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THE 'UTBI STATES IN EASTERN ARABIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

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Please note that in the pagination pages 233, 278-287 inclusive have been omitted in error.
I should like to express in this place my gratitude to Professor Bernard Lewis, under whose inspiring guidance this work has been carried out. To Dr. M. E. Yapp, of the S.O.A.S., I am indebted for valuable suggestions.

I should like to put on record the great assistance I received from the staffs of the libraries of the British Museum, the India Office and the School of Oriental and African Studies. Mr. J. D. Pearson, the Librarian of the S.O.A.S. was extremely helpful in obtaining microfilm copies of theses from abroad. I have also to express my thanks to the Kuwaiti friends for their valuable information on their local tradition. To Shaikh 'Abd Allāh b. Khalid Āl-Khalīfa, the cousin of the ruler of Bahrain, I am indebted for similar information on the local tradition of the Āl-Khalīfa.

To the British Council I owe a debt of two years scholarship without which it would have been difficult to accomplish this work.

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with the 'Utbi States in Eastern Arabia in the second half of the eighteenth century. The rise of the 'Utbi, the ancestors of the present influential families and the rulers of Kuwait and Bahrain, has so far been neglected.

Chapter One of the present work describes the position in Eastern Arabia and the Persian Gulf in the first half of the 18th century and how certain factors paved the way for the rise of the first 'Utbi settlement of Kuwait.

Chapter Two treats of the origin of the 'Utbi and reflects an attempt to answer various questions relating to the growth of Kuwait and the rise of the Al-Sabah as the first 'Utbi rulers in that town, in 1752.

In 1766, the Al-Khalifa, the cousins of Al-Sabah, accompanied by other 'Utbi families, migrated to the south and established Zubara in Qatar. The rapid growth of the 'Utbi trade that followed its establishment and other aspects of the 'Utbi history are discussed in Chapter Three.

The commercial success of Kuwait and Zubara provoked the jealousy of other Arab tribes in the area and especially those on the Persian littoral of the Gulf. As a result of military operations between the 'Utbi and the latter Bahrain Islands were conquered in 1782 and by now the 'Utbi had become the strongest Arab maritime power on the Persian
Gulf. This rise in the ‘Utub power until 1790 is treated in Chapter Four.

By the 1780s the Wahhabis had conquered most parts of Central Arabia and started their wars against the Banī Khālid, rulers of al-Hasa and the barrier of the coastal ‘Utub States. Wahhabism, Wahhabi-Khālidī struggle, and Wahhabi relations with the ‘Utub are treated in Chapter Five.

Chapter Six deals with the commercial aspect of the ‘Utub history and it shows how they succeeded in almost monopolizing the trade of Eastern Arabia.

‘Utub relations with the European and other forces in the area are treated in various chapters of the thesis.
Transliteration

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ABBREVIATIONS

B.S. Bombay Selections.
R.K. British Museum.
J.I.H. Journal of Indian History.
Sec. Com. Secret Committee.
SURVEY OF THE SOURCES
Materials for writing the history of the 'Utub States in Eastern Arabia in the second half of the eighteenth century were traced in both Arabic and European sources. The 'Utub, whose rise is for the first time being historically treated, have so far remained without any serious study. Very little was said about their history during that period, principally because those who dealt with it were either Arabs who did not consult European sources or Europeans who did not consult the relevant Arabic sources. In the present work those sources were combined and an attempt was made to let them join in presenting that history.

Some of these sources were used by writers who dealt with Arabia and the Persian Gulf in as much as they needed them for their narratives, but it can be claimed that they have never been used in writing the history of the 'Utub, which is being written for the first time and with some detail. In fact, many of the Arabic manuscripts, as far as I know, have never been used before.

Therefore it has become necessary in the opening of this work to reevaluate the most important sources in point of the light they throw on the history of the 'Utub in particular, and Eastern Arabia in general.

It has seemed best to divide our sources of information into the following groups:
A. Arabic sources.

Most of the Arabic contemporary or semi-contemporary sources are still in manuscript. The very few that were published appeared either in abridged forms or they are as rare as the manuscripts. It is necessary to state that those sources did not deal specifically with Eastern Arabia or the 'Utub, but events relating to them are given there.

The Arab writers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries whose works throw light on Eastern Arabia come mostly from Najd and 'Iraq. Those who wrote in Najd were chronicling the Wahhabi Islamic revolution. The writers in 'Iraq, on the other hand, were influenced by the Ottoman rule of the country.

Husayn b. Ghannam is the first Wahhabi chronicler. His work Rawdat al-Afkār wal-Afham⁴ is made up of two volumes. In the first

⁴For the title in full see the bibliography. This book exists as a manuscript and printed. Two manuscript copies are in the British Museum, Nos. Add. 23, 344-5 and 10,700,10,300. El-Beṭrik in his Turkish
volume the author explains the situation in Najd and neighbouring countries and how people at that time, i.e. the eighteenth century, "were not Muslims at all". The author gives Chapter II to the genealogy of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and how he achieved success and the effect he had on his contemporary shaikhs. The remaining three chapters are given to the Wahhābī creed as seen from various dispatches of Shaikh Muḥammad to a number of people, Wahhābīs and otherwise.

This volume is of extreme importance in explaining the Wahhābī doctrine because Ibn Ghannām was one of the disciples of Shaikh Muḥammad, and he presents in this volume most of the Wahhābī creed as given by its founder. The Wahhābī creed and the teachings of Shaikh Muḥammad were of great consequence in Eastern Arabia and other parts of the peninsula.

(cont.)

and Egyptian Rule in Arabia (1810-1841) (thesis, London University 1947) used a manuscript copy owned by "Fawzān al-Sābin, late Suʿūdī Minister to Egypt" (see p. xv of his thesis). Rawdat al-Affār was published in lithograph print at Bombay, 1919. The work of Ibn Ghannām and other British Museum manuscripts were either bought from their owners or given to the Museum. Most of those manuscripts were bought by the British representatives in the Persian Gulf, many of whom were acquainted with the Oriental languages.
The second volume entitled *Kitāb al-Ghayt al-Bayāniyya etc.* is the earliest chronicle of Wahhābīsm. The author made it clear from the beginning of this part that he intended to chronicle the spread of the new doctrine of which he was a follower. He starts with the year 1159/1746, when Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb was obliged to leave al-'Uyayna town in Najd and seek refuge at al-Dir‘iyya, the stronghold of Al-Su‘ūd, an incident which coloured the history of the following fifty years because he was driven out by Sulaymān b. Muḥammad Al-Ḥamīd of the Bani Khalīd. The Wahhābīs had to wage war against the Bani Khalīd, the protectors of the 'Utūb and other smaller tribes in Eastern Arabia, until their humiliation in 1795. As Wahhābīsm colours the history of the era under consideration, Ibn Ghannām becomes invaluable for the tracing of Wahhābī expansion towards the east of Najd. His importance comes, as well, from the fact

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1See bibliography for the full title.

2For the Bani Khalīd tribe, their territories and rule in Eastern Arabia, see Chapter II, pp. 70-72. For their struggle with the Wahhābīs, see Chapter V, pp. 224-249.

3By protectors, I am referring to the Arab custom of himāya or dakhīl. The 'Utūb settled at Kuwait, their first settlement in Eastern Arabia, by the permission of the Shaikh of the Bani Khalīd and they stayed under his protection till his authority was weakened and this gave them the opportunity to practise a state of independence in the 1750's.
that he was both contemporary to the events he describes, and he knew the people and places he writes about.

In his chronicling of events, he portrays the spirit of a true Wahhabi. Therefore, he is not sparing in describing the opponents as "infidels, treacherous enemies of God", etc. Yet his chronicle is invaluable for not only being the first chronicle of Wahhabism but also because he gives almost in all events the results of skirmishes or battles whether they turned in favour of the Wahhabis or not. In fact, his description of those encounters is more detailed and informative than the second Wahhabi chronicler, Ibn Bishr. Modern writers hold his work in great esteem. Kitab al-Ghazwat ends abruptly by the events of 1212/1797, though Ibn Ghannam lived thirteen years after


2Ibn Ghannam's work was used extensively by Rentz when compiling his thesis on Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab and the Beginnings of the First Unitarian Empire in Arabia. B. Winder, in A History of the Sa'udi State from 1233/1818 - 1303/1881, uses the Ibn Ghannam not infrequently. They both used the Bombay printed copy. Al-Rayhan, in his Ta'rikh Najd al-Hadith Wa Mulhaqatuh, uses the Bombay copy.
that date.\footnote{Ibn Bishr in ‘Unwān al-Ma.jd, Vol. I, p. 149, gives the death of Ibn Ghannām in the events of 1225/1810.}

‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Bishr (d. 1283/1867), in his work ‘Unwān al-Ma.jd fī Taβīkh Najd, chronicles the Wahhabi movement from its earliest phase, like Ibn Ghannām, till 1268/1371. His work exists as a manuscript in the British Museum (Or 7715) with the date 1270/1853 at its end. This means that it is one of the earliest copies existing.\footnote{There may be other manuscripts of the same work in the possession of Su‘ūdīs. The work was published in Baghdad in 1328/1911 in one volume, and in Makka in two volumes. The references are here made to the Makka edition. Rentz and Winder use the Makka edition, while Battrick uses the Baghdad edition.} Ibn Bishr intended to compile the history of Najd under the Wahhabi-Su‘ūdī rule (I, pp. 1-4). His History is a year by year account of the current affairs of the Su‘ūdī rulers. Their triumphs as well as their defeats are recorded. Those rulers are always highly esteemed by him and their success is mentioned in detail while their defeats or withdrawals are not. He quoted other historians (pp. 4-5), but he does not mention the History of Ibn Ghannām, though he quoted his poetry more than once (I, p. 95).\footnote{Ibn Ghannām composed long poems to commemorate the Wahhabi victories over their opponents. On pp. 98-99, Vol. II, he expresses his rejoicing on the reduction of al-Riyād, and on pp. 214-17, Vol. II, he expresses the relief the Wahhabi’s felt on the death of Thawaynī.} Yet my
close examination of both texts revealed that Ibn Bighr modelled his work on Ibn Ghannām's Ghazwat. The events are the same and the wording is similar, but the main difference lies in the fact that Ibn Bighr's does not digress when chronicling events to religious questions, like Ibn Ghannām's. As for the area under consideration, the struggle with the Banī Khālid, rulers of al-Hasa, is fairly well described. The writer, in what he calls "earlier event or antecedent", Sabīca, in his History gives much about the Banī Khālid's rule. In fact, they are the only dated events from which a chronology for the Banī Khālid rulers was drawn.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when piracy became a pressing danger to the area, Ibn Bighr becomes invaluable as an authority on the subject, where he, as usual, expresses the Wahhabī attitude towards piracy, the Qawāsim pirates being adherents of Wahhabism (I, p. 146).

As a Wahhabī authority and contemporary too, he is invaluable for recording events of the Wahhabī occupation of Bahrain and the ever-existing Wahhabī threat to 'Umān and Masqat, where the Al-Bū-Sa'īdīs, the rulers, had to face both Wahhabism and piracy in the Persian Gulf (I, 142-146).

1See for example the events of the years 1167/1753 and 1210/1795.
The importance of both Ibn Ghannām and Ibn Bishr in the history of the 'Utbī States lies in the fact that they record the Wahhabi-Khalidi relations. The Bani Khalid were for sometime the protectors of the 'Utbūb and their barrier against the Wahhabīs. They also record the Wahhabī raids on the 'Utbūb States in the 1790's and the 'Utbī counter attacks. They gain importance also from the fact that they were Wahhabī believers and that they were contemporary to the events recorded by them.

But if Ibn Ghannām and Ibn Bishr were contemporaries who represent the Wahhabī interests, there were other contemporaries who held just the opposite point of view. These were 'Iraqī historians who represent the Ottoman outlook.

In this group of Histories falls the work of Yāsin b. Khayr Allah al-Khaṭīb al-‘Umarī, Al-Durr al-Maknūn fī Ma‘āthir al–‘Adiya min al-Qurūn. Al-‘Umarī was born in 1158/1745 in al-Muṣil. So he was quite old when the Wahhabīs started raiding ‘Iraq at the beginning of the 19th century. He compiled more than one historical

1See Chapter V below, pp. 265-294.

2Yāsin belongs to a distinguished ‘Uloma family. His father, grandfather and his son were ‘Uloma and authors. See their works in Brockelmann, Supp. II, 731-782.
work. Al-Durr al-Maknūn starts with the first year of the Hijra and ends at 1226/1811. The long era covered by the work made the chronicling of events very brief. Though the material concerning the area under consideration is not abundant, when compared to that of Ibn Ghannām or Ibn Bīghr, yet it is of special importance because it reflects the Ottoman outlook on the Wahhābis. And, at the same time, it expresses the feeling of the Shi‘as on every "event of Wahhābī barbarism", as he often calls it, displayed during their sudden and frequent raids. The Wahhābis are called "treacherous and damned fellows" and Su‘ūd, their leader, was no more than a "villain" (f. 387). Unfortunately, he does not give any detailed account of the Ottoman reaction to those attacks.

1His work Gharā‘ib al-Athār was published in al-Muṣil by Maḥmūd Șiddīq al-Jalīlī in 1369/1940. See ʿAbbas al-Azzawi Taʿrīkh al-ʻIrāq bayn Iḥṭila‘ālyn, Baghdād, 1954, Vol. 6, p. 208. There are two manuscript copies of Al-Durr al-Maknūn in the British Museum, Add. 23, 312-3. For other works by the same author see Brockelmann, Supp. II, pp. 781-782. These manuscripts are kept in Berlin, Cairo, Paris and al-Muṣil. Another manuscript copy is in Paris, 4949, Brockelmann, Supp. I, 781.

2The same Ottoman outlook is represented in the contemporary Syrian work, Kitāb al-Mīrāh al-Sārī wa Muḥrat al-Qārī, by Ibrāhīm Khālīl al-Dayrānī, Bayrūt, 1272 A.H/1855.
Yet this can be traced in the work of 'Uthmān b. Sanad al-
Basrī' which was compiled on the demand of Dawūd Pasha, the Walī of Baghādād, in 1241/
1825. The work does not actually give the history of Dawūd Pasha alone, for it portrays the history of Ottoman 'Iraq and its relations with the neighbouring countries from 1188/1774, the birth of Dawūd pasha, to 1242/1826, the death of the author. The reigns of preced­ ing Pashas of Baghādād are described and important events are re­ corded. Thus this contemporary work becomes invaluable for the siege and occupation of Basra by the Persians (1775-1779), the information it gives on the Muntāfīq and other Arab tribes of 'Iraq and their re­ lations with Eastern Arabia, the expeditions of Thuwaynī of the Muntā­ fīq against the Wahhābīs in 1786 and 1797 and the expedition of 'Alī

1 'Shaikh 'Uthmān b. Sanad is a Najdi of the 'Anaza tribe. He was born in Najd in 1180/1766 and later migrated to Basra. He died at Baghādād in 1242/1826. He was Maliki Sunnī. See the article "Al-Shaikh 'Uthmān b. Sanad al-Basrī" in Lughat al-'Arab, III, 1913, pp. 130-186, by Kazim al-Dujaylī.

2 On the Berlin MS, the title of the work is given as Ta'rīkh Baghdād al-
Musammat Naṭāli' al-Su'ud fā Akhbar Dawūd. The title I give in the text is taken from the author, f. 14.

3 See Naṭāli', f. 13.

4 Brockelmann, Supp. II, 791, gives his death in 1250/1834, after Amin Hasan al-Ḥulwānī's Mukhtasar 'aṭāli'. 

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Pasha, the Kaya of Baghdad, against them in 1798/9. The work reveals the author's anti-Wahhabi feelings in more than one place. An example of this can be seen in his long poem commemorating Thuwaynī, the chief of the Muntafiq, who was assassinated by the Wahhabīs in 1797 (f.f. 79-80). This work is also important for it is the earliest source to give the letters exchanged between 'Alī Pasha and Su'ūd on the first's withdrawal from al-Ḥasā in 1799. Events in this work are arranged chronologically and it contains the biographies of many contemporary literary figures and chiefs of Arab tribes. The book was written in compliance with the desire of Dawūd Pasha and the author left Baṣra for Baghdad for that purpose in 1241/1825 (f. 13).

1He is praising Thuwaynī for contradicting Ibn Ghāmām's poem which praises the assassinator, the Wahhabī slave Tu'ayyis.

2The work was abridged by Amin b. Ḥasan al-Ḥulwānī and printed in Bombay in 1304/1886 under the title Mughṭasār Ta'rikh al-Shaikh 'Uthmān b. Sanad al-Baṣrī al-Musammā Mafāli' al-Su'ūd Biṭayyib Akhbar al-Wali Dawūd. The copy I am using in my work is the Berlin manuscript which is in itself incomplete because it ends with the events of 1231/1315. Al-Dujaylī, in Lughat al-Arab, III, p. 184, mentions to other manuscript copies in the Murjaniyya Library and in the Library of the Carmelite Fathers in Baghdad. Al-ʿAzzāwī, in his customary way of quoting in verbatim other works in writing his chronological history of 'Iraq, refers to another copy owned by him, see Ta'rikh al-ʿIraq, Vol. 6, p. 63.
Of special importance to the historian of Eastern Arabia in
the eighteenth century is Ibn Sanad's *Saba'ik al-'Asjad fī Akhbār
Ahmad Najl Rizq al-As'ad*, which is a monograph dealing with the bio-
ography of Ahmad b. Rizq, a rich 'Utbi merchant who, according to Ibn
Sanad's *Saba’ik*, established Zubāra together with Khalīfa b. Muḥammad,
the founder of the Al-Khalīfa ruling family of Bahrayn. This work was
published in Bombay in 1315/1897.¹ In this work Ibn Sanad gives very
short biographies of forty-two men who had connections with Ibn Rizq.
They represent a cross section of the men of Başra and the 'Utbi towns.
A brief note is made of Shaikh 'Abd Allāh Al-Sabāh, the second ruler
of Kuwait, and Khalīfa b. Muḥammad, the first 'Utbi ruler of Zubāra.
The style of writing is full of *gaj* (rhyming) and the author's poetry.

Still this is the earliest place where mention is made of the 'Utub
as the founders of Zubāra.² It is the only Arabic source to give us in-
formation, though without statistics, on the 'Utbi trade and the atti-
tude of Khalīfa b. Muḥammad towards relieving the merchants from paying
any duties (p.20).³ Ibn Sanad, when speaking of the 'Ulama' and mer-

¹A manuscript copy of the same is kept in the British Museum, No. Or 7565.
²Sabā’ik, p. 19.
³He might be comparing the position of the merchants at Zubāra with
those of the neighbouring ports of al-Qaṭīf and al-'Uqair where the
duties were collected on imports.
chants, seems to have known most of them very well. He, himself, was a student of Ibn Fayruz, one of those whose biographies he gives. Although Ibn Sanad does not give the reason for writing this book, it can be gathered from the biographies of Ibn Rizq's five sons at the end of it that Ibn Sanad wrote it on the eldest son's demand. This son, Muhammad by name, was a rich 'Uthai merchant who migrated with his father from Zubara to Basra after the surrender of Zubara to the Wahhabis in 1793. The book was written after the death of Ahmad b. Rizq.1 Ahmad b. Rizq continued to be a prominent figure in 'Iraq after his emigration from Zubara.2 This work is known to people interested in history in Kuwait and Bahrain. It is referred to in al-Qina'i and al-Rashid3 when they tried to fix an approximate date for the rise of Al-Sabah and Al-Khalifa. Shaikh 'Abd Allah b. Khalid

1 He died in 1224/1809. See Sabā'ik, p. 103.

2 Coranez in his Histoire des Wahabis, (Paris 1810), pp. 57-59 and p. 190, note no. 23, speaks of the wealth of Ahmad b. Rizq and how in 1804 he intervened between the Mutasallam of Basra and the Sultan of Masqat in a financial dispute.

3 Two Kuwaiti historians, see below pp. 91-93.
Al-Khalīfa, reflecting the tendency among the Al-Khalīfa, does not agree to the point which Ibn Sanad makes when he states that the father of Ahmad b. Rizq was, together with Khalīfa b. Muhammad, the founders of Zubāra. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh told me that Ibn Sanad was the Imam of the Al-Khalīfa mosque at Zubāra during the reign of Ahmad b. Khalīfa. Although I could not trace any information about 'Uthmān b. Sanad's life, yet his wide knowledge of the important people in al-Ḥasā and the 'Uthī States is clear from the forty two biographies in Sahīk al-'Aṣjad and of the comments he makes in his exact chronology in Matāli al-Su'ūd. These two works of Ibn Sanad, however, gain importance from the fact that they are written by a person whose contemporary to the events about which he writes and well acquainted with the 'Utūb themselves.

Much valuable information on Eastern Arabia in the period under our consideration was traced in the work of another historian whose identity has remained unknown in the catalogue of manuscripts in the British Museum since 1860, when his manuscript found its way to the Museum. This is Lam‘ al-Shihāb fī Sirat Muḥammad b. 'Add al-Waḥhab. My efforts to discover the identity of the author have not, so far, proved successful. I contacted to that end some people interested in history in Kuwait, Bahrein and Su‘ūdī Arabia, but none of them could give any information, because the book is not known to them. The British Museum manuscript may, therefore, be the only known copy. Bound with the same manuscript is another manuscript of Kitāb al-Tawḥīd by Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Waḥhab.
As no proper introduction and use of this book has so far been made, it becomes necessary to give a brief analysis of its contents.

Lam' al-Shihab deals with the history of the Wahhabis from the start of their movement until the year 1233/1317. It is divided into five chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter I deals with the rise of Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab and gives his biography.

Chapter II explains how Muhammad b. Su'ud accepted the new doctrine.

Chapter III deals with the genealogy of Muhammad b. Su'ud.

The fourth chapter gives a detailed account of the rule of the Wahhabis beginning with Muhammad b. Su'ud and ending by 'Abd Allah b. Su'ud, and the spread of their influence in 'Uman, Qatif, 'Iraq, Syria, etc.

In Chapter five the author explains how the Wahhabis won parts of the Hijaz, Yaman, Tihama, and gives some account of the Arab tribes living there.

The conclusion illustrates some of the teachings of Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab and how other Muslims refuted them.

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1 It is interesting to note that this manuscript was written, according to what is given by its copyist Hasan b. Jamul b. Ahmad al-Rubki, in the same year of its compilation by its unknown author, in 1233/1317. See f. 280.
In all this the writer does not appear to be a mere chronicler of events like Ibn Ghannām and Ibn Bishr. He gives the historical facts, and discusses causes and results almost throughout his work. He tries to find out the truth about what he writes by contacting shaikhs from Zubair and Kuwait (ff. 20-21). He is not prejudiced against the Wahhābīs. On the other hand, he himself was not a Wahhābī, and yet he respects the teachings of Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. When the Wahhābīs commit a crime he never looks for an excuse but condemns it.

He is the only Arab historian to give a fairly detailed account of the Bani Khaḍīlī and mentions their good characteristics (ff. 222-226). In Lam' alone one can find a satisfactory genealogical account of the Bani Khaḍīlī in spite of the fact that even this account lacks the dates. His analysis of their fall is also remarkable. According to him, the Bani Khaḍīlī could have resisted the Wahhābī attacks, had it not been for the fact that their chiefs began their internal struggle for the Shaikhship influenced by the Wahhābī instigation and conspiracies (ff. 79-81).

1 An example of this according to Lam' is the attitude of the Wahhābīs towards ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Ṭālib, a Khaḍīlī chief, who was killed in cold blood after he had been offered safe conduct by Su'ūd (ff. 86-87).

2 The Bani Khaḍīlī shaikhs can be traced in Ibn Bishr's 'Unwan al-Majd, Vol. I, but here they are disorderly, thrown into the various pages. Ibn Bishr is useful in dating the various rules of those shaikhs.
On tackling the expeditions sent to al-Ḥāṣa, whether Wahhābī or Ottoman, he tries to be quite accurate in estimating the distances between towns, by giving different estimations and selecting the most appropriate one.

Nor does he forget to give statistics in his History; the income of the Wahhābī states in 1232/1816, from the different parts of Arabia, was estimated at 2,210,000 riyāls (ff. 236-237); the population of the state numbered about two millions and three hundred thousands (ff. 237-238).

As for the Wahhābī attitude towards piracy, he states the fact that Shaikh ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, an important Wahhābī religious figure, used to hold it as supreme religious duty (ff. 247-243). He points out that the Wahhābīs used the Qawāsim as their tools in many piratical instances (ff. 96-109). His account of ʿAlī Pasha's expedition against the Wahhābīs in al-Ḥāṣa in 1213/1798 is unrivalled by any other Arab account for he offers reasons for the failure of the expedition not to be found anywhere else (ff. 173-187). Nor did he forget to tell us that he had been an eyewitness of the expedition somewhere near Başra.

1 Ibn Sanad in his Maṭālī' gives an account of this expedition, but his account is not so detailed as Lam's and it lacks the reasoning on the failure of the expedition given by Lam. Ibn Bishr records the expedition from the Wahhābī point of view, but there again the reasoning is lacking. According to Ibn Bishr the Wahhābīs were victorious because they were stronger and better fighters.
His honesty as a historian made him revise his account of some incidents later in the year 1233/1317, a year after he had finished writing his work. As for the topography of al-Hasa, he gives a description which is far better than other contemporary accounts (ff. 215-221).

But the work has a defect so much as the author relates many events without giving the dates, and these had to be calculated by reference to other works. However, it is a rich source of information and it can boast of a moderate and unbiased attitude towards recording the history of the struggling forces in the area, a fact which is lacking in most other contemporary Arab works.¹

Another work which compares with Lamʿ al-Shihāb in its moderation is 'Unwan al-Majd fī Bayn Ahwāl Baghdad was Baghra wa Najd² by Ibrāhimm b. Faṣīḥ al-Ḥaydarī al-Baghdādi. Ibn Faṣīḥ, before writing his history, travelled, as he stated in his introduction, to Syria, Egypt and Turkey in order to become acquainted with the countries he may speak about in his work. His grandfather Asʿad al-Ḥaydarī was

¹From the date 1233/1317 given at the end of the book by the copyist, this copy of the British Museum may go as the earliest if other copies should come into existence.

²British Museum MS. Or 7567.
the Ḥanafī Muftī of Baghdad. So Ibn Faṣīḥ is a Sunnī Moslem.

His work was written at Baṣra in 1286/1869 when he was working as a government official. In his introduction to his work he shows how he divided it into three chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter deals with the history of Baghdad, the second with Baṣra and the third with Najd.

The chapter on Baṣra interests us in this place and this interest arises from the fact that the author shows the connection it had with other towns on the Arabian coast of the Gulf. Thus he gives the names of some mercantile families, members of each of which live in three or more of those towns (ff. 91-92).

Still the chapter on Najd should not pass without the following comments. Ibn Faṣīḥ here gives the texts of some letters addressed by Wahhābī rulers to their subjects. These letters, as well as extracts from his main work, were quoted by a late ‘Iraqi historian, Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālusī in his Taʾrīkh Najd. Sometimes Ibn Faṣīḥ criticises the Wahhābīs (f.113). Al-Ālusī, copying his work in verbatim and without acknowledgement, in his Taʾrīkh Najd, aroused the anger of Shaikh Sulaymān b. Sahlān al-Najdī, who thought that al-Ālusī

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An example of that is al-Qinaʿāt or Al-Badr family, whose members were in Kuwait, Baṣra and Bahràin.
contradicted himself because he started by praising the Wahhābīs at the very beginning of his work. The fact is that towards the end of Taʾrīkh Najd, al-ʿĀlūsī was actually quoting Ibn Faṣīḥ literally.

Whatever Shaikh Sulaymān or other Wahhābī writers might think of what Ibn Faṣīḥ stated, the latter was trying all the time to keep his impartiality, and his work remains an authentic account of Najd and the Arabian littoral of the Gulf during the early years of the 19th century.¹

Another short, but invaluable, manuscript which throws light on the area and era under consideration is Shaikh Muḥammad al-Bāṣṣām's Kitāb al-Durar al-Mafākhīr fī Akhābār al-ʻArab al-Awākhīr. (British Museum Add. 7358). This work has been compiled by the author at the request of Mr. Rich, the political Resident at Baghdad.²

Al-Bāṣṣām was a soldier in the Wahhābī army which fought against ʿUsūn Pasha, the son of Muḥammad ʿAlī Pasha, the Wālī of Egypt (f.14). The main value of this work rests in the fact that it gives a detailed

¹The work of Ibn Faṣīḥ is still in manuscript kept in the British Museum. Or. 7567. Other copies, Berl. Olt. 1806 and 2985; See Brockelmann, Supp. II, 791.

²Mr. C. J. Rich, born 1787, died at Shirāz 1821. He was the Resident of the East India Company at Baghdad from 1803-1821. His collection of MSS, medals and antiquities is placed in the British Museum. (His MSS. are in the India Office Library).
study of the Arab tribes inhabiting Arabia, 'Iraq and Syria towards the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. The author gives the number of fighters in every tribe.¹ His account of the Qawāsim, whose territories came to be known as Trucial 'Umān, (ff. 38-39) tallies with what other contemporaries have written. His chapter on al-Ḥasā (ff. 39-40) is important for the geographical study and implications of names of towns and places at a time when there were no adequate maps for that area.²

'Umān's relations with the 'Utub and Eastern Arabia under the Āl-Bū-Ṣa'īd dynasty³ is given in the works of a native from 'Umān, Hamīd b. Muḥammad b. Rāziq, whose work Al-Fath al-Mubīn al-Mubārīn Sīrat al-Sāda al-Būsā'īdīyīn became known to the Western scholars through

¹These numbers are given on various pages. The cavalry as well as infantry is calculated. The total amounts to 1,079,468.
²Al-Bassām wrote his work in 1813, as Mr. Rich puts it on the last page of the work.
³This is the dynasty that succeeded Al-Xaṣāītā dynasty in the Imāmāt of 'Umān, in 1154/1741. The first Būṣaʿīdī Imam was Ṭāhir b. Saʿīd (1154/1741 - 1183/1775).
Badger's translation in 1871. Two other manuscript works, of Ibn Razīq, were consulted and the data relating to 'Uman's relations with the Gulf are the same as those given in Al-Fath al-Mubīn.

These two works have remained unused by the writers on the Persian Gulf, Eastern Arabia and 'Uman; it is necessary to report here that the one kept in the University Library at Cambridge (Add. 2393) called Al-Sīra al-Jaliyya al-Musammāt Sa'd al-Su'ūd al-Or-Sa'īdīyya, is the short summary on which Al-Fath al-Mubīn was based. This book has at its end the date 1271/1854 while al-Fath al-Mubīn is dated 1273/1856. To Al-Fath, is added also the history of All-Sa'īdī start-from Amīr b. Sai'īd, and forming 100 folios, the first part being 156 folios. Al-Sīra al-Jaliyya is in thirty folios.

The title given to the work by Badger is History of the Imāms and Seyyids of 'Oman; it is an accurate title because the work deals with the history of 'Uman under the Ibaḍī (Khārijī) rule (for Ibaḍiyya see Ibid, pp. 385-393) beginning with Julanda b. Mas'ūd 135/751 as the first Imām and ending by Thuwayrī b. Sa'īd (1273/1856). It is worthy to notice in this place that the Christian name of the author is not Salīl, as Badger gives it, but Ḥamīd b. Muḥammad. The word Salīl used by the author (f. 155) means the son of (see Ibn Durayd, Kitāb al-Istāqaq, Cairo, 1958, pp. 359-60). Nevertheless, the author gives his Christian name and his family name in full in more than one place (for example, see f. 124).
The other work is Sahīfat al-Qahṭaniyya. ¹

The importance of those works lies in the fact that they convey the 'Umani point of view in the affairs relating to the Gulf and Eastern Arabia. They also are written at a time not far from the events under consideration.

There are other Arabic sources that deal with the history of Eastern Arabia and reference to those will be made where they are used in our text. But before considering the local traditions, it is necessary to state here that the works surveyed above were, except in the case of Ibn Ghannam's, Ibn Bishr's and Al-Fāth's translation, not used before, as far as I know, by any author in dealing with the history of the 'Utūb, whether in Kuwait or in Bahrain. Even the three that were used were not used in that context.

B. Local Tradition.

Because the rise of the 'Utūb is treated in this work for the first time and because it does not go back more than 250 years, it became necessary, if possible, to make use of the local tradition kept

¹This work was presented to Rhodes House, Oxford University, by the Sultan of Zanzibar in November 1929. At the end of this work the author, Ibn Razīq, puts his signature and tells that the script is written in his handwriting. The date of writing is also given. It is 1269/1852.
by the inhabitants of both the Shaikhdoms of Kuwait and Bahrain. To investigate these traditions a number of questions in letters and in conversations was put to those people whom I thought able to help. In addition to this, use was made of whatever books were written on the history of the ‘Utūb.

As regards my enquiries in Kuwait, these were the result of five years stay in that country (1953-58) during which period I was able to learn much about the present families, many of whom were there from the very beginning. Unfortunately, members of those very few families who have any documents of any kind would not allow any access to them.

Fortunately local tradition in Kuwait was put down in two books in 1926 and 1951. The authors are two Shaikhs or ‘Ulama‘ who did their best to write down the history of Kuwait from a traditional point of view.

The first of these two is ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Rašīd and his work is Ta‘rīkh al-Kuwait. In volume one of his history al-Rašīd portrays the social life of the people of Kuwait in the early years of the twentieth century. As social life in Kuwait did not undergo any important changes until after the exploitation of oil in 1946, the pictures the

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1This book was published in Baghdad in two volumes in 1926.
work draws are almost the same as those of Kuwaitis in the eighteenth century. An example of this will be seen in his description of pearl fishery among the Kuwaitis. Here the same portrait can be seen in any eighteenth century work of the European travellers.

In volume two, which deals with the history of Kuwait, the author gives all that the local tradition could say about the rise of Kuwait and the Al-Sabah as its rulers. The publishing of that history in 1926 had its effects on the Arab intelligentsia. Father Anastrase Marie al-Karmalî was disappointed when the first volume made its appearance and had no detailed political study of the Shaikhs and the Shaikhdom. The second volume, however, he said, satisfied more adequately his thirst for historical information. He ended his comments by asking the author to write the history of the other Arab ports on the Gulf. Existing copies of this book are very rare because its circulation was prohibited by the Shaikh of Kuwait for the author gave some facts relating to the murder of Shaikhs Muhammad and

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1For his hypothesis on the rise of Kuwait and the Al-Sabah see Chapter II below.

2See his article in Lughat al-'Arab, IV, 1914, p. 89. See also other comments made by Yusuf As'ad 'Aghuir in Al-Adib literary magazine VII, July 1958, pp. 19-20.
Jarrah Al-Sabah by their half brother Shaikh Mubarak in 1896.

The other Kuwaiti historian Shaikh 'Isa b. Yusuf al-Qina'ī gives his own version of the establishment of Kuwait and the rise of the Al-Sabah as its rulers. 1 His work Safahat min Ta'rikh al-Kuwait, which appeared in 1954, is a short History of Kuwait beginning with the rule of Sabah I and ending with Mubarak Al-Sabah, who died in 1915.

The author is considered, by Kuwaitis, the leading living authority on the history of Kuwait. He is an old man of about 90 years of age. His family is held in esteem by the people and the Shaikhs of Kuwait. 2 In spite of the fact that he planned his work for the benefit of the government schools in Kuwait, it is a condensed history of Kuwait, with very valuable information on its rise, families, social life and trade.

Like its predecessor it was stopped from circulation on the same grounds. 3 However, these two works gain importance from the fact that

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1 In the copy in my possession of al-Rashīd's work, Shaikh 'Isa wrote in the margin his notes on that History. I am not sure of the date when he made those marginal notes.

2 For some details about his family see below, p. 97-98.

3 The works of al-Rashīd and al-Qina'ī were used in various books written after 1950 on Kuwait. These latter books are of no historical value for our present work but contain certain information on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which may be useful to future generations.
they are written by Kuwaitīs who know their local tradition well.
Some of the relevant facts they give were examined where appropriate
in the thesis.

In Bahrain, where the Āl-Khalīfa family is ruling, the local
tradition was kept in Shaikh Muhammad al-Nabhānī's Taʾrīkh al-Bahrain,
which is part one of his Al-Tuhfa al-Nabhāniyya fī Taʾrīkh al-Jazīra
al-ʿArabiyya. Al-Nabhānī, after staying some time with the ruler of
Bahrain, collected his information and wrote his Taʾrīkh which tells
the history of Bahrain from the earliest times to the present time.
What concerns us in this place is the local tradition dealing
with the history of Bahrain under the Āl-Khalīfa.

What he tells about the Āl-Khalīfa tallies with what Shaikh ʿAbd
Allāh b. Khaṭīb Āl-Khalīfa told me in August 1959 in London in several
meetings held between us. Shaikh ʿAbd Allāh, who is a judge in Manama
courts by profession, was kind enough to show me his manuscript history
of Bahrain which he is planning to have published. Shaikh ʿAbd Allāh's
points of view were discussed wherever they occurred in our narrative.

Shaikh ʿAbd Allāh's witness to the events is important to us be-
cause he represents the Āl-Khalīfa point of view on certain events in
the history of the ʿUtūb. An example of the conflict between the Āl-
Ṣabāh and the Āl-Khalīfa points of view was discussed when we dealt with
the emigration of the latter from Kuwait in about 1766 and their settle-
ment at Zubāra.
The local 'Utūb tradition was accepted when there was no other source of information on points discussed. The fact that the 'Utūb do not have written records of their history makes it difficult for us to fix even the date for the rise of their first Shaikh to power in Kuwait.

C. India Office Records.

However, some of these dates can be checked by the records of the English East India Company kept in the Commonwealth Relations Office, London. Here use was made of manuscript as well as printed records.

1. Manuscript documents: Of the manuscript sources, the Factory Records relating to Persia and the Persian Gulf in the second half of the eighteenth century were consulted. These comprise the volumes dealing with the period from 1703 to 1801.¹

The East India Company in this period had Factories at Bandar 'Abbās (Gombroon), Abū Shahr and Baṣra. The Company's agents used to include in their reports and letters to their superiors at London and Bombay accounts of the state of affairs in the Persian Gulf area. Even

¹These volumes have no index and are unpublished. Reference to them is indicated in this work by giving the date of letters and their numbers. The use of numbers makes it easier to locate the dispatch referred to.
before the temporary establishment of the Basra Factory at Kuwait in 1793, these reports supply us with information on Eastern Arabia. It is fair to say that the information on Eastern Arabia, here, is very small when compared with that on Persia and 'Irāq. This may be attributed to the small amount of commerce the Company had had with Eastern and Central Arabia. That commerce, which I describe in Chapter VI of this work, was in the hands of 'Masqatī and 'Utba merchants.

However, because of the relations of the Arab tribes of southern 'Irāq and the Persian littoral of the Gulf with those of Eastern and Central Arabia, we can trace some information in the Company's records relating to the 'Utub and Eastern Arabia.¹ One striking feature of those records is the lack of information on Bahrain. This may be attributed in its turn to the lack of the Company's commercial interests in the area.

However, my hypothesis of the rise of Kuwait to power after the 1770's rests to a considerable extent on the sporadic but very valuable information which those records contain. Perhaps Kuwait's geographical position near Abū Shahr and Basra, the Company's centres of commercial

¹In spite of the fact that the Wahhābīs started building their power in the 1740's, they are mentioned for the first time only in the dispatches of 1787 and the only report on the Wahhābīs which I could trace in these records is by Harford Jones Brydges and dated 1st December 1793.
activity in the second half of the 18th century, drew the attention of the Company's agents.

2. Printed documents and works: A clearer picture of the state of affairs in Eastern Arabia from the British point of view is revealed in two works.

The first is *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government* - No. XXIV - New Series. In this compilation we can trace "historical and other information" connected with the Arabs of the Persian Gulf. This information comes from reports drawn up by various officers of the Bombay Government in the first half of the 19th century. The importance of these reports to our work comes from the fact that the reporters were officers who were officially asked to report to their government. They wrote at first hand having visited the area. It is true that there are some mistakes in dating earlier events in Arabia, but, on the whole, their work is very valuable for showing the British point of view in the affairs of the Gulf in the 18th and early 19th centuries, for the lists of dated events they offer and the great deal of information on the Arab tribes.

Another compilation on the Persian Gulf is the *Selections from State Papers, Bombay, regarding the East India Company's Connexions*

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1Reference to these reports and the names of the compilers are given when use is made of them.
with the Persian Gulf, 1600-1800. In this work Saldanha selects various letters relating to the history of the Persian Gulf from 1600 to 1800. His selections of the eighteenth century come mostly from the Factory records of Bagra and Abu Shahr. At the end of this work are appended two extremely important reports on the trade of the Gulf. The first was compiled by the Agent and Factor at Bagra in 1789 and the second by John Malcolm in 1800. These two reports are contemporary witnesses to the degree of growth that the 'Utbi States had reached towards the end of the century.

D. The European travellers' accounts.

European travellers, in whose works original information on Eastern Arabia was traced, can be classified into three divisions.

1. East India Company's servants.
2. Travellers other than those officials.
3. Early 19th century travellers.

1. East India Company's servants.

Of this group of travellers very little need be said in this place for their works are described in Chapter VI. However, the narratives of their journeys up and down the Gulf and across the great Syrian desert are the main source of information on those famous trade routes in the period and era under consideration.
2. Other travellers.

To this group of travellers belong C. Niebuhr and A. Parsons. Niebuhr (1733-1815) who became the best European authority on 18th century Arabia, needs but little introduction.

He was the mathematician of the scientific expedition sent out by the King of Denmark to Arabia and the adjacent countries in 1760. Out of five persons, of whom the expedition was originally composed, Niebuhr was the only survivor. On his way back from Bombay to Europe he chose the route via the Persian Gulf. During the period from December 1764 to June 1765 he stayed in the Persian Gulf area. During this time he recorded details of the Arabian tribes inhabiting both coasts of the Gulf and southern 'Iraq. This is very important to our study because there have always been relations between the Arabs of both shores, and from other works apart from those of Niebuhr very little can be gathered. Thus invaluable information on the Bani Khalid, Bani Ka'b, the Muntafiq, the Arabs of Bandar Riq and of Abu Shahr, is given in his works, Description de l'Arabie, and Voyage en Arabie.

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1 For the life of Niebuhr and the origin of the expedition, see G. N. Niebuhr, The Life of Carsten Niebuhr, English translation by Prof. Robinson, Edinburgh, 1838, p. 11-14.

2 Niebuhr's works first appeared in German in 1772. A French translation appeared a few years later in 1774 and 1778 and 1780.
In Niebuhr's Description the earliest information concerning Kuwait can be traced (p. 296). It is true that Niebuhr did not visit the town but his method of collecting information on the places which he was unable to visit supplies useful material. In the case of Kuwait he is the first writer to give the two names by which the town was known, Kuwait and Qurain.¹

Niebuhr's chart of the Persian Gulf was the best drawn before the end of the century. It is of great historical value because he locates on it the various territories of the Arab tribes.² Niebuhr failed to collect material of any historical value on the Wahhabis, but here an excuse can be found in the fact that the Wahhabis were in their early state and not very much was known about them in Abū Shahr or Basra, the places he visited, during his travels in the Gulf.

However, Niebuhr was and will continue to be invaluable for all historians who write on Arabia in the eighteenth century.³

Another traveller whose information on the state of affairs under

¹See below, pp. 30-31.

²Zubāra is not placed on the map merely because it came into existence a year after the compilation of the map in 1765.

³Almost all those who wrote on Arabia after the publication of Niebuhr's works until the present century depended on Niebuhr's investigations.
discussion is invaluable is Abraham Parsons.1 Parsons travelled from Aleppo to Basra by the desert route in 1774 and he was at Basra in 1775 when the Persians besieged the town. In his treatment of that event and its consequences, he gains importance from two facts; he was an eyewitness to and a participant in the events he describes. In that affair the English Factory took the side of the Ottomans against the Persians and Parsons, being on the spot, played his role in the war. The siege of Basra had far reaching results on the rising Utūb and their conspicuous turn in the war as portrayed by Parsons's narrative of the events has been examined in Chapter 4 of the thesis.

3. Early 19th century travellers.

Of the early 19th century travellers Dr. Seetzen, Bruckhardt, Buckingham, Stocqueler and Wellsted give, though limited, valuable information relating to the Utul States. These, and other travellers, are quoted in various places of the present work and the nature of the information they offer is stated there.

Before concluding this survey of the sources, it is necessary to point out the importance of Sir Harford Jones Brydges' account in

1"In 1767 Parsons was appointed, by the Turkey Company, Consul and Factor Marine at Scanderoon, in Asiatic Turkey, a situation which, after a residence of six years, he was obliged, from the unhealthiness of the country to resign, when he commenced a voyage of Commercial speculation." See the Preface to his Travels, p. iii.
The Wahauby. In this work Brydges speaks of events to which he was a witness and in which he himself participated. He also speaks of events which he did not see but here his power of selectivity and rejection as a historian is great. He is almost always conscious of judging the material he represents. Whenever he feels that there was a better authority on any particular subject he does not hesitate to quote him.

Harford Jones joined the Basra Factory in 1784 and stayed in this area until 1794. During this period he stayed at Kuwait for a short time in 1790 for "a change of air" after falling ill in Basra. In 1793 he came to Kuwait with the Basra Factory on its temporary establishment there. In 1798 he was appointed as a representative of the British Government to the Court of the Pasha of Baghdad.

With this career as a background, a work by Brydges on this particular area must be of particular importance.

His Wahauby, therefore, reflects its author's experience. He knows the area and its inhabitants. When treating Wahhabiism as a creed, he, believing that Burckhardt was the best authority on the subject, refers the reader to Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys and Brydges quotes him instead of giving his own account. ¹

¹See Brydges, The Wahauby, pp. 110-114.
As a matter of fact it is not his History of the Wahhabis that interests us as much as his Notes appended to it. For in them he gives most valuable information on the rule of Shaikh `Abd Allah Al-Šaḥā, the second 'Utbī ruler of Kuwait. His account and criticisms of the expedition of 'Alī Pasha, the Kase of Baghdad, against the Wahhabis in 1798 are equalled only by those of Lam' al-Shihāb.

Yet there is only one riddle which remained unanswered by Brydges in the delicate affair of the Wahhabi attacks on Kuwait which took place during the Factory's residence there. Brydges makes the Shaikh and the people of Kuwait the heroes of the Wahhabi repulsion and clearly states that neither the Factory's sepoys nor the Company's cruiser at the port, played any share in that affair. On the other hand John Lewis Reinaud, an official of the Factory, told Dr. Seetzen in Aleppo in 1805 that the Factory's role in repelling the attackers was decisive, that the Factory's relations with the Wahhabis suffered and that he was sent by the Factory to al-Dir'iyya, the Wahhabi capital, to restore the relations. Did Brydges keep in his mind when he was giving his account the Company's policy of keeping neutral in any struggle among the Arabs of the Gulf and not interfering as long as the Company's mail and flag

\[1\] For a rather detailed account of this affair, see below, pp. 289-291.
remained unmolested?  

Nevertheless, it is only in Brydges' work that we find an explanation of how the Basra Factory came to know of the arrival of the French emissary, Captain Borel de Bourg, at Kuwait in 1778. The Factory Records relate only the story of his capture. It remains for us to treat two works of value on the history of the Gulf in this survey. The first is Sir Arnold Wilson's The Persian Gulf, first published in London, 1923, which is a general study of the region since its ancient times, and J. G. Lorimer's Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, which was published by the Government of India (Calcutta, 1915) and which until recently was not available for public use.

The Gazetteer, which has been used in our compilation, is a remarkable work of compilation and the author based it primarily upon selections from the records of the Indian Governments. For the material on 18th century Arabia he depends mostly on Bombay Selections No. XXIV, Western travellers, formerly alluded to, and Brydges' Wahauby.

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1 For this policy of neutrality see Mr. Francis Warden's "Extracts from Brief Notes Relative to the Rise and Progress of the Arab Tribes of the Persian Gulf" in Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 57, and p. 433.

2 See below, p.

3 This work is in two volumes of two parts each.
Its main defect in the information on Arabia lies in the fact that Lorimer did not consult any Arabic source. This led him to say in some places that information on certain periods was lacking. In the case of al-Ḥasā, he says "Nothing is known of al-Ḥasā before 1795". Had he consulted Ibn Ghannām, Ibn Bīshr, Lamʿ al-Shihāb or other Arabic works, he must have known much about al-Ḥasā.

However, the Gazetteer will remain an exceedingly important source of information on the Persian Gulf, especially during the 19th century.

We may now turn to show how these different Arabic and European sources were used.

It has been seen that, besides Ibn Ghannām, Ibn Bīshr, Ibn Rāzīq and Ibn Sanāʾī's Matalī, which are chronicles, other Arabic sources give most of their accounts without dates. With the European sources the case is different. The Factory Records give not only the year but the day and month. The European literary sources usually give the dates. So whenever possible the dates were fixed by the help of the European sources. It should be stated here that the Arabic chroniclers were exact and their dates, when given and when checked by the Factory records, proved to be correct.\(^1\)

\(^1\)An example of this is Thuwaynī's expeditions of 1786 and 1797 against the Wahhābīs and 'Alī Pāshā's expedition of 1798/9. They are all given the right dates in the Arabic chronicles.
As for the material for the history of the 'Utūb, the Company's Records helped in building up the picture of the 'Utūbī sea power and trade, while the description of the internal relations between the Arabs of Eastern Arabia was based on the information contained in the Arabic sources.¹

The local tradition supplied the material for the rise of the 'Utūb in Kuwait, their origin, emigration and their final settlement at the place by the permission of the Shaikh of the Banī Khālid.

¹An example of that is the continuous struggle between the Banī Khālid and the Wahhābīs throughout the whole period and the Wahhābī attack on Zubāra.
Chapter I

Introductory

THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE PERSIAN GULF IN
THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
Chapter I

Introductory

THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE PERSIAN GULF IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The study of the rise of the 'Utbi States and their development in Eastern Arabia throughout the second half of the eighteenth century dictates a preliminary study of the state of affairs in the

Historical research on Eastern Arabia in the eighteenth century is very scanty. The prominent event in that century was the emergence of the Wahhabi movement, which reached the zenith of its strength in the last decade of the eighteenth and the first decade of the nineteenth centuries. The two major sources of information on the Wahhabi movement, namely, Rawdat al-Afkar wal-Afham limurtadi Hal al-Imam wa Ta'add Ghazwat dhawal al-Islam, two vols. (Bombay, 1919) by Husain b. Ghannam, and 'Uthman b. 'Abd Allah b. Bishr 'Unwan al-Majd fii Ta'rikh Najd, two vols. (Makka, 1349/1930), do not give much information on Eastern Arabia in the first half of the eighteenth century, mainly because the authors, being Wahhabi believers and chroniclers, were interested in the period of the spread (cont.)
countries surrounding the Persian Gulf in the first half of the same century. This is mainly because the migration of the 'Utūb and their settlement at Kuwait took place around the opening years of Wahhābīsm. Ibn Bīshr clearly stated that the period previous to that was not of equal importance to the years following the beginning of Wahhābī propagation (see Ibn Bīshr, Vol. I, pp. 5 and 6).

Recent research work on Wahhābīsm, when referring to Eastern Arabia, mostly derives from these two chroniclers. Reference may here be made to 'Abdel Ḥamīd M. El-Batrik's _Turkish and Egyptian Rule in Arabia, 1810-1841_, Ph. D., 1947, Modern Islamic History, London University, and G.S. Rentz's _Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (1703/4-1792) and the Beginnings of Unitarian Empire in Arabia_, Dissertation submitted for the degree of Ph. D. in History, California University, 1948 (microfilm copy), and Salah al-'Aqqād's _Le Premier Etat Saʻudite (1744-1818). Essai sur son histoire politique et religieuse_, These pour le Doctorat d'Etat, Université de Paris, Faculte des Lettres (1956). See also Ch. V below on Wahhābī relations with Eastern Arabia.
of the eighteenth century.  

To this one may add that the histories of the Persian Gulf littoral states were interrelated. This interrelation might be attributed to more than one factor. In the first place come the Arab tribes, who were very influential during the eighteenth century. They dwelt on all the shores of the Gulf, and were ruled by Shaikhs who hardly acknowledged any superior authority in any of the governments around the Gulf. The same aspect of interrelation can be as well exemplified by the European companies, who had factories in and commercial relations with all the country surrounding the Gulf. However, the three outstanding indigenous spheres of

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1 See "Chronological Table of Events connected with the Government of Muskat, from the 1730-1843; etc.", in Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government, No. XXIV, New Series, (Bombay, 1856), pp. 140-141. See also "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrain) from the year 1716 to the year 1817; Prepared by Mr. Francis Jarden, Member of Council at Bombay; etc.", in Ibid., pp. 362-363.

For the local tradition respecting the rise of Kuwait, see above.
of dominion of the Persian Gulf, all through the eighteenth century, were the Persians in the north-east, the Ottomans in Mesopotamia, and the Arabs in the west and south, wherever circumstances made it possible for the ‘Utūb to build their independent state at first in Kuwait about 1716, and then to establish Zubāra in Qatar in 1766, and to conquer the Bahrain Islands in 1782.¹

It is worthwhile noting too that the ‘Utūb built their states in the above-mentioned places on the coast of Eastern Arabia when three factors were working on their side. The first was the conveying of trade to and through the Persian Gulf by the European trading companies, and the second was the lack of any one strong power in the Gulf and Arabia that could interfere with the progress of establishing these ‘Utūb settlements. The third was the situation of Kuwait in the Bani Khālid territory. The Bani Khālid’s rule was most favourable to trade and at the same time they were the protectors of the thriving town.² In the present chapter an attempt is

¹See Chapter III for the establishment of Zubāra, and Chapter IV for the conquest of Bahrain.

²It is still related by the Al-Ṣabāḥ that their ancestors used to pay homage to the Shaikh of Bani Khālid whenever he came to Kuwait in summer. I was told of this by Shaikh Ṣabāḥ al-Salīm Al-Ṣabāḥ. The kind of the tribute paid by the Al-Ṣabāḥ varied according to the property of the ruler. Still, there is no evidence of the kind or amount of that tribute.
made to see how these three factors were working in a way that made it possible for the 'Uthub to build their states in Eastern Arabia.

A. The European trading companies in the Persian Gulf.

The English East India Company

The English East India Company's relations with the Persian Gulf and its trade can be seen from two aspects. The first is from that of competition with the other European nations trading with the Gulf; the second is from that of the East India Company's relations with the local powers working within the Gulf. As to the first aspect, it is known that the English were not the first European nation to form relations with the Persian Gulf.

The European nations who had trade activities in the Gulf were the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English, and the French.

The Portuguese

Among the four, the Portuguese were the first to establish their power and influence in that area. Yet by the beginning of the seventeenth century they were losing their positions, for Bahrain was lost to them in 1602 and Hormuz in 1622. Their last fortresses in Masqat capitulated to the Arabs of 'Uman in about 1651.1 This political

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and military decline was followed by a similar decline in trade.
Yet this did not mean that Portuguese ships and merchandise stopped frequenting the Gulf for trading purposes, for until 1721 their Factory at Kung was visited by merchant ships belonging to "Indians, both Hindus and Muhammadans". ¹

Two European nations worked in harmony to drive the Portuguese out. These were the English and the Dutch, represented by their East India Companies as early as the first half of the seventeenth century.²

The English and the Dutch fought a joint battle against the Portuguese in the Gulf till the latter were dislodged.³

The French

The French entered the competition after the formation of their French East India Company in 1664.⁴ But early in the eighteenth century their factory at Bandar 'Abbās was closed down. It was not till the year 1755 that they re-established their Residency at Basra. However, during the first half of the eighteenth century French ships used

³Ibid., p. 161.
⁴Ibid., p. 166.
to call at Başra and other parts of the Gulf.¹

The Dutch

But the two major European trading nations in the Gulf in the first half of the eighteenth century were always the Dutch and the English. Both of them had Factories at more than one town and port in the countries bordering on the Persian Gulf.²

The relations between the Dutch and the English seem to have been cordial during the first half of the eighteenth century. The Factory Records of the English Company speak of packets and letters being conveyed from their factory at Gombroon to Başra in Dutch ships.³ This friendship soon gave way to hostilities early in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the English occupied the first place among European nations trading with the Gulf.

²Both had Factories at Bandar 'Abbās and Başra.
³Gombroon Factory to the C. of D. dated Gombroon, 7th May 1737. See also E. Ives, A Voyage from England to India in the year 1754, also A Journey from Persia to England by an Unusual Route in 1758 and 1759 (London, 1773), p. 206.
The English: their proceedings in the Gulf.

A brief discussion of the British interests in the Gulf in the first half of the eighteenth century helps to illustrate how their relations with the 'Utbi States started and developed. These interests are reflected in the dispatches of the agents in the English Factories, in Gombroon, Isfahan, Bagra, and other places in Persia and Ottoman Mesopotamia. From these dispatches one can feel that there were two main purposes for the establishment of those Factories. The first was to establish centres for distributing English goods and other goods that were carried by English ships to and from the countries bordering the Persian Gulf. The second was to use these Factories

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1For two lists of goods carried to the Factories of the Persian Gulf see F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 14, letter from Gombroon to the C. of D., dated 25th March 1727. The following articles are listed: From Bombay: pepper, sugar, rice, betel nut, cotton piece goods. From India: Bengal and Mangahore rice, sugar, ginger, turmeric, pepper and piece goods. From Gombroon ships carried fruit and rose water. European woollens and Persian silks head the list of trading commodities.
and especially the Basra Factory, as a centre for the English Company's dispatches, whether they were going to the East or to the West.\(^1\) The English Company could depend only on two speedy and safe ways of conveying the dispatches in the eighteenth century. The first was by sea from India to the Red Sea, and from thence to Europe. The second was what was called the overland or the desert route through Basra and Aleppo, which proved to be more practical and to some extent safer. The degree of safety by the overland route was greater because the only danger was from the Arab tribes, whose friendship was easily bought by regular presents of money and goods.\(^2\) The overland route not

\(^1\) Though the purposes for establishing these Factories can be traced in most of the dispatches of the first half of the eighteenth century, yet a very clear reference to that was made in a letter from Mr. Latouche on his handing over the responsibilities of the Basra Factory to his successor, Mr. Manesty. See a letter from Latouche to Manesty, Basra, 6. xi. 1784, F.R.P.F.G., Vol. 18, dispatch No. 1299.

only proved valuable for the Company's trade in the Gulf of Persia, but also for speedy contact between Bombay, Surat and other places in India and the Court of Directors in London. The importance of the overland route can be clearly seen in the second half of the eighteenth century, before and after the Seven Years War (1756-1763).

Trade before politics

However, it was the duty of the representatives of the trading companies to try always to keep to the main object behind their establishments in the area, which was trade. Yet one could not expect those representatives to remain isolated from what happened in the countries where they functioned. In other words, politics followed the trade, till at least the end of the eighteenth century, when the French tried to establish themselves politically in Egypt. As a matter of fact, the English East India Company, "in less than half a century after its incorporation by the Royal Charter of 31st December 1600, assumed a political aspect".

Consular power for the Agents

The year 1708 witnessed the union of the new and old English companies, and thence the new name, "The United Company of the merchants

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1 For the desert route, see Chapter VI, pp. 399-310 and pp. 310-312 for the advantages the Persian Gulf had over the Red Sea.

2 See Wilson, op.cit., p. 169.
of England trading to the East Indies." 1 Their Residents had from now on consular power and rank. 2

Relations with the Ottomans and the Persians

This consular power, given to a Resident who was at the same time investing his personal fortune in trade, made him always think of his own interests as well as the Company's. More than once the Residents fell into quarrels with local governments. The solution of those disputes had to be undertaken by both the Governor at Bombay and H.M. Ambassador in Istanbul. 3 If it is remembered that the Factories existed both on Ottoman and Persian territories, one can expect the Governors in both countries to try to use the Company's war vessels in times of crisis against each other. In addition to this, both the Ottomans and the Persians sought the help of the Company in building up their naval

1 The name of the English East India Company will be used throughout the present work.
2 Wilson, op.cit., p. 170.
3 We can take the example of Mr. Samuel Manesty's dispute with the Mutasallim of Bagra and the Pasha of Baghdad in 1792, which led to the removal of the Factory from Bagra in 1793, and its establishment at Kuwait till 1795. Kuwait was not as good a centre as Bagra for the Company's trade.
power in the Gulf. And the Company used to shift its activity between the two, and thus, early in the 1720's the English East India Company thought that Bagra, an Ottoman territory, might prove more prosperous for and more yielding to its commercial interests, and thus Gombroon was deserted mainly because of the anarchy that ruled Persia as a result of the Afghans' invasion. The transfer of commercial activities from Persian to Ottoman territory was, as expected, taken as a sign of enmity to the Persian Government. However, this transfer of the Company's chief residency back and forth between Persian and Ottoman territories seems to have been dictated mainly by two reasons. The first was to show each Government that the Factory could do its job in the other place, and the second was to avoid the oppression of local governors.

Ottoman and Persian behaviour towards the English

In both situations the intended results were often not as desired. The Mutasallims of Bagra were not less oppressive than the Shaikhs of Abu Shahr and Gombroon. To please both powers at the same time was almost impossible. However, the Residents did their best, and managed to keep the Company's trade with the countries bordering

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1See below, Nādir's policy in the Gulf, pp. 70-71.
on the Persian Gulf flourishing. But wars and the disturbed internal state of affairs worked against the Company's interests. Mr. Martin French of the Basra Factory wrote to the Court of Directors in London in 1732 from Basra telling them that

"The War with Persia has put so effectual a Stop to Business here that a Bale of Goods has not been sold in many Months. We do not think it advisable to unladen the Ships now here till we see how Things are likely to go."

Capitulations and Rogaoms

The European companies enjoyed favourable terms offered them by the Ottoman capitulations on one hand, and "favourable "Rogoms".

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1 Early in the year 1726, difficulties arose with the Pasha of Basra, who hindered the progress of the Factory. In a letter from Basra Mr. Hassaye, "Basra. Chief for the Company's affairs in the Gulf of Persia", wrote to the Court of Directors in London saying that the Pasha wanted to levy customs on goods before their sale. F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 14, Basra 10th April 1726, and Vol. 15, No. 2384 from Gombroon speaks of the same difficulty. The latter is dated Gombroon 25th March 1727.

2 Mr. Martin French to the C. of D., Basra 19.iii. 1732/3, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 15. Another letter dated the 25th June 1732 from Basra, signed by Mr. French, is written to the same effect.
from the Persian Shāhs. In Baṣra and Gombroon the English East India Company collected the consulate from English ships. This yielded a large profit in peace, but during the wars and sometimes because of local intervention the Factories were unable to collect consulate.

In addition to the threats from local governors, the Companies had to beware of sea depredations or what the reports call piracy. The Factories were therefore fortified and garrisoned by sepoys. The ships conveying the trade were armed with guns. There was almost a continuous demand from the Factories for war vessels to be kept close at hand for emergencies. Thus the Companies kept trade going in the Gulf and this trade brought wealth to many towns in the area. Though

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1The consolate was collected at a rate of 2%. The consulate of the year 1725 at Baṣra amounted to 17195 shahees. *F.R.F.P.G.*, Vol. 14 dispatch No. 559. Accounts of the Factories in the Persian Gulf were given in Indian Rupees or Persian Namoodles (Maḫmūdis) or Persian Shahees. Though the value of the Ottoman and Persian currency was inconsistent, some valuation can be drawn from accounts that were given in the Factories' records. Every Indian Rupee was nearly equal to five Maḫmūdis. (*F.R.F.P.G.*, Vol. 15, No. 649, dated Baṣra 22nd February 1736). In one pound sterling there are 80 Shahees (*F.R.F.P.G.*, Vol. 15, dispatch 2578.)

Kuwait and Bahrain are hardly mentioned in the reports of the English East India Company in the first half of the eighteenth century, there can hardly be any doubt that the conveyance of trade by European vessels and by Muslim vessels from India and Masqat gave the initiative for the rise of the 'Utbī maritime power in the 1750's,\(^1\) as we shall see in the following chapter.

\begin{itemize}
  \item B. Affairs of Persia and Ottoman Mesopotamia (1700-1750)
\end{itemize}

Alongside with this trading activity in the Gulf, the second factor referred to previously, namely, the lack of any centralized power in the Gulf, was working also in favour of the rising 'Utbī states. For the only two powers that might have been able to exercise such authority, the Ottomans and the Persians, were in no way in a position to do so.

1. The Affairs of Persia

In Persia the first half of the eighteenth century was a period of constant change and unrest. The country was invaded by the Afghans, the Ottomans and the Russians.\(^2\) So it was natural that the Persian

\(^1\) Cf. Ives, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 207, 222-223.
Gulf remained in the same period far from feeling any impact from Persia. And it was not until after 1726, when Nadir Šah rose to power in Persia, that the Gulf began to play a role in the policy of that Persian ruler.

Maritime ambitions of Nadir Šah

As for Nadir Šah's interests in the Gulf, "it is no mean testimony to his genius, and to the wide range of his ambition, that while for a brief moment he elevated Persia to the rank of the first military power in Asia, he also dreamed of creating naval resources which should ensure her dominion over the shores of both the northern and the southern seas, i.e. over the Caspian and the Persian Gulf."¹ The lack of strong Persian naval power in the Gulf made it impracticable for any ruler of Persia to establish his authority over the rebellious Arab populace of the shores of the Gulf.² Though "Nadir Šah deserves the credit for being the first Monarch of Persia who realized the value of a fleet", yet he was fighting against "the influence of physical


conditions which gave the Persians invincible repugnance to the sea."¹ This repugnance is best exemplified in Nadir's Admiral of the Coast, "a Persian who had never seen a ship".² The Persian fleet was manned by Indians and Portuguese.³ A Persian naval attack on Basra took place in 1735, but the "Ottoman Governor" obliged two English ships, belonging to the East India Company, to fight against the Persians, who were driven back.⁴ As to the power of the

²Ibid., and Curzon, Vol. II, p. 392, where he, commenting on that selection, quoted Hanway, who says, "But there cannot be a stronger ignorance of the Persians in regard to maritime affairs than that of Myrza Mehtie (i.e. Mirza Mehdi) who was appointed Admiral of the Coast before he had ever seen a ship."
⁴Cf. a letter from Mr. French to the C. of D. dated 5. vi. 1735, in F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 15, dispatch No. 647.
Persian fleet in the Gulf, it was reported to consist in 1739 of "three Ships, one Brigantine, one three Mast, and one two Mast Grabs beside several Trankeys". As early as 1734 Abu Shahr was selected as a suitable base for the fleet, and shortly afterwards it was renamed Bandar Nadiriyya.

Persia and Bahrain

What is worth noting in Nādir's naval policy in the Persian Gulf in this context is the Persian occupation of Bahrain in 1736, which was destined to become later, in 1782, an integral part of the 'Utbā dominions. Bahrain during the first half of the eighteenth century seems to have changed hands between the Sultan of Masqat and the Huwala Arabs of the Persian coast of the Gulf.

The opening of the eighteenth century saw Shaikh Jubāra of the Huwala Arabs ruling in Bahrain completely independent of the Shāh of Persia, because the disturbed state of affairs there left the Arabs of the Gulf free to behave independently of the Shāh.

2 Lockhart, op.cit., p. 92.
3 Niebuhr; Description de L'Arabie, pp. 234-236.
In about 1713, a descent was made on Bahrain by the Arabs of Masqat, then governed by Sultan b. Saif II, an Imam of the Ya‘ariba dynasty. But the Huwala Arabs, the occupants of Bahrain, obliged the Sultan’s forces to leave the island, "by the voluntary removal from their houses of the indigenous population, who emigrated to other places in order to escape the ‘Umani oppression’.  

The Persian campaign of 1736 seems to have been strongly supported by the Huwala Arabs of the Persian coast and Abu Shahr, for Nadir appointed as governors in Bahrain Shaikh Ghait and his brother Shaikh Nasir al Madhkur of the Najarish Arabs. Their authority lasted till 1732, when the ‘Utub captured the Islands.  

One may ask what motives were behind the conquest of Bahrain. The simple answer is that the Islands of Bahrain were coveted for their rich pearl fisheries. In fact they were the richest fisheries in the whole waters of the Gulf, and indeed in the world. They used

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3 For the conquest of Bahrain by the ‘Utub see a letter from Latouche to C. of D. dated Basra 4 xi. 1782, F.R.P.P.C., Vol. 17. See also Nabhani, Ta‘rikh al-Bahrain, pp. 114-115.
to yield, yearly, an income of half a million Indian rupees.\(^1\) Bahrain in the first half of the eighteenth century was not in other respects an important emporium for trade, and the trading companies had no Factories there.

Nadir's Fleet - the trading companies

Another thing worth considering is the way in which Nadir formed his fleet. The Dutch and the English East India Companies offered to help either by selling ships to the Persians or by facilitating the construction of those ships in India or elsewhere. This question of the Persian fleet touched the Arabs of the Gulf on both littorals. Those on the Persian littoral were ordered to hand over to the Persians a certain number of ships. The Arabs on the Persian littoral, who were mostly of the Huwala tribe, had always had trading and other relations with their kinsmen of the Arabian littoral. It has been customary among the maritime Arabs of the Gulf to take to their boats and to abandon, together with their families, their ports, when oppressed, and to resort to their kinsmen, waiting for the day of revenge. Thus it was not later than 1741, during Nadir's lifetime, that the Huwala Arabs succeeded in laying their hands on the Persian fleet, a fact which made "the Persians very pressing for ships". So their demands

\(^1\)"Report on the Trade of Arabia, etc." in Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 407.

\(^2\)See above.
for ships from the English East India Company were listened to and ships were ordered from India. ¹

Nadir's Navigators

Though Nadir was quite sure that only the Arabs of the Gulf could be his navigators, yet he transferred some of them to the Caspian in his attempt to create a Persian naval power. ² At Abū Shahr he built a dockyard, and, at terrible cost in human suffering, transported timber right across Persia from Mazandaran to Abū Shahr for the use of his shipwrights. The only results of this project were the rude ribs of an unfinished vessel, which were visible at Abū Shahr soon after Nadir's death. ³ Yet the use of naval power by Persian Monarchs later in the eighteenth century did not cease. Karīm Khan Zand, when sending his forces under the leadership of Ṣadiq Khan against Baghra in 1775, resorted to the Arab Shaikhs of Abū Shahr, who were of the Maṭārīsh tribe, of Bandar Riq, and of the Banī Ka’b Arabs, who were the most powerful forces in the Gulf. ⁴

³ Curzon, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 392; and Sykes, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 372. Niebuhr made a similar remark on those remains as early as 1765, when he was at Abū Shahr (Description de l'Arabie, p. 273).
⁴ See Chapter III below, p. 766.
2. The Affairs of Ottoman Mesopotamia

Baghdād

The second power, bordering the Persian Gulf, which might have exercised a strong control over its affairs, was Ottoman Mesopotamia. But here, as in Persia, the Governor's authority was limited to Baghdād, and it did not actually extend south as far as Basra. In addition to that handicap, the Wāli of Baghdād, as well as other governors in Mesopotamia, was in a state of almost continuous warfare with the Persians since the Ottoman occupation of Mesopotamia in the fifteenth thirties.

Basra

In Basra, however, where the Muṭasallim was ruling almost independently of the Pasha in Baghdād, he had to depend on the Arabs for defending the town and transporting its trade. The authority of the Muṭasallim extended beyond the walls of the town to the Arab tribes living around the place.

Arab Tribes

The Muntafiq tribe occupied the area to the west of the town. The Bani Ka'b occupied the area to the east and south-east. While the

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1. The Wāli of Baghdād.

Muntafiq Arabs were almost all through the eighteenth century loyal to the Mutasallim of Basra, the Bani Ka‘b used to change their allegiance from the Ottomans to the Persians, and sometimes they used to pay homage to both.¹ To these two Arab tribes, the neighbours of Basra, may be added the Al-Zafîr tribe, which was almost continually loyal to the Pasha of Baghdad and his Mutasallims in Basra.²

The tribes and the Mutasallim

The relations between these Mesopotamian Arab tribes and the Arabs of Eastern Arabia during the first half of the eighteenth century could be described as peaceful, but this peace gave way to strife and struggle in the second half of the century.³ To gain the friend-

¹Cf. C. Niebuhr, Voyage en Arabie & en d'autres Pays circonvoisins (Amsterdam 1780), Tome II, pp. 187-188. These Arabian tribes are dealt with in Chapter III of the present work.


³See Chapter IV below, pp. 166 ff.
ship of those Arabs or to have them under the direct rule of the
Mutasallim was always an aim of his policy. Once those tribes were
free from his control, the trade of Basra used to suffer. Baghdad
would suffer in turn, because of the great amount of trade that had
always been conveyed between Basra and Baghdad, both by the water way
and the desert caravans. 1

Basra's importance to the Ottomans

The Ottomans paid special attention to Basra in the sixteenth
century as a centre for their attacks against the Portuguese; the
same interest continued to exist in the absence of the Portuguese
threat in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What mattered
then to the Pashas of Baghdad was the trade which flourished after
the English East India Company and the Dutch established trading re-
lations there in the early years of the seventeenth century. 2

The standard, the amount and the prosperity of trade at Basra
was controlled by more than one factor. The Mutasallim was the first;
his greed, his wisdom, his attitude towards the trading bodies, were

1 The trade by the rivers Tigris and Euphrates was always great. See
A. Parsons, Travels in Asia and Africa (London, 1808), p. 154. Also
Wilson, op.cit., p. 67-8.

2 The East India Company's Factory at Basra was established in the year
of the greatest importance. Secondly, trade needed peace. In fact, this factor is of no less importance than the first. The peace at Basra was not just sustained when there was no Persian aggression. Yet the Arab tribes, formerly alluded to, could disturb it and thus affect the state of trade both within Basra and the transit trade to Syria, or even the internal trade with Baghdad and other cities of the Pashālik.

These tribes were, as well as the tribes to the south of Basra, occupied in the conveyance of trade by caravans travelling from Central and Eastern Arabia to Mesopotamia and Syria from time immemorial. These desert routes used to pass through Jahra village for water, and the newly established ʿUtba town of Kuwait seems to have benefited greatly from this desert route. Jahra and other villages to the south of Basra were under the control of the Banū Khālid tribe.

1Mr. M. French, the English Agent at Basra, wrote, as early as April 10th, 1726, to the Court of Directors at London, saying that the Factory's relations with the Pasha of Baghdad were bad because the latter wanted to receive the customs due to him before the Factory could sell the goods. F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 14, dispatch No. 561.


3Jahra lies between Kuwait and Basra.
C. Eastern and Central Arabia

The Banī Khaḍīl - their territory

The paramount power in Eastern Arabia on the Persian Gulf in the first five decades of the eighteenth century was that of the Banī Khaḍīl. Their sphere of influence was spreading from Kuwait in the north to Qatar in the south. The depth of their influence in Najd will be discussed in the next chapter. And some of their tribes settled in ‘Uman al-Sīr. 

Banī Khaḍīl occupy al-Ḥasa from the Ottomans

The history of the Banī Khaḍīl's rule in al-Ḥasa began earlier than the eighteenth century, but before the second half of the seventeenth century their power was not as strongly established as it was later to be. As early as 1581, they were powerful enough to hinder the authority of the Sharīfs of Makka whenever the latter tried to raid Eastern Arabia and impinge upon them at al-Ḥasa. The Banī

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1 For details relating to the Banī Khaḍīl's early power, origin, and sphere of influence, Ibn Bishr's Sawābiq supplies the chronology, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 80, 154, 183, 211, 218. Lam' al-Shihāb gives information but no chronology, op. cit., ff. 223-228, 235.


Khalid seem to have been traversing Arabia from Qatar in the south to Baṣra in the north all through the sixteenth century. Yet they do not seem to have had friendly relations with the Ottomans, who were accompanied by the Muntafiq Arabs when they occupied al-Hasa, which was ruled by Al-Jabri of the Qays Arabs. The country continued under Ottoman control till 1030/1620, when it was occupied by Barrak b. Ghurair Al-Jamid of the Banī Khalid. Barrak after the conquest established the rule of the Banī Khalid in al-Hasa. The Ottoman Pasha of al-Hasa was driven out. Thus ended the first Ottoman rule in al-Hasa. Four Ottoman Pashas had already ruled there. They were Fāṭih Pasha, who was the first Governor, 'Alī Pasha, Muhammad Pasha, and lastly 'Umār Pasha, who surrendered to Barrak. Barrak continued to rule till 1093/1682, when he died and his brother Muhammad b. Ghurair took over.


2Longrigg gives the name of Barrak in an attack on al-Hasa by the Pasha of Baṣra in 1632-34. This Barrak may be an ancestor of the present Barrak. Longrigg, op. cit., p. 112.

3Respecting the nature of the Ottoman rule in al-Hasa, it was only nominal, for "there were no fiefs there", and the Governors in fact were ruling without authority. "Briefly, a baseless and unreal claim to al-Hasa was maintained, in the Turkish manner, unsupported by history or present power." Longrigg, op. cit., p. 38.
The extent of their territory

The history of the Banī Khālid, rulers of al-Ḥasā, is of special importance to the historian of eighteenth century Arabia, because their suzerainty extended to Basra in the north, which brought them into continuous contact with the Ottomans of Mesopotamia, and to some parts of Najd in the east, which put them into contact with the petty provinces of Central Arabia. As al-Ḥasā was more fertile than Central Arabia, many people from Najd used to own farms in towns there. This led to complications with Governors of that territory. To illustrate this there is the example of 'Uthmān b. Mu‘ammar, the Shaikh of 'Uyayna in the Province of Al-‘Ārid. He owned a palm-tree grove in al-Ḥasā which gave him a year’s profit of 60,000 golden riāls. When he sheltered Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, Sulaymān b. Muḥammad Al-Ḥamīd, ruler of the Banī Khālid, threatened to prevent him from taking his profit if he continued to protect him. The immediate result was the expulsion of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, who sought refuge at al-Dir‘iyya with Muḥammad b. Su‘ūd. This led to a series of raids and severe fighting, which ended with the occupation of al-Ḥasā in 1795.

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Their ports - Al-Qaṭīf and Al-‘Uqair

The Banī Khālid were not only occupying the fertile oases of al-Ḥasā, but they controlled the trade to Central Arabia from the Gulf. Al-Qaṭīf and Al-‘Uqair were the harbours of Central Arabia through which sugar, coffee, spices and other goods from India and the Yemen found their way to Central Arabia. Kuwait was in a position to participate in this trade, but did not gain importance till the second half of the eighteenth century. It is interesting to note that the Banī Khālid in themselves were divided into settlers and nomads. And as it was customary among the people of the towns to ask the help of the nomads to protect them, the Banī Khālid could do both jobs, and so there was no need to ask the help of other Bedouins. The tribal centre of the ruler was at al-Ḥasā Oasis. From that place the Banī Khālid used to raid Central Arabia, and to go north to the gates of Basra, where they came into conflict with the tribe of al-Ẓafīr.

1 Fertility is, of course, limited to the oases, or the centres where water could be drawn from the wells. Most of al-Ḥasā territory is itself a desert land.

2 "Report on the Trade of Arabia etc.", in Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, pp. 405-409

These pages contain much information on the part played by these ports in distributing goods to Central Arabia.


4 Ibid.
Early relations with the ‘Utub

The Banī Khalīd are extremely important to this narrative, because it was in their territory that the ‘Utub built their states. Kuwait, as we shall see later on, gained its early importance as a summer residence of Barāk, the Shaikh of the Banī Khalīd. To him is attributed the establishment of al-Kūt, or the fortress, after which the town was named.¹ It was not only Kuwait that started and flourished under the Banī Khalīd rule, for Zubārā, in Qatar, the second ‘Utub settlement, was under their protection.² The progress of Kuwait, Zubārā and other towns of the eastern littoral of Arabia shows that the Khalīdī rule was peaceful and most favourable to trade.³ Though they were in control of the trade which was carried into Central Arabia, and though they were in control of most of the harbours of Eastern Arabia, they do not seem to have been a seafaring tribe like al-Qawāsim of


²Al-Khalīfa and other ‘Utubī families migrated to Zubārā in 1180/1766.

Cf. ‘Uthmān ibn Sanā‘, Sabā‘ik al-‘Asjad fī Akhbār Ahmad Najl Rizq al-As‘ad (Bombay, 1315/1897), pp. 18-19. See also "Sketch of the Uttoobe Tribe," etc. in Bombay Selections, p. 363

Ras al-Khayma or the 'Utub of Kuwait or the Arabs of Masqat. However, the peaceful Khalidi control of Eastern Arabia was a necessity.

1 In the English texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries al-Qawasim are referred to as "Joasmees", while all the Arabic texts give "Qawasim", see Lam' al-Shihab, ff. 96-104, and "Historical Sketch of the Joasmeee Tribe of Arabs; from the Year 1747 to the Year 1819", in Bombay Selections, pp. 300-359.

2 "The ascendency of the Arabs of Muskat in the Gulf of Persia may be dated from the year 1694-5, where they became so powerful as to excite an alarm that they would obtain the command of the Persian Gulf. The navigation of the Gulf became more difficult in the following year, from the increase of their power, of which the Agent at Gombroon predicted that they would prove as great a plague in India as the Algerines were in Europe." - ("Historical Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Government of Muskat, etc." E.S., xxiv, p. 168).

This supremacy led to the occupation of some places on the Persian coast and to many acts of piracy (see Ibid.). Neither the English nor the Portuguese could oppose the rising power of Masqat. Nor was Persia in the first three decades of the eighteenth century in a position to stop the Masqati depredations. Nadir Shah directed his fleet and forces against Masqat and succeeded in occupying it and invading other parts of 'Uman, yet the Persians were driven out of 'Uman during his lifetime by Ahmad b. Sa'id, who became Imam in about 1744. (Ibid., p. 169, and "Chronological Table of Events connected with the Government of Muskat, etc.", op.cit., p. 122. See also Humayd ibn Muhammad b. Razīq, Al-Fath al-Mubīn al-Mubarhīn Sīrat al-Sādāt al-Dū-Sa'idīyyīn,
for giving Kuwait a chance to rise unhindered by other tribes in its early years.

Najd

This peace in Eastern Arabia, which resulted from the consolidation of power in the hands of one Khalid Shaikh, was lacking in another place which was a neighbour of the newly established ‘Uthbi town. For in Najd petty chiefs exercised unrestrained power over their towns or tribes. It was not until 1745 that these towns and Amirs began to feel the overwhelming power of the Su‘ud family of al-Dir‘iyya. Arabia, from time immemorial, used to drive away thousands of its population to the rich outskirts of Syria and Mesopotamia. This was mainly the outcome of droughts, occurring every now and then in some regions of the desert. Recorded history of modern times

(cont.) M.S., Cambridge University Library, Add. 2392, ff. 153-155; and Al-Si‘ra al-Jaliyya al-Musammata Sa‘d al-Su‘ud al-Bi‘Sa‘idiyya, Cambridge University Library, M.S., Add. 2893, ff. 19-23). However, Masqat’s fleet during the first and second halves of the eighteenth century was the greatest local sea power, proving formidable not only to local fleets, but also to foreign ones. So strong did Masqat feel that it tried to impose certain fees on local ships crossing the straits of Huymuz.

1This year marks the beginning of the Wahhabī activities in Najd.


2See next chapter, pp. 95-
suggests that such expulsions also took place in modern history. As it was customary among the Bedouins to travel with their cattle to the neighbouring fertile oases when attacked by drought, the resort of the people of Najd was al-Ḥasā, with its rich oases. Ibn Bishr in his chronicle points out different years, both in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when the people of Najd found it indispensable to move eastwards towards al-Ḥasā after suffering from severe attacks of drought. The duration of the drought of 1135/1722 was so disastrous for the people of Najd that they did not find enough room for all the emigrants in al-Ḥasā, and so many had to travel to Baṣra and other fertile places in Mesopotamia. The attitude of the inhabitants of al-Ḥasā, both settlers and Bedouins, towards the immigrants seems to have been friendly. This might be attributed to the fact that Najd and al-Ḥasā were inhabited by ʿAdnānī Arabs. The Bani Khālid, the then rulers of al-Ḥasā, belonged to Rabīʿa, an ʿAdnānī tribe. This attitude, however, seems to have been due to the obligations of Arab hospitality. Yet, as we shall see later on,

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their blood link with 'Ağāniyya did not prevent the Banī Khālid from later attacking the rising Su‘ūdī Power, which was primarily situated at Dir'iyya in central Najd. The Wahhābis took the defensive for over twenty years (1745-1765), but soon changed to the offensive and carried their wars against the Banī Khālid till they succeeded in humiliating them finally in 1208/1793 - 1210/1795.

Conclusion.

Thus three main factors gave the ‘Utbūb the chance to establish themselves in Kuwait during the first half of the eighteenth century. The first was the conveyance of trade through the Persian Gulf and the desert route, in which the ‘Utbūb seem to have participated, and by which they seem to have found a start for their transportation of trade both by camels and by sea. The second was the confused state of affairs and the consequent lack of centralized power in Persia, Ottoman ‘Irāq, and Arabia. This confusion, unrest and change in the area made it possible for small communities to live almost free from external interference. The third was the position of Kuwait in the territory of the Banī Khālid whose reign was most favourable to trade, an additional advantage for the thriving ‘Utbūb town.

Chapter II

THE RISE OF KUWAIT

(1700 - 1762)
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(1700 - 1762)

Rise of Kuwait c. 1700

The emigration of some Arab tribes of the 'Anaza group in the first half of the 18th century from Central Arabia, among whom were the 'Utūb and their settlement at Kuwait marks the rise of the 'Utbī States in Eastern Arabia for several reasons.

In the first place the town was situated in the Banī Khālidī's territory, whose protection the 'Utūb seem to have acquired from the start. Other circumstances helped in the development of the town, such as the trade in the Gulf and the disturbed state of affairs formerly alluded to in Najd, Ottoman 'Irāq and Persia. Yet the geographical position of the town and its natural harbour, formed by the bay, or Ḫūn, was a factor of no less importance.

1Kuwait town is the capital of the present Principality or Shaikhdom. The present borders of the Principality were fixed after the 'Uqair conference of 1921, Ḥāfiz Wahba, Jazīrat Āl-'Arab fī'l Qarn al-‘Ishrīn, (Cairo, 1935), p. 83. The territory under the authority of the Shaikh in the eighteenth century will be discussed later in this chapter.
These various aspects of the rise of Kuwait, the choice of the Al-Ṣabāḥ as its Shāikhs and its early administration will form the subject of the present chapter.

**Geographical situation**

The town, Kuwait, which is about eighty miles south and slightly east of Başra, almost 180 miles west by north of Abū Shahr and nearly 280 miles north-west of Bahrain, faces the north-west and is situated on the southern shore of Kuwait Bay, about one-third of the way from its entrance at Ras-al-Arḍ to its foot at al-Jahra village.¹

**The Bay**

The bay itself is a large inlet of remarkable form, leading out of the north-west corner of the Persian Gulf, with an extreme length west and east of over twenty miles, and a maximum breadth of about ten miles. In shape it approaches a crescent with the convex side to the north and the horns pointing to the south-west. The bay proper is an indentation in the true Arabian coast line, which is represented northwards by the western shore of Ḫōr al-Ṣabbiyya and southwards by the coast below Ras al-Arḍ; but its shore is prolonged on the side next the mouth of the Shatt al-'Arab by a mud-flat extending twenty miles.

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southeast from the mouth of Khôr al-Ṣabbiyya, on which stands the island of Failaka. The entrance of the bay, between this mud-flat and Rās al-Arḍ, is about four miles wide and open to the south-west and south-south-east. In the southern shore of the bay, within, there are three coves: the easternmost, between Rās al-Arḍ and Rās 'Ajūza, is shallow, and vessels are recommended not to enter it; the middle cove, between Ras 'Ajúa and Ras 'Ushairij, contains Kuwait\(^1\) on its eastern side, a dead coral reef covered with mud and sand and known as 'Akāz in the centre, the island of 'Urāin or Shuwaikh on the southern margin of 'Akāz, and the island of 'Umm-al-Naml near Rās 'Ushairij and Rās Kāzima, forms the innermost recess of the whole bay, and near the foot of it stands the village of Jahra.

The land surrounding the bay is low except on the north side, where the Zôr hills, parallel to the shore, attain a height of 150 to 400 feet. A flat of soft mud extends for some distance off shore on the northern side of the bay, making communication difficult at low water between sea and land.

\(^1\)The town proper is meant.
In most parts of the bay the water is of suitable depth for anchorage, and there is good holding-ground.

Supplies and water

Neither Kuwait town nor its environs has ever boasted of any agricultural resources. There are no date plantations, no fields, hardly even a kitchen garden. Forage and vegetables were mostly brought from Jahra village or from abroad. Drinking water was mostly brought from wells a mile outside the town, and it was, in the words of Sir Harford Jones Brydges, "sweet, bitter and salt at the same time."
same time. The water of these wells usually becomes sweet immediately after rainfall, but it quickly becomes of a brackish nature after the cessation of the rain.

Climate

The climate of Kuwait is often cool when the north-west wind, the Shamāl, is blowing; during the summer, the west wind blows cool from the desert all through the night. Kuwait has gained fame as having the mildest summer compared to other towns on the Arabian littoral of the Gulf. The Shaikhs of the Bani Kūlīd chose it as their summer resort soon after its establishment.

The name 'Kuwait'

The name Kuwait is the diminutive of the Arabic Kut or fortress. This may sufficiently indicate the insignificant origin of the town, which became the capital of the present Shaikhdom of Kuwait.

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2Al-Ẓina‘ī, Safaḥat min-Ta‘rīkh al-Kuwait, pp. 7-8.

3Ibid., p. 5.

4Father Anisṭās al-Karmalī, commenting on the origin of the denomination of Kuwait, says that "al Kuwait is the diminutive of Kut. The word

(cont.)
was also named Qurain, which is the diminutive of Qərn, a horn or a hill.¹

**Foundation of Kuwait**

To fix a certain date for the foundation of Kuwait is almost impossible for lack of evidence. The local tradition, preserved by Kuwaiti historians, however, gives the late seventeenth century as a

(continuation) 'Kut' in the language of southern 'Iraq and its neighbouring countries in Arabia and parts of Persia is the house that is built in the shape of a fortress or like it so as to be easily defended when attacked. This house is usually surrounded by other houses. The name 'Kut' is given to such a house when it only lies near water, whether it is river, sea, a lake or even a swamp. Then it was applied to the village built on such a site." He gives the examples Kut al-Ifranjī, Kut al-Zayn, Kut al-'Amāra and Kut Bandar. See the article "Fī Tasmiat Madīnat al-Kuwait", Al-Mashriq, X, (Bayrūt, 1904), pp.443-453.

¹An island a short distance to the west of Kuwait has the name Qurain.

I was told by Shaikh 'Abd Allāh b. Khālid al-Khalīfa that 'qurain' or little hill is a common name in Qatar and al-Hasa. It is worthwhile noting, in Eastern Arabia, that inclination towards diminution occurs not only in the names of places but also in the names of the rulers. The Banī Khālid give a clear example where the names Dujayn, 'Uray'ir and Sa'dūn were very common.
date. Al-Qina‘I, after stating that Kuwait had been first established by an Amīr of the Banī Khālid,\(^1\) thinks that it was built about the year 1100 A.H./1683 by Amīr Barrāk, ruler of the Banī Khālid.\(^2\) Al-Rashīd, another Kuwaitī historian, could only say that it was in the late seventeenth century that Kuwait was founded.\(^3\) According to al-Nabhānī, quoting the oral tradition, it was established as early as 1019 A.H./1611.\(^4\) ‘Uthmān b. Sanad, writing as early as 1800, could only say that Kuwait gained importance in the early eighteenth century.\(^5\)

The above-mentioned suggestions do all agree to the fact that Kuwait had been established before the opening of the eighteenth century. Al-Qina‘I suggests 1100/1683 and gives as his reason that Barrāk was the founder. This date must be fixed earlier if we remember that Barrāk was dead by 1100/1683. Barrāk ruled from 1080/1669 till his death in 1093/1682.\(^6\)

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\(^1\) The authority of the Banī Khālid in the seventeenth century extended to the north as far as the neighbourhood of Basra, see above, Chapter I, p. 76.

\(^2\) Safahāt min Ta‘rīkh al-Kuwait, p. 5.


\(^4\) Al-Nabhānī, Al-Tuhfa al-Khānīyya, Al-Kuwait, p. 126.

\(^5\) Sabā‘ik al-‘Asajad, p. 13. Ibn Sanad was speaking on Kuwait in the context of the arrival there of Rizq al-‘As‘ad, a well known and rich Kuwaitī merchant of the 18th century. His statement runs as follows: "It (Kuwait) had not been populated before the arrival of his (Ahmad's) great father except for a very short period."

The coming of the 'Utūb. The wandering stage.

Kuwait, however, might have been a small fishing centre in the seventeenth century, where some Bedouins had settled around that Kut built by the Amir of the Bani Khalid. To that small sea village came the 'Utūb, a collection of Arabian families.

The date of the arrival of the 'Utūb is also controversial, and both their name 'Utūb' and the track they followed are by no means certain.

The denomination 'Utūb

This federation of Arab families was referred to sometimes as Banī 'Utba,¹ and often as 'Utūb² Uttoobee or Banī 'Attaba.³ All these words derive from the Arabic root 'ataba, meaning to travel from one place to another.⁴ In the second half of the eighteenth century and

¹Sābā'ik al-ʿĀṣjad, p. 13.
²Lamʿ al-Shihāb, ff. 95, 101, 107.
³Francis Warden, "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobbe Tribe of Arabs, (Bahrein) etc." in Bombay Selections, pp. 362-372.
the early nineteenth, Arabic sources refer to them as 'Utub, a denomination which I shall be using all through the present work. Lieutenant-Colonel Dickson is inclined to think that the name 'Utub comes from the verb 'atala too, and he adds that the present Shaikh 'Abd Alläh al-Sâlim al-Sabâh, informed him that his forefathers were called by that name after their movement to the north, 'atala ila al-Shamâl'.

On the way to Kuwait

Whatever the origin of their name may be, all the authorities writing on Kuwait, early or late, agree that the 'Utub belong to 'Anaza, an 'Adnâni Arab tribe, inhabiting Najd and North Arabia. The Al-Sabâh, as well as other 'Utub families, claim to be a division of 'Anaza. The tradition, kept by the Al-Sabâh and Al-Khalîfa states that they belong

3 Ibid.
4 See al-Râshîd, Vol. I, p. 12 for the origin of the Al-Sabâh. The Al-Khalîfa claim the same descent, I was told of that by Shaikh 'Abd Alläh b. Khalîd Al-Khalîfa and that they were the descendants of the same Jumayla division of the 'Anaza.
to Jumayla, a sub-division of Anaza, and that they were originally dwelling at Haddar in al-Aflaj in Najd, whence they migrated to Qatar from which place they sailed to Kuwait. Though that tradition does not state clearly when that migration to Qatar took place, it might have been a part of the great 'Anaza emigration which took place at about the end of the seventeenth century.\(^1\) That great migration of the 'Anaza in the 18th century resulted in the arrival of the Ruwala in Syria.\(^2\) They were originally related families that migrated from Central Arabia, either together or separately, and temporarily settled in various places on the eastern coast of Arabia, but finally settled at Kuwait. No certain date can be given for the migration of the 'Utub.

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\(^1\) Oppenheim could not fix a date for that emigration, yet he states that Jumayla is still there at al-Aflaj. See M. von Oppenheim, *Die Beduinen*, (Leipzig 1939), Band I, p. 62. He states that the 'Utub were among them and that they migrated to Kuwait, but he does not give any date for this migration. See *Ibid* and Ashkenazi, "The 'Anaza Tribes", in *South-Western Journal of Anthropology*, New Mexico, 1948, pp. 222-239.

\(^2\) Anaza is usually divided into two groups, northern and southern. The Ruwala belong to the first. To the southern group belong Al-Su'ud, Al-Sabah and others. Cf. A. Musil, *The Manners and Customs of the Ruwala Bedouins*, (New York 1926), p. 46.
but, as I have already pointed out in Chapter I,\(^1\) the second half of
the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth were
years of drought in Central Arabia. The ‘Utūb must have been among
the tribes that moved to Eastern Arabia because of the drought.\(^2\) Local
tradition asserts that the ‘Utūb were living in al-Aflāj district in
Central Arabia. They were driven by drought eastward as far as Qaṭar,
then under the suzerainty of the Bani Khālid. Though no one is sure
of how they finally assembled in Kuwait, they must have learned sea-
far ing in Qaṭar or in al-Ḥasa, for this can explain the local author-
ities’ theory of how they sailed to the north. In fact, local tradi-
tion asserts that they had dispersed into various Persian Gulf ports
before coming to Kuwait.\(^3\) However, as far as local traditions are con-
cerned, they suggest three places, from one of which the ‘Utūb must
have arrived at Kuwait.

The first implies that they were living near Khor al-Ṣabbiyya to
the south of Basra, whence they were driven by the Ottoman Mutassallim
of Basra, because they used to raid the desert caravans coming to Basra.

\(^1\) See above, pp. 32-33.


\(^3\) Ṣafāḥat min Ṭaḥk al-Kuwait, p. 9; Al-Rashīd, *Taḥk al-Kuwait*, Vol. I,
pp. 15-16.
and to attack the shipping of the Shatt al-‘Arab. Another alternative is that those families were living on the Persian coast of the Gulf, whence they made their way by sea to Kuwait after being oppressed by the Arab tribes living there; while others are inclined to believe that they moved to Kuwait from Qatār sailing in their boats, as a result of their quarrels with the Al-Musallam Arabs of Qatār.

However, Al-Qinā‘ī resolves the dilemma when he says that the ‘Utūb originally inhabited Qatār after their departure from al-Aflāj. From Qatār the different families scattered into the various ports of the Persian Gulf littorals. And finally they all came to live together once more at Kuwait. He gives the example of his own family, Al-Qinā‘at, who came to Kuwait about two hundred years ago from the Persian littoral, ‘Iraq and the south, i.e. Qatār. Thus it is most probable that the

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1Al-Rashīd, op.cit., p. 16, and Al-Nabhānī, Al-Tuhfa, al-Kuwait, p. 123.
2Qays Island, ‘Abadan and other places are given as their settlements before moving to Kuwait. Cf. Ṣafahat min Ta‘rikh al-Kuwait, p. 9.
3This is the local tradition, told to me personally by Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh b. Khālid Al-Khalīfa. The Al-Khalīfa tradition states that the Al-Khalīfa branch of the ‘Utūb was inhabiting Kuwait earlier than the Al-Sabāḥ, cf. Nabhānī, op.cit., p. 123.
4Al-Qinā‘at. Al-Qinā‘ī in his Ṣafahat speaks of the Qinā‘at at Kuwait, Zubara, Başra and Najd. It is not quite clear from where they came to Kuwait. According to him (p. 100), they might have come from northern

(cont.)
'Utūb came from the south after spending not less than half a century after their arrival from Al-Aflāj, a passage of time which taught them how to become sea-farers and sail to Kuwait.

Arrival at Kuwait

The date of the 'Utūb's arrival at Kuwait is not certain. Yet here we have to distinguish between the coming of the Al-Ṣabāḥ, whose chief Ṣabāḥ b. Jābir rose to power and became the Shaikh of Kuwait in the 1750's, and the other 'Utūb families. Though Mr. Warden and other officers of the Bombay Government¹ state that about the year 1716 the Al-Ṣabāḥ, with two important branches of the 'Utūb, namely the Al-Khalīfa and Al-Jalāhima, occupied Kuwait and started to direct the affairs of the place, there is a great deal of conjecture in the state-

(continuation) 'Iraq, where they had been settling for some time before.

As for their genealogy, they originally belonged to the Suhāl Arabs.

It seems also that some of them migrated to Zubāra with or after the emigration of Al-Khalīfa in 1766. Soon after the desertion of Zubāra by its inhabitants in 1213/1798, some of the Qīnā'at migrated to Bahrain Islands and others to Persia (see Ibid., pp. 99-100). At Manama town in Bahrain there is a quarter called after them (Ibid.).

¹See "Historical Sketch of the Uttoohee Tribe of Arabs etc." in Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 140. This article, by Lieutenant Kemball, depends on previous articles written by Mr. Warden in 1817. Kemball wrote it in 1844.
ment. In the first place all the 'Utūb did not arrive at one time. Some families arrived there before the others. 1 Secondly, the statement is an anachronism, for, in the year 1716 neither Ṣabāḥ nor Khaļīfa were the chiefs of their families, as is stated there. 2 Yet this should in no way mean that the predecessors of Ṣabāḥ b. Jabir were not at Kuwait in the beginning of the eighteenth century. 3

1 Safaḥī, p. 9, and Al-Rašīd, Ta'rikh al-Kuwait, I, pp. 14-16.

2 The statement runs as follows:

"About A.D. 1716, three considerable tribes of Arabs, called the Bani Sabah, Al Yalahima, and Al Khaleefa, urged by motives of interest or ambition, entered into a compact, and took possession of a spot of ground on the north-western shore of the Persian Gulf, called Kuwait. The Bani Sabah were subject at this time to Shaikh Suleyman bin Ahmed; the Bani Yalahima to Jaubir bin Uttooobee; and the Bani Khaleefa to Khaleefa bin Mahomed." "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobee Tribe of Arabs, etc." p. 362.

3 Local tradition among the Shaikhs of the Al-Khalīfa says, according to what Shaikh 'Abd Allāh b. Khalid Al-Khalīfa told me, that their family came to Kuwait earlier than the Al-Ṣabāḥ, and the head of the 'Utūb was the ruler of Kuwait, and perhaps this is why the Al-Khalīfa migrated in 1766 to Zubāra when 'Abd Allāh Al-Ṣabāḥ came to be the Shaikh of Kuwait. See below, p. 122.
Rulers of Kuwait, 1700-1750.

There is nothing clear about the rulers of Kuwait in the first half of the century in the consulted records of the English East India Company, the writings of travellers, or the local tradition. Yet it seems that Kuwait, until the early 1750's, was under the direct rule of the Banū Khālid ʿAmīr. The opening of the eighteenth century saw the strong rule of Saʿdūn b. Muḥammad b. Ghurair ʿAl-Ḥamīd. After the death of Saʿdūn, his brother ʿAţī occupied the seat of government, after a struggle with Dujāyn b. Saʿdūn and Mūnayyī. Sulaymān, a third brother of Saʿdūn and ʿAţī became the ruler of Eastern Arabia in the same year.

The struggle for the Shāikhship among the members of the ruling family of the Banū Khālid, that started after the decease of Saʿdūn in 1722, seems to have given other tribes who were tributaries of the Banū Khālid some sort of local independence, though at the same time they remained loyal to the Banū Khālid. In the case of Kuwait that

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 27.
independence was not achieved till after the 1750's. Mr. Warden, in his sketch of the 'Utūb, which was compiled in 1817, gives the name of Sulaymān b. Ahmad as the Shaikh of the Sabāh family as early as 1716. ¹ But since no local tradition and no other source besides Mr. Warden's report gives the name of any Sulaymān as the first ruler of the 'Utūb at Kuwait from the Sabāh family, the Al-Khālīfa local tradition may prove helpful in this place, otherwise the Governor may have been of the Banī Khālid. The Al-Khālīfa tradition states that one of them was ruling in Kuwait prior to the Al-Sabāh. Khālīfa, after whom the family was named, and who migrated to Zubūra in Qaṭar in the year 1766, was the son of Muḥammad b. Faiṣal. The Khālīfa version of their rule in Kuwait gives the names Muḥammad and Faiṣal as their chiefs in Kuwait before their departure to Zubūra. These two names could not be mistaken for the Sulaymān of Mr. Warden's report.

In my opinion Sulaymān b. Ahmad, whom Mr. Warden believed to be the ruler of Al-Sabāh, is the same Sulaymān b. Muḥammad or Sulaymān Al-Ḥamīd, ruler of the Banī Khālid tribes from 1736–1752. ² This theory can be supported on the following grounds. First, it is easy to give the name Ahmad for Al-Ḥamīd when mentioning the ruler's family name,

¹ "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs" etc., in Bombay Selections, p. 362.
as long as his first name is properly stated, in this case Sulaymán.

In the second place, the ‘Utūb, according to local tradition, came to live at Kuwait with the permission of the Banī Khālid ruler. To this one can add that the power of the Banī Khālid remained strong and centralized in the hands of one Shaikh till the decease of Sulaymán bin Muhammad Al-Ḥamīd in the year 1752. Family disputes that started after the death of Saʿdūn in the year 1722 were not of so great a consequence as to give the ‘Utūb a chance of complete independence, a chance which became greater from 1752 onwards, not only because of the dissensions in the Āl-Ḥamīd family, but also because of the emergence of the Wahhābī power in Central Arabia and its impact on the territories of the Banī Khālid.

The rise of Sabāḥ, 1752.

Thus Sulaymán can only by the Amir of the Banī Khālid, who was finally driven out of al-Ḥasā by ‘Urayrīr b. Saʿdūn, and who died in exile at al-Kharj in southern Najd in 1166/1752. These internal struggles among the ruling family of the Banī Khālid gave the ‘Utūb the chance to practise some sort of independence.

1Ṣafāḥat min Taʾrīkh al-Kuwait, p. 9; Al-Nabhaṇī, Al-Tuhfa al-Nabhaṇīyya, al-Kuwait, pp. 128-129.  
Local traditions, though not sure of a certain date for Ṣabāh’s rise to power, relate that he was chosen by the inhabitants of Kuwait after the tribal fashion to administer justice and the affairs of the thriving town. Before Ṣabāh, his family do not seem to have attained any fame. His father Ḥabir was never mentioned in contemporary traditions.

Ṣabāh’s name was not even given by the earliest European travellers who mentioned the name of Kuwait in their accounts, though they said that Kuwait was ruled by a Shaikh.

Relations with the Dutch – Dr. Ives at Kharij, 1758 – limits of the Shaikh’s authority.

But as early as 1758 Ṣabāh’s authority seems to have been very well established over Kuwait and its vicinity. And, as a result of


Shaikh Muhammad b. ‘Īsā Al-Khalīf, when asked by al-Shamlān about the father of Ṣabāh I, answered that he was named Ḥabir. Shaikh Muhammad quoted a verse that used to be sung by Al-Bin ‘Alī on their departure from Kuwait on their way to Qatār in the 1750’s, the translation of which is: 0 for him who could tell the most generous Ṣabāh b. Ḥabir how we are directing our sails to our end strongly. Al-Shamlān, op. cit., p. 105.
the commercial success of the town, Kuwait became an important place of call for the desert caravans coming from Aleppo. From Kuwait the caravans used to carry goods that were imported from India by Kuwaiti vessels, and at the same time passengers who wanted to travel from the Persian Gulf, via the desert, to Aleppo in Syria, used to join those caravans from there. The story of Dr. Ives and his fellow travellers with the Shaikh of Kuwait is worth rendering in this place, for it is the first instance where Kuwait is mentioned in the work of a European traveller.

In March 1758 Dr. Ives, with other travellers, anchored at Khārij Island on their way from India to Europe. When Dr. Ives and his party asked Baron Kniphausen, the head of the Dutch settlement at Khārij, the quickest way to get to Aleppo, the latter suggested that they should travel by felucca (boat) to Kuwait, where the Shaikh was "a man greatly obliged to him and in some measure under his influence", and at Kuwait join the caravan proceeding from thence by the desert to Aleppo. That desert route would be covered in twenty-five or thirty days, and would save them at least from two to four weeks compared with travelling by boat to Baṣra and Baghdad.

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1Ives, op.cit., p. 207.

2For an account of Khārij Island, see Dr. Ives, Voyages, pp. 207-216., Niebuhr, Voyages en Arabie, II, pp. 149-166. Parsous, op.cit., pp. 190-198;
"That desert route the Baron knew it to be a road frequented by people of trade and that an European, attended only by a single servant, had safely travelled over it."¹

Arrangements were made by which a Felucca was sent from Khārij to Kuwait to fetch the Shaikh on the 31st March, but it did not return until the 14th April and on it was "the long expected Arab".² Negotiations were carried out between the Shaikh and Baron Kniphausen as to the amount the English travellers should pay for their conveyance from Kuwait to Aleppo. The Shaikh said that they should pay two thousand piastres.³, while the Baron offered from one thousand to eleven hundred, and thus negotiations failed and the Shaikh returned to his town and the travellers proceeded by vessel to Baṣra.⁴

"The Shaikh", says Dr. Ives, "after negotiation was broken off, waited upon the Baron, and remonstrated after this manner, 'You use me very unkindly, Sir. Pray what are these travellers to you? I and my tribe have been in friendship with you for a long time, and I could not have expected that you would thus have given the preference to strangers.'"⁵

¹Ives, op. cit., p. 207.
²Ibid., p. 222.
³Eight hundred piastres make one thousand rupees, or one hundred and twenty-five pounds sterling. See Ibid., p. 223.
⁴Ibid., pp. 222-224.
⁵Ibid., p. 224.
Lorimer, when commenting on the arrival of the Shaikh at Khārij, and trying to prove that the latter was "under the influence" of the Baron, seems to be affected by the wording of Dr. Ives in his narrative. In fact the Shaikh's relations with the Dutch were on an equal footing. Both the Baron and Shaikh Sabāh benefited from carrying trade by a route avoiding Basra, the Baron because of hostilities with the Pasha of Basra that one day led him to prison, and the Shaikh because of the pecuniary gains he could get from merchandise carried through his town.

The Shaikh's sphere of influence

This conveyance of trade both by sea and the desert must have put the Shaikh into direct contact with his neighbours. Though it is very difficult to fix a limit to the area under the control of the Shaikh during the first half of the eighteenth century, one can say that his influence might have extended outside the walls of his town. From his story with Dr. Ives and how he promised the traveller a safe arrival at Aleppo, it appears that the Arabs of the desert route from Kuwait to Aleppo were on good terms with him.

However, there is no written evidence to show the limit of the 'Utub suzerainty north of Kuwait, but it must have extended to Jahra.

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village, whose wells had a water of better quality than that of Kuwait. Away from the mainland, near-by islands like Qurain, Umm al-Naml and Failaka were under the rule of the Shaikh. The wealth of the Shaikh, and consequently of the town, can be judged from his refusal of the Baron's offer of one thousand piastres where he had asked for two thousand, in spite of the fact that the whole deal was liable to bargaining.

The Shaikh's resources

This rapid growth of the 'Utbi town can be attributed to the bulk of trade that was carried by the merchants of Kuwait and other merchants who used Kuwait as a station for the caravans that carried their goods from southern and eastern Arabia to Syria. Pearl fishing formed another source of wealth, by which, according to Niebuhr, the town kept busy a fleet of over eight hundred small boats. It may be interesting to note that the 'Utub used to sail to the south for pearl fishing, because the vicinity of Bahrain was the richest place in pearls in the Bani Khalid territory.

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1Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, pp. 286, 296.
2The caravan by which Dr. Ives and his companions were supposed to travel consisted of 5000 camels and one thousand men. See his Voyage, p. 222.
3Niebuhr, Description, p. 296.
4For pearl fishing, see Chapter VI, p. 314-316.
The 'Utbī families

Other 'Utbī families besides Āl-Ṣabāḥ, the ruling Shaikh, shared in the ease of conveyance of merchandise and in the pearl fishery. Among the first families mentioned by local traditions and in the Records of the Bombay Government are Āl-Jalāhima, Āl-Khalīfa, Āl-Zayid, Āl-Ghanīm, Āl-Badr, Āl-Kūmī, Āl-Khālid, Āl-Qina‘āt, Āl-Sa‘īf and others.¹

Description of the early settlement

These families seem from the very beginning to have settled in a way that made every part of the town take a certain family or more. The town was thus divided into "Ḥayy-Sharq" (People of the East), Qiblī or Jiblī, i.e. the West, because this is the direction of Makka, and the Waṣṣat, or centre. In the central quarter lived Āl-Ṣabāḥ.²

The town's wall

Local tradition states that the town was not walled from the very beginning because the authority of the Bani Khalid was respected by

¹Ṣafāḥat min Ta'rikh al-Kuwait, p. 67; Min Ta'rikh al-Kuwait, p. 115. "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobee Tribe, etc." p. 362. Some of these families are living nowadays both at Bahrain and Kuwait, e.g. Āl-Jalāhima, who are called in Kuwait Āl-Naṣf. See Al-Rašîd, Vol. I, p. 18.
²The 'Utbī and other newcomers to the town kept those divisions till the last ten years, when new town planning carried people out of Kuwait town, when the wall was demolished in 1956.
other Bedouin tribes. But when the Banî Khālid lost their influence, as a result of internal struggles between members of the ruling branch, Kuwait was walled, but these local authorities do not give a date for the building of the wall. Yet we can roughly say that it was begun in about 1760, i.e. about eight years after the Banî Khālid had lost much of their influence among the Arab tribes. This wall was built of mud. Heavy rain used to damage most of it, yet it served as a defence against Bedouin raids as late as the early twentieth century. The reason for building a wall around Kuwait as given by local historians was to defend the town against the aggression of neighbouring Arab tribes, when the Banî Khālid's influence was shaken, as previously mentioned.¹

Thus, though no definite date is given by local authorities for the building of the wall, one can say that it might therefore have been built during the reign of Sabāh, because it was then that the Banî Khālid's rule began to totter. The East India Company Records clearly state that the town was walled as early as the 1770's.²

Early Administration

This lack of protection for the town made the local Shaikh, Sabāh, exercise more power. Local tradition states that Sabāh was chosen by

¹Ṣaḥḥat min Ta'rīkh al-Kuwait, p. 13.
²F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, dispatch No. 1152, paragraph J.
the different families so that his rule may not have been as despotic as one would have expected. This is due in the first place to the fact that the ‘Utub from the very beginning were settler Arabs, not nomads. The nomadic stage came to an end after their departure from Qatār early in the seventeenth century. Though the powers of the Arab Shaikhs were extremely great at that time in Arabia, the Shaikh of Kuwait had to consult his townspeople every now and then, especially where commercial interests were concerned. If we can judge from what happened later in about 1775, when Bagra was occupied by the Persians, and when many of its merchants moved to Kuwait and Zubara, the ‘Utub settlements, we can say that the merchants of Kuwait did really share in the politics of their town.

Administration of Justice

The Shaikh, as in almost every part of Arabia then, had to see that justice was evenly distributed among his people. In practising that, he was expected to resort either to the Qur’ān and Shari‘a law

1 Al-Qinā‘ī, Safahat, p. 41.
2 Ibid.
3 The ruler’s family shares in the trade of the town today, a thing which the Al-Ṣabāḥ had to work into as their number grow.
or to the ʿurf or the Salīfa (custom), which is practised by experience. The two local Kuwaitī historians who tackled this problem, namely al-Qināʿī and al-Rašīd, state that Kuwait did not see the Sharīʿa law working all through the eighteenth century and even after that.

It was not necessary in this case to ask the ruler to intervene, as it was the custom to ask any man thought to have the required prudence to settle any conflict. In the case of the ʿUtbi rule in Kuwait, and later in Zubūra, it can be assumed that what was customary at al-Ḥasā was carried with the ʿUtbi to these places. In other words, there must have been a judge (Qādi) at Kuwait from the start. ʿUlamaʿ or learned men were in abundance at al-Ḥasā in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. ʿUthmān b. Sanad, in his work Sabāʾik al-ʿAṣidā, gives the biographies of twenty ʿUlamaʿ who were mostly his contemporaries, i.e. late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Their influence was great, not only on the people but also on the rulers. Almost every town in al-Ḥasā and Najd had its school of ʿUlamaʿ. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, the great Wahhābī reformer, was the son of Shaikh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b.
Sulaymān, the Qādi of ‘Uyayna. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb had to fight hard against the other ‘Ulama’ to convince them of his teachings. He had travelled to various towns in Najd and Hijāz in the 1720’s, where he listened to the ‘Ulama’ in Makka, Madīna and other towns of Hijāz.¹

Among the biographies Uthmān b. Sanad gives in the above-mentioned work is that of Shaikh Muḥammad b. Fayruz² and his son Shaikh ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. Muḥammad b. Fayruz.³ The name of the first is given by the local tradition of Kuwayt as the first judge of the town.⁴ The date given by al-Raḥīd and al-Qinā’ī for the death of Muḥammad b. Fayruz is 1135 A.H./1722. Yet they state that Ṣabāḥ was the first ruler and ibn Fayruz was the Qādi during his reign.⁵ As we have already seen that Ṣabāḥ could not have come to power earlier than 1752, we have to say that both al-Qinā’ī and al-Raḥīd are mistaken in giving Shaikh Muḥammad b. Fayruz’s death at that date. Uthmān b. Sanad gave the year 1146 A.H./1733 for ibn Fayruz’s birth and the year 1216/1801 for his death.⁶ He added that ibn Fayruz was born in Hajar (al-

¹ Ibn Ghannām, op. cit., pp. 30-31; Lam‘ al-Shihāb, ff. 6-7.
² Saba‘īk al‘Asjad, pp. 93-94.
³ Ibid., p. 96.
⁴ Saffahat min Ta‘rīkh al-Kuwayt, pp. 35-36; Al-Raḥīd, Ta‘rīkh al-Kuwayt, Vol. I, pp. 75-76.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Saba‘īk al‘Asjad, p. 96.
Hāsa) and buried in Zubair, a town between Basra and Kuwait. As it was natural for these 'Ulama' to travel from one town to another, I am inclined to think that the dates 'Uthman b. Sanad gives are correct, while the year 1135/1722 is not.

However, from the facts stated about Ibn Fayruz and his job as the first Qādī in Kuwait, and from the dates given by Ibn Sanad for his birth and death, we can decide that Ibn Fayruz was the first Qādī of Kuwait, and that he officiated under the rule of Shāikha Sabāh.

'Abd Allāh b. Sabāh, the second ruler, 1762.

If local traditions do not agree on the date when Sabāh was chosen as ruler, they differ greatly on the date of his death. Only one gives it as 1190 A.H./1776, which is not right. Sabāh left five male descendents: Salmān, Mālij, Mubārak, Muḥammad and 'Abd Allāh, who was the youngest. All local traditions agree that the youngest was chosen as his successor for special merits, such as bravery, justice, wisdom, and generosity, which an Arab usually desires to see in his Shāikha.

1Sabā'ik al-'Ajad, p. 96.
2Al-Qinā'ī gives the following list of Qādīs in Kuwait:

1. Muḥammad b. Fayruz.

They were all Qādīs in the town of Kuwait during the 18th century. It
Lorimer, writing his chronicle after the East India Company Records, states that 'Abd Allāh became ruler in about 1762. Uthman b. Sanad, though not giving an exact date, shows that 'Abd Allāh was ruling for some years before 1188/1774. Al-Qina‘ī gives the year 1229 A.H./1813 for 'Abd Allāh's death. Al-Rashīd gives the same date. Al-Qina‘ī adds that he ruled for about seventy years, which means that he became Shaikh in 1159/1746. But as this is inconsistent with what we have discussed concerning the rise of Sabāḥ as Shaikh in 1752, the year 1762 can be fixed as the year of his rise to power. This year can give an explanation for one of the main reasons for the emigration of the Al-Khalīfa from Kuwait to Zubara in Qatar four years later in the year 1180/1766. Though the question of the departure of Al-Khalīfa will be

(cont.) may be worthwhile noticing that three of them were of the Al-'Adṣānī family who originally came from al-Ḥaṣā. (See Al-Qina‘ī, op. cit. p. 36, and Al-Rashīd, op. cit., p. 76). The dates in the list are given according to Al-Qina‘ī.


4Saḥaṭ min Ta’rīkh al-Kuwait, p. 10; Al-Rashīd, Ta’rīkh al-Kuwait, Vol. II, p. 2.

1Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Vol. IV, Table 9.

2Saba‘ik al-‘Asjad, p. 18.

3Saḥaṭ, p. 10.

discussed in the following chapter, yet we can mention here that local tradition gives as one of the reasons for their emigration the fact that 'Abd Allah succeeded his father and not one of his cousins, i.e. the Al-Khalīfa, who were the Shaikhs of the 'Utbū at Kuwait before Sabāh b. Jābir. That emigration took place in 1180 A.H./1766. Thus 'Abd Allah must have become ruler some time before 1766.2

Conclusion

Thus, through all the first half of the eighteenth century, the 'Utbū were establishing themselves in Kuwait. They chose their Shaikh Sabāh, after whom the present ruling family was named, in about 1750. Sabāh was succeeded by his son 'Abd Allah, in the 1760's, and it was during his early rule that the Al-Khalīfa division of the 'Utbī coalition emigrated to Qatar where they established Zubāra, the second 'Utbī settlement.

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1 This is what Shaikh 'Abdallāh b. Khalīd Al-Khalīfah told me personally.

2 See Sabā'ik al-'Asjad, p. 13; and "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobee Tribe of Arabs, etc." in Bombay Selections, p. 362.
Chapter III

THE GROWTH OF KUWAIT -

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ZUBARA, 1766 -

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE 'UTĪ ī

NAVAL POWER (1762 - 1775)
Chapter III

THE GROWTH OF KUWAIT -
The Establishment of Zubara, 1766 -

The Beginnings of the 'Utbi Naval Power (1762 - 1775)

This chapter will follow the progress the 'Utbi settlements of Kuwait and Zubara made until 1775. During its duration certain developments took place in Kuwait. These led to the emigration of the Al-Khalifa to the south. They were followed by other 'Utbi families, most famous among whom were the Al-Jalahima. The various questions relating to this 'Utbi movement and the relations of the 'Utbi with the different influential powers will therefore be attempted in this place.

The 'Utbi settlement of Kuwait began to flourish rapidly after the 1750's, and by the 1760's it began to draw the attention of other rival Arab powers in the Gulf. The position of other powers besides these, namely the Persians, the Ottomans and the English East India Company, did not hinder that growth. For the Persians, as formerly stated, had neither the sea power nor the internal peace to think even of their own coast of the Gulf. The Ottoman Pasha in Baghdad and the Mutasallim of Baghra were no better off than the Persians, and they did not seem to be ready to molest the Banî Khalid predominance on the 
eastern shores of the Gulf. To the East India Company the 'Utūb had so far given no trouble. Until then piracy had never been a characteristic of the 'Utūb.¹ The only force that could directly affect the 'Utūb, namely, the Wahhābī power, was still not consolidated. Direct contact with the maritime Arab powers in the Gulf did not start till the year 1766, when a part of the 'Utūb moved southwards and chose Zubāra in Qatār as their new settlement.² The most powerful Arabs on the Persian littoral of the Gulf were then the Bani Ka‘b, whose stronghold was at Dawraq,³ the Arabs of Bandar Riq and the Arabs of Abū Shahr.⁴

¹See "Historical Sketch of the Jawāsmī," etc. in Bombay Selections, XXIV., p. 307.
³Bani Ka‘b originally came from Najd in the seventeenth century and established themselves to the east of Başra on the Persian-Ottoman borders. See Niebuhr's Description de l'Arabie, pp. 276-277.
⁴The last two tribes came originally from 'Uman. The Shaikh of Bandar Riq was Mīr muhanna, and he came from the Bani Sa‘b tribe. The ruler of Abū Shahr, Shaikh Naqr, belonged to the Maṭārīsh, an 'Umanī tribe. There were other Arab tribes living in the area under the domination of these two Shaikhs, cf. Ibid., pp. 273-80.
The Ka‘b activities

Those Arabs living on the northern and eastern shores of the Gulf did not show any interest in Kuwait till the 1760’s when, due to the growing sea trade of the ‘Utub, and the growing trend towards piracy among the Ka‘b, the latter began to hinder the ‘Utub trade. Banī Ka‘b were not only threatening the trade of Kuwait, but also the East India Company’s trade that was destined for their Factory at Bāṣra. Karīm Khān Zand, the Vakīl of Persia, tried, but unsuccessfully, to subdue Shaikh Sulaymān in 1759. An Anglo-Ottoman expedition against the capital, Dawraq, in 1765, proved fruitless.

The Wahhābīs move

In the west, the Wahhābīs were trying very hard to consolidate their power in Central Arabia. At the same time they started to expand eastwards at the expense of the Banī Khālid. The late 1750’s and the early 1760’s show that the Wahhābīs were not an equal match for the Banī Khālid. The two Wahhābī chroniclers, Ibn Ghannām and Ibn Bishr,

1Local tradition in Kuwait states that the enmity between the Banī Ka‘b and Al-Ṣabāḥ started when Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh Al-Ṣabāḥ refused to give his daughter (some say his sister) in marriage to Shaikh Sulaymān of the Banī Ka‘b. See Ta’rīkh al-Kuwayt, Vol. II, p. 3.

2The Persian Gulf, op. cit., p. 184.
clearly point out this fact when chronicling the events of 1171/1757 and 1172/1758. However, Abī al-'Azīz, the Wāhhabī Amīr, raided al-Ḥasa in 1176/1762. But two years later 'Ara' ar b. Dujayn b. Sa'dūn, the Shaikh of Bānī Khalīd, tried twice in 1178/1764 to occupy al-Dir'iyya, the Wāhhabī capital. The author of Lam' al-Shihāb states that 'Ara' ar did not molest the Wāhhabīs for seven years, which ended in 1764, because the Wāhhabīs demanded peace; peace might have been planned for seven years, but 'Ara' ar did not keep his promise, and took the opportunity of attacking the Wāhhabīs who were fighting against two great opponents, namely Dāḥīm b. Dāwās, the chief of al-Riyyād, and the 'Ajman tribes of the Yaman.

Al-Khālīfa move to Zubāra

This unsettled state of affairs in Arabia, Persia and Ottoman 'Iraq made it possible for a large division of the 'Utūb to depart from Kuwait and establish a new settlement at Zubāra in Qatār.

Reasons for the departure of the Al-Khālīfa,

Local tradition among the 'Utūb of Kuwait gives as a major reason

4Lam' al-Shihāb, ff. 43-44.
behind the emigration of Al-Khalīfa the above-mentioned disputes with the Bani Kaʿb which led to the humiliation of Al-Šabāh and consequently of the settlers at Kuwait. Al-Khalīfa did not like to come to terms with the Kaʿb or did not like the policy of Al-Šabāh, the ruling family, and thus migrated to Zubara. Though this reason sounds very convincing, it cannot stand as the only reason explaining the emigration.

Mr. Francis Warden, in his "Historical Sketch of the ‘Utūb", after stating that Kuwait, having attained in the first fifty years (1716-1766) a very high degree of prosperity, goes on to say that "the accumulation of wealth rendered the mercantile branch (Al-Khalīfa) desirous of seceding from the original league, that they might singly enjoy to add to their acquired riches". He continues that Al-Khalīfa, then under the chieftainship of Khalīfa b. Muḥammad, whose name the family bore, "were obliged to have recourse to dissimulation to effect their purpose": Khalīfa undertook to accomplish it. He represented to the other two, the Al-Šabāh and Al-Jalāhima, the prospects of wealth that presented themselves by proceeding to the shores of that part of the Persian Gulf, the most productive of pearls, and, by forming a settlement

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2 Jalāhima are known today as Al-Nisf, and they are represented both at Kuwait and Bahrain by rich merchants.
on some contiguous spot, conducting the fishery themselves. The Al-
Sabāḥ agreed to this plan of their kinsman's, and thus Khalīfa started,
with a great number of his family, towards the south.¹

To the above-mentioned factors given for the emigration of Khalīfa² and his family, it is worthwhile rendering the story told by
the Al-Khalīfa now which says that Khalīfa's grandfather was ruling
at Kuwait or wherever the 'Utub might have been before that. This
grandfather, Faisal by name, gave his daughter in marriage to Jabir,
the father of Shaikh Sabāḥ. When Shaikh Sabāḥ was chosen as ruler,
his uncles did not object to that choice, hoping that the next ruler
would be chosen from Faisal's branch. But the choice of 'Abd Allāh,
the youngest son of Sabāḥ, irritated Khalīfa, who was expecting to
take over after Sabāḥ, and made him depart from Kuwait.³

¹ "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe etc." Bombay Selections,

² Al-Qinā'ī mistakenly gives the name of Muhammad b. Khalīfa instead of
Khalīfa, Safahat, p. 11., while Ibn Sanad, who is more authoritative,
being contemporary with the events described, gives the name of Khalīfa
with the title of "Ashraf Banī 'Utba", the noblest among the 'Utub,
Sabā'īk al-'Asiad, p. 19.

³ This may explain why Ibn Sanad refers to Khalīfa as "Ashraf Banī 'Utba",
see above. I was told of this tradition by the above-mentioned Shaikh
'Abd Allāh b. Khalīd Al-Khalīfa.
The choice of Zubāra.

The departure of Khālīfa and his followers was undoubtedly affected by sea. The 'Utūb had already established their sea power and knew how to sail the Gulf in safety. They shared in the pearl fishery seasons¹ by sending their boats to the shores of the Gulf near Bahrāin and Qaṭar where everybody was free to indulge in this trade without any restrictions other than paying a certain amount of money to the ruler either of Bahrāin or Qaṭar. They had already shared in the conveyance of merchandise to the different ports of the Gulf, and hence they were apprenticing themselves for future sea venturers. On their way to the south, and before landing at Zubāra, the emigrants called at Bahrāin where they tried to land and settle, having formerly touched at the place, but the rulers of Bahrāin, the Banī Maḏḥūr Arabs, would not allow them to halt. Bahrāin was then under the suzerainty of the Shaikh of Abū Shahr, who in his turn recognised the authority of the Shāh of Persia and used to pay him irregular tribute on behalf of Abū Shahr and Bahrāin.²

However, the coming to Zubāra was not all of a sudden. The place was well known to the 'Utūb, not only because of their former experience on land when they first came to Qaṭar, before settling at Kuwait, but

¹Pearl fishing takes place in the hot months of the summer, see Carsten Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 286; "Report on the Trade of Arabia, etc." in Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, pp. 407-408.
²Carsten Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, pp. 284-286.
also because they carried trade to and from Bahraīn, Qaṭar and Al-Ḥasā by sea and by land.¹

**Surroundings of Zubāra**

Nevertheless the emigrants chose Zubāra as a settlement, but before describing this settlement let us for a while try to acquaint ourselves with the local powers that could affect it. Though our information on Zubāra is very scanty, yet it is sufficient as regards its environs. A strong Arab tribe was ruling Qaṭar peninsula, who were called Al-Musallam. The Al-Musallam were there when the 'Utūb left Qaṭar for Kuwait early in the eighteenth century. They paid tribute to the Banī Khālid who were, as previously stated, ruling al-Ḥasā and all the eastern coasts of Arabia from Qaṭar in the south to the vicinity of Baṣra in the north. Good relations were still prevailing between the ‘Utūb and the Banī Khālid. Thus the ‘Utūb did not meet with any resistance when they landed on the western coast of Qaṭar and in the territory of the Banī Khālid. To the north of Zubāra lie Bahraīn

¹Desert caravans used to come from 'Uman in the south of Arabia to Baṣra and Alep in the north, c.f. Ives, op.cit., p. 222; Carsten Niebuhr, *Description de l'Arabie*, p. 295; "Report on the Trade of Arabia bordering on the Persian Gulf", p. 406+9. For the 'Utūb trade see Chapter VI below.
Islands, then and earlier called Awal by the Arabs. The Bahrain Islands were then under the direct rule of the Arabs of Abu Shahr. Their inhabitants were a mixture of Arab tribes, the majority of whom were of Huwala extraction. Bahrain was, more or less, coveted for its pearl fisheries and its vast palm plantations that produced a yearly income of a lakh of rupees, most of which was spent on maintaining the garrison of Awal.

Description of Zubara

The emigrating 'Utub, after being prevented from landing at Awal, sailed to the east, where they landed at Zubara. It is not possible to give a detailed description of Zubara at that time, mainly because no reference to it was made earlier than 1766, and because its prosperity did not continue for more than forty-four years, until it was attacked and damaged by the Sultan of Masqat in 1810/11.

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1 Carsten Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 284.
2 Ibid., p. 286.
3 Ibid.
4 See Chapter VI on Pearl Fishery, p. 314.
5 "Chronological Table of Events" in Bombay Selections, XXIV, pp. 124, 141; "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobee Tribe, etc." p. 368 in Ibid.
However, we can draw a picture of Zubāra from later accounts by the officers of the English East India Company,¹ and from local tradition.

Situation

Zubāra, now a ruined and deserted town, lies on the western side of the Qatar promontory, about five miles south of Khūr Ḥassān.² It

¹Two of these reports were compiled, the first in 1818 by Captain Robert Taylor, Assistant Political Agent in Turkish Arabia, the second by Captain George Barnes Brucks of the Indian Navy in 1822-29. Captain Brucks was one of five officers of the Indian Navy who from 1821 to 1829 worked on a survey of the navigation of the Persian Gulf.

²This town was the resort of the Jalāhimā, an ‘Utbi division who later turned pirates after the establishment of Zubāra in 1766 and the conquest of Bahrain in 1782. See "Sketch of the Proceedings (from 1809-1813) of Rahmah bin Jaubir, Chief of Khūr Ḥassān", prepared by Mr. Francis Warden, Member of Council at Bombay; with Continuation to the Period of that Chief's Death in 1826; "A Brief Sketch of the Proceedings (down to the year 1831) of Shaikh Busheer bin Rahmah, son and successor of the above Chief"; by Lieutenant S. Hennele, Assistant Resident in the Persian Gulf, in Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, pp. 521-529.
stands at the foot of a deep bay of the same name, of which the
western point is Rās-‘Ushairij, and which contains a small island
also called Zubāra. Thus from the different descriptions of Zubāra
we can infer a possible picture of the town in the 1760's and after.

Captain Robert Taylor in 1818 states that Zubāra had then 400 houses,
and its people were allied to those of Khor Ḥassān, i.e. Al-Jalāhima.

Captain G. B. Brucks, writing in 1824, says "Zubāra is in latitude
26°N., long. 51° 8' 30"E. It is a large town, now in ruins. It is

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1It is interesting to note that Qurain (Kuwait), the early ‘Utbī
settlement, also has an island named Qurain; and Rās ‘Ushairij is
common to two promontories both at Kuwait and Zubāra. Zubāra was
described at the beginning of the present century by J. G. Lorimer,
who visited the various sites of the Persian Gulf in 1904, before
compiling his authoritative work, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf.

2"Extract from Brief Notes, containing Historical and other Information
connected with the Province of Oman, Muskat, and the Adjoining Country;
the Islands of Bahrein, Ormus, Kishm, and Karrack; and other Ports and
Places in the Persian Gulf", prepared, in the Year 1818, by Captain

3See note on the map facing p. 531 of the Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV.
situated in a bay, and has been, before it was destroyed, a place of considerable trade". He adds that the place had but very few inhabitants, and that it was "originally the principal of the Uttooobee Tribe, until they separated". Lorimer gives more detailed information of the town's fortifications when he says that "the town was the stronghold of Al-Khalīfa, the ruling family of Bahrain"; and that it was "walled and some 10 or 12 forts stood within a radius of 7 miles round it, among them Puraiyah, Ḥalwān, Līsha, 'Ain Muhammad, Qal'at Murair, Rakaiyāt, Umm-āl Shirwail and Thaghab. All of these are now (1904) ruinous and deserted, except Thaghab, which the people of Khūr Ḥassān visit to draw water. Murair is said to have been connected with the sea by a creek, which enabled sailing boats to discharge their cargoes at its gate, but the inlet is now silted up with sand."2

Water Supply

Zubara, the new 'Utbi settlement, like its predecessor Kuwait, had no water supply, though that supply was to be found in Qāṭar pen-

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1Captain George Barnes Brucks, "Memoir descriptive of the 'avigation of the Gulf of Persia; with Brief Notices of the Manners, Customs, Religion, Commerce, and Resources of the People inhabiting its Shores and Islands", in Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, p. 562.

insula in large quantities. The nearest water supply was one league (Farsakh) and a half away from the walls of the town. It seems that the emigrants were so greatly affected by their long stay at Kuwait that they did not mind about the water and the vegetation as long as their chosen site offered them a suitable harbour for the trade which they had been carrying on during their residence at Kuwait.

Early Settlement at Zubara

However, the emigrating Utūb started to settle down quickly at Zubara and dealt prudently with the two major powers that seemed to influence their settlement. The first of the two and of course the dominant power was that of the Banī Khālid, under whose patronage the ‘Utūb had established their first settlement at Kuwait. There is no indication that the ‘Utūb of al-Zubāra were oppressed or vexed by the Banī Khālid. However, there was no reason why any disputes should take place. The relations between the ‘Utūb and the second power, Āl-Musallam, on the other hand, were not altogether cordial. Though no contemporary authorities explain the nature of these re-

1 Lam‘ al-Shihāb, f. 95.
2 The lack of water within the town itself gave the Wahhābīs the chance of taking it by means of cutting it off from its water supplies later towards the end of the century. See Chapter V, p. 128-129.
lations, yet we can judge that they were not friendly, because the ‘Utub started from the very beginning to build a wall and forts to defend their town. It has already been stated that local Shaikhs in the Bani Khalid territories began to develop some sort of local independence after the death of Sulayman b. Muhammad, the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid, in 1752. The ‘Utub of the north, at Kuwait, practised some sort of independence. In the same manner Al-Musallam in Qatar seemed to have begun to practise some sort of independence. The ‘Utub of Zubara, feeling that the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid was unlikely to help them on account of his quarrels with other chiefs of his ruling family and the struggle with the rising power of the Wahhabis, found it very necessary to depend upon their own resources in defending their town. The local traditions of the Al-Khalifa state that Al-Musallam wanted the ‘Utub of Zubara to pay them tribute, which the latter refused to do, and made ready to defend their town against any aggression by the Al-Musallam by rapidly finishing the wall and the fort called Murair by 1182/1768, just two years after their arrival at Zubara. Though the presence of these tribes did

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1 Lam‘ al-Shihab, f. 95.

2 See above, p. 102.

3 Lam‘ al-Shihab, fff. 80-84.

4 Al-Nabhan, Ta‘rikh al-Bahrain, p. 121. Al-Musallam, like the Bani Khalid, belonged to Rab‘a. While Bani Khalid were living in al-Hasa, Al-Musallam lived in Qatar at Furaiha and Fuwairiţ, (cont.)
not alarm the ‘Utūb at the very beginning of their settlement at Zubāra, because of the awe in which they all held the Banī Khālid, yet they turned against the ‘Utūb and endangered Zubāra later when the Wahhābīs made war against the ‘Utūb town in the 1790’s.¹

How Zubāra fared

If it took the first ‘Utūb port, Kuwait, about fifty years to develop from a fishing centre into a town of consequence,² Zubāra in a very few years became a great rival to other ports on the Persian Gulf, a circumstance which soon made the Arabs on the Persian coast direct their attacks against it.³

(cont.)

and could call to war 2000 men. Lam‘ al-Shihab, f. 235. Of less importance than Al-Musallam and of Rabī‘a extraction, two other tribes lived in Qaṭar. The first was Āl-Abī Ḥusain, living at al-Ŷusufiyya and having 1500 fighters, the second al-Ma‘ādiyya, numbering 3000 fighters and inhabiting al-Ruwayda and al-Muṭaybakh. Besides these tribes, other tribes inhabited Qaṭar who could collect 5000 fighters.

Ibid., f. 236.

The very rapid growth of Zubāra was occasioned by the participation of the 'Utūb in the pearl fishery on the rich coasts of the Banī Khalid. Trade in pearls, especially in Bahrajn, goes back to time immemorial. Zubāra's share in the pearl trade was very small at the beginning, but that little share gradually increased. One of the earliest settlers of the place was Rizq al-Asʿad, the famous Kuwaitī merchant. This merchant is said to have accompanied Khalīfa, the founder of the Āl Khalīfa dynasty, in his journey from Kuwait to Zubāra as early as 1766. To show the great wealth Rizq accumulated in a very short time, ibn Sanad relates that he started trading in pearls with three dināres which he borrowed from the Governor, Wali. Soon those three dināres multiplied. 'Uthmān b. Sanad thinks that Rizq was the first among the 'Utūb to choose the site of Zubāra, and Khalīfa joined him in building the town, and to encourage the merchants to come to the new town and share in building up its trade,

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1 Ibn Sanad, Sabaʾik alʿAsjad, pp. 18-19.
2 Ibid.
3 Though ibn Sanad does not state clearly who the Wali was, I should think that he means the ruler of al-Ḥasā, 'Urayr b. Dujayn, since the author says that Rizq left Kuwait for al-Ḥasā. Sabaʾik al-ʿAsjad, p. 18.
the two friends, Khalīfa and Rizq, thought it a wise policy to put no duties of any kind on the trade.¹ In the "Report on the Trade of Arabia", this fact is confirmed when the Report states that "The Government of Zeberra (sic) does not collect Duties of any Kind on mercantile Articles".²

Free Trade at Zubara

There can be no doubt that this newly established harbour with its policy of free trade began to affect the trade of the two already existing ports of the Banī Khālid, namely al-Qa‘īf and al-‘Uqair. In these two ports the duties paid on imported goods were not high when compared with the duties in other ports of the Gulf, as

"the Government of Catiffe is extremely favourable to Merchants who there enjoy complete Protection in their Persons and Property, and the Duties collected at that Place are very moderate, and are confined to Imports. A Zirmaboob³ is levied on a Bale of Coffee, or a Robin⁴ of Pepper and about one per cent is levied on all other Articles, except Provisions"⁵

¹Ibn Sanad, Salā‘ik al-‘Asjād, p. 20.
³This is an Ottoman currency. According to Ives, who was in Basra in 1758, one Zirmaboob of Basra currency was equal to 19 Marmoodas and 75 Fluce. Each Marmooda was equal to 100 Fluce. See his Voyage, p. 236.
⁴Robin, or Robbin, a term used in Malabar for a measure of grain.... anonymous authority makes it a fourth of a Khandi or Candy. In that

(cont.)
Al-'Uqair was the harbour through which al-'Jasā town, the residence of the Shaikh of the Banī Khālid, used to get its own provisions and other merchandise for the Banī Khālid tribes of the interior. Through al-Qaṭīf other interior towns in Najd such as al-Dir'iyya, al-Riyāḍ, and Manfūha were thus supplied. This 'Utbī policy of free trade at Zubāra was not applied to Kuwait, where its government "collected Duties on mercantile Importations similar to those collected by the Government of Catiffe", which were trifling when

(Cont.)
case it may be a barbarism for the Arabic Raba or Arba, four, a fourth. See Wilson, H.H., A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms ...of the Govt. of the British India, etc. (London, 1855), s.v. Robin. 5See "Report on the Trade of Arabia etc." in Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.

1 Captain G. Forster Sadleir, Diary of a Journey across Arabia from el-Khatif in the Persian Gulf, to Yambo in the Red Sea, during the year 1819 (Bombay 1866), p. 30.

2 Ibid, see also "Report on the Trade of Arabia etc." in Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 408.

3 Ibid., p. 409.
compared with the duties collected by the Government at Masqat, where they amounted to "6½ per cent on all Importations, even Provisions not excepted".¹

The duties collected by the Government of Basra on all goods imported there by sea or from Baghdad, and all goods exported from thence by sea or by Aleppo, except on those made by Europeans and on provisions, were very heavy.

"Importations of fine Goods from Sea and from Baghdad pay 7½ per cent duties and Importations of gruff Goods from Sea and from Baghdad pay 3½ per cent Duties, Exportations to Aleppo pay similar Duties and Exportations to Sea for all Kinds pay 5½ per cent Duties."²

The coming of the Al-Jalâhima

As a result of this trade policy in the ports of the Gulf, the merchants favoured the 'Utbî ports when carrying goods from India and Arabia to Syria and other Ottoman territories. This resulted in the rapid growth of the new 'Utbi settlement, and consequently large numbers from Kuwait migrated to Zubâra to share in its accumulating wealth. Among the emigrants were the Al-Jalâhima, another large

²Ibid., p. 411.
The 'Utbi family who had already proved to be the best mariners among
the 'Utub.1 Nothing is stated about the numbers of the Al-Jalahima
or the other new emigrants, but their numbers seem to have been so
considerable that the early settlers, fearing their competition, had
soon to drive them away.2 Al-Jalahima do not seem to have emigrated
to Qatar till their cousins, the Khalifas, had established themselves
very strongly at Zubara, which seems to have inspired the 'Utub of
Kuwait to join them.3 By the 1760's the influence of three leading
'Utbi families seems to have established itself among the other 'Utub.
We have already dealt with the Al-Sabah, the Shaikhs of Kuwait, and
the Al-Khalifa, the Shaikhs of Zubara. The third family was that of
Al-Jabir who came to be known as Al-Jalahima, and who gained fame
later in the eighteenth century as pirates.4

1The name Jalahima is not used today by the descendants of that 'Utbih
cfamily. They are called Al-Nisf, and are quite considerable both at
Kuwait and Bahrain.

2"Historical Sketch of the Uttooobee Arabs", etc., Bombay Selections,
XXIV, p. 363.

3Ibn Sanad, Sab'ik al-'Asjad, pp. 18-19.

4See "Sketch of the Proceedings (from 1809 to 1818) of Rahman bin
Jaubir, Chief of Khor Hassan", etc. Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV,
pp. 522-529.
Reasons for the coming of the Al-Jalahima to Zubara

Why the Jalāhima\(^1\) emigrated to Zubara may seem a less controversial question than why the Khalīfas did so. Al-Jalahima were described as mariners from the very beginnings of Kuwait early in the eighteenth century; this, no doubt, gave them the chance to know where to find the best sites for pearl fishing. The Al-Khalīfa had succeeded earlier in persuading the Al-Ṣabāḥ and the Al-Jalahima to leave Kuwait, hoping for benefits for the whole ‘Utub tribe in the shape of larger profits from pearl fishing. This hope was not realised. Al-Jalahima went for their own benefit, to add to their own wealth. On the other hand, quarrels seem to have taken place between the Al-Jalahima and the Al-Ṣabāḥ soon after the departure of the Al-Khalīfa, and the discovery shortly thereafter that the remaining ‘Utub were in financial difficulties caused by the Al-Khalīfa’s monopoly of the pearl trade, complicated matters further. Thus there was no room for both the Al-Ṣabāḥ and the Al-Jalahima in Kuwait; consequently,

\(^1\)Since the Jām is usually pronounced Yā among the ‘Utūb of Kuwait and Bahraīn, the word Jalāhima is always pronounced Yalāhima; and thus the officers of the Bombay Governments in their reports use "Yalāhimah", cf. "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobe Tribe of Arabs etc.", Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, pp. 362-365; "Sketch of the Proceedings of Rahman bin Jauibir," etc. in Ibid., pp. 522-529.
"The more powerful clan of the two, the 
Āl-Subah, soon felt the absence of their commercial brethren (Āl-Khalīfa), in a deficiency of their finances; and, following the example of their renegade brethren, first refused the Āl Jalāhīmāh their share of the revenue, and ultimately expelled them from the port and town of Koweit."¹

Shaikh Jabir directed the sails of his clan towards Zubāra, where they were kindly received by their kinsmen, who assigned "to each... according to his rank, an adequate income". But in a few years the Āl-Jalāhīmāh asked for a larger share, which the Āl-Khalīfa denied them.

"Urged by necessity, and a sense of wrong, the Āl-Jalāhīmāh quitted Zubara, and took up their residence at Revelish, a barren spot at a short distance eastward of Zubara, and turned their whole attention to the increase, equipment, and preservation of their fleet, contemplating the object of revenging themselves on their proud and perfidious neighbours."².

Struggle between the Āl-Khalīfa and the Āl-Jalāhīmāh

Khalīfa, who was paving the way for his new settlement with difficulty against the fears of the Āl-Musallam, had to face a grave danger caused by his cousins, the Āl-Jalāhīmāh, who commenced an ex-

¹Historical Sketch of the Uttarbee Tribes, etc., in Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 363.
²Ibid.
tensive system of maritime depredation and, by capturing his property and that of his clan, "created in the mind of Al-Khalīfa fears for their existence, and such a thirst for the punishment and destruction of the Jalāhīma Chief, that, adding to their own force all the mercenaries their pecuniary resources could obtain, they environed the marauders on every side." The treasures which the Al-Jalāhīma had amassed, which they were determined to defend to the last, and the feelings of animosity that existed between them, led to a desperate contest: the Jalāhīma Chief having been killed at an early period of the action, the overwhelming superiority of their enemies obtained a complete victory, and a few infants and females were alone saved from the massacre that ensued.¹

This decisive victory resulted in establishing the suzerainty of the Al-Khalīfa over all the other ‘Utbī clans in the vicinity of Zubāra. Yet this should in no way be taken to mean that the Al-Jalāhīma and the Al-Khalīfa did not bury their hostilities very deep when a common enemy threatened them soon after 1775, when the Arabs of Abū Shahr, Bandar Rīq and Dawraq joined forces to humiliate Zubāra, the new thriving ‘Utbī settlement, an aggression that ended, as we shall see later, by the ‘Utbī

¹"Historical Sketch of the Utbaee Tribes, etc."., in Bombay Selections, p. 363.
occupation of Bahrain in 1782. Thus the spread of 'Utbi influence into this area brought them into direct contact with the Persians, or, more accurately, with the Arabs of the Persian littoral of the Gulf, whose Shaikhs in this way or that admitted the suzerainty of the Shah of Persia. In that struggle all the 'Utbi clans joined hands and successfully attacked and occupied Bahrain, but the reward of the Al-Jalahima was not as they had expected.

'Utbi relations with other powers in the Gulf (1766-1770)

Let us turn for a while to the state of affairs in the countries bordering on the Persian Gulf to see how these conditions facilitated the growth of the two 'Utbi settlements of Kuwait and Zubara.

The Wahhabiis in the 1760's

On the mainland of the Arabian peninsula there were four conflicting powers whose internal strife gave an excellent opportunity for the 'Utbi towns to add to their rapidly increasing prosperity. The first two powers that could directly affect the 'Utbi were the Bani Khalid and the Wahhabiis. The struggle between these two opponents, previously alluded to, began to enter a very serious stage when 'Uray'ir the Amir of the Bani Khalid, in 1178/1764 besieged al-Dir'iyya, the

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1 See next chapter.

2 Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs etc., in Bombay Selections, p. 365.
capital of the Wahhabis, which had already been attacked by the
‘Ajman tribe of Najran. Though ‘Uray’ir failed to capture al-
Dir‘iyya, yet this battle showed the Wahhabis that the Banī Khalid
would seize every opportunity to destroy them, and that they should
put no faith in any promises of a truce that the Banī Khalid might
offer. ‘Uray‘ir had violated an existing truce when he saw Dir‘iyya
being attacked by Dahham b. Daws, the Chief of al-Riyya. Though
no other battles of significance took place between the two combat-
ants till the 1770’s, the Wahhabis went on consolidating their power
in Najd, waiting for their chance to fall on the Banī Khalid. Thus
the Wahhabi danger was still far from threatening the ‘Utub, who thus
were still enjoying the Banī Khalid protection.

‘Uman’s wars with the Qawasim

To the south and on the mainland of Arabia also, the other two
powers, the Qawasim in al-Ṣīr and the Sulṭan of Masqat, were no bet-
ter off, as far as their mutual relations were concerned, than the
first two combatants.

"As early as 1758 Imām Ahmad b. Sa‘īd, having con-
solidated his power and gained complete ascendancy

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1Ibn Ghannam, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 76-80; Ibn Bishr, op.cit., Vol. I,
p. 48; Lam‘ al-Shihāb, ff. 42-43.
2Ibid.
3Al-Ṣīr is known today as Trucial ‘Uman.
over the 'Umani tribes, was able to undertake operations in al-Šīr, generally known as the Pirate Coast, in order to reduce to subjection the Qawāsim and other warlike tribes, who had hitherto remained entirely independent."

In 1762 Imam Ahmad despatched Sayyid 'Alī b. Saif with four ships and ten dhows to al-Šīr, with orders to blockade the area strictly. The result was the recognition of the Imam's supremacy by all except Rās al-Khayma.  

In 1763 Shaikh Saqr, with his uncle 'Abd Allāh, proceeded to Rustaq in 'Uman, where, at an interview with the Imam, it was arranged that the blockading fleet should be withdrawn and that the Qawāsim port of Jufār (Rās al-Khayma) should be considered independent of the Imam's authority. The political state of affairs then outlined remained unaltered for more than twenty years. The state of hostility or suspicion that characterised the relations between the Imam of 'Uman and the Qawāsim gave in its turn the 'Uthūl settle-

1 "The Qawāsim are a branch of the great Huwala clan. They occupy the Persian coast from Gumbroon to Ras Berdistān. They got their name from Shaikh Qasim, the grandfather of the notorious Shaikh Rashīd bin Muttar, who ruled at this time and who resided at Jufār or Ras al-Khayma." Colonel S. B. Miles, The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf, two volumes (London, 1919), Vol. II, p. 269.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.
ments an additional chance to develop without being molested by either the Imam or the Qawasim till the year 1782. In this year the 'Utub attacked Bahrain and had to fight against the Arabs of Abu Shahr who had occupied those islands in 1753.

Situation in Persia bordering on the Gulf (1760-1770)

In the introductory chapter, it is stated that the position of the southern coast of Persia had always had something to do with the Arabian littoral of the Gulf, mainly because it was inhabited by Arabs and because other Arabs continued to migrate from the eastern shore of Arabia and to settle there among their kinsmen. When Nadir Shah tried to consolidate his power among the Arab population in southern Persia, he depended on Persian troops only in his land operations and Persian officers in his fleet. Thus he kept the Arabs of southern Persia out of his army and fleet, a policy which terminated in his failure to achieve Persian supremacy in the waters of the Gulf. From 1747, the year of Nadir's death, until 1757, when Karim Khan Zand rose to power, anarchy was the order of the day in Persia. With the advent of Karim Khan and the trial of strength involved in consolidating his power over most of Persian territory, a new era seems to have begun in the re-

1Miles, Countries and Tribes, II, p. 269.
2As Niebuhr commented, "the Sunnî sailors of Nadir's fleet killed their Persian officers and handed the fleet to the "Arabs". Description de 1'Arabie, p. 273.
lations between the Arabs of southern Persia and Karīm, and to have continued until his death in 1779. Karīm, contrary to Nādir, sought the help of those Arabs all through his struggle for power. Yet this does not mean that those Arabs co-operated willingly with Karīm Khan; on the contrary, they gave him much trouble. But before discussing the relations of Karīm and the Arabs, a brief description of the position of the major Arab tribes on the Persian littoral seems necessary in the present context.

Karīm Khan and the Arabs

Three major Arab forces were making the history of southern Persia in the 1760's. They were the Arabs of Abū Shahr, then under the rule of Shaikh Naṣ'ir Āl-Madīkhur of the Māṭarīsh Arabs of 'Uman, the Arabs of Bandar Rīq to the north of Abū Shahr, and the Banī Ka'īb of al-Dawraq. Reference had already been made in Chapter I to their activities in the first half of the eighteenth century. In addition to these three major Arab forces there were the other Arab tribes who were of the Huwala stock and were inhabiting the southern parts of the Persian shore and the islands of Qīshm, Qais, Hurmuz, and other smaller and less significant islands in the Gulf. These latter Arabs did not play much of a role in the sequence of events during the 1760's, as

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2See above, pp. 73.
their place was taken by the Qawasim; however, as these events do not concern the 'Utūb, we shall not deal with them at this time.

Shaikh Na'īr of Abū Shahr

The Arabs of Abū Shahr had already occupied Bahrain in 1753 and they were the rulers of these islands when the 'Utūb came to Zubara in 1766. Neibuhrr on his way from Masqat to Başra landed at Abū Shahr in February 1765, and when he spoke of the independent Arab states upon the sea coast of Persia, he included Abū Shahr among them and stated that it was then the sea-port of Shirāz, the capital of Karīm Khan, the Vakīl of Persia. By the year 1763 the English East India Company had established a Factory there in preference to Bandar 'Abbās (Gomboon), where the French fleet had attacked and destroyed the English Factory in 1759.

"The Arabs inhabiting the district of Abū Shahr were not of the Huwala tribe. There were among them three eminent families; the first two of which had been from time immemorial settled in that place. The third, named Matārīsh, had come

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2 See above, p. 123.
3 C. Niebuhr, Voyage en Arabie, Tome second, pp. 75-78.
4 See Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 273.
lately from ‘Uman, where they had been employed in fishing, and they soon entered into an alliance with the other two and found means to usurp the sovereign authority which they had been holding for several years before 1765.”\(^1\)

Shaikh Nas’r of Abu Shahr did not only possess that town and Bahrain, but he also

"had considerable domains in Kermasīr, which he held for Karīm Khān, with whom Shaikh Nas’r’s children were placed as hostages for their father’s fidelity. It was a happy circumstance for Schiras (sic) that the Prince of Abu Shahr could thus be retained in the interests of Persia by means of his possessions in Kermasīr.”\(^2\)

The Shaikh of Abu Shahr owned a fleet which enabled him to retain his sovereignty over Bahrain Islands till their occupation by the ‘Utūb in 1782.\(^3\)

**Bandar Rīq**

To the north of Abu Shahr was the Shaikhdom of Bandar Rīq, whose Shaikh had influence not only on the neighbours of that town but also on several other places in Kermasīr. Both of the Shaikhs of Abu Shahr and Bandar Rīq had already worked in harmony in 1753 and occupied the islands of Bahrain. This may be attributed to the fact that they were originally ‘Umanī Arabs, the former belonging to al-Matārīsh and the latter to Banī Sa‘b. The ruling Shaikh of Bandar Rīq was in the 1760’s

\(^1\)Niebuhr, Description de l’Arabie, p. 273.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 274.

\(^3\)Ibid.
Mir Muhanna, the son of Mir Naṣr. Mir Muhanna’s grandfather, who had established the rule of the family at Bandar Riq, had been, like his tribe a Sunni not a Shi‘a Muslim. Yet, because of his relations with the Persian Shahs, he thought it wiser to change to a Shi‘a, and to marry a Persian Shi‘a lady. The result of this change was that the ruling family “were no longer counted by the Arabs among their genuine nobility”. 1 Mir Naṣr and his son Mir Muhanna played an eminent part in the history of the Persian Gulf from 1753, when Mir Naṣr agreed to let the Dutch establish a Factory at Khārij Island, until the year 1769, when Mir Muhanna was obliged to quit Khārij and seek refuge at Kuwait. The Shaikh of Bandar Riq had to fight against the Dutch, the Persians, and the English. Soon after the Dutch had established themselves at Khārij, Mir Naṣr fell into conflict with Baron Kniphausen, who refused to pay him more than the agreed amount for the Dutch establishment at Khārij. 2 This enmity continued when Mir Muhanna usurped the power from his father, whom he strangled to death in about 1758. 3 Mir Muhanna’s relations with

1 Niebuhr, Description de l’Arabie, p. 274.
2 Ives, op. cit., p. 213.
Karim Khan were very bad as well, but his relations with the Pasha of Baghdad and the Mutasallim of Basra were cordial.¹ Mir Muhanna's relations with the English East India Company will be dealt with later on.

Bani Ka'ab

The third major Arab power which had played a great part in the trade and the politics of the Gulf was that of the Bani Ka'ab, who interest us for the time being more than the Bani Sa'b and al-Matarish, because of their direct relations with the 'Utub and the Bani Khalid.

Origin of the Bani Ka'ab

The original home of this tribe is Najd, whence, in the seventeenth century, some made their way to the farthest point upon the side of the Persian Gulf, then occupied by the Afshar Turks. Their power rapidly increased by the middle of the eighteenth century under the reign of their Shaikh Sulayman, whose fame reached Europe, in consequence of a quarrel he had with the English, in which he took some of their ships.²

Shaikh Sulayman, who continued to rule till 1766, wrested Dawraq and

¹Yet these cordial relations did not prevent the Pasha from ordering the Mutasallim to cut off the head of Mir Muhanna after his arrival at Basra from Kuwait in 1770; cf. Parsons, op. cit., p. 193.

²Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 276; Niebuhr Voyage en Arabie, Tome II, pp. 151, 186.
then Fallahiya from the Afghars. He obtained and maintained his virtual independence by playing off the Ottoman and Persian authorities one against the other, between whose countries his territories lay; at the same time withholding tribute from both countries.¹

Karîm Khân attacks the Banî Ka‘b

In 1757 Karîm Khân, whose authority in Persia was then not fully established, attacked the Banî Ka‘b with the intention of subduing them, but difficulties in other parts of his realm prevented his doing more than extort a tribute, and the attack only served to rend Shaikh Sulaymân more aggressive, for he at once set about creating a fleet, the first vessel of which was launched in 1758,² and it was not later than 1765 when he had ten large gallivata and about seventy small vessels.³ In the same year Karîm Khân sent a second expedition against the Banî Ka‘b, in which the Pasha of Baghdad had agreed to co-operate, but, on consequence of the unpreparedness of the latter, Shaikh Sulaymân crossed to the west side of Shatt-al-‘Arab and found refuge in Ottoman territory. Karîm, however, destroyed Dawraq, the Banî Ka‘b’s

²Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 276.
³Ibid.
Niebuhr, who was at Basra in 1765, says that the territory of the Banī Ka'b extended from the desert of Arabia to the country of Ḥa'ndīlan and northward to the principality of Ḫawīsa, another town inhabited by the Arabs.

"The territory was watered by several rivers, large and small. It abounded in dates, rice, grain, and pasture. Its principal cities were al-Dawraq, Ḫafar and Gho'bān." 3

The Ottomans and the English fight the Banī Ka'b

Soon after the failure of Karīm's expedition, the Banī Ka'b became troublesome to the Ottomans, who commenced operations against them. The English were drawn into the quarrel by becoming allies of the Ottomans in their struggle. Various attempts made by the latter two powers, acting in concert, to subdue the Banī Ka'b proved unsuccessful. In the same year the English found themselves joining in two battles, the first against the island of Khārij, when they took the side of Karīm Khān against Mīr Muhannā, a battle which proved indecisive, and the second against the Banī Ka'b, who, soon after the abortive Anglo-Persian attack on Khārij, suddenly seized three English

1Niebuhr, Voyage en Arabie, II, p. 133; Description de l'Arabie, p. 276.
2A small district north from Bandar Rīq, and bordering on the possessions of the Banī Ka'b, subject to an Arab Sovereign - Niebuhr, Description de l'Arabie, p. 277.
3Ibid. Niebuhr states that Shaikh Sulaymān used to reside at Gho'bān, not at Dawraq.
vessels in the Shatt al-‘Arab. The Bombay Government speedily
equipped the largest expedition that had sailed for many years
from India for the Gulf, consisting of four vessels and a small
detachment of European infantry and artillery. Concerted action
between English and Ottomans followed by sea and land, and an at-
tempt was made to recapture the seized vessels, but they were burnt
at their moorings and the British, in attempting to storm some Ka‘b
redoubts on Khūr Mūsa, met with a disastrous repulse. 1

At this junction Karīm Khān intervened, asserting that the Banī
Ka‘b were Persian subjects, and insisted that both Ottomans and Eng-
lish should retire from Persian territory. The Ottomans thereupon
withdrew, and the campaign came once more to an inconclusive end,
much to the chagrin of the English, as strong reinforcements were on
the way from Bombay. 2

Following upon these repeated failures, the English maintained
a naval blockade of the Ka‘b waterway for about two years, at the end
of which time the vessels of the blockading squadron had fallen into
such a "melancholy condition... as well with respect to stores as men"
that the blockade had, perforce, to be raised. 2 The Banī Ka‘b remained

2Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie*, II, p. 188.
unsubdued and continued for a long period to be a thorn in the side of the Ottomans and of the Persian and English trade in turn. The complaints of the East India Company's Factory at Bagra which reached the Court of Directors in London were so strident and effective that the Court submitted a very urgent long request to the British Government suggesting that the latter should send a strong fleet to India and the Persian Gulf "to protect the interests of the East India Company and the British nation".  

A. The Wahhābīs

Thus the 'Utūb of Kuwait and Zubāra had to establish some sort of relations with each of the above-mentioned powers. On the mainland of Arabia there had been no change in the balance of power between the Wahhābīs and the Bani Khalid, in spite of the fact that the Wahhābīs achieved their aim of consolidating their power finally in Najd after their conquest of al-Riyād, the capital of Dahhām b. Dawwas, in 1187/1773, an event which made the Wahhābīs turn their

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faces towards Eastern Arabia. Banī Khālid were still united and maintained the power to face any Wahhābī attack on their land. But soon after the death of their chief ‘Uray‘īr in 1774, war broke out between his two sons Buṭayn and Sa‘dūn, and it ended by the murder of the former in 1777. Banī Khālid, up to this time, used to carry the war into Najd, and thus Kuwait and Zubāra went on with their flourishing trade without any fear of Wahhābī intervention.

B. The Arabs of Persia.

The great threat to the two ‘Utbī towns came from the sea. Mīr Muhanna of Bandar Rīq had already taken Khārij from the Dutch in 1765, and continued his piracy, capturing any ship he could lay hands on. Bahrain under the Arabs of Abī Shahr was the nearest spot under Persian supremacy which could come into contact with the ‘Uṭūb, who must have started monopolising the conveyance of trade from Masqaj to Eastern and Central Arabia. As Bahrain was the most famous place in the Persian Gulf for the pearl trade, the occupiers of the Islands started

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1Ibn Ghannām, op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 94-100. Ibn Ghannām was so greatly moved by the event that he commemorated it by a long poem. See also Ibn Bishr, op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 60-61.


3An address from Benjamin Jervis (Bushire Factory) to Charles Crommelin, President at Bombay, dated Bushire 5th January 1765, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 16, dispatch No. 901.
to feel the rivalry of both Kuwait and Zubara in that trade. Banī Kaʿb, as we shall see soon, represented the major menace.

C. مير مهانة at Kuwait, 1769

The ‘Utub had already established good relations with خريج Island since the Dutch occupation of that place in 1753. These good relations must have persisted during the rule of مير مهانة at خريج, and this could explain why مير مهانة, after being hard pressed by كريم خان,

"with a few of his favourites, and men sufficient to man a swift-sailing boat, embarked in a dark night (not forgetting to carry treasure sufficient) and next evening arrived at Grane (Kuwait) in Arabia, which is governed by a deputy of the Turkish governor of Bussora, and is about sixty miles from the island of Karak (خريج). From thence he and his adherents went to Bussora (Bāṣra), where he thought himself sure of finding an asylum, having strictly conformed with the treaty made with the pasha of Bagdad, in not molesting any ship or vessel going to or from Bussora. The musolem (محتسب المعلوم) received him kindly, and entertained him as the friend of his master, the pasha."

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1 See above, p. 103-106.

2 Parsons, op. cit., pp. 196-198. To carry the story of مير مهانة to its end, Parsons added that "After مير مهانة had been some time at Bussora, the musolem acquainted the pasha of Bagdad, that he solicited the pasha's protection, and that he might be permitted to come to Bagdad to kiss his hands. The pasha having been made acquainted with his unnatural cruelties; thought him unworthy of life, and sent orders to the musolem of Bussora to put him to death on the receipt of his letter..." مير مهانة was killed, but his companions were suffered to live unmolested.
Though Parsons states that Kuwait was a dependency of Basra, there is no evidence to assert this fact; and I am therefore inclined to believe that the relations between the Shaikh of Kuwait and the Mutasallim of Basra were then friendly, and this made Parsons jump to this conclusion. It has always been a policy of the ‘Utbi Shaikhs to keep friendly with the other powers in the area, but this friendliness should not be taken as a sign of dependence or subjugation. What might have dictated that state of friendliness was the growing power of the Banī Ka‘b on one hand and of the Arabs of Abū Shahr on the other.

D. Banī Ka‘b

We have already seen how the Banī Ka‘b were causing the Mutasallim of Basra and the English East India Company great trouble, and how Karīm Khān, the Vakil of Persia, intervened to prevent the subjugation of the Banī Ka‘b. Shaikh Naṣr of Abū Shahr was in the same way under the protection of Karīm Khān,1 who made him admiral.

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1 Parsons, op. cit., p. 189.
of the Persian fleet in the Gulf. To keep away the impending danger of the Banī Ka‘b and Shaikh Naṣr, the ‘Utūb, both at Kuwait and Zubāra, sought the friendship of the English East India Company and the Ottomans in Basra. The ‘Utūb, who until then had not acquired the naval power that could defy the Arabs of the Persian coast, were keeping on good terms with the Banī Khālid. But this friendship did not prevent the Banī Ka‘b in 1774 from taking and plundering al-Qaţīf, the rich port of the Banī Khālid which was "most remarkable for its pearl commerce".2 "The Ghaub' (Ka‘b) gallivats returned "to Doorack (Dawraq) with the plunder of Catiffe which is said to be very considerable."3 Though Banī Ka‘b alone carried out that attack on al-Qaţīf, yet it is worth noticing that they had since 1770 been working in harmony with Shaikh Naṣr of Abu Shahr, both being used by Karīm Khān as instruments in carrying out his policy against the Ottomans and others in the Gulf, best exemplified in the Siege of Basra in 1775.

1 As the Persians had no fleet of their own they depended, during the rule of Karīm Khān, on the fleets of the Ka‘b and Abu Shahr; (cf. Malcolm, Vol. II, p. 141).
Plague at Basra, 1773

That attack on al-Qaṭīf was carried out soon after ‘Urayrīr, the chief of the Banī Khalid, had died, and when the town was just recovering from a great and serious epidemic that had spread to it from Basra. As this plague had much to do with other events in the area, a short discussion of its consequences may prove necessary in the present context.

Early in 1773 it broke out at Basra on its way from Baghdad to the south. In Baghdad it was of such severity and violence that it put a stop to every activity in the city, including trade, which suffered heavily. In the months of April and May 1773 it devastated Basra. Members of the English Factory at Basra had left the town before the plague reached it and went to Bombay, leaving the Factory to the care of Surgeon Reilly. Soon after the plague started to devastate the town many inhabitants left, carrying the epidemic with them to Kuwait, al-Qaṭīf, Bahrain, and many others towns on the Arabian coast of the Gulf. Though loss of life was less on the Arabian

1See Letter from Mr. Moore, Mr. Latouche and Mr. Abraham of the Basra Factory to the Court of Directors, London, dated 1st April 1773. F.R.P.G., Vol. 17, dispatch No. 1056.
coast than in Basra, the number of deaths was estimated at two million.¹ It is worth noticing that Beni Ka'b's territories and the Persian littoral of the Gulf did not suffer many losses because they took the necessary precautions by stopping all kinds of communication with the affected areas.² Basra's casualties, with those of the surrounding villages, were estimated at 200,000 deaths.³ Mr. Moore and his colleagues, after returning to the Factory at Basra, giving the above-mentioned figures, say in the same address:

"Neither will this account appear to be exaggerated when it is considered that for near a month the daily deaths in the town (i.e. Basra) alone amounted from 3,000 to 7,000 - at length about the 25th May when least expected the disorder suddenly ceased, leaving Basora in particular almost destitute of Inhabitants."⁴

Consequences of the plague

This horrible plague was damaging to the trade of Basra and thus gave the rival ports on the coast of the Gulf a better chance to compete with Basra. Abu Shahr, on the Persian coast, whose importance as the greatest emporium of the Gulf trade was greatly diminished after

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid. Ibn Ghannām, who was also contemporary to the event, states that the number of deaths ran into hundreds of thousands, and adds.

(cont.)
the English East India Company had preferred Basra to it, was waiting for such an opportunity to regain it. Kuwait and Zubara, though on good terms with Basra, began to attract much of its trade. Their relations with the English Factory at Basra continued to grow, and their boats, as well as other Arab vessels, were hired by the Factory to carry dispatches to Masqat on the way to Bombay. Yet the shift of the English Gulf trade from Abu Shahr to Basra, which took place after 1770 and made Basra the richest port of the Gulf, did not pass without Persian resistance. Karim Khan went on with his plans to capture Basra from the Ottomans. The Ottoman Mutasallim of Basra, being aware of the Persian plan, lost no opportunity of strengthening his naval power, taking into consideration that no attack on his walled town could succeed unless accompanied by a strong naval

(continue)

that most of the population of Basra perished as a result of the plague. Ibn Ghannam, op. cit. Vol. II, pp. 99-100.

1 In 1763 Karim Khan Zand, by a royal grant, conferred on the English more privileges than any other European nation enjoyed respecting trade with Persia, as the Grant stated that "No other European nation, or other persons, shall import any woollen goods to any port on the Persian shore in the Gulf but the English Company only. Should any one attempt to do it, their goods shall be confiscated." F.R.P.P.G. Vol. 16, dispatch No. 782.

2 See a letter from Messrs. Moore, Green, Latouche and Abraham, Basra Factory, to the Court of Directors, London, Basra, 9th December 1774.
force. Thus early in 1774 "the two Ketches of 14 guns each, which the Bashaw (Pasha) requested might be built for him at Bombay some time ago, arrived with the Revenge" and were delivered to the Ottoman authorities at Bağra after their cost had been paid into the Company's treasury at Bombay.1 Karîm Khan found naval help from the Ka'b and Abû Shahr fleets. His preparations ended in 1775 with the famous siege of Bağra, in which the 'Utûb found themselves inevitably involved. As had always been the case whenever war broke out between Persia and Ottoman 'Iraq, or between other powers of the Gulf, it was always very difficult for any power to keep out of the fray. The position in the Gulf in 1775 during the siege of Bağra will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Conclusion

The establishment of the 'Utûb at Zubâra and the growth of their trade both at Kuwait and at Zubâra aroused the jealousy of the other maritime Arabs of the Gulf and especially those on the Persian littoral, namely the Arabs of Bandar Râq, the Banî Ka'b and

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of Abū Shahr. The last were the nearest to the 'Utūb of Zubāra because Bahrayn was under the suzerainty of Abū Shahr. With the struggle between the Ottomans and the Persians that started in 1775 by the long siege of Baṣra, the 'Utūb towns had another chance to accumulate more wealth - and gain more importance - as safe centres for trade. The free trade policy at Kuwait and Zubāra was a factor of great consequence in drawing the merchants as well as the capital to trade in 'Utūb land. It was not easy for Abū Shahr to give way to Zubāra and Kuwait. This tension in relations naturally led to war in which the 'Utūb were victorious and occupied Bahrayn in 1782.
Chapter IV

STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE "UNITED STATES 1775 - 1799
Chapter IV

STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE 'UTTĪ STATES 1775-1790

In the period covered in this chapter, 1775-1790, two major events took place that had important effects on the rising 'Uttī. The first was the siege and occupation of Başra by the Persians (1775-1779) which had a direct impact on the 'Uttī who, though they did not openly share in the fight, shared in its consequences as will be shown below. The second great event whose consequences are still felt to the present day was the occupation of Bahrain Islands by the 'Uttī. An attempt will be made to trace the growth of 'Uttī sea power that enabled them to achieve it.

To understand the effects of the siege and occupation of Başra on the 'Uttī in particular and Eastern Arabia in general, it is necessary to give a brief summary of that event, in which Ottoman, Persian and Arab forces were involved. The British did not maintain

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1 The study is mainly based on the unpublished Factory Records of the English East India Company and other reports of the officials of the same Company published in Volume XXIV of the Bombay Government Selections in 1856.
their policy of non-interference and fought on the Ottoman side.¹

The siege. March 16th 1775 - April 15th 1776.

No sooner had Basra recovered from the devastating plague of 1773 than rumours of the proposed Persian attack on the town began to grow. In 1875 the danger became more acute, conferences were daily held between Sulayman Agna, the walis, the Qaptan, the notables of Basra and the British Agent.

"On January 15th, 1775", says Parsons,² "advice arrived from Bushehr, in Persia, that an army had left Shiras (now the capital of Persia) consisting of upwards of fifty thousand men, commanded by Sadoe Khan (brother to Kerim Khan, the present ruler of Persia); and that he was on his march for Basora, being resolved to take the city. This report caused great alarm among the inhabitants." ³

¹For a detailed account of the event see Parsons, op.cit., pp. 162-186, Low, op.cit., pp. 166-172. The Arabic sources unfortunately comment very briefly on the attack and its results but give no particulars. There seem to have been no Arab historians or "Ulama" in Basra after the devastating plague of 1773. The event did not interest the Wahhabī chroniclers. The contemporary writer Ibn Ghannam, and Ibn Bishir, writing in the 1830's, gave it only one line each in their chronicles in the events of the year 1188 A.H.

²Parsons was an eyewitness to these events and participated in the defence of Basra against the attacking Persians.

³Parsons, op.cit., p. 162.
The motives behind the Persian attack on Bagrā.

Though this is not the place to trace Perso-Ottoman hostilities in detail, yet it is necessary to point out that the prosperity of Bagrā in the 1760's, after the removal of British trading activities to their Factory there instead of Abu Shahr, was among the causes of "strained relations between Pasha and Regent".1

However, Karīm Khan, jealous of the increased importance of Bagrā, and being faced also with discontent in his army, decided to despatch his expedition against it; and, "seeking a pretext, he demanded the head of the Wall of Baghdad as a punishment for daring to levy a tax on Persian pilgrims to Kerbela".

The coming of the Persians, March 16th, 1775.

On March 16th the Persian army, under the leadership of Ṣādiq Khan, the brother of Karīm Khan, arrived "at the mouth of Avisa /Hawīza/ creek in Persia, where there is a town called Swāb /Suwaib/".2 The

1The Pasha of Baghda and the Regent of Persia. See Longrigg, op.cit., p. 183.
3Parsons, op.cit., p. 164; Longrigg, op.cit., p. 190. Longrigg says that the Persian army "reached the Shatt ul ‘Arab near the mouth of the Suwaib river". It seems that the "Suwaib river" was then called Hawīza river or creek, as Parsons puts it, and as the contemporary map drawn by Niebuhr shows it. Swāb was the name of a town. See Voyage en Árabie, II, map facing p. 199, and p. 202 for Hawīza and Swāb.
siege dragged on for thirteen months, until the town surrendered to Śādiq Khan by the middle of April 1776.

The Allies of both camps

In alliance with the Persians were the Arabs inhabiting the Persian littoral of the Gulf. 1The Arabs of Abū Shahr, under the rule of Shaikh Naṣr, seem to have supplied the attacking Persian army with ammunition and provisions, without which the Persian army was expected "soon to decamp". 2 The Shaikh of Bandar Rīq seems also to have been on good terms with Karīm Khan, and to have assisted in the siege. 3

On the Persian side were also the Banī Ka'b, whose boats would be invaluable to either side. It seems that there was a previous agreement between the Banī Ka'b and Karīm Khan that they would join him, because Śādiq Khan, with the Persian army, marched through their land and camped in their territory at Swāib, as previously stated.

1Shaikh Naṣr was the admiral commanding the Persian fleet in the Gulf (Parsons, op. cit., pp. 189-200). Parsons calls him "Sheik Nassah".

2Ibid., p. 169.

3When Parsons, with the Agent and men of the Basra Factory, arrived at Abū Shahr on April 27th, 1775, they were received by "the governor and chiefs of the town; with them was sheik Alli, governor of Ban- derick, who was here on a visit." Ibid., p. 199.
The Bani Ka'b, as well as the Arabs of the Persian littoral of the Gulf, seem to have put the greater part of their fleets, both commercial and fighting vessels, at the service of the Persians.\(^1\)

**The Allies of the Ottomans.**

With the Ottomans, or rather, on the side of Sulayman Agha, the Mutassallim of Basra, were the Arabs of the Muntafiq tribe who, under their Shaikhs Thamir and 'Abd Allāh, were supposed to play a major part in the defence of the besieged town, and to withstand the Persian advance. During the siege the cooperation of parties of the Bani Khālid and the Muntafiq outside enabled caravans to reach the city.\(^2\) The Masqat fleet went to the rescue of the besieged town in August 1775 on the demand of the Mutassallim,\(^3\) and was reported to have forced its way up Shaṭṭ al-'Arab to Basra on October 14th, 1775, and to have been a great help to the besieged

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\(^1\) Of the sea power of Abu Shahr, Parsons, *op.cit.*, p. 188, noted when he reached the harbour that "At present all the galliotes are employed in the siege of Bussora, as are also many of the largest merchant vessels".


\(^3\) See Parsons, *op.cit.*, pp. 206-207. Parsons was at Masqat on August 3rd. He saw "the great part of" the Sultan's fleet "loading with provisions, for the relief of Bussora, and expect to depart in about fifteen days".
Besides these Arab allies, Sulaymān Agha succeeded in persuading the British Agent of the Basra Factory to join him in repelling Persian aggression.

"At this time a squadron of ships of the Bombay Marine was lying in the river Shatt-ul-Arab, near the creek off the city, consisting of the 'Revenge', a frigate of twenty-eight guns, 'Eagle', of sixteen guns, and 'Success', ketch, of fourteen guns; beside two other ketches of fourteen guns each, built at Bombay for the Pasha of Bagdat." The Pasha's ketches were "commanded by an English midshipman, in the company's service", and had "on board, a few English sailors", the remainder of the crew were "Turks", and they carried British colours. In fact the British "gentlemen of the Factory and the English East India Company's cruisers joined the Mutassallim's forces wholeheartedly till their retreat from the field of battle.

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1 W. D. Latoche and G. Abraham (Abū Shahr) to Court of Directors, 2.xii. 1775, F.R.P.P.G. Vol. 17, No. 1109. Mr. Warden is wrong in giving the date of the arrival of the Masqat fleet at Basra as "early in the month of August". See his "Historical Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Govt. of Muskat", etc. in Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, p. 170.

2 The Agent was Mr. Green. See Parsons, op. cit., p. 169.


4 Parsons, op. cit., p. 152.

5 By April 9th the British were deserting the town (Parsons, op. cit., p. 174) and by the 13th of the same month the British ships, with some of the Pasha's, were making for Abū Shahr (Ibid., p. 181).
Other forces.

Two other forces in the Gulf were expected to join either the Persians or the Ottomans, namely the Qawāsim of Ṭīs al-Khayma and the 'Utūb. No mention of the first was made in connection with the Basra affair of 1775, though they were reported to have "become more powerful than ever both by land and sea". The absence of the Qawāsim might be attributed to the fact that they were then at war with the Sultan of Masqat. However, because of their traditional enmity with Masqat, one would not have expected them to join the Ottoman side in the Basra affair. As a matter of fact, later on, when the 'Utūb were at variance with the Shaikh of Abu Shahr and with the Banū Ka'b, the Qawāsim joined the Shaikh of Abu Shahr in his fruitless attempt to re-occupy Bahrain Islands in 1783. Shaikh Naṣr, as formerly stated, was an ally of Karīm Khan, then Regent of Persia.

The position of the 'Utūb

It is not easy to identify the part played by the 'Utūb in the siege. Parsons refers to Kuwait only twice, the first time when

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1In 1775 the Qawāsim were at war with the Sultan of Masqat, but they seem to have appeared from 1775 to 1778 as traders, not raiding any of their neighbours. See "Historical Sketch of the Joasmee Tribe of Arabs", etc. in Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, p. 301. Miles too speaks of their growing power in 1775, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 274.
Pasha's two galliotes" were ordered to repair to its harbour in the afternoon of April 13th, and the second when the 'Eagle' and one of the Pasha's ketches, which were on their way from Basra to Abu Shahr on April 14th, 1775, "noticed two trankeys coming from Abu Shahr and going" to Kuwait. Parsons describes Kuwait as a town "dependant on Bussora". What he meant by "dependant" is not clear, yet one can gather that friendly relations must have been kept up between the Mutassallim and the Shaikh. For

"all the Turks and Arabs which were on board the pasha's ketches (in number about two hundred and thirty) embarked on board these two galliotes, and took their departure to Kuwait."

In a letter to the Court of Directors in London, about three months later, the Basra factors stated that

"the two Turkish Calivats which were sent to Grain, were demanded from the Shaikh of that Place by the Ghaub /Bani Ka'iy/, and delivered up to him."

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1 Parsons, op. cit., p. 131.
2 The naval forces, of which mention was made by Parsons, were two ketches of fourteen guns each, built at Bombay for the use of the Pasha, and two galliotes. The two ketches continued their journey to Masqat, where they were delivered to the Sultan on August 3rd, 1775. He was then preparing his war vessels for the rescue of Basra. Ibid., p. 206.
3 Ibid., p. 181.
4 Ibid.
5 Moore, Latouche, Abraham, to the C. of D. 'Eagle Snow in Bushire Road', (cont.)
The same letter added that the Shaikh sent, "though unwillingly", a party of two hundred men "to the assistance of Sadoo Caun" [Ṣadiq Khan].

Though the position of the 'Utub was vague in the Basra affair, yet it would not be difficult to explain their friendly attitude towards the forces of the Mutasallim at first, and their sending two hundred men to help Ṣadiq Khan three months later. The 'Utub apparently not being sure of the winner had to appease both struggling parties. Yet on account of earlier prejudices against the Banī Ka'b, and owing to the new hostilities with the Arabs of Abū Shahr, the 'Utub soon engaged in strife with the latter two, who were the allies of the Persians.

Effects of the Siege and Occupation of Basra on the 'Utub States of Kuwait and Zubāra, 1775-1779.

The circumstances of the siege and occupation of Basra by the Persians had a far-reaching influence on Kuwait and Zubāra. In the first place, direct relations were established between Kuwait and the British East India Company's representatives in the Gulf. Kuwait became important as a centre for almost all the caravans carrying goods.

(cont).
between Basra and Aleppo during the period 1775-1779. And because of the enmity that then persisted between the British and the Persians, goods coming from India, which could have been sent to Abu Shahr for conveyance to Aleppo via Basra, were unloaded at Zubara and Kuwait. This led to the accumulation of wealth at the two ‘Uthbi towns, and provoked the jealousy of other Arab sea powers, especially the Banī Ka‘b and the Arabs of Abu Shahr, which grew fiercer than it had been before. But they were unable to prevent the establishment of ‘Uthbi-British relations.

Beginning of British relations with Kuwait, 1772.

"The recorded history of British relations with Kuwait", says Lorimer, "opens in 1775, when on the investment of Basrah by the Persians, the British desert mail from the Gulf to Aleppo began to be despatched from Kuwait instead of Zubair."  

And, although the latter town was occupied by the Persians, not at

1Kuwait had always been referred to as Grain, Grane, Graine, while Zubara was spelled Zeberra and Zebarra. This varied spelling occurs in the letters of the Basra Factory and the works of English travellers.


3Zubair was attacked and devastated by the Persians early in 1773. When Colonel Capper, on his way from Aleppo to Basrah, reached Zubair on December 17th 1773, he found it destroyed. James Capper, Observations on Passage to India through Egypt, and across the Great Desert; with Occasional Remarks on the Adjacent Countries, and also Sketches of the different Routes (London, 1784), pp. 31, 33.
the same time as Basra in 1776, but later, in 1778, the desert mail of the English East India Company was forwarded from Kuwait by the middle of the year 1775.¹

The desert route

To the English East India Company, this desert route was of special importance, not only for forwarding mail to and from India, but for trading purposes. It is for the first purpose that Kuwait gained importance in the eyes of the English Factory of Basra, and it was about four months after the Persian attack on Basra that despatches were received by the desert mail at Kuwait.² The Basra Factory used to send the "desert express" from Zubair, where messengers were hired for that purpose, but soon after the choice of Kuwait as a centre for that mail messengers were obtained there. Yet the mail does not seem to have worked satisfactorily from the start, most probably because the Factory had no representatives at Kuwait. To receive the mail arriving at Kuwait in time, and to arrange for the departure of other mail from the place, it was suggested that a civil officer of

¹The letter dated July 15th, 1775, sent by Moore, Latouche and Abraham to London, may be the first desert mail sent via Kuwait.

²For the desert route to Aleppo in the eighteenth century, see Chapter VI.
the Company should be stationed at that port. And as there was none available at Basra by July 1776, Mr. Latouche asked Lieutenant Twiss, the Captain of the "Terrible", to be responsible and arrangements were made at Kuwait. ¹ The desert mail continued to be received and sent through Kuwait during the Persian occupation of Basra.²

For the commercial purposes of the English East India Company, Kuwait seems to have offered a solution to their difficulties in exporting Indian goods to the markets of the Middle East. In a letter to Mr. Latouche at Basra from the Consul at Aleppo dated June 11th 1776, much is revealed of the situation at Kuwait and of British trade. Mr. Latouche, quoting that letter to the Court of Directors, wrote on July 24th, 1776:

"The Consul at Aleppo, in a letter to us dated the 11th June, has inserted the following paragraph:

'India and Surat Goods continue in Demand at the Metropolis. I hear two merchant Ships arrived at Bushire from those Parts - If the Town of Grain is suffered to remain neuter, Caravans may be made no doubt to and from thence to this Place, for as a long War will probably be caused by the Loss of Basora, that City will be deserted unless Merchants can find some Method of carrying on Trade

²Lorimer, op.cit., Vol. I, i, p. 1002.
Grain seems to be well situated to serve as a Substitute to Zebere (Zubara), but that can only be whilst it remains independent for should the Persians take Possession of it, it will be dangerous for Merchants to bring Goods from thence, that will probably be prohibited by the Porte even to Europeans, therefore it is in the Interest of the Merchants Your way to represent the Necessity of Grain is remaining under Benechaliid (Bani Khalid) Governors independent of the Persians.1

Mr. Latouche adds to the Consul’s letter:

"We are very sensible that the thus opening a Communication with Aleppo and even Bagdat by the Way of Grain, if practicable, would be a most desirable Circumstance, especially as it might afford an Opportunity of disposing of the very considerable Quantities of Bengal and Surat goods now lying at Bombay for the Busora Merchants. Grain still continues unmolested by the Persians. We do not think however that the Merchants would attempt to send any goods across the desert, before Affairs are somewhat relieved from the Confusion which they are in at present."2

1The migration of merchants from Basra to Zubara, and may be other places in the area, took place soon after and during the Persian attack. See "Historical Sketch of the Uttoohee Arabs", etc., in Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, p. 363, where it is stated that a Shaikh from Kuwait migrated to Zubara with those merchants; see also Wahba, Jazīrat al-‘Arab fī al-Qarn al‘Ishrīn, p. 96.

2Latouche, Basra, to Court of Directors, 24.vii. 1776, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, No. 1127. Mr. Latouche’s letter should not imply that before 1775 there were no caravans travelling from Kuwait to Aleppo. In 1758, Ives contemplated travelling by such a caravan."
It was not long before the Consul's expectations became true, for Kuwait remained unmolested by the Persians and caravans carried trade from it to Baghdad and Aleppo. These desert caravans were not altogether safe in the desert, for sometimes they were attacked by Arab tribes on the orders of the Persian occupiers of Basra. An attack on caravans going from Kuwait to Baghdad was effected in April 1777 by Shaikh Thamir of the Muntafiq tribe, after he had recognized Persian suzerainty and at Persian instigation. But the Bani Khalid Arabs had to attack the Muntafiq, and so caravans went on as usual.

Caravans had sometimes to change their route across the desert from Baghdad to reach Kuwait in safety. By a large caravan from Kuwait "a large Sum of Goods which had been collecting for some time from Bushire and Muscat" was conveyed to Baghdad.

In the latter part of 1777, British trade in 'Iraq and Persia was suffering very much from the burdens imposed by the governments of Abu Shahf and Basra on the British Factories.

"At Bushire," says a letter from Latouche and Abraham, "we are almost as much exposed to Oppression as we are at Basora. The Shaiks there interfere too much in the Trade of the Place; and the few Merchants with any Property who are there, are too much in a Com-

1Latouche and Abraham, Basra, to Court of Directors, 10 iv.1777,

2Ibid.
bination to admit of our drawing any great Commercial
Advantages from it were indeed as is the Situation
of Bussora at present it is much superior in Point of
Trade than Bushire." 1

The factors at Basra, therefore, thought of choosing another site for
their factory. Kuwait suggested itself, but they were still afraid of
having there "much the same Treatment" as at Abu Shahr and Basra, and
besides they were afraid of being

"too much exposed to Persians, who there is Reason to imagine would regard our settling there with
a jealous eye and would throw all the Impediments of
their power in our way." 2

The only other safe place that they could think of was Kharij Island,
where they thought they might be free from "these Inconveniences". 3

However, soon after, on November 11th 1777, Kuwait was visited
by the 'Eagle', the English Company's ship, to report on the place. 4

The harbour was suitable for anchorage, and the town "has a slight Wall
calculated for Musquetry", and

"however, it serves for the caravans for Aleppo and
Bagdat to assemble with some security and free from
Persian extortions."

1 Latouche and Abraham, Basra, 10.viii.1777, to C. of D., F.R.P.P.G.
Vol. 17, No. 1144.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Latouche and Abraham, Basra, 14.1.1778, to C. of D., F.R.P.P.G.
Vol. 17, No. 1152.
The Factors went on to say that

"In Future too it [Kuwait] might serve for Shipping bound to Bussover to take in Pilots for the River in case the Port of Bushire should at any Time be shut to them or the Shaiks their continue their present Impositions with Respect to the Pilots for Your Honours Cruizers; or/as we informed the honourable the President and Council in our Letter to them dated 24th December by the Eagle/ should they at any Time hence occasion to send us a Packet for Your Honours, the forwarding of which required particular Dispatch, by ordering the Vessel directly to Grain, and the Captain to dispatch the original overland from thence, particularly should the Wind be unfavourable for him, we might receive it many Days sooner than we otherwise should do."1

Messengers used to cover the distance between Kuwait and Basra in three days, while the vessels, while the northwest winds prevailed, were sometimes twenty days if not more in their passage up the river.2 In this way Kuwait was of great use to the desert mail, and it did help considerably in conveying Indian goods to the markets of Syria and other countries of the Middle East and Europe. Yet the establishment of a factory there by the British did not take place till about fifteen years later, in 1793, when the Basra Factory moved to Kuwait for causes that will be dealt with later in their places.

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2Ibid.
Owing to the misfortunes of Basra and Zubair, and to the wise policy of Shaikh ʿAlī ʿAlā al-Ṭahlā in maintaining Kuwait's neutrality, the town's prosperity continued to flourish and his relations with the major European trading power in the Gulf, the English East India Company, continued to be cordial. In fact, the Shaikh was one of the Arab Chiefs who were given presents by the Factory. However, these relations underwent difficulties which might have broken them had it not been for the wise policy of the men of the Basra Factory.

Arrest of a French officer in Kuwait, 1778.

In consequence of intelligence received from Kuwait of the arrival there of a French officer, Mr. Abraham "One of the Factors from Basra", proceeded to the place in the Company's cruiser, the 'Eagle', from Abu ṣahr, taking twenty hours. Captain de Bourne, the French officer, was residing there as a guest of Shaikh ʿAlī ʿAlā

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1Personal relations between the Factory Residents and agents could solve arising problems. Later in 1779 the Resident was asked to intervene in the question arising from the Butasallim's and Shaikh Thuwayn's refuge at Kuwait. It was mainly because the Resident was a friend of the Factory.

2Brydges, in his Mahanuby, pp. 171-174, gives a detailed account of the event. He is there quoting Captain Capper's version of the story. Captain Capper met M. de Bourne at Basra when the latter was on his way back to France via Basra. See Capper's Observations, pp. 99-104. The same story is related by Mr. Abraham in detail. See Abraham to the C. of C., Grain 7. xi. 1778, F.R.F.P.C., Vol. 17, No. 1161.
Al-Jahān. The French officer was carrying secret letters to the French in Pondicherry and Mauritius. He was travelling from Aleppo to the Persian Gulf when, in the desert, about fifteen days journey from Basra, a party of Bedouin Arabs threatened him, and he had committed the offence of shooting one of its members. Severely wounded by a sword cut on the head, he saved his life by throwing himself on the "protection" of the eldest of the attackers, and promising to pay a sum equal to £100 Eng. on condition of being conveyed to Kuwait in safety. On his arrival at Kuwait, he succeeded in borrowing the promised amount from an Armenian of the place, after which he wrote to M. Rousseau, the French Consul at Basra, desiring to be supplied with the means of continuing his journey to Pondicherry. The French Consul having refused or hesitated to honour the draft of his fellow-countryman, it was carried by the Arab messenger to the British Factory at Basra, of which the staff in this manner became aware of M. de Bourg's presence in Kuwait.

1 Armenian merchants were strongly established in the ports of the Gulf and Muscat in the eighteenth century.
2 Perhaps to get money for the information.
3 See Brydges, p. 175.
A difficult question was thus raised, for a report having reached Basra of war having been declared between France and Britain,\(^1\) the Factors conceived it to be the duty of British officials abroad to seize wandering French emissaries,\(^2\) but, on the other hand, the consequences to the British Resident, Mr. Latouche, were likely to be serious if he took action against M. de Bourg: on information which subsequently proved to be incorrect. The chief obstacle to the execution of the Resident's orders to Mr. Abraham was the opposition of Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah, who though a friend to the British, was strongly averse to the seizure of a person at the time enjoying his hospitality; his objections were, however, withdrawn, principally it would seem in consequence of an assertion that M. de Bourg was a "fraudulent debtor".\(^3\) M. de Bourg

\(^1\) M. de Bourg seems to have said something about the war after his arrival in Kuwait. See Abraham to the G. of D., Grain, 7.xi.1778. F.E.P.P.C., Vol. 17.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Mr. Abraham does not state clearly how he "gained the Shaikh to" his interest. See Ibid. See also Brydges, Wabaub, p. 176.
and his dispatches were conveyed to the 'Eagle'¹ and from Bagra he was sent captive to Bombay.

Mr. Latouche, feeling that these actions needed some justification, wrote, a few days later, to the Court of Directors:²

¹ The dispatches could not be deciphered because M. de Bourg succeeded in destroying the key to the cypher, yet his diaries and other letters disclosed much of the French plans. For a full text of Mr. Abraham's account of the capture of M. de Bourg and the details of his letters and diary, see Appendix, pp. 332-326.

² Sir Harford Jones Brydges's opinion of Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah is of interest. The Shaikh refused to hand his guest, M. de Bourg, to Mr. Abraham and refused the presents and the bribes the Factory offered him (The Wahauby, pp. 175-6). Brydges comments on the Shaikh's behaviour saying: "So that it was the old Shaik's love of justice and not his avarice, that induced him to act as he did." See Ibid, p. 176.
"We were well aware of the Risque we ran in attempting to intercept [the French dispatches] but we thought our Duty to our Country in General at such a critical Season exacted it from us. We doubt not but that it will be of the utmost Consequence to your Affairs in India, the having thus not only sent our Honourable Superiors such early Intelligence of the War but perhaps at the same Time laid open to them the Intentions of the French Government with respect to India..."  

While Colonel James Capper was proceeding to India, via the Persian Gulf, he met Captain de Bourg en route to Europe at Muscat on January 24th, 1779. Captain de Bourg had been released by the Governor of Basra.

1 Mr. Latouche thought that the Basra Factory was the first to send the news of the declaration of war with the French after the seizure of M. de Bourg, but the news had arrived earlier via Suez and the Red Sea. See Holden Furber, "Overland Route to India", J.I.H., Vol. XXIX, part II, August 1951, p. 125.

2 In the same letter Abraham and Latouche add:

"We cannot indeed sufficiently congratulate ourselves on the good Fortune that attended the prudent Measures pursued by Mr. Abraham for the obtaining of the Packets in Question. Had not particular Expedition been used by him, Monsieur de Bourg would have escaped. He had determined to leave Grain the Morning following the Night of Mr. Abraham's Arrival and had not Mr. Abraham taken the Sheik of Grain in a Manner of Surprise; had he given him the least Time for Deliberation, in all Probability, so strict are the Notions of the Arabs with Respect to Hospitality that no Consideration whatever would have induced the Sheik to suffer the Seizure."

(Latouche and Abraham to C. of D., November undated, 1773, F.R.P.P.G. Vol. 17.)
of Bombay and authorised to return to France overland. Capper related the story of de Bourg with the gentlemen of the Basra Factory in his *Observations.*

"Uthai sea power in the 1780's."

The war between France and England gave Kuwait and Zubára in a way special importance for the French sent a strong fleet to the Persian Gulf to intercept the English East India Company's mail and to attack their vessels. As a matter of fact the French attacked other ships in the Gulf for that purpose. So it was still safer for the Company's mail to travel by the Arab vessels. Both Kuwait and Zubára benefited from that conveyance of men and mail through the Persian Gulf and through the desert route from Masqat to Aleppo. They seem to have been used by messengers and passengers as stations.

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1 Capper, *cit.* pp. 99-104. Captain de Bourg arrived at Basra from Bombay on board the 'Success' after promising the authorities there not to return to India. A letter from Latouche and Abraham (Basra Factory) to the C. of D. dated Basra, 23.11.1779. *F.R.P.P.C.* Vol. 17, No. 1165.


3 Latouche and Abraham to the C. of D., Basra, 31. x. 1778, *F.R.P.P.C.* Vol. 17, No. 1161. A French Marquis de Calern arrived by a caravan from Aleppo at Kuwait at the end of September 1773, and he was planning to go to Zubára, whence he hoped to make the journey by sea to Masqat. He seems to have been a French officer belonging to Pondicherry. See *Ibid.*
Enmity with the Banī Ka‘b, Abū Shahr and Bandar Riq.

This transfer of commercial activities to the eastern shore of the Gulf from the western could not please the western trading centres. It had already been seen that among the reasons for the Persian attack on Basra was the transfer of the English East India Company’s activity to its Factory in the latter town in preference to Bandar Riq, Abū Shahr or Bandar ‘Abbās. ¹ It had already been seen too that the Persians used to depend for their naval operation on the Arabs of the Persian shore.² With the death of Karīm Kūn in 1779 and the absence of any other predominant political power in the Gulf the opportunity for the Arab chiefs to pursue their independent policies became great. And from that time “may be dated the decline of Persian influence in the Gulf”.³ About the same time the Gulf gained increased importance “for orders were issued by the Porte prohibiting Christian vessels from trading to Suez”.⁴ This gave the ports of the Gulf great importance, as the places from which the goods of India and the East could find their way to Aleppo and Constantinople. There can be little doubt that

¹See above, p. 166.
²See above, p. 166.
⁴See Danvers, op.cit., p. 44. See Chapter VI, p.
Kuwait benefitted from that restriction as well.

**Position at Zubāra.**

In the second ‘Utūbi settlement in the south, prosperity reached a state which made her neighbours jealous and ready to attack the town at any moment because they could not compete with it.¹ Thus Shaikh Nasr of Abū Shahr who was at the same time ruler of Bahrāin was planning an attack upon the town. Early disputes between the ‘Utūb of Kuwait and the Banī Ka‘b² seem to have revived. The Shaikh of Bandar Riq, the ally of both the Banī Ka‘b and Shaikh Nasr, was ready to join hands with them in their meditated attack on the ‘Utūb towns. But by the year 1779 the ‘Utūb seem to have had an armed fleet that could stand against any aggression by those allies.³ In the year 1730 the ‘Utūb, both at Kuwait and Zubāra, were at war with the Banī Ka‘b.⁴ Though the circumstances of that war are not known,⁵ yet

¹See Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 140 and p. 364.

²See above, pp. 155-6.

³In a letter from Latouche and Abraham to the Court of Directors, Basra, 21.x.1779, the Shaikh of Kuwait had been requested to send on board one of his gallivats two Englishmen coming from London to Masqat, but he refused because he was expecting an attack from the Banī Ka‘b. F.R.P.P.C., Vol. 17, No. 1177.

⁴Lorimer, op.cit., i, i. p. 1003.

⁵Ibid.
one can say that enmity between the 'Utūb and the Bani Ḳā'b which started in the early 1760's continued to exist. And the 'Utūb were expected to join the side of the Pasha of Baghdaḍ in his war against the Bani Ḳā'b later in 1780. Yet that enmity with the Bani Ḳā'b was of less direct consequence to the success of the 'Utūb than the capture, by the French, of a "Mascat ship in 1781, the cargo of which is valued at 3 lac(s) of rupees", which was shared by the merchants of Bagra, Ḍafif and Zubara. The two French ships that were attacking other ships in the Gulf were endeavouring to intercept the English mail.

However, the great threat to the 'Utūb did not come from the French but from the Bani Ḳā'b and their allies the Arabs of 'Abū Shahr and Bandar Rīn. There is no need to trace that threat earlier than 1780, but suffice it to say that the 'Utūb found that by that date they had to


3See a letter from Latouche to the C. of D., Bagra, 10.vii.1781, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, No. 1195. The attack on the Masqat and other ships was a clear indication that the French knew that the English mail was carried by other vessels than the English.
expect an attack from the Arabs of the Persian coast of the Gulf.

That expected threat made the 'Utūb of Kuwait and Zubāra keep their fleet near at hand for emergency. What helped to postpone an attack by the Banī Ka'īb on the 'Utūb may have been the hostility that persisted at the same time between the Ottomans and the Banī Ka'īb, most probably as a result of the Ka'īb's help offered to the Persians during the attack on Basra in 1775. Thus the Banī Ka'īb were on bad terms with the Kutassālim of Basra and the 'Utūb. The latter on the other hand were on good terms with the Kutassālim and were quite ready to join him in the battle against the Banī Ka'īb if he really wanted such a battle, otherwise "they wait, they say, until till they see that the Bacha himself is really in earnest". They themselves were ready for the battle.¹

¹In a letter from Mr. Latouche to the C. of D. dated Basra, 25.iv.1782, he speaks of "two Turkish ketches of Kuwait" which were expected to be brought to Basra "under the protection of the Grain Gallivats". And since the Pasha was at war with the Banī Ka'īb it can be concluded that the 'Utūb sea power of Kuwait was in a position to defy the Ka'īb's by thus escorting three ketches to Basra. See the letter in the F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, No. 1214. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh Al-Ṣalāḥ by the 1780's was enlisted among the influential chiefs to whom the East India Company offered presents because those chiefs had it in their power to hinder the Company's trade and mail. See a list of Abstract of charges general - Basra Factory from 1st of May 1780 to the 31st of April 1782, in F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, No. 1216.
Reasons for the emergence of the 'Uthba sea power.

This rise of the 'Uthba sea power seems to have been motivated by various factors. In the first place, the 'Uthba were merchants and thus they added to their freight vessels whenever their trade grew, and there can be little doubt that their trade, though its volume is not certain, grew after the siege of Basra in 1775-1779. The increase in the number of trading vessels must have been accompanied by buying and building armed vessels so as to protect the trading fleet. This became a necessity after the death of Karim Khan in 1779, who could suppress any depredations the piratical vessels of the Ras-al-Khyma or Nasqat might commit, or at least because of the awe in which the Arab pirates held him must have prevented them from making any depredations. For soon after the death of Karim Khan the Qawasim and the Nasqat Arabs were at war. Depredations on Arab vessels using the Gulf became frequent and the Arab maritime states started quarrels among themselves.¹ Thus

¹Of the activity of the Qawasim after the death of Karim Khan, says Warden:

"The Rasool-Khyma fleet, in consequence of the decline of the Persian ascendancy in the Gulf, being constantly on the cruise, roused almost every petty chief to fit out armed boats, manned by lawless crews, under no control, but who depended solely on plunder for their maintenance, which they indiscriminately practised. This state of affairs arose out of the war between Rasool-Khyma and Muskat."

See Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 301.
"Shaikh Abdoola of Ormus was at variance with Karrack [Ābārī]; the Shaikh of al Haram with the Jamia people; and the Utub of Zubara and Grane with the Chaab."

In the same way this absence of major power in the Persian Gulf gave the Arab maritime forces on both littorals of the Gulf, the Persian and the Arab, the chance to fight each other because of earlier grievances or on account of new ones.

Among these comes the traditional enmity of the 'Utub with the Banī Ka'b. But since the latter became the allies of the Arabs of Abū Shahr and of Bandar Rīq during the siege of Basra in 1775, the struggle for power between the 'Utub and those Arabs of the Persian littoral which became apparent after 1779 found an expression in the Bahrain affair which ended by the establishment of the 'Utub in the Islands and the collapse of the power of the Arabs of Abū Shahr and consequently the authority of the Persian Shāhs.

The conquest of Bahrain by the 'Utub, 1782/3.

The conquest of Bahrain by the 'Utub comprises certain questions that need to be answered in view of the little light thrown upon the

1Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 301.
2See above, pp. 155-6.
affair by both sources which were contemporary with the event and later ones. First comes the question whether the 'Utūb of Kuwait or the 'Utūb of Zubāra were the first to occupy the Islands. Secondly, there is the problem of fixing a date for that conquest. In addition there are the questions relating to the progress of the conquest and the reasons given for it.

On the first question contemporary documents and the local tradition clash. The local tradition kept by Āl-Khalīfa suggests that the 'Utūb of Zubāra, namely Āl-Khalīfa and others, were the only 'Utbī element in the capture of Bahrain. On the other hand some dispatches of the English Factory of Basra and others who drew on them state that the 'Utūb of Kuwait were the first to occupy the Islands. There should be no doubt that the contemporary documents are right, for in addition

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1 I was told of this by Shaikh 'Abd Allah b. Khalid Āl-Khalīfa in July 1959. Al-Nabhanī in his Al-Tuhfa, Ta'rīkh al-Bahrain, pp. 123-125, mentions Āl-Khalīfa and the people of Zubāra as the only attackers of Bahrain; he does not mention the 'Utūb of Kuwait or even Āl-Jalāhima as sharers in the battle.

2 See a letter from Mr. Latouche (Basra Resident) to the C. of D., 4.xi.1782, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, No. 1230. See also Lorimer, op.cit., Vol. I, i, pp. 839, 1003; and "Historical Sketch of the Uttooobe", in Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 364.
to stating that fact they give details about the conquest on which local tradition keeps silent.

As to the date of the conquest and occupation of Bahrain, available sources vary in giving the date, though generally they suggest the year 1783 for the occupation and the transfer of power in the Islands from Shaikh Naṣr of Abu Shahr to the Al-Khalifa of Zubara. However, after the establishment of the Al-Khalifa at Zubara in 1766, and with the rapid growth of the ‘Uthūl sea trade, Bahrain must have been a port of call for the ‘Uthūl trading the fishing vessels earlier than the conquest.¹ Lorimer, drawing on the Bombay Government records, gives the date as 1783.² But as Lorimer does not usually give precise reference to his sources he might, in selecting that year, have depended on Saldanha's Selections³, or the Bombay Government Selections.⁴

¹In his attempt to legalise the Persian claim to Bahrain, Dr. Abbas Faroughy, in his book The Bahrain Islands (750/1951, New York, 1951, pp. 70-71) states that the "Al-Khalifa persuaded the Sheik of Bushir, who had authority over Bahrain, to lease them the island". This lease, if it had ever existed, must have taken place in the 1770's. Captain Taylor states that the ‘Utūb reduced Bahrain in 1194/1779. See Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 27.
³See J.A.Saldanha, Selections from the State Papers. The author gives a selection of 1780 and leaves 1782. No. cc1xxix.
⁴See No. XXIV of the Selections, pp. 364-365.
Yet in the Factory Records of the East India Company there is a document dated November 4th, 1782, which clearly states that the 'Utūb had "lately taken and plundered Bahreen". This document leaves little doubt that the taking of Bahrain by the 'Utūb was effected before 1783.\(^1\)

It may be said that the event referred to might have been one of a series of attacks on Bahrain that started earlier than 1782, yet still the wording of the Resident, Mr. Latouche, is quite clear and decisive. In fact he goes on to say in the next paragraph that the Shaikh of Abū Shahr was trying to come to terms with the 'Utūb, though he was meanwhile preparing for a retaliatory expedition against their states at Kuwait and Zubāra.\(^2\)

**Reasons for the 'Utūb attack on Bahrain**

It has already been seen how the 'Utūb were on bad terms with the Banī Ka‘b, the Arabs of Bandar Rīq and the Arabs of Abū Shahr. Whether it was a question of rivalry for the conveyance of trade in the Gulf, or a feeling of contempt with which the 'Utūb regarded the Banī Ka‘b and their allies because of their intermarriage with non-Arabs, or a question of Sunnī and Shī‘ī creeds, or a combination of them, the 'Utūb were always on the alert, especially after the Persian occupation of Başra in 1776, expecting an attack from the other shore of the Gulf.

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\(^1\) See the document in [F.R.P.P.G.], Vol. 17, dispatch No. 1230.

\(^2\) Ibid.
However, the 'Utub expansion in Bahrain should be considered as a natural phenomenon. The 'Utub settlement at Zubara which rapidly grew into a fortified and walled town could not satisfy the needs of the 'Utub community, whose population was increased by newcomers from Kuwait and Najd and presumably hoped to share in the water and plantations of Bahrain. The 'Utub could not think of expansion on the mainland because they were the allies and protegés of the Bani Khalid and it would not be easy for them to fight against the Arabs on land. On the other hand, with the help of their sea vessels they could defy other maritime forces and thus protect an island such as Bahrain. Whether the 'Utub were at that early period aware of the Wahhabi danger is another factor which might have driven them to the conquest. For it is related that Shaikh Khalifa b. Muhammad Al-Khalifa, the then Shaikh of Zubara, had anti-Wahhabi sentiments. The pearl fishery and the rich palm groves of Bahrain might have been among the attractions of the new coveted territory.

1See above, p. 129 ff.

2The siege of Basra obliged many merchants to migrate to Zubara. This is clearly stated in contemporary writings. See Latouche to the C. of D., Basra, 7. xi. 1782. F.R.P.P.C., Vol. 17. About the same time and later others migrated from Najd because of the Wahhabi threat.

3See Ta'rikh al-Bahrain, p. 122, where Nabhaní quotes two verses by Shaikh Khalifa which show that he had no high opinion of Wahhabism.
However, by the 1780's circumstances on the Persian Gulf seem to have made an attack on Bahrain by the 'Utub not only desirable but a necessity. The absence of a strong Persian Shah gave the Arabs of the Persian coast the chance to behave almost independently of any supervision or advice from the Shah. Thus the long-awaited attack of the Arabs of the Persian littoral became imminent and the war with them seemed to be inevitable.

Early aggression on the 'Utub

As a matter of fact the reduction of Zubara, after the diversion thither of much of the sea trade with India, became an object of importance to the Persian Government; and following their instruction several attempts, commencing in 1777, were made upon the place by the Shaikh of Abu Shahr, but without success.¹ In 1780, possibly in the same connection, but more probably in consequence of piracies committed by the Bani Ka'b, that tribe were at war with the 'Utub both of Zubara and Kuwait.²

According to a tradition kept by the Al-Khalifa, which probably dates from about 1780, the people of Bahrain being Shi'as did not allow some of the Khalifas' servants to buy palm tree trunks from Sitra, an

¹Lorimer, op.cit., I, i, p. 783.
²Ibid.
Island of Bahrain, and as a result of the quarrel between them one of the servants was killed. The Zubāra inhabitants retaliated after some days by attacking Sitra and killing five of its inhabitants. The Sitra people reported the matter to their Shaikh Naṣr, who started preparing for a retaliatory expedition against Zubāra.

Whatever the reasons for the war might have been the conflicting parties were by 1782 ready for the decisive battle for Bahrain, and by that time it seems that each party sharing in the struggle had found allies in the different maritime Arab forces of the Gulf.

On the Abu Shahr side, there were the Shaikh of the Bani Kaʿb, of Bandar Rīq, of Hurmuz and the Qawāsim. On the ‘Utbāsi̇de, who took the defensive in the early stages of the fight, it is not possible to ascertain any allies. However, it is related that as early as 1779 the Sultan of ‘Uman had sent a ship to Zubāra upon some friendly errand. It was expected that the Sultan of ‘Uman should take the side of the ‘Utūb

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1See Taʾrīkh al-Bahrain, pp. 123-124.

2Ibid. Persian rule over Bahrain was exercised through the medium of the Arab Shaikh of Abu Shahr who was by all means the lord of the Island, and his recognition of the authority of the Shāh of Persia over Bahrain and other parts of the Abu Shahr, neighbourhood was only nominal.

3See Lorimer, op. cit., I, ii, p. 788.
as long as his traditional enemies, the Qawasim, joined the other side; yet the Sultan was not said to have joined any party as far as the Bahrain affair was concerned in 1782. But the ‘Utūb had found allies in the Arabs of the Qaṣr peninsula, as we shall see, in the defence of Zubāra against the aggressors as early as 1779.

**Early skirmishes**

Though the ‘Utūb in the early stages of the fight for Bahrain were on the defensive, yet they were reported early in the year 1782 to have seized at the entrance of Shāṭṭ-al-‘Arab "several boats belonging to Bushire and Bunderick".\(^1\) Shaikh Naṣr of Abū Shahr was reported in return to have been "collecting a marine, as well as a military force, at Bushire, Bunderick, and other Persian ports - he gives out that he intends to revenge these hostilities by attacking Zebarrā";\(^2\) he was reported also to "have wrote (sic) for a supply of money to Aly Morat Caun" at Isfahān.\(^3\) Mr. Latouch commented on these preparations by:

"Notwithstanding this Show of Vigor, however, it is said, that he [Shaikh Naṣr] has lately sent to Grain to request a Peace, but that the Shaik

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\(^1\)Latouche to Court of Directors, 4.xi.1782, _F.R.P.P.G._, Vol. 17, No. 1230.

\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Ibid.
had refused to grant it, unless Shaik Nassir pays him half the Revenues of Bahreen and a large annual Tribute also for Bushire.\(^1\)

Mr. Latouche goes on to say in the next paragraph:

"It is not many Years since Grain, was obliged to pay a large Tribute to the Chaub, and that the Name of Zebarra, was scarcely known. On the Persians attacking Bussora, one of the Shaiks of Grain, retired to Zebarra, with many of the principal People. Some of the Bussora Merchants also retired thither. A great Part of the Pearl and India Trade, by this means entered there and at Grain, during the Time that the Persians were in Possession of Bussora, and those Places have increased so much in Strength and Consequence, that they have for some Time past set the Chaub at Defiance, have gained very considerable Advantages against him, and is now under no Apprehensions from the Force Shaik Nassir threatens to collect against them."\(^2\)

Shaikh Naqr besiegues Zubara.

However, Shaikh Naqr found it necessary to proceed against Zubara to avenge those 'Uthī depredations, especially after the capture of a "Bushire Gallivat that had been sent to Bahreen to receive its annual tribute" by the 'Uthī vessels."\(^3\) He prepared an expedition for the destruction of his powerful rival, in which he was assisted by the Shaikhs of Bandar Bīqā, Ganawah, Dushistan and other places on

\(^1\) Latouche to Court of Directors, 4.xi.1782, F.R.P.P., Vol. 17, No. 1230.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 364.
the Persian coast. The fleet sailed from Abu Shahr with two thousand Arabs for Bahrain under the command of Shaikh Muhammad, a nephew of Shaikh Nāṣr. This fleet "though deemed sufficient to attack Zubāra, it appeared to be Shaikh Nassir's object to bring the Arabs to terms by blockading their port, for which purpose the Persian fleet kept constantly cruising between Zubāra and Bahrein."  

The Shaikh of the Qawāsim as mediator.

Meanwhile Shaikh Rāshid b. Mātar, the retired Shaikh of the Qawāsim, played the part of mediator, but his efforts failed because the most the 'Utūb agreed to concede was to return the plunder they had taken in Bahrein. These negotiations failing, the Abu Shahr troops landed at Zubāra with the aim of storming its fort, which they expected to reduce with little opposition. The attackers, however, had scarcely landed, when they were resolutely attacked by a force much greater than they expected, which sailed from the fort, and after an obstinate conflict, they threw down their arms, fled, and embarked on board their

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1 Al-Nabhanī states in his Taʾrikh al-Bahrein, p. 124, that Shaikh Nāṣr was the Commander.
2 Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 364.
3 Shaikh Rāshid retired because of old age and his son Saqr succeeded him. The Qawāsim were on the Persian side because the 'Utūb were said to have captured a boat belonging to the Qawāsim and put eighteen of the crew to death. See Lorimer, op. cit., I, i, p. 634.
4 Before Shaikh Rāshid, the Shaikh of Bandar Rīā tried to mediate but his efforts were not fruitful. See Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 364.
boats. As a result of this battle Shaikh Muhammad, "some men of consequence belonging to the Shaikh of Hurmus and a nephew of Shaikh Rashid" were killed.¹

The role of Kuwait.

The 'Utub of Kuwait do not seem to have joined in this battle, most probably because they were expecting the attack to fall first on them as they were nearer to the Banī Ka'b and the territory of the Abū Shahr. The news of the attack on Zubāra seems to have arrived there very late, for they were reported to have captured a vessel of Shaikh Nasr which was conveying the news of his defeat at Zubāra and which ordered his son at Bahrain to do his best to defend the island until it became possible for his father to send him reinforcements. The Kuwaiti fleet intercepted that vessel and thus came to know about the state of affairs at Zubāra and Bahrain.²

¹See Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 364. It is worthwhile noting in this context that the 'Utub of Zubāra were helped in repelling the besiegers by most of the tribes inhabiting Qatar. A special mention of Al-Bin 'Ali of Furaiḥa town is made by Nabhānī. See Al-Nabhānī, Tārīkh al-Bahrain, p. 125. Lorimer mentions other tribes of Qatar who helped in the occupation of Bahrain. See Gazetteer, I., i., p. 840.

²See Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 28. In his "Extracts" Captain Taylor suggests that Shaikh Nasr was at the head of the besieging army and on his way back to Abū Shahr, he sent the news to his son whom he had left at Bahrain to look after the Island. See Ibid.
The attack on Bahrain

That Utub fleet seems to have consisted of six large vessels and a number of boats, which was sailing towards Zubara as a relief to the besieged town. The information intercepted in the Abu Shahr boat was valuable and led the Kuwaiti vessels to adopt a "prompt and decisive measure". They immediately sailed to Bahrain and seized the principal forts.

It is not quite clear whether the Utub of Zubara joined their cousins of Kuwait in the early stages of the battle at Manama in Bahrain. For though the Al-Khalifa tradition of the conquest attributes the achievement to Ahmad b. Khalifa and the Arab tribes of Qatar, it

1Lorimer, *op. cit.*, I, i, p. 839.

2See *Bombay Selections*, XXIV, p. 365. Lorimer, in recording the event, states that this Kuwaiti expedition ran to Manama, the capital of Bahrain, seized and set fire to the town and shut the Persian garrison in the citadel. See Lorimer, *op. cit.*, I, ii, p. 839. Lorimer speaks of the "Persian garrison", by which should be understood Shaikh Nasr's garrisons who were most probably Arabs.

3Local tradition kept by the Al-Khalifa makes no mention of any sort of Kuwaiti help in that respect, though it asserts the great help the tribes of Qatar gave. Al-Nabhan gives no mention of the Utub of Kuwait in the Bahrain affair. He is most probably chronicling after the Al-Khalifa tradition.

4He was officiating as Shaikh on behalf of his father Khalifa, the ruler of Zubara, who was away on pilgrimage to Mecca. See *Ta'rikh al-Bahrain*, p. 122.
denies the part played by the 'Utúb of Kuwait. Yet earlier accounts of the event by Mr. Warden and Captain Taylor state quite clearly that the Kuwaití role was decisive.

To turn to the conquest of Bahrain, the 'Utúb of Kuwait were joined there, as quickly as the available means of transport would admit, by the 'Utúb of Zubára and Ruwais, and by contingents from various tribes of Qatar, among them Al-Musallam from Huwaila, Al-Bin 'Allí from Fuwairat, Sudan from Dōha, Al-Bu 'Ainain from Wakrah, Kibīsā from Khōr Ḫasan, Sulūtah from Dōha, Mana'a from Abū Dhalūf and the Na'īm Bedouins from the interior of the promontory. The attacking 'Utúb outnumbered the garrisons of the forts and did not seem to have met with difficulty in occupying the forts of Manāma and Muharraq, the two big towns of Bahrain. Other villages do not seem to have shown any signs of resistance, for the garrisons of the forts were the only fighting body.

1Shaikh 'Abd Allāh b. Khalid Al-Khalīfa is of the opinion of his family respecting this fact.

2See their "sketches" in Bombay Selections, pp. 28-29 and pp. 364-365.

3Al-Jalahīma division of the 'Utúb had settled at the last place in Qatar to the north of Zubāra.

4See Lorimer, op. cit., I, i, pp. 839-840.
Dating the occupation

The occupation of the islands seems to have taken place a month after the return of Shaikh Nasr to Abu Shahr from his lost battle against Zubara. Shaikh Nasr according to one report returned to Abu Shahr on the 12th June 1782, and on the 28th July of the same year, the garrisons of Bahrain capitulated to the Utub, and on the 5th August 1782 they reached Abu Shahr on their way back from Bahrain. Thus by the end of 1782 Bahrain was transformed from a Persian dependency into an integral part of the Utub states.

Shaikh Ahmad, the Conqueror.

Neither Shaikh Nasr nor the Shah could reconcile themselves to the loss of the islands, and, as it will be noticed later, efforts were made to reconquer Bahrain and to destroy the Utub of Zubara and Kuwait. At the same time, Shaikh Ahmad, surnamed the Conqueror by the Utub of Bahrain by the following sentence:

1 See Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 365. The same source gives that Shaikh Rashid of Ras al-Khayma accompanied the garrisons to Abu Shahr. Ibid.
2 See below.
3 Local tradition plays upon the word "Khalifa" and dates the conquest of Bahrain by the following sentence: Sara Ahmad fi Awal Khalifa, meaning "Ahmad became the ruler of Awal", i.e. Bahrain. The calculation of the letters in the Arabic sentence gives the year 1197/1782-3 as the time when the conquest was completed. I was told of this sentence by Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Khalifa and it is given as well by Rabbani. See Ta'rikh al-Bahrain, p. 126.
Bahrain just after the accomplishment of the conquest, did not lose
time in consolidating his power in the Islands. Shaikh Ahmad became
in 1783 the first ruler of Bahrain and Zubara, for in that year his
father Khalifa died at Mecca where he was performing his pilgrimage.

While establishing his power over the Islands Shaikh Ahmad had
to distribute some of the booty among those who shared the battle for
Bahrain with the Al-Khalifa. It is not quite certain what each of the
partners was allotted. However, Al-Sabah of Kuwait seem to have re­
turned back to their town after the cessation of military operations.
The other important division of the 'Utub, Al-Jalahima, who seem to
have given useful help in the occupation of Bahrain, expected to get
a larger share of the booty, and they seem to have asked for a footing
at the place.¹ Though what they really claimed was not definitely stated
in any available source, their demands were not fulfilled and they in­
dignantly departed from Bahrain and settled for some time at Kharij
Island and at Abu Shahr². The Al-Jalahima were then under the rule of
four sons of Jabir. One of these sons, Rahma, perhaps after quarrelling

¹ Formerly the Al-Jalahima had been humiliated by Al-Khalifa at Zubara
and driven out of that town to Ruwais.

² See Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 522.
with his brothers, usurped power, and one of his brothers, 'Abd Allah b. Jabir, had to seek refuge at Masqat where he hoped to get help to fight Rahma the usurper. The Al-Jalahima do not seem to have stayed very long at Khārij and Abū Shahr, for they were reported to have returned to Qaṭar to settle this time not at Ruwais but at Khūr Ḥasan to the north of Zubāra. With the ascendancy of Rahma and his selection of piracy as a means of living for his tribe, he soon became "the scourge of the Al-Khalīfa".

Shaikh Ahmad, however, does not seem to have transferred the seat of his government from Zubāra to Bahārain immediately after the conquest. For he is reported to have returned to Zubāra, leaving one of his relatives, with his headquarters at the Diwan fort of Manama town, to rule the Islands and guard them against any Persian threat. Shaikh Ahmad used to spend the summer at Bahārain and the remaining part of the year at Zubāra until his death in 1796, and he was buried at Manama.

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1 Bombay Selections, XXIV, p. 522. Cf. also Lorimer, op. cit., I, i, p. 240.
2 It is not clear why Al-Jalahima chose Abū Shahr for their temporary settlement after their expulsion from Bahārain. Still it may have been because they thought Shaikh Naṣr might take Bahārain again and thus enable them to settle in the Islands, a better place than Qaṭar.
3 See Lorimer, op. cit., I, i, p. 840.
4 See Al-Nabhānī, Al-Tuhfa, Taʾrikh al-Bahraʿin, p. 127.
Shaikh Ahmad was succeeded by his son Salman who chose al-Rafa‘ for his residence.¹

Consequences of the Conquest of Bahrain to the ‘Utub

Despite the fact that the Al-Khalifa continued to hold Zubara as their headquarters and consequently as a centre for their mercantile activities, the acquisition of the Bahrain Islands had far-reaching consequences for the political and economic development of the ‘Utub states. For the geographical position of the Bahrain Islands and their comparatively great wealth² would offer any enterprising and active merchant a chance of rapid and steady income. The ‘Utub seem to have been aware of this fact. And if we add to this the ramshackle condition of Basra and the unsettled state of affairs in Persia, it can be easily understood how the ‘Utub benefited from the newly acquired territory. The pearl trade of the Gulf which had always been centred in Bahrain was now theirs, many rich merchants who had large interests in the Indian trade were at Zubara,³ and the ‘Utub

¹This choice may have been based on health grounds, for al-Rafa‘ lies on a hill, unlike Manama, which is rather low, being situated on a plain. The Arabic word rafa‘ means to raise.

²The comparison is made with Qatar and other uncultivated areas of Eastern Arabia such as Kuwait itself.

³See letter from Latouche to the Court of Directors, Basra, 4.xi.1782, F.R.P.R.C., Vol. 17, No. 1230.
fleets were in a position to play a dominant role in the freight trade in the Persian Gulf.¹

Yet this commercial as well as political success brought with it rivalries that were not in existence before 1782. For in addition to the three enemies of the 'Utūb, namely the Bani Ka'b, the Arabs of Bandar Rīq and Abu Shahr, the conquest made Shaikh Rashid of Ras al-Khayma, his son, and Shaikh 'Abd Allah of Hurmuz become new enemies to the expanding 'Utūbi power. An even more dangerous threat to the 'Utūb at Bahrein could be expected from the Sultan of Masqat who had earlier claimed sovereignty over Bahrein.² But the Sultan did not become a threat to the 'Utūb at Bahrein till the closing years of the eighteenth century. He was reported to have "preserved strict neutrality" towards the struggle that ensued between the 'Utūb and their enemies at and after the time of the conquest.³ This attitude of the Sultan can be accounted for on the following grounds. Those who were struggling for supremacy in Bahrein were the 'Utūb, who had so far no grievances against the Sultan, and the other Arabs of the Persian coast, including the Qawāsim, the


²See above, p. 669.

³ Bombay Selections, p. 171.
traditional enemies of Masqat, were his enemies. If he were to join the 'Utub, he would lose his claim to Bahrain as a former tributary to Masqat, and he would not join the others basically because they were his enemies. Ahmad b. Sa'id, moreover, was by 1780 too old to start any war. His death on December 15th 1783 was followed by a struggle for the throne by his three sons. Thus Masqat was not in a position to interfere in Bahrain.

However, the abstention of the Sultan of Masqat from intervening did not stop the Arabs of the Persian coast from planning a re-occupation of Bahrain, and the other 'Utub land at Kuwait and Qatar. But it seems that the 'Utub by the 1780's were possessed of a naval power that could withstand any such attack on their territories.

"During the latter part of the year 1783 preparations were on foot for an expedition on a large scale by the Shaikhs of Bushir and Hormuz, assisted by Persian troops and by the Shaikh of the Qawasim, against Zubarah and Kuwait; but no armament actually sailed."  

1. See above, p. 69.
2. See Miles, op. cit., II, p. 281.

In a letter from Basra to the Secret Committee dated 17th December, 1783, Mr. Latouche speaks of the Bani Ka'ib's preparations for an attack on Kuwait and Basra. He speaks as well of Shaikh Saqr of Abu Shahr as an ally of the Bani Ka'ib. See F.R. F.P.C., Vol. 17, No. 1262.
Preparations for that purpose were, however, renewed at the close of the following year, and on 12th February, 1785, Shaikh Naqr proceeded by land to Kungūn, and the Abu Shahr and Bander Riq fleets sailed for that place on the 21st, where they were to be rejoined by the Shaikhs of Hurruz and Ras al-Khayma. A small force from Shiraz had already arrived at Kungūn to join the expedition.1

"But the death of ‘Ali Hurād Khan of Shiraz dispelled the danger which thus threatened the Al-Khalīfa of Bahrain during the next few years, while the Shiraz Government laboured under domestic difficulties, the Shaikhs of Bahrain remained unmolested.2

This may also be attributed to the death of Shaikh Naqr on 11th April 1789.3

Mustafa Agha, the Mutasallim of Bagra, and Shaikh Thumayni of the Montafiq Tribe refugees at Kuwait.

But in Kuwait, on the other hand, the ‘Utub were experiencing some difficulties with Sulayman Pasha of Baghdad. Sulayman lost his control of Bagra in 1787 when its Mutasallim Mustafa Agha tried to

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1 See Bombay Selections, Vol. XXIV, pp. 365-366.

2 Lorimer, on cit., I, i, p. 340.

3 Shaikh Naqr’s death is mentioned in a letter from Manesty and Jones to the Secret Committee, dated Bagra, 29th June, 1789. See F.R.P.P.C. Vol. 18, No. 1520.
govern the town independent of any orders from Baghdād. Sulaymān Pasha, who had been the Mutasallim of Baṣra before the Persian occupation of the town in 1776 still aspired to direct the affairs of the place after becoming Pasha of Baghdād in 1780. Thus Sulaymān started an expedition to reduce Baṣra when Thuwaynī, the Shaikh of the strongest Arab tribe near Baṣra, joined hands with the Mutasallim. Thuwaynī in 1787 established himself as governor of the town and sent the mufī of Baṣra to Constantinople to persuade the authorities to instal him as governor of Baṣra and its neighbourhood.

As a result of Sulaymān's expedition, Mustafā Aghā, his brother Māˈrūf Aghā, Thuwaynī and many others who took part in the insurrection against the Pasha of Baghdād, sought refuge at Kuwait with its Shaikh ʿAbd Allāh b. Ẓabāḥ. The Pasha and his Kaya wanted him to deliver them but he refused. On the Shaikh's refusal the Pasha asked the Resident of the English Factory at Baṣra to intervene, but the latter refused to share in the expedition which the Pasha was planning against Kuwait.¹

¹See a letter from Mr. S. Maneṣty, the Resident, and his Joint Factor, Mr. H. Jones, to the Secret Committee, 29.vi.1789, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 18, No. 1532. It is interesting to note that Mr. Maneṣty and Mr. Jones observe that the Kaya was not really in earnest in asking the Shaikh to deliver Mustafā Aghā because he deemed him a great rival, if he was pardoned by the Pasha and if he stayed in Baghdād. See Ibid.
Mr. Manesty in a letter to the Shaikh 'Abd Allah b. Sabah

dated 17th April 1769 informed the latter of the Pasha's expected
march against Kuwait if he refused to deliver the refugees. ¹ Shaikh
'Abd Allah in his reply to Mr. Manesty said that he was ready to
fight against the Pasha to protect his guests if war was otherwise
inevitable.² In the meantime, Shaikh 'Abd Allah assured the Resident
and Sulaymān Pasha that they need not fear any attack on Baṣra as
long as they remained in Kuwait under his protection.³

The fears of the Pasha were not without foundation, for

"In the beginning of the month of July, Shaikh
Twiney assembled a Force at Jarra [Jahra village],
a Place in the Vicinity of the Town of Grain where
he was joined by Mustafa Aya the late Musaaleem,
and about one hundred and fifty Turkish Horsemen."

Their small united army advanced towards Baṣra and

"on the 10th July encamped at Saffwan [Safwan],
a hill at about 30 miles distance from it."

They were met there by Ḥmūḏ b. Thāmir, the new Shaikh of the Munta-
fiq, and the new Mutasallim of Baṣra. Thuwaynī and Mustafa Aghā were
defeated and the first sought refuge with Shaikh Gḥūthbān of the Banī
Ka'b, while the latter, accompanied by his brother, and some other

³See text of the above letters in the appendix, p.
Turks, fled to Kuwait. There they sold their horses and proceeded to Maspqat "with the intention of repairing to Mecca".¹

The determined behaviour of the Shaikh of Kuwait shows plainly that the power he could exert against any meditated attack on his territory was strong enough to repel any aggressor. It has already been seen how he defied the Banī Ka'b and Shaikh Nasr of Abū Shahr in 1782, and how his fleet led the attack on Bahrain at the end of the same year.² The established authority of Shaikh 'Abd Allah b. Sabāh and his "excellent character" gained him the respect of the English Factory at Basra. Mr. Manesty and Mr. Jones, on difficulties arising with the Mutasallim of that town and Sulaymān Pasha, thought that Kuwait could replace Basra as a centre for the English Factory.³

Friendship between the Factory and the Shaikh "has long subsisted".⁴

The position of the English in the struggle among the Arabs of the Gulf (1782-1790).

But before dealing with the English relations with Kuwait, let us examine their position and attitude towards the struggling Arab

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¹ Manesty and Jones to Sir Robert Ainslie, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, Basra, 20.ix.1789. F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 18, No. 1537A.
² The story of Thuwaynī's insurrection is given in detail by Ibn Sanad in Māṭalī' al-Su'ūd, ff. 121-125.
³ See above.
⁵ Ibīd.
forces in the Gulf.

That position was one of neutrality. This neutrality was mainly dictated by the orders from Bombay for what mattered to the English East India Company so far was that her trade with the Gulf should go unmolested and her ships should not interfere with any pirate ships as long as the British flag was respected. The Resident at Basra, after the Qasimi attack on and their capture of an English vessel in 1778, was waiting for the moment when he could receive orders and vessels to destroy their power. And when that power was at hand, he could not do anything without "consent from Bombay". However, the Company's directions to the Basra Factory in the 1780's were to continue on friendly terms with the "several powers" of the Gulf — with the Banū Ka'b,

"With the Bunderick, the Grain people, and other tribes of Arabs on the Persian and Arabian coasts, who have it in their power to annoy our trade... for the security of the Company's dispatches, of the English trade, and of English travellers, passing between Basra, Aleppo and Bagdat."

The Company found that

"timely presents are often of great use in preserving this good understanding."

1 In a letter from Latouche to the Secret Committee, dated Basra, 17th December 1783, he expresses the Factory's hope of seizing, one day, the opportunity of destroying the Qasimi fleet. He seems to have been a sympathiser with the 'Utub against their adversaries. See that letter in F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17, No. 1262.

2 Latouche to Manesty, Basra, 6.xi.1784; a letter from Manesty to the Secret Committee, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 13, No. 1299. For the full text of the letter see Appendix, p.335.
Shaikh 'Abd Allāh's Relations with the English

As stated before, Shaikh 'Abd Allāh was on very good terms with the representatives of the English East India Company. In 1773 he had allowed the Basra Factory to seize the French officer, M. de Bourg. Those friendly relations persisted through the 1780's. This appears natural because of the mutual benefit. The Company had depended for some time past on Kuwait for her dispatches. The Shaikh derived substantial benefit from the traffic. As we have already seen in the case of M. de Bourg how those good relations were about to break down on the question of the "protection of the guest", they were again exposed to the same test when Mr. Manesty tried to intervene in the question of Shaikh Thuwaynī and Mustafa Aghā. However, friendship persisted and in 1790 Mr. Harford Jones (later Sir Harford Jones Brydges) on account of his ill health retired to Kuwait for some time for a change of air. And whenever disputes became sharp between the Basra Factory and the Pasha of Baghdad, Kuwait was mentioned by the factors as a

1Kuwait is known for its dry air among the towns of the Eastern coast of Arabia. In comparison to Basra it is far healthier because almost no mosquitoes can live there.
substitute for Basra. These disputes dragged slowly from after 1780, when Sulaymān was appointed Pasha of Baghādād, till 1792, when a final and decisive step was taken by Manesty and Jones for the removal of the Factory from Basra to Kuwait.

But by this time the danger that threatened the 'Utūb both at Kuwait and Zubāra, and later at Bahrayn, came neither from the Arabs of the Persian coast of the Gulf nor from the Pasha of Baghādād, but from Central Arabia, where a new overwhelming power was forcing its way to the Arabian coast of the Gulf. The Wahhābis whose impact upon Eastern Arabia started in the early years of the 1780's deserve a separate chapter.

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1Mr. Jones was in Kuwait for the "change of air" on 7th March 1790. See a letter from Manesty and Jones to the Court of Directors, 27.vi.1790, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 18, No. 1551. The preference was given to Kuwait as a substitute for Basra, when Khārij Island was thought of as a possible solution. See Manesty and Jones to Secret Committee, Basra, 29.vi.1789, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 18, No. 1520.
Chapter V

THE WAHHABIS IN EASTERN ARABIA

A. The Wahhabiyya and the Wahhabi relations with the Rani Khalid.

B. Development in the 'Uthbi States (1790 - 1800).

C. 'Uthbi-Wahhabi relations, 1793-1800.
Chapter V

THE WAHHABIS IN EASTERN ARABIA

Introduction

In dealing with the Wahhabis in Eastern Arabia, I am proposing to make a brief historical study of a hitherto neglected people, the Banī Khalid, one of the most influential tribes who lived on and controlled the Arabian coast of the Gulf from Qatar in the South to Basra in the north during the period covered by the present work. Every history of the Wahhabī movement in Arabia mentions the Banī Khalid, but here too the Banī Khalid are usually eclipsed by the treatment of the power of the Wahhabīs and therefore neglecting the Banī Khalid.

The name Banī Khalid was mentioned in many of the letters and reports of the representatives of the English East India Company in the Gulf during the eighteenth century, but no details of their rule in Eastern Arabia is found there. The two Wahhabī chroniclers, Ibn Ghannam and Ibn Bishr, could not neglect the Banī Khalid's power and their stubborn resistance to the Wahhabī expansion in Eastern Arabia. However, to the two, the Banī Khalid represented a part of the associates/mushrikīn who had to be brought under Wahhabī control. Yet much of the material to be traced respecting the Banī Khalid before
the expansion of the Wahhabis comes from Ibn Bishr's Sawābiḥ accounts of previous events. When Ibn Bishr speaks of the Bani Khalid's rulers before that period, this may be taken as an emphasis of their importance in the wars against the Wahhabis that took place in Central and Eastern Arabia in the second half of the 18th century. So far there has been no attempt to draw a genealogical tree of the Bani Khalid Shaikhs. An attempt will therefore be made in the present chapter to give a list of those rulers based on the writings of Ibn Ghannām, Ibn Bishr and the author of Lam' al-Shihab. The study of the Wahhabī-Khalidī relations will throw light on the position of the 'Utbi states during and after the struggle. A separate part of the chapter will be given to developments in the 'Utbi states after 1790; and their relations with the Wahhabis in the same period will be studied in the light of Wahhabī and other contemporary writings. Arabic rather than European writings will be the main sources for the Wahhabī-Khalidī struggle, while the Factory records and other European sources form the main authorities on the development of the 'Utbi states.

1 See above, p. 17.

2 Oppenheim in his Die Beduinen gives genealogical trees for many Arab tribes, but although he describes the Bani Khalid, he does not draw such a tree for them. See Vol. III, pp. 133-142.
A. The Wahhabiyya

A brief summary of the basic doctrines of the Wahhabiyya is here essential because the Wahhabi wars with the Banī Khālid were to a large extent based on the Wahhabi's interpretation of Islam. In their wars with the Banī Khālid the Wahhabis were aware of the fact that they were not fighting against the petty chiefs of Najd. If it is remembered that the Wahhabis could not carry war into the heart of al-Hasa till the late 1780's, it may be understood how they appreciated the power of the Banī Khālid Shaikh. However, those tribes, who fought under the leadership of the Al-Su‘ūd, did so in large part through their zeal for the teachings of Muḥammad b. ʻAbd al-Wahhāb.

Basic Doctrines of Wahhabiism.

Briefly speaking the Unitarianism of Muḥammad b. ʻAbd al-Wahhāb was founded on the concept of the unimpaired and inviolate Oneness of God. There was nothing original in Shaikh Muḥammad's creed, nor did he intend that there should be. Shaikh Muḥammad, as a reformer, wanted

1 The Wahhabis used to refer to themselves as Muwahhidin/Unitarians.

They were given the first name by their enemies inside and outside Arabia. See the article "Wahhabiyya" by Margoliouth in E.J./1, p. 1048.

2 European and Moslem writings contemporary to the Shaikh are very misleading. Their erroneous statements were criticised by later European writers like Burckhardt in his Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys, p. 277. Another example can be traced in Shaikh Mansūr, the Italian physician and commander of the forces of Sayyid Sa‘īd, the Sultan of Muscat, in his History of Seyd Sa‘īd, p. 30.
to rid his people of the sinfulness that beset them when they parted from the laws laid down in the Qur'ān and led a life that did in no way subscribe to the Moslem creed, as he interpreted it. He, therefore, wanted them to go back to the Word of God in the Qur'ān and to put into practice the Words of the Prophet and his pious companions. This was in essence the aim of the preaching of Shaikh Muhammad.¹

¹For a short account of the teachings of Shaikh Muhammad see Lam‘ al-Shihab, pp. 263-277. The author, though not a Wahhabī himself, yet seems to understand fully the teachings of the Shaikh and his account does not differ from Ibn Ghannâm’s in his Rawdat al-Askar. There were two doctrines condemned by the Wahhabīs with unceasing vehemence: Shirk and bida‘. Shirk is the association of any being or thing with God, who in his Oneness can have no associate, nor can any have the natures and attributes that by right belong only to God. Bida‘ or innovations: Moslems should follow the example of the Prophet and his companions, for the innovations were, according to the Wahhabīya, the outgrowth of ignorance. The Shaikh and his followers, the Mwahhidīn, believed that if they stamped out Shirk and bida‘, so that God was acknowledged throughout Islam as the One and only God and men trod the right way He had set for them, all Moslems would indeed become brothers, peace would prevail and the world would prosper. See an account on the Wahhabī doctrine in Reut’s Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhab, pp. 40-41.
On studying the life of Shaikh Muhammad, one can clearly see three distinct phases, the first, his early religious education by his father, Shaikh 'Abdi al-Wahhab\(^1\) who was a Qa\(\bar{\imath}\) at 'Uyayna in Najd and by other 'Ulama\(\vec{\imath}\) in Najd; the second, the period of his wide travels,\(^2\) and the third beginning with his return to 'Uyayna\(^3\) where he started propagating Wahhabism which led to his expulsion from there and his final settlement at al-Dir'iyya. The man chiefly responsible for his expulsion was Sulayman b. Muhammad al-Janid of the Ban\(\bar{i}\) Khalid.

\(^1\)Brydges wrongly calls Muhammad by his father's name; The Wahhabi, p. 7.

\(^2\)Shaikh Muhammad started his travels when he was about 20 years old. He travelled to al-Hasa, Bagra, Baghda\(\ddot{\imath}\), Kurdist\(\ddot{\imath}\)an, Hamdhan, Isfahan, Qumr, Alempo, Damascus, Quds al-Khalil (Jerusalem), Cairo, Suez, Yanbu', Makka, Burayda, whence he returned to 'Uyayna after an absence of about twenty years. His travels must have given him a good idea of the deteriorated conditions in the Islamic world. His stay at Damascus must have given him the opportunity to study the works of the great Hanbali reformer, Ibn Taymiya. For the towns Shaikh Muhammad visited see Lam\(\acute{\imath}\) al-Shihab, ff. 5 - 17.

\(^3\)Others say Yamama in Najd. Lam\(\acute{\imath}\) al-Shihab gives both versions, see f. 17. Ibn Gham\(\ddot{\imath}\) and Ibn Bishr give 'Uyayna. See Kitab al-Ghazw\(\ddot{\imath}\)at al-Bay\(\ddot{\imath}\)niyya, p. 30 and 'Ur\(\ddot{\imath}\)an al-Majd, Vol. I, p. 6.
The Bani Khalid's influence in Najd.

This was not the first instance of a Khalid intervention in Najdi affairs. The Shaikh of the Bani Khalid had long been recognised by the inhabitants of Najd as their most powerful neighbouring chief whom they had to appease with gifts and homage. This seems to have been the position in Najd in the seventeenth and early 18th centuries. If the chiefs of the Arabian tribes withheld their presents from the Bani Khalid, the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid would raid the towns of Najd and return with the booty to his quarters at al-Hasa.

1 Before the emergence of the Wahhabi power at al-Dir'iyya in the 1750's, the most powerful chief in Najd was Ibn Mu'ammar of 'Uyayna. See Lam' al-Shihab, p. 41.

2 Ibn Bish's Sawabiq supply us with information regarding such raids in several years of the first half of the 18th century carried out by the consecutive rulers of the Bani Khalid. In 1126/1714 Sa'dun b. Muhammad b. Ghurair raided al-Yamama. He was accompanied by 'Abd Allah b. Mu'ammar, the Shaikh of 'Uyayna. See Ibn Bishr, Vol. I, p. 187. In 1132/1719, accompanied by his artillery he attacked al-Dir'iyya. See Ibid, pp. 212-213. In 1140/1727 Muhsein, the Sharif of Makka attacked the al-Zafir in al-Kharj and 'Ali b. Muhammad b. Ghurair, the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid joined Muhsein in his attack. In the following year 'Ali, having as allies some of the 'Anaza tribe made war against the al-Zafir and obliged their Shaikh Ibn Suwayt to flee to al-Riyadh.
Yet the authority of the Bani Khalid in Najd did not go unchallenged even before the rise of the Wahhabis. For in 1142/1729 Chief of al-Jasa Sulayman b. Muhammad b. Ghuair chose as Amir al-haji (the prince of the pilgrims (of Qatar, Bahrain and al-Jasa)) one of his relatives. Their caravan was attacked by the Mutair tribe of Najd, who robbed the pilgrims of large amounts of money and killed a great number of the notables of al-Jasa, al-Qatif and Bahrain.\(^1\) His attack might have been made on a Khalidi protected caravan because the ruling family of Al-Hamid was divided after the death of Sa'dun in 1135/1722 and its chiefs were struggling for the succession.\(^2\)

**Struggle for the Succession among the Bani Khalid.**

The rival parties were 'Ali and Sulayman, the brothers of the deceased Sa'dun against his two sons Dujayn and Munay.\(^6\) The brothers

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2. The following is a list of the Khalidi rulers in the second half of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th. For a full table of the Bani Khalid Shaikhs see appendix, p. 34:

were victorious initially against the sons of Sa'd bin who had sought the help of the al-Zafir and the al-Muntafiq tribes.\(^1\) Hostilities were renewed in 1136/1723 but Dujayn was again unsuccessful,\(^2\) and so he turned again to the al-Zafir and the al-Muntafiq in 1139/1726, who attacked al-Hasa but were defeated by 'Ali b. Muhammad and returned to their own land.\(^3\) This internal strife among the Shaikhs of the Bani Khalid was resumed with the death of 'Ali in 1736. Sulayman, however, ruled in the Bani Khalid from 1736 to 1752.

Sulayman b. Muhammad

It was during the reign of Sulayman that the first clash with the Wahhabis took place.\(^4\) For as a result of violent action by Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab and his followers at 'Uyayna in which an adulterous woman was stoned to death, the enemies of the movement tried to suppress it before it spread to other parts of Najd. But

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\(^1\) Ibn Bishr, *op. cit.* p. 218.


\(^3\) *Ibid.*, p. 235. The al-Zafir were living in al-Khar to the East of al-Hasa in the first half of the 18th century according to Ibn Bishr. Later in the century the al-Zafir and the al-Muntafiq were inhabiting the territory near Basra.

\(^4\) The Wahhabiyya is taken as a single continuous movement, i.e. it started with Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab's propagation at 'Uyayna in 1725 before he was expelled to al-Dir'iyya.
because Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab was under the protection of 'Uthman b. Mu'ammar, the chief of 'Uyayna, the chiefs of the weak neighbouring towns around him turned to the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid, who had it in his power to command Ibn Mu'ammar to do whatever those chiefs wanted. Shaikh Sulayman was so powerful that Ibn Mu'ammar complied instantly with his orders. And thus Shaikh Muhammad left 'Uyayna for al-Dir'iyya where he allied himself with its chief Muhammad b. Su'ud in 1153/1745. This new alliance of Shaikh Muhammad was destined to bring about a clash between the rising Wahhabis power in Arabia and the already established power of the Bani Khalid.

But there, unlike Shaikh Muhammad's expulsion from 'Uyayna, there was more than the religious reason for the war. In the Wahhabi-Khalidi struggle for power in Eastern and Central Arabia one can detect religious, political, and economic factors. To the Bani Khalid the Wahhabis re-

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1 Ibn Mu'ammar, by the virtue of being the chief of 'Uyayna, was the strongest among the chiefs of Najd. So no other chiefs could attack Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab in 'Uyayna. See Lam' al-Shihab, f.32.
2 See Ibid, f.33. The influence of Shaikh Sulayman, according to Lam' al-Shihab, was felt not only in al-Hassa and its vicinity, but also in Arabia, especially in those areas bordering on 'Iraq, in Najd itself and also the outskirts of al-Shar, (Syria).
3 Ibn Bishr gives this year for the emigration (hijra) of the Shaikh. See Ibn Bishr, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 15. Muhammad b. Su'ud and Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab made a compact by which the former became the political leader of the muwahhidin and the latter the ostensible religious leader.
presented a potential danger which they should control before it
covered more than al-Dir‘iyya, but they were unable to take effective
action because Sulaymān was always threatened by rivalry for leader-
ship within his own family especially by Dujayn and Munay‘, sons of
Sa‘dūn, a rivalry that ended in 1752 by Sulaymān’s expulsion from al-
Hāsa to al-Kharj where he died in the same year.¹

The rule of ‘Uray‘ir

‘Uray‘ir, the son of Dujayn, succeeded Sulaymān in 1166/1752.²
His reign lasted over twenty years.

All through the reign of ‘Uray‘ir the Banī Khālid waged war into
Najd. The Wahhābīs were not yet powerful enough to start raiding al-
Hāsa.³ ‘Uray‘ir could not forget the rising Wahhābīs in Najd and in

(continues)

Cf. Lāmi‘ al-Shihāb, ff. 34-36, and see also Ibn Ghannām, op.cit., II,
p. 4, and Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, p. 12. However, from what the author
of Lāmi‘ al-Shihāb writes it appears that Shaikh Muhammad b. Abd al-
Wahhāb’s role was supreme in all Wahhābī affairs, political and reli-
gious, through his life.

¹See Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, p. 27.
²Ibn Bishr states that ‘Uray‘ir had a rival in a certain Ḥamāda of the
Banī Khālid and it took him some time before he established himself as
Shaikh of the Banī Khālid. See Ibid., p. 27.
³Only once during the reign of ‘Uray‘ir in 1176/1762 did the Wahhābīs
manage to raid al-Hāsa, led by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and this raid was a very
minor affair. See Ibn Ghannām, II, p. 72; and Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I,
p. 46. The first gives fuller details than the second.

(continues)
1171/1758 he started preparing for a campaign against al-Dir'iyya.\(^1\)

The effect of the news on the Wahhabis was great for they started fortifying al-Dir'iyya and other Wahhabi towns.\(^2\) In the following year he mobilised his forces from the Bani Khalid and the people of al-Hasa and allied with certain Najdi towns. In this campaign 'Uray'ir did not reach al-Dir'iyya for his forces failed to occupy al-Jubayla, a fortified Wahhabi stronghold.\(^3\) Six years later (1178/1764) the chief of Najran, Hasan al-Makrami, attacked the Wahhabis near al-Dir'iyya and routed their forces but they succeeded in concluding peace with

\(\text{(cont.)}\)

\(^4\) Rentz thinks that 'Uray'ir "was not greatly concerned at first over the existence of the Unitarian community in neighbouring Najd". See Muhammad b. Abd al-Wahhab, p. 104. He does not give an explanation for that opinion. In fact, 'Uray'ir was interested but perhaps he could not strike before establishing his authority over the different sections of the Bani Khalid. All through his reign the Wahhabis were held away from his territories and he fought more than one great battle with them. (See below.)

\(^1\) Ibn Ghannam, op. cit., II, p. 61.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Lam' al-Shihab, ff. 42-43.
the attacking prince. Meanwhile ‘Urây’ir made an agreement with the prince to attack al-Dir‘îyya jointly; but the joint attack did not take place and ‘Urây’ir tried to storm al-Dir‘îyya alone but without success.\(^1\)

The failure of ‘Urây’ir to take al-Dir‘îyya and at Jubayla shows how strongly those towns were fortified and how weak the means of siege of ‘Urây’ir were. However ‘Urây’ir did not stop campaigning against the Wahhabîs for in 1133/1774 he captured Burayda on his way to al-Dir‘îyya, but he died at al-Khâbiya and never reached there.\(^2\)

Sa‘dûn b. ‘Urây’ir, 1188/1774 - 1200/1785.

Du‘ayn, the eldest son of ‘Urây’ir took over the command of the Khalidî army and tried to carry on the projected attack, but did not find his tribe willing to do so. He therefore returned to al-’Husâ where his brothers Du‘ayn and Sa‘dûn strangled him. Sa‘dûn soon poisoned

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\(^1\)Iyâsîn al-Makramî was a Shi‘ite, see Lam‘al-Shihabî, ff. 44. Lam‘ states that ‘Urây’ir tried by every means to persuade Iyâsîn to join him in eradicating Wahhabîsm and he promised to pay him yearly one hundred thousand pieces of gold if he agreed "to break his oath" with the Wahhabîs, but the latter refused. See ibid., p. 43. ‘Urây’ir’s arrival on the battle field took place after al-Makramî had concluded peace with the Wahhabîs.

Dujayn and became the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid in 1183/1773. The chiefs of the Bani Khalid did not all support Sa‘dun and so ‘Abd al-Aziz, the Wahhabi chief, was able to play the factions of the Bani Khalid one against the other. Since in 1773, before the death of ‘Uray‘ir, the Wahhabis had brought al-Riyadh and its vicinity under their yoke and so had established a firm base for operations outside. They were by now in a position not only to interfere in the internal struggle among the Bani Khalid chiefs, but also to carry war into al-Hasa itself.

Nevertheless Sa‘dun consolidated his power over al-Hasa in the same year, and he was in a position to check any Wahhabi aggression against his territories. During the twelve years of his reign Sa‘dun proved to be invincible, at least in al-Hasa and the Wahhabis had to

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1 Rentz in Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhab, p. 90, puts this event in 1189, most probably influenced by Ibn Ghannam’s chronicling of 1189 where he says that Dujayn offered the chief of Hajar help in his second war with the Wahhabis. Ibn Bighir, who all through his work is careful to give dates for the Khalid rulers, puts the event under 1183.

2 See Lam‘ al-Shihab, ff. 79-83.

3 Dabham b. Dawwas, the chief of al-Riyadh was the Wahhabis’ stubborn enemy. It took them about twenty eight years to get possession of his town.

4 Rentz wrongly states that they were twenty; See his Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhab, p. 219. Lam‘ al-Shihab, f. 30, correctly states that Sa‘dun ruled for twelve years, which tallies with Ibn Bighir’s account.
meet him in Najd and not in al-Hasa. Many towns in Najd, when trying to overthrow the Wahhabi yoke, sought his help. However, the Wahhabi rule in Najd by 1780 was strongly established and 'Abd al-Aziz Al-Sufud who, being sure of his ability to repel any Khaliidi attack, tried a new weapon in his struggle with the enemies in al-Hasa. It was clear, after the struggle for the sheikhship that ensued with the death of 'Uray'ir among the Bani Khalid, that the latter's chiefs did not support Sa'dun unanimously. So 'Abd al-'Aziz, according to Lam' al-Shihab, resorted to bribery as another means to achieve his end, namely that of destroying the Khaliidi power in Eastern Arabia. According to Lam' al-Shihab also, 'Abd al-'Aziz wrote letters to the brothers of Sa'dun and the other chiefs of their tribe in which he encouraged the first to rebel and occupy the seat of government "for Sa'dun had no more right to rule" and the claimants should share the rule.

So far the Bani Khalid had settled their domestic affairs themselves without outside intervention. We see in 1752 after the expulsion of Sulayman b. Muhammad, 'Uray'ir established himself as Chief

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1 In 1192/1778 Sa'dun attacked the Wahhabis in al-Khajir, in 1193/1779 in al-Kujama'a, in 1195/1780 in al-Khajir, and in 1196/1781 in Burayda. See Ibn Bishr, op. cit., pp. 70, 71, 74, and 75.

2 Lam' al-Shihab, p. 30. The Wahhabi chroniclers Ibn Quanmam and Ibn Bishr in their works naturally would not refer to the use of guile and bribery by 'Abd al-'Aziz.
without foreign assistance for over twenty years. And on his death, Sa‘dūn also restored order without any outside aid. But as time went on because of the Wahhābī intrigues and the weakness of the opposers of Sa‘dūn their quarrels brought closer their final overthrow because they invited outside help.

So it was most probably due to the encouragement of the Wahhābīs that ‘Abd al-Mu‘īṣīn b. Sirdāh b. ‘Abd Allāh of the Āl-Ḥamīd led the revolt against Sa‘dūn in 1200/1785.1 ‘Abd al-Mu‘īṣīn, feeling that his own and his nephews’ supporters2 among the Bani Ḥālid could not defeat Sa‘dūn, sought the help of Thuwaynī, the head of the Muntafīq,3 who joined forces with the insurgents and won the battle of Jadīs4 against Sa‘dūn, who fled to al-Dir‘iyya to seek the protection of his bitter enemy, ‘Abd al–‘Azīz Āl-Su‘ūd. The Wahhābīs were expecting this end to their intrigues and Ibn Ghannām when recording the arrival of Sa‘dūn at al-Dir‘iyya and the rise of Duwayhīs into power rightly anticipated the imminent fall of the Khalīdī rule in Eastern Arabia.5

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1Lam‘ al-Shihāb, f. 81, states that Duwayhīs and his brother Muḥammad were the first to revolt and that they asked the help of their maternal uncle ‘Abd al-Mu‘īṣīn after their failure to overthrow Sa‘dūn.

2The nephews were Duwayhīs and Muḥammad, the brothers of Sa‘dūn.

3Lam‘ al-Shihāb, f. 81.

4Ibn Ghannām, on cit., II, p. 139.

5Ibid.
According to Lam, al-Shihāb, Sa'dūn asked 'Abd al-'Azīz Al-Su'ūd for forces to enable him to recapture al-Ḥāṣa, but the latter wanted to continue his policy of playing the Bani Khālid chiefs one against the other till he made sure that the time was ripe for a decisive attack on their territory. For in 1196/1784, Su'ūd, the son of 'Abd al-'Azīz raided al-Ḥāṣa most probably to test their response to a Wahhabi attack, but that raid proved that the Bani Khālid were still powerful. Now with Sa'dūn in his hands, 'Abd al-'Azīz was sure that the Bani Khālid lacked a leader; but still the whole power of the Bani Khālid was massed on the side of 'Abd al-Muḥṣīn and Duwayhis. However, soon the Wahhabis started raiding the territory of the Bani Khālid. For in 1202/1787 Sulaymān b. 'Uffayṣān, the Wahhabi general, raided some parts of Qatār and on his way back to al-Dir'īyya attacked al-'Uqair, and earlier in the same year Su'ūd went to al-Dahwā desert with the purpose of spying on the Bani Khālid.

The Reign of 'Abd al-Muḥṣīn and his nephews

Duwayhis and Muḥammad, 1200/1785 - 1204/1789.

By the rise of 'Abd al-Muḥṣīn and his nephews into power in the Bani Khālid, it became clear that their family strife would continue

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1See Lam, ff. 83-84.

2Ibn Ghannām, on cit., II, p. 153, Ibn Bīshr, on cit., p. 82.
for 'Abd al-Muhsin of Al-'Abd Allah became the uncrowned prince of the Banī Khālid and his nephews of the Al-'Urayfi only puppets. Sa'dūn died a year after his arrival at al-Dir'iyya during which time the Wahhābīs were doing their best to enlarge the split between the Banī Khālid by asking them to overthrow 'Abd al-Muhsin and his nephews and re-install Sa'dūn. Their propaganda did not work and yet after the death of Sa'dūn they were asking his tribe to pay allegiance to another brother of Sa'dūn, Zayd b. 'Urayfi.

The history of the accession of the Banī Khālid rulers after the death of Sa'dūn becomes very complicated. The only contemporary sources where the accession could be chronologically traced are the chronicles of Ibn Ghannām, Ibn Bishr and Lām al-Shihāb. These three sources are not decisive. In fact they sometimes clash, and it becomes very difficult to form a clear picture of the Khālidī ruling chiefs after 1204/1789.

1Zayd's presence at al-Dir'iyya is hard to explain. Philby suggests in **Saudi Arabia**, p. 78, that he was banished from the tribe with his followers after the revolt against Sa'dūn.

2Ibn Ghannām states that Dwayhīs and 'Abd al-Muhsin after their defeat in the battle of Ghuraymīl in 1207 sought refuge with the Zubāra people while Ibn Bishr states that they sought it amongst the Muntafiq in the north. See Ibn Ghannām, op.cit., II, p. 160, and Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, p. 35.
Yet in spite of the fact that the chiefs of the Bani Khalid were periodically liable to be overthrown by family and Wahhabi intrigues, there were certainly three clear reigns from 1785 to the close of the century. The first of Duwayhis and Muhammad with their uncle 'Abd al-Muhsin as regent which lasted till 1204/1789. This was followed by Zayd b. 'Urayir (1204/1789 - 1208/1793) and the next by Barrak b. 'Abd al-Muhsin (1208/1793 - 1213/1796).

Successive Wahhabi attacks on the Bani Khalid territory,
1200/1785 - 1208/1793

From 1200/1785 to 1208/1793 the Wahhabi raids on Eastern Arabia were characterised by their ferocity and terrorism as if the Wahhabis wanted the inhabitants of the towns to revolt against their rulers. 1 But still, during the reign of 'Abd al-Muhsin and Duwayhis, the Wahhabis were unable to invade al-Hasa and reduce it to their control. The Wahhabi attacks in 1787 and 1788 were short and sharp raids. 2 It has already been stated that Thuwayri of al-Muntafiq was an ally of 'Abd al-Muhsin and Duwayhis. Thuwayri had had an agreement with the Wahhabis and thus he resented it when Sa'dun was offered shelter at

1Thus in the case of al-Fudul village, the inhabitants were slaughtered like sheep. See Ibn Ghannam, op.cit., II, p. 159.
2For the nature of those raids see Ibn Ghannam, op.cit., II, pp. 153-159 and Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, pp. 83, 84 and 85.
al-Dir‘iyya. Thuwaynī consequently was inclined to assist the ruling chiefs of the Bani Khalid. But unfortunately for them, Thuwaynī failed in his revolt against the Pasha of Baghdad when he tried to make himself the Mutasallim of Bagra. In 1787, Thuwaynī's forces were beaten by Sulaymān, the Pasha of Baghdad and Thuwaynī, with a few survivors encamped at al-Jahra village to the north of Kuwait. In the following year Su‘ūd, the šāhhabī general, after hearing of Thuwaynī's defeat, attacked him at al-Jahra and annihilated his forces. Thus the Bani Khalid in al-Hasā were left without Thuwaynī's help. Even so Su‘ūd did not seem to have had the power to invade al-Hasā and face 'Abd al-Muḥsin and Duwayhīs in open battle; and therefore he went on raiding the Bani Khalid territory in the north and in the south.1

In 1787/1739, however, Su‘ūd, accompanied by Zayd b. ‘Uray‘ir and his followers of the Bani Khalid felt strong enough to invade al-Hasā and made for al-Hasā oasis, the tribal centre of the Bani Khalid. After three days of continuous combat, 'Abd al-Muḥsin and Duwayhīs2

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1 See above.


3 Lam‘ al-Shihāb, f. 36 gives the name of Muhammad b. ‘Uray‘ir, together with 'Abd al-Muḥsin and Duwayhīs, among those who sought refuge with the Muntafīq after their defeat.
fled from the battlefield and sought refuge, according to Ibn Ghannām, at Zubāra with the ‘Utūb and according to Ibn Bishr and Lam al-Sāhihāb, with the Muntāfīq in the north of al-Ḥasā. Yet this Wāḥābī victory over the Bani Khālid was not decisive, for in the first place Su‘ūd was unable to extend his attack to the fortified towns of al-Ḥasā such as al-Ḥufuf, al-Subarras, al-‘Uqair, and al-Ḵaṭīf. And in the second place, the Shaikh he put up in place of ‘Abd al-Muḥsin was not dependable. This was Zayd b. ‘Urayr who became the ruler of the Bani Khālid, but who does not appear to have paid tribute to the Wāḥābīs. For as we shall see Zayd joined others of his tribe and waged war on the Wāḥābīs.

Zayd b. ‘Urayr (1204/1789 - 1208/1793)

The Bani Khālid at this junction seem to have had two recognized Shaikhs for Zayd b. ‘Urayr was the Shaikh at al-Ḥasā - with the towns from al-‘Uqair in the south to al-Ḵaṭīf in the north under his control, and ‘Abd al-Muḥsin was the Shaikh of the nomadic sections of the tribe in the northern regions of the Bani Khālid territory.

3Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, p. 85. See also Lam al-Sāhihāb, p. 86.
4For the borders of the Bani Khālid territory see above, pp. 76-7.
It was not long after that 'Abd al-Muhsin was assassinated by Zayd in 1206/1791, most probably on Wahhābī instigation. Meanwhile Su‘ūd attacked the nomad Banī Khālid, whose new chief was Bārrak b. 'Abd al-Muhsin, near al-Jahra and routed their Bedouin forces in 1207/1792.

It is apparent by now that the Banī Khālid were divided into two main sections, the first including the nomads whose allegiance was to the family of Al-'Abd Allāh, of whom 'Abd al-Muhsin was the first Shaikh, and the second including the settlers in the various towns of al-Ḥāsa and some nomadic sections who were now headed by Zayd b. 'Urāyšir.

The hostility of these two sections to the Wahhābīs still persisted after the battle of Ghuraymil. For soon after the Wahhābī attack on

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1 Ibn Bishr, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 88, states that Zayd invited 'Abd al-Muhsin to return from the north to al-Ḥāsa oasis after granting him safe conduct.

2 Ibid.

3 I was told by one of their descendants, who is studying in London, that the Banī Khālid still retain that prejudice against the Su‘ūdī family and when the king goes hunting in the desert and camps near the Banī Khālid encampment, nobody goes to his camp to ask for presents or to pay homage etc. while other tribes go to his camp, eat and take presents and pay homage. This may reflect how strong and bitter was the hostility between the Su‘ūdīs and the Banī Khālid.
the Banī Khalid, near al-Jahra, there was unrest in al-Ḥasa. Su'ūd therefore directed his forces to the South, but Zayd b. 'Urayṣir seems to have pacified the area and to have persuaded Su'ūd to return to Najd. The texts in both Ibn Ghannam and Ibn Bishr are not quite clear in respect to this unrest in al-Ḥasa. While Ibn Bishr gives the impression that Zayd was on the Wahhabi side, that he subdued the revolt and thus Su'ūd did not find any grounds for interference, Ibn Ghannam gives the impression that Zayd was among the conspirators and that he was living at Kuwait for some time most probably to plan attacks on Najd. However, from the statements of both chroniclers one can infer that by 1792, the Wahhabis had not yet broken the Khalidī power. In the years 1791 and 1792 terrorist raids were inflicted on the different towns of al-Ḥasa. But until 1793 no real military campaign was sent against the Banī Khalid and the towns of al-Ḥasa. In that year a great Wahhabi force attacked al-Ḥasa, drawing troops not only from al-Dir'iyya but also from the other Wahhabi towns. In this campaign against al-Ḥasa, Barrāk b. 'Abd al-Muhsin seems to have played an important role in serving the Wahhabi in al-Ḥasa. He is reported to have acted as

1See Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, p. 93.


3For the damage done to these towns and cultivation of al-Ḥasa and for a description of the Wahhabi raids see Ibn Ghannam, op.cit., II, pp. 173, 182; and Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, pp. 38, 97-98, 100.
mediator between Su‘ūd and the Bani Ḵālid of al-Ḩasa.\(^1\) Zayd b. ‘Uray‘ir who had formerly been supported by the Wahhabīs was at the head of the Bani Ḵālid of the south who were still blocking the way to the East. Duwayḥis, Muḥammad and Mājid, the sons of ‘Uray‘ir returned from Zubārā\(^2\) and were among other Bani Ḵālid warriors (muqaṭṭila) staying at the Ḥuẓura ṭāqī fort.\(^3\) From this one can infer that the four sons of ‘Uray‘ir, the brothers of Sa‘dūn, found it very necessary to forget their enmity\(^4\) in the face of the impending danger. In order to keep the Bani Ḵālid divided into two hostile sections, Su‘ūd had this time secured Barrāk b. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn on his side. Thus in the Wahhabī campaign of 1793, when the capture of the fortified towns of al-Ḩuṭḥūf, al-Ḥuẓura ṭāqī and al-Ḫaṭīf seemed impossible, Barrāk was able to enter al-Ḥuẓura ṭāqī by a trick,\(^5\) the sons of ‘Uray‘ir

\(^1\)See Ibn Ghannām, op. cit., II, pp. 188-189.

\(^2\)See above.

\(^3\)Ibn Ghannām, op. cit., II, p. 190.

\(^4\)Zayd, see above, was in 1204/1789 supported by the Wahhabīs and he became the chief of the Bani Ḵālid.


The trick Barrāk played is not given by either of these two chroniclers.
departed and Barrāk became the Shaikh of the Banī Khālid. So far the Wahhābīs had not succeeded in storming any fort of the Banī Khālid. It is true that they defeated their tribal forces near al-Jahram, but the towns near the coast of the Gulf were not yet conquered. Even the actual rule of the territory had so far been left to a Shaikh from the Banī Khālid. But Zayd b. ‘Uray’ir did not succeed in ruling al-Ḥassa for the Wahhābīs.

Barrāk b. ‘Abd al-Muhsin (1211/1796 - 1213/1798)

On the contrary, Barrāk turned to be a dangerous enemy and he joined hands with Dwayḥis and Muḥammad, in an attempt which aimed mainly at the re-establishment of the Khālidī power as the strongest in Eastern Arabia. With the overthrow of the sons of ‘Uray’ir and the establishment of Al-‘Abd-Allāh in the person of Barrāk b. Muḥsin the Wahhābīs were still following their policy of keeping the different sections of the Banī Khālid opposing each other. At the same time, they knew that Barrāk was too weak to plot against them, because he had quite recently been defeated by them in the north.2

1 It is not quite clear where the sons of ‘Uray’ir this time went. Ibn Bishr, op. cit., I, p. 100 says that they went to the north. Ibn Ghannām, op. cit., II, p. 190 simply says that they ran away. Lūḥ al-‘Abhāḥ, f. 86, says that they sought refuge at Bagdād with Sulaymān Pasha.

2 Ibn Bishr, op. cit., I, pp. 97-98, says that Su‘ūd in 1792 directed his attack on the northern part of the Banī Khālid territory because "the head of the serpent lay there", meaning that Barrāk was the most dangerous Khālidī chief.
As a matter of fact both Ibn Ghannam and Ibn Bishr date the fall of the Bani Khalid rule over al-Hasa by the fall of Zayd and the rise of Barrak.¹ But the end of the Bani Khalid power was not finally accomplished till 1795 when Barrak and others attacked the Wahhabi teachers (mutawwif) and troops who were stationed in some of the towns of al-Hasa after the wars of 1792-1793. Following this Su'ud carried out savage attacks on all the tribes and towns of al-Hasa which had fought on the Khalid side.² The Wahhabis were unable to send a large expedition to al-Hasa earlier than 1795 mainly because they were crossed to attacks from the West in 1790, 1791 and 1794 by the Sharifs of Makka and they were afraid of expeditions sent from the north by the Pasha of Baghdad who could direct against them the tribal forces of al-Zafir, ‘Arza and the Muntafiq. It is true that Thuwayni’s expedition of 1786 proved a failure, but expectations were realized in 1796 and 1798.


²Barrak escaped to the northern territory of the Bani Khalid where he found shelter with the Muntafiq. Later in 1796, he took part in Thuwayni’s second expedition against the Wahhabis. He is reported to have repented and joined the Wahhabi troops and was killed in one of their raids on Sūq al-Shuyukh and Sarwān in ‘Iraq in 1212/1797. See Ibn Bishr, *op. cit.*, I, 112.
**Stages in the conquest of the Bani Khalid**

The Bani Khalid were completely overpowered by the Wahhabis and in 1795 the first non-Khalid ruler of al-Jasa was appointed by 'Abd al-'Aziz Al-Su'ud. This was a certain Najim, a man of no distinguished family.¹ With the choice of Najim as Wali ends the final stage of the humiliation of the Bani Khalid. Earlier stages could be briefly summarized in three distinct steps. The first, through most of the 1780's, began by the usual Wahhabi raids² aimed principally at frightening the towns and tribes that were loyal to the Bani Khalid. The second stage was that of playing the Khalid ruling chiefs one against the other and thus weakening the allegiance of the different Khalid families to their chiefs, and the third was that of the conquest of the towns of al-Jasa and the destruction of their walls, towers and fortresses and the building of new Wahhabi forts in or near

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¹Ibn Bishr, op. cit., I, p. 106, describes him as "one of the populace of al-Jasa", Wahwa min 'ammati ahli al-Jasa. The Wahhabi attitude towards the conquered tribes or towns was to select a new chief from the same ruling family or to keep the old one. It is clear that they tried to establish Zayd and Barak at various times, but neither proved to be faithful to the Wahhabi cause.

²Burckhardt gives the best description of the Wahhabi warfare in his Notes on the Bedouins, pp. 311-320.
those towns.\(^1\) Towers like these were built outside al-Mubarraz town and al-Hufūl, and they played an important role in the fight against the expedition of ʿAlī Pasha al-Kurjī, the Kaya of Baghdad in 1798/99.

ʿAbd allāh b. Sulaymān al-Mahṣūrī al-Khālidī

The last among the Khālidī chiefs who resisted stubbornly the Wahhābī attacks on the last stronghold of the Bani Khalid at al-Qatif, Sīḥāt\(^2\) and Tārīf Island was ʿAbd Allāh b. Sulaymān of the Mahāshīr section of the Bani Khalid. Lamʿ al-Shīḥāb, the only source of detailed information on the capture of al-Qatif states that

"when ʿAbd al-ʿĀzīz conquered the whole territory of the Bani Khalid, the settlers and the nomads, he sent an army against al-Qatif, one of the strongest positions of Bani Khalid.\(^3\)"

The town was walled and defended by towers. ʿAbd Allāh b. Sulaymān was in the beginning supported by the settlers' chief, ʿAbbād b. Ṣūlāmī

\(^1\) There can be little doubt that by the choice of the site of the family homes of Bani Khalid at al-Ĵasā oasis, and the demolition of those houses and building a qāsīr, fort, for the Wahhābī soldiers, was only meant the humiliation of the Bani Khalid. This event took place in 1792 after one of the Wahhābī raids and is recorded by Ibn Ghannām, *op. cit.*, II, p. 183.

\(^2\) A fortified village lying to the south of al-Qatif. See Lamʿ al-Shīḥāb, f. 87.

\(^3\) *Ibid.*
al-Qaṭīf. The attacking army, led by Ibrāhīm b. ‘Ufayṣān captured Sīhāt, a fortified village three farsakhs to the south of al-Qaṭīf. Hearing of the fall of Sīhāt, ‘Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān left al-Qaṭīf, marched against Ibn ‘Ufayṣān and forced him to retire. However, the Wahhābīs, still led by Ibn ‘Ufayṣān, continued to raid the neighbouring villages of al-Qaṭīf. ‘Abd Allāh did not have enough troops to withstand the Wahhābīs who returned to besiege the town. After his defeat by Ibn ‘Ufayṣān in the suburbs of al-Qaṭīf, he returned to the town which finally capitulated to Ibn ‘Ufayṣān, probably due to the treachery of Ibn Ghānim. ‘Abd Allāh, therefore, retired to Tarūt Island, the last place of the Bani Khālid to be occupied by Ibn ‘Ufayṣān. This island also fell to the Wahhābīs by treachery and ‘Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān escaped capture and sought refuge, like other chiefs of the Bani Khālid, with the Muntāfiq Arabs in the north.

1 Lam' al-Shihāb commenting on the fall of al-Qaṭīf says that it fell "because the people of al-Qaṭīf, similar to the people of Bahrain, are without seals and fervour". See Lam', p. 39.

2 This island is separated from the land by shallow water through which men and animals could wade at low tide.

3 Lam', p. 92.

4 See Ibid. For the capture of al-Qaṭīf. See also Ibn Ghānmān, op.cit., II, pp. 172-173. To avoid the plunder of their corn, the inhabitants of al-Qaṭīf paid the Wahhābīs according to Ibn Ghānmān, op.cit., II, p. 173, the amount of 3000 zar, and according to Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, p. 88, only 500 almar. Zar and almar are gold coins.
Consequences of the Fall of the Banī Khālid.

The Wahhābis, by their conquest of the Banī Khālid, won more than a military victory - for the consequences of the fight resulted in political, religious and economic gains. At the same time their expansion was in itself one of the reasons for the overthrow of the Wahhābi power not only in Eastern Arabia but even in Ḫajd itself, by provoking the Ottoman expeditions sent against them.\(^1\)

Politically, the Wahhābi influence was established in Eastern Arabia in a way that made other forces who had interests in the area feel the Wahhābi impact and try either to appease them or to think of a way to eliminate them.\(^2\) To the first group belong the English East India Company, whose interests in Eastern Arabia were merely commercial. Consequently, they avoided any clash with the Wahhābis. The British did not care what was happening in the area so long as their desert mail remained unmolested,\(^2\) and they made sure of this by allotting the

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\(^1\) The first expedition that was sent against the Wahhābis on Ottoman instigation was that of Thūwaynī in 1737. Thūwaynī's second expedition about ten years later, ended by his assassination at the hands of a Wahhābi fanatic, Th'ayyis by name. Th'ayyis was a slave of Barrūk b. Mā'īsin of the Banī Khālid. Ibn Ghannām, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 266-271, in a poem of 88 verses expressed his and the Wahhābi joy and blessings at the death of Thūwaynī.

\(^2\) See Brydges' *The Wahhabi*, p. 17.
Wahhābī chief certain presents. Other forces among the Arabs had to expect the same fate as had been met by the Bani Khalid or succumb to the Wahhābī teachings. But since we are not concerned here with all the forces that were working in Eastern Arabia, we will confine ourselves to the Qawāsim who became adherents of Wahhābīsm and the 'Utūb who did not. The Ottomans on the other hand, who were in occupation of al-Ḥasā before the Bani Khalid and who had religious interests in Arabia were shocked by the spread of the wahhābī influence to the borders of Basra.

As for the religious gain, the Wahhābīs imposed their tenets on Eastern Arabia and, according to their policy of eradicating what they considered shirk, they devastated the monuments in the towns of al-Ḥasā and installed their propagators and instructors in the mosques.¹ It would have been easier for the Wahhābīs to propagate and inculcate their teachings in al-Ḥasā, had it not been for the fact that most of the population of some towns, especially al-Qatif were Shi'ītes. This was a point of weakness in the Wahhābī domination and control in al-Ḥasā. It gave them considerable trouble as we saw soon after their occupation of parts of that country in 1792 and later.²

¹See Ibn Ghannam, op.cit., II, pp. 197-209, and Ibn Bishr, op.cit., I, pp. 93 and 106, Ibn Bishr, I, 33, speaks of the damage done to the mosques which he calls churches and the burning of religious treatises.

²See above.
Economically, the Wahhabis must have gained much from bordering on territory richer than their own. Musil may be right in assuming that the Wahhabis in their rush to the East were aiming at acquiring an outlet to the sea. But this is not the main economic outcome of the acquisition of al-Hasa. For by conquering a wealthy territory and not only dividing the booty among the warriors but also adding much of the previously Khalid owned territory to themselves, the Wahhabi rulers, the house of al-Su'ud, acquired fabulous wealth. The farms of al-Hasa were known for their rich produce and its harbours had for a long time been supplying Najd and inner Arabia with Indian and European goods. The only places of consequence that withstood the Wahhabi attacks were in the 'Utub territory to the north and the south of al-Hasa. But before studying the relations of the 'Utub with the Wahhabis it is necessary first to study developments in the 'Utub states from the point where we left them in the previous chapter, in 1790, to the close of the century.

1 See Northern Najd, p. 260.

2 See above, pp. 95-6 for the agricultural wealth of al-Hasa and see below, p. 317 for the commerce of al-Qatif and al-'Uqair.
B. Development in the ‘Utbi States (1790 - 1800)\(^1\)

In Kuwait the long peaceful rule of Shaikh ‘Abd Allah Al-Sabah still continued. In the south at Zubara and Bahrain Shaikh Ahmad Al-Khalife ruled till his death in 1796 and was succeeded by his son, Salman, whose reign covered the remaining four years of the century and extended till 1825.

During the 1790’s the prosperity of the ‘Utub of the north continued. They were also lucky in escaping subjugation by the Wahhabis who were the real danger to every force in Eastern Arabia. It is true that though the Wahhabi impact on Eastern Arabia was felt very strongly at Kuwait, various factors contributed to keep Kuwait out of danger.

\(^1\)The major source of information, on the development of the ‘Utbi states in the 1790’s, and which also throws some light on their history is the Factory Records of the East India Company. Contemporary Arabic sources especially the Wahhabi writings are very meagre on the subject of the ‘Utub. Ibn Ghannam and Ibn Bishr merely record two Wahhabi attacks on Kuwait and others on Zubara but no details are given about other activities in the ‘Utbi states. Lam’ al-Shihab is invaluable for the siege of Zubara by the Wahhabis in 1793, but this work also does not give any other information on the development of the ‘Utbi towns. The Records themselves do not give much information on the southern part of the ‘Utbi states in Qatar and Bahrain.
The temporary establishment of the Basra English Factory at Kuwait, 1793 - 1795.

It has already been seen how the Utub benefited from the misfortunes of other ports and states in the Gulf, and especially during the Persian siege and occupation of Basra, 1775-1779. In the early years of the 1790's because of difficulties with Ottoman officials, the Staff of the British Factory at Basra withdrew from that place on the 30th of April, 1793 and established themselves at Kuwait until the 27th August 1795. The head of the Factory was

1See above, pp. 171-173.

2Detailed accounts of those difficulties are given in the letters of Manesty and Jones to the Court of Directors in London and the British ambassador, Sir Robert Ainslee, at Constantinople. See *F.R.P.P.G.* in numerous dispatches of the year 1792.

3Early in 1792 Manesty and Jones left Basra for Ma'qil, a place about five miles to the north of Basra, where the Company had built a resort for its men. From there most of the letters of the Factory were sent and thus Ma'qil or Maghil, as it was called by Manesty, was the place from which they retired to Kuwait. Their stay at Ma'qil was a preliminary threat to the Pasha of Baghdad of their intention of going farther to Kuwait or Kharij if he did not come to terms with them.

4The departure took place by vessels from Ma'qil on the 30th of April and they arrived at Kuwait on the 5th of May. See Manesty and Jones to the S. Com., Grain, 18.vii, 1793, *F.R.P.P.G.*, Vol. 19, No. 1652. (cont.)
Samuel Manesty who was assisted by Harford Jones, the Joint Factor, and John Lewis Reinaud.

The selection of Kuwait as a place of retreat from the Ottomans, implies that it must have been in no sense an Ottoman dependency. Various reasons dictated this choice. First of all Kuwait had served very well as a centre for the East India Company's dispatches in the period of the Persian occupation of Basra, 1775-1779, and thus one of the two main purposes behind maintaining the Basra Factory would not be affected by the removal of its activities to Kuwait. Moreover, Manesty could safely assert "that the Charges for a Factory at Grain would be more moderate than those of the Honorable Company's Factory here [at Basra]." Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah was on good terms with

(cont.)

Mr. Manesty and his companions departed from Kuwait on board a Turkish vessel. See Manesty to Mr. Robert Liston (British ambassador at Constantinople), Basra, 13 ix 1795, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 19, No. 1762.

1 Mr. Manesty in a letter to the C. of D. dated Maghil near Basra, 22 xi 1792, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1636, spoke of two places that can replace Basra, the first was Kuwait and the second Khārij Island.

2 Cf. Lorimer, op. cit., I, i, p. 1004. Buckingham writing in 1816 in his Travels in Assyria, pp. 462-3:

"The next port above El Kateef of any note on this coast is that of Graine, as it is called in our English Charts; though known among the Arabs by the name of Koete only.... It seems always to have pre-
the British and it is reported that he received them with great hospitality on their arrival. The town was known to Harford Jones who had spent some time there in 1790 when he was suffering from bad health. Maneesty may have taken into consideration the fact that Kuwait's harbour was suitable for the Company's vessels and that therefore goods could be unloaded there (although this belief, if it existed, was disappointed). Apart from these advantages, Maneesty had virtually nowhere else to go when his threat to the Pasha of Baghdad failed. He was compelled to leave Basra or withdraw his threat.

Maneesty had already made his intentions known to the Bombay Governor, the British Ambassador at Constantinople and the Company's headquarters in London. Thus, the India mail was dispatched from Constantinople to Kuwait on 19th March 1793 before the Factors' de-

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served its independence too..... and they still bear the reputation of being the freest and the bravest people throughout the Gulf."


1See Maneesty to the Sec. Committee, Grain 18.vii.1793, F.R.P.P.G.

2See above.

parture to Kuwait and arrived at Kuwait before the staff. The withdrawal of Manesty and the staff from Basra did not mean the closing down of the Factory there, for an agent was retained at Basra to look after the Company's commercial interests. At the same time Manesty was careful to inform the Captains of the English ships that when possible they should call at Kuwait instead of Basra and unload their goods there. Letters to this effect were sent to the Mutasallim of Basra, and to Mr. Nicholas Hankey Smith, Resident at Abu Shahr. But because Kuwait's harbour was unknown to the Company's captains they were at first unwilling to undertake the risk of anchoring there.

1 They arrived on May the 5th 1793, as given in a letter from Manesty to the Sec. Committee from Grain dated 18.vii.1793, No. 1652. The first letter sent from Grain was addressed to Harford Jones and it is dated 7th May, 1793, No. 1654. In this letter Mr. Manesty asks Mr. Jones to proceed to Abu Shahr carrying important dispatches which arrived at Grain from the British Ambassador and they were addressed to the Bombay Government.

2 See letters from Manesty to the Mutasallim and to Mr. Smith, Grain, 6.dii.1793, F.R.F.P.G., 19, No. 1683.

3 Captain Gay Hamilton of the Begum Shah refused to obey the instructions of Mr. Manesty (because of his responsibility for the preservation of the ship, cargo and lives on board) as he knew nothing of the port of Grain. See a letter from Captain Hamilton to Manesty dated 27.v.1793, F.R.F.P.G., 19, No. 1658, the place of the dispatch was Begum Shah, at the mouth of the Basra river.
but later some ships did call at Kuwait,\(^1\) and unload there. Negotiations between the Pasha and Manesty continued for the re-establishment of the Factory at Basra and Manesty does not seem to have insisted on the carrying out of his orders for English ships to unload at Kuwait throughout the establishment of the Factory there.

However, a year after the establishment of the new Factory, Manesty seems to have recognised that his calculations about the facilities Kuwait could offer as a substitute for Basra were not entirely correct. Firstly, Kuwait was menaced by the Wahhabis, who attacked the place more than once during the period from 1793-1795. Secondly, Shaikh 'Abd Allah was growing too old for the responsibilities of his position.\(^2\)

**Consequences of the temporary British stay in Kuwait.**

It became clear to Manesty that Kuwait could not replace Basra and negotiations with the Pasha resulted in the return of the Factory to the latter place in August, 1795, after two years and four months residence at Kuwait. Mr. Manesty in a letter dated 8th of July, 1795

\(^1\)The earliest example is that of the ship 'Laurel' whose Captain, Alexander Foggo arrived at Failaka Island and sent a message to Mr. Manesty enquiring about further instructions. See the letter dated 18th July, 1793, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1650.

to the Court of Directors, showed his delight at the re-establishment of the Factory "in the most Honourable Manner" at Bagra. On the 27th August, 1795, he embarked at Grain on board an Ottoman vessel which was accompanied by other Ottoman vessels and the Viper of the East India Company. The vessels arrived at Bagra on 2nd September, and on the 4th September he made his public entry to Bagra.

From Manesty's point of view the stay in Kuwait had had the desired effect of bringing the Pasha round to the English terms. From the Shaikh's point of view, the stay of the British Factory was of great importance to the prestige and finance of Kuwait. Though nothing is stated in local tradition about the British Factory at Kuwait and though Arabic chronicles do not even mention this stay, its importance can be gathered from events related in the English dispatches from Kuwait and from the information related by Brydges and Dr. Seetzen.

This letter is a duplicate of a previous letter dated 23 August and a triplicate of a letter dated 8th July of the same year. I could not trace the last two letters which may have been lost.

2A description which shows the vanity of Manesty is given in two of his letters dated Bagra, 13th September, 1795, F.R.P.P.G., 19, Nos. 1752 and 1762. The first was addressed to the C. of D., and the second to Mr. Robert Liston, the British Consul at Constantinople.
the first in his Jahaub and the latter in Monatliche Correspondenz. ¹

In the first place the town profited greatly from ships\' cargoes that were unloaded there. Though no exact estimates can be given concerning the amount of that cargo, yet however small it might have been it would be considerably bigger than that which formerly used to come to the town. ²

Kuwait must also have derived some profit from the Company\'s nail, which was usually transmitted by the Arab desert express, recruited from

¹In a letter from Burckhardt, the traveller, to Sir Joseph Banks, the secretary of the Association for promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, dated Malta, April, 22, 1809, he gives the following about Dr. Seetzen:

"Dr. Seetzen is a German physician, who was sent five or six years ago by the Duke of Saxe-Gotha into the Levant, to collect manuscripts and Eastern curiosities. He has resided for a considerable length of time at Constantinople for the last eighteen months at Cairo, from whence his letter to Mr. Barker (the brother of the English Consul at Malta) is dated on the 9th February last. After sending from Cairo to Gotha a collection of fifteen hundred manuscripts and three thousand different objects of antiquity he planned to travel to Suez and the eastern coast of the Red Sea and enter Africa to explore its interior.


²For some figures and details see the next Chapter, p. 321.
camel riders who were chosen from the Arabs inhabiting the town or who had to inhabit the town because of the nature of this work.\(^1\) Hanemy's personal contacts with the Shaikh must have become stronger. These contacts may have extended to other Kuwaiti merchants whose boats were used sometimes by the Basra Factory for carrying dispatches to India in order to avoid the interception of British vessels by the French fleet in the late 1790's. The Shaikh also allowed the British factors to intercept French emissaries and dispatches that were carried on board Kuwaiti boats.\(^2\)

**Intercepting French dispatches and emissaries**

The 1790's saw noticeable French activities in the Persian Gulf area. For with the declaration of the 1793 Anglo-French war, the French stepped up their activities in India and the Indian Ocean, and made increased use of the overland route via the Syrian desert and the Gulf to India. French emissaries and dispatches were liable to interception by the staff of the British Factors in the Gulf.

To discuss fully and in detail the Anglo-French rivalry in the Persian Gulf would be beyond the scope of the present work. Yet that rivalry was not without its repercussions in Eastern Arabia, and the 'Utub became involved in it.

In their struggle against the British in India, the French tried to make the Persian Gulf route useless to the British while at the same time

\(^1\)For the desert mail see also the next Chapter.

\(^2\)Several examples of this interception of French activities can be located in the Basra Factory dispatches of the years 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797 and 1798. There were earlier French activities such as the mission of M. de Bourc in 1773.
they made use of it in the conveying of their own dispatches to India.

To achieve this end French emissaries were sent to the various states bordering on the Gulf to try to gain them to their side, and a French fleet was sent to police the Indian Sea and the Gulf. At the same time the French sent several dispatches by the overland route eastwards to Basra and they tried to convey others to India in Arab boats.

It was in this latter side of the French activities in the Gulf that the 'Utub of the north became involved. The friendship that was cultivated between Mr. Manesty and Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah was employed in curbing French plans to use 'Utub vessels as a means for both conveying their emissaries and dispatches. The main reason for using Arab boats for those purposes lay in the fact that neither

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2 Sir Richard Worsley, Minister Resident at Venice to the Principal Factor or Agent at Basra, Venice, 15.iii.1796, *F.R.P.P.G.*, 19, No. 1803.

the French nor the English had any regular mail service in the Gulf and it was most necessary to keep the dispatch of important information as secret as possible. That secrecy could be secured through Arab dhows or gallivats, whose nokhadhas (captains) seem to have been notable for their honesty.¹

Sometimes to avoid interception by each other's vessels, they preferred to use Arab boats. It has already been stated that British influence in the Gulf was predominant in the second half of the 18th century, but the sending of dispatches was not limited to the Persian Gulf British Factories. Most of the mail was travelling to India, and the Indian Ocean was always made dangerous by the presence of French vessels during any crises with the British, whether in Europe or elsewhere.² It may be argued that both the French and English would intercept Arab boats as well but this does not seem to have taken place except in cases where emissaries or dispatches were reported to

¹Shaikh Ibrahim b. Ghanim on whose vessel two Frenchmen were travelling from Mosqat to Basra is an example of this. He refused to allow these two men to be captured by the English though he was offered a large amount of money as a bribe. He finally agreed because he was shown a letter signed by the Shaikh of Kuwait telling him to deliver the Frenchmen to the English. See the details of this event in Manesty to Reinsaud, Grain, 10.vii.1795, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1754.

²French warships were reported to have arrived in the Gulf in July, 1793, and it was said they represented a great threat to British dispatches. See Manesty to the Sec. Comit., Grain, 13.vii.1793, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1652.
have been travelling by a known boat; and it would have been a difficult and impracticable task for either fleet to stop every Arab vessel and they might have run into difficulties with the Arab Shaikhs who would not have allowed it. The Arab vessels of the time were well equipped with armour which might render their interception more difficult.

The position of the 'Utūb

The position of the 'Utūb in this business of interception was not easy for although the British Factory rendered Kuwait invaluable services by its establishment there in 1793, and the Shaikh was well disposed to the British, yet he did not like their attitude towards Kuwaiti ships carrying French dispatches and citizens. At least this was the position in January, 1795, when Manesty directed Reinaud to seize Signor Gualtiero Vicenzo Visette, son of the Venetian Pro-Consul.

1Mr. Manesty speaks of the substantial armament of Arab ships in general in a letter from Grain, 23.viii.1795, F.R.P.P.C., 19, No. 1762, sent to the Sec. Comit, and thinks that they will be a great danger to the British trade in the Gulf. In another from Grain, 17.1.1795, F.R.P.P.C., 19, No. 1723, to the Sec. Comit, he speaks of Kuwaiti vessels being highly equipped for war.

2See below, pp. 30-31 for the Factory's attitude towards the Wahhabis who raided Kuwait during the sojourn of the Factory there.
at Aleppo, in a Kuwaiti gallyar at Kuwait. It is worthwhile noticing that Manesty, who was not sure of intercepting Visette at Kuwait, gave Reinaud letters to the Shaikh of Bahrain and Ibn Khalfan, the Governor of Masqat to facilitate Reinaud's call. What the response of both might have been to the letters remains unknown because Visette was seized earlier at Kuwait. Yet the fact of writing to Shaikh Ahmad Al-Khalifa of Bahrain suggests that he may have been well disposed towards the British.

However, later in the same year, the behaviour of Shaikh 'Abd Allah towards the interception of the French dispatches changed to some extent for, on the 10th of July, intelligence reached the British Factory at Grain that a Kuwaiti vessel sailing from Masqat to Basra had on board two Frenchmen who might be carrying dispatches from Mauritius. Shaikh 'Abd Allah was requested by Manesty to write a letter to the Kuwaiti Holkhadha asking that Reinaud confiscate the

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The reference to the indignation of Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah is reported in another letter, Manesty to the Sec. Comit. 13.1.1795, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1722. Signor Visette did not have any French dispatches and he continued his travel to India.

dispatches. Though this order was not carried into effect because Reinaud fell ill soon after his departure from Kuwait, yet it is interesting to notice that though the Sheikh wrote the desired letter he did it unwillingly. ¹

But three months later and in similar circumstances the Sheikh's attitude changed considerably. What made the change cannot be ascertained. For on the 25th of October Manesty, after receiving intelligence that a Monsieur Guirard had left Basra on his way to Surat in a Kuwaiti dhow owned by Sheikh Ibrahim b. Ghānim, ² directed Reinaud to capture the French dispatches which Guirard was carrying. Manesty gave Reinaud a letter to Sheikh 'Abd Allah asking him to write a letter to Ibrahim to allow Reinaud to capture the dispatches. Sheikh 'Abd Allah wrote that letter, but the question remained would Ibrahim, the Nokhadha, allow the seizure? To ensure this Reinaud carried 4000 piastres to be given to Ibrahim as a reward if he agreed to the seizure. ³ Ibrahim did not object to the seizure after he had seen the

¹Manesty to Reinaud, Grain, 10.vii.1795, F.R.P.P.C., 19, No. 1754.
²Al-Ghānim family in Kuwait is now one of the richest trading families in Kuwait.
³Manesty to Reinaud, Basra, 25.x.1795, F.R.P.P.C., 19, No. 1773. It should be remembered that the British Factory returned to Basra on 27th August, 1795. For the local and foreign currency in the Gulf in the second half of the eighteenth century, the best information can be traced in an anonymous pamphlet in the British Museum, An Account of the Ionies, Weights and Measures, etc. (London, 1780).
letter of Shaikh 'Abd Allah.¹

By the 13th November of the same year Shaikh 'Abd Allah had granted the British Resident at Basra the right to inspect every 'Utbi vessel that called at that port in search of foreign dispatches and emissaries.² It is worthwhile noting that in the last two events the vessels belonged to Shaikh Ibrahim b. Ghānim.³ This grant must have been of very great value to the British for they found it easier to intercept the dispatches before the carriers landed and contacted the French Consul at Basra. Otherwise it was more difficult for the British to carry out their activities on Ottoman territory.

¹Ibrahim must have known Reinaud from the first stay at Kuwait as a member of the Factory.

²This grant came after a request from Manesty to the Shaikh which Reinaud carried with him on his last mission. See Reinaud to Manesty, Basra, 13.xi.1795, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1773. In this letter Reinaud gives interesting details concerning his mission and how Ibrahim was at first reluctant and how he finally helped in the seizure of the dispatches.

³Two more names are given in another letter (Manesty to Reinaud, Grain, 17.i.1795, No. 1723) of Kuwaitis who owned and were the Nokhodchas of their vessels. The first was Muhammad b. Bakr al-Dawsarī, of a family that still lives in Kuwait, though not rich as the Al-Sānim, and Shaikh Ali b. Sulaymān. Their vessels were said to have been well equipped for war, see Ibid.
The French apparently became aware of the British effectiveness in capturing the dispatches and thus no more was heard about the ‘Uthūl boats carrying French agents, emissaries or dispatches in the last four years of the century. Another reason may have been the agreement that had been made between Reinaud and the Tartar Aghāṣī to deliver to him all French dispatches sent to M. Rousseau, the French Consul at Baghdad. It should be stated in this place that the French diplomatic manœuvres at Constantinople, Baghdad, Persia and Masqat during the period 1793-1798 did not include the ‘Uthūl states. One therefore can infer that with the establishment of the British Factory at Kuwait from 1793 to 1795 and the favourable policy of the Shaikh towards the British as formerly discussed, the French could not contact the Shaikh in order to win his support. However

1 Dispatches from Kuwait and Bagra to Aleppo were usually carried by the Arab express while those coming from Constantinople were carried by Tartars. The Tartars were the imperial Ottoman couriers, referred to as Ulak.

2 According to this agreement Reinaud was able to send from Baghdad to Manesty at Bagra, the French dispatches sealed. Reinaud, Baghdad, to Manesty, Bagra, 25.viii.1798, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1906.

3 When M. Beauchamp and other French emissaries arrived at Aleppo from Turkey on their proposed journey to Masqat, Robert Abbot, the British Agent at Aleppo, wrote to Manesty at Bagra, telling him that they might travel through Persia to Masqat and not through Kuwait, al-Hasan and Zubara. See Abbot to Manesty, Aleppo, 27.i.1798, and 1.ii.1798, F.R.P.P.G., 19, No. 1371.
with the French occupation of Egypt in 1798, and with the British diplomatic success at Basra in the same year and in the court of Persia, there remained no place in the Persian Gulf for the French dispatches and emissaries.

However, besides this European activity there is another side of the 'Uthbi episode that has so far remained unnoticed and has hardly ever been dealt with by any historian. It is their relations with the Wahhabis.

C. 'Uthbi-Wahhabī relations, 1793-1800.

Against the background of this general state of affairs in Eastern Arabia and of the ‘Uthbi states in particular which have been treated in Sections A and B of the present chapter we can proceed to study the ‘Uthbi-Wahhabī relations. This may be divided into three parts, the first deals with the position in the ‘Uthbi states and how it invited a Wahhabī action against them. The second will be the actual military operations and the third shows how and why the ‘Uthbi were able to stay free of Wahhabī control until the close of the eighteenth century.

It must be remembered here that the ‘Uthbi states, which formed part of Eastern Arabia, started as small towns under the protection of
the Shaikhs of the Banī Khalid; and that when those towns grew in importance and when a new territory was conquered in Bahrain, no change was ever reported in the attitude of the Banī Khalid Shaikhs towards the ‘Utub chiefs of both Kuwait and Bahrain. Friendly relations persisted and the ‘Utub at certain critical periods in the history of the Banī Khalid offered help. An example of this can be traced in the temporary stay of Zayd b. ‘Uray’ir at Kuwait in 1793 when he could not withstand the Wahhabi attack on his territory of al-‘Asā and that of Barrāk b. ‘Abd al-Muhsin in 1795, when he fled from al-‘Asā for the same reason. As a matter of fact many inhabitants of al-‘Asā who fled from the Wahhabis found shelter in the fortified ‘Utub town of Zubara. It appears that Bedouin tribes of the Banī Khalid, whenever defeated by the Wahhabis, used to travel northwards to the neighbourhood of Kuwait, while the settlers took to their

\[1\] See the rise of Kuwait, p. and the establishment of Zubara, p.

\[2\] See above.

\[3\] See above.

\[4\] Ibn Ghannām, op.cit., II, p. 205, states that many of the inhabitants of the towns of al-‘Asā were allowed to leave their forts safely on condition that they would leave the country, which they did and after taking boats in the harbour of al-‘Uqair, they sought refuge with the Zubara people and told them about the situation in al-‘Asā.
boats and settled at Zubāra and similar places on some of the coastal islands which the Wahhabīs had not yet conquered.¹ The ‘Utbū in this case were following the duty of protection while at the same time increasing their fighting strength because those refugees must have told them what to expect in their turn. By accepting them, the ‘Utub quite clearly showed the Wahhabīs that there was no alternative but to bring the ‘Utbū states under their control.

This question of offering shelter to people fleeing from the Wahhabī yoke is not the only reason for the ‘Utbū-Wahhabī struggle. In their main teachings the Wahhabīs said that they would carry war to wherever existed shirk and bida’. The ‘Utbū territory therefore could not be excluded from such lands because the ‘Utub were, like other non-Wahhabī Moslems, practising Islam in a way the Wahhabīs could not accept. Moreover, Bahrain was one of the territories clearly stated by

¹ The Wahhabīs were efficient warriors on land, but not at sea, for they dared not attack the islands which belonged to the Banī Khalid. Even in the first one that they conquered, al‘Amayir, the island was near the shore and people could reach it by swimming or wading out to it. Even then the Wahhabīs were helped by al-Mahashir, a division of the Banī Khalid, cf. Ibn Shannām, op.cit., II, pp. 225-226.
the Wahhabi as a land of shirk and ra'ada, Shi'ites, and the reduction of such lands was a necessity in the upholding of essential Wahhabi doctrines.

Also it seems likely that the Wahhabi were attracted by the substantial wealth the Utbi towns seemed to have possessed, which they had accumulated in their trading. Whatever the Wahhabi motive in attacking Eastern Arabia was, they would have done their cause no harm by seizing the property of the Utbi who were classified, in the Wahhabi teachings, as mushrikin.

Military operations

The actual clash of arms between the Utbi and the Wahhabi, however, did not take place till 1208/1793, when the latter had almost annihilated the strength of the Barî Khalid in several raids on the various towns of al-Hasa. The Utbi do not seem to have formed a unified front in their fight against the raiders for while the Al-Salih in Kuwait had to face the earlier Wahhabi raids in 1793, it was not till 1795 that the Al-Khalifa were exposed to direct Wahhabi

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1 See Ibn Ghannam, op. cit., I, p. 15. Shi'as form a large part of the present population of Kuwait and Bahrain. In Bahrain Shi'ism dates from the days of the Qaramathians.

2 Lam' al-Shihab in treating the Wahhabi attacks on Zubara says that it was one of the richest ports and included some of the wealthiest Arab merchants, such as Ibn Rizq, Bakr Lulu and others of Al-Khalifa. See f. 95.
attacks on Zubara and its vicinity. Even if the Al-Khlf, or their cousins the Al-Sabah knew of any meditated Wahhabi attack, the long distance between Kuwait, and Bahrain and Zubara would make it impracticable for 'Utbi forces to go to their aid, both by land and sea. In addition to that the nature of the Wahhabi warfare of rapid raids and withdrawals did not allow it. The Wahhabis in their attacks used to depend on their great mobility. The Wahhabi chroniclers give accounts of two such raids that had been directed against Kuwait.

The first took place in 1203/1793 and the Wahhabis were led by Ibrahim b. 'Ufayşan, who had already won some battles against the Bani Khald in al-Yasa. The army of Ibn 'Ufayşan was composed of Najdi Arabs from al-Kharj, al-‘Arid and Sudayr and no mention was made in this raid of al-Yasa Arabs by either Ibn Ghannam or Ibn Bishr. The subsequent raid that took place in the year 1212/1797, on the other hand, included among the invaders people from al-Yasa. It is important to notice in this first Wahhabi attack that the Wahhabi chroniclers state that the people of Kuwait went to face the Wahhabis outside the town and that among the booty the Wahhabis won were "famous and precious

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1 See Notes on the Bedouins, pp. 311–32, also The Wahhabi, pp. 10–11.
3 See above, p. 265.
weapons." 1 Ibn 'Ubayd and his men returned with their booty to their towns after killing thirty of the inhabitants of Kuwait. 2

The second Wahhabi raid on Kuwait according to those chroniclers took place in 1212/1797 3 but it can be inferred from a Basra Factory dispatch 4 and Brydges Wahabiy 5 that Wahhabi attacks on Kuwait did not cease and were frequent throughout the period of the Factory's stay at Kuwait. Brydges gave an interesting description of one of the more serious Wahhabi raids where he showed how Shaikh 'Abd Allâh Al-Şabâh "and his brave townsmen" repelled that attack. 6 This must have taken place before his departure to Baghdad in 1794 and from there to Constantinople and England. From both sources, the two Wahhabî chroniclers and these English sources, it is difficult to believe that the 'Utub were ever on the offensive. The only reference to an 'Utub attack on the Wahhabis can be traced in Ibn Ghannam 7 who, when chronicling the various events of 1212/1797, says that a certain Mas'ûd ibn Ghannam, op. cit., II, p. 191.

Ibid.


4 See Manesty and Jones to the G. of D. Grdn, 15. vii. 1794, F.P.P.F.G., 19, No. 1700.

5 See Brydges, The Wahabiy, pp. 11-12.


7 Ibn Bishr does not refer to this attack in his chronicle.
that was near Kuwait. The attacking party consisted of twenty camels and others among the 'Utūb were mounted. Masjārī was killed in this battle.¹

Earlier in the same year the Wahhābīs led by Ma‘ānī Abī Rijlaan, attacked Kuwait. The 'Utūb met the enemies outside their town, but they withdrew from the battlefield leaving behind an amount of armour and twenty of their men dead.²

By these attacks on Kuwait the Wahhābīs may have intended to indicate to the 'Utūb that any one who helped the Bani Khālid or other enemies of the Wahhābīs in any way, would be liable to a Wahhābī attack. The survival of the 'Utūb of Kuwait seems to have been due largely to Wahhābī preoccupation elsewhere, and particularly with Ottoman intention, either indirectly by Thawānī’s, or directly by Aḥl Pasha’s expedition. The 'Utūb appear to have played some part in supporting the Ottomans. In 1211/1796 Thawānī’s forces, before and after his assassination by a Wahhābī fanatic in al-Ḥāsa, on their

¹ Ibn Ghannām, op.cit., II, p. 274.
² Ibn Righr, op.cit., I, p. 111, says that this attack on Kuwait was carried out by order of ‘Abī al-‘Azīz Al-Sufūd. The fact that the attackers were from al-Ḥāsa may indicate that ‘Abī al-‘Azīz wanted to test the fidelity of those people whose land he had finally subjugated two years ago in 1795.
withdrawal to 'Irāq spent about three months at al-Jahra in the
neighbourhood of Kuwait, and it was later in 1795 after the failure
of what the Wahhābī chroniclers called the "Conspiracy against the
Wahhābīs in al-Hasa", that many of the Bani Khalīd and the inhabitants
of al-Hasa escaped to Basra and Baghdad where they induced Sulaymān
Pasha to send Thūwa'nī against the Wahhābīs who would soon be attack-
ing his territory in Basra. Although the role of the 'Utūb in Thūwa'nīs
expedition is not clear because the reference is always made to the Bani
Khalīd and their supporters, yet they must have been on Thūwa'nī's side
because they were suffering from continuous Wahhābī threats all the time
and they were supporters of the Bani Khalīd.

The reduction of Zubāra, 1795.

However, this support led the Wahhābī commander, Ibrāhīm b. 'Ufay-
šan, who was chosen by Su'ūd as Governor of al-Hasa after its reduction
in 1795, to write to 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Su'ūd seeking permission to re-
duce the 'Utūb settlement of Zubāra and its neighbourhood. Zubāra
was used as a shelter for the refugees who were fleeing from the Wah-
hābī occupation and who continued to intrigue against the new regime

1 It is odd that the Wahhābī chroniclers do not mention the reduction
of Zubāra in their works. The only source of information is Lam' al-
Shihāb, ff. 94-96 and 101-103.
2 See above, p. 240.
in al-Hasa. It is not quite clear from the text of Lam' al-Shihab why Ibn 'Urfqân made his demand from 'Abd al-'Azîz in a very secret form, and it is also not clear why he did not start a war against the town as soon as he received 'Abd al-'Azîz's sanction to attack it. Ibrahim, however, commenced his attacks on the place by sending raiders to the vicinity of Zubara and instructed them to cut off the town on the land side and to prevent its inhabitants from obtaining water and wood. The town of Zubara depended for its water on wells which lay about one and a half faradhîs (c. 7 miles) from the town. These wells were protected by a citadel and between the citadel and the town were a number of fortresses (Kîts), which enabled the Wahhabîs to reach the water under protection. It seems clear that Ibrahim hoped to capture the town without an assault. But because of its strength, the position, its water supplies, his hopes proved in vain, and it was necessary therefore to take it by force. He attacked first the citadel which fell after the Wahhabîs had lost heavily in men, but the fortresses (Kîts), did not. But Shaikh

1See Lam', f. 94.
2Ibid., f. 95.
3See above.
4Lam' al-Shihab, f. 96, states that the building of the citadel and the fortresses was effected after Ahmad al-Khalîfa had gathered a council of the rich merchants of the town and consulted them when he saw the approaching Wahhabî danger.
Salman Al-Khalifa, the ruler of Zubara, ordered his men to leave the Kitis after rendering them useless. Thus Zubara was cut off from the mainland and its siege began. The ‘Utub thought that the besiegers would tire of a fruitless siege and depart, but this did not happen. In fact the Wahhabis were in the meanwhile conquering other towns in Qatar such as Furayha, al-Juwayla, al-‘Ansufiya, al-Ruwayda. Because the latter towns had boats, they were directed by the Wahhabis against the ‘Utub boats. It is reported in Lam’ al-Shihab that the ‘Utub of Zubara attacked the above mentioned towns and scattered their forces, but the ‘Utub were unable to meet the Wahhabis in an open land battle. Thus when Ibrahîm came to the rescue of the other towns and maintained a strong siege of Zubara, the inhabitants, under the rule of Shaikh Salman b. Ahmad Al-Khalifa, thought they could force the Wahhabis to leave their town by their mass migration to Bahrain. In Bahrain they chose to settle at al-Jaw, on high ground in the south of the largest island, where they

1Ahmad died in 1796 and Salman his son was chosen as his successor.

2According to Lam’ al-Shihab, p. 103, the ‘Utub thought that the Wahhabî Government would not last for ever, and then it would be possible to return to their homes. Traditionally it was the practice of the inhabitants of regions on the Gulf to abandon their settlements entirely if threatened by an overwhelming force and take to the sea. With no inhabitants and no trade the invaders were usually forced to abandon the settlements and the inhabitants could return. Cf. the evacuation of Bahrain by the Huwala Arabs in 1741 after the Persian occupation of the island (see above, p. 70).
built a citadel and homes for the immigrants. 1

The date of the departure of the 'Utūb from Zubāra is uncertain and there is no evidence as to whether the Wahhābīs, on finding Zubāra abandoned, asked the 'Utūb to return. All that is given by Lamʿ al-Shihāb amounts to that Ibn 'Ufayṣan, after entering the deserted town, felt sorry for what he had done. 2 The cause of that sorrow may, however have resulted from the fact that he had occupied a town known to be wealthy but he had not won any booty, Ǧanāʾīm, to distribute among his soldiers or to enrich the State treasury of al-Dir‘iyā.

ʿAlī Pasha's expedition, 1793.

Soon after the failure of Thūwaynī's expedition, Su‘ūd led the Wahhābī forces northwards and attacked the outskirts of ʿIrāq. 3 With the Wahhābī danger at his door, Sulaymān Pasha had to fit an expedition against the Wahhābīs. This expedition was sent under the leadership of his Kaya, ʿAlī Pasha, who was a Georgian slave. The cavalry marched by land to al-Ḥasā and the infantry, artillery and ammunition were transported by water to Baḥrām and other ports at al-Ḥasā where they

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1 Lamʿ, f. 103.
2 Ibid.
3 The attack was directed against al-Samawā and Suq al-Shuyūkh; see Ibn Ḍibr, op. cit., I, p. 112.
were welcomed. Since this is not the place for enumerating the details of this expedition which mostly belongs to Ottman and Wahhabī history, we shall only deal with it in the light it throws on the history of the 'Utūb. Lam' al-Shīhāb tells that the artillery and provisions were transported to Bahrain and landed at al-Hasa ports by vessels of which two hundred were hired from the 'Utūb of Kuwait. The landing of the provisions at Bahrain indicates that Al-Khalīfa were also on the side of the Ottomans.

'Utūb independence continues till the close of the century.

One last point which should be raised in the 'Utūb-Wahhabī relations in the last decade of the eighteenth century is how the 'Utūb

1Details of the equipment of this expedition, its march against the Wahhabīs to al-Hasa instead of al-Dir‘iyya, reasons for its failure, can be traced in the writings of three contemporaries and eyewitnesses; the first is Brydges in his Jahālib, pp. 19-24 and the second is the anonymous work of Lam' al-Shīhāb, ff. 173-184. The third is Ibn Sanad who gives a detailed account in his Mafāli‘ al-Su‘ud, ff. 170-175.

2See Lam' al-Shīhāb, f. 176. The man who arranged this was 'Abd Allāh Aghā, the Mutassallim of Bagra, who seems to have been on good relations with the 'Utūb because he himself, when hearing of the approach of 'Alī Pasha and because of earlier animosity with him, took to one of the 'Utūb vessels and was going to Kuwait; but 'Alī Pasha promised not to allow previous grievances to affect him and so he returned to Bagra. See ibid, f. 175.

3It is stated in Bombay Selections, p. 429, that the Arabs of Kuwait
could maintain their independence of the Wahhābīs through those crucial years when most of Eastern Arabia fell to the Wahhābī arms.

In answering this problem it is advisable to separate consideration of the two domains of the 'Utbī states, one lying in the north and the other in the south, and to try to see how each resisted the Wahhābī aggression on its territory.

The Bani Khalid resistance.

However, both parts shared the same geographical situation. They lay on the coast of the Gulf, to their east lay the Bani Khalid lands. The Bani Khalid were the first barrier that kept the Wahhābī influence from those maritime 'Utbī states. But with the decline of the Bani Khalid the subjugation of the 'Utbī after 1792/3 seemed more than probable. However, with the rise of Zayd b. 'Uray'ir to power in 1739 and the rise of Barrāk b. 'Abd al-Muhsin after 1793, the establishment of direct Wahhābī rule over Eastern Arabia was postponed for some years.

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were supposed to take part in the expedition together with the Arabs of Bagra and the Muntāfīq, but no details are given there of the manner in which the 'Utbī participated. It appears that it was marine help that they offered.
The fall of Barrak in 1795 marked the beginning of the end of the Khalidī rule in Eastern Arabia; and with that the difficulties which the ʿUtub were expected to meet became greater. But even before the fall of Barrak, Kuwait, as related in the military operations with the Wahhābīs, was attacked frequently by them but they could not capture the town from what we know about the development of the town in the 1730's and the 1790's.

Reference had already been made to the growing power of the ʿUtub sea fleet and its high standard of equipment in arms. These weapons could be used in defending the town if necessary and it must have become so one day by 1793 and afterwards. The ʿUtub who were among the Arab traders trading with India were able to arm themselves with better weapons than the Wahhābīs and this could explain Ibn Ghannam's comment on the "famous weapons" which the Wahhābīs won from the ʿUtub after their attack on Kuwait in 1793. The presence of the British Factory at Kuwait from 1793 to 1795 may have been another strong reason for the safety of Kuwait and its escape from the Wahhābī yoke.

1 See above, p. 139.
2 See above, pp. 268-270.
The role of the British Factory

There is no evidence in the Factory records of Ḍaṣra to show that the Factory upheld the ʿUtūb in their stand against the Wahḥābī raids. On the contrary, Brydges, the Joint Factor at Kuwait, in his Wahḥābī gives the impression that Kuwait was defended by its own people who were courageous and had full confidence in Shaikh ʿAbd Allāḥ b. Ṣabāḥ, a venerable old man, of commanding appearance, whom they regarded more as a father than a governor, and that the Factory did not intervene between the two combatants because these were the orders of the Company and because the Factory did not want the Wahḥābīs to intercept the Company's mail in the desert.

But it is not easy to reconcile this with what Mr. Reinaud, a remarkable figure of the Factory, wrote to Dr. Seetzen from Aleppo in 1805. For while Brydges represented the grand attack of the Wahḥābīs

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1See pp. 12-16.
2See The Wahḥābī, p. 12.
3According to Corances, p. 50, the Wahḥābī Amīr undertook to protect the British mail only so long as he should be at peace with the Pasha of Baghdad, and once put a man to death for tampering with it.
4See Monatliche Correspondenz, pp. 234-235.
as having been made by 500 men, who were driven off by a single shot from an old gun that had been brought ashore by the Shaikh from one of his vessels. Mr. Reinaud, on the other hand, places the strength of the enemy at 2000 camels each carrying two men, the front rider armed with a gun and the other with a lance to protect his companion while reloading; and he alleges that, under Manesty's orders, two guns were landed from the British cruiser which was used as a guard to the Factory, and that the sepoy guard of the Factory took part in repelling the attack, and that the Wahhabi's lost heavily in their flight along the beach from the fire of the cruiser herself. Reinaud adds that the resentment of the Wahhabi's at this interference expressed in depredations upon the Company's desert mail, was the cause of his own mission to al-Dir'iyya.

Though no fixed date is given to that attack by both authorities except that it took place during the sojourn of the Factory at Kuwait, it seems most probable that Mr. Reinaud's version of the Factory's role cannot be a fiction. There is much evidence to prove it for in

1 See The Wahauby, p. 12 ff.
2 See Monatliche Correspondenz, pp. 234-235.
3 He gained by that mission fame as the first European to have visited that town, see Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, I, 1, p. 1004.
the first place the Factory was responsible for the Company's goods of which there were always quantities at Kuwait. The Wahhabis would presumably not have spared the infidels if the town had been taken. In addition to this it seems unlikely that Manesty would have been so ungrateful as to refuse the giving of help to the people of Kuwait who had received him with hospitality so soon before. But at the same time Manesty could not explain in his letters to his superiors the role he played against the Wahhabis for the policy of the Company has so far been one of neutrality towards the powers of the Gulf. It is noteworthy that in the despatches from Kuwait there is no mention of any Wahhabi attack, although it is indisputable that these took place.

It is noteworthy that Kuwait stayed out of the Wahhabi sphere of influence after the reduction of Zubara. This may be explained on the ground that the Wahhabis after 1796 were busy in repelling attacks by the Sharifs of Makka on the one hand, Thuwaynī of the Muta'fik in 1797 and Ali Pasha in 1798/9 on the other. Moreover the 'Utub did not possess an army that could represent any threat to the strongly established Wahhabi regime in Eastern Arabia for they could at that time put 50,000 men mounted on camels in the field. In this manner the re-

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1 See extract of a letter from Brydges to Jacob Bosanguet, Chairman of the Court of Directors, dated Bagdad, 1.xii.1798, in F.P.R.P.G. Vol. 21.
uction of the 'Utub seemed to have been postponed.

However, in 1799, the Imam of Masqat, on the plea that the 'Utb ships were refusing to pay a tribute for passing the Straits of Hormuz, attacked Bahrain but failed to capture its capital, Manama, and returned to Masqat. In 1800 the Imam's expedition against Bahrain succeeded in occupying the Islands and 26 'Utb families were carried as hostages to Masqat, while many others fled to their deserted homes at Zubara. From there they sought the help of the Wahhabis who readily gave it. The 'Utub re-occupied Bahrain in 1801, but the influence of the Wahhabis was established in their islands.

It is not clear how much Wahhabi influence was in Kuwait. According to Lieutenant Kemball, the British Assistant Resident in the Persian Gulf, the Wahhabi influence was established throughout the whole coast of the Persian Gulf from Basra in the north to the territories of the Jawasim in the south by 1800-2; this means that the 'Utub of Kuwait must have recognized the Wahhabi suzerainty.

1See al-Sira al-Jaliyya, f. 51 and also al-Fath al-Kabir, ff. 193-194.
2Ibn Bishr, op. cit., I, p. 121.
3Bombay Selections, p. 152.
4Mr. Warden in his historical sketch on the rise of Masqat, Bombay Selections, p. 174, states that on the conquest of Bahrain in 1801 by the Sultan of Masqat, the latter demanded of the Shaikh of Kuwait that he would personally pay him homage, which, according to Warden, the Shaikh must have complied with, as the Imam shortly after dismissed (cont.)
Before we bring the history of the 'Utub in the second half of the 18th century to a close, it remains for us to try to give an appropriate picture of their trading activities in the same period.

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all his troops. However, there is no reference to Kuwait in the Wahhabi chroniclers who refer only to Bahrain and give the name of Shaikh Salman Al-Khalifa as "Amir 'Abd al-'Aziz 'ala al-Bahrain wa-Zubara". Cf. Ibn Righ, *op. cit.*, I, p. 129.
Chapter VI

The 'Utbi States and the Trade of the Persian Gulf and Eastern Arabia

1750 - 1800
Chapter VI

THE ‘UṬBĪ STATES AND THE TRADE OF
THE PERSIAN GULF AND EASTERN ARABIA
1750 - 1800

It is necessary in this place to recall some of the important factors which contributed to the development of the ‘Uṭbī States in Eastern Arabia along the coast of the Gulf. First there is the geographical situation which placed them on the important trade route of the Persian Gulf. From this follows naturally the interest in sharing in the trade itself by every possible means. As a matter of fact the ‘Uṭbī proved, all through the second half of the eighteenth century, to be active merchants who knew how to benefit from the state of affairs in the Gulf to build their prosperity.

The role of Geography

With their lands controlling trade from Qaṭar in the south to Kuwait in the north, they were at an advantage in the carrying of merchandise to various parts in central and northern Arabia. They had commercial relations with the Persian coast and with Masqat and Baṣra. The position of Kuwait at the extreme north-western corner of the Gulf gave them the opportunity of sharing in the commerce conveyed by caravans between the Gulf and Aleppo.
So in the present Chapter an attempt will be made to study the trade routes to and from the 'Utbī' domains, the merchandise itself and finally to discover what trade and how much went through the 'Utbī' channels.

Trade routes - sea and desert.

Trade to and from the 'Utbī' states must have followed the two old routes in the area, namely the Gulf sea route and the caravan tracks. As to the former the 'Utbī' vessels, together with other ships owned by the Arabs of Masqat, almost monopolised the conveyance of goods in the Gulf. Ships owned by the 'Utbī' merchants of Kuwait, Zubara, Bahrain, and Muscat used to call with their cargoes at Masqat, Basra, Abu-Shahr, and changing ports of consequence in the

1 With the exception of the vessels of Abu-Shahr, it can be said that there were no other Arab cargo vessels in the Gulf in the second half of the 18th century. The merchants of Basra do not seem to have owned their own vessels at that time.

2 "Since the Capture of the Island of Bahrein by the Arabs of the Tribes of Benqattaba, an Enmity, rather however of an inactive and negative Kind, has uniformly subsisted between that Tribe and the Persians and has totally destroyed the commercial Intercourse, which previous to that Period, was advantageously cultivated by both Parties."

See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.
Gulf. Later in the eighteenth century and after the 'Utub vessels were capable of trading with India, they ceased calling at Masqat and sailed directly from India to the 'Utub ports so as to avoid paying any duties to the Sultan. There is no evidence as to whether the 'Utub vessels called at Mocha in the Yemen to share in the conveyance of coffee to the Gulf. In short, the 'Utub fleet had a large share in the sea-borne trade of the Gulf and in fact it came second only to that of Masqat in that respect. By the end of

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Elsewhere in this report, p. 423, Manesty and Jones added that "little Intercourse has subsisted between the Inhabitants of the Opposite Shores of the Gulph" after the occupation of Bahrain.

1 When the Dutch established their Factory at Kharij Island from 1754-1765 the 'Utub seem to have benefitted from that and although there is no clear evidence to how much use the 'Utub, especially those of Kuwait, made of that establishment, yet from Ives' account of the relation between the Shaikh of Kuwait and Baron Kniphausen it becomes clear that the 'Utub did have commercial intercourse with Kharij, see above.

2 See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 408.

3 The conveyance of the annual crop of Coffee seems to have been a monopoly for what was called the Masqat Coffee fleet which used to carry it to Basra and the various ports of the Gulf. See Parsons, op. cit., p. 157 and also Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 418.
"Their (‘Utub) Galliots and Boats are numerous and large and they have engrossed the whole of the freight Trade carried on between Muscat and the Parts of the Arabian Shore, of the Persian Gulf, and a Principal Part of the freight Trade, carried on between Muscat and Bussora."

It is very unfortunate that we do not possess an adequate description of all those different vessels. Thus Baghla, trankey, Galivat, dhov and dinghy remain as terms without much indication of what they were especially after the disappearance of eighteenth century types.2

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1 See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.

2 Captain Jenour, The Route to India through France etc. (London, 1791) p. 36, gives this brief description of a dinghy:

"These Dinggees have no deck except just abaft, which covers the man at the helm below which there is a place to put goods that might suffer materially by rain; the stern is much higher than any other part, and are altogether, most clumsy, inconvenient, unmanageable things."

He concludes his talk by advising the European traveller not to sail on board those dinghies.

Mr. J. A. Stocqueler made the journey from Bombay to Kuwait in 1831 in a Kuwaiti Baghla. He gives the following interesting and informative report of the vessel itself and the Kuwaiti seafaring character:

"Buggales are large boats averaging from one to two hundred tons burthen; they have high sterns and pointed prows, one large cabin on a somewhat inclined plane, galleries and stern windows; they usually carry two large latteen sails, and occasionally a jib; are generally built at Cochin and other places on the Malabar coast, and are employed by the Arab and Hindoo merchants..."
The desert caravans

While boats formed one means of conveyance, it was left to the desert caravans to carry the merchandise from the ‘Uthbī, as well as other Gulf ports, into the countries surrounding the Gulf and to other remote areas.

(cont.) on the trade between Arabia, Persia, and the Indian coast. The nasserice, on which I engaged a passage for the sum of one hundred and fifty rupees, was manned by about forty or fifty natives of Grane, or Koete, on the western side of the Persian Gulf, and commanded by a handsome Nacquodah in the prime of manhood. The sailors acknowledged a kind of paternal authority on the part of this commander, and mixed with their ready obedience to his mandates a familiarity quite foreign to English notions of respect, and the due maintenance of subordination. The Nacquodah took no share in the navigation of the vessel while it was crossing to Muscat; this duty being entrusted to an old Arab who understood the use of the sextant, and who was so correct in his observations that we made Ras-el-Lad within an hour of the time he had predicted we should."


The baghla, according to Low, was a vessel of great size, sometimes of 200 or 300 tons burden, and carrying several guns. Baghlas were long-lived and one of them which had been built in 1750 was still sailing in 1837. See Low, History of the Indian Navy, I, p.169.

"The Arab dhow is a vessel of about 150 to 250 tons burthen by measurement, and sometimes larger... Dhows may be distinguished from baghlas by a long gallery projecting from the stern, which is their peculiar characteristic." See Ibid. About 1876 the dhows disappeared from the Gulf. Ibid.
The importance of the 'Great Desert Caravan Route' in transporting goods between Asia and Europe in the 18th century has so far passed unnoticed. No serious study has been made of that subject, in spite of the fact that the desert caravans were still used for commercial purposes between the Gulf and the Mediterranean. It is worthwhile noticing in this place and giving briefly some data on those caravans because they concern the 'Utub of Qatar and Kuwait'. The 'Utub as a people of rising importance in Eastern Arabia and as

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1 Two distinguished scholars wrote papers on "The Overland Route to India" in the period under our consideration: Hoskins "The Overland Route to India" in History, Vol. IX, 1924-5, pp. 302-318, and Furber, "The Overland Route to India in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" in J.I.M., Vol. 29, 1951, pp. 106-133. Both papers speak of the usage of both the Red Sea route and the Persian Gulf route for purposes of sending the Eng. East Ind. Company's dispatches. In neither of them one can trace mention of goods conveyed by means of caravans; but both are extremely valuable for their information relative to the Company's mail.

2 Information in respect of the desert route and caravans in the second half of the eighteenth century comes from the Journals of the European travellers who used those caravans in journeying from Aleppo to
tribes interested in commercial activity, went on using the usual
the Persian Gulf, or vice versa. It may be worth noticing that most
of these Journals were written by men who were in the Eng. East India
Company's service. Among those who crossed that desert in the 1750's
and whose journeys were published are Bartholomew Plaisted; his work
is Narrative of a Journey from Bagra to Aleppo in 1750 and John Car-
michael, his work is Narrative of a Journey from Aleppo to Bagra in
1751. These journeys are published by D. Carruthers in his work The
Desert Route to India, London, 1929. They were followed by Ives in
1758. The story of the caravan route subsequent to that, as told by
Western travellers, is brief. In 1765 Niebuhr recorded an itinerary
of this same caravan route, from information gathered from a Bedouin
who had made the journey more than twenty times, and from a merchant
of Bagra (Voyage en Arabie, Vol. II, p. 193 ff); while in 1771 General,
afterwards Sir Eyre, Coote crossed the desert from Bagra to Aleppo
In 1774 A. Parsons set out from Alexandretta on 'his voyage of com-
mercial speculation' to Bagdad and Bagra. In 1778 Colonel Capper
went overland to India. In 1781, Mr. Irwin, of the Madras Establish-
ment, "entrusted with dispatches too important to admit of delay", rode
from Aleppo to Bagdad, Bagra and India. In 1785-6 we have Julius
(cont.)*
caravan routes that passed through their territories. Thus goods that were unloaded at the ports of Eastern Arabia found their way into the inner parts of the peninsula through the traditional caravan routes from al-‘Uqair, Zubara and al-Qatif. There is no clear evidence of caravans carrying goods from Masqat northwards along the Eastern shore of the Gulf to Basra. Yet the fact that the 'desert express' was dispatched from Basqaṭ by the East India Company's agent there to Basra to announce the arrival of the Company's ships at Masqat seems to suggest that the ancient caravan route was still in operation. However, there is clear evidence that the desert caravans used to load at Kuwait and to carry goods from there to Baghdad and Aleppo. The earliest reference to such caravans can be traced in Ives' Griffiths' account of the same journey from Aleppo.

In 1739, Major John Taylor, 'of the Bombay Establishment' went out to India by the same desert route and recorded his journey with great detail. Earlier in 1735 Captain Matthew Jenour made the same journey and also from Aleppo. In 1797, Oliver, followed over the northern section of the route, on his way from Aleppo to 'Iraq.

1See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 408.
2Arab messengers most probably riding camels.
3For the dispatching of these messengers see Parsons, op.cit., p. 203.
Voyage\(^1\) which dates 1758. This seems to have continued till 1761 when for unknown or unspecified reasons the caravans stopped calling at Kuwait till 1789 and perhaps for some time later.\(^2\)

The Composition of a Caravan.

Concerning those desert caravans a few notes should be made to give an idea of the amount of trade they were capable of conveying.

Caravans\(^3\) were usually composed of merchants who hired a number of camels, mules and donkeys from shaikhs who made this their business and who used to accompany those caravans from their starting point till they reached their destination. These shaikhs used to charge the merchants usually fixed amounts of money for the services they offered them during the journey. These included the payment of

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\(^1\)See Ives, op. cit., p. 222-225.

\(^2\)See Saldana, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.

\(^3\)Because most of the journeys that described those caravans come from people who were in the service of the Eng. East India Company, they give almost the same details of the procedure followed by the Company's representatives at Basra and Aleppo for securing them a speedy and safe arrival at their destination. Cf. Capper, op. cit., pp. 55-58; Irwin, op. cit., pp. 290-292; Jenour, op. cit., p. 34.
duties$^1$ to some chiefs of the Arab tribes on the caravan route and the hire of Arab guards or rafīṣ$^2$ besides the hire of the camels. Although the question of the cost of a camel was a matter of bar-gain, yet it can be said that during the second half of the 18th century it ranged between thirty-five and fifty piastres for a loaded beast from Basra or Kuwait to Aleppo.$^3$ This variance may be attributed to the type of goods carried by a camel. For "in Arabia" say Majesty and Jones in their report of the trade of Arabia bordering on the Gulf,

"the usual load of a camel is in weight about seven hundred English pounds, and the Shaiks of the Caravans will in all times by Customary Agreement, engage to convey from Grain to Aleppo and to pay the Arab the Jawaise or Duties thereon, that Weight of Piece Goods for a Sum of Money equal to Bombay Rs. 130, and that Weight of Gruff Goods for a Sum of Money equal to Bombay Rs. 90".$^4$

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$^1$What was called juwaiṣa, allowance for free passage, see Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.

$^2$These men usually belonged to the tribes through whose territories the caravan would pass and this was the only way to guarantee unmolested passage through their quarters. See Griffiths, op.cit., p. 351 and Parsons, op.cit., p. 103.

$^3$Ives, in 1758, gives it 35 piastres for a camel from Kuwait to Aleppo, see his Journey, op.cit., p. 223. Parsons in 1774, op.cit. p. 112, paid forty piastres "for the hire of each camel" and five piastres for the desert duty on each camel as well.

$^4$See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409. Though this estimation looks too high, yet Majesty and Jones may be considered, after their long stay at Basra, reliable.
The Shaikh of the caravan performed the duties of guide and his authority in the caravan was absolute. Such caravans used to cover the distance from Basra or Kuwait to Aleppo in about seventy days.  

1Jenour, op.cit., pp. 25-26, writing to advise the travellers on the best way to accomplish that journey, mentions the caravans, and gives this interesting report:

"As to the preparations for the journey, it depends on the manner you propose going, whether with expedition, ease, or at moderate expense. To accomplish the first method, you must engage four or six Arabs to conduct you to Bassora, carry very little baggage, and as soon as you quit Aleppo, leave every thing to the management of the escort, they knowing what is most proper to be done, and the best track to pursue.... As to the next mode, where ease is solely considered, it will be necessary to purchase mules.... Tents, provisions... camels to convey them; and this show of wealth will demand a large escort... to guard it.... The third method, which is by far the cheapest and most common, is, with the caravan. A caravan is a number of merchants, and other travellers, assembled together, some on horse back, but mostly on camels, to any number, escorted by a very strong guard; the whole under the direction of a Shaik or Chief... The only objections against this mode are, the length of time it takes, and the uncertainty of their departure."

2Jenour, op.cit., p. 27, allows sixty to seventy days, while Manesty and Jones, Selections from State Papers, p. 409, estimate about eighty days.
It is worth noticing that those desert caravans used sometimes to break their journey at Baghdad and sometimes to travel direct between the Gulf and Aleppo; and that their numbers used to grow when other caravans joined them from stations on the route. As to the number of the camels conveying goods it varied from one caravan to another and the increase or the decrease depended on the status of commerce in Aleppo, Basra, Baghdad and other commercial centres in the area. Plaisted estimated that the caravan with which he travelled from Basra to Aleppo was made up, at the start of 2000 camels in all, and about 150 'Mosqueteers'. These camels did not make a laden caravan, but were being taken to market. Half way they were joined by the Baghdad caravan of 3000 camels, bringing the total to 5000 camels and 1000 men; of the former 400 laden. Carmichael's caravan consisted of 50 horses, 30 mules and 1200 camels, 600 of which were laden with

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1 See Plaisted's account of his journey in Carruthers, p. 80.

2 It is necessary to state in this place that not all the camels in the caravan were carriers, especially when the caravan was travelling northwards to Aleppo. Then many camels accompanied the caravan without loads for the purpose of being sold at Aleppo for the use of merchants who wanted to convey their merchandise southward. This was necessitated by the lack of camels in Syria.

3 See his Narrative of a Journey in Carruthers, pp. 68-69 and 93.

4 Ibid. p. 80.
merchandise valuing £300,000. It was guarded by an escort of 240 Arab soldiers. The caravan by which Ives and his colleagues were trying to travel from Kuwait to Aleppo in 1758 amounted to 5000 camels accompanied by 1000 men. Parsons' caravan had 800 laden camels besides several mules, donkeys and horses; and there were four European and twelve Turkish merchants. They had 105 Arab guards.

1 Carruthers, op. cit., p. xxxiii.
2 From the context it appears that the caravan was coming to Kuwait from the south because Ives and his companions were going to hire camels at Kuwait to join that caravan. This might have been the same caravan that used to be dispatched by the Shaikh of the Bani Khalid annually from al-Hasa. It is described by Plaisted, p. 93, as "the caravan of light camels" contrasting it with the merchants' laden camels. It used to be made up of young camels sent to Aleppo for sale. It had a guard of 150 men mounted on dromedaries, "which is a lighter and swifter sort of camel". Many merchants used to wait for its arrival on their stations to join it with their merchandise and thus they used to double or triple the original number setting out. Those merchants were Greeks, Armenians, Europeans and sometimes Turks/Arabs.
3 Parsons, op. cit., pp. 75-76. The caravan left Aleppo on March the 14th, 1774.
caravan which was composed originally of eight camels and a guard of 30 to 40 men, reached, before their departure from Aleppo on 8 June 1786, 200 camels.¹

The merchant caravans and the desert caravan.

This difference in the number of camels variously used is related to the fact that there were three types of caravans that used to make the desert journey. The first was the light camel caravan coming from the south to Aleppo used for supplying that town with animals that would carry goods for one of the two other caravans. The first of these two was the caravans of merchants who wanted to carry their goods from Aleppo southwards without waiting for the arrival or departure of the largest caravan known as the Aleppo or Basra caravan according to the place of departure. This last caravan used to travel twice a year between Aleppo and Basra.²

The travellers' caravans

In addition to those three caravans there was a fourth which might be called the travellers' caravan. English travellers sometimes, for instance, hired a complete outfit, including both riding and baggage

¹Griffiths, op.cit., pp. 350-353.

²Latouche stated in one of his letters to the Court of Directors that such a caravan spent eight months in performing this operation. See Latouche to the Court of Directors, Basra, 31.x.1778, F.R.P.P.G., 17, No. 1160.
camels, as well as a small force of armed guards. Captain Taylor recommended travelling in comfort, by hiring a caravan at a cost from £500 to £600, engaging 40 to 60 armed men, and 20 camels for water, tents, provisions, etc. The procedure of hiring and equipping these caravans for men who usually were in the service of the Eng. East India Company was left to the English Consul at Aleppo and the members of the Basra Factory.

As regards the time occupied on the road between Aleppo and Basra or Kuwait, both the size of the caravan and the method of travel have to be taken into account. While large caravans went slowly, 7 hours a day, and took from 45 to 70 days, small caravans did it in 25 days. Laisted was 24½ days in a rather large caravan. Carmichael, averaging about 7 hours a day took 318 hours or 45 days. Capper took 310 hours. The 'desert express' used to cover the same distance in about 13½-20 days.

1 See Irwin, op.cit., II, p. 291.
2 See Carruthers, op.cit., p. xxxiv.
4 See Carruthers, op.cit., p. xxiv.
Commercial activities in the Gulf.

This activity of the desert route had had no doubt its effect on the 'Utbi trade and in fact, together with the sea-borne cargoes, it had been a factor of great importance in building up the 'Utūb as a power in the area. It might have been one of the factors that made the 'Utūb in the south and north form one political entity. The other phase of the commercial activities of the 'Utūb would be a brief study of the conditions of commerce in the 'Utbi domains. As a brief introduction to this study, it may be worthwhile discussing the commercial activities on the western side of Arabia where there had always been a rival trade route to the Persian Gulf in the Red Sea.

The Red Sea route.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the Red Sea did not prove to be a great rival of the Persian Gulf in the conveyance of Indian goods to the markets of the Ottoman provinces in Syria and Turkey. It is true that European vessels used to call at Suez carrying Indian goods to Egypt and other neighbouring countries until the 1770's, but the last decades saw a great decline in that trade. This was mainly due to the Firman which in 1778 prohibited Christian vessels from trading with Suez.¹ Though these orders were against the

¹See Hoskins, loc. cit., p. 315.
interests of the Mameluke Beys, the actual rulers of Egypt who would naturally try to neutralize its effect, yet the attacks of the Arabs of the desert on caravans which carried articles for European merchants represented another danger to their trade. Until 1786 the Court of Directors of the East India Company preferred the Cape route to that of Egypt in conveying the India goods to Europe, and "they were, therefore, quite willing to support the point of view of the Turkish Government in opposing the navigation of the Red Sea by European vessels".¹

Yet with the French commercial rivalry and the conclusion of a treaty between the Chevalier de Troquet for France and by Murād Bey for the Mamelukes of Egypt at Cairo on 7 February 1785 British interests in the Red Sea route revived and the British diplomacy continued to prevail at the Porte who in 1787 sent a successful Ottoman campaign

¹See Hoskins, loc. cit., p. 307. In 1775 the English had signed a treaty with the Beys of Egypt to facilitate their commercial activities, but the Sultan and his advisers at Constantinople were against this treaty because they were more than apprehensive that in time the governors of Egypt might find it to their advantage to throw off the Turkish yoke entirely, perhaps with English aid. See loc. cit., p. 306.
against the Mamelukes. Yet the English success did not mean that the Red Sea route was preferred to the Cape route or that of the Persian Gulf for all the three routes remained in use after that, both for trade and mail purposes until the occupation of Egypt by Bonaparte in 1798. ¹

But if the French were able to compete in the markets of Egypt, they do not seem to have been so successful in the markets of the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless the 'Utīb were not affected in their commercial enterprises by the Anglo-French rivalry nor did they rely on goods carried only by English or other European vessels. They had by the 1780's their own fleet that used to sail to India bringing back the India goods to the 'Utīb ports and Bağra. Masqāt was the emporium of trade in Arabia in the second half of the 18th century, ² and the 'Utīb fleet with the Masqāt fleet were the monopolisers of the freight from Masqāt and India to the Gulf. ³

¹See loc. cit., pp. 315-317.

²Parsons, op. cit., p. 207.

"Muscat is a place of very great trade, being possessed of a large number of ships, which trade to Surat, Bombay, Goa, along the whole coast of Malabar, and to Mocha and Jedda in the Red Sea. It is the great magazine or deposit for the goods which they bring from those parts; it is resorted to by vessels from every port in Persia, from Bussora, and the ports of Arabia within the gulf, and from the coast of Caramaina without the gulf, as far as the river Indus, and many places adjacent to that river."

³See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.
The ‘Utub share the Persian Gulf trade.

But just how much trade was conveyed in the ‘Utbi vessels and how much went through Kuwait and Zubarah from that Gulf trade is a question to which there seems to be no satisfactory answer. It is possible, however, to try to form a hypothesis, after looking into the kinds of goods that were brought to the ‘Utbi and other ports in the Gulf by the various vessels that traded with them.

Manesty and Jones began their report on the trade of Arabia bordering on the Persian Gulf, etc. by showing how difficult it was for them to report on that trade mainly because of the lack of information that could be obtained from the people of the Arabian coast.

‘Utbi Trading centres.

Still one can detect that the ‘Utub were conducting almost continual commercial activity all through the period lying within the scope of this work. Their activity was centralized at three places: Manama in Bahrain, Zubarah in Qatar and Kuwait. These places shared in the sea-borne as well as the desert trade. And it seems more convenient to deal with each separately and to try to detect what goods

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1 This report covers the period from 1763 to 1789.
2 The merchants in those parts did not normally keep registers of their trade. This practice is still continued by many merchants of Kuwait.
3 The name of Manama does not occur often but the whole Island is mentioned.
were imported to each place, and from where, also what goods were exported and their destinations.

Bahrain's trade before the 'Utub occupation of the islands in 1782-3 was not considerable except in pearls.\(^1\) The Island's trade after their arrival seems to have been of two sorts, the first was fishery and marketing pearls and the second the sea trade with India, Masqat and the ports of the Persian Gulf.

**Pearl fishery**

With respect to the pearl fishery, the 'Utub do not seem to have made any changes in the customary practice of pearl fishing which was "engaging the Attention of many rich Arabian Merchants resident at Bahreens" and which gave "Employment to many industrious People of the lower Arabs belonging to that Place."\(^2\)

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\(^1\)See Saldanha, *Selections from State Papers*, p. 405.

\(^2\)See *Ibid.*, p. 405. The principal fishery was carried on during the months of May, June, July, August and September, when the water is warm. The yearly catch was estimated at 500,000 Bombay rupees which was divided in proportions settled by agreement between the merchants who were the proprietors of the vessels employed in the fishery, the people who navigated them and the divers. For a detailed description of pearl fishing see Buckingham's *Travels in Assyria*, pp. 454-457, and Wellsted, *Travels in Arabia*, Vol. I, pp. 264-265 and his *Travels* (cont.)
With the acquisition of large vessels from India the 'Utūb of Bahrain in the 1730's and after started to sail to the Indian ports to bring back India goods that were necessary for the daily use of their people and for export to the markets of Baghdad and Aleppo. These goods found their way to their markets partly via Bagra and partly by way of Kuwait. It is really interesting to 

(continues)

to the City of the Caliphs, pp. 115-123. Al-Rashīd in his Ta’rīkh al-Kuwait, Vol. I, pp. 47-65, gives a detailed account of the present way of pearl fishing which has not changed through the ages.

1See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 408. Manesty and Jones speak of those Indian goods as well as other European mercantile articles which were carried in the 'Utūb vessels to Bahrain.

"Those Articles, in the present Times (1789) are however first conveyed in a direct manner from Surat to Bahreen and from thence to Zebarra and Catiffe. The Importations made from Surat to Bahreen for the Consumption of that Island, principally consist of small Quantities of Surat Blue and other Piece Goods, Guzerat Piece Goods and Chintz, Cambay, Chanders, Shawls, Bamboos, Tin, Lead and Iron." Ibid.
notice that the owners of those vessels were merchants who carried with them goods for their own profit and it is this part of Surat goods that was transported to Baghdad and Aleppo. Besides there was the trade with Muscat whence those vessels imported to Bahrain the Mucha Coffee, "partly intended for the Basora Market", and a quantity of Sugar, pepper, spices of Bengal ghee and rice. Parts of these imports were in their turn exported to Basra. On their way back from Basra, these vessels conveyed to Bahrain dates and grain that were necessary for the local population and other articles for the market of Surat. Though we are not in a position to give the exact amount of the imports at Bahrain during the 1780's, we are better able to do this at the end of the century where those imports "of Indian Goods" amounted annually to the value of ten lacs of rupees and we learn also that these were "balanced by an export of pearls to an equal amount".

1 These Surat articles that were on demand at Baghdad and Aleppo were described as "Sundry Gruff Articles of Commerce... Cotton, Yarn, Shawls, Surat Blue and other Piece Goods and Guzerat Piece Goods and Chintz". See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 406.

2 Ibid.

3 These other articles which were "proper for the Surat Market" were: "Copper, Arsenic, Galls, Lamette, Ora Contarino, Venetian false Corals, and Bead of different Kinds, cochineal and Saffron". See Ibid.

The commerce of Zubāra.

The second centre of commerce in the 'Utbi States was Zubāra. This port by virtue of its geographical situation was bound to play its role in conveying part of the above mentioned 'Utbi cargoes from BahRAIN to Eastern and Central Arabia. Before the occupation of BahRAIN by the 'Utūb, Zubāra was the centre of the commercial activities of the Al-Khālid and the other 'Utbi families. There is no evidence of the amount or the kind of trade that was there before the 1780's. As a port on the pearl coast it must have shared in the pearl fishery, but even that share seems to have been very small. After the 'Utūb of BahRAIN had bought their large vessels which traded with India, Zubāra served as a centre, together with al-Qaṭīf, for distributing those goods among the tribes of the Bani Khālid and caravans carried the Mucha coffee and sundry goods to al-Dir‘iyya, the Wahhābī capital and to many places in the Wahhābī domains. The occupation of BahRAIN

1The rich pearl coast extended from the neighbourhood of Qaṭīf to Ras al-Khayma on the Arabian coast of the Gulf.

2See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 408.

3See Ibid., pp. 405-408. These importations which were made at Zubāra were the same as those imported at BahRAIN. Dates and grain were always on demand by the Arabs of the Bani Khālid and the Wahhābīs. Ibid.
must have inevitably reduced the importance of Zubāra as regards
the Āl-Khalīfa's commercial centre.

The commercial position at Kuwait.

The conquest of Bahrain on the other hand does not seem to have
reduced the commercial importance of Kuwait. For the ruling 'Utbī
family at this place was faced by the rivalry of the Banī Ka'b and
other Arabs from the Persian littoral, a fact which made the Āl-
Sābah determined to possess a strong fleet, and this they obtained.
It has already been seen that Kuwait in the 1770's served as a centre
for the Eng. East India Company's mail. In addition to this its geo-
ographical situation was advantageous to the town both as a sea port
and as a station for the Aleppo and Baghdad caravans. With the estab-
ishment of the East India Company's Factory at Kuwait in 1793 for
over two years, the town kept a position which equalled that of Bah-

Therefore Kuwait's commercial success seems to have been largely
dependent on transit trade. With the growth of the 'Utbī trade as a
result of the occupation of Bahrain, importations were made from Bah-
rain and Zubāra to Kuwait. These belonged to merchants, from Bahrain
and Baṣra, who wanted to send those goods either to Aleppo or Baghdad
by desert caravans, mainly to avoid the heavy duties levied on them

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1 See above, p. 139.
Dates and grain were imported from Basra for local consumption and that of the immediate vicinity. It is worthwhile noticing too that the conveyance of property from Kuwait to Baghdad or Aleppo by the desert caravans was not attended with any consequential danger for the Shaikhs of the caravans were careful in selecting the rafīqs, and allotting the tribal shāikhs the necessary presents. Griffiths, writing in 1785-6, even adds that the tribal shāikhs did their best to keep those caravans running regularly without any molestation because this way they were sure of their reward.

1 See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409. Some of those importations from Bahrain, al-Qatif, Zubara and Masqat were for "the local Consumption of Kuwait and its immediate Vicinity". These consisted of "small Quantities of Surat Blue Goods, Bengal Coarse white Goods, Bengal Soosies, Coffee, Sugar, Pepper & ca. Soices, Iron and Lead"..."and of more considerable Quantities of Bengal Piece Goods, Surat Piece Goods, Cotton yarn, Camby, Chanders, Coffee, Pepper for the Bagdad and Aleppo merchants". Ibid. For the duties collected on those goods both at Basra and Baghdad, see above, Chapter III, pp.

2 Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 409.

3 Ibid.

4 See Griffiths, op.cit., p. 351. It took the caravan, according to Manesty and Jones, about 30 days from Kuwait to Aleppo and about 30 to Baghdad. See Selections from State Papers, p. 409.
The trade of Kuwait does not seem to have benefitted much from the stay of the English Factory there. For the Captains of the English ships refused in the beginning to unload at Kuwait goods that were destined for Basra, and as it had already been pointed out in the previous chapter, Manesty did not insist on his orders being carried out that English vessels must not unload at Basra. The gain from the English stay was mostly political and not economic.

Basra and Masqat.

Before concluding this chapter, it is necessary to say that the principal entrepôts for the trade of the Persian Gulf in this period were Masqat and Basra. The first was described by Parsons as a large store for European and Indian goods which were conveyed to Basra and the 'Utbi ports by the Masqat fleet and that of the 'Utub. Basra was the centre of the English East India Company's trade with the Gulf during most of the years from 1763-1800.

1 See above, p. 254.
2 The Wahhabi threat to Kuwait was averted.
3 See Parsons, *op.cit.*, p. 207.
4 The devastating plague of 1773 and the Persian siege and occupation of the town (1775-1779) had noticeable effect on its trade, but it soon recovered. Griffiths, visiting the town in 1785, wrote: "Bassorah is the emporium of this quarter of the World. It is here that richly laden ships, from every part of India pour in their valuable cargoes..." *op.cit.*, p. 389.
Although we do not have any statistics of the trade of the Arabian side of the Gulf apart from those of the English trade with the area, that trade can only be described as prosperous. The Indian trade, according to Malcolm, to Arabia amounted to 40 Lacks of rupees of which 30 were with Basra and 10 went to Bahrain and its neighbourhood.¹

"These great Imports" says Malcolm, "are answered by exports from Basora of Dates, the Native Product, by Pearls (received from Bahrain and other neighbouring Ports in exchange for grain) and Gold and Silver Lace brought from Europe by the Alepno caravans and Copper from the mines of Diarbekr. Most of those exports pass through Muscat in their Way to India."²

Griffiths said that the

"returns are made chiefly in specie or jewels; and a certain number of highly bred Arab horses."³

Conclusion

The share of the ‘Utūb in this prosperous trade was great for they participated in its conveyance both by sea and by caravan. They seem to have done all that they could to benefit from that flow of trade both by legal and illegal means. They did not hesitate to play

¹See Saldanha, Selections from State Papers, p. 445.
²Ibid.
³Griffiths, op. cit., p. 389.
their part in smuggling goods from Kuwait to the markets of Baghdad and Aleppo to avoid the Baṣra customs. Their mercantile activities increased enormously after their conquest of Bahrajn.
CONCLUSIONS
CONCLUSIONS

Social position and domestic affairs

The 'Utub were originally Arab families who came from al-Aflāj in Najd. Their first settlement was Kuwait where they lived under the protection of the Shaikh of the Banī Khālid until 1752, but on the death of Sulaymān Al-Ḥamīd, the Khālidī Shaikh, they became independent and Ǧābir, the ancestor of the present Shaikh of Kuwait, was chosen as the first known 'Utub Shaikh. In 1766 the second 'Utub settlement of Zubāra was established by the Ǧalīfah, the second most influential 'Utub family. In 1782/3 Bahrain was conquered jointly by the Ǧabāḥ and Ǧalīfah which put the 'Utub in a delicate political situation for Bahrain had always been coveted by its neighbours.

The government in both the ruling families was hereditary and a member of other 'Utub families could become Shaikh. The tribal authority of the Shaikhs was strong but because of the commercial nature of the 'Utub States, the Shaikhs were less despotic than might otherwise be expected. Besides the influence of the merchants in the 'Utub towns, there was the power of the Qādī, who saw to the application of the Shari'ā law.

The boundaries of the 'Utub territories cannot be ascertained except in the case of Bahrain Island. In Kuwait in the north Failaka
Island belonged to Kuwait. Yet the fact that both Kuwait and Zubara grew up in unoccupied desert territory made it possible for the 'Utub to have free exits by land and sea. In Qatar, for example, the Al-Jalahima settled at Khor Hasam to the north of Zubara, and later, in the early 19th century, they settled at al-Dammam, near al-Qatif, without any opposition. However, all the 'Utub territory except Bahrain and the neighbouring islands was within the Khalidi sphere of influence.

The 'Utub did not turn to piracy like other Arabian maritime tribes. The sole exception is Rahma b. Jabir, of the Al-Jalahima section, and even in his case, he only turned pirate after he had been refused by the Al-Khalifa a proper share in the pearl trade of Zubara and the booty from the conquest of Bahrain.

In spite of the fact that circumstances forced the Al-Khalifa to leave Kuwait in the 1760's and make their homes in the south, yet cordial relations existed between the two 'Utub ruling families of the Al-Sabah and Al-Khalifa. Two examples bear witness to this, the first is that the 'Utub of the north joined their cousins in fighting against Shaikh Nasir of Abu Shahr in the 1770's and in conquering Bahrain in 1782/3. The second is that the Al-Khalifa at Bahrain and Zubara sent their merchandise to Kuwait rather than to Basra on its way to Aleppo.
There is evidence that the 'Utbi states towards the end of the eighteenth century were united to form one political entity with Shaikh 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah at its head. This can be explained by the Arab custom which gives power to the eldest. Thus 'Abd Allah Al-Sabah, eldest among the 'Utbi rulers, was their chief and his authority, according to Malcolm, extended over all the 'Utbi territories, both north and south.

Foreign affairs.

As regards the 'Utbi relations with other powers which had interests in Eastern Arabia, it is clear that the 'Utub did their best to keep on good terms with them all. Our study reveals the following facts about those powers in the second half of the eighteenth century. First there was no Ottoman ruler in Eastern Arabia, in fact Ottoman rule was not even nominally acknowledged. Their attempts in 1736 through the campaign of Thuwayni and, in 1798 through 'Ali Pasha's expedition against the Wahhabis, to restore their lost position in al-Hasa were unsuccessful. At Kuwait, the nearest point of the 'Utbi domains to the Ottoman Mutasallimiyya of Basra, the Shaikh was not under any form of Ottoman control. The aim of 'Utbi external policy was to keep friendly relations with all the forces working in the Gulf, and to avoid direct clashes with them.
Thus, though the 'Utūb of Kuwait appeared to be on the side of the Pasha of Baghdād in the early stages of the Persian siege of Baṣra in 1775, when the Persian occupation became almost certain, the 'Utūb's policy was reversed and aid sent to the besieging army. In spite of this, Persian influence, expressed through the medium of the Arab Shaikhs of the Persian littoral, was not felt in Eastern Arabia during the period under consideration. In fact, the 'Utūb eradicated Persian influence from its nearest centre to the Arabian littoral, by occupying Bahrayn. Because Kuwait was not a dependency of Baṣra the Persian occupation of Baṣra (1775-1779) did not affect Kuwait.

There were friendly relations between the 'Utūb and two European nations, the Dutch and the English. Relations with the Dutch were the outcome of their establishment at Khārij Island which lies in the north eastern corner of the Persian Gulf, almost opposite to Kuwait. Stronger and closer relations existed between the 'Utūb and the English. The recorded history of these relations starts in 1775 at the time when the Persians were besieging Baṣra. The intercepting of French emissaries and dispatches in the Persian Gulf, the earliest example of which is that of Captain Borel de Bourg in 1778, and the choice of Kuwait in 1793 as a place of refuge for the Baṣra Factory for about two and a half year, reflect the accommodating disposition of the Shaikh towards the English. The aid which the Factory apparently gave to Kuwait in
repelling the Wahhabi aggressors during its stay there is another
testimony to the existence of these strong and friendly relations.

The hostile 'Utub attitude towards the Wahhabis was dictated
by their allegiance to their benefactors, the Banî Khalid, who were
the Wahhabi's bitter enemies. So, as long as the Banî Khalid were
able to withstand the Wahhabis, the 'Utub, in their turn, escaped
Wahhabi domination. Once the Khalid power was annihilated by the
Wahhabis in 1795, the 'Utub gradually came under Wahhabi dominance.

Commercial Status.

Turning finally to commercial enterprise, we find that the 'Utub
were here most successful. They made use of their geographical posi-
tion to enrich themselves by trade, carried by sea and desert. Our
study reveals clearly for the first time that the Eastern Arabian coast
shared the Indian and European trade. The Banî Khalid's rule was fav-
ourable to trade, but the 'Utub were able to surpass the Banî Khalid
by becoming themselves the traders of Eastern Arabia. Their sea fleet
was the strongest in the Gulf and in fewer than sixteen years after
the establishment of Zubara in 1766 they defied all the Arab maritime
forces in the Gulf. Thus not the ships of Abu Shahr, nor Bandar Riq,
nor the Banî Ka'b could compete with them. Their fleet was next in
importance to that of Masqat. Their large ships made non-stop journeys
from the Persian Gulf to India.
The 'Utub in the second half of the eighteenth century did not see any great threat from the European trading nations. On the contrary, the Arab traders were the monopolisers of the sea-freight in the Gulf. But for this fact, and the satisfactory working of the desert caravan routes, the 'Utub could not have achieved success, nor could their early settlements at Kuwait and Zubam have flourished for they were built on the bare desert. The 'Utub made great use of these two channels along which trade passed between Asia and Europe, on one hand, and the internal trade of Arabia on the other.

The occupation of Bahrain in 1782/3 was of great importance to the 'Utub trade because it put in their possession the richest pearl producing area and a centre of substantial commercial activity. The merit of the 'Utub here lies in the fact that they knew how to use their newly conquered island.

Our study of the 'Utub commercial activities makes it apparent that the cargoes carried by Arab vessels of Mucqat and 'Utub ports were as large or more probably larger than those carried by European vessels. Although we do not know the actual amount of trade, yet we have the report of Manesty and Jones about it. This leaves no doubt that it was enormous. The Arab boats, of which the 'Utub's fleet was the greatest, monopolised the trade of the Gulf during most of the last fifty years of the eighteenth century.
Finally, we see that the second half of the eighteenth century was the time when the foundations of the present ruling houses of the Al-Šabāh and the Al-Khalīfa were laid. These were steadily protected by the wisdom and perseverance of Shaikh ʿAbd Allah Al-Šabāh, the second ʿUtbī ruler of Kuwait and Ahmad Al-Khalīfa of Zubāra.

On the sea these two rulers and their followers proved to be invincible, but on land their position was weaker. They were sure that their resistance to the Wahhābis could not last too long after the defeat of the Banī Khālid and events proved this to be the case.
THE AFFAIR OF M. BOREL DE BOURG. 1

In consequence of intelligence received from Grain of the arrival there of a French Officer having in charge a packet of importance for Pondicherry, it was determined by your Honours Factors at Bussora to endeavour to get possession of it, a measure which appeared to them the more necessary from an unguarded declaration made at Grain by the officer in question that war was absolutely declared between France and England.

I was in consequence, ordered immediately to repair to Grain to use my utmost endeavours towards getting possession not only of the packet but of the bearer also. I departed from Bussora the 1st at night on board your Honors Cruizer the Eagle; and finding the wind unfavourable and a great probability of being detained so long perhaps as to afford an opportunity to the bearer of the packet to escape to Muscat, I procured a boat in the river which I was convinced would convey me to Grain by some days sooner than I could expect to reach it in the Eagle whose presence too I judged might alarm the Frey I had in view and give him an opportunity, if not of avoiding

1Abraham to the C. of D., Grain, 7.xi, 1778, F.R.P.P.G., Vol. 17.
me entirely, at least of destroying his packet. I therefore left the Eagle in the river, and in about twenty hours arrived at Grain at 10 o'clock at night; I immediately proceeded to the Sheik and having gained him to my interest so far as not to interfere in the business I had in hand, I proceeded directly to the house where the messenger lodged, and informed him who I was, seized him together with his packet, and conveyed him instantly on board my boat - this was all effected without the least disturbance.

I arrived on board the Eagle in about twelve hours, where having examined the packet, I find it contains sundry advices in cypher from Monsieur de Sartine, Minister for the Marine Department in France directed to Monsieur de Bellecombe, Commander-in-Chief at Pondicherry, and to Monsieur de Briancourt, the French consul at Surat, together with a declaration of War between France and England, and sundry private letters from all which I can only gather that the bearer of the packet is Captain Borel du Bourg; that the advices he bears are of the utmost consequence, and that he is directed to fix a Resident at Muscat in order to convey all French packets with the utmost expedition by way of Aleppo, and that, the King of France having acknowledged the Independency of the United States of America, all vessels belonging to them are to be received into the port belonging to the King of France and to be paid the same honors as are
paid to the United States of Holland. From a Journal of Captain du Bourg, I find he left Marseilles the 14 of August, and arrived here from Aleppo in 21 days.

Before I left Bussora, it was determined should I find the packet in question to be of any consequence immediately to despatch it to India by the Eagle. The Declaration of War alone therefore I have judged to be of sufficient consequence to warrant her despatch. I have in consequence ordered Captain Sheriff, the Commander, immediately to proceed to Bombay without touching at Bushire or Muscat and to deliver Monsieur du Bourg together with his packet to the Honourable the Governor and Council.
A letter from William Digges Latouche (Basra Fact.) to Mr. Manesty (Basra Fact.)

There are several other Powers besides the Banī Ka‘bīš with whom it is the Company's Interest to continue on friendly Terms - with the Bunderick, the Grain People, and other Tribes of Arabs on the Persian and Arabian Costs, who have it in their Power to annoy our Trade - with the Shaikhs of the Montificks, of the Benechalids, of the Anisas, of the Gheesaals for the Security of the Company's Dispatches, of the English Trade, and of English Travellers passing between Bussora, Aleppo and Baghdat.

Timely Presents are often of great Use in preserving this good Understanding. Those on the changes of the Kussalems here are fixed, and should not be increased though Attempts under various Pretences have been, and will be probably made for that Purpose. The Others must be regulated by your own Prudence and according to Circumstances - they should be made with Caution. If they are too frequent and too large they will increase Expectations of future Ones. If on the other hand they do not in some measure answer the Expectation of the Person to whom they are given, the giving them will be worse than not giving any. They are too often in this country considered as a kind of Tribute and therefore as a Right. When I have found this to be the Case,

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I have deferred them until they appeared as made from my own
Inclination, and rather as a Return for Favours received, than
as given through for or in Expectation of future Services.

Bagra 6th Nov. 1784

Signed Latouche
The Capture of Bahrain by the 'Utub

A letter from Mr. Latouche (Basra Resid.) to the Court of Dir., London, dated 4th Nov., 1732.¹

The Zebara, and the Grain People, have lately taken and plundered Bahrein, and have likewise seized at the Entrance of this River, several Boats belonging to Bushire and Bunderick. Shaikh Nassir of Bushire, in return is collecting a Marine, as well as a Military Force, at Bushire, Bunderick, and other Persian Ports — he gives out that he intends to revenge these Hostilities by attacking Zebarra, and has wrote for a Supply of Money to Aly Morat Caum at Isphahan. Notwithstanding this show of Vigor, however, it is said, that he has lately sent to Grain to request a Peace, but that the Shaik had refused to grant it, unless Shaikh Nassir pays him half the Revenues of Bahrein, and a large Annual Tribute also for Bushire.

It is not many years since Grain, was obliged to pay a large tribute to the Chaub, and that the name of Zebarra, was scarcely known. On the Persians attacking Busura, one of the Shaiks of Grain, retired to Zebarra, with many of the principal People. Some of the Busura Merchants also retired thither. A great Part of the Pearl and India

Trade, by this means entered there, and at Grain, during the Time that the Persians were in possession of Bussora, and those Places have increased so much in Strength and Consequence, that they have for some time past set the Chaub at defiance, have gained very considerable Advantages against him, and now under no Apprehensions from the Force, which Shaik Nassir threatens to collect against them.

Bagra 4th Nov. 1782
Signed Latouche
Translate of a Letter from the Resident to
Abdulla ibn Subbeh Shaik of Grain dated the
17th April 1789

I am induced by the Consideration of the Friendship which has long subsisted between us, to write to You in the present Hour.

I have lately paid a Visit to the Bacha of Bagdat in his Camp. In the Course of our Conversations the Bacha mentioned Your Name. He said that an ancient Friendship had subsisted between the People of Grain and of Bussora, he expressed great Surprise & anger at Your Conduct in giving Protection to People, who had been in Rebellion against him, and who had fled to avoid the Punishment due to their Guilt, he said that unless You delivered them up to him, or ordered them to quit the Town of Grain, he should consider You, as his Enemy, and proceed on an Expedition against You. He said that he would march with his Army to Grain and order his Fleet, to repair thither to cooperate with it. He said that he would write a letter to the Governor of Bombay, requesting the early Assistance of a Marine force and he desired that I would also write a Letter to the Governor of Bombay to the same Purport.

Friendship has urged me thus to make known to you the Sentiments of the Bacha of Bagdat.

1This letter and the following one come from Volume 18 of the Factory Records, Persia and Persian Gulf. Their serial number in that volume is 1532.
Translate of a Letter from Shaik Abdulla ibn Subbah to the Resident received the
30th April 1789.

After Compliments,

I have received Your Letter and understand its Contents. You mention that a friendship has always subsisted between the English and myself, I pray God, it may continue so to the End of time.

I am obliged to You for the Information You have given me in Regard to the Intentions of Soliman Bacha, whom I am sorry to observe is displeased at my Conduct towards Mustapha Aga.

The Town of Grain belongs to the Bacha, the Inhabitants of it are his Servants but You Yourself thank God are well enough acquainted with our Customs, to know, that if any Person whatsoever falls upon Us for Protection we cannot refuse to afford it to him and that after having afforded it, it is the extreme of Infamy to desert him or to deliver him into the hands of his Enemies.

You know the Bacha knows, the whole World knows that I receive no Advantage from Mustapha Aga's Residence at Grain but to turn him out is wrong, to deliver him up is Infamy.

I depend upon Your Friendship to stop this Matter to the Bacha in its proper Light.

May Your Years be long and happy

Bussora the 29th June 1789.

True Translates

(signed) Samuel Manesty
Translation of a contract with the Sheick Suliman for an escort of Arabs across the Great Desert from Aleppo to Bassora.

"THIS writing is to certify, that we the under-written of the tribe of Arabs Nigadi, having for our own free will agreed to accompany and conduct the bearer of this contract, Colonel Capper, an Englishman, and those of his company; and that we oblige ourselves to take with us seventy guards of the tribes of Arabs Nigadi, and Agalli and Benni Khaled, who are all to be armed with muskets; we the under-written are included in the number, excepting Sheick Haggy Suliman Eben Adayah. - And we do promise also to carry with us nine refeeks with their muskets, two of whom of the two different tribes called Edgelass, two of the two tribes Il Fedaan, one of the tribe of Welled Aly, one of the tribe of Benni Waheb, one of the tribe of Lacruti, one of the tribe of Baigee, and one of the tribe of Sarhaani, making in all nine refeeks, as above-mentioned.

AND it is agreed, that we the underwritten are to bring with us our own provisions, and the provisions for the guards and refeeks above-mentioned, and the same provisions are to be loaded upon our camels, the hire of which camels is to be paid by us; and we likewise agree to buy ourselves thirteen rotolas of gunpowder, and

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twenty-six rotolas of balls, the cost of all the aforesaid things are to be paid by us, and not by Colonel Capper.

AND we also oblige ourselves to provide for him and his people nineteen camels, for the use of himself and his company, to carry their tents and baggage, water and provisions for themselves and for their horses, besides those nineteen camels above-mentioned; we also oblige ourselves to provide them two other strong camels to carry the mohafa, in order that they may change very day one camel, and to provide a person to lead the camel that carries the mohafa from Aleppo to Graine, and moreover we will appoint him a person to take care of his horses.

WE the underwritten do promise Colonel Capper, by our own free will and consent, and oblige ourselves to pay all kafars and giawayez (that is to say duties) to all the Arabs, and to the Sheick Tamur, the Sheick Tiveini, and all the Sheicks of the tribe of Beni Khaled, and to all other tribes of Arabs whatever; and we make ourselves responsible for all what is above-written, and further when we approach the tribe of Arabs called Il Aslam, and Shammar and any other tribes, we oblige ourselves to take from them a refeek to walk with us till we have passed their confines.

WE agree to carry no goods, or even letters from any other person or persons, excepting the goods from Khwaja Rubens, which are
thirty-one loads, for the hire of the said goods from Khwaja Rubens we have received in full, that is, the hire, the inamalumi, the re-seeks, the giawayez, figmaniah, and all other expenses to Graine; we have received of him in full, according to the receipt in the hands of the said Khwaja Rubens: moreover we have agreed with our free will to provide for the said thirty-one loads, for every load two camels, in order to keep up with the above-mentioned Colonel Capper, and never separate from his company till our arrival at Graine; and we also oblige ourselves to pay the dolleels (scouts) the maadeb, the birakdar, and the chaous (officers of the guards) all the aid persons we are to pay ourselves, and not Colonel Capper. We have agreed also with our free will, with the said Colonel Capper, to carry him and his company safe in thirty-six days to Graine, from the day we depart from the village of Kayreb; but in case the said Colonel Capper should be desirous of staying to rest a day or more the said delay is not to be reckoned in the aforesaid thirty-six days. And we the underwritten also engage three days before our arrival at Graine, to dispatch a messenger from our parts with Colonel Capper's letter to the agent of the British nation in Graine. And by this instrument it is stipulated and agreed between the said Colonel Capper and us the underwritten persons, that he pays us for all the services above-mentioned dollars nine hundred forty-one and one fourth in Aleppo,
which sum we have received in full; besides which the said Colonel Capper does oblige himself to give us on the road dollars five hundred; and moreover at our safe arrival at Graine, on our having fulfilled this our agreement with him, he the said Colonel Capper obliges himself to pay us dollars eight hundred rumi, and in case we should fail in performing any part of our agreement with him, we then are to forfeit the last-mentioned eight hundred dollars, and all we the underwritten are responsible one for the other, for the performance of the promises as above agreed between the contracting parties. In witness whereof, we have signed with our fingers this the sixteenth day of the moon called Shewal, in the year of the Hegina, one thousand one hundred and ninety-two.


The witnesses to the agreement are:

Genealogical Table of the  
Al-Šabāh, rulers of Kuwait  
in the 18th and early 19th centuries

Jābir
  Ṣabāh

(Shaikh of Kuwait from about 1752 to 1762, and founder of the Al-Šabāh)

‘Abd Allāh

(Shaikh of Kuwait from 1762 to 1812)

Jābir
  (1812-1859)
Genealogical Table of the Al-Khalīfa
rulers of Zubara and Bahrain
in the 13th Century

Faisal

(said to have come from 'Anaza in Qasīm and settled at Kuwait about 1716)

Muhammad

Khalīfa

(Founder of the Al-Khalīfa section of the 'Utub; migrated to Zubara in Qatar, 1766; died in pilgrimage at Makka about 1783)

Abdalmad

(Established himself in Bahrain, 1783; died about 1796)

Salman

'Abd Allāh

(Shaikh of Bahrain 1796-1825; in his later years his brother 'Abd Allāh was associated with him in the Shaikhship)
Genealogical Table of the Al-Su'ud rulers of Su'ud Arabia

Maqran

Muhammad

Su'ud

(From whom the family take their name of Al-Su'ud)

Muhammad

(Amir of Southern Najd until his death in 1765)

'Abd al-'Aziz

(1765-1803, assassinated at al-Dir'iyya; married a daughter of Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab)

Su'ud

(Born in 1746; mother a daughter of Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab. Commanded the Wahhabis in the field during his father's life time; died 1814)
Genealogy of the Bani Khalid Shaikhs in the 17th and 18th centuries

- Ghurayr Al-Hamid
  - Barrak (1669-1682)
  - Muhammad (1682-1691)
    - 'Abd Allah
      - Sa'dun (1691-1722)
      - 'Ali (1722-1736)
      - Sulayman (1736-1752)
        - Duwayhis
        - Dujayn
          - Uray'ir (1752-1774)
            - Barrak (1793-1796)
              - Sirdah
                - 'Abd al-Muhsin (1786-1791)
          - Dujayn
            - 'Umar (1771-1786)
        - Sa'dun
          - Muhammad (1786-1789)
            - Butayn (1793-1796)
              - Zayd (1789-1793)
        - Butayn (1774)
          - Dujayn (1774)
            - Sa'dun (1774-1786)
              - Duwayhis (1786-1789)
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LOCATION OF ARAB TRIBES
IN THE PERSIAN GULF (18th Cent.)

SCALE 1" = 4,000,000 miles.

AL-MUNTAFAQ
AL-ZAfar
AL-SABBI
JAFIR
KHALID
BANI
KHALID
CENTRAL ARABIA
(NAJD)

HADDAR
MUSALLA