of oil and/or the independence of each country.

3.2 Kuwait

Kuwait is a small entity located in the north-western corner of the Arabian Gulf. Its area is 17,818 km² (7127 sq. miles). It is an extension of the Arabian Peninsula. Kuwait has arid climate. There is a great difference between winter and summer. While temperature reaches 120° in the summer, it gets to 21° in winter Fahrenheit. It has deep Kuwait Bay and many small bays in Failaka Island and other coastal areas.

As we mentioned earlier, there were many waves of migration from Iraq, Iran and the Arabian Peninsula to the Arabian Gulf coasts and islands for thousands of years. One of the great sanctuaries for those migrants was the area that is called now Kuwait, especially Failaka Island and Al-Jahra'a. The former was good for receiving trading ships and the latter for its plenty of sweet water wells that used to provide dates and other fruits as well as vegetables.

Based on excavation findings, settlement might have begun about the third millennium in Failaka and Al-Jahra'a (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998). Those migrants to Failaka and coasts lived on fishing, some vegetation that had short life cycles, serving passing-by ships and pearl industry as well as trade. Most of the area had wells depending on rainfall that was not much. Al-Jahra'a was the only exception of having sweet water all year round. That is why people used to plant palm tree, grapevines, fig trees, etc. (Al-Qanna'i 1988).

The Kingdom of Dilmun that started in Bahrain around 3000 B.C. ruled Kuwait. Trade flourished during the Dilmun era, with Failaka and coasts of Kuwait serving as ship stopping station between Bahrain and the end of Tigris and the Euphrates. Trade at that time is indicated by remnants which belonged to Mesopotamian and Indus Valley civilizations (Ibrahim 1985).

During the period 320 B.C.–100 A.D., the Greeks had controlled most of the Mediterranean area. Their trade increased between India and China of the East and Europe. Kuwait became a Greek colony. Excavations show the existence of pots, stamps and other Greek items (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998). Trade continued by Arab merchants between Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey and Europe, on one hand, and Oman, East Africa, India and China, on the other hand.

During the golden era of the Muslim State (sixth to the fifteenth centuries), Muslim merchants controlled the East-West trade and within. Kuwaiti ports had their share in that trade. Some rich families had their own ships and pearl boats. These activities ceased to exist when the Portuguese controlled the Arabian Gulf, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

In the seventeenth century, a tribe named Bani Khalid migrated to Kuwait and controlled it.

Later on came five families, Al-Sabah, Al-Khalifa, Al-Za'id, Al-Jalahma and Al-Mu'awda, to settle in Kuwait with the permission of Bani Khalid. These groups were migrants to Qatar, but gradually moved to Kuwait (Slot 1990).

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, residents of Kuwait found themselves to be larger in number without leadership. Hence, heads of families gathered together and selected Sabah as their Amir (leader). He took their covenant to listen and obey him if he was right. These information and those to follow regarding Al-Sabah reign were taken from (Al-Qanna'I 1988). When Sabah died, his youngest son Abdullah succeeded him. He ruled for 70 years. During his reign, al-Khalifa left to Bahrain and began their ruling there. Another event happened during Abdullah's ruling: the battle of al-Riqa. Bani Ka'ab decided to invade Kuwait by taking it over. The Amir of Kuwait prepared small boats as many as they had and filled them with armed fighters. Their plan was to go after each Ka'bi's large ship, surround it and take it over. They were able to do that with most ships. The others fled away. The Kuwaitis gained ships, weapons and munitions.

Abdullah was succeeded by his son Sabah II. When the latter died, he had several sons. They agreed to share the authority. The oldest, Abdullah, was the Amir. The other three divided the duties among them. When the new Amir died, the three brothers disputed again. With some mediation from friends, they agreed to have Mohammed the Amir, Jarrah for the finance and Mubarak for tribal affairs. But in 1897, Mubarak and his son killed the Amir and the other brother. Next morning Mubarak claimed that some stranger killed his brothers. He assumed the emirate. He went to the Ottoman Governor of Basrah, to whom Kuwait belonged, and gave him a large sum of money as bribe. The Governor wrote to the Sultan saying that an unknown Bedouin killed the Amir of Kuwait and his brother and recommended Mubarak to be the Amir (Al-Ejli 2017b).

Mubarak also gave to the Field Marshal of the Sixth Army large amount of money to support him with the Sultan (Document No. 91/29).

Two battles took place during Mubarak's reign; the first was with Abdul Aziz bin Rasheed in which Mubarak lost. The other was the Battle of Haddeth (Gift). In 1910, Sa'adoun Al-Mansour raided Al Mutair tribe. He mistakenly took some Bedouin prisoners. Mubarak's son Jabir told Sa'adoun about his mistake. The latter apologized and Jabir accepted the apology. When Jabir told his father, Mubarak was angry that he should not accept the apology. He prepared an army to fight Sa'adoun. The latter won the battle, and the Kuwaitis fled leaving everything behind for Sa'adoun's army. That is why it was called the Battle of Gift.

We wonder why Kuwaitis nicknamed Mubarak Al-Kabeer (Grand Mubarak). He became Amir by assassinating two of his brothers and dragged his people into two unnecessary failed battles (Onley 2009).

The family of Al-Sabah kept ruling Kuwait exclusively until today. Kuwait was loosely part of the Ottoman Empire. It was administratively tied with the Governor of Basrah. The Governor of Basrah required Kuwait to send an army as part of the Midhat Pasha Campaign in the eastern coast of the Arabian Gulf. It became under the mandate of Britain in 1899 until its independence in 1961.

The Kuwaiti economy began to grow since the mid-nineteenth century. Its economy diversified to include trade, pearl industry, ship building and repair, some agricultural and industrial activities for local markets. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Kuwait had several family-based businesses that engaged in trade and pearl activities. They had their own ships. Kuwaitis surpassed other Arabian Gulf countries in trade because its merchants were very aggressive, they diversified their trade, they used to smuggle pearls, gold and other valuable items and they worked as one family collectively.

Although the pearl industry was income produced in Kuwait, it was not as large as it was in other Arabian Gulf entities. Hence, when the Japanese Mikimoto Kokichi discovered cultured pearls, the Kuwaiti economy was not affected much as compared to Bahrain and Qatar. The Kuwaiti economy was more diversified than its sister entities.

In the year 1913, British company received the privilege of exploration for oil based on the Britain-Kuwait Agreement of 1899. The effort was hampered by World War I and the 1929 crisis. In 1934, an American oil company came to an agreement with the British to work together. In 1937, the first oil well was found in commercial quantity. Oil activities were put on hold because of World War II. Crude oil export began to increase gradually in the 1950s. But in the 1960s, it began to rise at geometric progression rates (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998).

In June 19, 1961, Kuwait became independent during the reign of Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and later on became a member of the United Nations. Soon after its independence, Kuwaitis elected a parliament starting a democratic regime (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

3.3 Bahrain

The main Island of Bahrain, which is the largest island, is surrounded by 33 islands. Some of these islands are large and inhabited, but others are small uninhabited islands. Total area of the kingdom of Bahrain is 765 km² (306 sq. miles). The water between and around the Islands of Bahrain is very clear and not very deep. Hence, it has been the most suitable for pearl collecting for more than 5000 years. Pearls of Bahrain were known to be of the best quality.

There is a theory that Bahrain was sometime in history part of the eastern Arabian Peninsula but was separated by natural causes. Archaeological

excavations showed that Bahrain was inhabited before the third millennium B.C. The Kingdom of Dilmun was founded in Bahrain during the Bronze Age at around 3000 B.C. Dilmun was known to be the greatest trading centre because Bahrain is situated along the route between the Indus Valley (currently India and Pakistan) on one hand and Mesopotamia and then Turkey, the Mediterranean and Europe (Ibrahim 1985).

During its prosperous time Dilmun enjoyed for 2000 years, it expanded north to Kuwait and west to Qatif, Al-Ahsa'a and Qatar. However, in the first millennium B.C., Dilmun's trading activity was declining gradually especially when the Greeks stepped up their trade activities and took over Failaka Island of Kuwait. It should be noted that the volume of trade between the East and West was more or less stable. Hence, when there was a new trader, the share of others (Dilmun and Hormuz) would decline (Ibrahim 1985).

Dilmun became a vassal of the Assyrian Empire in the eighth century B.C. Then it was annexed to the Assyrian Empire in 600 B.C. Between the 600 and 300 B.C., Bahrain became under the rule of the Persians. When Nearchus, the army leader sent by Alexander the Great, travelled from India through the Arabian Gulf, he passed by Bahrain in the year 326 B.C. In his report to Alexander the Great, he called Bahrain Tylos. He mentioned that it had good maritime position between the East and the West. He also drew the attention of its good pearls.

During the 600 years (300 B.C.–300 A.D.), Bahrain was very prosperous. In the first century A.D., Pliny, a Greek historian, mentioned that Tylos was famous for its pearls. Its trade was vitalized because of the direct involvement of the Greeks and the Persians. The former had Failaka Island and the coasts of Kuwait, and the latter was ruling Bahrain (Al-Timimi and Malik 1998).

The inhabitants of Bahrain appeared to have adopted the new Christian faith during the third and fourth centuries A.D. It is a fact that Nestorian sect of Christianity was well established in Bahrain and the east side of the Arabian Peninsula by the fifth century. In that area, there were five seats of Nestorian bishoprics; two of them were in Bahrain. That was before Islam entered the area (Shakir 2005).

Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) sent in 628 several messages with envoys to leaders of the world and chiefs of entities inviting them to Islam. Among them was Al-Ala' Al-Hadhrami who was dispatched to Bahrain's ruler Munthir Al-Timimi. The ruler accepted Islam so as his people. Since then, Bahrain became an Islamic military base for the Muslim troops that were spreading Islam at the Indian subcontinent. The Bahraini assistance was desperately needed for those Muslims that came from Mecca and Medina who had no knowledge of maritime.

Bahrain continued to play important role in the East-West trade for almost one thousand years. However, its role in trade started to diminish after the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese in 1507. Trade between India and the West was shifted to route around South Africa. Besides, as we mentioned earlier, the Portuguese were hijacking merchant ships that belong to Muslims, confiscated their cargoes and killed people on them. Hence, Muslim merchants avoided the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and the Red Sea (Al-Ejli 2013).

In 1521, the Portuguese invaded Bahrain and stayed there until 1602 when the Persians expelled them. During the existence of the Portuguese in Bahrain, they cruelly treated Bahrainis. They used to kill people for trivial reasons, prevented merchants from trading and took pearls at cheap prices. Therefore, when the Persians attacked the Portuguese, the Bahrainis assisted them (Al-Ejli 2013).

Bahrain remained under the Persians' occupation until 1783 when Al-Utbah tribe led by Mohammed Al-Khalifa expelled the Persians from Bahrain. They continued to rule Bahrain until now. However, Bahrain joined the Ottoman Empire as semi-independent but related to the Governorate of Basrah administratively.

During the nineteenth century, the British raised their activities in the Arabian Gulf after they got rid of their competitors: the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese. They had a strong alliance with the Persians. They had a treaty with the Sheikh of Bahrain in 1820. They claimed to protect their ships from piracy. They did not share the protections of Bahrain territorial waters with the Sheikh. But they would be present all the time protecting their interests (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

In 1861, the UK had another treaty with Bahrain which stated that the Sheikh agreed to refrain from prosecution of war, piracy and trading of slaves. The naïve Sheikh found nothing wrong with the treaty. But actually it was an admission of the Sheikh that he was practicing all that. Besides, the treaty gave the British to watch over the shoulders of the Sheikh to make sure he refrained from those acts. Hence, the treaty gave the British the chance to set foot in Bahrain to prevent other powers from doing so (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

In the beginning of the year 1870, the British sent four warships to Bahrain. They removed its ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa, and exiled him to Bombay. They appointed his brother Ali as the Sheikh of Bahrain. The British, perhaps, used the 1861 treaty and fabricated incidence of piracy against their ship to accuse the legitimate Sheikh of attacking that ship. The reader will notice that they replaced Mohammed with his brother Ali so that they would not make of Al-Khalifa enemy. Besides, the new Sheikh would become their obedient servant (Ottoman Government 1334).

When this news got to Istanbul from the Governor of Baghdad, the Government enquired from the British Embassy in Istanbul about the matter in Bahrain. The Embassy replied, "Lord Clarendon has no knowledge of this matter". When the Ottoman Embassy in London enquired from the British Government, its answer was that they wanted to protect their ships, they did not know Bahrain was part of the Ottoman Empire and they thought it was within the Persian waters. In his reply to the British claim, the Ottoman Ambassador in London said, "Iran does not have any right in the Arabian islands in the Arabian Gulf including the Islands of Bahrain, but they have been part of Basrah Governorate since ancient times" (Bayat 2010). When the Ottoman Empire controlled Baghdad and Basrah, Bahrain became consequently part of the Ottoman Empire.

When Sheikh Ali replaced his brother, the British made sure that Sheikh Ali would not resort to the Ottomans for protection. The British told the new Sheikh that their warships were against the pirates and any claimant of the sheikhdom. Incidentally, the British used the same method when they took over Muscat and the coast of

Oman, but this tactic did not work with Qatar because Sheikh Jassim, the Amir of Qatar, was very cautious (Soyyigit 1990).

The British by that time had exposed their intention of making the Arabian Gulf their possession. This was communicated to the Ottoman Sultan by a letter sent from the Governor of Baghdad. The Sultan's reply on February 22, 1869, was apathetic and showed no seriousness of the matter. Actually, the reason was for the treaty between the Sultan and the British. The latter gave the Ottomans a loan of money and war materials during their war with Russia in 1856 (the Crimean War). One of the conditions of the loan was the Sultan must ignore any British activity in the Gulf and instruct his officials in the area accordingly. The British found the need of the Sultan for assistance as gold opportunity to tie his hands with the treaty.

In order to stay in Bahrain, the British created antagonism between Sheikh of Bahrain and other sheikhs in the region. For example, they created a war between Bahrain and Qatif even though in the process their appointed Sheikh was killed and Bahrain blockaded Qatif for more than 6 months (Document No. 1667).

The British later on stepped up their presence in Bahrain to make it a protectorate. In the twentieth century, oil companies were trying to excavate for crude oil. American company, related to Aramco, found oil in 1931. Bahrain never had but small quantity of oil as compared to Iraq, Iran and other Gulf countries. That is why Bahrain was not a member of OPEC, but a member of AOPEC. Bahrain took different economic route than the other oil-producing countries; it concentrated on trade and financial intermediaries.

Since the last quarter of nineteenth century, many Indians, called Banyan merchants, settled in Bahrain as they were encouraged by the British. They were working in retail and wholesale trade as well as foreign trade. They brought with them the financial institution know-how. They promoted commerce and pearl trade. Their number increased to become about 25% of total inhabitants in Bahrain. Iran began to encourage their citizen to migrate to Bahrain. The Iranians now became majority in the country. The purpose is to take over the country through public unrest or election.

In 1968, the UK decided to withdraw all its forces in the Arabian Gulf. This led Sheikh Isa bin Salman Al-Khalifa to proclaim Bahrain independence in August 1971. A Treaty of Friendship was signed between the UK and Bahrain terminating the status of protectorate and designated Sheikh Isa the Amir of Bahrain. It became later a member of the UN and the Arab League.

In 2002, Bahrain adopted a new constitution under which it became a kingdom. Hamdan bin Isa Al-Khalifa became the first King. Later in the year, Bahrain elected the first parliament and municipal councils (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

3.4 *Qatar*

Qatar is a peninsula extending into the Arabian Gulf as a tongue followed by several islands. It is connected with the Arabian Peninsula from the southern part. The land

of Qatar is flat with rocky surface, except for limy hills in the west and Mount Foyirit in the north. There are in the southern and central regions many swamps, ponds and pans that gather rainwater. The areas around these swamps are fertile.

Total area of Qatar is 11,521 km² (4608 sq. miles). It was formed mostly through the drying of shallow water of the Gulf that merged into the main land. There are many sand dunes along the coast. The heat of the sun on the surface turns it into lime layer making it unsuitable for plantation. There is in the north large area good for plantation including trees and palm trees.

Qatar has long summer with temperature passing 120 F (38.9 °C) in the shade. It starts to fall in September but remains warm with little rain. The country is affected by northwest and southeast winds. The former causes sandstorms, and the latter brings sea moisture causing humid weather (Al-Ejli 2013).

Unlike Failaka Island of Kuwait and Bahrain, Qatar did not have stimulating features to attract migrants except to stay until they find a better place to go to.

Some migrants came from Yemen after the collapse of the Ma'arab Dam or from Arabian Peninsula due to lack of rain. Around 1700, Al-Ma'adhid (sub-tribe of Bani Tamim) migrated to Qatar. They came from Al-Eshaiqir. Following Al-Ma'adhid Al-Thani, a related tribe migrated to Qatar from Al-Eshaiqir, too. The other group migrated to Qatar was from Basrah who fled the transgression of the Persians in 1776 when they made mass killing and destructed almost all homes. During the period 1770–1820, the sons of Mohammed Ali Pasha of Egypt carried out mass destruction in the Arabian Peninsula that led many tribes to migrate to Qatar (Al-Shuraifi 1999).

The population of Qatar in the nineteenth century consisted of groups from different sub-tribes or place of origin. None of these groups was strong enough to lead the country or even defend itself. Representatives of all tribes or groups got together and selected Sheikh Jassim Al-Thani as their leader and spokesman for the people of Qatar. He was the perfect fit for tribesmen to have as leader. He was generous, brave and hospitable. He had very sharp mind. He was the richest person in Qatar as he owned several times the ship for pearls and fishing than all other owners combined (Al-Ejli 2017b).

It should be noted that Qatar was poorly endowed with resources to pay for Government expenses and infrastructures and welcome internal and foreign guests. Sheikh Jassim was the only one who could do all that. In fact, events that followed the selection of Sheikh Jassim proved that he was the best selection. Qatar remained outside the Ottoman Empire, while the entire Arabian Peninsula, Yemen, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman were all under the Ottoman flag.

Though Sheikh Jassim united all tribes in Qatar under his leadership, he was not left alone. The first attempt on his life was when Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa of Bahrain invited him with assurance of full protection. However, bin Khalifa arrested Sheikh Jassim and put him in a fortress. He managed to escape and was greatly welcomed by all tribes of Qatar as hero (Al-Ejli 2013).

During the 1860s, there were several events and disturbances that took place in Oman, Bahrain, Nejd and other east coast regions of the Arabian Peninsula, except Qatar. Sh. Jassim was observing those events, but stayed out of them. The British

invasion of Bahrain was the most threatening to Qatar for it is close and he thought that the British had their eyes on Qatar to set foot in the Arabian Peninsula. The British replaced Bahrain's Amir with his brother Ali Al-Khalifa who became subservient to the British. Besides, The British could use Sh. of Bahrain and Sh. of Abu Dhabi who were under their control to attack Qatar.

At the end of 1867, Sh. of Bahrain and Sh. of Abu Dhabi made a treacherous attack on Qatar. They levelled to the ground the cities of Doha and Al Wakrah, the largest ones in Qatar. People fled for their lives. The losses were estimated at 200,000 rupees that was huge amount at that time. Under these circumstances, Sh. Jassim decided to ally with the Ottomans to protect his country from such transgression to happen again. He knew that these sheikhs would not dare to do what they did without the planning and assistance of the British (Shubber 2010).

After he had the backing of the Ottomans, Sh. Jassim devoted his efforts to the internal affairs. He called on the sheikhs for unity under the banner of Islam. As to the Ottomans, they lost Oman, which included Muscat and Abu Dhabi as well as Bahrain, when they were busy with their wars in Europe and Crimea. The British were busy having treaties with sheikhs of Oman and Bahrain.

The succession of events and their effects on the Arabian Gulf region raised the political awareness that the Ottomans lost vast area to the British. Hence Sultan Abdul Aziz appointed the renowned administrator Midhat Pasha as the Governor of Baghdad and Basrah on February 27, 1869. He dispatched spies in the region to get him information. He designed a plan for his Campaign that involved Arab dignitaries, the Amir of Kuwait and Arab tribes from southern Iraq. His Campaign was from land and sea aiming at the eastern region of the Arabian Peninsula and Nejd (Saban 2005).

The huge army led by Nafith Pasha took over Al-Ahsa'a, Qatif and other nearby entities. Sh. Jassim immediately sent letters to Midhat Pasha and Nafith Pasha inviting the army to Qatar as guests. Nafith Pasha sent Sh. Jassim four Ottoman flags to put one on his palace and the others in designated places. Hence, when a British ship came to Qatar asking for taxes for Sh. Isa Al-Khalifa, Sh. Jassim pointed to the Ottoman flag saying we are under this flag and no one else. The ship returned empty-handed. Sh. Jassim felt danger from Bahrain and the British (Document No. 44930). Hence, he requested from the Ottomans to send protection. They sent two ships with columns from Al-Ahsa'a to protect Qatar (Saban 2005).

When the military operations ended, the Ottomans redefined the administration set up in the region. Al-Ahsa'a became a district to include Qatif, Haffoof, Qatar and the surrounding entities. However, one of the articles in the instruction excluded Qatar from having an Ottoman director, but given Sh. Jassim full authority to rule Qatar. The article also exempted Qatar from having other post run by Ottomans (Korshon 2010).

While the situation in Qatar was stable, everywhere else began to deteriorate. The Government in Istanbul relaxed after the success of the Campaign. British started to infiltrate into the region and tried to conciliate high-ranked Ottoman officials in the region to control the Government from within. Besides, they started to encourage tribes and intellectuals to deviate from Islam that was the strong link with the

Ottomans. The British created hatred between district directors as well as between the Governor of Basrah to Sh. Jassim.

On May 22, 1892, 36 merchants from Nejd sent petition to the Cabinet in Istanbul complaining about bandits who keep robbing their caravans and killing their attendees. They named the bandits and mentioned Sh. Abu Dhabi who supported them with men. The Governor of Basrah Hafidh took this opportunity to claim falsely that Al-Ahsa'a and Qatar helped the bandits. The Governor wanted to get rid of Sh. Jassim and get the revenues of Qatar. He also would please the British (Document No. 1310/1M/16).

Hafidh Pasha attacked Qatar with land troops and warships. When the army reached Al-Dira, Sh. Jassim found out that there were no Arab dignitaries with them. He suspected their action. Hafidh asked to meet with Sh. Jassim, who refused and sent his brother Ahmad. Hafidh arrested Ahmad. The tribes of Qatar fought with the Ottoman Army at the fortress of Al Wajbah. When Hafidh found that his army was losing, he escaped to a British ship. Sh. Jassim stopped the fight and gave the troops the chance to stay in Qatar or being escorted out of the country. The Battle of Al Wajbah was described differently by Sh. Jassim, Hafidh Pasha, the investigation committee and the Commander of the Sixth Army. Every one gave different version. However, the Government in Istanbul dismissed Hafidh Pasha and commended Sh. Jassim whose star was glared with the Sultan. He dispatched a letter to his friend Sa'eed Afandi, Chief of the dignitaries of Basrah, who sent a copy in telegram to the Sultan. The letter from Hafidh Pasha took 3 weeks to get to the Sultan (Document No 272/95).

After the Al Wajbah battle, the Ottomans had a battalion in Qatar without any control over its administration. The tribesmen were watching the soldiers very carefully because they were not accustomed on having foreign forces in their territory. One day there were 12 soldiers and a first lieutenant walking in the market when they saw an Iranian and Arabian fighting. The soldiers interfered and began to beat both fighters. When people saw what the soldiers were doing, they attacked the soldiers. The officer was injured, two civilians were killed, and three were injured. The fight was with knives, sticks and rocks. The soldiers ran back to their fortress.

People rushed to get their guns and started to shoot at the fortress, but the soldiers did not respond. The Qataris demanded to surrender the two soldiers accused of being the killers. The Ottomans gave the two killers who were chained awaiting authorization to trial them and compensated those who lost their merchandise. The Qataris were not satisfied with that, so they cut off the water from them. Sh. Ahmad, Sh. Jassim's brother, went to calm the people. He sent a letter to the new Governor of Basrah Anees Pasha explaining what happened. Meanwhile, the 6th Army Commander took this opportunity to twist the incidence against Sh. Jassim, who was about 6 h away from the incidence.

Sh. Jassim resigned his post to show his anger for falsely being accused of that incidence while he was far away from it. The Ottoman Government sent Naqeeb of Basrah to investigate the incidence. He cleared the name of Sh. Jassim from being involved in the market incidence. Sh. Jassim was able to impose his political

pressure to be recognized as great leader in the region. The market incidence was obtained from Document No. 93/21.

The Ottoman Empire and Great Britain had an agreement that included (Articles 11 and 12) the declaration of independence for Qatar under the leadership of Sh. Jassim and his descendants after him to rule Qatar. Article 12 disassociated Qatar from Bahrain in taxes and otherwise. Article 17 appointed committee to draw the borders of Qatar. The Agreement was signed by the UK and the Ottoman Empire representatives on July 29, 1913. It should be noted that Sh. Jassim died just 12 days before the signing of the Agreement: July 17, 1913. The full text of the Agreement is in Document No. 242/17.

Early in 1906, Sh. Jassim appointed his son Abdullah Amir of Doha bypassing the other two sons Khalifa and Abdul Rahman. On March 8, 1906, 30 of Qatar chiefs of tribes and other dignitaries sent pledge of allegiance for Sh. Abdullah to Sh. Jassim to become their leader and the Amir of Qatar. Sh. Jassim called his sons and the rest of his family for a meeting and announced his son Sh. Abdullah to be his successor. Although the new Amir began to run the country, he continued to consult his father to learn from his experience until the death of Sh. Jassim. The Governor of Basrah proclaimed Sh. Abdullah Deputy District Director of Qatar in 1907.

According to the Agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain under which Qatar became independent, it obligated Sh. Abdullah to terminate all relations with the Ottoman Empire by 1915. In order to assure Qatar security, Sh. Abdullah had a treaty with the British in 1916. Qatar remained independent under this treaty, but was considered protectorate of the UK. Besides, the protection of the Indian merchants and their trade was made Sh. Abdullah's responsibility to avoid having British soldiers in Qatar (Document No. 242/17):

In 1934, the UK requested to build an airport in Qatar so that British planes could use in case of emergency. Sh. Abdullah approved the request and the airport was completed immediately. In 1935, the British asked Sh. Abdullah to grant the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APCO) to explore for oil in Qatar exclusively. The Company started its work immediately to find oil in 1941. The oil operations stopped until 1949 because of the war and aftermath. During the period 1940–1949, Qatar suffered from economic severe hardship as a result of the following:

1. APCO closed its doors and released its Qatari employees.
2. World War II caused shortage of commodities worldwide.
3. There was a war between Qatar and Bahrain at Zibara which led Bahrain to stop trade with Qatar.
4. The pearl industry suffered a great set back when cultured pearl was discovered by the Japanese.

In 1949, Sh. Abdullah relinquished his post to his son Sh. Ali because he became very old. Sh. Ali was very successful in the pearl industry before he became Amir. During his reign, oil export started and increased a lot. Hence, the country which was among the poorest in the world with almost nothing of social and physical infrastructures used oil funds to develop the country. Sh. Ali lifted his country from its poverty to richness and had his role in the Arab affairs.

Sh. Ali became ill and had to go abroad often for treatment. In 1960, he abdicated his rule to his son Sh. Ahmed who was one of 11 sons and 4 daughters to Sh. Ali. Sh. Ahmed continued his father's policy and made electricity and pure water free for all people. In 1970, Sh. Ahmed pronounced the constitution and established the Cabinet. In 1971, Qatar became completely independent after the withdrawal of the UK.

In 1972, Sh. Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani made a peaceful coup against his cousin Sh. Ahmed. He was the Prime Minister. Sh. Khalifa established the Council of Advisors in 1972. In order to enhance education, Sh. Khalifa erected the University of Qatar. He established Planning Council in 1989 to channel oil revenues into development projects (Anthony and Heartily 1980). On June 27, 1995, Sh. Hamad, who was the Minister of Defence and successor Crown Prince, ousted his father while travelling in Europe. Sh. Hamad remained the Amir until his son Sh. Tamim took over when his father was travelling in Europe. Sh. Tamim is the current Amir of Qatar.

It is quite unfortunate that the last four emirs came by coup against cousin or fathers. I do not understand if someone is named successor and was Prime Minister, why would he overthrow his cousin or father? The coup initiator had everything under his control except for the title. I strongly believe that it is a curse from Allah for deviating from the straight path set by the founder of Qatar Sh. Jassim in his will.

3.5 The United Arab Emirates

Currently, the United Arab Emirates (we shall refer to as UAE) is an independent country since 1971. It is in the lower region of the Arabian Gulf. Its total area is 83,657 km² (33,463 sq. miles). It has 644 km (386 miles) of coasts on the Arabian Gulf and 90 km (54 miles) of coasts on the Gulf of Oman (Anthony and Heartily 1980). The UAE has varied land structure as follows (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010):

1. The coastal region consists of salty soil formed by the retraction of the Gulf water that was between the numerous islands. The majority of people reside in this region.
2. The sandy desert region constitute about one-third of the UAE area. It has many oases that were built around water springs.
3. Pebbled plains located between the sandy desert and the eastern mountain regions.
4. The eastern heights region is a series of mountains, the highest of which is Heiss Mountain that is 1900 m (6333 feet) high.
5. The plains between the eastern heights and the Oman Gulf coasts are 20 mile long.

The territorial water of the UAE is generally shallow. They are full of coral reefs. There are hundreds of islands; some are small, but others are big such as the Island of Abu Dhabi, Umm Al-Nar, Abu Musa and Lesser and Greater Tombs.

Historically, the UAE's history had been part of the history of Oman that we referred to earlier as the Kingdom of Hormuz. The latter ruled the area of what is now the Sultanate of Oman and the UAE during the third millennium B.C. (Al-Abdul Jabbar in *Dara Periodical* No. 1 year 39). But after the fall of Hormuz Kingdom, the region was ruled by local sheikhs of tribes, except Oman that had kings. During the early Islamic era, the UAE accepted Islam upon invitation from the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) peacefully.

The UAE suffered from the Portuguese occupation, but the Arabian tribes gave the invaders a hard time. That was why the Portuguese avoided their region unless it was necessary to concentrate on Oman and Bahrain. It should be noted that the UAE sheikhdoms gave the British a lot of headache and took the British long time before they could control them especially Ras Al Khaimah and Sharja. The British named the UAE sheikhdoms as "Pirate Coast". However, the British were much stronger and had more sophisticated weapons than the Arabian tribes. Hence, the latter gave in and accepted treaties with the British. Then they renamed these sheikhdoms "Trucial Coast" (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010).

The British did not stop with the treaties, but began to use them against other Arab entities. We have mentioned earlier the attack of Sheikh Abu Dhabi on Qatar that resulted into the complete destruction of Doha. Besides, Sheikh Abu Dhabi was supporting outlaws with men and weapons who were hijacking caravans in Nejd and Hejaz to create disturbances in those areas that were under the Ottoman's rule. The British were behind these and many other incidences.

However, this period was mostly peaceful as far as trade, pearl industry, ship building and repairing and other activities (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010).

Recent excavations in Abu Dhabi showed some pots, stamps and other articles that indicate the existence of trade relations with Mesopotamia, especially the Sumerians, as well as with the Greeks. The Greek historian Herodotus found great relation between the UAE region and the Phoenicians. In fact some historians speculate that the Phoenicians were originally from that region based on the similarity between the names of their respective cities, such as Sur, Arwad and others (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010).

Early in the fourth century A.D., the Emirates attacked Persian cities and ports. But the King of Persia Sapor II responded with great army to attack the Arabian Gulf coasts and Bahrain. He left the region with great losses and destruction. During this era, the UAE region became prosperous with their trading between China, India and Iraq, Syria to Europe and East Africa. In addition to moving merchandise from one area to another, trading pearls brought them huge profit.

This era of prosperity in the UAE region continued during the Islamic domination of the region. In fact, trade had flourished even further because the Islamic Empire covered most of the known world. Besides, the Caliphs considered peace and security their prime duty. During the Abbassid Dynasty, all sciences thrived including what concerned maritime. Hence, navigation was made easier and less risky (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010).

However, when the Islamic Empire lost its power while Europeans got up from their slumber, the situation began to take new course. The Portuguese entered the

region by force and dominated trade in the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf. They occupied Oman, the UAE region and Bahrain (Al-Ejli 2013).

During the domination of the Portuguese, the Arab sailors found it dangerous to sail in these waters, because they would be cruelly killed. Merchants turned to use land instead. The UAE region suffered great stagnation, especially ports. After the victory of the British-Dutch fleet over the Spanish fleet, the British became interested in taking over India. They fought their former allies, the Dutch and then the French; the British started their plan of infiltration into the Arab Gulf.

The British gradually occupied Oman and then Abu Dhabi by pretending to protect them and keep the Gulf off pirates. By 1835, all sheikhs of the UAE region had signed treaties with the British. Economic activities began to improve gradually as ports resumed their trade, ship building and service to passing-by ships. However, when we talk about prosperity, it was relative to what happened during the Portuguese occupation. But standard of living was very low, where a handful of elementary schools and all other features were underdeveloped (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

In 1971, the British decided to withdraw from the Arabian Gulf including the UAE region. Every sheikhdom declared its independence. Then Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi and Sheikh Rashid Al Maktoum of Dubai contacted other sheikhs to form a union. After several meetings, the United Arab Emirates was declared on December 2, 1971, to include Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharja, Umm Al Quawain, Ajman and Fujairah. Ras Al Khaimah joined the Union on February 10, 1972. The UAE joined the Arab League and then the United Nations. It should be noted that most of the UAE people came from Yemen during various times. Hence, they were related by blood as being from the same original tribe.

The following is a short view of each emirate (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010):

- *Abu Dhabi* is the largest emirate. Its area is 73,060 km² (29,224 sq. miles), which is four times the area of Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar combined. It has 400 km (240 miles) of coasts on the Arabian Gulf. It has 200 islands, with Abu Dhabi Island being the largest. Abu Dhabi Island is the capital of the Emirate and the Union. Al Nahyan rules Abu Dhabi and assumes the presidency of the Union.
- *Dubai* is considered the most beautiful emirate in the Arabian Gulf. It is called the "Bride of the Gulf". Its area is 3900 km² (1560 sq. miles). Dubai is of two sections; the northern one has all businesses, high-rise building and hotels, while the southern section has the Government buildings, customs and industries. Dubai's ruler holds the position of Vice President of the Union.
- *Sharja* is the third emirate in area: 2700 km² (1080 sq. miles). It is located in the centre of the Union with coasts on the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, and each has a port. It has several islands including Abu Musa.
- *Ras Al Khaimah* has 1700 km² (680 sq. miles). Its coast on the Arabian Gulf is 64 km. long. It has many islands including Greater and Lesser Tombs, which has oil. It was confiscated by Iran together with Abu Musa Island. This emirate has plenty of sweet water that is used for agriculture. Its climate is the best in the

Union. There are many castles, towers and fortresses that protected the emirate in its long war with the British.

- *Umm Al Quawain* has an inland area of 780 km² (312 sq. miles). It falls on the Arabian Gulf. It is known for its plenty of sardine fish that is exported dried. There is good fertile land around its City of Felj Al-Mu'alla. The Simia Island, with an area of 900 km² which belongs to this emirate, is well-known for its rare birds and attractive sea shells.
- *Al-Fujairah* is the only emirate that falls entirely on the Gulf of Oman with sandy coast that reaches 32 km wide. Its area is 1300 km² (520 sq. miles). There mountains that fall after the sandy coast with valleys full of rainwater. This emirate is very hot and humid in the summer.
- *Ajman* is the smallest emirate in the UAE with an area of 260 km² (104 sq. miles). Most of the emirate land is sandy with few mountains. The emirate has plenty of sweet water and very pleasant climate. It is called the summer resort of the UAE.

The people of the UAE used to be self-sufficient but under the poverty line before the discovery of oil. Situation became worse after the discovery of cultured pearls. It did not have any of the modern infrastructures such as schools and road and not even a post office. Their mail used to be delivered to Bahrain and then sent by boat to Abu Dhabi. When Sheikh Shakhbout, the Amir of Abu Dhabi before Sheikh Zayed took over, was asked to have postal services, his answer was, "we did not have postal services for hundreds of years why now". In fact, he used to send oil royalties cash to Bombay for safekeeping. Later on, the sheikhs of the UAE used oil revenues to create big jumps in their economy and modern infrastructures.

3.6 *Sultanate of Oman*

Oman is located in the south-eastern portion of the Arabian Peninsula. Its total area is 309,500 km² (123,800 sq. miles). It has 1700 km (1020 miles) of coasts on the Arabian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. The Strait of Hormuz separates the Arabian Gulf from the Gulf of Oman, as well as Oman from Iran.

Oman's topography varies from mountains to plains to sandy coasts. With this variation follow different climates and agricultural produce. But Oman's climate in general is hot and humid near the coasts and warm and dry in the central regions (Ministry of Information Oman 1988).

Oman depended on agriculture, fishing, pearl picking and trade for thousands of years. Rural economy was self-sufficient using traditional plantation, animal husbandry and handcraft industries and services. However, merchants used to come to those villages to buy some of their products to sell them to passing-by ships. This has been the situation since 6000 B.C. It let farmers maximize their production because there was demand for their products by merchants.

The history of Oman goes back to 6000 B.C. as shown by excavations. There are evidences of trade between Oman and Mesopotamia, the Mediterranean and Greece on one hand and Oman and Indus and China on the other. Unlike other Arabian Gulf

entities, Oman had many of its own products: wood, copper, stones and agricultural produce. Hence, in addition to serving passing-by ships, Oman had its own articles to ship to other civilizations (Al-Ejli 2017a).

As we mentioned earlier, the Kingdom of Hormuz dominated the southern part of the Arabian Gulf since the third millennium B.C. Trade during the rule of this Kingdom was enhanced due to its protection of the ships. This continued for thousands of years because there was no foreign power to disturb the peace and security of the region (Al-Abdul Jabbar, Dara Journal No.1 year 39).

After it accepted Islam during the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) era, Oman enjoyed even more protection and peace. The Omanis helped Muslims spread the new religion to the Indus. Ports of Oman were congested with ships coming from everywhere. The significance of Omani ports enhanced after the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Oman lost its role in trade between East and West with the operation of the Suez Canal in 1869. But the cruel treatment of the Portuguese to the sailors led merchants to prefer land transportation over maritime.

The British began to sneak in the Arabian Gulf territories starting with Oman. They sent their Indian merchants to Oman to establish themselves in the market. The British were hoping to have any incidence involving Indians and Omanis in order to move in to protect the Indians. As we mentioned earlier (pp. 17–18), an Ottoman spy wrote to his Government saying (Document No. 18/553-141.93.94) how the British tried to utilize any problem in the Port of Aden to show their muscles and take it over.

There is a memorandum from Ali Bey, another Ottoman spy; dated January 1888 we shall mention part of it (Document No. 14/366/126/9) “After the Imam of Muscat Turki bin Sa’eed replaced his father, his brother Abdul Aziz rebelled against the new Imam. He brought with him 18,000–20,000 Bedouins to claim the Imamate. The British brought in two ships to bombard and disperse the rebels. The British Consul went to Imam Turki asking him to sign a treaty with the British to protect him, but he refused”.

When Imam Turki died, his three sons disputed for who should replace him. They agreed to have the oldest. The British spread rumour that his uncle Abdul Aziz was preparing to attack Muscat. The reader may see how the British were standing by to take every opportunity to get involved and have the leader sign treaty. When this manoeuvring did not work, they were ready to get their troops in the region like what they did in Oman later as well as Bahrain.

In the year 1737, the Persians invaded Oman in their effort to control Strait of Hormuz; hence all ships would pass by their territorial waters. The British did not object because they had a treaty with the Persians. However, the Persians did not stay long, but 12 years later, they were driven away by the Omanis led by Beni Sa’eed. The latter continued to rule the entire Sultanate of Oman until today (Onley 2009).

In 1913, the country was split in two parts; the interior part became under the rule of the Ibadite Imams, and the coastal area remained under Sultan Sa’eed bin Taimur. The main reason for the split was the Sultan taxed the interior without offering any services in return. The British played an important role in instigating the leaders of

the interior to revolt against the Sultan. The latter did not recognize the Imam's rule until 1920 when the British forced him to recognize the interior as independent entity. However, the Sultan regained control over the interior in 1959 (Anthony and Heartily 1980).

In 1970, Qaboos made a bloodless coup against his father Sultan Sa'eed bin Taimur to become the Sultan until today. He also has the positions of Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Head of Defence and Finance Ministries. Oman remained without democracy. It has very strict censorship of any publication. In 2011, there were demonstrations for the first time asking for democracy. The Sultan promised his people more jobs and benefits (Onley 2009).

In 1964, oil was discovered, but extraction of crude oil began in 1967. Oman's oil reserve, production and revenues are the lowest among Arabian Gulf countries. But with the existence of fertile land and water, Oman has improved its standard of living from the pre-oil era substantially. Oman invested great deal of its oil revenues in building its infrastructures practically from scratch. It also built many industrial projects, which were mostly related to oil. Farmers and fishermen began to use modern technology in their fields with great assistance from the Government (Al-Ejli 2017a).

3.7 *Saudi Arabia*

Saudi Arabia occupies most of the Arabian Peninsula. It is the largest Arabian Gulf country with a total area of 2,250,000 km² (900,000 sq. miles). Its land has varied topography. There are narrow plains along the Red Sea, followed eastward series of mountains of Hejaz and Asir, which reach more than 2000 m. East of the mountains, there are sandy deserts and rocky hills that occupy most of Saudi Arabia. In the eastern part of the country, there are coastal plains along the Arabian Gulf coasts.

The climate of Saudi Arabia also varies with the variation of the land. In general the summer is hot and humid near coasts but dry in the centre, while winter is cold with rain that is in large quantity in the coastal plains and mountains, but it becomes rare in the Rub' Al-Khali (the empty quarter).

There is evidence that human habitation in the Arabian Peninsula dated to 125,000 years ago. Then human inhabitants moved to Africa through Bab Al-Mendab Strait and to Asia. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) mentioned that Arabian Peninsula was full of forests and rivers and shall return back that way in future. Perhaps he meant the forests were during the Third Glacier Era. There were many civilizations that existed in the Arabian Peninsula such as (this information was obtained from the Internet):

- Al-Magar is a prehistoric civilization that was founded in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula that is Nejd. They were the first to domesticate animals especially horses.

- Dilmun Kingdom started in Bahrain and gradually expanded to Kuwait and the eastern region of Arabian Peninsula up to Nejd (Anthony and Heartly 1980).
- Thamud civilization was located in Hejaz dated to the first millennium B.C. It was referred to in the Holy Quran as people of Prophet Saleh. They built their houses by carving them into the mountains in a highly sophisticated way. There are 9000 thamudic inscriptions that were recorded in south-west of Saudi Arabia.
- Kingdom of Nabataea (In Arabic Al-Anbat) was located in the northern region of the Arabian Peninsula and included Greater Syria. They controlled trade in the Arabian Peninsula with lines through oases.
- Kingdom of Lihyan was established in the north-western of current Saudi Arabia. It was dated sixth to fourth century B.C.
- Kingdom of Kinda was a tribal association in Nejd headed by a king. Tribes joined this Kingdom for prestige or protection or being forced to join by coercion.

In general, the Arabian Peninsula has been the home of numerous pastoral tribes for thousands of years. They were nomadic moving where there was water and pastures, except for the aforementioned civilizations. When there was a drought for 2 or more years in an area, the tribe migrated to the west coast of the Arabian Gulf or even crossed to the east coast with few tribes that settled in the north: Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Palestine. Their major activities were grazing their animals, raiding on each other's and trading by caravans with Syria and Yemen.

When Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) came with Islam, people of the Arabian Peninsula changed drastically. Instead of fighting among themselves, they went out to spread the new religion; Islam to Yemen, Oman and southeast to India; Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Syria, Palestine and Africa, etc. Then, even when the Umayyad Dynasty took the Caliphate to Syria, Hejaz remained the center of the Muslims' attention.

The Abbasid Caliphs were in control of the Arabian Peninsula. But when their Caliphs became weak, the Fatimid's rulers of Egypt had their conflict with the Abbasids to control Hejaz especially Mecca and Medina. Then they were ejected by Salaheldeen Al Ayoubi. The struggle to control Hejaz went on until the Ottoman Empire ruled the entire Arabian Peninsula. Since the Ottoman Empire was very large, their rule was more of administrative than political and economic. Besides, the Ottoman governors sent to the Arabian Peninsula were inefficient and corrupt. Their main interest was to get money for themselves (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010).

The tribes and distinguished families had their control over the areas. In the beginning of eighteenth century, Saud bin Mohammed bin Muqrin became the Amir of Al-Dar'ieh (near Riyadh) until his death. There was some conflict between them as to who would be the emir until they agreed to have Mohammed bin Saud as Amir. At the beginning of his reign, he met with Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdul Wahhab. The two persons laid down the foundation of the first Saudi State that ruled in 1727–1818. During that period four rulers governed Al-Dar'ieh: Mohammed bin Saud, his sons Abdul Aziz, Saud and finally Abdullah. It should be noted that Saud, the third ruler took over Hejaz including Mecca and Medina. During the rule of the fourth Amir Abdullah, Mohammed Ali Pasha of Egypt sent his son with huge army

that let the Amir to surrender and then was killed in Istanbul (Yaghy and Mahmoud 2010).

The plan of Mohammed bin Saud, the founder of the first Saudi State, was to unify Nejd. It took 40 years to accomplish that because the tribes were not accustomed on being ruled by higher authority: king. Besides, there was the interference of Beni Khalid in the Nejd's affairs trying to take it over from the Saudis. But the plan was completed during the second Amir Imam Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed in about 1826. As we mentioned earlier, the Saudi State continued until the Ottomans instigated Mohammed Ali Pasha of Egypt to eliminate the Saudi rule of Nejd and Hejaz. He succeeded in 1818.

During the period 1819–1892, the second Saudi State ruled Nejd and extended their rule to include Al-Ahsa'a, Qatif and Bahrain. It included Qatar for a short period. This State was ruled by its founder Turki bin Abdullah followed by his son Faisal and then Khalid bin Saud the brother of the last Amir of the first Saudi State. He did not actually rule, but was fighting until Faisal bin Turki escaped his prison from Egypt to resume his second rule for 23 years. Faisal's son Abdullah took over, followed by his son Saud and finally came Abdul Rahman bin Faisal bin Turki. With him ended the second Saudi State. The son of the last ruler, Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman, founded the third and current Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Al-Qalam 2009).

The second Saudi State did not actually start in 1819, but there were many wars and disputes between members of Saudi family as well as the attack of Mohammed Ali Pasha's commanders who took over Riyadh and adjacent areas. He left four Garrisons each one in a city. Finally, Turki bin Abdullah, a member of the Saudi family, seized the opportunity of having two of the four garrisons in the area left; he entered Riyadh and gathered supporters. He was proclaimed the Amir and Imam of Nejd. He did not stop there, but annexed Al-Ahsa'a, Qatif and Bahrain. He was assassinated by his nephew Mshari. When his son Faisal heard of his father's assassination, he rushed to Riyadh and captured Mshari. He became the Amir. When Mohammed Ali heard that the Saudis had new State, he sent a huge army. Amir Faisal found that he was unable to stand against it. He surrendered and was taken to Egypt. But he was able to escape and returned to Riyadh. People supported him. He started his second reign for 23 years. He spent some of his reign time to retake Al-Ahsa'a and Bahrain. In about 1892, Imam Faisal died. He was survived by several children. His two sons Abdullah and Saud had a dispute about who should succeed their father. Finally, Saud went to Al-Ahsa'a and Bahrain, while Abdullah remained in Riyadh (Document No. 1667 Folder 1).

At that time Midhat Pasha the Governor of Baghdad and Basrah was preparing to subjugate the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula, which we discussed with the history of Qatar. Saud found out that he was unable to stand against that huge army. He wanted to negotiate with Midhat Pasha. He sent his brother Abdul Rahman to Baghdad. The Governor refused the negotiation and held Abdul Rahman captive. The latter was able to escape to go to Bahrain and then Al-Ahsa'a. When Saud was defeated by the Ottomans, he went to Bahrain and then to Riyadh (Document No. 44230). After arriving Riyadh, Saud died. Abdul Rahman became the Amir for a short time as he relinquished the emirate to his brother Abdullah bin Faisal who

became the Amir. But he was disputed by Saud's sons. When Abdullah was defeated by the Saudi traditional enemy Ibn Rasheed, Saud's sons seized this opportunity to go to Riyadh and captured their uncle Abdullah. These disputes and wars kept on. Amir Abdul Rahman bin Faisal left Riyadh to Kuwait taking with him his son Abdul Aziz.

When Amir Abdul Rahman and his sons were in Kuwait, the Arabian Peninsula was disunited. The regions were governed as follows (Al-Qalam 2009):

- Hejaz was under the control of the Ottomans, but administered by the Al-Ashraf (Nobles).
- Asser, which is in the southwest of the Peninsula, belonged to the Ottomans, but administered by Mohammed Ali Pasha.
- Jazan was ruled by Mohammed bin Ali Al-Idrisi, the grandson of the renowned Ahmad bin Idris Al-Idrisi. The ruler then sided with the Ottomans who made him the Governor.
- The eastern region, Al-Ahsa'a and Qatif, was nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, but was the place for the outlaws, robbers and bandits. They never let caravans pass by including for the pilgrimage.
- Nejd was under the control of Ibn Rasheed, the number 1 enemy of the Saudis.

The young Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman was observing the situation while in Kuwait. He was thinking of how he could reunite those regions under the Saudi reign. He and his father joined Mubarak, the Amir of Kuwait, against Ibn Rasheed in the battle of Al-Sareef. Ibn Rasheed won the battle. Amir Abdul Aziz thought of a plan to take over Riyadh, though his father discouraged him.

The plan of Amir Abdul Aziz was to gather as many as possible of his relatives and friends and pick up some of the Ajman tribesmen to go to Riyadh. Ibn Rasheed heard of this plan. He threatened the Ajman tribe if they joined Abdul Aziz. He went with 40–50 men that could be considered suicide. Riyadh was ruled by Ajlan bin Mohammed for Ibn Rasheed. Abdul Aziz sneaked into Riyadh with seven men only to avoid raising suspicion. They waited for Ajlan to come home after dawn. They took him by surprise and killed him. In that day Abdul Aziz let a man announce the death of Ajlan and that Abdul Aziz was the ruler of Riyadh. People of Riyadh did not like Ibn Rasheed and his administrator; they all accept Abdul Aziz as their ruler. They knew that he was religious, kind and popular.

The new ruler Abdul Aziz began to move southward to unify the rest of Nejd. He met with Ibn Rasheed several times in battles. Finally, the two met in the battle of Braideh in which he surprised Ibn Rasheed and killed him.

Sharif (Noble) Hussein ibin Ali, who was ruling Hejaz, made an attempt to take over some of the Saudi territories, but failed because people rejected him. When Abdul Aziz heard of that, he advised the Shareef to go back to Mecca and stay there. Abdul Aziz also faced the problem with the grandsons of his uncle Saud. He met them in a battle and defeated them (Al-Qalam 2009).

Abdul Aziz went on to retake Al-Ahsa'a and Qatif, which were ruled by his uncle Saud, but the Ottomans took them during Midhat Pasha Campaign. He chose this time because the Ottomans had problems in their European territories. Besides,

people there were uneasy with the Ottoman administrators who were taking heavy taxes without even keeping security against the bandits. Therefore, it was easy to take over the eastern region.

During World War I, the relations between the Abdul Aziz Al Saud and Shareef Hussein became worse. The latter prevented pilgrims from the Saudi territories to enter Mecca. The British assured the Abdul Aziz that the Shareef would not interfere in the Saudi affairs, or prevent Saudis from Mecca or assume leadership of the Arabs. However, the Shareef did not honour his promise. The British called for a meeting between the two in Kuwait. The Shareef did not go to the meeting. Instead, he declared himself the Muslim Caliph. Abdul Aziz and many other Arab leaders were very angered.

Abdul Aziz sent troops to attack Hejaz starting with Al-Ta'if. When he took over Al-Ta'if, dignitaries of Mecca realized that the Saudi troops would be taking over Mecca. They requested from Shareef Hussein to relinquish his position to his son Ali and leave to Jeddah in his way to A'qaba. They also asked the Abdul Aziz to enter Mecca. Abdul Aziz tried to negotiate with Hussein, but failed. He then sent an army to Jeddah and blockaded it. Its people asked him to enter Jeddah without fight (Al-Qalam 2009).

As for Jazan, It was governed by Al-Hassan Al-Idrisi for the Ottomans as we mentioned above. He thought that the best thing for him and his people was to side with the Saudis. He had a treaty with King Abdul Aziz who stated that Al-Idrisi would run the internal affairs under the umbrella of King Abdul Aziz (O'Fahey 1990).

The last problem Abdul Aziz had was with the "Brotherhood". These were not the Islamic Brotherhood of Egypt, but an extremist group who objected to the King using modern technology such as telegrams, telephones, and radio or even to have relations with the West. He had conference with them, but they did not honour their promises, but attacked some territories. He had another meeting with their leaders and threatened them to eliminate them if they did not adhere to his rule. He ordered them to disassemble their organization (Al-Qalam 2009).

By 1932, Abdul Aziz completed the unification of the entire country named the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In 1930, the Kingdom had a treaty with the UK in which the UK recognized Saudi Arabia as independent country ruled by the Saudi family. King Abdul Aziz declared the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on September 23, 1932. Oil was discovered on March 3, 1938. The exploration continued after World War II until Saudi Arabia became the largest producer and exporter in the World and possesses the second largest oil reserve in 1976 (This and the following information was obtained from the Internet).

After the death of King Abdul Aziz in 1953, his oldest son Saud became the King. When King Saud died in 1964, his half-brother Faisal assumed the reign. In 1975, King Faisal was assassinated by his nephew and replaced by Saud's half-brother Khalid. There are rumours that King Faisal did not like any interference of the West in his country's affairs. He was assassinated to be replaced by King Khalid who was more submissive to the West especially the USA. King Khalid died of heart attack in June 1982. He was succeeded by his brother King Fahd, who added the title of

“Custodian of the Holy Mosques” to his name in 1986 to avoid using the term “Majesty” that should be only for God. He kept close relations to the USA and the UK by buying arms and equipment.

In 1995, King Fahd suffered debilitating stroke and the Crown Prince Abdullah assumed the administrating duties of the King. Abdullah was hindered by King Fahd’s full brothers. During the time of Prince Abdullah’s acting King, there were many uprisings in Al-Ahsa’a and Qatif by the Shi’a and in other places. In 2005, King Fahd died and was succeeded by King Abdullah, who continued with limited reforms in response to the demand of demonstrations. Abdullah also made several changes in the way of modernization the administration, army and police. King Abdullah allowed women to vote and be elected in the municipal election of 2011. He allowed women to be nominated for the Shura Council (Advisory Council).

The current King that followed King Abdullah is King Salman on January 23, 2015. Short time after his reign, he dismissed his successors #1 and #2, who were selected by the Saudi family. He appointed instead his son Mohammed. There have been always the sons of the founder King Abdul Aziz. They were succeeding each other according to their seniority by age.

There have been so many events, disputes and uprisings as well as constructive changes and democratic development in recent decades that we skipped because of the limited space for the article. These also applied to other Arabian Gulf Countries.

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Map

Julia (1667) Map entitled “L’Empire des Turc” Paris, 1st edn. Copied with the permission of the Archives Administration, Istanbul