

THE HISTORY OF KUWAIT

"THE EMIRATE AND THE STATE"

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To “Monerah”

My Mother and my Daughter

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Preface

The book “History of Kuwait – The Emirate and the State” by Professor Abdullah. M. AlHajeri, is issued to bring an important addition to the Kuwaiti history library, which is in great need of serious specialised researchers to cover important aspects of the history of our dear nation. The book handles the course and events of the history of Kuwait since its emergence as a political entity with the arrival of the Utub⁽¹⁾, under the leadership of al Sabah, al Khalifa and the Jalahma, until the rise of the independent State of Kuwait, a constitutional, institutional and democratic State. The book relies on the most important acknowledged sources and references, while criticising their information where criticism is needed, yet in a scientific, objective and sober manner, studying all angles, thus maintaining balance and objective criticism, in addition to using a fluent style and clear expression. With all this, the author perceives our pride in our national history, and the obligation to carefully document it, study it, and teach it - as the other nations and peoples do - in order to increase national consciousness, and engrave the sentiment of belonging in the children of the nation.

In his book, Professor Abdullah. M. AlHajeri, also perceived that our core interest and our main goals as the people and the government of Kuwait, and particularly the researchers and specialists, must be to research the history of our nation in a scientific and documented way. This would allow our researchers

(1) The Utub are a group of clans, most of who belong to the Anizzah Arab tribe, they migrated and they were named the Utub; it is a verb, i.e. they migrated and crossed the *atabah* (threshold) of the house.

to step into new doors and programs that would open the doors of knowledge about historical information and evidence, to be studied and researched objectively and honestly. Certainly, history is a human study that has its methodology and its rules about research, based, mainly, on accredited documents as an important domain to complete the historical writing, where diligence plays a major role.

Professor AlHajeri is conscious of all this, and implements it in his book “History of Kuwait – The Emirate and the State”, which fulfils the need of those studying and those interested in our history, and of all the people; all of us – people and government – are keen to know its aspects, and the course of its events. Those who don’t know their past, cannot live their present, nor build their future.

The book contains several important subjects from the history of Kuwait, and no important historical event was left without being exposed and analysed, as shown in the “Contents” of the book, rich in subjects.

Although the book handles the modern and contemporary history of Kuwait, Professor Abdullah. M. AlHajeri, exposed glimpses of the inhabitants of Kuwait in ancient and Islamic history, of the historical events that were recorded by researchers, of antiquities dating back to four thousand years BC, and of what was left behind recorded Islamic historical events.

It was a good and important thing that he presented those who wrote the history of Kuwait for the first time - local writers, the History of Kuwait Committee, the Najd writers, the Western travellers, agents of the East India Companies (British, Dutch, and others), and the agents of British India’s government. It asserts his

going back to these sources and knowing their authors, and the same with the documents, assuring his reference to original sources regarding the many historical subjects contained in the book taken from those Westerners' records.

This book comes to crown many valuable researches and studies by Professor Abdullah al-Hajeri who succeeded, through his diligence and devotion in scientific research, to upgrade his degree to Professorship early in time. In the end, we wish the researcher to continue his valuable historical researches, and God is the helper for what is good and right.

*Professor Maimaunah Khalifa
al-Athbi al-Sabah*

Our History is our Identity

Author's introduction

There is a direct link between the history and the national identity of any nation or people. The identity of any nation relies on its rooting and history, which requires searching and prospecting origins and roots. Identity is not a closed structure limited to a few people, or groups, or particular races, but it is a vast term that reflects itself with the facts and the components of existence, and with the history surrounding it and its measures. It is a term one can only deal with considering the givens of nature, and the political, cultural and economic social mobility, within the context of the interaction between all these components.

History is the soul of a nation, and the societies' need to assert their identities – at all the sages of their growth and development - is an urgent need, and a major axis of power and social unity.

In Kuwait, the question of identity is one of the most important problematics raising continuous polemic and debate. The most import question is: who is the Kuwaiti? And what differentiates him from other people in the region? What are the elements that form the identity of Kuwait?

The Kuwaiti identity emerged and developed due to the faith of a group of people in their attachment to a different political legitimacy. Although the region of Kuwait did not bear the meaning of a country at the beginning, it nevertheless carried the concept of a society, with all the social values, principles, systems, and connections it entails. This was under the auspices of an organisation that led the simple society in its beginnings, and was able to achieve a relative independence, allowing its individuals to belong to this authority as a source of legitimacy. All this was the main seed establishing the Kuwaiti identity, and

consolidating the understanding of citizenship and belonging. To the Kuwaitis, the Kuwaiti identity wears characteristics that are different from other identities. Since the foundation until this day, the national identity of Kuwait has been shaped through several bases and determinants, the most important of which being that the society confronted the different challenges that faced it, united in one organisation determined by the general interest. Time itself became, to the society, an active factor in accumulating the conceptions of the Kuwaiti identity. In spite of the harshness of life at the beginning, groups of people from the founding fathers and others were united to live through the different epochs, simultaneously forming a universal identity gathering everybody underneath it. Hence, the constituents of this identity are remembered or read through history alone, in the context of a general idea through which are formed “the central authority represented by the Sabah family, the geographical space that forms the borders of Kuwait and broadens or narrows according to the circumstances and events, and finally the groups of people living on this land and pledging allegiance to their authorities”. These determinants are also directly related and derive directly from economic and trade paths resembling one texture that has grown and has been formed on the shores of the northern Arabian Gulf, linking all these forces in “one political system” which shaped its final identity.

The ability of the Kuwaitis to face their problems, their self-power, the nature of the events surrounding them and their dealing with them according to the mechanisms that would guarantee their settlement, and preserve their freedom and a secure and peaceful life, were an additional fundamental values. They distinguished the Kuwaiti identity from other identities that were also developing and being formed nearby; especially the identities sharing its language, religion, history, culture, and geographic extension. The Kuwaitis fused out of the tribal or

societal identity to blend in this new identity, the universal identity of Kuwait.

Having spent many long years searching and prospecting, I have come to believe that answering all these questions and the ability to read the Kuwaiti identity will only occur through reading history. History alone can unveil and show the nature of our reality; through history, we will be able to read how Kuwait emerged and was established with its three main components, population, governance, and land. How did Kuwait and its people acquire the constituents of construction socially, economically, politically, and culturally? How did its rulers from the Sabah family lead it to the road of growth and progress, and how did the Kuwaiti society develop to have its own specificity? A society that has grown to believe that its identity or “the Kuwaiti identity” is not just a land one lives on or a land one is born in or inhabits. But it is an identity that stems out of a history made by the fathers and the forefathers, a history full of diversity and pluralism, of chronicles, events, challenges, successes and failures, an identity open to all cultures and civilisations, an identity still interacting and exchanging giving and taking.

This may be what Iraq realised when, right after the invasion, it attempted to nullify the Kuwaiti identity by putting doubts on our history. It pretended that we are a country without history, and that we were once part of Basra, although our history clearly proves how we were, how we grew, how we lived on the soil of this nation and defended it, how our founding fathers and ancestors took it as a homeland, and settled and lived in it.

Yes, the Kuwaitis are different. Not because they are distinct from other peoples or nations, but because they chose the land they live on, they chose the nation they grew in, and they forged its political, economic and living aspects. They are the ones who chose their societal formation, to blend in one societal entity;

they chose the authority that rules them, and they are satisfied with it.

They are the ones who looked for a land and a place, far from the other existing powers in the area, to establish this new homeland.

Hence, the Kuwaitis are the only people who made their history and their identity. Hence also, the Kuwaiti identity is the result of the vision of the Kuwaiti himself of the historical experiment of his nation, just like the identities of the other peoples and nations are also the results of these peoples' and nations' vision of their history.

From this premise, this book comes as one of the models of historical writings and studies contributing to recover the historical reality of the Emirate of Kuwait, to expose its identity and how it was formed since its foundation, and the emergence of its independent entity until the period of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 CE. Between the covers of this book, we attempted to focus on what I call the Kuwaiti historical experiment, the formation of the identity, its past, how it emerged and was founded by the Utub, its relationship with the neighbouring regions and the other forces, the nature of its administration and its rulers, the development of its society, its political mobility, its independence, and the construction of its institutions. Following the story of this society will prove to the reader that the experience of Kuwait was a different experience. Hopefully, this book will present a clear view within this context, and will bring the desired benefit.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1299 CE Foundation of the Ottoman Empire.
- 1453 CE The fall of Constantinople at the Ottomans' hands.
- 1492 CE Christopher Columbus and the New World, America.
- 1498 CE Vasco da Gama's arrival to India via the Cape of Good Hope.
- 1507 CE The Portuguese head towards the Arabian Gulf.
- 1515 CE The Portuguese seize Muscat.
- 1516 CE The Battle of Marj Dabiq – the fall of the Levant at the Ottomans' hands.
- 1517 CE The Battle of Ridaniya and the Ottoman conquest of Egypt.
- 1534 CE The Ottomans enter Baghdad.
- 1546 CE The Ottomans conquer Basra.
- 1555 CE The fall of al-Ahsa at the Ottomans' hands.
- 1600 CE Establishment of the British East India Company for spices.
- 1613 CE Establishment of the Utub in Kuwait.
- 1650 CE Eviction of the Portuguese from Oman.
- 1670 CE Success of the Bani Khalid in usurping power from the Ottomans in al-Ahsa.
- 1682 CE Transcription of the Muwatta manuscript in the Kuwaiti Failaka Island.
- 1701 CE The Ottoman document signalling the migration of the Utub.
- 1701 CE al-Bahrani's manuscript (tackling the Utub's problems in Bahrain).

- 1709 CE First mention of Kuwait in an Arabic manuscript – Murtada Bin Elwan’s manuscript refers to Kuwait during his visit there.
- 1716 CE Francis Warden confirms the entrance of the Utub in Kuwait.
- 1744 CE Rise of the First Saudi State.
- 1752 CE Historian Ahmad Mustafa Abu-Hakima confirms this year to be the date of the foundation of governance in Kuwait.
- 1756 CE The Dutch document La Haye Den Haag (The Hague) discusses Kuwait.
- 1762 CE J. G. Lorimer indicates that Sheikh Abdullah I al-Sabah governed Kuwait.
- 1775-1779 CE Persian siege and invasion of Basra.
- 1775 CE First postal journey from Kuwait to Aleppo.
- 1783 CE al-Raqa incident.
- 1787 CE Mustafa Agha, *mutesellim* of Basra, and Sheikh Thwaini, sheikh of al-Muntafiq take refuge in Kuwait.
- 1792 CE Death of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in Diriyah .
- 1793-1795 CE Residency of the British East India Company moves from Basra to Kuwait.
- 1793 CE The fall of al-Ahsa at the Saudis’ hands.
- 1793 CE First Saudi military expedition to Kuwait.
- 1797 CE Second Saudi military expedition to Kuwait.
- 1814 CE Sheikh Jaber I governs Kuwait.
- 1818 CE The fall of the first Saudi State at the hands of the forces of Mohamed Ali Pasha, *Wali* of Egypt .

- 1839 CE Sheikh Jaber I refuses to raise the English flag on Kuwaiti land.
- 1859 CE Sheikh Sabah II Bin Jaber governs Kuwait.
- 1866 CE Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah II governs Kuwait.
- 1869 CE Inauguration of the Suez Canal.
- 1871 CE al-Ahsa Ottoman expedition.
- 1892 CE Sheikh Mohamed Bin Sabah governs Kuwait.
- 1896 CE Sheikh Mubarak Bin Sabah governs Kuwait.
- 1899 CE Anglo-Kuwait agreement signature.
- 1901 CE Battle of Sarif.
- 1902 CE Conquest of Riyadh at the hands of Prince Abdul-Aziz al Saud.
- 1902 CE The Ottomans invade Bubiyan Island, and the regions of Umm Qasr and Safwan.
- 1904 CE Establishment of a British post office in Kuwait.
- 1910 CE Battle of Hadia.
- 1911 CE Establishment of al-Mubarakiya School in Kuwait.
- 1913 CE Conquest of al-Ahsa at the hands of Prince Abdul-Aziz al Saud.
- 1914 CE World War I.
- 1915 CE Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak governs Kuwait.
- 1916 CE Rise of the Urabi Revolt against the Ottomans in Hijaz.
- 1917 CE Sheikh Salim al-Mubarak governs Kuwait.
- 1917 CE Balfour Declaration supports the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine.
- 1920 CE Battles of Hamdh and Jahra, and construction of the third wall of Kuwait.

- 1920 CE Official British mandate for Iraq in accordance with the San Remo resolutions.
- 1921 CE Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber governs Kuwait.
- 1921 CE Establishment of al-Ahmadiya School in Kuwait.
- 1921 CE Proclamation of Faisal Bin Hussein, son of the Sharif of Mecca, King of Iraq.
- 1921 CE First *Shura* Council in the history of Kuwait.
- 1922 CE Uqair Convention.
- 1924 CE Abolishment of the Ottoman Caliphate.
- 1930 CE Foundation of Kuwait Municipality.
- 1932 CE Correspondence between Kuwait and Iraq to determine and demarcate the borders between the two countries.
- 1936 CE Foundation of *Majlis al-Ma'arif* in Kuwait.
- 1938 CE First Legislative Council in Kuwait.
- 1938 CE Crisis of the Zuhoor Palace Radio between Kuwait and Iraq.
- 1946 CE Exportation of the first Kuwaiti petroleum shipment.
- 1950 CE Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim governs Kuwait.
- 1958 CE Kuwait refuses to join the Hashemite federation.
- 1958 CE Abd al-Karim Qasim's coup against the monarchy in Iraq.
- 1959 CE Britain's House of Commons indicates that the Sheikhdom of Kuwait is an independent state.
- 1961 CE Independence of Kuwait and abolishment of the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement.
- 1961 CE Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis.
- 1961 CE Kuwait joins the Arab League of Nations.

- 1962 CE Ratification of Kuwait's Constitution.
- 1963 CE First National Assembly in the history of Kuwait.
- 1963 CE Kuwait joins the United Nations Organisation.
- 1965 CE Sheikh Sabah al-Salim governs Kuwait.
- 1966 CE Inauguration of the University of Kuwait.
- 1973 CE Samita border skirmish.
- 1977 CE Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah governs Kuwait.
- 1980 CE Iran-Iraq War.
- 1988 CE End of the Iran-Iraq War.
- 1990 CE Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
- 1991 CE Liberation of Kuwait.
- 1991 CE Extinction of the last burning oil well .
- 1992 CE The United Nations finishes drawing the borders between Iraq and Kuwait decisively.

CHAPTER ONE

How Was the History of Kuwait Written?

- Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed (1926).
- al-Qinai, *Safahat min tareekh al-Kuwait* (Pages from the History of Kuwait) (1946).
- Saif Marzuq al-Shamlan, *Min tareekh al-Kuwait* (From the History of Kuwait) (1959).
- History of Kuwait Committee (1959).
- Ahmad Mustafa Abu-Hakima records the official history of Kuwait on his own (1967).
- Hussein Khaz'al's book *Tareekh al-Kuwait* (History of Kuwait) (1962).
- Kuwait through Western eyes.
- History of Kuwait today – necessity or correction of path?

“Shame on us that a foreigner would ask us about the history of our country, about the news of our ancestors who founded it, and that our answer would be silence.”

(Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, Tenth Ruler of Kuwait)

Foreword:

Writings on the history of any nation or period, however well mastered or completely documented and edited, remain linked to the consciousness and perceptions of those who observe and record them. To be more precise, they reflect the historians' input and their handling of the event or text. In our modern era, some historians return to history in search of missing events, recalling chronicles through which they try to find and create historical links that help making and shaping the identity of the society or the nation. Others return to history trying to understand the present and current reality, and to foresee the future. Others still, try through history to lean on the Historical Theory of Rights, to rationalize it in order to serve particular purposes, or to justify or delude on the historical consequences of this theory in favour of one party over the other – this is what actually happened during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.⁽¹⁾

How the history of Kuwait was written?

Before the settlement of the Utub, Kuwait was only a poor desert area with unknown identity. It had no known residential agglomerations and there was little interest in it. Kuwait's history was merely splinters (of narrated heritage, poetry, stories taken from popular legacies and recounted by people here and there), a simple history entangled in the pages written by Arab or Western travellers who passed by its land and ports, or resided in it for some time. Hence, there is a lack of clarity on the different

(1) After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 CE, Iraq issued a book titled "*Al-hawiya al-iraqiya lil-Kuwait*" – *dirasa tarikhiya wathaiqiya* (The Iraqi Identity of Kuwait – a Historical Documental Study) which was written by a number of Iraqi academicians including Dr Mustafa Abdul-Kader Al-Najjar who occupied the position of the Secretary General of the Arab Historiographer Federation, as well as Dr Mahmud Al-Dawud and Dr Abdul-Karim Al-'Ani, Baghdad, 1990.

aspects, the nature of the situation and the population, and the form and image of governance. In the light of all this, how was the writing of the history of Kuwait done?

For nearly ninety years, most attempts to follow the writing of the history of Kuwait and recording it were trials that highly reflected the nature of the writer, as well as the nature of the circumstances and the motives during or around the period when history was written. Badr Khalid al-Badr⁽¹⁾ describes the historical writings on the State of Kuwait in a certain period as follows: "There was a lot of cheap literature, with shallow or false information, lacking real scientific research, as the purpose of many of these writings was material interest."⁽²⁾

Based on the above, the following lines will review the most prominent and most important literature on the history of Kuwait, which were a major reference for me to write this book, as well as for many researchers and historians since the first half of the twentieth century, until this very day.

(1) Badr Khalid Al-Badr (1911 CE-2015 CE), Kuwaiti historian, he was the undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Information Ministry which was known as "*al-irshad wal anba*" (guidance and news) at that time; in 1964 CE, he was assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and received the title of Ambassador. Al-Badr was also in charge of the aid organisation for the Gulf and the Arabian south until 1969 CE. Al-Badr is the author of several books, the most prominent being "*rihla ma' qafilat al hayat*" (A Journey with the Caravan of Life) and "*maarakat al-Jahra ma qablaha wa ma ba'daha*" (The Battle of Jahra, before and after).

(2) See Badr Khalid Al-Badr, "*rihla ma' qafilat al hayat*" (A Journey with the Caravan of Life), 1st ed., Kuwait, 1987, p. 17.

“Tareekh al-Kuwait” (History of Kuwait) – Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed (1926 CE)⁽¹⁾

Local history of Kuwait in the first quarter of the twentieth century was devoid of books and literature dealing with the general history of the Emirate, its emergence and its political and social development. Reliance was mainly on narrated stories which were most probably transmitted in the *majalis* and *diwans*, or on listening, whether to who lived the event, or who heard it, or transmitted it from one of Kuwait’s citizens, or rulers, or the knowledgeable of its news. Undoubtedly, the first and most important local book which tackled the history of the Emirate of Kuwait⁽²⁾ was “*Tareekh al-Kuwait*” (History of Kuwait)⁽³⁾, by the Kuwaiti writer and historian Shaikh Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed⁽⁴⁾ whose book is considered the first extensive registered record of

(1) See Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, “*dirassa naqdiya fi manhajiyat wa madmun al nass al tarikhi l kitab tareekh al-kuwait l mu’alifuh Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed*” (Critical Study of the Methodology and Historical Text Contents of the ‘Book History of Kuwait’ by Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed), Yearbooks of the Faculty of Arts, Yearbook 35, 2014, winner of the State of Kuwait’s incentive prize for history and antiquities studies.

(2) See Fattouh Al-Khatrash’s study “‘*abdul-‘aziz al-rasheed wa manhajuh al-tareekh fi kitabuh tareekh al-kuwait*” (Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, and His Historical Method in His book “History of Kuwait”), published under the title “*nadwat dur-al muarikhin al-mahaliyin fi kitabat tareekh al-kuwait wal-khalij al-‘arabi fil tareekh al-hadeeth wal mu’asar*” (Forum of the Local Historians for Writing the History of Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf in Modern and Contemporary History), History Department, University of Kuwait, 2001, p. 44-83.

(3) See Yacoub Youssef Al-Hajji, “*al-sheikh abdul-aziz al-rasheed, sira thatiya*” (Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, Biography), 1st ed., Kuwait, Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 1993, p. 25.

(4) In addition to his fame for being a poet, a speaker, a politician and a religious preacher.

the history of the Emirate. al-Rasheed was able to safeguard the local national memory and keep it from being lost. He was the first one to have recorded the history of Kuwait in one big book, on the importance of which historians and researchers have agreed. Some even said that any researcher could not do without what came in that book.⁽¹⁾

With that book, al-Rasheed launched the first phase of written records of the history of Kuwait, and shifted its history from just an oral novel, some poems, stories and prose texts here and there, to a registered and recorded history. al-Rasheed explained the nature of his method in the book by saying: “I only relied on the mouths of the deliverers and the news of the narrators, and fragments from the official and the common say”⁽²⁾. al-Rasheed spent a year and a few months writing his book that was thus printed in 1926 CE. However, he was surprised to find his book seized and forbidden from entering Kuwait. In spite of all the efforts deployed to allow the circulation of the book, it stayed prohibited for nearly twelve years until its saleability was finally allowed⁽³⁾. It then became the most important and famous local book on the history of Kuwait.

Studying its contents shows that the book, which al-Rasheed divided into two parts, contains “close to two hundred and sixty

(1) Badr Al-Din Abbas Al-Khususi, “*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-‘arabi*” (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), 2nd ed., part 2, Kuwait, That al Salasil pub., 1984. See also Al-Ra’y Kuwaiti newspaper, vol. 11727, 10 August 2011, “*abdul-aziz al-rasheed... ahad al romuz al-kuwaitiya al-mu’asara*” (Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, One of the Contemporary Kuwaiti Symbols).

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), revised ed., annotated and supervised by Yacoub Abdul-Aziz-Al-Rasheed, Dar Maktabat al-Hayah pub., Beirut, 1978, p. 22.

(3) Perhaps this was under the instructions of the 1938 CE Council at that time.

two subjects, a great number of which contain poetic texts”⁽¹⁾ covering the complete history of Kuwait since its foundation and until the period during which the book was written. The author indicates that his book “researches the past and present rulers of Kuwait, their incidents, their wars and their relations with other nations and rulers, as well as the economic, social and political status of Kuwait”⁽²⁾. Although al-Rasheed made a successful choice of subjects⁽³⁾ attempting to cover a lapse of over three hundred years, he relied extensively on strangers, undocumented oral narratives and poetic verses⁽⁴⁾, and sources were lacking – the totality of his references does not exceed 30 sources⁽⁵⁾. Not to mention that the book itself was not completed. al-Rasheed says: “this history is divided into two parts; the first is now in the reader’s hands, as to the second... I shall start the onus later”⁽⁶⁾. But he did not get the opportunity to achieve the second part as he wished.⁽⁷⁾

(1) They were about 1356 verses, in addition to prose paragraphs.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see previous.

(3) Which include the history of Kuwait since its foundation till the reign of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber.

(4) The observer of the prose and verses left by Al-Rasheed in his book “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait) will notice the abundance of verses; he wrote more than one thousand verses to create some kind of identification with the narrative and the verse, which led the literature and verse character to overwhelm, if one may use the terminology, the historical character of the book.

(5) Between people and writings.

(6) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see previous, p. 15.

(7) On the cover of the first part of Al-Rasheed’s book in the first edition (Baghdad, 1926), it was written, Part I: History of Kuwait – part I of vol. I”, while on the cover of the second part it was written “History of Kuwait – part II of vol. I”.

The book "*Tareekh al-Kuwait*" lasted, and was reprinted several times. The most important edition was the revised one, edited and published by his son Yacoub Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed, which contained some additions. This was the most widespread and reliable edition since 1962, fit to confront much questioning and criticism. The book "*Tareekh al-Kuwait*" was the first real record that tackled the history of Kuwait extensively, containing texts, stories and chronicles allowing it to remain until this day the most prominent historical book in the Emirate, and qualifying al-Rasheed to be described as the first historian of Kuwait.

al-Qinai... "*Safhat Min Tareekh al-Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait) (1946 CE)

The book "*Safhat Min Tareekh al-Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait) by Shaikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai, published in 1946 CE, comes as the second most important local book written on the history of Kuwait. al-Qinai started by saying: "This is an easy brief on the history of Kuwait which I wrote for the pupils, starting with Sabah I, and ending with the death of Mubarak al-Sabah. I postponed writing the history of his followers to some other time, if I get the opportunity. My references are what I witnessed, then what we took from the fathers, and what the fathers took from their ancestors"⁽¹⁾.

Based on what is written in al-Qinai's books, it appears that it was only a simplified summary for pupils, to enable them to know some of their fathers' and ancestors' history, and that it was not a comprehensive or extensive history of Kuwait.

al-Qinai wrote on diverse subjects in his book. He wrote on Kuwait's climate, its land, its first inhabitants, as well as agriculture, industry, commerce, in addition to the history of

(1) Youssef Bin Issa Al-Qinai, "*safhat min tareekh al-kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), 5th ed., That al Salasil, 1987, Kuwait, p. 9.

governance and its men, to ruling, moving on to the judiciary, the *ulemas*, knowledge, industry, religion, poetry, diving, the virtues of the Kuwaitis and their incidents, the merchants, even though all this in a very summarized way.

The importance of al-Qinai's book lies in that it is one of the most prominent historical books on the local history of Kuwait with a social nature, containing important events which completed, for the researchers and historians, some facts and events in the record of the history of Kuwait and its personalities.

Saif Marzuq al-Shamlan “*Min Tareekh al-Kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait) (1959 CE)

The book “*Min Tareekh al-Kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait) (first edition 1959 CE) by the author Saif al-Shamlan came to add to the credit of the history of Kuwait a new and important chapter in the phases of recorded historical writings. It is indispensable for any researcher to get acquainted with this book, as it deals with periods, events and facts that al-Shamlan sourced from oral narratives which he described by saying: “They and the written sources are like two bet horses, if not that they [the narratives] are of greater use and bigger benefit”. He added: “I relied in getting the information for this book on men whose words are trustworthy”. al-Shamlan declared that what pushed him to write this book was that some of his friends had asked him to compile his articles on the history of Kuwait published in the Kuwaiti magazine “*al-Be'thah*”⁽¹⁾...He added: “I began gathering my comments and remarks in this book of mine which I named *Min Tareekh al-Kuwait* [From the History of Kuwait], as it is not comprehensive history”. Perhaps the importance of al-Shamlan's book⁽²⁾ lies in the fact that it dealt – intensely – with different

(1) One of the earliest Kuwaiti cultural magazines; its first issue was in 1946 CE.

(2) See Saif Marzuq Al-Shamlan, “*min tareekh al-kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), Kuwait, That al Salasil, 1986.

aspects of the political life in Kuwait, and with many copies of the correspondences, the books, the letters, and the stories which the author was told orally by elderly Kuwaitis, bearing in mind that al-Shamlan was related to the Utub themselves.

History of Kuwait Writing Committee (1959 CE)

As the local books were accused of sinking in their reliance on oral narratives, with weak documentation and absent Western sources and documents, and as the regional and international interest in the Arabian Gulf and its nations in general increased, there arose a need in Kuwait to have a clearer historical book which would put forward its importance and its role, and which would help confront the challenges and claims that faced it. The history intended to be written was required to leave the narrow and limited course of the local oral scene, and follow a more precise methodological reality, a reality which would take into account the rapid developments the Emirate was undergoing towards independence, and towards the completion of the requirements of modernity and contemporariness... and other novelties.

Hence, came the year 1959 CE bringing the most important phase in writing the history of Kuwait in a more modern and comprehensive manner, with reality fitting and handling events and situations as history rather than as heritage. In order to achieve this end, an official committee was formed to write this history in an official manner, the State thus taking charge of this particular task.

The vision developed by the History of Kuwait Writing Committee is considered to be the first basic text on which the modern history of the Emirate of Kuwait was built⁽¹⁾. In 1959 CE, Shaikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah – who was then the President of the

(1) See Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, “*ishkaliyat lajnat kitabat tareekh al-kuwait 1959-1967, mashru’ tareekhi lam yaktamel*” (The problematic of the History of Kuwait Writing Committee 1959-1967, an Incomplete Historical Project) Yearbook Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University, No. 4, October – December, vol. 44, 2016.

Department of Press and Publications– suggested to the Supreme Council, which was then the executive authority of the Emirate, to “create a committee which would supervise the writing of the history of Kuwait”. Its purpose was to shift the Emirate with its history noted through oral narratives, literature and heritage writings, and uncertified or accurate records, to a new phase that would rely on methodology and documentation as bases to record and write history.

This suggestion undoubtedly represented the most important and delicate phase in writing the history of Kuwait. The State adopted it, in a serious attempt to compensate for the void and confusion in the Kuwaiti historical library, and to enhance national motivation, keep the national identity and preserve its heritage. The Iraqi academicians Abd al-Aziz Duri, professor of History⁽¹⁾, and Saleh al-Ali⁽²⁾ were selected, as well as Hussein Khaz'al⁽³⁾, maternal grandson of Shaikh Khaz'al Bin Merdaw the

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- (1) Duri worked at the American University in Beirut in 159-1960, and then he became the President of the University of Baghdad 1963-1968. Duri had many important historical writings, the most important of which was “*dirasat fil 'usur al-abbassiya al-mutaakhira*” (Studies in the Late Abbassid Eras), “*mujaz tareekh al-hadara al-'arabiya*” (Summary of the History of the Arab Civilisation) 1952, “*tareekh al'iraq al-iqtisadi fil qarn al rabi' al-hijri*” (Iraq's Economic History in the Fourth Century AH) 1948, “*al-nuthum al-islamiya*” (The Islamic Systems), 1950, “*muqadimah fi tareekh sadrul-islam*” (Introduction to the History of the Early Years in Islam) 1949.
- (2) Saleh al-Ali is an Iraqi researcher and academician; he taught in the University of Baghdad and was the Dean of the Institute for Higher Islamic Studies for several years, Acting President of the Centre for Revival of Arab Scientific Heritage (1980-1982), and President of the Iraqi Academy of Sciences.
- (3) Hussein Khaz'al was born in 1912 in Al-Muhammerah. Khaz'al wrote several historical books; the most famous was “*tareekh al-kuwait al-siyasi*” (Political History of Kuwait). He had also previously worked at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior for some years before being discharged from it.

last ruler of al-Muhammerah, who used to work in the Passport Department in Kuwait at the time. Khaz'al was in charge of helping to gather documents and information. Additionally, there was the Palestinian Ahmad Mustafa Abu-Hakima who had previously worked in the Kuwaiti *Da'irat al-Ma'arif* (Ministry of Education) during the years 1953 and 1958 CE⁽¹⁾. After the formation of the Committee, Abu-Hakima was assigned searching for documents and sources related to Kuwait in the English archives, the records of the East India Company, and the British Foreign Office. He was in Britain at the time he was selected, working on the thesis of his Doctorate, the topic of which was "History of Eastern Arabia: The Rise and Development of Kuwait and Bahrain", where he addressed extensively the Emirate of Kuwait, its rise and development, and the beginning of the emergence of the Utub⁽²⁾.

Hussein Khaz'al writing *Tareekh al-Kuwait* (History of Kuwait) (1962 CE)

The book "*Tareekh al-Kuwait al-Siyas*" (Political History of Kuwait) by the author Hussein Khaz'al is also considered one of the prominent books which extensively dealt with the history of Kuwait, with regard to details and personalities. When the History of Kuwait Writing Committee assigned Khaz'al with the task of gathering sources, documents and material from the Iraqi side, he managed to get in touch with some libraries and families owning books, such as the library of the family Basha Ayan

(1) Abu-Hakima has also previously worked as a teacher at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education, and he had a number of articles published in the Kuwaiti magazine "Al-Arabi".

(2) "*Tareekh sharqy al-jazirah al-arabiyah, nashaat wa tatawur al-kuwait wal-bahrain*" (History of the Eastern Arabian Peninsula, Emergence and Development of Kuwait and Bahrain), translated and revised by Mohamed Amin Abdullah, 1st edition, Volume I, Beirut, Dar Maktabat al-Hayah pub., 1984.

in Basra⁽¹⁾, and the library of *Mudireyet al-Athar al-Qadima* (Directorate of Antiquities) in Baghdad. He also contacted the Director of Arabian Gulf Affairs in the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs to get some documents. The latter played a role in what was later used and relied on to write Khaz'al's book "*Tareekh al-Kuwait al-Siyasi*" in five parts - the first of which was issued in 1962 CE⁽²⁾.

Khaz'al was supposed to submit all the documents, sources and material pertaining to the history of Kuwait that he had obtained, to the History of Kuwait Writing Committee. The strange thing is that, instead, in an unjustifiable incident, he took over all the documents and manuscripts, and travelled away from Kuwait. This pushed the Committee to exclude him⁽³⁾, which might have been the reason for him to attack, criticise and offend Kuwait and its rulers in some parts and chapters of his book, and particularly in the fifth part, under the governance of Shaikh Ahmad al-Jabir. He heavily accused Shaikh Ahmad, and laid the blame on him for losing the Emirate of Arabistan that had been ruled by the author's grandfather, Shaikh Khaz'al.

(1) This library was named after the famous family Basha Ayan in Iraqi Basra. The library contained many rare books and manuscripts, in addition to journals and newspapers – see Amer Al-Saad, "*al-maktabat al-'ama wal khasa fi thakirat al-basra*" (Public and Private Libraries in Basra's Memory), *Kutub Basriya* (books from Basra), issued by the Iraqi Ministry of Culture, Al-Mawruth Iraqi magazine, No. 57, 2012.

(2) See Hussein Khalaf Al-Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part I, Beirut, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1962.

(3) Meeting of the researcher with Mr Ibrahim Al-Shatti, former Secretary of the History of Kuwait Writing Committee in the library of the Amiri Diwan on the 29th of November, 2014, "*eshkaliyat lajnat kitabat tareekh al-kuwait 1959-1967, mashru' tareekhi lam yaktamel*" (The problematic of the History of Kuwait Writing Committee 1959-1967, an Incomplete Historical Project) see previous.

Moreover, he did not refer to the true sources of many of the narratives and events, or even mention the people from whom he took what he wrote.

Ahmad Mustafa Abu-Hakima records the official history of Kuwait on his own (1967 CE)

Approximately six years after the Committee started working, and after Duri resigned, and Saleh al-Ali and Khaz'al were excluded, the Committee decided in early 1965 CE to invoke Dr Abu-Hakima to complete writing the history of Kuwait – on his own. The first part of his book saw the light in 1967 CE, i.e. only two years after he was assigned the task. The book was titled "*Tareekh al-Kuwait, al-Juz' al-Awal al-Qism al-Awal – Lajnat Tareekh al-Kuwait 1967 CE*" (History of Kuwait, First Part First Section – History of Kuwait Committee 1967 CE). It expressed a, then, new style of writing the history of the Emirate, as it was particularly obvious in the book that Abu-Hakima insisted on shifting the traditional style of the local books to a level higher in methodology and analysis. Abu-Hakima attempted in his book to draw the line between Kuwait as an emirate, and Kuwait as a state, relying extensively on Western books and documents⁽¹⁾, yet neglecting the Ottoman documents (Archives).

Abu-Hakima's book consisted of eight chapters. The first was an introduction of the sources on Kuwait's history. The second handled the general conditions in the Arabian Gulf in the first half of the eighteenth century. The third chapter was titled "*al Kuwait nash'a wa takadum*" (Kuwait, emergence and development). As to the fourth and fifth chapters, they handled the expansion of the Emirate of Kuwait, and the Utub and their situation in the Emirate. In the sixth and seventh chapters, Abu-Hakima discussed the Wahhabi movement in the Eastern Arabian Gulf, and the

(1) See "Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies", University of Kuwait, No. 6, 1976, p. 141-174.

Utub microstates and commerce in the Gulf. Abu-Hakima ended this part with the period from 1800 to 1815 CE. In 1970 CE, the second section of the first part was issued, also under the supervision of the History of Kuwait Writing Committee. The two parts were later compiled in the last edition, in 1984, under the name "*Tareekh al-Kuwait al-Hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE])⁽¹⁾. It is the most widespread edition, and the most acknowledged one by the researchers up until this day.

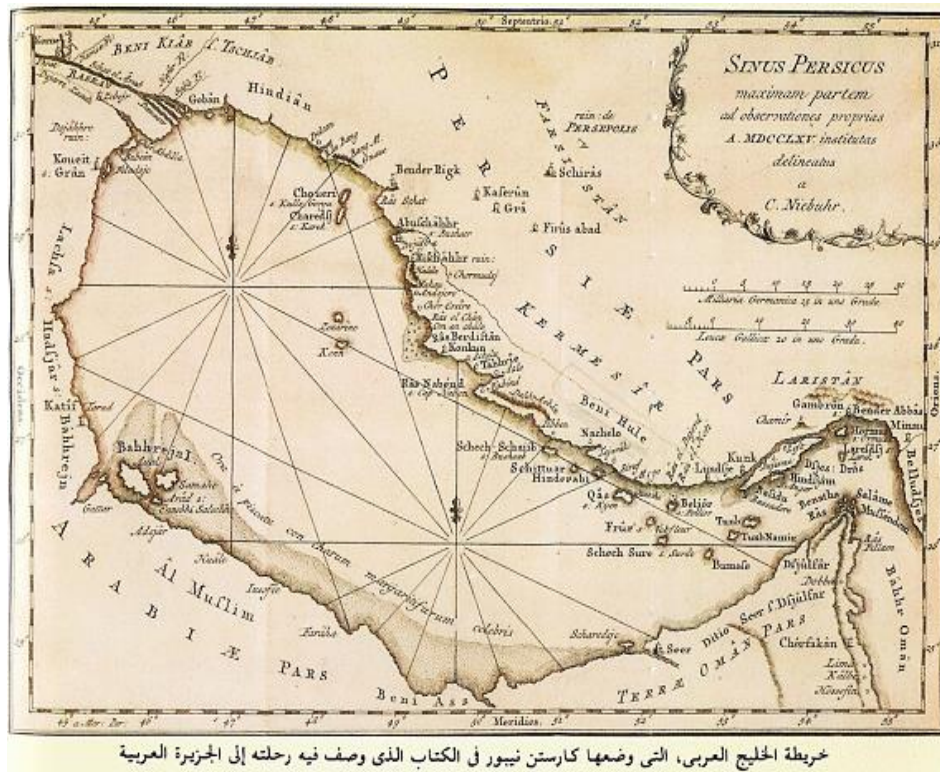
History of Kuwait through Western eyes

To complement our study of the most important Arabic books on the history of Kuwait, we shall also review a few of the most important writings of the Westerners who visited Kuwait, or passed by the Arabian Gulf and wrote about it. Many of such writings were of importance to Kuwait, as in many cases they were the only source of available information.

At the top of these, comes, in chronological order, Carsten Niebuhr⁽²⁾, one of the most renowned European travellers, and the most important of those who travelled to the Arabian Gulf in general, and wrote about it or about Kuwait, namely in their memoirs or their books.

(1) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), 1st ed., That al Salasil, 1984.

(2) Niebuhr was a citizen of the Frisian Islands; he studied mathematics and engineering in the German universities, then he went with his companions on a scientific trip to the Arabian Peninsula in 1761. He was the only one among his companions to have remained alive. See Carsten Niebuhr, "Travels Through Arabia and Other Countries in the East", translated [to Arabic] by Abeer Al-Munthir, Arab Diffusion Co., part I, 1st ed., 2007 p. 11; see also B. J. Slot, "Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity" [Arabic], Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2003, p. 157.



Niebuhr travelled to the region in 1761 CE⁽¹⁾. His memoirs were written in German and widely translated. In these memoirs, Niebuhr revealed the secrets and diaries of the trip where he was the only survivor, out of five men who were sent by the King of Denmark to explore the area⁽²⁾. The general goal of that expedition had been to elucidate the Old Testament⁽³⁾. Although Niebuhr did not visit Kuwait, he drew important information on it, as he

(1) See Abdullah Youssef Al-Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait, qiraa fil kharait al-tarikhiyah*” (Kuwait, Reading Historical Maps), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 3rd ed., 2000, p. 22.

(2) See Carsten Niebuhr, “Travels Through Arabia and Other Countries in the East”, prev., p. 11.

(3) See Al-Jazeera report on the issuance of the book of the Danish traveller Niebuhr; the report indicates the issuance in Copenhagen of the first part of the book “Description of Arabia” in 525 pages, report issued on the 25th of August, 2003.

handled, in what he wrote about it, the population, the economic life, and the political relation between the Utub and Bani Khalid.

There were also the writings of the English traveller and journalist Buckingham⁽¹⁾, who visited the region in 1816 CE, and wrote about Kuwait saying that it was independent, and that the Kuwaitis were known to be the people in the Gulf most loving of freedom and progress⁽²⁾. The significance of Buckingham's writing on Kuwait probably lies in the fact that he gave an important political description of it. His attention was drawn to the ability of Kuwait to remain independent while other neighbouring places were under the governance of foreign rule, and al-Qutaif and Basra were subjected to the Ottomans, as he said.

Then, there was Francis Warden, the Chief Secretary in Bombay, one of the civil servants of the British Bombay government in India, and the Assistant Resident in the Persian Gulf. His article "Historical sketch of the Uttoobee [Utub] tribe of Arabs (Bahrein)" is the oldest and most important text illustrating and pointing directly to the migration of the Utub and their agreement in Kuwait to divide the tasks among themselves, and hence the establishment of authority, and the emergence and appearance of Kuwait's political and economic identity. The article was written in 1819 CE⁽³⁾.

However, the most important (encyclopaedic) Western publication is the one written by the civil servant of the British Raj, J. G.

(1) He also established the Calcutta Magazine in India.

(2) Abu-Hakima, '*tareekh al-kuwait*' (History of Kuwait, part II, vol. I, see prev., p. 163.

(3) Abu-Hakima said that the article was written in 1817, see Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 26.

Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia". This book, which was later referred to as the handbook of the Arabian Peninsula, is considered to be a historical, geographical and statistical encyclopaedia, containing thousands of pages, papers, letters, telegraphs and important correspondences which describe, date and record precisely and sometimes extensively, events, facts and information about the diverse aspects and activities of the region at that time. The value of what Lorimer wrote probably lies in the fact that its contents embody the vision of the British towards the situation of the Gulf countries in that period. It may also be considered fabricated or wanted history, serving the goals of British politics. Lorimer's publication was considered, at that time, an essential read for every official sent by Britain to the region of the Gulf, in order for them to get acquainted with the conditions, the situation and the nature of the region. In fact, the existence of this book is also largely thanks to Lord Curzon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India from 1899 to 1905 CE. It is said that he was the one to order for a handbook to be written as a guide for the British envoys and consuls to get acquainted with the Gulf region before visiting it and staying there. This task was assigned to Lorimer who resorted to the archives of the government in India, to Bombay Selections, and to the summary of correspondences that dealt with the affairs of the Gulf from 1801 to 1853 CE.⁽¹⁾ The book with its different parts remained secret for some time until it was declassified and printed in the sixties of last century.

There was, as well, what was written and indicated by Harford Jones-Brydges, the East India Company Assistant Resident in

(1) See Ahmad Zakariya Al-Shalaq, "*fusul min tarikh qatar al-siyasi*" (Chapters from Qatar's Political History), 1st ed., al-Doha al-Haditha al-Mahduda, Qatar, 1999, p. 35.

Basra (since 1784 CE). And also Lewis Pelly, the British Political Resident in Bushehr (Bushire) who visited Kuwait in 1863 and 1865 CE and wrote about it.

However, Harold Dickson⁽¹⁾ - a British Indian army officer, the British Political Agent in Kuwait, and later the Chief Local Representative of Kuwait Oil Company, who lived in Kuwait from 1929 to 1959 - was one of those who presented an important description of Kuwait and its surrounding regions. He wrote the books "Kuwait and her Neighbours" and "The Arab of the Desert", which are both among the Western books that contain extensive, important information on Kuwait and the region, based on lived, observed reality.

These Western publications and books, and the information, reports and correspondences they contain, are undoubtedly a registered record of high importance. Through them was formed the global knowledge of facts and events which had to do with the social, economic, political, and even religious conditions of the Arabian Gulf region, in addition to geographic and demographic information. The writings were particularly important, as the strategies of rival European nations started being formed through the written information, reports, correspondences and books, for these nations to obtain more authority and to establish their colonialist interests. The last decades also witnessed a considerable progress in the detailed study of a large quantity of Western manuscripts, documents and correspondences related to the history of the Arabian Gulf region in general, and to the history of

(1) In 1915, he moved to work in the political administration under the direction of Sir Percy Cox, and when the First World War ended, he moved to Bahrain as a British Political Agent; in 1927, he worked as the secretary of the Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf, then he was sent to Kuwait to become the Political Agent there in 1929. He retired in 1936, and was appointed representative of Kuwait Oil Company. He died in Kuwait in 1959.

Kuwait in particular. However, it remains evident that the most prominent and important sources of archived information on the history of Kuwait are the archived material kept in the files of the India Office Records, which is part of the British archives in London⁽¹⁾. There are also the files and documents of the British Foreign Affairs Office (Public Record Office), and the files and documents of the Ottoman Archives, now essential to complement incomplete scenes, confused events, or those seen from one point of view (which is the point of view of the British Administration). The Ottoman Archives today will surely add dimensions and facts about the conflict, from the Ottoman side. The documents are located in the General Directorate of the Prime Ministry of Turkey and in the archives of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Although the contents of these documents directly bear the Ottoman point of view on the region and the Ottomans' dealing with it, in most of the instances they were bound to expose the current events with profuse details. That is because the administrative officer or military official had to transmit an accurate picture to the Sublime Porte, to enable it to take the necessary measures to preserve its status in the region. Let us not ignore some documents, correspondences and writings which are actually present at the Persian side, and that to this very day still need more research and study.

History of Kuwait today, necessity or correction of path?

Today, with the emergence of diversified historical evidence (manuscripts, maps, correspondences, telegraphs, books and publications translated from the records and documents of the colonialists who dominated the region, in addition to drafts of the texts of treaties and the documents which were later released and

(1) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 12.

became available and published for the researchers to see, especially those related to the Ottoman and Russian sides), we find that it has become imperative to put in order the papers to write the history of Kuwait in a way that gives regard to our confidence in our history and our pride of it all, a way that considers bringing and constructing the facts of the past in the context of the proper historical time of the event, and to reach from there close facts, in a precise and organised manner, far from bias or sentiment. The history of Kuwait, in spite of it still having some tangles and missing historical events, is not unknown history – it is a history that calls for pride and honour, with all the successes and failures, and the hopes and pains it bears. There is nothing in it that can be ignored or overridden.

Our history today is what enables us to get inspired from our past and from this past to discover our present. The means to know the events and facts, as well as changes and trends accompanied them. It is the confirmation of the national unity and the identity that has unified this people, and a statement of the settlement and life of the founding fathers and ancestors, and how they chose the Sabah family to be their rulers through consent and *shura* (consultation). That is besides understanding the historical, political, social and economic variables witnessed by Kuwait from its foundation until our present time. Peoples who do not know their history and are not aware of it are peoples with no identity.

CHAPTER TWO

The Arabian Gulf

The history – the importance – the conflict

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“The Gulf has always appeared on the international political scene, sometimes due to its geographic location, and other times due to the wealth stacked in its water and land; and every time it has been a thrilling element to the men of politics and economy.”

(Abdul-Aziz Hussein)

Foreword:

It is not easy to understand the history of a region without studying its geographical location, and its natural and civilizational environment, because of the direct influence of these factors on the course of historical events. In the course of learning about the nature of the Arabian Gulf: this arm or water passage lies in the south west of the Asian continent⁽¹⁾. Its vital location and centeredness amidst the Old World continents (Asia, Africa and Europe) gave it some special importance, particularly because of its closeness to most of the known ancient human civilizations. Since ancient times, this fact has made it the subject of the aspirations of the different powers, and a target to be dominated⁽²⁾.

In our present time, with the rise of international conflict and rivalry between the major powers, and the attempts to extend control and authority over the main artery of the most important source of energy (petroleum) in the world, the Arabian Gulf remains a candidate to play an “active” role. It is prospect for more appeal, and conflict between these powers aiming to control it, possess its riches, and the riches of the regions, countries and peoples overlooking it.

The geography of the Arabian Gulf

The Gulf lies between latitudes 24°N and 29°-30°N, and between longitudes 47°E and 57°E. Its coastline extends from the Musandam exclave in the south to Shatt al-Arab in the north,

(1) Jean-Jacques Berreby, « *La péninsule arabique, terre sainte de l'Islam, patrie de l'arabisme et empire du pétrole* » (The Arabian Peninsula, Holy Land of Islam, Nation of Arabism and Petroleum Empire), translated [to Arabic] by Mohamed Kheir Al-Buqai, Obekan Bookstore, 2002, p. 16-29.

(2) See also Khalid Al-Wasmi, “*tareekh al-khalij al-'arabi fil 'asr al-hadith wal muassar*” (History of the Arabian Gulf in the Modern and Contemporary Times), 1st ed., Dar Qortas, Kuwait, 2006.

over a length of 1500 km, while the Iranian coast extends from the Strait of Hormuz in the South to Shatt al-Arab in the north, over a distance of 1060 km⁽¹⁾. There are eight countries with a coastline overlooking the Arabian Gulf, namely Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the Sultanate of Oman, Qatar, Iraq, and Iran. All of these are Arab countries, except for Iran.



Iraq borders the Arabian Gulf in the north, while in the south the Gulf is considered to be complementing the Gulf of Oman, as

(1) See Al-Sayed Khalid Al-Matari, “*jughrafiat al-khalij al-‘arabi*” (Geography of the Arabian Gulf), 2nd ed., Dar al-Saudia pub., Jeddah, 2001.

they both meet at the Musandam exclave. Its eastern border is Iran, and its western one is the Arabian Peninsula.

The Arabian Gulf and the problematic of naming

Nowadays, the importance of confirming the Arabism of the Gulf⁽¹⁾ and granting it the Arab identity is a crucial matter because of the current dispute between the Arabs on one side, and Iran on the other, and the eligibility of each to appropriate it as theirs. This would call for applying this reality to the geographical and historical nature of some areas and their ownership⁽²⁾. Resolving this issue is of important historical significance, as it would give additional support and covering to the party that would succeed in appropriating the Gulf historically speaking, or at least in limiting the pretensions of the other party and neutralising them.

At the beginning of his words on the Arabian Gulf in his book “*Muhadarat ‘an al-Mujtama’ al-Arabi bil-Kuwait*” (Lectures on the Arab Society in Kuwait), Professor Abdul-Aziz Hussein⁽³⁾ said: “The Arabs kept calling it the Persian Gulf until a few years ago when some States used its conventional name, and tried to give it

(1) For more, see Kadri Qal’aji, “*al-khalij al-arabi bahr al-asatir*” (The Arabian Gulf, Sea of Legends), All Prints Distributors and Publishers, Beirut, 2nd ed., 1992.

(2) Specifically, the three occupied islands of the Arab Emirates, Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Mussa, in addition to the problems and provocations by Iran to Bahrain.

(3) Abdul-Aziz Hussein, “*muhadarat ‘an al mujtama’ al-‘arabi bil-kuwait*” (Lectures on the Arab Society in Kuwait), 1st ed., 1960, p. 9. Abdul-Aziz Hussein was the director of *majlis al-maarif* 1952-1961, he was also Ambassador to Cairo for some time and minister of State for the cabinet’s office in the second cabinet in Kuwait. Then he was the counsellor of Kuwait’s Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah since 1985 till his death.

political connotations”⁽¹⁾. Yet, historical sources can end the debate on the name “Arabian Gulf” or “Persian”? Favouring one over the other causes conflicts and disputes... even the United Nations until this day have not been able to use only one term or one name. This reluctance is extremely obvious when they address the parties overlooking the Gulf, or in some of their bulletins and publications. For example, they use the name “Persian Gulf” in their English documents, while they use “Arabian Gulf” in their documents issued in the Arabic language or when they address an Arab state.

The Arabism of the Gulf

Looking at some of what came in historical sources – generally – it is noted that the Gulf, since ancient times, has had many names; it has been named the Lower Sea, the Sea of the Great Sunrise, the Chaldean Sea, the South Sea, and other names⁽²⁾.

The Ancient Greeks were the first ones to have called it the “Persian Gulf”. Then their descendants⁽³⁾ used this name through the geographer Ptolemy, thanks to whom the name became famous and known to the West and to the Arabs⁽⁴⁾. However,

(1) See Abdul-Aziz Hussein, “*muhadarat ‘an al mujtama’ al-‘arabi bil-kuwait*” (Lectures on the Arab Society in Kuwait), prev., p. 7.

(2) For more, see Abdul-Aziz Awad, “*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-‘arabi*” (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), Dar al-Jalil, Beirut, 1st ed., 1991, p. 9.

(3) The Greeks called themselves Hellenics, but the Romans called them Greek; the word was soon spread and they became known as such. For more see Sayed Al-Nassiri, “*al-ighriq tarikhum wa hadaratuhum*” (The Greeks, their History and their Civilisation), 2nd ed., Dar al-Nahda, Cairo, 1973, p. 27.

(4) Mohamed Shafik Ghobrial, “*al-mawsua al-‘arabiya al-muyassara*” (Arabic Encyclopaedia Made Easy), Dar al-Nahda, Beirut, Part I, undated, p. 318. Also Farouk Omar Fawzi, “*tareekh al-khalij al-‘arabi fil ‘usur al-wusta al-islamiya*” (History of the Arabian Gulf in the Islamic Middle-Ages), 2nd ed., Baghdad, 1985, p. 63.

some believe that Alexander the Great was the first to name it “Persian Gulf”⁽¹⁾.

In the first century CE, the Romans named it “the Arabian Gulf”⁽²⁾. The Greek-Roman geographer Strabo (64 BC), in his publication titled “Arabiscus”, referred to the Gulf as “Arabian”. As to during the Islamic era, it was named “the Arabian Sea”, “the Gulf of Basra”, “the Gulf of Bahrain and Qutair”, and the “Oman Sea”. Additionally, the English historian Roderic Owen said that those extents of sand and water had always been part of the Arabian Gulf, and that naming the Gulf “Persian” was unfair and denying the Arabs’ right⁽³⁾. The traveller Niebuhr also said that it was a mistake to name the Gulf “Persian Gulf”, because the Arabs were dominating it and both its coastlines, the western and the eastern, and owned the shores on the Persian Empire⁽⁴⁾. And with the advent of the fourth century AH, came indications from the Persian geographers themselves, as the Gulf was named “Gulf of Iraq” in the manuscript titled “*Hudud al-Alam*” (Boundaries of the World), written in 982 CE⁽⁵⁾. Moreover,

(1) See Kadri Qal’aji, “*al-khalij al-arabi bahr al-asatir*” (The Arabian Gulf, Sea of Legends), prev., p. 8.

(2) Among those who gave it this name were the Roman historians Bellini and Strabo in the first century CE, but the name was not propagated because the Muslim geographers did not know it. See Kadri Qal’aji, “*al-khalij al-arabi bahr al-asatir*” (The Arabian Gulf, Sea of Legends), prev., p. 8.

(3) Roderic Owen, “The Golden Bubble: Arabian Gulf Documentary”, Collins, 1957.

(4) See Jacqueline Pirenne “A la découverte de l’Arabie: cinq siècles de science et d’aventure» (Discovering Arabia: Five Centuries of Science and Adventure), translated [to Arabic] by Kadri Qal’aji, Manshurat al-Fakhriyah, Riyadh, undated.

(5) Unknown author; it was transmitted by the orientalist Minorsky in 1937. For more, see Ibrahim Khoury and Ahmed Jalal Al-Tadmori “*saltanat hurmuz al-‘arabiya*” (The Arab Sultanate of Hurmuz), vol. 2, 1st ed., Centre of Studies and Documents, Ras Al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, 2000, p. 9.

in his book "*Safarnama*", as the Persian traveller Nasir Khusraw described the Arabs' countries and the cities on the Gulf during his trip between 1045 CE and 1052 CE, he named the Gulf "the Basra Sea" once, and the "Oman Sea" another time, without mentioning the name "Persian" or "Persian Sea".

To be fair, historical facts may need more research to confirm the naming of the Arabian Gulf, far from the political considerations it is still subjected to. However, the former historical indications seem very important to rely on during the process of research for more proofs and indications that might assure the Arabism of the Gulf. The geographical and historical reality and the nature of the Arab population who have lived on its northern, eastern and western shores since ancient times confirm that the Gulf is of Arab origin and formation. It is not exaggerated to say that the Arabian Gulf's geographical and historical positions, as well as its topography, also confirm that. Even though some ancient and modern sources have named it Persian, it does not erase its reality, as it is no more than a link with a period in time, when the Persian Empire was more known, and had more power and authority.

The Arabian Gulf, civilizational and commercial importance

Since ancient times, the Arabian Gulf has been an important stream in civilisation. It has played a direct role in the cultural and commercial exchanges between the great civilisations existing near it or on its banks. (The Arabian Gulf region was the meeting point of civilisations and cultures, and the route of the Old World trade throughout ancient periods of history)⁽¹⁾. To the north of the Arabian Gulf, was the civilisation of the land of the

(1) For more, see Arnold Wilson, "The Persian Gulf: an Historical Sketch from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century" [Arabic], Oman, Ministry of Heritage and Culture, 1981, p. 23.

Two Rivers (Mesopotamia), where agriculture was discovered, and man settled, built villages, and learned to write at the hand of the Sumerians. The region of the Arabian Gulf also witnessed the emergence of several empires that controlled big parts of the ancient Near East. Hence, other areas, countries and civilizations followed the rise of these empires and civilisations, such as the Babylonian and Assyrian civilisations, and others.

In the east, the Gulf comprised three major civilisations, the most important of which being the Elamite civilisation, then the Median civilization, and then the civilisation of Persia which saw its brightest epoch under the Achaemenid Empire (648 BC – 330 BC) which governed the Old World. The period of governance of this Empire (specifically) marks the time when the Persian civilisation was most powerful, most influential, and most extended⁽¹⁾. And in the south, the Gulf was connected to the Indian Ocean, hence the civilizational communication with the ancient cultures of India and Sindh, both famous for the trade of spices, types of incense, and other trades.

The Arabian Gulf also helped these civilisations to communicate with each other. For example, it was the only means for the civilisations of India, Sindh and China to communicate with the civilisations of the Mediterranean Sea and Europe, either directly through its waters, or indirectly through the inhabitants of its coasts⁽²⁾.

In the first century AH, the Muslims sent military land expeditions to Sindh. These expeditions succeeded in establishing

(1) See Sami Said Al-Ahmad and Reda Jawad Al-Hashemi, “*tareekh al-shark al-adna al-qadeem (iran wal-anadol)*” (Ancient History of the Near-East “Iran and Anatolia”), Baghdad, 1981, p. 234.

(2) See Ibrahim Khoury and Ahmed Jalal Al-Tadmori “*saltanat hurmuz al-‘arabiya*” (The Arab Sultanate of Hurmuz), prev., p. 181.

an Islamic Kingdom there. Thus, the Muslims were able to dominate a big part of the merchandise coming from India to the Muslim cities in both the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea, and to control and join in the trades of the Silk Road. The latter was the most important axis of international trade in the Old World; it began in China and ended in Europe⁽¹⁾. With the growing need (to the Europeans especially) for the trade of spices and silk, the Arabian Gulf became the commercial and civilizational intermediary connecting these civilisations and their peoples⁽²⁾.

The Arabian Gulf, conflict and power

In ancient times, trade used to follow two major maritime routes, namely “the Red Sea and Egypt”, and the route of “the Arabian Gulf and the Levant” – both under Arab domination. When Genoa (Italy) lost its commercial status after the fall of Constantinople at the hands of the Ottomans in 1453 CE, it became clear to the Europeans that to discover new routes that would reach India, the world’s spice centre, without being under the control of the Arabs, was imperative. In this context, they concentrated their efforts to find new trading routes, far from the authority and dominance of the Muslims.

Additionally, the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869 CE downsized that absolute importance of the Gulf, as its flourishing and maritime activities gradually diminished due to the transfer of a big part of the trades through the new maritime channel, “the Suez Canal”.

(1) See Ghanima Youssef Rizkalah, “*tijarat al-‘iraq qadiman wa hadithan*” (Iraq’s Trade in Ancient and Modern Times), 1st ed., Baghdad, 122, p. 47.

(2) See Ramadan Abdu Ali, “*tareekh al-sharq al-adna al-qadim, wa hadaratuh munth fajr al tareekh hatta maji hamlat al-iskandar al-akbar*” (Ancient History of the Near East and its Civilisation since the Dawn of History till the Arrival of Alexander the Great’s Campaign), Dar Nahdat al-Sharq, Cairo, part I, Iran and Iraq, 1997.

Nevertheless, along with the dispute and rivalry between the Arabian Gulf and the other maritime routes, and in spite of the commercial activity of the Suez Canal, trading remained important in the Arabian Gulf, and although it decreased, it did not stop. But after the discovery of large quantities of petroleum in the region, the Gulf regained its importance, and became more glowing and more active in maritime transport and trade, relying mainly on the transportation of petroleum. The Arabian Gulf became even more important, after the discovery of petroleum, than other places that were previously believed to be more progressive regarding the standards of strategy, security, and the higher interests. Nowadays, whoever has control over the region of the Arabian Gulf⁽¹⁾ can control the first source of energy in the world: petroleum⁽²⁾.

The Arabian Gulf, target of the Europeans

If we look at the general conditions of the world map prior to the fifteenth century CE, we will see that the Muslims had a strong presence and a positive influence in commercial activities in most of the maritime passages, notably in the Arabian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Indian Ocean. This is the reason why the attempt to reach new maritime and trading routes that would not pass by the lands of the Muslims (as previously said) was an important goal, urged by the will of the Europeans to surpass and break the Islamic domination⁽³⁾.

Geographic exploration generally represents one of the major aspects of the fifteenth century CE. Before that, the Europeans'

(1) For more see Mohamed Al-Rumaihi, "*al-khalij lays niftan, dirasa fi ishkaliyat al-tanmiya wal-wihda*" (The Gulf is not Petroleum, a Study of the Problematic of Development and Unity), 2nd ed., Dar al-Jadid, Beirut, 1995.

(2) See Mohamed Fuda, "*al-amn al-qawmi lil-khalij al-'arabi*" (National Security of the Arabian Gulf), 1st ed. Al-Maktab al-'Arabi lil-Maarif, Cairo, undated.

(3) And also the imperative need for the trade of condiments and spices.

knowledge of the external world was limited to the northern coast of the African continent, on the Mediterranean Sea⁽¹⁾. Portugal was among the first states to think in that direction, as the idea of exploration got the support and patronage of the well-known Portuguese Prince Henry the Navigator (1394 CE – 1460 CE). Then appeared the Italian traveller Christopher Columbus, heading with his ship, under the auspices of the Kingdom of Spain, to complete his explorative voyages. In 1492 CE, Columbus was able to discover America; he called its inhabitants Red Indians, believing he had reached India. Meanwhile, the Portuguese had been able to round the Cape of Good Hope, or what was called the Cape of Storms.

In the meantime, Vasco da Gama also reached India after travelling around Africa, using the Cape of Good Hope and avoiding the passages under the domination and controlled by the Muslims. That was in 1498 CE. However, the Arabs were not absent, as it has been pointed that the name of the renowned Arab traveller Ibn Majid was linked to the famous voyage round the Cape of Good Hope to India, as he had helped Vasco da Gama⁽²⁾.

Thanks to that maritime route, the Europeans were able to reach India and the regions nearby, thus establishing the first pillars of colonialism on the territory, accessing it from the back

(1) Also, the West's knowledge of the Arab sciences was a strong motive to proceed with the discovery of new areas beyond the seas. For more, See Salih Uziran, "*al-atrak al-'uthmaniyun wal portoghaliyun fi al-khalij al-'arabi 1532-1581*" (The Ottoman Turks and the Portuguese in the Arabian Gulf, 1532-1581), translated [to Arabic] by Abdul-Jabbar Naji, Baghdad, 1979, p. 52.

(2) Ali Abullah Al-Difa', "*ruwad 'ilm al-jughrafiya fi al-hadara al-'arabiya al-islamiya*" (The Pioneers of the Science of Geography in the Arab Islamic Civilisation), Maktabat al-Tawba, 2nd ed., 1993, p. 234.

door. At that time, the countries of that area – including the Arabian Gulf – were not prepared to face or confront that commercial and economic invasion, which led the region to enter a bitter era of conflicts and colonialism that lasted too long and exhausted its capacities.

The motives behind the Europeans' going to the East and the Arabian Gulf

The most important reasons that called for the Europeans to turn to the East and the Arabian Gulf are numerous. Mainly, there was the Global Exploration era witnessed by the European countries in that period, with particular advance in astronomy and mathematics. There was also the attempt to control the Eastern trade, the rivalry with the Ottoman countries, and the religious conflict between the East and the West. Portugal's slogan at that stage, for instance, was to break the power of the Muslims in West Africa, on the coasts of the Atlantic and on the Mediterranean Sea. Add to this the conflict between Christians and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal)⁽¹⁾. In the same context, there was the attempt of the Portuguese to execute the plan of marching towards Holy Mecca, invade the Great Mosque and destroy the Ka'ba, then to march from it towards Medina to raid the tomb of the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH)⁽²⁾. The Portuguese fleet had succeeded in entering the Red Sea and attempted twice to invade the Port of Jeddah in the years 1517 CE and 1520 CE, but failed. It is certain that this Portuguese failure was directly due to the presence of the Ottoman fleet. Moreover, the open announcement that had previously been

(1) The Portuguese did not only commit killings and genocide against the Muslims, they were also persecuting them on the western coast of Africa, and they attacked the Islamic ships there.

(2) For more, see Abdul-Aziz Al-Shinnawi, "*al-dawla al-'uthmaniya dawla islamiya muftara 'alayha*" (The Ottoman Empire is an Islamic State that is Slandered), part II, Cairo, 1980, p. 862.

made by the Spanish, that they had come to apply the policy of increasing the quantity of Christian properties and to baptise the population of the lands they occupied, was provocative. It pushed the Ottomans to rush and protect the areas under their authority, as they were the greatest and most prominent Islamic force and the heirs of the Caliphate in the Islamic World at that time⁽¹⁾.

The Portuguese and the Arabian Gulf

The Arabs of Oman and Yemen have controlled the maritime trades between Africa, the coasts of the Peninsula, and India for some considerable time. These trades brought them immense fortunes. The downright seeking of the Portuguese to control the Arabian Gulf and its trades assures that their colonialist interest came from an economic perspective, which was to exploit these regions and seize their control.



(1) Mahmoud Shaker, “*al-kushuf al-jughrafiya dawafe3ha haqiqatha*” (The Geographic Discoveries, their Motives, their Truth), 2nd ed., al-Maktab al-Islami lil-Tiba’a wal-Nashr, 1988, p. 38.

That was in the early sixteenth century, in 1507 CE precisely. Perhaps the return of Vasco da Gama from his journey to India (carrying spices and cheap kinds of Eastern trade) wetted the appetite of the rest of the European powers and aroused their ambition to dominate the, then, most saleable and profitable commerce, namely the trade of spices with India.

If we look beyond the repeated Portuguese campaigns in the region of the Gulf, and ultimately their success in controlling it, we will find that during nearly one and a half centuries, the governance of the Portuguese in the region of the Arabian Gulf has proved to be one of the worst colonial systems. The Portuguese destroyed the economic base of the region of the Arabian Gulf and its small states, and linked the global economy of the Arabian Gulf to them. The Portuguese also often confiscated the merchandise of the trading ships, and tortured their sailors. Even the defenceless civilians were not safe from their violence, as they murdered them merely to oppress them, and to terrorise the rest of the cities. Sometimes, they cut off ears and noses as punishment to the people, which is what happened in Muscat that they had occupied in 1515 CE. After destroying Muscat, they left to Sohar, and from there, the Portuguese fleet sailed to Khawr Fakkan, where they were met with attempted defence, but the Portuguese leader was able to defeat the people, and he ordered for their noses and ears to be cut like it was done to the people of Muscat⁽¹⁾. As the Portuguese pursued their victories in the Arabian Gulf, they decided to prohibit the Arab ships from sailing

(1) See Arnold Wilson, "The Persian Gulf: an Historical Sketch from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century", translated [to Arabic] by Mohamed Amin Abdullah, Dar al-Hikma, 2003, p. 68-69.

in the Arabian Gulf without their permission⁽¹⁾. They also forbade the Indian traders from dealing with Arab ones. All along the sixteenth century, the Portuguese exerted extreme power over the Arabian Gulf in that same manner. But their authority did not bring the required peace, as some hostile activities started, particularly on behalf of the Ottomans, and this eventually led to an open military conflict between the two parties.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, some changes occurred concerning the conditions of the Portuguese in the East generally, and in the Arabian Gulf particularly. This was due to the arrival of ships from other European countries that had come to share their profits and win the booty. The most detrimental blow to the Portuguese was their eviction from Hurmuz in 1622 CE, followed by their eviction from Oman in 1650 CE⁽²⁾. Meanwhile, the Dutch had emerged as powerful rivals in the waters of East India, and England had also started moving in the same direction with the Persians.

One of the important pages of the Arab-Portuguese conflict of the time was marked by the defiance with which the Arab forces confronted the Portuguese; “the Ya’ruba [dynasty] in Oman managed to extract from the Portuguese a recognition ending the trade monopoly and acknowledging the freedom of navigation in the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean for all races”⁽³⁾. The efforts

(1) See Abdul-Aziz Awad, “*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-‘arabi*” (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), Dar al-Raid al-‘Ilmiya, Amman, 1st ed., 1991, p. 8.

(2) Lorimer, “Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf”, Historical section, part I, Qatar’s ed., p. 56-68.

(3) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, “*al-khalij al-‘arabi dirasat li tareekh al-imarat al-‘arabiya fi ‘asr al-tawasut al-euroopi al-awal 1507-1840*” (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates’ History in the First Era of the European Expansion, 1507-1840), Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, Cairo, 1985, p. 12.

of the Arabs, symbolised by the Ya'rubā and other Arabian forces, have greatly helped in wiping out the Portuguese presence from the Gulf and in their eviction out of there, towards the end of the seventeenth century. They had had significant participation in dismantling the Portuguese navy, and shattering their efforts and their ability to preserve their authority in the Gulf. This ultimately made the Portuguese incapable of protecting their interests in the areas they colonised, or of remaining in the places that they occupied.

The arrival of the Dutch to the Arabian Gulf at the dawn of the seventeenth century

The Dutch presence started in Asia particularly and in Eastern Arabia generally towards the end of the sixteenth century. Holland kept striving to compete and play an active role in Eastern Arabia, particularly after the exhaustion and weakness that started showing on the Portuguese. In 1595 CE, the first Dutch fleet sailed to Asia to reach the East Indies (including today's Indonesia). Not only was this the beginning of many voyages, but it was also an engine to establish the United East India Company. The latter was founded by an edict issued by the Dutch government on the 20th of March 1602, granting the company monopoly over trade, empowering it to take the necessary measures to deter any mistreatment of the Dutch, giving it the right to conclude treaties with the rulers of the East in the name of the Dutch government, to build forts, to appoint jury and judges in the places under their control, to implement the law, and to ensure order.

The Dutch also established trading posts in Bushehr and Basra, and the company soon monopolised the spice trade avidly, controlling production, interfering in determining the quantity of spices to be produced, and destroying what exceeded the required

amount - the destruction process included the spice trees themselves. The activities of the Dutch and their company (the Dutch East India Company) - after their independence from Spain in 1648 CE - persisted for about one hundred years in the region of the Arabian Gulf⁽¹⁾.

However, it was clear that due to the conflict between Britain and France, the Dutch presence in the region of the Arabian Gulf would not last long. In fact, by the fifties of the eighteenth century, the Dutch had lost most of their properties in the Indies and their eastern shores⁽²⁾, the star of their company (the Dutch East India Company) faded out, not to mention that their relations with the Ottomans deteriorated.

The English seize control of the Arabian Gulf

The ambitions of the English to take control of the trade in the East and the Arabian Gulf were bound to lead them to a dispute with the Dutch. The rivalry between them grew bigger after the establishment of the British East India Company, a trading company which received a Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 CE. It was later enabled to confirm the British reign in India and the region of the Arabian Gulf⁽³⁾. Holland's loss of the

(1) When the British lost their Trade Agency in the Arabian Gulf as a consequence of their war against Holland in 1652, the Dutch East India Company became the most important company in the region, and the main supplier of spices and their marketer in most of the European countries.

(2) Except for the Indonesian Archipelago.

(3) For more, see J. A. Saldanha, "Selections from State Papers, Bombay, regarding the East India Company's connections with the Persian Gulf, with a summary of events, 1600-1800", vol. II, Calcutta, 1908, p. 395. See also Mahmud Abul-Wahid Al-Qissi, "*al-nashat al-tujari wal-siyasi li sharikat al-hind al-sharqiya al-ingilisiya fi al-hind 1600-1668*" (The Trade activities of the British East India Company in India, 1600-1668), Baghdad, 1993, p. 53. See also Mahmud Ali Al-Dawud, "*tareekh al-'ilaqat al-hollandiya maa al-khalij al'arabi*" (History of the Dutch relations with the Arabian Gulf), The Faculty of Arts' magazine, University of Baghdad, No. 3, 1961, p. 7.

Kharg Island in 1766 CE, and afterwards its participation in the American War of Independence against England in 1780 CE, precipitated the British pace to wipe out the Dutch presence in the Arabian Gulf and exploit the region. The fact that Holland itself had lost its independence and fallen under French rule, empowered Britain even more and ultimately enabled it to take over the Dutch properties in India, and seize Ceylon and the Dutch commercial posts in the Arabian Gulf. The British were also empowered when the Persian Shah granted them some privileges, such as the monopoly of silk, and the right to establish trading posts for their company in Persian cities, and to hire some ports⁽¹⁾. All of these facts strongly reinforced the British position, making them the strongest and most important colonial power in the Gulf. However, the scene was not free from new rivals. The French had also previously established a trading enterprise in Bandar Abbas in 1664 CE, and had been granted commercial privileges. They attacked the British trading post in Bandar Abbas and occupied it in 1759 CE. Britain and France became the two major states to compete over colonial rule, not only in the Arabian Gulf, but also worldwide. Yet, the French wars generally, but particularly the Seven Years' War which lasted from 1756 CE to 1763 CE⁽²⁾ and ended with the defeat of the French, undoubtedly, and to a great extent, put limits to this rivalry. Subsequently, Britain became more conscious of the importance of the Arabian Gulf, key water passage to India, and since that time, British politics have been directly concerned with

(1) Badr Al-Din Abbas Al-Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-'arabi*" (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), That al Salasil, Kuwait, 1st ed., 1988, p. 32-33.

(2) The Seven Years' war ended with the defeat of France, with Britain taking India and signing the Treaty of Paris between the two parties. J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, A Documentary Record, 1535-1956, vol. I, London, 1987, p. 18.

the Arabian Gulf, as a vital route to protect its Empire in India⁽¹⁾. To the British, India at that time represented the most important source of all economic wealth, in addition to being the most important market for British products. At a later stage, Britain changed its orientation from dominating the region economically. Instead of following the trading and commerce approach, the British battle over the Gulf shifted to the political and military approach. The new British intentions and political goals also appeared; they aimed at having no competition from the rest of the colonial powers in the region (so the Gulf would become British water). The British policies were generally characterized by not interfering in the internal conflicts of the peoples of the region.

The Ottomans try to prove existence too late

The Ottoman State was an Islamic Empire that emerged after the end of the Abbasid Caliphate, and the assassination of the Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad at the hands of the Mongols in 1258 CE. It was founded by Osman I bin Ertuğrul around 1299 CE, and it reached the peak of its glory and power during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its lands extended vastly in Europe, Asia, and Africa. After their considerable victories in Europe, the Ottomans rushed to seize the Arab states and regions. After the Battle of Marj Dabiq in 1516 CE⁽²⁾ against the Mamluks, the Ottoman conquest of the Levant, and the death of the Mamluk Sultan

(1) Sultan Al-Asqa, “*al-khalij al-‘arabi fil-siyasa al-britaniya ma bayn nadhariyat al-qishra al-waqiya lil-hind wal buhayra al-mughlaqa 1871-1903*” (The Arabian Gulf in British Politics between the Theory of the Shielding Peel for India and the Endorheic Lake, 1871-1903), a paper presented at the sixteenth scientific convention of the History and Antiquities Organisation at the States of the Gulf Cooperation Councils (Bahrain), 3-29 April, 2015.

(2) Ali Al-Wardi, “*lamhat ijtimaiya min tareekh al-‘iraq al-hadith*” (Social Glimpses at the Modern History of Kuwait), Baghdad, part 3, 1972, p. 48.

Qansuh al-Ghuri, ruler of Egypt, in that battle, the Battle of Ridaniya took place in 1517 CE, adding Egypt to the Ottoman orbit. Then, the Ottomans rushed to the western sector of Persia in 1534 CE.



They succeeded in capturing Baghdad in 1534⁽¹⁾ under the leadership of Suleiman the Magnificent (Kanuni)⁽²⁾. Thus, they clearly declared their existence, and their being the new heir of the Islamic Caliphate⁽³⁾. The Sharif of Mecca had already handed the keys of the Two Holy Mosques to the Ottoman Sultan Selim I who was in Egypt, assuring his submission and his recognition of the Ottoman supremacy over the Holy Lands. Hence, Holy Mecca, the most important of the Muslims' cities and one of their most sacred symbols became subjected to Ottoman rule. The Ottomans also hurried to extend their authority over the rest of the surrounding regions, such as al-Ahsa in 1555 CE.

(1) See Sayed Mohamed Al-Shaly, "*al-sana al-bahir*" (The Breathless Brilliance), Maktabat al-Irshad, Sanaa, 1st ed. 2005, p. 15.

(2) See detailed translation in Yilmaz Öztuna, "*tareekh al-dawla al-'uthmaniya*", (History of the Ottoman Empire), Faisal Foundation, reviewed by Mahmud Al-Ansari, Istanbul, 1988, p. 261.

(3) Ali Al-Wardi, "*lamhat ijtimaiya min tareekh al-'iraq al-hadith*" (Social Glimpses at the Modern History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 53.

The Ottomans were undoubtedly met with responsiveness from the peoples in many of the Arabian Gulf regions seeking protection under their Islamic leadership. This led them to focus their campaigns directly to seize the eastern shores overlooking the Arabian Gulf, the southern shores overlooking the Arabian Sea (Oman), the Indian Ocean, and the western shores overlooking the Red Sea. However, they did not really consolidate their presence there, nor did they establish true interests in these areas, which were mostly related to the Ottomans only nominally, because they were the heirs to the Caliphate, and because they dominated the most important places in the Arab World, namely the Levant, Baghdad, and Egypt, in addition to Holy Mecca and Medina.

However, with the Europeans targeting the Arabian Gulf, and the consecutive defeats of the Ottomans in Europe and their loss of important areas of influence in Asia and on the Mediterranean Sea (Algeria and Egypt), the relationship of the Arabian Gulf with the Ottoman sovereignty became fragile; it did not bring anything new to the Gulf's peoples or rulers. In fact, while there was fierce European rivalry motivated by interests and economy, and protected by actually existing military forces, the Ottomans were more like a ghost power, as they always arrived late and never made the required changes.

Studying the conflict, and the ardent political, economic and military colonialist rivalry that targeted the region of the Arabian Gulf, its Emirates and its Sheikhdoms then emerging, makes us reflect on how Kuwait was required to deal with these dangers at the time of its foundation. In addition, to how the political scene was developing and being shaped; how the rulers of Kuwait and its Sheikhs managed to deal with these colonial powers in order to guarantee their safety and the safety of individuals as well as groups of people, and how they managed to preserve their lands. This was in the context of the feverish impulse of the Western

colonialists to obtain privileges and exploit the capabilities and resources of the peoples of the region. We can also ponder upon how the political, economic and social issues were tackled with the existence of these pressures, based on living these facts. Kuwait emerged amidst all this entangled and troubled reality.

CHAPTER THREE

Features from the Geography of Kuwait and Its Inhabitants in The Past

The history – the importance – the conflict

- The geography of Kuwait and its weather.
- The location of Kuwait and its importance.
- The islands of Kuwait.
- Kuwait through old times.
- The population of Kuwait in the past.

“Many states have known the great importance of Kuwait’s place in commerce and politics on the shores of the Arabian Gulf, so they sought to own it in order to strip it from its benefits, and monopolize its riches, or at least to have an active hand there and interfere with its internal affairs.”

(Sheikh Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed)

Foreword:

Destiny had Kuwait geographically neighbouring two important and great countries, Persia and Iraq. Yet, historical monuments and evidence prove that the land of Kuwait was never a part, attached, or subjected to the authority of either of these two powers, even when they were at the peak of their glory, whether in ancient or in modern times. The antiquities later discovered there do not show that, along the different epochs, Kuwait was administered by any of these two states as a dependent geographic area. Even far from the geographic aspect, the discovered monuments and remains show no tangible proof of the participation of Kuwait with these two countries through any social activities in styles similar to what existed there.

Kuwait's geography

Kuwait is situated in the north-eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. Geographically, it is a part of an area forming the natural and geopolitical extension of the Arabian Gulf region. Specifically, it is located on Kuwait Bay (*Jōn*) in its north-western corner between longitudes 46°E and 49°E, and between latitudes 28°N and 30°N. It is bordered by Iraq in the North, by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the South and in the West, and to the East is the Arabian Gulf that separates it from Iran. The area of Kuwait is about 17818 square kilometres. Its border with Saudi Arabia extends to about 255 kilometres, with Iraq about 240 kilometres, and its shores along the Arabian Gulf are about 195 kilometres long.



Geologically, Kuwait is part of the Arabian mass. It separates Iraq from the desert plateau that constitutes the Arabian Peninsula⁽¹⁾. Generally speaking, Kuwait's land is formed of plane sand valleys, with occasional low hills. Its surface is inclined towards the east⁽²⁾.

Kuwait's climate

Kuwait's location made it part of the arid subtropics, characterised by a warm weather in winter and very hot weather in summer⁽³⁾. Kuwait has a dry continental desert climate, marked by high temperatures most of the year. Two types of winds blow on Kuwait. The first is the north-western wind, which is cold dry in most of the areas. The second is the south-eastern wind called "*al-Kous*", which causes very high temperatures and humidity.

(1) National Atlas of Kuwait, Ministry of Information, Kuwait, 2001.

(2) See Khalid Harimis, "*al-'imran fi dawlat al-kuwait, dirasa fi jughrafiyat al-tanmiya*" (Construction in the State of Kuwait, a Study in the Geography of Development), University of Alexandria, no publisher, undated, p. 24-77.

(3) Khalid Harimis, "*al-'imran fi dawlat al-kuwait, dirasa fi jughrafiyat al-tanmiya*" (Construction in the State of Kuwait, a Study in the Geography of Development), see prev., p. 25.

Summer in Kuwait lasts from March to October, approximately, whereas winter is usually short. The Kuwaiti historian Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed describes Kuwait as follows: "It is located on Kuwait Bay (*Jōn*) on the Arabian Gulf, extends on its shores in the east, and in the west it stands on canyons and valleys of good soil; its weather is pure and its air healthy"⁽¹⁾. Sheikh Youssef al-Qinai indicates that it is "the best of the Arabian Gulf countries climate wise and health wise"⁽²⁾. Also, the American traveller Luscher (1868) described it as being more developed and cleaner than other cities⁽³⁾, estimating its population to be 15-20 thousand.

Concerning the land, Kuwait has a desert nature, and its agricultural land is limited, contained in a few regions such as Fahaheel, Mangaf, Fintas, al-Wafrah, Jahra, Abu Halifa, Aqila, Shu'aiba, and al-Dimna, where there is groundwater. al-Qinai explaining that the rareness of agricultural land is due to little water, said: "there is no water in Kuwait, or springs to fulfil farmers' needs"⁽⁴⁾.

Recent studies on the desert environment of Kuwait have demonstrated that its climate is characterised by dryness and lack of humidity due to high evaporation levels and seldom raining⁽⁵⁾. This makes Kuwait geographically and climatically a distinct region in the Arabian Gulf area. Also noted in Kuwait is the quick change of seasons, especially winter and summer. As to water resources, they are scarce, and the inhabitants have suffered since

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, 'tareekh al-kuwait' (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 37-38.

(2) Youssef Bin Issa Al-Qinai, "*safhat min tareekh al-kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 12.

(3) Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'ayun al-akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), 3rd ed., Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, That al Salasil, Kuwait, 1985, p. 544-545.

(4) Youssef Bin Issa Al-Qinai, "*safhat min tareekh al-kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev.

(5) Dari Al-Ajami & others, "*madkhal li 'ilm al-manakh wal-jughrafiya al-manakhiya*" (Introduction to the Science of Climate and the Climate Geography), Maktabat al-Falah, Kuwait, 1987, p. 232-234.

old times from its scarcity and its saltiness. The most important places where potable water avails are al-Rawdatain, Umm al-'Aysh, Sulaibiya, al-Abdali, and al-Wafrah, in addition to some shallow wells, dispersed in the eastern part of the Kuwaiti land⁽¹⁾.

Kuwait's islands

Kuwait has a number of islands, the biggest in size being Bubiyan, which represents 5% of the global size of the country⁽²⁾. There is also Warbah, Miskan, Auhah, Failaka, Umm al-Namil, Kubbar, Qaruh, Umm al-Maradim, as well as Shuwaikh⁽³⁾. Warbah and Bubiyan in particular are the most important Kuwaiti islands that were constantly sought after and desired by Iraq. The latter was always keen to conquer them in the different periods of its conflict with Kuwait, mainly because Iraq considers these two islands to be the most important ones to give it an appropriate outlet on the Arabian Gulf.



(1) Khalid Harimis, *"al-'imran fi dawlat al-kuwait, dirasa fi jughrafyat al-tanmiya"* (Construction in the State of Kuwait, a Study in the Geography of Development), see prev., p. 36.

(2) National Atlas of Kuwait, Ministry of Information, Kuwait, 2001.

(3) "That became part of the port of the area of Shuwaikh after the section between it and the shore was filled up with earth" –see National Atlas of Kuwait, Ministry of Information, Kuwait, 2001.

The Kuwaiti islands are mostly uninhabited⁽¹⁾. Failaka is the most prominent one with regard to history and ancient archaeological and architectural evidence. Failaka or Ikaros is also the second biggest in size, and it holds a lot of historical and archaeological evidence and remains. It is known that this island in particular has been mentioned by Western travellers, and by ancient Greek and Roman sources. In modern times, it has been the subject of several exploration trips in search of its antiquities and the nature of the civilisations that flourished on its soil⁽²⁾.

As to Warbah, it is the northernmost island of Kuwait, and Auhah is a small island lying to the southeast of Failaka; the distance between them is approximately twelve miles⁽³⁾. Kubbar Island is also close to Failaka (to the south) and is about nineteen and a half miles away from it; it is almost the same size as Auhah. There are also Miskan and Qaruh islands that are among the smallest; they are located in the south. Umm al-Maradim is the last Kuwaiti island on this same side⁽⁴⁾.

The importance of Kuwait's location

The purpose of studying the location of any country is mainly to put forward its actual value, the way its vital interests are, and the role it can play. In this context, one can say that Kuwait

(1) Iskandar Maarouf, "*al-kuwait lu'lu'at al-khalij*" (Kuwait, Pearl of the Gulf), Dar al-Tadamun Print., Baghdad, 1965, p. 17.

(2) For more, see Complete report on archaeological excavations in the island of Failaka 1958-1963, Ministry of Information, Antiquities and Museums Administration, Kuwait Government Press.

(3) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev. p.55.

(4) To know about the nature and the location of the islands, see pictures of the Atlas of the State of Kuwait from space pictures, prepared by the Centre for Remote Sensing, Boston University, written by Farouk El-Baz, Mohamed Abdul-Rahman Al-Saraawy, supervised by Ali Abdullah Al-Shamlan, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, 2000.

enjoyed all the distinct characteristics of the political entity and the state in the northwest of the Arabian Gulf, for the following reasons:

1. Its location represents the natural end of the maritime and trade sea routes on the way to India and the region of the Far East.
2. Kuwait is the natural gate and entrance to the northeast of the Arabian Peninsula, and a trade centre for the people coming there from Najd, al-Ahsa and the Syrian Desert to discharge their merchandise⁽¹⁾.
3. Its reputation to be a transit⁽²⁾ trade area where transit taxes are low.
4. The maritime and trade activities of Kuwait which is one of the most important ports in the north of al-Ahsa region, especially given its land backup and its annexed islands.
5. The distinction of Kuwait in trade transportation between the ports of the Gulf and the shores of India and East Africa⁽³⁾.

Given all these advantages, Kuwait has been and still is the subject of everybody's greed. The most eloquent to express this was Kuwait's first historian, Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed, who pointed it out by saying: "Many states have known the great importance of Kuwait's place in commerce and politics on the shores of the Arabian Gulf, so they sought to own it"⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Mohamed Rasheed Al-Feel, "*al-jughrafiya al-tarikhiya lil-kuwait*" (Historical Geography of Kuwait), 2nd ed., see prev., p. 31.

(2) Transit is generally is the trade of passage, see Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*nashaat al-jamarik al-kuwatiya wa dawraha fi tad'im siyadat al-kuwait 'ala manafithha*" (The Emergence of the Kuwaiti Customs and their Role in Supporting Kuwait's Sovereignty over its Ports), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2000, p. 13; see also Abdul-Aziz Al-Mansur, "*al-kuwait wa 'ilaqitha bi 'arabistan wal-basra, 1896-1915*" (Kuwait's Relations with Arabistan and Basra, 1896-1915), 2nd ed. That al Salasil, Kuwait, p. 22.

(3) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, see prev. p. 12.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 98.

Kuwait through the ages

Kuwait is a spot of the Gulf's land that has existed for thousands of years. In ancient history, some areas in Kuwait like Failaka (Ikaros) and Kazma were mentioned.

Antiques discovered (recently) also prove ancient human existence in the region of Kuwait that goes back to more than four thousand years BC. The old civilizational remains found in diverse areas of its land in Warah, al-Qurain Hill in the north of al-Wafrah, and Kazma, also point to this fact. Some sources even describe Kazma particularly as a land and sea link, and a stop for the caravans coming from Persia and Mesopotamia to the east of the Arabian Peninsula. Failaka was also a stop for the trade ships arriving between the head of the Gulf and its southern parts⁽¹⁾. In the area of Burgan, tools dating back to the Middle Stone Age were found, and on other archaeological sites, cylindrical objects dating back to different epochs were also found. In the Copper Age known as the Ubaid culture, Kuwait embraced several archaeological sites that prove that this ancient culture has existed there.

Nowadays, the sites of the Bronze Age (Dilmun), the Hellenistic period, and Failaka Island (Ikaros)⁽²⁾ are considered historical evidence confirming human existence on the land of Kuwait in ancient times, especially in the city of Dilmun, the site of the governor's palace, the tower temple, the site of al-Khidr, the

(1) See Preface of "*al-kuwait, qiraa fil kharait al-tarikhiyah*" (Kuwait, Reading Historical Maps), prev.

(2) See Complete report on archaeological excavations in the island of Failaka 1958-1963, Ministry of Information, Antiquities and Museums Administration; see also Abdul-Malik Al-Tamimi, "*abhath fi tareekh al-kuwait*" (Researches in Kuwait's History), Dar Qortas pub., 2nd ed., 2006, p. 13.

Hellenistic fortress, the sea temple, and Tal al-Khazna. Archaeologists make a link between these sites and the Dilmun civilization in Bahrain. The historian Arrian who wrote about Alexander the Great (356 – 324 BC) mentioned that Alexander kept sending small expeditions to the Arabian Gulf to explore its shores and conquer its people. He adds that Alexander had heard that there were two islands in the Gulf, and that on one of them (the small one) had a temple of the goddess Artemis, and farms for the sacred hind and sheep. Therefore, he ordered for this island to be named Ikaros, like the Greek island lying on the Aegean Sea⁽¹⁾. Afterwards, Alexander headed towards this region and ordered the construction of fortresses and coastal cities. He also commanded some of the soldiers who wanted to settle to stay there when he saw that some of them aged. As for the big island, it was called Tilos. The historians later assumed that the small island referred to, was the Kuwaiti island Failaka, and the big one, Tilos or “Dilmun” was Bahrain. It is noteworthy that Dilmun was mentioned in the ancient cuneiform scripts that were found in Mesopotamia, describing it as a small kingdom in the middle of the sea, having the shape of a fish. Archaeological excavations have proven that Bahrain is the Dilmun indicated in these scripts in their consecutive historical stages. Dilmun has played the role of trade intermediary between the civilisations of Mesopotamia, India and Sindh, and the area of the Arabian Peninsula. It is perhaps from there that Failaka Island also became among the important islands that helped the expansion of Dilmun’s role as trade intermediary between the civilisations near it. Particularly that since the second half of the first millenary BC, Failaka entered

(1) See Complete report on archaeological excavations in the island of Failaka 1958-1963, prev., p. 7.

the realm of the Greek Civilisation, and became part of the lands of the Seleucid Empire, after Alexander's Empire⁽¹⁾ was divided following his death⁽²⁾.

Some churches were also recently found on the land of Failaka, including a Christian complex of Nestorian doctrine, which was the faith that spread on the shores of the Arabian Gulf and Mesopotamia at that time⁽³⁾. As for the Islamic era, coins dating back to the Umayyad era were found in Kuwait. Some settlements were also found in Wadi al-Batin, they were possibly located on Darb Zubayda (Pilgrimage road). Additionally, texts confirm that in the year 12 AH, 633 CE, the Battle of Chains (*Sallasil*), between the Muslim Arabs, led by Khalid Ibn al-Walid, and the Persians, ending in the victory of the Muslims, took place on Kuwait's territory. It was also known by the name Kazma⁽⁴⁾, which

(1) Among the most famous military leaders and conquerors through history, see Kadri Qal'aji, "*al-khalij al-arabi bahr al-asatir*" (The Arabian Gulf, Sea of Legends), prev., p. 84.

(2) This was confirmed by some remains which prove the demographic presence and activities that go back to this period, see Complete report on archaeological excavations in the island of Failaka, prev.; see also Yacoub Youssef Al-Hajji, "*al-kuwait al-qadeema, suwar wa thikrayat*" (Ancient Kuwait, Pictures and Memories), Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 1st ed., 1997, p. 12.

(3) Some say that the Nestorians are the followers of Nestor the Priest who appeared during the reign of Al-Ma'mun, the Abbasid Caliph; it was also said that they are affiliated to Nestorius the Archbishop of Constantinople who is believed to have said that Mary did not give birth to God but to a man. The Nestorians had a prominent place in the Persian Empire after the Abbasids came to the rule. The Nestorian Church also flourished in these areas from the eighth century to the fourteenth century. For more, see Mohamed Abdul-Karim Al-Shahrastani, "*al-milal wa al-nihal*" (The Book of Sects and Creeds), Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiya, Beirut, 2nd ed., 1992, p. 251. And on Christians in Kuwait see Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, "Christian Minorities in Kuwait", Middle-East Journal, USA, 2015.

(4) Antiquities and Museums Department Guide, Antiquities and Museums Department at the Ministry of Information, 1989.

al-Isfahani describes by saying: “It is located on the seashore, and it has a fortress”⁽¹⁾. And Yaqut al-Hamawi said: “the sea coast located in the land of Bani Tamim in the cape of Kazma, water to Sa’d Bin Zayd Munat Bin Tamim, it was said: ‘it is all the coast of the sea’⁽²⁾”. Kazma’s importance seems to have faded towards the end of the seventeenth century, as Dr al-Ghoneim points out that it lost its importance as a port to the nearby region, al-Qurain⁽³⁾, a name that is closely tied to Kuwait and the foundation of its political entity later.

In his book “Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity”, B. J. Slot indicates that the area where Kuwait is located was anciently known as the land of tribes⁽⁴⁾, and that it was part of a poor desert area. Others see that one of the Arab tribes, Bani Iyad, in the period that preceded the emergence of Islam and afterwards⁽⁵⁾, used to live in the land of Kuwait⁽⁶⁾.

(1) Al-Asfahani, “*bilad al-‘arab*”, (The Arabs’ Countries), reviewed by Hamad Al-Jasir, Riyadh, 1968, p. 321.

(2) Yaqut Al-Hamawi, “*mu’jam al-buldan*” (Countries Dictionary), Dar Sader, Beirut, part 4, 2nd ed., 1995, p. 88.

(3) “*Al-kuwait, qiraa fil kharait al-tarikhiyah*” (Kuwait, Reading Historical Maps), see prev., p. 7.

(4) B. J. Slot, “Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity”, see prev. p. 11.

(5) One of the Arabian tribes who used to live in Tihamah; they were fought by the tribes of Mudhar and Rabi’ah who expelled them from the Arabian Peninsula towards the area close to Iraq, see Iskandar Maaruf, “*al-kuwait lu’luat al-khalij*” (Kuwait, the Gulf’s Pearl), see prev., p. 18; see also Sabri Falih, “*al-kuwait nash’uha wa tatawurha, 1750-1871*” (Kuwait, Foundation and Development, 1750-1871), Dar al-Hikma, London, 1st ed., 2005, p. 23.

(6) Yacoub Youssef Al-Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait ‘abr al-qurun*” (Kuwait through the Ages), Al-Amal Library, 2001, p. 61.

All these traces and evidence leave no doubt that Kuwait has been inhabited by human groups since ancient times, representing, at some point in time, a link between the different parts of the Old World⁽¹⁾, as Abu-Hakima indicated.

In spite of the existence of populations living on the land of Kuwait in old times, it had no clear political entity before the migration of the Utub (otherwise, some sources would have mentioned it or indicated it). Even though it would have been expected that the Portuguese, who were among the oldest Western colonial powers in the Gulf, would produce a geographic description, or aspects of any kind related to Kuwait because it extends from other nearby places, this did not happen⁽²⁾. This indicates that Kuwait's relations and its activity (probably) with some of the neighbouring regions was just out of keeping up with, or participating in economic activities.

Kuwait's population

Searching for the origins of the population⁽³⁾ in Kuwait is closely linked to the composition of the population of the Arabian Peninsula from a historical perspective. Because it is located within the geographic and political extension of the region occupying the western part of the Arabian Gulf, which was historically known as the region of Bahrain, and which extends from the south of Basra in the north, till Oman in the south.

From the most ancient (local) texts recorded describing the nature of the population in Kuwait, one reads Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed who says: "Kuwait before the arrival of the Sabah family was a poor land, inhabited by only a group of clans"⁽⁴⁾. And Sheikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai completes the scene and

(1) Ahmed Mustafa Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev. p. 17.

(2) B. J. Slot, "Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity", see prev. p. 11.

(3) Anciently, the life of the great majority of the tribes' people in general was linked to agriculture and pasturing.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 33.

explains the nature of these clans saying: “Before the Sabahs and their people, Kuwait was inhabited by a group of Bedouins and fishermen⁽¹⁾”.

These two texts are the oldest local texts describing the nature of Kuwait’s population before its foundation⁽²⁾ at the hands of al-Sabah. One can conclude from these that the clans, groups of Bedouins, or fishermen who previously inhabited Kuwait⁽³⁾ formed, together with the rest of the tribes and the families who migrated with the Utub, the nucleus of the subsequent waves of population settlements⁽⁴⁾, and from there a simple society was formed later⁽⁵⁾.

Since old times, Kuwait has not been an abandoned place empty from inhabitants. Its land was inhabited by people who belonged to several periods of time, people who lived and practised their normal lives, just like all the other people around them or in their vicinity. However, the main difference that can be noticed is that Kuwait lacked the two most important elements of the political structure of any region or state. The first

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- (1) Al-Qinai, *Safahat min tareekh al-Kuwait* (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 15.
 - (2) If we exclude Murtada Bin Elwan’s manuscript which describes some of the living aspects and activities in Kuwait, its people, and some economic and inhabitation information there, as well as the Ottoman Document 1701 CE – these will be further discussed in detail.
 - (3) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, “*al-khalij al-‘arabi dirasat li tareekh al-imarat al-‘arabiya fi ‘asr al-tawasut al-europi al-awal 1507-1840*” (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates’ History in the First Era of the European Expansion, 1507-1840), see prev., p. 387; see also Carsten Niebuhr, “Travels Through Arabia and Other Countries in the East”, vol. 2, Edinburgh, 1792, p. 103.
 - (4) To understand the nature of the tribal elite and their role in reflecting the major population movements in the Arab society, see Khaldun Hassan Al-Naqeeb, “*al-mujtama’ wal-dawla fil-khalij wal-jazeera al-arabiya min manthur mukhtalif*” (Society and the State in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula from a Different Perspective), Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1st ed., Beirut, 1987, 2nd ed., Beirut, 1989, p. 38.
 - (5) Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), part 1, sect. 1, 1st ed., Kuwait, 1967, p. 95-96.

is “authority”, which gives the political nature to the place and the people living in it, managing their affairs, governing, and being pledged allegiance and belonging to by the people; and the second one is “political boundaries” which this authority creates.

We can then wonder how the authority in Kuwait emerged and got shaped. How did Kuwait get to have borders, a political nature, and a society to which individuals and groups of people belong, hence the subsequent formation of its entity and its being known as the Emirate of Kuwait?

CHAPTER FOUR

The Utub, the Founding Fathers

- Who are the Utub?
- The first migration of the Utub from al-Haddar, and its reasons.
- Qatar, destination of the Utub after leaving al-Haddar.
- Departure from Qatar.
- Before settlement in Kuwait (second migration of the Utub).
- al-Kout (al-Qurain).
- The Utub and Bani Khalid.
- The formations and nature of the Utub society after settlement in Kuwait.
- Kuwait, a new Homeland seeking security and peace.

“In 1716 CE, three prominent Arab tribes brought into alliance by the factors of benefit and ambition, seized a spot of land on the north-western shore of the Gulf, called Kuwait... and the three tribes agreed that Bani Sabah would govern, the Jalahma would supervise navigation, and Bani Khalifa would specialise in trade.”

(Francis Warden, 1819 CE)

Foreword:

Without authority, the region or “the State” remains a theoretical concept that cannot achieve anything tangible or material⁽¹⁾. It is authority that can extend power and sovereignty over the land its people live on, so that the people feel subjection and belonging to this authority and land.

Undoubtedly, the foundation of authority in Kuwait was directly linked to the migration of the “Utub” tribes, and their settlement there. The Utub are the founding fathers, they are the first to have created a political entity in Kuwait, and to have determined its aspects and the nature of its emergence in the area.

Who, then, are the Utub? And why did they emigrate from their original homeland? How did they settle their new homeland in Kuwait? And subsequently set out to establish another homeland in Bahrain?

The Utub

The diverse Arab sources are unanimous that the Utub are a group of clans and families, most of which belong to or originally come from the tribe ‘Anizzah, this great Arab tribe which had previously lived in the region of Najd in the Arabian Peninsula⁽²⁾.

(1) Some believe that “state” is a general word which applies to every political organisation, whichever its form is, whether this political organisation is a civilised organised one or a simple primitive one.

(2) Their lineage goes back to Adnan which used to be in the north of the Arabian Peninsula, its centre and its west (Najd, Hijaz and Tihamah); see Jawad Abdul Wahab Al-Jamri, “*al khalifa min sahraa najd ila al istilaa ‘ala al-bahrain*” (Al Khalifa, from the Najd Desert to the Seizure of Bahrain), 1988, p. 21; see also Khaz’al, “*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*” (Political History of Kuwait), part 1, see prev., p. 40; see also Abbas Al-Azzawi, “*‘ashair al-‘iraq*” (Iraq’s Clans), part I, Baghdad, 1937, p. 258.

The sources also agree that their homes were in al-Aflaj, in al-Haddar specifically, near al-Dawasir Valley (*Wadi al-Dawasir*), and that whoever is left of them still lives in these areas⁽¹⁾. The most prominent people belonging to the Utub are the Sabah family, the Khalifa family, and the Jalahma⁽²⁾. Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed wrote: “al Sabah, al Khalifa, and al Saud belong to the well-known ‘Anizzah tribe; it is one of the greatest and most famous Arab tribes to this day”⁽³⁾.

Other researchers say that the term “Utub” refers to a grouping and an old tribal alliance composed of several families, clans and their branches, the most famous of which was the Jamila Clan, which is in its turn divided into factions and sub-clans⁽⁴⁾. They all united to form one tribe, the Utub⁽⁵⁾. In his book “*Saba’ik al-‘Asjad*” (Gold Bars), Sheikh Uthman Bin Sanad al-Basri (d. 1834 CE) pointed out: “Bani Utbah come from various lineages;

(1) Ali Aba-Hussain & Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalid Al-Khalifa, “*min tareekh al-‘utub, hijrat al-‘utub min al-haddar fi najd fil-qarn al-thamin ‘ashr*” (From the Utub History, the Migration of the Utub from Haddar in Najd in the Eighteenth Century), al-Watheeqa Bahraini mag., p. 14.

(2) Sheikh Bassam Al-Tamimi Al-Najdi assures in his book written in 1818 that Al-Sabah and Al Khalifa are linked in one lineage; see Mohamed Al-Bassam Al-Tamimi Al-Najdi, “*al-durur al-fakhir fi akhbar al-‘arab al-awakhir*” (The Precious Pearls in the News of the Last Arabs), reviewed by Saud Bin Ghanim Al-Ajami, 2nd ed., 2010, p. 106.

(3) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 33.

(4) Among them Al Khalifa and Al Sabah, see Al-Nabhany, “*Al-Tohfa Al-Nabhaniya, fi tareekh al-jazeera al-‘arabiya*” (The Nabhany Masterpiece, History of the Arabian Peninsula), 2nd ed., Mahmudiya Press, Cairo, 1923, p. 117; see also Al-Jamri, “*al khalifa min sahraa najd ila al istilaa ‘ala al-bahrain*” (Al Khalifa, from the Najd Desert to the Seizure of Bahrain), prev. p. 21.

(5) See Ali Aba-Hussain, “*tareekh al-‘utub*” (The Utub History), al-Watheeqa mag., No. 1, 1983, p. 82.

they are not united in a [genealogy] tree by a mother or father, but they allied and became related to each-other...” adding: “they have a share in ‘Anizzah Bani Assad [tribe]”⁽¹⁾. While al-Nabhany indicates in his book *al-Tohfa al-Nabhaniya* (The Nabhany Masterpiece): “The term Utub or Bani Utbah is used to call al Sabah and al Khalifa and their equals, by affiliation to them”⁽²⁾. Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed assures that the Utub’s homeland was al-Aflaj (al-Haddar)⁽³⁾, which is also what Abu-Hakima says⁽⁴⁾.

In old times, al-Aflaj was certainly famous for the abundance of its water and its wells, as the word *falj* (singular of *aflaj*), according to some books, means the running water from the

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- (1) The close to one thing gives a judgment, and the alliances between Arabian tribes has been well-known in the Arabian Peninsula since the oldest age; see Uthman Bin Sanad Al-Basri “*saba’ik al-‘asjad fi akhbar ahmad najl rizq al-as’ad*” (Gold Bars in the News of Ahmed, the Son of Rizk Al-Asaad), Bombay. Al-Bayan Press, 1897, p. 18.
- (2) Al-Nabhany, “*Al-Tohfa Al-Nabhaniya, fi tareekh al-jazeera al-‘arabiya*” (The Nabhany Masterpiece, History of the Arabian Peninsula), see prev., p. 118.
- (3) See Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 33; see also Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 22. One of the most important writings which deals with the region of Al-Aflaj globally is the book “*tareekh al-aflaj wa hadaratuha*” (Al-Aflaj History and Civilisation), its author assures the presence of the families and clans from the Jamila tribe, like Al Khalifa, Al sabah and Al Jalahma who were later called the Ututb; for more, see Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz Al Muflih Al-Jathalin to whom Sheikh Hamad Al-Jasir offered the book.
- (4) While Dickson says that Bani Utbah are from Dahmashaa (he means Al-Dahamsha) from the ‘Anizzah Arabs, see H. R. p. Dickson, “Kuwait and Her Neighbours” [Arabic], part I, Sahara pub., 2nd ed., 1990, p. 8; see also Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 22.

spring⁽¹⁾. The region of al-Aflaj⁽²⁾ has also been known to be a passage for trade caravans on their way to the south of the Arabian Peninsula. It had several markets, and its nature might have helped it to become the place where many tribes settled down. This explains the amount of conflicts that arose there and finally led to the immigration of some of them to the region⁽³⁾.

The researcher paid a visit to the region of al-Aflaj and al-Haddar, which is located more than 300 kilometres away from the capital, in the south of Riyadh. He noticed the amount of ancient sites, like Sabha Palace and Moussa fortress, and others. He also noticed that the nature of the places (and cities) there meets with what historical sources have indicated. This is that in the old times, it was a centre where caravans gathered and set off, and it was also on the way of the tribes during their pilgrimage, as they had to pass by there to get supplies of water and food, and other vital issues.

The researcher also had several meetings with notables and sheikhs from the Nateefat Tribe, who confirmed that they were called by that name because they were the remnants of the Jamilas, and that this was the continuity and heritage they had from their fathers and ancestors⁽⁴⁾.

(1) In the same context, what was mentioned by Dr Maimunah Al-Sabah, that *Aflaj* (plural of *falj*), which means a small river, proving that names or their diminutives were exchanged or distorted; see Maimunah Al-Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), vol. 1, 1st ed., 1989, p. 89.

(2) See Abdullah Al-Jathalin "*tareekh al-aflaj wa hadaratuha*" (Al-Aflaj History and Civilisation), prev., p. 49.

(3) Ali Aba-Hussain, "*tareekh al-'utub*" (The Utub History), *al-Watheeqa* mag., No. 1, Bahrain, 1983, prev., p. 82.

(4) The researcher held several meetings with some of the Nateefat notables and sheikhs, among whom Qabnan Bin Abdul-Rahman Al-Nateefat, head of the city council in Haddar, and Judge Dr Mohamed Nateefat; the researcher's visit to Haddar took place on the 28th of December 2015.

As to why the Utub were called as such, Abu-Hakima indicates that it was common in the east of the Arabian Peninsula at that time, for names of tribes to derive from verbs⁽¹⁾, adding that the Utub were also called Bani Utbah or the *Utubiyin*⁽²⁾ (Utubis). The British Agent Dickson says that he once asked the Ruler of Kuwait Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim (1950-1965 CE) about the etymology of the name. The Sheikh replied that it came from the verb “*atab*” which means frequent migration from one place to another, and that his forefathers who had the leadership of ‘Anizzah were called so because they migrated northbound to Kuwait⁽³⁾.

What directly concerns us here in order to be able to understand the nature and the course of the subsequent events, is to realise that the Utub were originally composed of different Arab clans and families, most of them belonging to the ‘Anizzah Arab tribe,

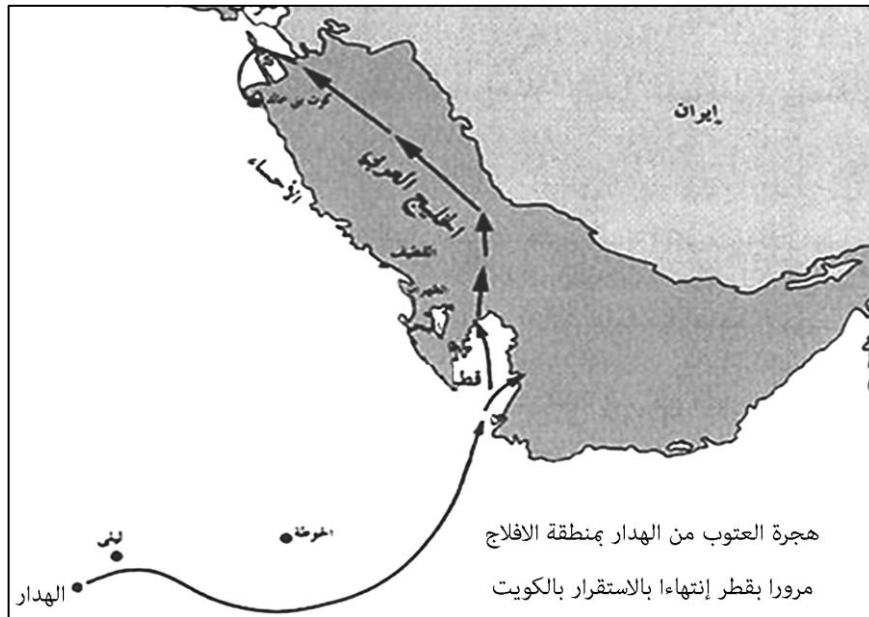
(1) For example, there is the “Hawajir”, which comes from “*hajar*”, or migrate.

Abu-Hakima points to the same context, saying that the tribes called Al-Thafeer or Al-Dhafeer (collaborate) are groups of tribes that united and therefore were called as such. See Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 22.

(2) See Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 22.

(3) Dickson says, in a random strange text, that there was another story causing the name to be given: when the Bani Kaab danger on Kuwait grew bigger, and after Al Khalifa retreated from helping Al Sabah, Sheikh Abdullah I gathered all the sheikhs of the family. He made them swear, at the step of his house (*atabah*), that they would stand strongly facing Bani Kaab’s threats; so they did, and this is why they were named Bani Utbah or the Utub. We tend not to take Dickson’s version and refute it for the simple reason that it excludes the alliance that existed with the Jalahma, although most of the sources assure that they were both the main parties of the Utubi coalition. Dickson, “Kuwait and Her Neighbours”, see prev., p. 9-10; see also Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 22.

who united and allied together⁽¹⁾. This federation or alliance between these Arab clans and families, which were later called Utub, was a common happening in the history of the region of the Arabian Peninsula – *atab* is thus a verb meaning travelling, and not a lineage.



The first migration of the Utub from al-Haddar and its reasons

The emigration of the Utub from their original homeland al-Haddar represents a turning point in the life and course of history of these tribes. Some of them were able to reach power (like the Sabah and Khalifa families) and form a nation (Kuwait and Bahrain), and others were unable to, like the Jalahma and other tribes and families that accompanied them. As for the reason of the migration of the Utub from their original homeland

(1) See Salah Al-Akkad, “*al-tayarat al-siyasiya fil-khalij al-‘arabi fi bidayat al-‘usur al-haditha hatta azmat (1990-1991)*” (The Political Currents in the Arabian Gulf Since the Beginning of Modern Times Till the Crisis of 1990-1991), Anglo-Egyptian Press, Cairo, 1991, p. 53.

in al-Haddar, Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed says⁽¹⁾: “The emigration of al Sabah and al Khalifa from al-Haddar was because of tribal conflicts and disputes between them and the Dawasir”⁽²⁾, and he adds, “perhaps the reason for migration was exposure to tribal pressure, or perhaps their pride and aspirations”⁽³⁾. al-Shamlan also confirms al-Rasheed’s words about the conflict between the Utub and the Dawasir, based on an answer from Sheikh Muhamed Bin Issa al Khalifa, the uncle of the ruler of Bahrain then, stating that emigration from al-Haddar occurred due to “discord between the Dawasir, and al Khalifa and al Sabah”⁽⁴⁾.

Abu-Hakima, however, sees that the emigration of the Utub from their original homeland was part of the great migration of the ‘Anizzah⁽⁵⁾, whereby the ‘Anizzah were divided into two branches; the first, al-Ruwalah, headed north, while the second,

(1) Al-Rasheed’s reference to this was a letter he received from Sheikh Ibrahim Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa on the reason for the migration of Al Sabah and Al Khalifa from their original home. Sheikh Ibrahim’s answer was that the reason for the migration from Al-Haddar was a conflict between Al Sabah and Al Khalifa, and their cousins from the Jamila branch from ‘Anizzah. They finally defeated their opponents and expelled them from the country; the opponents took refuge by the Dawasir in the valley, and there, all the branches of the Dawasir gathered. Each branch fixated a spear, and they made the Jamilis choose under the umbrella of which spear they wanted to be to protect it. They chose Al-Hassan’s spear, and they marched with them on Al-Haddar. The country did not find supporters, in addition to the Dawasir’s help. The result was that they defeated them and expelled their opponents the Al Sabah and their brethren”. Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 35.

(2) Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., 1999 ed., p. 21.

(3) *Id.*, p. 34.

(4) Al-Shamlan, “*min tareekh al-kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p.104.

(5) Which took place towards the end of the seventeenth century; Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 23.

Southern ‘Anizzah (clan Jamila, sub-clan Shamlan) moved towards the east, on the shores of the Gulf. Abu-Hakima’s reference to this was Oppenheim’s book “The Bedouins” issued in 1937 CE, where he mentioned that the Utub emigrated from al-Aflaj, and that remnants from the Jamila Tribe still live there⁽¹⁾.

Thus, the reason behind the reality of the first migration of the Utub as authorised in the books and the sources of history, remains encompassed between conflicts, wars, ambition, and aridity⁽²⁾, bearing in mind that the region of the Gulf at that time had witnessed the liquidation of the authority of important powers such as the Portuguese. This might have provided the opportunity for the displacement of the tribes towards the coasts of the Arabian Gulf, and given hope to these families and tribes, ambitious to create political entities they would govern by themselves.

Qatar, first destination of the Utub

The Utub’s journey from Najd or their migration from al-Haddar to the shores of the Arabian Gulf was not direct, to a particular place, determined and agreed on. Some see that the migration and departure were first towards the northeast (the Dawasir Valley)⁽³⁾. The Utub would have left therefrom towards

(1) See Al-Shamlan, “*min tareekh al-kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), p.104; see also Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 23; also Mohamed Mursi Abdullah, “*imarat al-sahil wa ‘oman wal-dawla al-saudiya al-ula 1783-1818*”, (The Emirates of the Coast, Oman, and the First Saudi State, 1783-1818), part I, al-Maktab al-Masry al-Hadeeth pub., Cairo, 1987, p. 121; and Yacoub Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*al-kuwait fi mizan al-haqiqa wal-tareekh*, 1963, p. 182.

(2) Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 23.

(3) (Al-Haddar, Al-Aflaj, Wadi al-Dawasir, Al-Ahsa) – see Faihan Mohamed Al-Otaibi, “*hijrat al-‘utub bayn al-riwaya al-shafahiya wa kitabat al-muarikhin al-mu’asarin*” (The Utub’s Migration between the Oral Narrative and the Writings of the Contemporary Historians), Ain Shams Arts Annals, vol. 37, January – March 2009, p. 55.

places near al-Kharj in the direction of al-Mubarraz and al-Hofuf, to reach the area of al-Ahsa, as the direction of their journey after leaving al-Haddar was towards two wells, namely al-Khun and al-Jayb in the direction of Qatar, and from there to al-Zubarah to its north⁽¹⁾. Abu-Hakima also confirms that Qatar's shores were the Utub's first resting places⁽²⁾. This is also what Dr Maimunah al-Sabah states: "The Utub moved from al-Ahsa to Qatar, they landed in Freiha Village near al-Zubarah in Qatar"⁽³⁾.

About the nature of Freiha where the Utub stayed – it is a village near al-Zubarah⁽⁴⁾ in Qatar, near Bahrain⁽⁵⁾, on its western coast. At that time, the area was under the rule of al Muslim of Bani

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- (1) Some, also through oral narrative say that there were two routes followed by the Utub before their settlement, and these were "the route of the caravans, Al-Mubarraz in Al-Hofuf near Al-Ahsa; and the second route was the southern route towards Berain arriving to Al-Ahsa". For more, see Ali Aba-Hussain, "*tareekh al-'utub*" (The Utub History), al-Watheeqa mag., prev., p. 92; see also Al-Jamri, "*al khalifa min sahraa najd ila al istilaa 'ala al-bahrain*" (Al Khalifa, from the Najd Desert to the Seizure of Bahrain), see prev., p. 24-30.
- (2) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 23; Banu Khalid received them, this is confirmed by the *waqf* document pertaining to Qutaif's palm trees in Al Khalifa's mosque in Kuwait. See also Maimunah Al-Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), prev., p. 16.
- (3) Maimunah Al-Sabah, *id.*, p. 77.
- (4) Al-Zubarah is one of Qatar's old cities. It was located in the North of the country, Al Zubarah was named so because of the height of its land, as according to "*Lisan al-Arab*" (The Arabs' Tongue) the name indicates putting the construction and the stones on top of each other. It is said that Al-Zubarah received many people from Basra and Zubayr; they went there when the Plague attacked them, so it was said that Basra's destruction was Zubayr's construction. See Ali Aba-Hussain, "*tareekh al-'utub*" (The Utub History), al-Watheeqa mag., prev., p. 19.
- (5) Al-Nabhany says that Al-Zubarah is located on the coast towards Bahrain island in the south, and the first one who landed on it was Sheikh Ahmed Bin Rizk; Al-Nabhany, "*Al-Tohfa Al-Nabhaniya, fi tareekh al-jazeera al-'arabiya*" (The Nabhany Masterpiece, History of the Arabian Peninsula), 2nd ed., see prev. p. 119.

Khalid⁽¹⁾. The Utub and al Muslim soon built up a strong relationship that became the pillar of their settlement and their remaining in the region for some time (estimated to be 30 to 50 years)⁽²⁾. Moreover, Freiha at that time was a simple society that accepted the Utub who mingled in it and became one of its important formations. The poverty of the area in general forced these new Utub formations to go towards the sea as a main source of income.

The importance of the settlement of the Utub in Freiha near al-Zubarah in Qatar for some time lies in the following:

1. Changing from nomadic life to settlement; the region had neither pastures nor agricultural lands, which led them to get rid of their herds and cattle, and move towards the sea and maritime trade.
2. Performing maritime jobs more importantly, especially pearl diving, which helped the city to flourish and acquire more fame.
3. Practising transport between the ports of the Arabian Gulf and the other sea trade routes.
4. Trade cooperation with Bahrain, which has trade markets near pearl diving places, especially given the easiness of transportation between Bahrain and Qatar.
5. Learning about maritime trade routes, particularly those linking India and the south of Basra, in addition to learning about the political situation in the region of the Arabian Gulf

(1) They were Qatar's rulers at the time, and their headquarters was al-Huwayla.

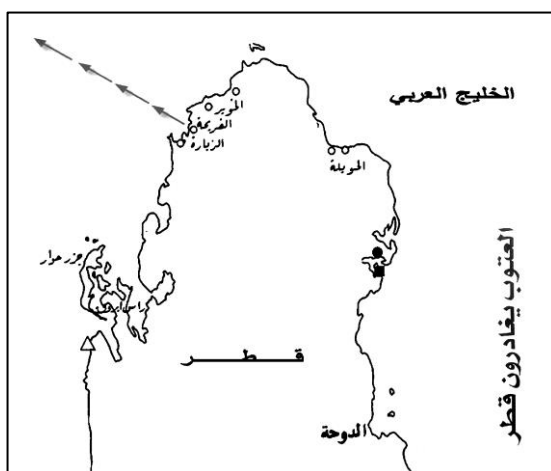
(2) Perhaps what helped them for that was that the Utub already knew the sea, as they were called the Sea Bedouins; see Maimunah Al-Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), prev., p. 89; see also Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 23.

shores, which subsequently helped them handle certain situations, events and dangers, and succeed in containing them

6. Learning about the nature of the region and the places that would eventually be, if needed, convenient for settlement, either on shores of the Arabian Gulf near Bahrain and Qatar, or, even, the places closer to the area and authority of bigger and stronger political powers, namely the Ottomans, Persia, Bani Khalid.

The second migration (departure of the Utub from Qatar)

Departure of the Utub from Qatar: It seems that trade flourishing, especially in the maritime affairs of the Utub in Freiha, started alarming the people, as well as al Muslim, the rulers of Qatar. This led to overt tension between the two parties, which ended in forcing the Utub to leave and look for another place.



In an attempt to learn about the reasons that led to the Utub's departure from Qatar, we inspect the opinions of our native historians, based on a local narrative that says that one of the Utubs killed a Qatari after he had mocked and ridiculed him. al-Shamlan's account of the story went: "A Qatari man mocked one of the Utub who was ugly and short, and carrying a sword on

his way to the blacksmith. He asked him sarcastically, ‘what are you going to kill with this sword?’, so the Utubi replied, ‘I’ll show you who I’ll kill with it’”. al-Shamlan continues, saying that after the Utubi man went to the blacksmith, he returned and killed the Qatari man⁽¹⁾. Apparently, after this incident, fearing possible retaliation or being asked to leave, the Utub took the initiative. al-Rasheed says: “al Sabah and their brothers fulfilled al Muslim’s request that they leave the area; they put their fortunes and their valuables in sailboats and floated away”⁽²⁾. However, al Muslim prepared ships and followed the Utub to combat them, but the Utub were victorious in the battle of Ras Tanura⁽³⁾. Strangely, al-Rasheed wonders, “we don’t know what pushed them [al Muslim] to let them [the Utub] go first, and then chase them”⁽⁴⁾. In any case, al Muslim were able to oust the Utub from Qatar, justifying this by the spilt blood of the man murdered by the Utub. And in spite of the Utub’s victory over al Muslim, they kept migrating and travelling with their families to look for a new homeland, which would later turn out to be Kuwait, formerly called “al-Kout” or “al-Qurain”.

The Utub after emigration from Qatar and before settlement in Kuwait

After what happened between them and al Muslim, and losing the legitimacy to stay in Freiha, the Utub had to look for a new place and homeland, far from the conflicts and the problems with existing powers; a new, independent place, far from the different powers existing in the region, and from the major changes which were taking place there.

(1) For more on the story, see Al-Shamlan, “*min tareekh al-kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), prev.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 35.

(3) Al-Shamlan, “*min tareekh al-kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 107.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 35.

To complete the historical overview, one must look into the information provided by the different sources about the regions through which the Utub passed after leaving Qatar and before finally settling in Kuwait.



al-Rasheed indicates that the Utub, after leaving Qatar, headed towards Kish Island in the Arabian Gulf, and “others went to al-Mikhraq [al-Faw] near Umm Qasr, to the north”⁽¹⁾, “and after leaving al-Mikhraq, they headed towards Khawr al-Sabiyah where they were expelled under pressure and threats from al-Dhafeer tribes, so they left towards al-Kout or al-Qurain after permission from Bani Khalid”⁽²⁾.

al-Qinai mentions that the Utub were dispersed in the ports of the eastern shores of the Gulf, and from there they returned to gather in Kuwait. He says: “Their migration to Kuwait was gradual, because when they left Qatar, they were dispersed in the countries, some of them settled in Persia, some in Kish, some in al-Sabiyah, and some in Abadan and al-Mikhraq, and then they kept arriving to Kuwait, followed by many other people, Arabs and Ajam”⁽³⁾.

(1) *Id.*, p. 22.

(2) *Id.*, p. 36.

(3) For more, see Al-Qinai, “*Safahat min tareekh al-Kuwait*” (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 15-16; see also Abdullah Khalid Al-Hatim, “*min huna badaat al-kuwait*” (Kuwait Started Here), 3rd ed., Lebanon, al-Matba’a al-‘Asriya, 2004, p. 362-364.

Abu-Hakima also points out that, after leaving Qatar, the Utub first went to Khawr al-Sabiyah, but they were expelled. He also says: "They came to Kuwait after they got expelled from the eastern coast", and: "Others tend to believe that they [the Utub] sailed from Qatar to Kuwait after a quarrel with al Muslim"⁽¹⁾. Also, Lewis Pelly discusses the displacement of al Sabah saying that the first Sheikh arrived with his followers through Khawr Bubiyan, and the travellers landed on the gulf called "Gulf of Kuwait or al-Qurain"⁽²⁾.

Thus, all these thoughts, however mingled and intertwined - and whether we accept them or not - are what we have to subsequently make a historical entrance to the beginning of the presence of the Utub in their new homeland, Kuwait. Hence, they became the first to have settled on this spot systematically, and they also practised governance systematically and directly. They are also the first to have drawn its policies, and established the foundations for it to rise as a new power in the region of the Arabian Gulf⁽³⁾.

Kuwait between al-Kout and al-Qurain

There are many opinions about the name al-Kout. al-Rasheed says that the one who built al-Kout was Mohamed Lasaka Bin 'Uray'ir who took it as a warehouse for arms and ammunition⁽⁴⁾. Yet, others see that it was Aqeel Bin 'Uray'ir who was the builder

(1) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750- 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 24.

(2) Yacoub Youssef Al-Ghoneim, "*al-kuwait 'abr al-qurun*" (Kuwait through the Ages), see prev., p. 44.

(3) These groupings from Al Sabah, Al Khalifa and the Jalahma settled in Kuwait; subsequently, they – or some of their branches – expanded to Bahrain and ruled. Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*al-khalij al-'arabi dirasat li tareekh al-imat al-'arabiya fi 'asr al-tawasut al-europi al-awal 1507-1840*" (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates' History in the First Era of the European Expansion, 1507-1840), see prev., p. 13.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 33.

of al-Kout, while others still, believe al-Kout was built by Barrak Bin 'Uray'ir⁽¹⁾, but al-Rasheed comes back to say: "It has been said that al Sabah themselves established it"⁽²⁾.

Beyond this disagreement, there is quasi-unanimity among the historians that the word "Kuwait" is a diminutive of "Kout", which is generally known to mean citadel, or fortress, and its plural in Arabic is "akwat"⁽³⁾. The historians of the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq have used this naming in reference to the many fortresses with towers and walls⁽⁴⁾.

The most important text about the naming of Kuwait was written by Father Anastas the Carmelite in 1904, in an article on Kuwait, where he indicated that the word derived from "*kout*", which is the house built in the shape of a citadel, in order to make it easier to defend it⁽⁵⁾. Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed adds that *al-kout* is the place near the water, whether it is a sea, a river or a lake. As to al-Shamlan, he says: "Ibn 'Uray'ir offered them [the Utub] al-Kout". Whereas Abu-Hakima in exposing the reasons behind naming Kuwait, said that Kuwait's old name – especially in Western sources – is al-Qurain, giving as reference Niebuhr's map where this name shows⁽⁶⁾.

(1) For more, see Jasim Mohamed Al-Salama, "*ta'sil shahadat al-'ayan wal-ruwaya al-shafahiya fi kitabat tareekh al-kuwait*" (Establishing the Origin of Eye Witnessing and Oral Narrative in Writing the History of Kuwait), 2nd ed. 2006, p. 127.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 33.

(3) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 18.

(4) Among them, for example, Ibn Bishr and Ibn Ghanam.

(5) The writer of the article is Butrus Jibrayl Yusuf 'Awwad, known as Father Anastas the Carmelite or Père Anastase –Marie de Saint-Elie; his article on Kuwait in *Al-Mashriq* mag. was in two parts, starting from issue No. 10 of the seventh year on 15/5/1904.

(6) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 18.

The region where the Utub landed kept being called al-Kout and al-Qurain for some time apparently, then the name Kuwait started prevailing, and the country became known as al-Kuwait instead of al-Qurain or al-Kout.

It is also obvious that the Utub took over al-Kout at a time when Kuwait was still called “al-Qurain”, which is the name most common and widespread in the European and other sources. al-Qurain - like with al-Kout- linguistically, is a diminutive of “*qurn*”, which is the hill or the elevated land⁽¹⁾, on the coast or on any other terrain. Diminutives were common at the time, and there are still areas in Kuwait where diminutives are in use, such as al-Shu’aiba, al-Shuwaikh, al-Fahaheel, al-Nuwaiseeb, al Funaitees, Bnaider... and others. Subsequently, the region has recorded increasing growth, and a population mobility that started settling with the Utub tribes and a group of Bedouins and anglers, according to al-Shamlan⁽²⁾. Local narratives specify the location of “Old Kout”, as being in places well known today; one of them is opposite “al-Forda” (Customs services), on top of Baheeta parallel to the shore; and some pointed to the location of the old American Hospital; others yet see that al-Kout was in the region of al-Watya.

But when did the name change from “al-Qurain” to “al-Kuwait”? It is undoubtedly impossible to determine an exact date. The two names remained linked to each other for a long time, and they were used together. In the Ottoman archives both names are used together, for example, the title of Sheikh Sabah II was “Sheikh of al-Qurain”, and in the British correspondence, the last Sheikh to

(1) *Id.*, p. 18.

(2) Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 117.

bear the title “Sheikh al-Qurain” was probably Sheikh Abdullah II⁽¹⁾. Also, the Western maps and texts of the foreign travellers show that the name al-Qurain remained more used until the end of the nineteenth century⁽²⁾. When the British traveller Buckingham visited Kuwait in 1816, he described it saying that no port after al-Qutaif had a noteworthy importance except al-Qurain... while Arabs only knew it as al-Kuwait⁽³⁾. Additionally, Stocqueler talking about the sailors of the Kuwaiti boat “al-Nasiri” in 1831 CE said that they were about fifty sailors, and that they all came from Kuwait or al-Qurain⁽⁴⁾.

The Utub and Bani Khalid

Bani Khalid are originally Adnanite Arabs from the north. Their tribes moved to the lands of Najd⁽⁵⁾ and the coast of al-Adan, which extends until the northern borders of Kuwait⁽⁶⁾. Their authority spread from Qatar in the south to Basra in the north, aligned with the coast of the Gulf and the middle of the Arabian Peninsula. This tribe was influential in the region in general

(1) Hamad Mohamed Al- Su’aidan, “*tareekh al- ‘alam al- kuwaiti*” (History of the Kuwaiti Flag), 1985, p. 10.

(2) For more, see Abdullah Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait, qiraa fil kharait al- tarikhiyah*” (Kuwait, Reading Historical Maps), prev., p. 5.

(3) Khalid Salim Mohamed, “*al-kuwait fil-qarnayn al thamen ‘ashr wal-tasi’ ‘ashr, hawadith wa akhbar*” (Kuwait in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries), Dar Al- Uruba Library, Kuwait, 2nd ed., 2000, p. 88.

(4) *Id.*

(5) In the past, Najd was one of the important Ottoman administrative units; it was changed from *kaza* to *mutasarrif* under Midhat Pasha, Baghdad’s Wali, after his campaign in 1871; see Basra’s *Salname* for the year 1318 AH, No. 4 – Basra, Al- Wilaya press, 1318 AH, p. 280-286.

(6) For more, see Adamov, “*wulat al- basra fi madiha wa hadirha*” (The *Walis* of Basra in the Past and in the Present), part I, translated by Hisham Salih Al- Tikriti, Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, University of Basra, 1982, p. 60.

before the settlement of the Utub. It is worth noting, as we record here based on this, that the region of Kout or Qurain or later Kuwait was not within the realm of the Basra Vilayet (Province). Authority there extended within the northern borders of the Emirate of al-Ahsa, the most important bastion of Bani Khalid who were able to conquer it under the leadership of Barrak Bin 'Uray'ir al Humaid, the *de facto* powerful ruler of al-Ahsa⁽¹⁾. Barrak made of al-Mubarraz and the region of al-Hofuf his capital and governing base there. Bani Khalid even succeeded in usurping authority from the Ottomans, and they became a major power competing with them there⁽²⁾, together with other Arab tribes, around the year 1670 CE⁽³⁾.

(1) Al- Ahsa; this region is located in the northeast of the Arabian Peninsula; it used to be the biggest part of a territory which extends from the west coast of the Arabian Peninsula, from Basra in the north to Oman in the south. It used to be called Al- *Bahrain* (The Two-Seas) for a long time at the beginning of the Muslim conquest. Yaqut Al- Hamawi, "*mu'jam al- buldan*" (Countries Dictionary), vol. 2, Cairo, al- S'ada press, 1906, p. 72.

(2) Strangely, Abu-Hakima says: "It does not seem that Bani Khalid wanted collision with the Ottomans who subjected Al- Ahsa under their authority from 1555 to 1670; Bani Khalid could not defy them. They reinforced their authority after the disappearance of the Ottoman rule. For more, see Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 20; see also Adamov, "*wulat al- basra fi madiha wa hadirha*" (The Walis of Basra in the Past and in the Present), prev., p. 60; see also Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*al-khalij al- 'arabi dirasat li tareekh al- imarat al- 'arabiya fi 'asr al- tawasu' al- europi al- awal 1507-1840*" (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates' History in the First Era of the European Expansion, 1507-1840), prev., p. 360.

(3) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*al-khalij al- 'arabi dirasat li tareekh al- imarat al- 'arabiya fi 'asr al- tawasu' al- europi al- awal 1507-1840*" (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates' History in the First Era of the European Expansion, 1507-1840), see prev., p. 360.

The reasons behind Bani Khalid allowing the Utub to settle in Kuwait may be the following:

Firstly, it might have been an attempt from Bani Khalid to adjoin the Utub to their battles against the Ottomans, especially that there was actually an Ottoman garrison in Qutaif, which was under the authority of Bani Khalid.

Secondly, Kuwait's trade and economic importance had not yet emerged, and it was only a military bastion or just a traditional defence line to them. The presence of some following or allied tribes like the Utub would not put any pressure or cause any embarrassment, and allowing them to settle at that time did not present any danger.

It is remarkable while looking into the relationship that was built between the Utub and Bani Khalid, that after the settlement, the relationship was divided into two periods. The first one was a period of peace and tranquillity, and perhaps cooperation. As to the second period, it was one of strain and tension. In the first period, the relationship was naturally in conformity with the rule of Bani Khalid in the east of the Peninsula. They were keen at that time on providing security⁽¹⁾, and on having the trade routes open. Some say that one of the English reports mentioned that trade in the Arab countries was located on the shores of the Arabian Gulf, and that the ports of Qutaif and Uqair were the points of departure of the caravans travelling to Najd. Given this situation, Kuwait might have benefitted and developed its capabilities until it was able to offer facilities to Bani Khalid themselves to conquer Qutaif, which is what happened in

(1) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*mawqif al-kuwait min al-tawasu' al-sa'udi fi najd*" (Kuwait's Stance from the Saudi Expansion in Najd), Journal of the Société Egyptienne des Etudes Historiques, vol. 17, 1970.

1670 CE⁽¹⁾. Bani Khalid cut off a piece of their territory and gave it to the Utub as *waqf* (endowment); it was like a reward for the Utub's active participation in some of Bani Khalid's disputes in the area⁽²⁾. (The Utub help Bani Khalid to conquer Qutaif in 1670 CE)⁽³⁾. The second period of the relationship, however, may be summarized in Niebuhr's statement that "Qurain is governed by a Sheikh subordinate to the Sheikh of al-Ahsa, but he aspires to independence". In the light of which we can see that some change occurred in the relationship between the two parties, and reached military threat, as Niebuhr says: "When the Sheikh of al-Ahsa advances with his warriors, the inhabitants of al-Qurain withdraw to the Island of Failaka"⁽⁴⁾.

Also, perhaps Sheikh Sabah I's visit to the Ottomans, after the settlement and far from Bani Khalid⁽⁵⁾, confirms that the Utub

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- (1) Mohamed Orabi Nakhla, "*tareekh al- ihsaa al- siyasi 1818-1913*" (Al-Ahsa's Political History, 1818-1913), Kuwait, 1980, p. 26.
 - (2) Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*'ilaqat al- kuwait al- kharijiya khilal al- qarn al- thamin 'ashr*" (Kuwait's Foreign Relations during the Eighteenth Century), al- Mu'arikh al- 'Arabi, No. 3, year 13, 1988, p. 72.
 - (3) Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), part 1, 4th ed., p. 82.
 - (4) Which means there was some kind of conflict that reached the use of force or at least the threat to use force; see Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*nashaat al- kuwait wa tatawurha fil-qarn al- thamin 'ashr*" (The Rise of Kuwait and Its Development in the Eighteenth Century), Journal of the Centre for the Studies of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula, vol. 12, No. 46, 1986; see also Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*'ilaqat al- kuwait al- kharijiya khilal al- qarn al- thamin 'ashr*" (Kuwait's Foreign Relations during the Eighteenth Century), prev., p. 73.
 - (5) Jacqueline Pirenne "A la découverte de l'Arabie: cinq siècles de science et d'aventure» (Discovering Arabia: Five Centuries of Science and Adventure), see prev., p. 165.

acted early to assure their tendency towards independence, even if not openly in order to avoid provoking enmity. This might have been the reason for which Bani Khalid contacted the Sheikh of Kuwait to settle the issue. Sources indicate that they contacted the Sheikh of Kuwait (Sabah Bin Jaber), and signed an agreement of friendship and good neighbourliness with his son Abdullah in lieu of his father. They recognised the independence of Kuwait under the condition that they would not join their adversaries⁽¹⁾.

The formations and nature of the Utub society after settlement in Kuwait

The political formations of the Utub were allowed to develop calmly and quietly, while the major powers (England, Holland, France, the Ottoman Empire, Persia, and the remaining powers) were busy with rivalry and disputes. The Utub achieved some sovereignty in Kuwait, as Niebuhr says: "Kuwait is a city and a port three days away from Zubayr or Old Basra; it is not far from Khawr Abdullah which is located in the west of Shatt al-Arab. The Persians and the foreigners in general call this city al-Qurain. Its inhabitants are pearl hunters or anglers, and the population is estimated at ten thousand people. Many of them travel on camels in caravans to Damascus and Aleppo"⁽²⁾. The most important aspects of the societal formations that had started to appear in the Kuwaiti society were probably concentrated in the following: diving, fishing, maritime trade, and ship manufacturing. Kout or Kuwait

(1) Kadri Qal'aji, "adwaa 'ala tareekh al-kuwait" (Lights on the History of Kuwait), Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, Beirut, 1962, p. 44; see also Badr Al-Din Abbas Al-Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-'arabi al-hadith wal mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 1, 1987, p. 104.

(2) See Habib Janhani, "*al-kuwait bayn al-ams wal yawm*" (Kuwait between Yesterday and Today), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2005, p. 18.

city also became an active place linking between sea and desert trade.

On the other hand, herding and other nomadic jobs propagated among the tribes that settled in Kuwait, and many Bedouin agglomerations and villages on the borders of Kuwait and around the trade and land transportation routes were considered pillars of protection to the nascent emirate or the sheikhdom from certain dangers then⁽¹⁾.

Kuwait, the new Homeland

Why settle in Kuwait? The answer to this question may lie in one truth, which is “the availability of security and peace”. These two major requests were the most important and urgent goal of these Utub tribes and families and those who migrated with them at that time. Looking for a place which would provide them quiet living and security far from the fighting colonial and regional powers, in addition to Kuwait being a natural port, the situation was the most acceptable for the Utub, and most convenient to live in security, and create a new homeland, with a clear political entity characterised by stability and tranquillity.

We can then notice that the Utub⁽²⁾, since their first emigration from their original land “al-Haddar”, followed by a temporary settlement in Freiha near al-Zubarah, then leaving Zubarah to their final destination, Kuwait. Through all these events, the Utub were not spared inconstancy, facing dangers, conflicts and challenges,

(1) See Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, “*dawr al- badiya fi tashkeel malamih al- mujtama’ al- kuwaiti wa khasa’isah*” (The Role of the Desert in Shaping the Kuwaiti Society and its Characteristics), p. 83.

(2) It is noteworthy that the indication of the French Consul in Basra is one of the oldest indications of the Utub in the Western sources; see B. J. Slot, “Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity”, prev. p. 119.

but in the end, they were able to settle in a new homeland where they lived, for the first time, an independent, sovereign life. They built and established a society that kept growing, dominating its economy and the culture of its new population, the Utub and all the other migrators who came along with them; a simple nation and a society seeking peace and defending its home.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Problematic of the Establishment of The Emirate of Kuwait

- Kuwait, creation and foundation.
- Historians' disagreement on determining the foundation of Kuwait.
- Opinions which tackled determining the date of the foundation of Kuwait.
- The Ottoman archive, 1701 CE.
- Murtada Bin Elwan's manuscript, 1709 CE.
- Historians' reaction to the Ottoman document.
- al-Bahrani's manuscript "*Lu'lu'at al-Bahrayn*" (Bahrain's Pearl).
- The Dutch archive La Haye Den Haag (The Hague).
- The Foundation of Kuwait 1613 CE.
- The succession of Kuwait's rulers.

“It is truly regrettable that the date of the foundation of Kuwait is so close to us, yet we surround determining it with doubts.”

(Professor Maimunah al-Sabah)

Foreword:

The date of Kuwait's foundation, compared to the dates of the foundation of other states and emirates, is considered recent. It is however still mysterious and not agreed upon.

With the beginning of the twentieth century, and due to the economic, social and intellectual transformations that occurred in the region in general and in Kuwait in particular, it was imperative that the historians, and especially the Kuwaitis, reconsider many events recorded in the history of Kuwait, ask new questions, and pose new historical issues. Until recently, these were not accessible to those working on and interested in the Kuwaiti history. On top of these issues is: in which year was Kuwait founded?

Along with this context, this chapter will specifically discuss this problematic and tackle the circumstances that surrounded it, in an analytic style, taking into consideration the lack of precise texts thereupon, and the abundance of differences in those observed.

Before going into this problematic and studying it, it is important to explain the meaning of two terms, namely "state" (*dawla*) and "authority" (*sultah*), bearing in mind that the latter is the one we are looking for.

The state is defined as a political entity that exerts power and authority over a specific geographic spot. The word "state" originates in the old Latin term "status" which means "stability". However, it is differently defined in the Arabic dictionaries. In his book "*Lisan al-Arab*" (The Arabs' Tongue), Ibn Manzur says that the word "state" means "the act and the shift from one status to the other". And Ibn Khaldun sees authority as one of the corners of the foundation and the construction of states, as sometimes, the definition of state is limited to authority or more precisely domination (*sultan*). But the state to Ibn Khaldun is the period of

governance of a certain dynasty, like with the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Fatimid states. Ibn Khaldun's latter definition is the one that matches our view while concretising the rise and the foundation of the Kuwaiti Emirate according to the establishment and choice of authority there.

On the other hand, the term "authority" represents an old terminology in the history of humankind. It is not known exactly whether this terminology came out independently⁽¹⁾ or whether it was a human demand in its simple meaning, which is exerting power over a certain group, whence it acquired a wider social meaning, which is imposing a political reality through administering the affairs of the community or of individuals⁽²⁾, like in Kuwait.

Based on the above, we will be able to understand when Kuwait became a population living on a land, with a clear authority, and consequently became eligible to have the qualifications of a state or "emirate", including all the social and political frameworks and organisations. Therefore, we can safely say that the birth of authority in Kuwait and its emergence was the real date of the foundation of the Emirate⁽³⁾.

(1) As a locution expressing that an individual or a group are in possession of a power prevailing in the reality they live in.

(2) In this context, and to know more about the modern civil society's constituent and philosophical anchors, see Tawfik Al-Madini, "*al-mujtama' al-madani wal dawla al-siyasiya fil watan al-'arabi, dirasah min manshurat itihad kuttab al-'arab*" (The Civil Society and the Political State in the Arab World, a Study from the Publications of the Arab Writers Federation), 1997.

(3) For more, Hussein Khalaf Al-Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 1, see prev., p. 43; Ahmed Al-Rasheedi, "*al-kuwait min al-imara ila al-dawla, dirasa fi nashaat dawlat al-kuwait wa tatawur markazha al qanuni wa 'ilaqatha bil-dawla*" (Kuwait from Emirate to State, Study of the Rise of the State of Kuwait and the Development of its Legal Status and =

Kuwait between creation and foundation

In principle, the foundation of any political system is organically linked to the foundation of the state, as there is no political system without a state, or state without a political system that directs it. As we handle the foundation of Kuwait, it is important to differentiate between two things:

First: “creation”; second: “foundation”. The differentiation between these two terms was often lost within what was written in this scope. When we look at what was written in the books and the different sources handling this issue, and also at what our first historians wrote, it is hard to identify whether what they bring to us is related to “the creation of Kuwait in general as a land, people and authority”, to “the foundation of the city of Qurain or Kout”, or “the coming down of the Utub and their settlement in Kout”. It has become usual to express oneself with terms like “building, creation, foundation, settlement, coming down” and other such terms, as if they were synonyms.

Creation as it comes in the dictionary⁽¹⁾ means life or formation for the first time, while **foundation** means building, constructing, setting bases. In other words, foundation is building on something that already exists, and not bringing something from nothing⁽²⁾.

= its Relation to the State), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2nd ed., Kuwait, Dar Soad Al- Sabah, 1993, p. 33; Maimunah Al- Sabah, “*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*” (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), part 1, 4th ed., p. 108; and also Maimunah Al- Sabah, “*Mubarak al- awal wa abna’uh, musahamathum fi khidmat al- watan*” (Mubarak I and His Sons, Their Contribution to the Nation’s Service), Annals of al- Mu’arikh al- Masry, January 2014.

(1) *Mu’jam al- Ma’ani al- Jami’* (Comprehensive Dictionary).

(2) Therefore, we are here in the context of “foundation” and not “creation” which we tackled previously in chapter three.

In Kuwait's case, what we mean by foundation is a process accompanied by political and social determinants and considerations, which eventually led to the rise of a political entity with specific elements, namely "the land, the people, authority". To make it simpler, by talking about foundation, we mean the foundation of the Emirate and the State on the soil of which and under the shadow of which we live today. This process is different from creation. The latter is an old concept Kuwait has been through at different eras and periods, having been a geographic region linked to the historical development of the Eastern Arabian Peninsula and its population. It has also been the temporary settlement of some families, tribes and clans, in epochs indicated and shown by the archaeological evidence and remains discovered later. Based on this, the process of Kuwait's foundation which enabled it to have a special kind of sovereignty, can be described as a process where the third element "authority" came to complement the two other elements, "the land", and the human groups or "population". "Authority" here precisely is what formed the main pillar by which Kuwait became a real political, economic and social entity.

The reasons behind the historians' disagreement on the date of the foundation of Kuwait

A big part of the disagreement on the date of Kuwait's foundation is due to the following:

- A. The lack of foreign or local accurately documented sources, from contemporaries of the foundation process, giving the exact year of the settlement of the Utub in Kuwait.
- B. Reliance has mostly been on verbal dates and sources transmitted from one person to the other, or from one generation to another, with all the contradictions, mistakes, and forgetting this entails.

- C. In its early period of existence, Kuwait did not attract the interest of Arab or foreign historians because of its poverty, and the harshness of life there.
- D. Its political and economic interest did not show to the neighbouring powers.
- E. The appearance of proofs, references and documents which were preceded by older proofs, documents and references - this led to confusion and mingling between the former and the latter; some see that their position and their conclusions and analyses are correct, while the other team who relied on what appeared later sees that the first team is wrong.
- F. Some considered that the foundation of "al-Kout" or "The Fortress" and its construction was the real date of Kuwait's foundation. Others saw that the construction of the stone or limestone houses in Kuwait was the beginning of the foundation, and others still saw that the date of foundation should be determined by and linked to the period in time when al-Utub arrived to the region.

Opinions that tackled the process of determining the date of the foundation of Kuwait

While exposing the most important opinions and deductions of our local and Arab historians, as well as the foreigners', it is impossible under any circumstances to neglect or underestimate the efforts of any of them. Undoubtedly, each one of them offered his opinion on this issue based on proofs, clues and words he relied on, and saw at that time that it was the closest to reality and precision. But it is strange that the majority was aware of an actual problematic to determine this issue. al-Rasheed himself, Kuwait's first historian stated this by saying: "There are no words one can trust"⁽¹⁾; and al-Qinai seconded him by saying: "We don't really know the date of the construction of Kuwait"⁽²⁾.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p.31.

(2) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 25.

The most important dates suggested for the settlement, formation and establishment of authority in Kuwait were as follows:

1. 1372 CE – a date given by Midhat Pasha, *Wali* (governor) of Baghdad, who wrote it in his memoirs saying: “Those Arabs are from Hijaz, and they were there five hundred years before”⁽¹⁾. This is an exaggerated date, and there are no proofs or evidence to support it⁽²⁾. al-Shamlan remarked on it by saying: “It is not true, and no one else said this”.
2. 1611 CE – An approximate date al-Nabhany thought likely, according to what came in his book *al-Tohfa al-Nabhaniya* (The Nabhany Masterpiece): “Some of Kuwait’s inhabitants told us... that their predecessors lived in Kuwait in 1019 AH, 1611 CE”⁽³⁾.
3. 1688 CE – Proposed by Sheikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai based on the construction of the *kout* (fortress) of Bani Khalid, as he says: “It seems that this *kuwait* (small fortress) was built by Barrak, the Emir of Bani Khalid, because in 1074 AH, Barrak was the Emir”⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 31; see also Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 112.

(2) Maimunah Al- Sabah, “*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*” (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), see prev., p. 80.

(3) See Al- Nabhany, “*Al-Tohfa Al- Nabhaniya, fi tareekh al- jazeera al- ‘arabiya*” (The Nabhany Masterpiece, History of the Arabian Peninsula); prev., see also Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait ‘abr al- qurun*” (Kuwait through the Ages), prev., p. 20.

(4) Al- Qinai, “*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*” (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 6.

4. 1688 CE, and 1713 CE – Two approximate dates mentioned by Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed (with a number of other dates). He said that they were both closer to reality although he did not determine which, or show inclination to any of them⁽¹⁾.
5. 1716 CE – In his article about the Utub Arabs, Francis Warden, the Agent of the East Indian Company, said that al Sabah, together with al Khalifa and the Jalahma and other Utub, arrived to Kuwait in that year⁽²⁾. This same year 1716 CE was also suggested by Lorimer, author of the famous “Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia”⁽³⁾.
6. 1752 CE – a date mentioned by Abu-Hakima, and acknowledged as one of the most important dates determining the year of Kuwait’s foundation. Abu-Hakima says: “Few realise that the creation of Kuwait goes back to the last part of the seventeenth century, and that the governance of al Sabah there started that year”⁽⁴⁾. This is what the historians, the writers and the researchers got to rely on in their writings, especially that Abu-Hakima was considered the official historian appointed by the History of Kuwait Writing Committee in 1959 CE.

With the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, especially after the school of documentation and annals became of great importance to fill the voids in this framework, and after

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- (1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 31, 32.
 - (2) And they started managing the affairs of the town; see Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 25.
 - (3) See Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait ‘abr al- qurun*” (Kuwait through the Ages), prev., p. 28.
 - (4) Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 11.

the criticism previous writings were exposed to, the date proposed by Abu-Hakima in his book became the most widely used and relied on. However, Murtada Bin Elwan's manuscript⁽¹⁾ appeared dated 1709 CE, and the Ottoman document in 1701 CE, then the Dutch document "La Haye Den Haag" (The Hague), and the document of al-Bahrani (d. 1772 CE), to add to the complexity and confusion, and put question marks and doubts on all the dates given for Kuwait's foundation. Based on what came in Bin Elwan's manuscript specifically, and also in the Ottoman document, the historians have succeeded in reconsidering many historical events, and started to ask many questions related to the veracity and accurateness of the given dates, particularly the date set by Abu-Hakima, 1752 CE.

Murtada Bin Elwan's manuscript, 1709 CE

The manuscript is part of a collection owned by the Royal Prussian Library in Berlin. It is a rare copy characterised by being handwritten by the traveller himself. This historical manuscript⁽²⁾ dated 1709 CE⁽³⁾ relates the journey of its writer, Ibn Elwan, one

(1) See "*Rihlat murtada bin elwan ila al- amakin al- muqadassa wal-ahsa wal-kuwait wal- 'iraq 1120/1121 AH - 1709 CE*" (Murtada Bin Elwan's Trip to the Holy Places, Al- Ahsa, Kuwait and Iraq, 1120/1121 AH - 1709 CE), studied and reviewed by Saeed Bin Omar Al Amer, Faculty of Education, King Faisal University, Al- Ahsa, Centre for the Studies of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula publication series, 1997, p. 22.

(2) Wilhelm Ahlwardt, *Verzeichnis der Arabischen Handschriften*, (1887-1889), 10 volume catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts. Kept at the Royal Library of Berlin.

(3) Kept under No. 6137, manuscript 102 A 115-B. The historical appearance of this manuscript as a research document was at the hands of Dr Abdullah Al- 'Uthaymin, a copy of the manuscript was offered to him in 1977; see Abdullah Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, "*Rihlat murtada bin elwan ila al- amakin al- muqadassa wa manatiq ukhra*" (Murtada Bin Elwan's Trip to the Holy Places, and Other Areas", *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*, No. 1, 1977, p. 215. Dr U. Haarmann was published the text for the first time in 1978.

of the Syrian *Haj* pilgrims who started off in Damascus, passing through Jordan, al-Ahsa, Hijaz, Najd, and Kuwait, ending in Baqubah in Iraq. The importance of this manuscript is that it is one of the oldest Arabic sources where Kuwait was mentioned, in 1709 CE. This is in addition to the importance Ibn Elwan gives to writing information about the Emirate, as the manuscript describes clearly some of the aspects of the settled life there - there was almost half a page in the manuscript describing Kuwait structurally and economically, whereby Murtada Bin Elwan said:

“We entered a country named al-Kuwait, with a diminutive. It is not a bad country, it resembles al-Ahsa, it is not the same but with its buildings and towers it resembles it. We had pilgrims from Basra with us, who separated from us there on a road called al-Jahra, from Kuwait to al-Basra four days, and in the boat only one day because the seaport is on the shoulder of Kuwait. The fruits and watermelons and other necessities come from Basra everyday by boat, because it is the port of the sea. We stayed there one day and two nights, and then we headed with God’s blessing towards al-Najaf al-Ashraf on the eleventh day of the mentioned month. This mentioned Kuwait is called al-Qurain. We walked, before reaching it, on the border of the sea for three days with the boat alongside us and the port on the edge of the town without a break. All the seeds come to this town from the sea, wheat and other things, because its land cannot be planted. It does not even have palm trees or any other trees. And its prices are cheaper than al-Ahsa because of the abundant payment from Basra and other places”.

Although the manuscript neither describes nor explains the nature of authority or the kind of governance, yet it confirms that Kuwait was an existing inhabited city, with buildings and roads, and people settled there. We can also understand from the manuscript that the system of governance or authority at that time managed its affairs effectively, since Murtada Bin Elwan

confirms that it was easy to move around the town, and that the exchange of utilities and goods was taking place securely and easily. Additionally, Kuwait had reached a high standard of living, making it comparable to al-Ahsa, the important trade capital at that time in the east of the Arabian Peninsula.

From Ibn Elwan's manuscript, one can certify that the foundation of Kuwait and the presence of a stable authority there happened before 1709 CE. This makes Abu-Hakima's assumption that Kuwait's authority was established in 1752 CE a matter that can no longer be accepted. This manuscript also makes most of the dates suggested after 1709 CE as a date for Kuwait's foundation, a historical mistake which must be corrected.

The Ottoman document of 1701 CE

With the appearance of Ibn Elwan's manuscript and the confusion it created in trying to determine the year of Kuwait's foundation, an Ottoman document from the Ottoman archives in Istanbul was also revealed, numbered 111, dated 21 Rajab 1113 AH, 1701 CE. This manuscript was a letter from the *mutesellim* (governor) of Basra to the Ottoman Sultan asking permission for the Utub to settle in the region⁽¹⁾. With the appearance of this manuscript, not only did the mistake of the dates previously proposed as the foundation year reoccur, but another historical debate, namely the original homeland of the Utub, and where they lived before coming down to Kuwait was also triggered⁽²⁾.

(1) A letter from Ali Pasha, (Basra's *Wali*) to the Ottoman Sultan. The document has several translations, by Ahmed Agrakja, Mrs Zuleikha, and Zekeriya Kurşun.

(2) Dr Sultan Bin Muhammad Al- Qasimi (ruler of Sharjah) clearly pointed to this as he translated the document in his book "*bayan al-kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al- sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah), where he explained that the Utub used to live in Bandar Deylam; see Sultan Bin-Muhammad Al- Qasimi, "*bayan al-kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al- sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah), al- Muassassa al- 'Arabiya lil-Dirasat wal-Nashr, 2006.

The Ottoman document says:

“With reference to this, I would like to inform you, there is a place on the Ajam’s shores called Bahrain. The Ajam inflict on the people of this place some kinds of pressure and mistreatment. The Ajam have great interest in this place. There are also two clans under the Ajam’s administration, namely the Utub clan, and the Khalifat clan, from both the Shafei and Hanbali sects. They live in a place close to Bandar Deylam. There is also another *bandar* called Kong, where there are seven or eight clans called Houla, all Arabs following the Shafei sect. Some made turmoil between Bahrain and these three clans, resulting in enmity between them. There were clashes in the middle of the sea, and three of them were killed treacherously, which made the merchants and immigrants afraid from coming to Basra. Most of the ships moving between the ports in this region belong to these three clans, and because of the enmity, they shoot each other if they meet in the middle of the sea. One day, the Houla clan attacked the Utub clan, the allies of the Khalifat clan in Bahrain, and all of a sudden, 400 of their men were killed, and they seized all their money. The survivors from the Utub fled to their allies the Khalifat, and both clans agreed that what had happened was because of the trouble from the Ajam living in Bahrain. They said: ‘There is no more security for us to stay in the Ajam’s country after what happened. Let’s go to the city of Basra which is part of the Exalted Ottoman State’. And in fact, they came and entered Basra. They are about 2000 homes, and they are presently there. Some of their notables came to me, your *ma’mour* (commissioner) in Basra, and they presented the request to stay, saying: ‘We are *Sunna and Jama’ah* people (Sunni Muslims), we left the country of the *rafidyin* (Shi’a), the country of the Qizilbash, and we have recourse to the Sultan of the Muslims to live on his land’. You know best what is in our interest, and they were not yet allocated any particular place to settle in. It is better

that they remain this way in order to consider whether they will permanently remain in Basra, and then they would be assigned a place. These people own nearly 150 ships. Each ship has two or three cannons, and on board each ship there are some thirty to forty men carrying rifles; their job is to transport merchants and merchandise between ports in the region. For the sake of interest and the continuation of their job, we sent our men to the Houla clan in order to mediate to reconcile between them, and the Utub and Khalifat; because perpetuating war between them will harm the merchants going to and coming from Basra if they settle among us. Yet with the approval of the mentioned tribe and achieving reconciliation, the sea and the shores will be safe from their evil. And after the peace treaty, it will be determined whether the Utub and the Khalifat will settle in Basra or not. But this is not known at the moment”⁽¹⁾.

Reviewing the Ottoman document, one can note the following: The *mutesellim* of Basra began his letter to the Ottoman Sultan with a description of Bahrain, and he said that the Ajam (he meant the Persians) were interested in it, but mistreated it. He continued that the two clans Utub and Khalifat lived in Bandar Deylam. The Bandar Deylam or town of Deylam referred to in the manuscript is a port on the northwestern coast of the Arabian Gulf, in the middle of the way to Bushehr and Abadan on the Persian side)⁽²⁾. The manuscript continues that there is another Bandar called Kong near Bandar Deylam, and that there are seven or eight clans there, among which the Houla who lived on the Persian side, according to the manuscript.

(1) Translated to Arabic by Zekeriya Kurşun.

(2) Jalal Khalid Al- Harun, “*tareekh ‘arab al- houla wal- ‘utub*” (History of the Arab Houla and the ‘Utub), al- Dar al- ‘Arabiya lil Mawsu’at, Beirut, 1st ed., 2010, from p. 29.

The manuscript further adds that there was a discord between Bahrain and Houla on one side, and the Utub and the Khalifat⁽¹⁾ on the other, creating clashes between the three clans, the Utub, the Khalifat and the Houla. These clashes threatened the merchants and immigrants, and scared them from going to Basra. The manuscript also asserted that most of the ships moving between the ports of this region belonged to these three clans who “shoot each other if they meet in the middle of the sea”. We also find out from the manuscript that the Utub and the Khalifat were linked by an alliance, the nature of which the manuscript did not discuss. In the development of the conflict, the Houla attacked the Utub – without the Khalifat – in Bahrain, and they were able to kill 400 of the Utub, which led the survivors from the Utub to flee to their allies from the Khalifat clan, according to the manuscript.

After the battle, and after losing such a great number of their men and losing all their fortunes, the Utub agreed with their allies the Khalifat to leave their land in Bandar Deylam, and to go to Basra specifically, on the Arab coast of the Gulf. The manuscript says that after leaving Bandar Deylam, the Utub and the Khalifat officially presented a request to the Ottoman Sultan to stay and settle in Basra, and that they were actually living there. The manuscript gives details about their numbers, estimated at “two thousand homes”. It also confirms that they were not yet given a place to settle, adding that it was better this way in order to consider the issue. The manuscript further describes the nature of the Utub and Khalifat who landed in

(1) Al- Sabah sees that what is meant by the Khalifat is not Al- Kalifa, but they are from Al- Ashaji’a, from Al- Hif, from Al- Jalasi from Al- Muslim from Anza. The Khalifat are affiliated to Bani ‘Ubaydah from Al- Yamani, and they are Malikis like the Utub; Maimunah Al- Sabah, “*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*” (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), 1st ed., p. 82.

Basra, and according to the description, the Utub and Khalifat owned nearly 400 cannons distributed among 150 ships, and had between five to six thousand combatants armed with rifles, whose job was maritime transportation⁽¹⁾. The manuscript says that there was an attempt of reconciliation between the Utub and the Khalifat on one side, and the Houla on the other, after which it would appear whether the Utub and the Khalifat would settle in Basra or not, but that this was not evident at that point.

The Ottoman document (which never mentioned Kuwait) ends thereto, leaving a problematic many relied on to write fallacies, the most important of these being:

1. That the Utub were in Bandar Deylam on the Persian coast⁽²⁾.
2. That when the Utub failed to stay in Basra and its surroundings, they settled in Kuwait to establish their new homeland, which means that the foundation of Kuwait occurred after 1701 CE, according to the events which were brought in the manuscript.

(1) These forces were in fact a big, armed army, and not an army that would run away fearing a tribal power like the Houla; this, without counting the rest of the families who were on board the ships. The document refers to thirty or forty armed men without mentioning the civilian men, women and children. Could the *Wali* or Basra's *matesellim* really face this big army if the Sublime Porte (the Sultan) refused their stay and decided to expel them and not allow them to stay in the region at that time?

(2) In his book "*bayan al-kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al-sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah), Al- Qasimi sees that the Utub used to live near Deylam which is located between Bushehr and the entrance to Shatt Al- Arab; this also what Al- Harun sees in his book "*tareekh 'arab al- houla wal- 'utub*" (History of the Arab Houla and the 'Utub). For more, see Al- Harun, "*tareekh 'arab al- houla wal- 'utub*" (History of the Arab Houla and the 'Utub), prev., p. 30; see also Al- Qasimi, "*bayan al-kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al-sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah), prev., p. 12.

Historians' reaction to the Ottoman document

The Ottoman document highly provoked the energies and efforts of the historians; Dr al-Sabah consecrated several pages to it, where she explained and analysed, and she said: "If it [the manuscript] is correct, it confirms that Sheikh Sabah I went to the Ottomans after their settlement in Kuwait to guarantee security"⁽¹⁾. Dr Yacoub al-Ghoneim puts doubt on its veracity, given the fact that there is nothing to support some of the facts mentioned in the manuscript. The head of the Dutch Archives, B.J.Slot, also discredited the manuscript⁽²⁾, in addition to other historians who see it as "unimportant and containing historical fallacies"⁽³⁾.

Undoubtedly, the attempt of some historians to rely on what came in the manuscript to justify the pretence that Kuwait was not an institution before 1701 is wrong and deprived of all truth. The manuscript of Murtada Bin Elwan 1709 CE, the most precise Arab manuscript, refutes this in its entirety. We previously reviewed it in detail. Moreover, the Ottoman document itself shows no proof that Kuwait had not existed prior to that time.

Based on this, the only remaining argument is that the original homeland of the Utub was Bandar Deylam, implying that they were subjected to Persian authority. This pretence cannot be accepted for many reasons, among which:

First: Everyone who used this argument relied mainly on one source, which is the Ottoman document, disregarding tens of sources, writings, and stories confirming that the original

(1) For more, see Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), part 1, 4th ed., p. 78-100.

(2) B. J. Slot, "Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity", see prev., p. 116.

(3) Sheikha May Mohamed Al Khalifa, see Jalal Khalid Al- Harun, "*tareekh 'arab al- houla wal- 'utub*" (History of the Arab Houla and the 'Utub), prev., p. 31.

homeland of the Utub was al-Haddar in al-Aflaj in Najd. We also tackled this issue earlier, reviewing proofs and evidence, and the most important arguments supporting this opinion and determining it to a great extent.

Second: The Ottoman document itself is countered by the Dutch document “La Haye Den Haag” which denies the presence of the Utub in Bandar Deylam. The document dating back between 1754 CE and 1756 CE⁽¹⁾ confirms that the Khalifat (allies of the Utub) were the ones in Bandar Deylam⁽²⁾, and not the Utub. It even specified the Sheikhs administering the Khalifat’s affairs there; it mentions their names: “The Janaba Bay ends on the edge of protruding ground behind which Bandar Deylam is located. It is an Arab settlement called Khalifat, which still practises its faith and preserves its traditions. They are poor, and they live on navigation, pearl hunting and fishing. Their city is not too bad regarding trade, because it is one walking day away from Behbahan the rich Persian city.” Several Sheikhs lead Bandar Deylam, “Sheikh Ghannam... Sheikh Ta’an... Sheikh Hamid”. This negates the presence of the Utub in Bandar Deylam, and shows that what was meant was the Khalifat⁽³⁾.

(1) The document appeared in the Persica Journal in 1979; it was translated to English by the Dutch sociologist Wilem Floor. It was translated to Arabic by Ibrahim Khoury in his book “*saltanat hurmuz al- ‘arabiya*” (The Arab Sultanate of Hurmuz), Centre of Studies and Documents, Ras Al- Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, 1st ed., 2000, vol. 2, fifth document , Dutch Lahaye Dag Wilem M. Floor, p. 63-180-214.

(2) Ibrahim Khoury, “*saltanat hurmuz al- ‘arabiya*” (The Arab Sultanate of Hurmuz), prev., p. 225.

(3) Did the Khalifat return to settle in Kuwait after 1701 and return to Bandar Deylam and the region of the Persian coast for the Dutch document to mention them fifty years later?

Third: al-Bahrani's manuscript "*Lu'lu'at al-Bahrayn*" (Bahrain's Pearl). It is a manuscript written by Sheikh Youssef al Bahrani (d. 1772 CE)⁽¹⁾; it presented a historical sequence touching upon the events of the Ottoman document of 1701 CE, particularly what happened between the Houla and the Utub, and the destruction that the Utub caused after attacking Bahrain at a time. This matches what came in the Ottoman document of 1701 CE. al-Bahrani's manuscript confirms that the Utub actually attacked Bahrain, and that Bahrain asked for the Houla's help to deter them. The Houla were first able to break the Utub who repeated their attack on Bahrain several times. They failed the first and second times, but the third time they seized it. This called for the interference of the Ajam (Persians), according to al-Bahrani, to take Bahrain back. But the Houla were later able to defeat the Utub another time, and hence free it from their hands⁽²⁾.

The text of the manuscript said: "The war took place between the Houla and the Utub, and the country was broken to the citadel, the greater and the smaller, until God broke the Utub after the *khawarij* (dissenters) tried to seize Bahrain, and they attacked it three times. Their first attempt failed, and so did the second one a year later. The third time, they besieged the country, because they dominated the sea, and it is an island, until they weakened its people, and they conquered it by force. It was a gigantic battle, and a huge catastrophe, because of the amount of killing, robbery, looting and bloodshed. After they took it and secured its kin, the people fled, as did the heads of the country, from there to Qutaif... a few years later, it was the Ajam's turn, so

(1) He tackled many of Bahrain's historical incidents and events, through his translation of prominent Bahraini speakers and scientists, as shown in the book, and he linked the scattered news which came from them. Al- Bahrani, "*Lu'lu'at al- Bahrayn*", prev., p. 5, Preface.

(2) Al- Bahrani, "*Lu'lu'at al- Bahrayn*", prev., p. 428, Preface.

they all got killed, and the country was set on fire. But the Ajam were able to retake Bahrain after a while... Yet, this situation did not last long, as the destructors of the country agreed... that the Houla would take hold of it”⁽¹⁾.

Perhaps al-Bahrani’s manuscripts partially upholds the events of the Ottoman document, but the truth is that al-Bahrani’s manuscript itself appears to be one of the tools completing the historical scene which confirms that the Utub were not in Bandar Deylam. Most of the events that came in al-Bahrani’s manuscript are far from mentioning that the Utub came from the Persian coast. Even the Khalifat disappeared in al-Bahrani’s version of this incident which, also, confirms that the Utub were able to conquer Bahrain and seize it at one point in time. Profound reading of these four documents (Ibn Elwan’s manuscript – the Ottoman document – al-Bahrani’s manuscript – the Dutch document) tells us the truth that the precise scene revealing the year of Kuwait’s foundation will not show based on one source alone. This is because the Ottoman document is completed and supported by al-Bahrani’s manuscript, while the Dutch document points to a precise reality of the Khalifat - that they were the ones who were in Bandar Deylam, and not the Utub. Moreover, Murtada Bin Elwan's manuscript assures the presence of an established and populated Kuwait before 1709 CE.

Hence, we must be aware that the migration of the Utub to Kuwait was not only one migration, but it happened at several intervals; some occurred earlier, conforming to the dates of some of the incidents and events, and some were subsequent to these old migrations. Moreover, most evidence indicate that the Utub were actually the allies of the Khalifat who lived in Bandar Deylam. The Utub and the Khalifat were in conflict with the Houla, and maybe because they feared the Persians’ reaction to

(1) *Id.*, 427-428.

the destruction of Bahrain, it was imperative that they request the protection of the Ottomans, the power closest to them. However when things calmed down, or rather when the Ottomans imposed the necessity of peace on everybody, and ceasefire for the region and trade not to be affected, or more adequately for the Ottomans' interests - which perhaps concurred with the interests of the Persians themselves - tranquillity returned, and the Khalifat went back to their home mentioned in the Dutch document, Bandar Deylam. Undoubtedly, also, their allies the Utub returned to their home, Kuwait, which Ibn Elwan's document confirms to have been established and populated during that period, and which nobody had governed before the Utub, as assured by al-Rasheed. No source, Arabic or Western, mentioned that there were military clashes that led to stopping navigation in the region of Basra after the date of the Ottoman document, or that the Ottoman authority failed in imposing reconciliation on the quarrelling parties⁽¹⁾.

Also, with the severe contradictions in the problematic of searching for a precise and determined date for Kuwait's foundation, one must realise that the period in question was one loaded and politically intertwined, and - for history's sake - the regional powers were almost all in clashes. The European countries as well were fighting among each other, whether overtly like France and Britain, or concealed like Britain and the Ottoman Empire to control the Arabian Gulf. Adding to this the perturbed situation of the Persian Empire, all these clashes and challenges undoubtedly widely opened the door to any arriving new power, especially if it

(1) Al- Qasimi assures at this point that "Basra's Wali was not able to mend the situation so he had to send the Utub and the Khalifat away from the area of Umm Qasr to Kuwait. See Al- Qasimi, "*bayan al- kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al- sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah), prev., p. 14.

was a power previously unknown (like the Utub), to quietly enter the history of this region, with all the foggiess and lack of clarity that would accompany this entrance. As previously mentioned, this new power, the Utub, was in stillness and isolation from combat with the major powers, having no controller and no major events to support and reinforce its chances to be accurately registered in the records of the region's history⁽¹⁾. This, in addition to many sources confirming that the migration of the Utub themselves with their three clans (al Sabah, al Khalifa and the Jalahma) did not happen all at once.

The foundation of Kuwait 1613 CE

We previously reviewed the historical debate, and what the Ottoman document of 1701 CE has done, preceded by Murtada Bin Elwan's manuscript of 1709 CE, then the manuscript of

(1) Many of the events in the history of the region were directly due to interests or the settlement of some political accounts. The most important example of this fact was the Utub tribes who were able, in a short period, to seize two regions in the north of the Arabian Peninsula, and to create there two independent emirates or sheikhdoms. These two sheikhdoms, Kuwait and Bahrain, were able to resist and face challenges and dangers since the foundation until our present day. The historical transition which was realised with the appearance of this evidence related to determining the date of Kuwait's foundation, or even the question of the Utub's original homeland, has become linked, to a great extent, to what these sources, documents and manuscripts have imposed on the historians. The latter have had to deal with what came in these writings in a new way, where the analysis and tackling had to match and combine between the new and the old. The process of trying to determine the date of Kuwait's foundation has shifted from a state of accepting what had been offered by the local and oral narrative sources, to another level based on dealing with the subsequent recorded historical evidence presented in the documents, manuscripts and sources. This had to be done in a critical, complex manner in order to reconstruct historical facts in the context of their correct period; hence, to reach precise, organised truths.

al-Bahrani (d. 1772 CE), in addition to the Dutch document (1754-1756 CE). Facing the tangling and contradictions that surrounded and limited the process of determining a precise date for Kuwait's foundation and the emergence of its political entity came Dr Maimunah al-Sabah's⁽¹⁾ attempt to tackle this reality⁽²⁾. al-Sabah suggested and reviewed a number of proofs and evidence that confirm that the date of the foundation of Kuwait was 1613 CE, relying on the following⁽³⁾:

1. What was said by the British political agent Lewis Pelly in a report on the Arab tribes on the 16th of July 1863 CE: "The family of the present ruling Sheikh have held power in Kuwait since around five generations or since 250 years"⁽⁴⁾. The generation was fifty years, according to Pelly⁽⁵⁾. 250 years deduced from the date of Pelly's report gives the year 1613 CE⁽⁶⁾.

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- (1) Maimunah Al- Sabah, Professor of Kuwait's Modern and Contemporary History and President of the Historical Society of Kuwait; she has many books and documental studies dealing broadly with Kuwait's history.
 - (2) And to confirm that continuing to rely on previous dates is a historical mistake; this is also what Dr Yacoub Al- Ghoneim says.
 - (3) For more, see Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), 1613 – 1800, part 1, 4th ed.,p. 78-100.
 - (4) J. J. Saldanha, "*min kitab shu'un al- kuwait 1896-1904*" (From the Book on Kuwait's Affairs 1896-1904), translated by Fattouh Al- Khatrash "*al-tareekh al- siyasi lil-kuwait fi 'ahd mubarak, dirasa wathaiqiya muqarana bil muarikheen al- khalijiyyin*" (The Political History of Kuwait Under Mubarak, a Comparative Document Study between the Gulf Historians), 1405 AH/1985 CE, p. 11.
 - (5) Kuwait Political Agency: Arabic Documents 1899-1949, 13 volumes, Cambridge, Archive Editions.
 - (6) See Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*al-kuwait 'abr al- qurun*" (Kuwait through the Ages), prev., p. 17.

2. From Sheikh Mubarak's document (1912 CE): "Kuwait is an arid land where our ancestor Sabah arrived in 1022 AH"⁽¹⁾ (1613 CE)⁽²⁾.
3. The book "*Tareekh Najd wa hawadithha*" (The History of Najd and its Incidents) by Saleh Bin Othman, where it is overtly indicated "The foundation of Kuwait 1022 AH/1613 CE"⁽³⁾.
4. The judge Mohamed Bin Othman Bin Saleh who mentioned in his book "*Rawdat al-natherin 'an maather 'ulamaa Najd wa hawadith al-sinin*" (The Garden of Those Who See On the Deeds of Najd's Ulemas and the Incidents of the Years) that Kuwait was founded in 1022 AH/1613 CE).
5. al Khalifa's Mosque, which was built in 1714 CE, and had the date of its construction engraved on it⁽⁴⁾. a palm tree lot offered by Bani Khalid to the Utub after their help in the conquest of Qutaif was erected there, in the area of al-Mubarraz in al-Ahsa. The endowment is confirmed in the *Waqf* Document.
6. Khalifa Bin Hamad al-Nabhany's indication in his book *al-Tohfa al-Nabhaniya* (The Nabhany Masterpiece) that the Ibn Bahr's Mosque in Kuwait was restored in 1745 CE; this

(1) Kuwait Political Agency: Arabic Documents 1899-1949, 13 volumes, Cambridge, Archive Editions.

(2) The text was found in the Political Arab Documents in Kuwait, part 3, p. 602, dated 11 March 1913, see See Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*al-kuwait 'abr al- qurun*" (Kuwait through the Ages), prev., p. 16.

(3) Salih Bin Uthman Bin Hamad, "*tareekh najd wa hawadithha*" (History of Najd and its Incidents), Al- Dar Press, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1993, p. 13.

(4) And planted on it a lot of palm trees in Al- Ahsa. The picture of the planted Al- Mubarraz palm trees in Al- Ahsa on the Al Khalifa Mosque, al- Watheeqa mag., Bahrain, No. 1, p. 96.

supports what al-Shamlan also pointed to⁽¹⁾, that the restoration process usually happens one hundred years after construction, where mosques are concerned⁽²⁾.

7. The manuscript “al-Muwatta”⁽³⁾ was written in Failaka in 1682 CE⁽⁴⁾ by Mussai’id Bin Ahmad Musa’id Bin Salim. This means that there were scientists who wrote such manuscripts, writings, and others in Failaka. And since Failaka is an island of Kuwait, its settled life implies that Kuwait was founded some time before the writing of this book.
8. Also, al-Sabah points to Dutch cartographer J. Blaeu’s map in 1645 CE, and the French Nicolas Sanson’s in 1652 CE, and also the Dutch map R. & J. Ottens of the Ottoman Empire at the dawn of the eighteenth century, where the borders between Kuwait⁽⁵⁾ and Basra appear clearly.

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- (1) See Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 113.
 - (2) See also Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait ‘abr al- qurun*” (Kuwait through the Ages), prev., p. 15.
 - (3) Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait tuwajih al- atma’ al- ‘iraqiya*” (Kuwait Faces Iraq’s Greediness), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 1418 AH/1998 CE, p. 15.
 - (4) Mussai’id Bin Musa’id Bin Salim, “Al-Muwatta” manuscript, written in 1099 AH/1682 CE, photos printed and published in Kuwait thereafter.
 - (5) Before folding the pages of this chapter, it is important to present a list of the most important western maps where Kuwait was mentioned in old times. Jan Linschoten’s map, 1596; Nicolas Sanson’s map, 1652; the Ottens brothers’ map, before 1737; Van Keulen’s map, 1753; ... mid eighteenth century; Arrowsmith’s map, 1829; ...1856; Palgrave’s map, 1862; Carl Ritter’s map, 1867; Johnston’s map, 1874; the map of the Arabian Peninsula from Harmsworth new Atlas, nineteenth century; the map of Edinburgh’s Institute of Geography, early nineteenth century; and the maps recorded in the book “*al-kuwait, qiraa fil kharait al- tarikhiyah*” (Kuwait, Reading Historical Maps), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 3rd ed., 2000.

Based on the previous evidence and indications which she handled extensively in a number of her historical books, Dr al-Sabah set the date of Kuwait's foundation at 1613 CE precisely, a date acknowledged by a number of historians and researchers, and also by the Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, and the Historical Society of Kuwait.

The problematic of the succession of Kuwait's rulers from al Sabah

Undoubtedly, the clues and evidences which led to settling for 1613 CE as the date of Kuwait's foundation represent an important historical reality on which to draw a clearer image of the course of Kuwait's history. But this proposal also led to a new query on the accurateness of the historical succession of the rulers of Kuwait between 1613 CE and 1752 CE, because Sabah I's governance in 1613 CE would not explain the one hundred and thirty nine years' time gap. Thus, settling for 1613 CE as an accurate date for Kuwait's foundation would mean that there was a mistake in the known succession of the rulers from al Sabah, or else that there have been other rulers who have governed after the foundation. Nevertheless, as long as there are no proofs that after the foundation and settlement of the Utub in Kuwait, there were rulers who ruled in a systematic way other than the al Sabah, then "they are the first to have built stone houses in the city of Kuwait. They are also the first to have taken it as headquarters, and no foreigner owned it before them", as al-Rasheed⁽¹⁾ confirms. There remains the fact that there are missing links or there are rulers who were not mentioned, and sources did not indicate the nature of the situation during their reign. For example, Sheikh Mubarak I whom the Dutch document "La Haye Den Haag"

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 106.

referred to by saying: "The people of Kuwait are independent from the Sheikh of the desert [meaning Bani Khalid] to whom they nevertheless pay a small contribution... a number of Sheikhs rule them, and they all live in relative harmony; the chief is Mubarak Bin Sabak [Mubarak Bin Sabah]"⁽¹⁾. There is no mention of this ruler in the succession of the al Sabah rulers, and this is a proof confirming the necessity to look into this problematic, and rearrange anew the order of the succession tree of al Sabah⁽²⁾. This might at least temporarily end the debate, after it has been determined in a more precise and systematic way by Dr al-Sabah, that 1613 CE is the date of Kuwait's foundation.

In the end, as we review the emergence of power and its formation in Kuwait, we can remark that the early concept of the Emirate, authority, and the surrounding society, simultaneously signified a kind of political society. Particularly that the choice of the rulers (al Sabah) happened in accordance with the nature and the needs of the formed simple society of that time. This reciprocated harmony between the tribes and the families who went down to Kuwait and settled there - headed by the Utub and those who accompanied them and were subsequently followed by other migrations towards them - played an important role in forming a frame of cooperation, and in the appearance of the shape of the Emirate socially and politically. It could not have been announced or practised in a broader manner at that time,

(1) B. J. Slot & Alan Rush. See Persica, vol. 8, p. 163-185; source of document B. J. Slot, "Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity", prev., p. 140-141.

(2) Al- Rasheed also says that Sabah I did not rule at the beginning of Kuwait's foundation; see Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 109; see also Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*Mubarak al- awal wa abna'uh, musahamathum fi khidmat al- watan*" (Mubarak I and His Sons, Their Contribution to the Nation's Service), prev., p. 142.

perhaps because of having to face dangers, or because of the pressure this new society in Kuwait would have been exposed to, notably from the existing (and lurking) powers, had the new authority shown an inclination implying wanting to make a change in the actual situation, or to strengthen a pivot other than the one prevailing and accepted at that time.

CHAPTER SIX

Kuwait's Rulers and Its Administration, Since Its Foundation Until 1896 CE

- The triumvirate.
- The first ruler of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah I.
- Manifestations of foreign sovereignty during Sheikh Sabah I's reign.
- Sheikh Abdullah I Bin Sabah's reign.
- Kuwait, a new power in the region, and the end of the triumvirate era.
- Common rule with the merchants.
- Kuwait, Basra's replacement.
- al-Raqa's incident.
- Relationship with the Ottomans.
- Kuwait and the conquest of Bahrain.
- Kuwaiti-Saudi relations during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah I, and the Saudi expeditions to Kuwait.
- Kuwait builds its first wall.
- Sheikh Jaber I Bin Abdullah al-Sabah, 1814-1859 CE.
- The reign of Sheikh Sabah II Bin Jaber, 1859-1866 CE.
- The reign of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah II, 1866-1892 CE.
- Kuwait and the Ottoman expedition to al-Ahsa, 1871 CE, and the justification of the principle of historic right subsequently.
- The reign of Sheikh Muhammad Bin Sabah 1892-1896 CE.

“Kuwait was not ruled by any foreigners, but only by the people who founded it, and none but them solely ordered and forbade, with the increasing enemies surrounding them like a bracelet around the wrist.”

(Shaikh Abdul Aziz al-Rashid)

Foreword:

Talking about Kuwait's political specificities and the aspects of governance there at the early beginnings after foundation, necessarily leads us to talk about the rulers who governed it from al Sabah family, and before whom there was no known ruler to have governed Kuwait and administered its affairs.

After the Utub settled and founded their new homeland in Kuwait, after the formation and completion of the entity uniting these immigrant tribes and families and their followers from the new inhabitants, and after the process of foundation, it was necessary that all be gathered under the authority managing the country's affairs. Surely, reviewing the historical material on how al-Sabah family took power, on their leadership of this nascent society at its early beginnings and their driving it to development and human prosperity, will help us to form opinions and see how al Sabah ruled Kuwait. It will also help us to understand this near past of the Emirate, and how this simple tribal society was able to put order in its affairs, far from the normal usual tribal formations. In addition to how it became a distinct civil society in the region in a short period of time; and how its rulers were able to preserve it, and bring it out as a safe nation, and also a hub of migrations from other neighbouring areas.

The Triumvirate

In his article dated 1819 CE on "The Utub Arabs in Bahrain", Francis Warden, Assistant Resident in the Gulf, said that three prominent Arab tribes, namely Bani Sabah, the Jalahma and Bani Khalifa, who were allied for benefit and ambition purposes, had seized a spot of land on the north-western shore of the Gulf, called Kuwait... He added that the three tribes had agreed that Bani Sabah would take over governance, the Jalahma would manage and control maritime navigation, and Bani Khalifa would

specialise in trade⁽¹⁾. The allied chiefs were “Sabah Bin Jaber, Khalifa Bin Muhammad, and Jabir Bin Rahma⁽²⁾. Some commented on this simple alliance saying: There was nothing to differentiate between the Sheikh and the other people. The Sheikh was not a ruler or a Sultan, but alike the Sheikh of the tribe⁽³⁾, consulting his people in everything concerning his town, especially in trade matters, as stated by Abu-Hakima⁽⁴⁾.

In his book “*Saba’ik al-‘Asjad*” (Gold Bars), Sheikh Uthman Bin Sanad al-Basri said: “The father of the mentioned one delegated him to conclude matters and revoke them to him; before a pitiful and humiliating fragment reached him, as they followed him to direct their opinions and they entrusted him with their affairs completely. He would enforce them, mend their

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- (1) See Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al-kuwait ‘abr al- qurun*” (Kuwait through the Ages), prev., p. 40; see also Francis Warden, “Extracts from brief notes relative to the rise and progress of the Arab tribes of the Persian Gulf”, prepared in August 1819”, Bombay, Bombay Education Society’s Press, 1856; under Utubee Arabs, Bahrain, I.S.B.O, vol. XXXIV, p. 362-372. See also Imad Mohamed Al- Atiqi, “*wujud al- khalifa wal-utub fil-ahsa min khilal al- wathaiq al- mahaliya, ‘awd ‘ala bid*” (The Presence of Al Khalifa and the Ututb in Al- Ahsa, From the Local Documents, Back to the Start), al- Arab mag., parts 7/8, year 48, 2012, p. 356.
- (2) They agreed early upon the division of tasks between them, so Sheikh Sabah was in charge of ruling matters, Khalifa handled finances and commerce, and Jabir Bin Rahma managed sea work. For more, see Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz’al, “*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*” (Political History of Kuwait), part 1, p. 42-44.
- (3) Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 112; see also Hassan Qaid Al- Subaihi, “*al-kuwait (1756-1992), ibhar fil-siyasa wal-tareekh*” (Kuwait “1756-1992” Navigating in Politics and History), 1st ed., Al- Fajr pub., Kuwait, p. 31.
- (4) Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*” (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 33.

cracks, bridge their gaps, and assemble them”⁽¹⁾. al-Qinai indicates that, at that time, circumstances imposed having someone managing the affairs of the Emirate, and that people get a commanding ruler to whom they would resort to solve their problems, and who would make decisions regarding the matters of the simple society at that time. He emphasised that choosing Sabah I⁽²⁾ to hold power, and choosing him for this specifically, was not random. “When the inhabitants of Kuwait increased in number, and were mixed with a group of immigrants, they found that there had to be an Emir, and their choice was Sabah I”⁽³⁾. Especially because, according to al-Shamlan, “his father was the leader of their clan since they were in Najd; he lived in Kuwait all year long and his job was on land, contrary to the majority who worked at sea”⁽⁴⁾.

As for Abu-Hakima⁽⁵⁾, he says: “The first leader chosen came from al Sabah family, in accordance with the Arab clans’ method”⁽⁶⁾. And when al-Rasheed refers to the person of Sheikh

(1) Uthman Bin Sanad Al-Basri “*saba’ik al- ‘asjad fi akhbar ahmad najl rizq al- as’ad*” (Gold Bars in the News of Ahmed, the Son of Rizk Al- Asaad), see prev., p. 18; see also Uthman Bin Sanad Al- Basri “*saba’ik al- ‘asjad fi akhbar ahmad najl rizq al- as’ad*” (Gold Bars in the News of Ahmed, the Son of Rizk Al- Asaad), reviewed by Jamal Al- Zanky, University of Kuwait, 2011, p. 16; see also Abdul- Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 62.

(2) They agreed on obedience in justice; see Al- Qinai, “*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*” (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 15.

(3) Al- Qinai, “*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*” (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 15.

(4) Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 116.

(5) Abu-Hakima, “*tareekh al- kuwait*”(History of Kuwait), 1st ed., part 1, Kuwait, Kuwait Government Press, 1967, see prev., p. 25.

(6) *Id.*, p. 27.

Sabah I, he says: "We don't know anything about him, except that he was the first of the rulers of al Sabah, and that he was the leader of that family"⁽¹⁾. Regarding the year he was nominated, al-Shamlan says: "We know nothing about the year he was chosen"⁽²⁾.

From what came previously, it seems that Sabah I was selected at that stage because he possessed the essential requirements for ruling, as he had a prominent role in ending conflicts and administrating the small town's matters. Additionally, he had the support and acceptance of his kin, as well as the other existing clans and tribes. The choice of Sabah I probably reflects a form of "tribal conciliation and council"⁽³⁾. After the Utub agreed on the choice of one of theirs to become the ruler of the city after its foundation – what was to be called the "triumvirate" or tripartite rule⁽⁴⁾ –, it became the right of this ruler, Sabah I, to act upon

(1) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 109.

(2) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 117.

(3) *Shura* is where the ruler consults the notables, the elderly and the knowledgeable of society's issues, where the matter requires consultation, and where it concerns the country facing an unexpected obstacle. The ruler has no right to refuse or object to what the group have agreed upon. This is what was agreed upon during the coalition between the three tribes, Al Sabah, the Jalahma, and Al Khalifa. This reinforced the rule of Al Sabah and gave the people some kind of satisfaction. For more, see the study of the researcher, Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, "*tatawur al- 'ilaqa al- tareekhiya bayn al sabah wal-tujar fil-kuwait munth al- nashaa hatta 'ahd al- shaykh 'abdullah al- salim*" (Historical Development of the Relations between Al Sabah and the Merchants in Kuwait since Foundation till Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim's Era), Arab Journal for the Humanities, Kuwait University, Academic Publication Council, 2009.

(4) Al-Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 16; see also Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History =

what he thought was best for the Emirate politically, economically, socially, and also judicially⁽¹⁾. Sabah I became, to use the standards and terms of our modern era, the representative of the society in policymaking and execution, and in conflict resolution; as well as the responsible for the administration of all of the Emirate's affairs, and for the preservation of security there⁽²⁾.

Kuwait during the reign of Sabah I

With time, Sabah I's authority was largely strengthened in the different parts of Kuwait⁽³⁾. These tribal groups (al Sabah, al Khalifa and the Jalahma) were able to become the first nucleus

= of Kuwait), see prev., part 1, p. 43; see also Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), part 1, p. 108. Also Ahmed Al- Rasheedi, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, dirasa fi nashaat dawlat al- kuwait wa tatawur markazha al qanuni wa 'ilaqatha bil-dawla*" (Kuwait from Emirate to State, Study of the Rise of the State of Kuwait and the Development of its Legal Status and its Relation to the State), see prev., p. 33.

- (1) The shape of the society and the fact that it was a simple one made it rely on counselling and the exchange of opinions. For more see Association of Social Workers, "*malamih fi tatawur al- mujtama' al- kuwaiti*" (Aspects from the Development of the Kuwaiti Society), collection of lectures from the 13th cultural season of the Association of Social Workers in 1985, 1st ed., Kuwait, Association of Social Workers pub., 1985, p. 131.
- (2) To know about the organisational responsibilities given to and practised by the ruler, transitions, properties and development of authority, see Samuel Huntington, "The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century" [Arabic], translated by Abdul-Wahhab 'Alloub, 1st ed., Cairo, Ibn Khaldun Centre for Development Studies, Souad Al Sabah for Publishing and Distribution, 1993, p. 86-90.
- (3) Ahmed Mustafa Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh sharqy al- jazirah al- arabiyah, nashaat wa tatawur al- kuwait wal-bahrain*" (History of the Eastern Arabian Peninsula, Emergence and Development of Kuwait and Bahrain), translated and reviewed by Mohamed Amin Abdullah, 1st edition, Volume I, Beirut, Dar Maktabat al- Hayah pub., 1984, p. 79.

that soon polarised many other groups of people that arrived to it⁽¹⁾. Some of them settled in the cities and villages, and others remained around Kuwait in the desert, looking for water and pasturages. These groups of people who settled and divided jobs among themselves were quickly able, under the rule of Sabah I in the city al-Kut, to practise specific economic activities imposed by the nature of the circumstances and the interests. The maritime activities and herding went side by side, as the most important activities these groups of people lived on.

During the reign of Sabah I, after Kuwait started stepping into its historical road towards becoming a centre attracting population, it was not strange that more migrants from neighbouring places arrived to Kuwait, as well as individual migrants from the surrounding desert, pressured by the unstable living conditions of the desert. In the light of Sheikh Sabah I's administration of the Emirate's affairs, the rest of the regulatory arrangements of the then nascent Kuwaiti society started to be determined gradually.

Manifestations of foreign sovereignty during Sheikh Sabah I's reign

The choice of Sabah I to rule Kuwait came from everyone's keenness to go beyond a historical era that Kuwait had lived without a binding entity. It had most generally relied on the sea, travelling, conquests, and moving trade. Choosing Sabah I at that stage widely participated in stabilising Kuwait's trade activities,

(1) Bani Khalid were with Al- Ajman, Al Murrah and Bani Hajar one of the four main tribes in the region of the Arabian Gulf's north coast. For more see Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*al-khalij al- 'arabi dirasat li tareekh al- imarat al- 'arabiya fi 'asr al- tawasu' al- europi al- awal 1507-1840*" (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates' History in the First Era of the European Expansion, 1507-1840), Dar al- Fikr al- Arabi, Cairo, 1985, p. 360-361.

and Kuwait started attracting many migrants who found a homeland where to settle there.

Actually, our specific point of interest here is to emphasize that, at the beginning of his reign, Sabah I⁽¹⁾ soon sought to have independence from Bani Khalid in decision-making, and hence he dealt directly with the Ottoman Empire. Sheikh Sabah headed a delegation and met the Ottoman *Wali*, to assure that the Utub wanted to live peacefully without causing harm to anyone⁽²⁾. This was the visit Dickson described by saying that in an assembly of *as'hab al-ra'y* (advocates of common sense). They agreed to send an envoy to the Turkish Pasha in Basra, so that he would explain to him that they were poor inhabitants who had emigrated from Najd, and who did not intend to harm anybody; the man chosen for this mission was Sheikh Sabah I⁽³⁾.

Concerning the reasons for this early visit, one cannot disregard that it might have occurred motivated by two aims. The first, a message of reassurance to the Ottomans; and the second, an attempt on the part of Sheikh Sabah I (or the Utub) to secure some immunity for themselves facing Bani Khalid, in case it were needed later. Especially because the latter soon sensed what Sheikh Sabah I was up to, and that Kuwait was seeking to take its Emirate far from their sovereignty. The Emir of al-Ahsa was sent to him, so Sheikh Sabah delegated his son Abdullah, and both parties made an agreement whereby al-Ahsa recognised the governance of Sheikh Sabah I of Kuwait, with the condition that Kuwait does not join the former's enemies⁽⁴⁾.

(1) See Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 109.

(2) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*al-khalij al- 'arabi dirasat li tareekh al- imarat al- 'arabiya 1840-1914*" (The Arabian Gulf, Studies of the Arab Emirates' History 1840-1914), see prev., p. 18.

(3) Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev., p. 9.

(4) See Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), prev., p. 42-44

Along the same line, Sheikh Sabah I may have also been keen on keeping good relations with the Dutch East India Company⁽¹⁾, which is what Lorimer pointed to⁽²⁾, also saying that the Port of Kuwait under the Utub's rule during that period, was mysterious and not prominent, particularly between the years 1753 CE and 1760 CE⁽³⁾. Sheikh Sabah I, according to al-Rasheed, had five sons, "Mubarak, Muhammad, Malik, Salman, and Abdullah"⁽⁴⁾. The latter, the youngest of the brothers, was the one who ascended the throne after the death of his father, Sheikh Sabah I.

Sheikh Abdullah I Bin Sabah's reign over Kuwait

By the time of Sheikh Sabah I's death, the shape and nature of power in Kuwait had largely been determined. Kuwait had started emerging as a flourishing city having its nature and specificity, and it had started attracting the attention of some of the neighbouring powers. As Sheikh Abdullah, the youngest of Sheikh Sabah's sons, ascended the throne, these specificities started appearing more obviously. And although Lorimer, relying on the East India Company's documents, pointed to 1762 CE as the beginning of

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- (1) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi*" (History of the Arabian Gulf), part I, see prev., p. 342.
- (2) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", see prev., part 3, p. 1503. See also Abdul-Amir Mohamed Amin, "*muqawamat imarat sharq al- jazeera lil taghalghul al- isti'mari al- europi*" (Resistance of the Emirates of the Eastern Peninsula to the Infiltration of European Colonialism), documentary research, Centre for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 1981, p. 60 and after.
- (3) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Department of History, see prev., p. 223.
- (4) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 109; see also Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 36.

Sheikh Abdullah's reign⁽¹⁾ - a date also given by Abu-Hakima - many historians⁽²⁾ did not mention the indication of this date.

Describing Sheikh Abdullah, al-Rasheed says: "Brave, wise, just, generous, clement"⁽³⁾, while al-Qinai describes him as "firm, close to righteousness, loving of justice, good politician, he didn't make any important decision without consulting his clan, and he did not contradict what they saw right. He ruled the Emirate for close to seventy years"⁽⁴⁾. He adds that Kuwait progressed during his reign, and its trade extended to India, Malabar, Yemen, and the Ottoman Iraq. As to al-Shamlan, he described him saying: "He has what proves excessive intelligence and strong consciousness"⁽⁵⁾.

Kuwait, a new power in the region

One can summarize the most important factors that facilitated the growth and flourishing of Kuwait after foundation as follows:

First: "The busyness of the powers", especially considering the weakness of the Persian and Ottoman authorities due to the constant conflict between them, which gave the opportunity to

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- (1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 36.
 - (2) Among them 'Uthman Bin Sanad Al- Basri and Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed.
 - (3) Al- Rasheed was the first one to mention the meeting which was held between Sheikh Abdullah and Bin 'Uray'ir himself; Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 213.
 - (4) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 13.
 - (5) Al- Shamlan, *Min tareekh al- Kuwait* (From the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 118. This is also what Abu-Hakima confirmed about Abdullah being the sole ruler rather than his brothers; he describes as his best qualities "courage and wisdom". See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 36.

the new emerging Sheikhdom of Kuwait to grow and flourish without fearing them.

Second: The changes which occurred to some powers like the first Saudi State, and the dismantling of the forces of Bani Khalid in the east of the Arabian Peninsula; they had been the ones to previously provide protection to Kuwait, especially from the dangers of the desert tribes.

Third: The keenness of the Western colonial powers to secure the activities of their trading agencies, hence the keenness to impose security and safety in the Arabian Gulf.

Fourth: Justice and governance based on *shura* (consultation).

Thus, during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah I, Kuwait witnessed political stability and a significant trade activity compared to what was happening nearby in Najd, al-Ahsa, Ottoman Iraq, and Persia. This was probably the main reason that attracted a large portion of the neighbouring population to migrate and settle in Kuwait. Particularly knowing Sheikh Abdullah's reputation of being fair and good, and of consulting his clan where his town's affairs were concerned; in addition to the fact that Kuwait did not impose high taxes on imports and exports as neighbouring areas did.

The end of the triumvirate era

After the agreement to divide responsibilities between al Sabah, al Khalifa and the Jalahma's, and the harmony that reigned around this accord during Sheikh Sabah I's reign⁽¹⁾, the latter's death may have put an end to this alliance. Sheikh Muhammad al Khalifa had believed that according to the agreement and the tripartite entente, power would go to him after Sheikh Sabah I's death, and

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh sharqy al-jazirah al-arabiyah, nashaat wa tatawur al-kuwait wal-bahrain*" (History of the Eastern Arabian Peninsula, Emergence and Development of Kuwait and Bahrain), see prev., p. 94.

governance would alternate, which did not happen. Sheikh Abdullah al-Sabah was chosen as the new ruler of the Emirate succeeding to his father, thus rooting governance and authority in al Sabah only. Sheikh Muhammad Bin Khalifa decided thereafter to emigrate, and after al Khalifa's emigration, Sheikh Abdullah al-Sabah decided to evacuate the Jalahma, the third element of the triumvirate, and hence became the absolute sole ruler.

Some, however, see that the richness and wealth acquired by al Khalifa due to their maritime trade businesses changed their view of the alliance between them, al Sabah, and the Jalahma. Francis Warden says that the accumulation of fortune made al Khalifa aspire to separation from the others to be the sole owners of that wealth coming from trade⁽¹⁾. This concurs with what Kniphausen wrote in his report: "Muhammad Bin Khalifa is rich and owns a big number of ships"⁽²⁾. In his analysis of why Sheikh Abdullah ended the triumvirate and why al Khalifa emigrated, Abu-Hakima attributes it to ambition and looking for better opportunities to expand, extend power, and build more fortunes. He points to the fact that Sheikh Muhammad al Khalifa explained to Sheikh Abdullah al-Sabah, to which extent they could all acquire more wealth would they go down to the region rich in pearls located on the coast of the Gulf near Bahrain and Qatar. Sheikh Abdullah agreed to that, and al Khalifa left, later followed by the Jalahma⁽³⁾. As to Khaz'al, he says that the end of the triumvirate

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 63.

(2) For more regarding this problematic, see Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), prev., p. 107; see also Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*Mubarak al- awal wa abna'uh, musahamathum fi khidmat al- watan*" (Mubarak I and His Sons, Their Contribution to the Nation's Service), prev., p. 141.

(3) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 63-64.

came because it was the wish of al Khalifa after they saw that they possessed the elements that would enable them to be rulers in other places⁽¹⁾. al-Rasheed recalls a local narrative where it is said that al Khalifa left when the problems between Kuwait and Bani Kaab came up: "They left at the first movement of Bani Kaab, because they saw that staying was an unbearable humiliation. In the end they were the rulers of Bahrain, and the others remained armed with patience until they achieved the great victory which cleared the pages of their history"⁽²⁾.

Common rule with the merchants

With the emigration of al Khalifa and the evacuation of the Jalahma from Kuwait by Sheikh Abdullah, the triumvirate was over, and Sheikh Abdullah became the main ruler, undisputedly. However, facing this new situation and the loss of an important source of income to the Emirate, it was imperative that Sheikh Abdullah looks for an alternative to secure his continuing to manage the Emirate's affairs and its economic interests without being affected. Hence was the agreement between Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah, the merchants and the ship owners, which were the two richest and most influential categories of the population due to the financial power they enjoyed. They were quickly able to fill the financial gap left behind the absence of al Khalifa and the Jalahma. They thus became the two major partners in the governing administration, and one of the most important financial inflows to the ruler. This may be called the stage of commercial alliance with the authority; it lasted for a long time, even after petroleum was discovered. It probably marked the emergence of what researchers call the alliance between "merchants and rulers",

(1) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 46-47.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 112.

particularly because both parties realised their need for each other. Merchants needed protection and legitimacy for their businesses, as well as preservation of their position and strong influence. And on the other hand, to the rulers, trade was a pillar on the road of the ruling system's reinforcement, and an important source of financial income which could not be ignored, especially after the emigration of al Khalifa and the Jalahma, and the loss of a big part of financial resources resulting from this exodus from Kuwait⁽¹⁾.

Kuwait, Basra's replacement

During the Persian siege and occupation of Basra between 1775 CE and 1779 CE, the postal dispatch route from Basra was shifted to dispatch from Kuwait as a secure substitute. The first recorded postal journey was from Kuwait to Aleppo on the 10th of July 1775 CE. Also, several ships changed their route to Kuwait which was a safe trade route used to discharge the merchandise of the British East India Company⁽²⁾. Thereon, Latouche, the British Agent in Basra in 1776 CE, confirms the emergence of the economic importance of Kuwait as a substitute to Basra by saying that if it were possible to keep al-Qurain neutral, it would enable the caravans to travel, and that it could be a substitute to al-Zubayr if it remained independent⁽³⁾.

(1) Dr Ghanim Al- Najjar was the first one to give the appellation of "common rule" to this kind of link between the government and the merchants.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Abdul-Ghani Ibrahim, "*britannia wa imarat al- sahel al- omani, dirasa fil- 'ilaqat al- ta'ahudiya*" (Britain and the Emirates of the Omani Coast, a Study of Treaty Relations), 1st ed. Baghdad, 1978, p. 47.

(3) See Najat Abdul-Kadir Al- Jassim, "*qadaya fil tareekh al- siyasi wal ijtimai' li dawlat al- kuwait*" (Issues in the State of Kuwait's Political and Social History). 1st ed., 2000, p. 12.

Moreover, in the period between 1793 and 1795 CE after a conflict between Manesty⁽¹⁾, the British Agent, and the Ottomans, the residency of the British East India Company was moved from Basra to Kuwait. Abu-Hakima indicates that this shift proves that the choice of Kuwait as a settlement for the new British activity and their company was because the Ottomans had no control over Kuwait, and that it was not subdued to them⁽²⁾.

al Raqa Battle 1783 CE

Obviously, after flourishing commercially and economically due to the preference of some merchants to its port, Kuwait aroused the jealousy of some powers nearby, mainly Bani Kaab who owned a port facing Kuwait on the other side. They had also benefitted, due to their position, from Basra's predicaments at the hands of the Persians (1775-1779 CE), and they saw that Kuwait's perpetual flourishing had a direct effect on their maritime trade in the region, and narrowed down their maritime dealings. Therefore, they had to look for a hidden reason that would justify their attack on Kuwait.

al Raqa battle between Kuwait and Bani Kaab was the first maritime battle in the history of the Emirate. al-Qinai states: "al-Raqa is a well-known place near Failaka. The reason behind

(1) British Agent Samuel Manesty (in charge of the British Trade Agency). After the misunderstandings and difficulties encountered with the Ottoman civil servants, he decided in February 1792 to address a letter to the British ambassador in Istanbul. He asked him to try to convince the Sublime Porte to make Basra's *mutasarraf* punish the Jewish community and impose fines on them. When this request was not fulfilled, Manesty removed his flag from the centre on the 30th of April 1793, and he withdrew from Kuwait. For more, see Khalid Salim Mohamed, "*al-kuwait fil-qarnayn al thamen 'ashr wal-tasi' 'ashr, hawadith wa akhbar*" (Kuwait in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries), prev., p. 134.

(2) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 110-111.

the battle was that Bani Kaab had their eyes on Kuwait, but Kuwait's people refused to be subjected to their grievances”⁽¹⁾.



Whereas al-Shamlan says: "Bani Kaab had their eyes on Kuwait, and they took the engagement of Mariam, Sheikh Abdullah's daughter as an excuse for that. Sheikh Abdullah had consulted the people of Kuwait, but they had refused the engagement of the Sheik's daughter to the Kaabis, and this was when the battle took place”⁽²⁾. al-Rasheed points to it saying: "When al Sabah felt their own strength, they refused to answer Bani Kaab, about the expenses they demanded from them, so what happened, happened”⁽³⁾, he meant the battle.

About the battle’s description and how it happened, al-Qinai says: "When Abdullah Bin Sabah learned about their expedition to Kuwait, he equipped the ships with the human and arms' forces he had. The ships met in Raqa, and for the Kuwaiti's good

(1) Al- Qinai, “*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*” (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 18.

(2) Al- Shamlan, *Min tareekh al- Kuwait* (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 120.

(3) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 111.

fortune, the wind was still and the enemy's ships were dispersed, while Kuwait's ships were small advancing by rowing, so they kept surrounding the Kaabi's ships one after the other. And the Kaabi's ships were big, and could not communicate because the wind was still. So the Kuwaiti ships would achieve one and move to the other, and so on until they achieved most of the enemy's ships, and only a few were saved. The victorious Kuwaitis returned, and took a number of the enemy's ships with their ammunition, and this victory became an augury of prosperity to the people of Kuwait"⁽¹⁾.

As to al-Rasheed, he says: "Sheikh Abdullah's messenger went and said... What is it with you? You did not defeat the enemy? Why were you not up to your Emir's opinion of you? Do you think a man dies before his day? No, by God it is only one death, but in grandeur better than in humiliation".

In any case, whether the battle took place because of al Sabah's wish to stop and downsize the ambitions of Bani Kaab regarding their Emirate, or whether it was a concealed reason through which Bani Kaab tried to conquer Kuwait, the importance of the battle of Raqa lies in the fact that it was the first real test to Kuwait and its capability to defend itself, especially when the danger came from the sea. The Kuwaitis were able to prove their capability facing an important naval power such as Bani Kaab, who possessed one of the greatest fleets, the strongest in the north of the Gulf at that time. The Kuwaitis returned with a lot of artillery and cannons that they took as war trophy and erected on the beach to immortalize their victories⁽²⁾.

(1) Al-Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 18.

(2) Sheikh Barakat subsequently attempted another campaign to restore Bani Kaab's dignity and take revenge for what had happened in Raqa. However, this campaign was not achieved because there was internal refusal from the Kaabis, as well as annoyance. There was also an insurgency against Sheikh Barakat, which ended in his assassination. See Rashid Al- Farhan, "*mukhtasar tareekh al- kuwait*" (Summary of Kuwait's History), Al- Afaq Library, 2nd ed., 2012, p. 89.

Sheikh Abdullah's relations with the Ottomans

The keenness of Kuwait's rulers to secure their Emirate in the first beginnings of their settlement was an important factor to contain all what would have led to clashes with the Ottomans, and getting involved in a military combat against them, the result of which would have been determined beforehand in favour of the most powerful. Therefore, the Ottomans' recognition of some sort of nominal sovereignty was a necessity imposed by actual circumstances and interests. On the other hand, the Ottomans suffered from problems and challenges in Iraq resulting from internal revolts and instabilities, especially between the two *vilayets* (provinces) of Baghdad and Basra, as the Pasha of Baghdad's authority was higher, while the Pashas of Basra tried every way to be separated from Baghdad's authority. Additionally, Baghdad's tribes played an important role in the economic and social life in the south of Ottoman Iraq. These tribes were always refusing submission to the Ottoman authority, and often rebelled against it. Because of this reality, continuous revolts arose in the face of the Ottoman *Wali* in Basra. The most important of these were the revolt and rebellion of the two tribes, al-Muntafiq and Bani Kaab, who are considered to be among the most defying of the Arab tribes to Ottoman authority, as sometimes they went as far as coups against the Ottoman *walis*, and they approached Persians just to spite the Ottomans.

Kuwait in its turn was affected by what was happening during the conflict between the Ottomans and the tribes in Basra, especially after the plague epidemic in 1773 CE and the recess of Basra's economic situation this entailed. Migrations started to follow one another towards Kuwait fleeing this epidemic. This also made many ships and merchants change their destination to Kuwait, especially because it had low taxes at the time. This led to the flourishing and revival of Kuwait's markets and trade. Kuwait also benefitted directly from the expansion of its activities and

reinforcement of its commercial influence in the region. Perhaps Sheikh Abdullah who inherited a stable relationship with the Ottomans, succeeded in taking advantage of these circumstances to make more friendly relations with the Ottoman authority. The only thing that ruined the atmosphere was the *mutesellim* of Basra seeking asylum in Kuwait in 1787 CE⁽¹⁾, because of his discord with the Ottoman State. The escape of Mustafa Agha al-Kurdi, Sheikh Thwaini, and others who had participated in the revolt against the Pasha of Baghdad, to Kuwait seeking refuge created a motive for the Ottomans to threaten to resort to power⁽²⁾ if Sheikh Abdullah was to continue protecting them. This was the consequence of Thwaini entering and conquering Basra with great power, and proclaiming himself Basra's ruler. He took hold of the Ottoman fleet, and Mustafa Agha shared it with him. Baghdad's *Wali* asked Sheikh Abdullah al Sabah to submit the refugees to him, a demand that was met with rejection by Sheikh Abdullah. In a letter from the British Agent in Basra to Sheikh Abdullah, dated 17 April 1789 CE, the former informed the latter that Baghdad's *Wali* was planning an attack on Kuwait if he refused to submit the refugees. However, Sheikh Abdullah, according to Abu-Hakima, replied by saying "that he was ready to fight the Pasha in order to protect his guests"⁽³⁾.

This refusal and defiance from Sheikh Abdullah al-Sabah's part gives clear evidence of the capability of Kuwait at that time to show some kind of direct defiance to the Ottomans. By welcoming the first case of political asylum on its land as an independent

(1) "*Al-kuwait wujudan wa hududan*" (Kuwait, Presence and Boundaries), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 3rd ed., 1997, p. 60.

(2) Sabri Falih Al- Hamaidi, "*al-kuwait nash'uha wa tatawurha, 1750-1871*" (Kuwait, Foundation and Development, 1750-1871), see prev., p. 57.

(3) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 96-97.

region and sovereignty, it even appeared as an asylum to the rebels against the Ottoman authorities and their *walis* in Basra and Baghdad.

Kuwait and the Conquest of Bahrain

After al Khalifa and the other Utub accompanying them emigrated to Zubarah in Qatar which they took as a new settling homeland, and with the continuing good relations between the Utub and Bani Khalid, the Utub (represented by al Khalifa) did not find noteworthy difficulties in Zubarah in Qatar, as they went down there and lived their normal lives. However, with Zubarah also, like Kuwait, keeping growing and flourishing, and with the increase of the population from the migrants, and since al Khalifa also aspired to govern, in addition to the financial powers they enjoyed, it was not strange that all these factors combine to divert al Khalifa's attention to head towards Bahrain and conquer it. Bahrain was one of the important regions of wealth and prosperity in the Arabian Gulf, because it was one of the most important places for pearl diving, in addition to its reputation of having a big number of palm tree plantations, the annual revenue of which was, according to Abu-Hakima, estimated at one hundred thousand rupees per year⁽¹⁾.

al-Nabhany mentions that in 1782 CE, during the arrival of some people to visit Bahrain, a person belonging to the al Khalifa was attacked. This attack caused a battle between the followers of al Khalifa and the Bahrainis. al Khalifa were able to defeat the Bahrainis who were ruled by Sheikh Nassir, the son of Sheikh

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 64; knowing that Bahrain at that time was under the rule of Bushehr's Arabs; therefore there was no need for Al Khalifa (and their ambitious chief) and their companions from the Utub to make Bahrain a main target to conquer and rule.

Nasr al Madhkour⁽¹⁾. Sheikh Nassir called for his father's help, and in fact, Sheikh Nasr prepared ships and forces to the rescue⁽²⁾, with the support of the Sheikhs of Bani Kaab, Bandar Rig and Hurmuz. On the other side, it was an expected matter that al Khalifa's succour would be their cousins al Sabah, as Sheikh Abdullah sent forces to support al Khalifa. Lorimer pointed to this, saying that Kuwait's fleet was made of boats, small and big, sailing to Zubarah on its way to rescue it⁽³⁾. Warden and Taylor also confirmed that Kuwait's role was important and determining in the conquest of Bahrain.

Kuwaiti-Saudi relations during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah I

The Wahhabi *da'wa* (preaching) or Wahhabi movement, as the historians usually call it⁽⁴⁾, is a reform movement that appeared at the hands of Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab⁽⁵⁾. The latter started spreading the principles of the *da'wa* which was based on the indivisible oneness (*tawhid*) of God and that He is singular with no partners (*shirk*). It was also based on following the way of the ancestors (*salaf*), on preaching to renounce innovations (*bid'ah*), and on purging Islam from myths, deception, and illusions

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- (1) The ruler of Bushehr was able, during his reign, to annex Bahrain, in cooperation with Mihana Nasir Al- Zu'abi, the ruler of Bandar Riq; and he tried to seize Al- Zubarah in 1777, but he was defeated.
 - (2) Al- Nabhany, "*Al-Tohfa Al- Nabhaniya, fi tareekh al- jazeera al- 'arabiya*" (The Nabhany Masterpiece, History of the Arabian Peninsula), see prev., p. 125-126.
 - (3) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", see prev., p. 839; see also Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 93.
 - (4) While its followers call themselves the *muwahiddun*, the *hanabila* or the *salaf*.
 - (5) Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al- Wahhab was born in 1703 in a place called "Uyayna in the province of Najd; his father Abd al- Wahhab Muhammad was the jurisconsult of Najd. He received his religious education at the hands of his father; he learned the Quran at an early age, then he started to learn grammar and the rules of the language, and some *fiqh* and *hadeeth* books according to the doctrine of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal.

in the Arabian Peninsula at that time. In addition, to fighting innovations and myths⁽¹⁾. These principles helped changing bad situations, both politically and religiously, so that many describe the *da'wa* saying “it became a mysterious national sentiment”⁽²⁾ which allowed everyone to move with a religious political background, which largely helped to deepen the national and spiritual belonging in everybody. The alliance between Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and the Emir Muhammad Bin Saud⁽³⁾, the founder of the First Saudi State and its capital al-Diriyah⁽⁴⁾ (1744-1818 CE), subsequently enabled the change of the course of the Arabian Peninsula's history, up until this very day.

Undoubtedly, this alliance between Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and the Emir Muhammad Bin Saud simultaneously threatened the influence of many existing emirates, small states, and sheikhdoms. It became a great danger for them, especially after the followers of the *da'wa* started imposing a new religious and political reality on the entire region, which required, consequently, rearranging the region's situation where politics and borders were concerned.

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- (1) For more, see Hussein Khalaf Al-Sheikh Khaz'al, “*tareekh al-jazeera al-'arabiya fi 'ahd al-shaykh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab*” (History of the Arabian Peninsula under Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab), p. 56 “muassis al-da'wa” (Founder of the *da'wa*); see also Abdul-Rehim Abdul-Rahman Abdul-Rehim, “*al-dawla al-saudiya al-ula (1745-1818)*” (The First Saudi State, 1745-1818), 2nd ed., Institute of Arab Research and Studies, 1975, p. 36.
 - (2) See Maimunah Al-Sabah, “*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*” (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), prev., p. 149.
 - (3) Imam Muhammad Bin Saud ascended to the throne of Al-Diriyah's Emirate in 1139 AH/1726 CE. For more see Amin Rihani, “*tareekh najd al-hadith*” (Modern History of Najd), 6th ed., Dar al-Jalil, Beirut, 1988, p. 40.
 - (4) Al-Diriyah's is located in the region of Al-'Arid, to the south of Najd; it is part of the Yamama province. Al-Diriyah's is the city where the *da'wa* and the state appeared simultaneously, so it became the basis of the state and the ruling headquarters after the coalition that took place between Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and Imam Muhammad Bin Saud.

Sheikh Abdullah later sent a letter to the Imam Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab enquiring about the truth of what this *da'wa* aimed to⁽¹⁾. This is what Ibn Ghannam mentioned, that Ibn Sabah asked Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab about what was attributed to him, so he answered his question, through which Sheikh Abdullah tried to know the nature of the *da'wa* and what it aimed to. a letter was found containing the answer of Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab: "And you who have been guided by God, don't think that those [he meant here those who believe in *awliya* or saints] love the righteous, but they are the enemies of the righteous, and you by God are the one who loves the righteous; because who loves a people obeys them, and whoever has loved the righteous and obeyed them believed only in God. But whoever disobeyed them, and yet call on them pretending that they love them, resemble the Christians who call on Jesus the son of Mary, and pretend to love him, but he disowns them"⁽²⁾.

Looking at this letter – if its attribution is correct – as the answer to Sheikh Abdullah, one notices its quiet, even smooth, impact, coming from the Imam Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and addressing Kuwait's Sheikh, particularly after having found that Kuwait's Sheikh showed some interest in the *da'wa*, and was eager to know about its principles and its propositions. Additionally, Imam Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's tribute to Sheikh Abdullah that he was a man who loved the righteous in the right way, as opposed to the believers in innovations and *awliya*, proves that there was an intellectual conciliation and rapprochement between the two parties. The request of Kuwait's Sheikh to have a detailed reply implies his trying to read both the

(1) See Abdullah Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, "*al-'ilaqat bayn al-dawla al-sa'udiya wal-kuwait*" (Relations between the Saudi State and Kuwait), see prev., p. 83.

(2) See complete letter in Hussein Bin Ghanam, "*rawd al- afkar wal-ifham li murtad hal al- imam wa ta'adud ghazawat thuwi al- islam*" (The Garden of Thoughts and Understanding to those Used to the Imam's State and the Multiplicity of Conquest of those with Islam), Ibn Batin ed., Cairo, 1368 AH, p. 215-216, copied from Abdullah Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, see prev., p. 86.

political and the religious sides, in order for him to be able to determine the political identity of the *da'wa*, and its link to the state. Yet, Kuwait's Sheikh did not take any supportive position⁽¹⁾.

It seems that Kuwait's Sheikh Abdullah, in spite of choosing not to take a stand of animosity against the *da'wa*⁽²⁾, found himself compelled to take a position against the Wahhabi movement, although he tried to mitigate the impact of this choice. He was keen on not showing any serious cooperation with Bani Khalid against the First Saudi State, so he was content with offering some help to the Sheikh of al-Muntafiq in his campaign against the Wahhabis, with the aim of preserving his political interest, which was undoubtedly in stopping the great expansion of the First Saudi State.

After the fall of al-Ahsa in the hands of the Saudis, the removal of the barrier that separated Kuwait from them in 1793 CE, and previously the death of Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in 1792 CE, Kuwait became a potential space for the Saudi expansion considering its relationship with Bani Khalid. More so, after the refuge of Zayd Bin 'Uray'r at Sheikh Abdullah's, escaping from the Saudis, and taking Kuwait as a place for him to settle. Thus, Kuwait became a military target for Saudi expansion⁽³⁾, and Sheikh Abdullah had two choices, either to face and defy, or to refuse what the Saudis imposed on him.

(1) For more, see Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, "*al-'ilaqat al- kuwait al- wahhabiya – (1744-1818)*" (Wahhabi Kuwait Relations - 1744-1818), *Waqai' Tareekhiya* mag., p. 273-291, January 2006, Cairo University, Faculty of Arts, Centre for Historical Research and Studies.

(2) It was at the same time a vision with some politics. The fall of Bani Khalid paved the way for the First Saudi State to expand, and opened the road for serious conflicts which would undoubtedly shed shadows on the independent state of the Emirate.

(3) Which extended from the Arabian Gulf in the east to the Red Sea in the west; and from Hadramaut and Najran in the south to the outskirts of Ma'an and Iraq in the north. See Ahmed Bin Hajar Al Butami, "*al-imam muhammad bin abdul-wahhab 'aqidatuh al- salafiya wa da'watuh lil-islahiya wa thanaa al- 'ulamaa 'alayh*" (Imam Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab, his Traditional Doctrine and his Appeal for Reform, and His Praise by the 'Ulema), Riyadh, 1999, p. 65-66; See Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, prev., p. 96.

The Saudi military expeditions to Kuwait

Kuwait was exposed to two Saudi military expeditions. The first military expedition was in 1793 CE, under the leadership of Ibrahim Bin Ofaisan⁽¹⁾ accompanied by the people of Najd. The importance of this expedition is that it was the first armed conflict between the Kuwaitis and the Saudis⁽²⁾. Almost 30 of Kuwait's men were killed in this confrontation⁽³⁾. The second military expedition was in 1797 CE, under the leadership of Manna' Abu-Reglain, accompanied by the people of al-Ahsa, whereby Kuwait lost 20 of its men. It is noteworthy, that in spite of the Saudis' victory, the losses of the Kuwaitis in both battles were small, and that both expeditions were limited in the number of forces in comparison with the other Saudi expeditions around the Arabian Peninsula⁽⁴⁾. This probably indicates that the idea of eliminating the existence of Kuwait and include it within the borders of the

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- (1) One of the famous leaders who led several battles for the First Saudi State; he was the most famous Saudi leader to have won important rounds in the military clashes with Bani Khalid.
- (2) Ibn Bishr and Ibn Ghanam indicate that the raids on Kuwait were consecutive since 1793; but these skirmishes did not lead to positive results; some even say that these campaigns against Kuwait had an important economic reaction when the route of the Indian trade was shifted from its way. For more, see Maimunah Al- Sabah, prev.
- (3) Hussein Bin Ghanam, "*rawdāt al- afkar wal-ifham li murtad hal al- imam wa ta'adud ghazawat thuwi al- islam*" (The Garden of Thoughts and Understanding to those Used to the Imam's State and the Multiplicity of Conquest of those with Islam), Dar al- Sherouk, Beirut, 1994, p. 187; see also Uthman Bin Bishr, "*'unwan al- majd fi tareekh najd*" (Glory's Name in Najd's History), 2nd ed., Saudi Arabia, p. 133.
- (4) In Al- Khurma dispute in 1797, which opposed the Saudis to the Ashraf in Mecca, for example, more than 1200 men died. This indicates that the First Saudi State had high warfare capabilities regarding the number of its forces, and how these were prepared.

Saudi State was not an imperative request for the First Saudi State. This might have been because Kuwait did not present real intellectual opposition to the Wahhabi *da'wa*. In other words, Kuwait did not stand in opposition against it, as the enemies of the *da'wa* did in al-Ahsa, Hijaz and Iraq. In fact, Sheikh Abdullah's position towards it was positive, and the lack of animosity probably had the followers of the Imam bear this thought about Kuwait, although it was never subdued to it, whether militarily or politically. It was also obvious that these expeditions only occurred after the death of Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in 1792 CE, and the fall of al-Ahsa in 1793 CE.

In truth, these campaigns launched by the Saudis against the Kuwaitis had an important effect, as Kuwait lived its first military challenge after the demise of its strong ally in the region, namely the power of Bani Khalid, which led it to confront this challenge on its own, relying on its power, capabilities, and sons.

The Kuwaitis also proved that their self-power could rescue them from the Saudis' big power, compared to their military force⁽¹⁾, as they were saved from falling before the Saudi power, the greatest in the Arabian Peninsula. This in itself is viewed as a victory when considering the limited Kuwaiti military power. This undoubtedly left to the Kuwaitis the legacy of the special feeling that it was imperative to develop self-capabilities by securing the city with a strong wall⁽²⁾, and to build a military power

(1) Although the Saudi historians considered that the two campaigns (Ibrahim Bin Ofaisan campaign, 1793, and Manna' Abu-Reglain's campaign, 1797) ended with the Saudi victory over Kuwait, the scene is undoubtedly completely different for Kuwait's people. See Hussein Khaz'al, *prev.*, part 1, p. 65.

(2) Ahmed Al-Rasheedi, "*al-kuwait min al-imara ila al-dawla, dirasa fi nashaat dawlat al-kuwait wa tatawur markazha al-qanuni wa 'ilaqatha bil-dawla*" (Kuwait from Emirate to State, Study of the Rise of the State of Kuwait and the Development of its Legal Status and its Relation to the State), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2nd ed., Kuwait, Dar Soad Al-Sabah, 1993, p. 89.

sufficient to defend the country from the dangers that threatened it. Kuwait could mobilise 5000 – 7000 warriors⁽¹⁾, and its naval forces were capable of pushing back any danger from the sea, especially that the only naval force the Saudis had was that of their allies al-Qasimi⁽²⁾, and the Kuwaiti fleet could overpower even these⁽³⁾.

Some historians believe that the presence of the British Trading Agency⁽⁴⁾ in Kuwait between 1793 CE and 1795 CE played a role to save it from falling in the hands of the Saudis⁽⁵⁾. Yet, the records of the British Trading Agency deny this, as the policy of the British at that time was based on non-interference in the internal conflicts in the region. Also, Brydges, the second in rank at the Agency in Kuwait at that time, reported that it was Kuwait's people who defended it⁽⁶⁾. Then, Kuwait, after the Saudi

(1) Samuel Barret Miles, "The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf", Part 2, London, 1960, p. 296, copied from Maimunah Al- Sabah, see prev.

(2) The power of the Qasimi tribe appeared in the second half of the twelfth *hijra* century. In the seventeenth century CE it became an important maritime power in the region.. However, they collide with Britain, which pushed the British to send naval campaigns to attack them. The British forces were only able to defeat them in 1819 after strong resistance. For more, see Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 141.

(3) *Id.*, p. 147, see also Maimunah Al- Sabah, prev., p. 156.

(4) Some historical sources say that the British Agent there (Manesty) had a cruiser remain in the port to protect the Agency. A troop of guards was also there, headed by an Indian officer. For more, see Maimunah Al- Sabah, prev., p. 150.

(5) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 129-133.

(6) See Hartford Jones Brydges, "A Brief History of the Wahauby", vol. 2, London, Bohn, 1834, p. 12-16.

attacks, shifted from the defending stage to the attacking stage, by the means of a brigade sent under the leadership of Mishary Bin Abdullah al-Hussain to attack some tribes belonging to the Saudis⁽¹⁾. And in spite of the death of the brigade's leader, the campaign reflected the Kuwaitis' feeling of confidence in their capacity to confront, and take their military forces out of their city.

Hence, from this review, it appears that Sheikh Abdullah did not meet the *da'wa* with animosity in its first stages; rather, he showed some sympathy and intellectual openness to hear its principles and discuss its thoughts, avoiding entering in a war against it. However, the political reality of the First Saudi State, as a religious state set out on the obligation to expand and propagate the principles of the *da'wa*, was a realistic reason to begin a political conflict with most of the powers surrounding this ambitious state, and Kuwait was not spared this conflict.

Kuwait builds its first wall

al-Qinai says: "In its beginning, Kuwait was under the protection of the Emir of Bani Khalid. When Bani Khalid's governance weakened, Kuwait became threatened from the south by al Saud, the rulers of Diriyah, and from the north by the emirs of al-Muntafiq. Therefore the Kuwaitis were obliged to build the wall in order to protect themselves and their fortunes, so they built it in a short period of time"⁽²⁾.

The construction of the wall took place (it was the first wall known in Kuwait), and it was about 750 meters long. It extended

(1) Hussein Bin Ghanam, "*rawdāt al-afkar wal-ifham li murtad hal al-imam wa ta'adud ghazawat thuwi al-islam*" (The Garden of Thoughts and Understanding to those Used to the Imam's State and the Multiplicity of Conquest of those with Islam), see prev., p. 202.

(2) Al-Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al-Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 18.

until the coast located to the north of the Baheeta slope, where al-Seif Palace stands today. The wall was simple, built from mud, and it had five gates. Abu-Hakima says: "The wall came at a period which necessitated its construction, particularly after the weakness and lack of influence of Bani Khalid. There is however a disagreement about the date it was built; was it before or after the fall of the state of Bani Khalid?"⁽¹⁾

Undoubtedly, the ability of the Saudis to tighten their control over al-Ahsa after putting an end to the influence of Bani Khalid there, and the expansion of the Saudi power till Kuwait and threatening it militarily, made Kuwait more conscious of the extent of the dangers and challenges it faced. The First Saudi State was not the only threat, as there was also the Ottoman Empire and the British as well.

Sheikh Jaber I Bin Abdullah al-Sabah, 1814-1859 CE

Ibn Bishr determines the date of Sheikh Abdullah I's death by the death of the Emir Saud Bin Abdul-Aziz. He says: "Saud's death was after the passing of thirteen days from the month of Rabi' al-awwal, 1220 AH/1814 CE... After three days from Saud's death, the chief of Kuwait Abdullah Bin Sabah al-Utubi died"⁽²⁾. By the time of Sheikh Abdullah's death, Kuwait had largely established its position and sovereignty in the northern region of the Arabian Gulf, and it became distinct from the other existing emirates and sheikhdoms. After the death of Sheikh Abdullah I, his son Jaber, who was in Bahrain when his father died, took over the governance of Kuwait. Muhammad al-Salman al Sabah

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 33.

(2) Uthman Bin Bishr, "*'unwan al- majd fi tareekh najd*" (Glory's Name in Najd's History), Mecca, 1930, part 1, p. 165-176.

was appointed as his deputy until his return⁽¹⁾. Upon Sheikh Jaber's return, he was given the Emirate's *bay'ah* (pledge of allegiance), in 1814 CE. Sheikh Jaber was reputed for being calm, loving of his people, having compassion for them. He was known by the nickname Jaber al-Aish (bread or living) because of his generosity, as al-Rasheed says: "Jaber was clement, generous – his generosity was given as an example, from the amounts he gave to charity for the poor and needy"; this is also what al-Shamlan said⁽²⁾. Whereas al-Qinai brings: "He used to cook rice for the poor; he had an arbour near his house where they gathered, and he served them food"⁽³⁾. British Captain J. Brooks also wrote about him during his journey in the Gulf in 1830 CE, saying that he was about fifty one years old, very intelligent, respected by his people, and that his family was a deep-rooted family, as they had been the sheikhs of a small tribe for four or five centuries⁽⁴⁾. Among Sheikh Jaber's most famous citations is what he said to his son: "We owe a lot to the people of Kuwait, and if I had a huge fortune, I would have fulfilled the needs of their poor and needy for the rest of their lives"⁽⁵⁾. al-Rasheed mentions that Sheikh Jaber had twelve sons, among whom Sabah who ascended the throne after his father⁽⁶⁾.

(1) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 116.

(2) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., 125.

(3) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 20.

(4) Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*al-kuwait 'abr al- qurun*" (Kuwait through the Ages), see prev., p. 36.

(5) Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 72.

(6) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 127.

Sheikh Jaber between the Ottomans and the English

al-Rasheed summarizes how Sheikh Jaber viewed the Ottomans by the Sheikhs words: "The Ottoman government is our neighbour"⁽¹⁾. When some tribes rebelled against the Ottoman rule in Basra (in addition to some tribes from al-Muhammarah), Sheikh Jaber helped the Ottomans bring order back there, as he was at the head of a naval fleet made of several ships which were able to subdue Basra and retake it. al-Rasheed says: "Sheikh Jaber was the one who subdued al-Muhammarah again and returned it to the Ottomans"⁽²⁾.

Also, during the reign of Sheikh Jaber, the rapprochement with the English was made with prudence and caution, although the British Agency had moved back to Kuwait in 1821 CE, after the Ottoman-British relations had worsened in Iraq as a result of trying to impose fees on the Agency's merchandise⁽³⁾. Hence, Kuwait's position as an important and safe substitute was directly reinforced.

In his report on the Arabian Gulf littoral dated September 1820 CE, Major Colebrook stated that Kuwait had a large port good for the ships' docking, that it was protected by a fortress equipped with twenty cannons, and that they worked in trade and lived peacefully⁽⁴⁾. In 1839 CE, Sheikh Jaber rejected the

(1) *Id.*, p. 125.

(2) *Id.*, p. 121.

(3) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), part 2, section 1, supervised by the History of Kuwait Writing Committee, Kuwait Government Press, Kuwait, 1963, p. 102. See also Habib Janhani, "*al-kuwait bayn al- ams wal yawm*" (Kuwait between Yesterday and Today), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2005, p. 24.

(4) See Yacoub Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*al-kuwait 'abr al- qurun*" (Kuwait through the Ages), see prev., p. 23; see also J. A. Saldanha, "Précis of Koweit Affairs, 1896-1904", India Office Library and Records-L.P.S/20C239Q, Simla, 1904.

request of the British Deputy Political Resident in Kuwait, that Kuwait raises the British flag. He also asked for some buildings to be constructed on its land. Yet, Sheikh Jaber affirmed to the British envoy that had this request been made by the Ottomans, it would also have been rejected, because it was not in Kuwait's benefit. al-Rasheed points to this issue by saying: "It is said that a clique of Englishmen landed in Kuwait during Jaber's reign and tried to convince him to fly the English flag, but he was not convinced". He added that they told him: "The Kuwaitis need India, their ships reach there, and it is one of the British colonies', so Sheikh turned a deaf ear to them, and finally, they asked for the permission to build, but he did not give it to them"⁽¹⁾. In 1841 CE, and in spite of the good relations established between Sheikh Jaber and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf (Samuel Hennell), the Sheikh also rejected the British East India Company's proposal to install a coal plant in Kuwait⁽²⁾, although it was sometimes pointed that Kuwait had signed⁽³⁾ a truce treaty with the British during Sheikh Jaber's reign. The treaty was similar to those signed with the Sheikhs of the Gulf's emirates. Under this treaty, Kuwait pledged to preserve the position and the freedom of sailing with the other regions, and to cooperate in fighting piracy, slave trade, and trafficking in the Gulf's waters. This treaty is among the first international treaties which Kuwait signed with Britain as an independent Emirate.

Undoubtedly, the deterioration of the political conditions in the Arabian Gulf at that time, and the severe conflict between the Ottomans and Persia were a motive for the British to bind the sheikhs and the emirates of the region with such treaties, in order to ensure the progress of trade and to guarantee the maritime route

(1) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 125-126.

(2) W. p. Johnston, Political Agent in Basra, No. 27, April 1860

(3) Political Agency: Arabic Documents, Archive Editions, 1994, p. 580 R.1505059.

to India, region of extreme importance to Britain. Abu-Hakima indicates that the British saw that their power extended from Oman in the south, to Kuwait in the North⁽¹⁾. And Lorimer said that the relations between the English and Sheikh Jaber were good⁽²⁾.

Lewis Pelly, the British Resident in Bushehr, mentions that Sheikh Sabah II transmitted from his father Sheikh Jaber, how, when he grew up, "he called his son Sabah and said: 'my son, you know I shall leave life, I am dying poor and not leaving you any fortune or money. But during my life, I have made sincere friendships with many people; you have to rely on these. Look at the different states around you in the region of the Gulf, you will find that they fell apart because of injustice or bad administration, while my emirate was getting stronger and was expanding. Hold on to my policies'"⁽³⁾. At another point, Pelly also said that among the manifestations of generosity in Kuwait, its Sheikh held banquets for the poor, and the Bedouins living outside the town also participated in these⁽⁴⁾.

Moreover, the period of Sheikh Jaber's reign is one of maritime flourishing in Kuwait. The construction of the big vessels known as *al-baghlah* (mule) and *al-batil* developed, and the Kuwaitis were able to reach the shores of India and Yemen to transport

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), part 2, section 1, see prev., p. 97.

(2) *Id.*, p. 98.

(3) Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al-akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), 3rd ed., Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, That al Salasil, Kuwait, 1985, p. 35.

(4) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 208.

merchandise therefrom and thereto⁽¹⁾. Stocqueler visited Kuwait in 1831 CE. He stayed there for four days, and indicated that Kuwait's population did not exceed four thousand people, that it had a wall surrounded by a trench and three gates, and that it had large streets. He clearly described the wall (it was the second wall, 1814-1816 CE) and the security ramparts, saying that it was made of mud, one foot thick, with three gates, and behind the wall, there was a trench with two paths and two cannons, and he said that Kuwait's streets were broad⁽²⁾. This matches what the traveller William Palgrave who described Kuwait as the most active port of the Gulf narrated⁽³⁾. Also, Captain Felix Jones from the British navy visited the port of Kuwait in 1839 CE, and said that Kuwait was healthy, generally speaking, especially after the "last plague"... that its people had no vegetables, not even a little, and that they sometimes got provisions from the ports on the Gulf⁽⁴⁾. Also during Sheikh Jaber's reign, the wall got seven

(1) Yacoub Youssef Al-Hajji, "*sina'at al sufun al-shura'iya fil-kuwait*" (Sailboats Industry in Kuwait), Kuwait, Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 1998, p.19; see also Maimunah Al-Sabah, "*al-kuwait hadara wa tareekh*" (Kuwait, Civilisation and History), prev., p. 95.

(2) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), part 2, section 1, see prev., p. 164-166.

(3) William Gifford Palgrave, "Personal Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia 1862-1863". A map of Kuwait was also published in his book "Central and Eastern Arabia", and the book was published in London in 1868. See also Khalid Harimis, "*al-imran fi dawlat al-kuwait, dirasa fi jughrafyat al-tanmiya*" (Construction in the State of Kuwait, a Study in the Geography of Development), prev., p. 33.

(4) Khalid Salim Mohamed, "*al-kuwait fil-qarnayn al thamen 'ashr wal-tasi' 'ashr, hawadith wa akhbar*" (Kuwait in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries), Dar Al-Uruba Library, Kuwait, 2nd ed., 2000, p. 88.

gates, and it was restored in 1845 CE to push back the attacks by the tribes of al-Muntafiq, led by Bandar al-Sa'doun⁽¹⁾.

The reign of Sheikh Sabah II Bin Jaber, 1859-1866 CE

Lewis Pelly, the Political Resident in the Gulf, described Sheikh Sabah II by saying that he was an imposing man who attracted the attention of anyone who met him. Pelly further said that Sheikh Sabah II stayed near Kuwait's gate. His eyes were not extinguished by his eighty years, his fatherly hands held a cloisonné watch which gave him stature in front of the others; his feet looked identical to the feet of Hercules of Florence; and the only constraint to a stranger entering Kuwait was that he had to leave his weapon at its gate⁽²⁾.

al-Qinai says: "Sheikh Sabah II ascended the throne after his father's death, and his father's life was his greatest helper; nothing happened during his reign that would disturb living. Trade progressed during his reign, a progress worth mentioning"⁽³⁾.

Among the most important events mentioned by the sources during Sheikh Sabah II's reign, is that he wanted to impose fees on the merchandise leaving Kuwait. However, the merchants opposed him and told him: "We do not accept that you make of our money what your father and grandfather did not do before you; we are all in obedience to you, our money is *waqf* (endowment) to what suits you and what you need"⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dawr al- badiya fi tashkeel malami al- mujtama' al- kuwaiti wa khasa' isah*" (The Role of the Desert in Shaping the Kuwaiti Society and its Characteristics), see prev., p. 85.

(2) Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al- akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), see prev., p. 36.

(3) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 22.

(4) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 131.

Also, one of the most important things declared by the foreign travellers, namely by Buckingham, was that during Sheikh Sabah II's reign, Kuwait always preserved its independence, even when Hurmuz, Muscat, Bahrain, and al-Ahsa succumbed to foreign rule; and that the Kuwaitis were the people in the Gulf most loving of freedom and progress⁽¹⁾.

Lewis Pelly as well, who had visited Kuwait twice in 1863 CE and 1865 CE described Sheikh Sabah II by saying that he was cheerful, strong, bearing the dignity of an eighty year-old, rough looking, but kind-hearted⁽²⁾. Pelly visited him in his house, and the Sheikh was sitting on a mat, according to Pelly, and the house was simple⁽³⁾. Actually, Pelly himself, in his account on the Arab tribes that was written during Sheikh Sabah II's reign, confirmed that Kuwait's wealth was due to its location, and that Kuwait's port kept preserving its natural advantages. As to the future, Pelly said that it was very important, considering the active development of the Gulf's trade, that Kuwait becomes a final destination port for the British ships, a coal plant, and a telegraph. He added that the port of Kuwait was better than the port of Basra. Pelly also expressed his surprise when he found the Sheikh of Kuwait receiving a copy of the "Oriental Paris Gazette"⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), part 2, section 1, see prev., p. 163; see also Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al-akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), see prev., "*malamih al-mujtama' al-kuwaiti wa khasa'isah qabl al-nift*", (Aspects of the Kuwaiti Society and its Characteristics before Petroleum), Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 2002, p. 20.

(2) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), part 2, section 1, see prev., p. 172.

(3) *Id.*

(4) Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al-akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, see prev., p. 41.

Finally, al-Rasheed, describing the era of Sheikh Sabah II's rule says: "There were no incidents that draw the attention, in his days, and there was no progress in Kuwait worth mentioning"⁽¹⁾.

The reign of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah II, 1866-1892 CE

While describing the person of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah II, al-Qinai said: "He was well-behaved, calm-tempered and gentle; he did not show any of the aspect of princedom and its grandiosity, he was not distinct from the rest of the Kuwaitis in his appearance and dress, and he lived soberly where it concerned food, clothing and home. He was loved by all the people"⁽²⁾. On the other hand, al-Rasheed was not interested in relating extended details on the events he participated in, as he said: "The moment he was in trouble, he got out of it"⁽³⁾. Yet, we believe that the most important event that occurred during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah II was the call for help by Jaber al-Kaabi (Bin Merdaw), the Sheikh of Kaab and Emir of al-Muhammarah. There was also his help to the Ottomans in conquering al-Qutaif and al-Ahsa in 1871 CE. The inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869 CE also happened during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah II, and much of the international trade moved there. This event undoubtedly played a role in downsizing the flourishing and commercial growth in the Emirate. This was also probably the reason why the events were rare, and why the international moves towards the Emirate were absent. However, we see these international moves reoccurring strongly to reach the peak towards the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 127.

(2) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 17.

(3) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 132.

Concerning the British view of Kuwait in that era, we see through some reports the British anxiety, and the careful surveillance of the Ottoman activity in the Gulf. The British Consul in Baghdad, Kemball, sent a letter to the British government in India on the 23rd of January 1867 CE, recording thereby that Kuwait relied in its flourishing on its trade activities and its seaport, especially that its trade and ships were active in merchandise transportation. It also said that the fatherly rule of their sheikhs helped in keeping the Kuwaitis away from practising piracy, which had spread in large areas of the other close maritime regions in the Gulf. The British Consul showed that the Ottomans' claims from Kuwait and its Sheikh did not exceed a small nominal *zakat* (tax)⁽¹⁾.

Kuwait and the Ottoman expedition to al-Ahsa, 1871 CE

The Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations remained generally free of sovereignty or submission, until the era of Namik Pasha's administration, Baghdad's *Wali* 1861-1868 CE. Namik Pasha tried to make the relations between Ottoman Iraq and the neighbouring areas stronger and more active, particularly with Kuwait which he tried to make directly following the Basra *kaza* (administrative division), whereof Lorimer wrote that Namik may have seriously considered invading Kuwait⁽²⁾. This may have been due to the difficulties the Ottoman Empire was encountering at that time, mainly its fear from Britain's increasing influence in the Gulf,

(1) FO. 195.803. A. Letter No. 2 of 1867. From Kemball to the Secretary of the Government of India, dated 23rd of January 1867.

(2) Due to increasing British influence there. Kuwait's ruler met this by asking Britain not to have their ships dock at the Kuwaiti ports. J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Department of History, Qatar, undated, p. 1520.

and its expansion on the coast of Oman and Bahrain⁽¹⁾. Namik Pasha thus tried to make Kuwait a *Qaymaqamiya* (provincial district) following Basra. He also tried to impose a permanent military garrison there, but his ambitions were met by firm rejection from Sheikh Abdullah II, the ruler of Kuwait.

The Ottoman archives show that when Midhat Pasha took over the administration of Baghdad, 1869-1872 CE, he dispatched a message to the Sublime Porte indicating that the British, after securing their influence in Bahrain, were getting prepared to conquer more places, and that one of these was Kuwait⁽²⁾. He called for looking into a re-evaluation of the relations with Kuwait, saying that doing so would be logical and necessary to support and reinforce the Ottoman influence in the region of al-Ahsa. It is also indicated that Midhat Pasha was in contact with Kuwait's ruler, and that he had invited him and some of the people to a meeting with him, explaining that this meeting would aim at protecting Kuwait and preventing it from being exposed to the British. In fact, the meeting took place, and the Kuwaitis expressed their satisfaction with this friendly approach. But at the same time, they showed their concern that any change in the nominal relations between Kuwait and the Ottoman Empire might necessitate that Kuwait commits to certain administrative duties imposed by the Ottoman Empire in the region, like in Basra particularly. The most important of these duties would be taxes; but Midhat Pasha reassured them that the Ottoman Empire had no greedy aspirations in Kuwait.

(1) For more, see Faisal Al- Kandari, “*‘ilaqat al- kuwait bil-dawla al- uthmaniya munthul-nashaa hatta 1289 AH/1872 CE*” (Kuwait’s Relations With the Ottoman Empire Since Foundation till 1289 AH/1872 CE), Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences pub.

(2) Ottoman Archives, class. I.DAH. 44930.

Midhat Pasha also openly declared that the Ottoman sovereignty had spread to Najd, and that an expedition would march there to consolidate Abdullah Bin Faisal Bin Saud's position there. The purpose of the expedition was to try to control his brother Saud Bin Faisal, end the conflict, and hold off the British danger. Considering the eagerness of the tribes loyal to the Ottomans to join the expedition, Sheikh Abdullah, the Sheikh of Kuwait, found himself - within the context of the situation - compelled to offer some kind of support to the Ottomans. He therefore led a part of the expedition through the sea, while his brother Sheikh Mubarak al Sabah led Kuwait's ground forces⁽¹⁾. Later, in his memoirs, Midhat Pasha confirmed that the ships, which he specified were eighty, that transported the expedition's provisions and military supplies, were Kuwaiti ships⁽²⁾.

Because of the help offered by Kuwait to the expedition, the Ottoman Empire once more reconsidered Kuwait, with more flexibility and positivity, and Midhat Pasha was able to get decisions issued from the Sublime Porte, guaranteeing a few bases to control Kuwait's relations with the Ottoman Empire. Among these:

- Kuwait was an Ottoman *kaza*, dependent on Basra Vilayet⁽³⁾, and its governance was to be inherited within the al Sabah family.
- Kuwait's Sheikh was independent in his internal affairs.
- Allowing Kuwait's judiciary to work according to the Shafei School of jurisprudence.
- Give Kuwait's Sheikh the title "*Qaymaqam*" (sub-governor).

(1) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 133.

(2) Ottoman Archives, class. I.DAH. 44002.

(3) *Id.*

- Kuwait's people were not to pay any fees or taxes to the Sublime Porte.
- Kuwaiti ships were to fly the Ottoman flag⁽¹⁾, and were exempt from taxes.
- Additionally, Kuwait was to get back its share of the dates which were sent from Basra⁽²⁾.

The effect of the Ottoman expedition to al-Ahsa, 1871 CE, and Iraq's subsequent justification of the principle of historic right

One can say that the historical period which followed the Ottoman expedition to al-Ahsa was the most important period the Iraqi state relied on to justify its pretences that Kuwait followed Basra, and consequently Iraq. During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 CE, Iraq used this expedition as a proof and a justification that Kuwait followed Basra, so that what Iraq was doing, was to bring things back to the origin, as it pretended, based on the false historical reading of the historic right.

Let us stop here before some points and problematics that later created confusion, and that were taken as a reference by the Iraqi side to vindicate and justify its pretences, and turn them into the principle of historic right. Iraq marketed the saying that Kuwait was a *kaza* pertaining to Basra, which was an issue with no actual back up, as it was only a form of the nominal relation, and nothing more than that; the proof to this is that Kuwait had its own judiciary system, and applied its own laws⁽³⁾.

(1) Cabinet Archives, BDA, internal ad. 44320, doc. 6, s119 no1, Aynyat 851, BDA.

(2) About these dates, see also resolution passed by State *Shura* Council on 20 Rajab 1289 AH, Ottoman Archives, class. A.MKT.SD 13/12.

(3) If it is correct to consider that the Ottoman judiciary at the time represented a main aspect to confirm the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire on the Ottoman territories, or the presence of a relation between it and Basra, how did the Ottomans allow squandering the most important aspect and give up on applying it in Kuwait?!

Additionally, Kuwait at that time could not oppose the Ottoman rapprochement, particularly given the feverish conflict between the great powers in the region, with Britain at their top. Midhat Pasha pointed to Kuwait's importance by saying: "If a strong Ottoman administration is formed in Kuwait, then al-Ahsa can be protected"⁽¹⁾. This became obvious during the Ottoman expedition, which resulted in al-Ahsa being subjected to the central administration and in the creation of an administration linked to Baghdad sometimes and to Basra at other times. Kuwait had to take a lean position by not showing signs of clashing, and by practicing less rigid policies towards the Ottoman party, especially considering the prevailing balance of power. Midhat Pasha himself later described Kuwait after visiting it at that time as "a quasi-republic"... Criticising Namik Pasha's former position from Kuwait, he said: "Namik Pasha wanted to adjoin it to Basra, so its people refused because they were used not to be subdued, and not out of hostility towards the Ottoman Empire"⁽²⁾.

There is also the problematic of the ruler of Kuwait accepting the title of *Qaymaqam*; this title, like all honorary titles given by states, was only conventional, and did not impose any tangible obligations on the Emirate. Actually, in their correspondences with the Ottoman Empire itself, the rulers of Kuwait used to sign as the Ruler of Kuwait and Chief of its Tribes; this was what Sheikh Mubarak later used to do, for instance. Moreover, this title was given by the Ottoman Sultan in the Ottoman Capital, and Basra and its *walis* had nothing to do with it, and were never the givers of titles.

There was also the pretence that Kuwait accepted to use the Ottoman flag. The reply to this pretence could be that the

(1) Ottoman Archives, class. I.DAH. 44930.

(2) Al-Shamlan, "*min tareekh al-kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 112.

circumstances, the need, and the interests required at some periods in time, that the Kuwaiti vessels use this flag, in order to ensure the safety of the ships, the merchants, and the merchandise aboard them. This was no proof of Ottoman sovereignty, and Kuwait repeated the same thing during the crises⁽¹⁾ it witnessed later, fearing harm to its interests and its economy.

From what came above, one can also notice that the Ottoman decisions stipulated that Kuwait had the liberty to manage its affairs, and practise the law convenient to its situation, in addition to Ottoman acknowledgement of al Sabah's rule.

Also, whoever tried to propagate these pretences missed that, according to what came in the Ottoman decisions, Kuwait was made a *kaza* following the Ottoman Basra and not the Iraqi Basra. In fact, there was no Iraq yet at that time, with sovereignty, borders, and specific features. On the other hand and contrary to Iraq, there was recognition of the existence of Kuwait as an emirate with an independent status, having rulers with recognised authority, and having ports, followers, judiciary and a society applying law. This is an important issue, here precisely, in order to be able to understand the extent of the fallacies which Iraq armed itself with during Saddam Hussein's governance, attempting to justify and vindicate his tyrannical invasion in 1990 CE, using Midhat Pasha's expedition as one of the justifications for the case of the historic right.

We must not forget that Kuwait's sheikhs owned some lands in Basra, and had prevailing interests there, and refusing to help the Ottomans would have meant losing these properties and interests, let alone that Kuwait until that time saw the Ottoman Empire as the symbol of the Caliphate and the great Islamic powers in the region. In addition to the fact that Kuwait was not

(1) During the Iran-Iraq War, 1980-1988.

bound by a treaty to any other state as big and as powerful as the Ottoman Empire, which would provide succour or interference to protect it in case of its exposure to danger.

What interests us, finally, is to confirm that with the end of the Ottoman expedition to al-Ahsa, the Ottomans became more accepting and conscious of Kuwait's independence, and of its Sheikh's administration of its internal affairs without their interference. Midhat Pasha explained that non-interference in Kuwait's affairs was because it was a stable country, which applied Islamic *sharia* (law), and did not need a controlling Ottoman power⁽¹⁾.

The reign of Sheikh Muhammad Bin Sabah 1892-1896 CE

Sheikh Muhammad ascended the throne after his brother, Sheikh Abdullah I. This was a historical premiere with no antecedent, because, as we previously exposed, it was usual for a son to rule after his father. This directly reflects how Sheikh Abdullah trusted his brother Muhammad, and how confident he was that his brother would be the most qualified to rule at that time. Or, from another point of view, he might have been unable to impose one of his sons, stepping over his brother Sheikh Muhammad.

Describing Sheikh Muhammad, al-Rasheed says that he was 'loving to his people, sound of body, kind of heart, uncaring about fame, sober, with no ambition to achieve more than what he held in his hands. He was unjustly killed in his bed, and weeping and crying resounded all over Kuwait, from one end to the other'⁽²⁾. al-Qinai's description goes: "Sheikh Muhammad Bin Sabah is characterized by decency and temperance... nothing

(1) See Mohamed Orabi Nakhla, "*tareekh al- ihsaa al- siyasi 1818-1913*" (Al-Ahsa's Political History, 1818-1913), That al Salasil pub., Kuwait, 1980, p. 96.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 138.

was said about him in his youth or old age, that would touch upon his honour or humiliate him. His decency covered him with reverence and dignity, with modesty; he talked only little, religious, he loved the *ulemas* and obeyed them; he loved his people and was keen on having harmony and courtesy among them. The clan loved him dearly. He was killed unjustly". And al-Shamlan says: "Sheikh Muhammad was peaceful, loved goodness"⁽¹⁾.

About the most important political events during Sheikh Muhammad's reign, one of the documents of the Ottoman archives indicates that he participated in the military expedition to al-Ahsa, and was offered a medal⁽²⁾ for his services, like his brothers Sheikh Abdullah and Sheikh Mubarak, in 1871 CE⁽³⁾. Also, prior to being appointed by his brother Abdullah as an envoy, Sheikh Muhammad acted as an intermediary to conciliate between Sheikh Muhammad al Khalifa and his brother⁽⁴⁾. Sheikh Muhammad carried a letter from his brother Sheikh Abdullah to the Sheikh of Bahrain blaming him, and advising him to reconcile and bring matters back to what they previously were⁽⁵⁾. Moreover, al-Bassam indicated in his book that in 1890 CE,

(1) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 139.

(2) BDA, Ayniyat 851, s27 no 2, copied from Faisal Al- Kandari, "*'ilaqat al- kuwait bil-dawla al- uthmaniya munthul-nashaa hatta 1289 AH/1872 CE*" (Kuwait's Relations With the Ottoman Empire Since Foundation till 1289 AH/1872 CE), see also Bondarevsky, "*al-kuwait wa 'ilaqatuha al- dawliya khilal al- qarn al- tasi' 'ashr wa awail al- qarn al- 'ishrin*" (Kuwait and its International Relations throughout the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century), translated by Maher Salama, Kuwait, Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 1994, p. 82.

(3) See Ottoman Archive, Doc. No. 1044230.

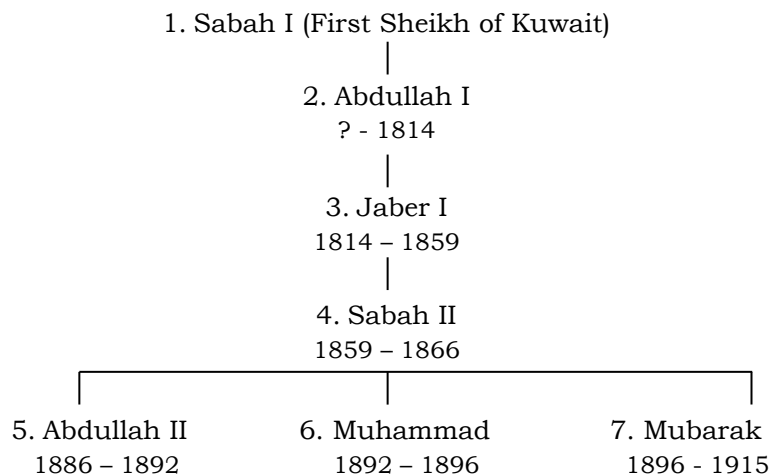
(4) Al- Nabhany, "*Al-Tohfa Al- Nabhaniya, fi tareekh al- jazeera al- 'arabiya*" (The Nabhany Masterpiece, History of the Arabian Peninsula), see prev., p. 187-188.

(5) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 135.

Sheikh Muhammad went to *haj* (pilgrimage), intending meanwhile to put an end to the misunderstanding with Ibn Rasheed⁽¹⁾.

Also, during his reign, Sheikh Muhammad was able to keep Kuwait safe, stable and solid⁽²⁾. In 1893, the British Consul in Basra, Captain Beville, wrote that it was imperative to strengthen British policy so that it would extend from Basra to Kuwait, and to drag Kuwait under British influence while taking it away from Ottoman influence⁽³⁾. Also during the reign of Sheikh Muhammad, the family of Imam Abdul-Rahman al Saud and his son Abdul-Aziz al Saud settled in Kuwait after leaving Riyadh. Sheikh Muhammad al-Sabah welcomed them and granted them the means to live freely and securely.

The Rulers of Kuwait



(1) Abdul-Rahman Salih Al Bassam, “*khizanat al- tawarikh al- najdiya*” (The Cabinet of the Najdi Dates), arrangement and correction by Abdullah Salih Al Bassam, Dar al- ‘Asima, 1st ed., part 5, 1998, p. 82.

(2) Salih Al- Ajiri & Mohamed Mohamed Ahmed, “*tareekh al- kuwait yawm bi yawm*” (History of Kuwait Day by Day), 2006, p. 25.

(3) Basra’s *Salname* for the year 1320 AH, p. 241; see also Abdul-Latif Al- Hamad, “*thakirat al- ‘ataa wal ‘inmaa*” (Memories of Giving and Developing), Al- ‘Arabi mag., August 2001, p. 345.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Great Sheikh Mubarak 1896-1915 CE

- Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah.
- Governance crisis and the assassination of Sheikhs Muhammad and Jarrah.
- Internal conditions during the reign of Sheikh Mubarak.
- The struggle between Sheikh Mubarak and Yusuf al-Ibrahim.
- Sarif, 1901 CE.

(Mubarak) “Sharp-tempered, very strong, moody, he has something like the lion and things like the chameleon, a nomadic nature and a city taste, sometimes an adversary, at other times a flatterer, he was generous and thriftless, half of his work was a secret only he knew, the other half dazzling deception.”

(Amin Rihani)

Foreword:

No strong society can rise in the shadow of weak governance. a strong society and strong governance are complementary components differentiated by the division of roles, and not by separation.

The reign of Mubarak al-Sabah (1896-1915 CE) is an era of great importance to the emirate. During this period, Mubarak was an absolute ruler. He was actually the State, with all the powers it represents, notably because during his reign, he faced a reality waved with changes and ambitions that targeted and threatened his emirate and its existence.

During the reign of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah, and after he was able to preserve Kuwait's entity throughout an ardent conflict in the Arabian Gulf area, the emirate went towards more stability and development. Mubarak was also able to maintain the cohesion of the social formations and the society of the emirate independently. He also prevented its people from identifying with and sinking in the regional and tribal agreements and arrangements that took place based on alliances and treaties. All this resulted in that the characteristics of the political, economic and social development of Kuwait during his reign played a great role in making him one of the most reputable rulers of al Sabah. His reign is also described as the time when power and prestige were born in Kuwait.

Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah's upbringing

Sheikh Mubarak was born in 1844 CE. He was the third of Sheikh Sabah II's sons⁽¹⁾. Before the age of fourteen, he had mastered horseback riding, which led him, during the life of his

(1) Since he was 5 years old, his grandfather had him learn the Quran at the hands of a teacher; see Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), see prev., part 2, p. 11.

brother Sheikh Muhammad, to maintain security in the desert, and later lead the army⁽¹⁾.

About Sheikh Mubarak and the aspects of his personality, al-Rasheed says: "Mubarak is the entire Kuwait; he is the one who raised it from the dust above its equals, and made it known in all territories. Mubarak is the one who let his name travel around the capitals and the cities, and infiltrate the clubs and the conferences; therefrom he became famous, and by him, it prospered. Its time in his days was a time of security and opulence, a time of strength and prestige; upon losing him it lost a brave fearless of death and demise, it was deprived of one of the peerless Arab princes in vitality and dignity, and in wisdom and opinion... Without him it wouldn't have been known, without him it wouldn't have been the gem in the Gulf's crown, without him its legend wouldn't have reached far to the wide and arid deserts". Together with these words but on another subject, al-Rasheed says: "Mubarak was not inclined to learning, and had no interest in knowledge..."⁽²⁾

Dr Stanley Mylrea, one of the missionaries of the Arabian Mission, revealed Mubarak's absolute self-confidence when he said that he had one day asked Sheikh Mubarak why he had not built a wall to protect Kuwait, and the answer was very expressive of the Sheikh's personality, as he said: "I am the wall"⁽³⁾.

(1) See Al- Qinaï, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 27; see also Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 137.

(2) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 146 -147 – 221.

(3) Al- Rasheed wrote several pages in this book where he attacked Sheikh Mubarak with harsh descriptions; he said that he was "a titan, stubborn, eager to accumulate money and always looking for ways to acquire some, overtaxing the offenders with huge amounts of money..."; see Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of =

Governance crisis and Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah's ascendance to the throne in Kuwait, 1896 CE

al-Shamlan, describing the assassination of Sheikhs Muhammad and Jarrah says: "This incident had a resonance of sorrow and sadness in Kuwait"⁽¹⁾. It is important, before undertaking the analysis and exposure of the reasons for the governance crisis that occurred resulting in Mubarak's access to power, to relate the story as it was told by the local sources. al Qinaï says: "After Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sabah's death, there was a severe conflict between the brothers, and I see no reason for it except the Dirhams. Because Mubarak is a ruler, and he wants to appear like the Arab rulers in expenditures, whether in the right place or not, and Jarrah opposes him in this, and scants money to him, because he sees (himself) as the only founder of money, and does not agree with what Mubarak sees in spending. And late Muhammad is inclined to Jarrah's opinion"⁽²⁾. This crisis was intensely analysed by historians and writers; after Sheikh Muhammad took over governance (1892-1896 CE), "Mubarak [was] Prince of the desert and head of the army at that time, and Sheikh Jarrah was the responsible for financial affairs. They strongly cooperated in the administration of matters. Some historians deal with the period from 1892-1896 CE almost as if it were an era of common rule between the three brothers. Abu-Hakima even assumed that the reason why Mubarak was given

= Kuwait), see prev., p. 220-221. On the other hand, Raunkiær, who visited Kuwait in 1912 as part of a delegation financed by the Royal Danish Geographical Society to study the region of the Arabian Peninsula, said that he was "full of life in spite of his seventy years of age". For more, see Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al- akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), prev., p. 158-165.

(1) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 141.

(2) Al- Qinaï, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 27.

the charge of securing the desert was to attempt to exclude him and weaken him away from any position that would qualify him to later ascend the throne⁽¹⁾. It seems that this was widely subjective to Abu-Hakima's personal estimation and prevented him from looking into the course of events, as al-Rasheed assures that "Sheikh Muhammad had a quiet nature"⁽²⁾. Therefore, it is unlikely that he would have secretly worked on excluding Sheikh Mubarak from any active participation in governance, notably because Mubarak was the head of the army, and the power holder in the desert. Consequently, he could not be far from anything vital, or arrangements or cooperation in drawing the general policies of the Emirate while he was holding one of the most important sources of power, the army.

If we try to understand the real reasons behind this crisis that propelled Sheikh Mubarak in power, from the point of view of our first historians and our local sources, we will see that it was contained in the circle of money issues and personal ambitions. To Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed, the conflict was because of Mubarak's ambitions and his military nature⁽³⁾; while al-Qinai sees that financial conflicts had an important role to play, and controlled the relationship between Mubarak and his two brothers⁽⁴⁾. As to Abu-Hakima, he attributed the origin of the problem, besides financial disagreements, to the interference of Yusuf al-Ibrahim⁽⁵⁾

(1) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 307.

(2) See Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 137.

(3) *Id.*, p. 138.

(4) See Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 25.

(5) Lorimer says that Yusuf Al- Ibrahim was related to the Sabah family and that he had marriage ties with them. For more, see J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, =

in governing matters, and Mubarak's fear from undermining al Sabah rule⁽¹⁾. Some even said that Mubarak succeeded in making solid friendships with the sheikhs of the Bedouin tribes at the time, which helped accelerate acceding to sole governance. It happened after the tribes surrounded him and supported him⁽²⁾. Whereas Khaz'al says that "Mubarak saw the necessity of Kuwait's ground expansion, so that its activities and ambitions wouldn't be limited to the sea only, contrary to his brothers' views"⁽³⁾.

Governance crisis as recorded in the writings and reports of the Western Consuls

It seems that the real motives behind the assassination of Sheikhs Muhammad and Jarrah will undergo more analysis and interpretation, and trying to analyse these interpretations nowadays will make us tend to look at them from a different point of view, beyond the local view of the crisis.

Mubarak who spent his life in the desert – between the conquest and the military conflicts – was never, at any point, far

= Oman and Central Arabia", material collected, arranged and reviwed by Khalid Saud Al- Zayd, 1st ed., part 1, Kuwait, Rubay'an pub., 1981, p. 143. See also Bondarevsky, "*al-kuwait wa 'ilaqatuha al- dawliya khilal al- qarn al- tasi' 'ashr wa awail al- qarn al- 'ishrin*" (Kuwait and its International Relations throughout the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century), translated by Maher Salama, Kuwait, Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 1994, p. 91.

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 308.

(2) Dhafir Al- Ajami, "*jaysh al- kuwait fi 'asr Mubarak al- sabah 1896-1915*" (Kuwait's Army under Mubarak Al- Sabah, 1896-1915), 1st ed., Kuwait, no pub., 2000, p. 55

(3) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 1, prev., 156-185.

from governance⁽¹⁾. If we set aside what our first historians wrote as motives and reasons, and look into some of what the Western reports and documents brought about what Mubarak al-Sabah did, we would find that there are reasons to believe there were other motives behind the incident. Motives of political and regional nature⁽²⁾, as the Western reports and consulates' representatives did not neglect this crisis. On the 27th of May 1896 CE, the British Consul in Baghdad sent a report to his embassy in Istanbul informing that it had been said that Sheikh Mubarak had killed his two brothers, and that the reason behind the assassination was that Sheikh Muhammad had refused to present him with money⁽³⁾. In a report by Stavridis, the British legal counsellor in Istanbul, there is an indication that the assassination took place after a meeting between Sheikh Mubarak and the British Deputy Political Resident in the Gulf, seated in Bushehr in Persia. The Russian consulate also followed what happened with interest. Mashkov, the Chargé of consular affairs in Baghdad⁽⁴⁾ pointed to a secret meeting between some of the sheikhs of

(1) Abu-Hakima himself recognised this when he said: "Sheikh Muhammad shared governance with his two brothers Jarrah and Mubarak, and Sheikh Mubarak was charged with going to Al- Ahsa in 1893 CE, because of the troubles taking place there"; see Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 263-264.

(2) See B. J. Slot, "Mubarak Al- Sabah, Founder of Modern Kuwait, 1896-1915", p. 104.

(3) PRO, FO 195/1935 Consul Baghdad to Curry, 27 May 1896.

(4) Mashkov is one of the most important personalities who supported the Russian movements, and he spoke Persian as well as Arabic. For more, see Bondarevsky, "*al-kuwait wa 'ilaqatuha al- dawliya khilal al- qarn al- tasi' 'ashr wa awail al- qarn al- 'ishrin*" (Kuwait and its International Relations throughout the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century), translated by Maher Salama, prev., p. 97.

al Sabah and some Kuwaiti notables on the 16th of May 1896 CE, which directly tackled the disagreement between Mubarak and his two brothers⁽¹⁾. Also, some of the reports of the Russian consulate⁽²⁾ explain that the reason behind Sheikh Mubarak assassinating his brothers was that Sheikh Muhammad had close contact with the British – this reflects to us contradictions. Some indicate that Sheikh Muhammad rejected a British offer, and that this worried Britain, while others point to the existence of close ties between the British and Sheikh Mohammad, and precisely, that Sheikh Muhammad wanted to grant the British the monopoly of maritime trade transportation.

The French Consulate in Istanbul was also informed by a report from its Consulate in Baghdad on the 26th of May 1869 CE, which stated: “And finally problems have exploded in Kuwait”⁽³⁾. On the 4th of June in the same year, the French Consul in Baghdad telegraphed his embassy in Istanbul that there was confusion due to the assassination that had taken place. Also, the German Consul informed his government about the matter, whereby he made the assumption of the involvement of Sheikh Muhammad Bin Rasheed, the Emir of Ha’il⁽⁴⁾. As to the Ottoman Empire, it accused Britain of standing behind what had

(1) He claimed that the assembled agreed that Sheikh Mubarak removes his brothers.

However, strangely, we did not find anything to support this claim made by Mashkov. Bondarevsky, “*al-kuwait wa ‘ilaqatuha al-dawliya khilal al-qarn al-tasi’ ‘ashr wa awail al-qarn al-‘ishrin*” (Kuwait and its International Relations throughout the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century), translated by Maher Salama, see prev., p. 97.

(2) *Id.*

(3) B. J. Slot, “Mubarak Al- Sabah, Founder of Modern Kuwait, 1896-1915”, see prev., p. 98.

(4) Berlin AA RR, 13841. Richarz 21 May. Ibn Rachid’s War, Northern Negd, p. 224.

happened⁽¹⁾, while Rihani says that Rajab Pasha, Baghdad's *Wali* wrote to the Sublime Porte saying: "The incident is an ordinary one usual among the Bedouins"⁽²⁾.

Some German circles also handled news about these doubts⁽³⁾. As to Lorimer, he summarises the assassinations by saying that there was an internal revolt in Kuwait, which led to Sheikh Mubarak's ascension to the throne⁽⁴⁾.

In any case, the governance crisis did not last long, and it did not cause confusion in the loyalty to the ruling family, as Mubarak succeeded in ruling it and quickly bringing a conclusion, in spite of al Rasheed saying, "Kuwait resounded from one end to the other"⁽⁵⁾.

Internal conditions during the reign of Sheikh Mubarak

Following the incident of his two brothers' death, his ascension to power, and his taking control of matters⁽⁶⁾, Sheikh Mubarak

(1) This accusation confirmed the rumours in 1895-1896 that Sheikh Mubarak had a plan to form an Arab block in the regions the Ottomans were claiming (Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, in addition to Ibn Rasheed in Najd). For more, see J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Department of History, Qatar p. 501. See also Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 321.

(2) Rihani, "*muluk al-'arab, al-hijaz al-yaman 'asseer lahij wal nawahi al-mahmiya*" (Kings of the Arabs, Hijaz, Yemen, 'Asir, Lahij and the Protected Areas), Dar al-Jeel, Beirut, 8th ed., 1987, p. 658.

(3) Berlin AA R, 12203 A 8792 A. Richarz in Baghdad, 9 August 1895.

(4) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Department of History, Qatar p. 501.

(5) See Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 145.

(6) It is noteworthy that March 1896 also witnessed the assassination of the Shah of Persia. For more, see Arnold Wilson, "The Persian Gulf: an Historical Sketch from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century", translated [to =

was able to contain the sequels of the incident quickly and firmly. al-Rasheed says: "In the morning of the ominous day, after the two martyrs were buried in their graves, Mubarak called the notables and the nobles of the country and told them 'it is over, and what it has been done for is over, so what do you see? And what are you up to?', then they understood that Mubarak, the brother of the two murdered sheikhs was going to rule, if not that day, the following one. So they shook hands with him in *bay'a*, and they showed him submission and compliance"⁽¹⁾.

As for the nature of the internal conditions during Sheikh Mubarak's reign, al-Qinai describes them by saying: "During the period of his reign, security prevailed..., fortune increased, and trade progressed... In the first ten years, Mubarak was following in the footsteps of his predecessors in modesty and justice, and he was even better than his predecessors in the rigor of governance, and in defending Kuwait's people outside its borders; to him the strong and the weak were equal in rights"⁽²⁾.

Mubarak quickly worked on providing security; he also had to take interest in trade, and the economic conditions globally. al-Rasheed says: "Mubarak's interest to provide security to his Emirate was such that he opened his coffers to the Kuwaitis and supplied them with money to help them in their trade. He also

= Arabic] by Mohamed Amin Abdullah, Muscat, Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, 1981, p. 179; see also Ghanim Sultan, "*gawanib min shakhsyat al- kuwait*" (Aspects from Kuwait's Personality), 1st ed., Kuwait, Ali Al- Sabah pub., 1990, p. 120.

(1) As to him, he promised them to make justice prevail, to work on reform, that he would not determine anything without them, and that he would consult them for all matters. For more, see Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 148.

(2) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 27.

made them sell a part of his dates in Basra, and allowed them time to repay in case there was recession. Frequently, he gave freedom to the inhabitants, especially in managing the matters of their interior lives; he only interfered where there was interest, so he watched the markets, ruled in the people's problems, and punished the outlaws and those trying to get out of the prevailing order"⁽¹⁾.

Mubarak's economic policy led to a visible increase in his Emirate's revenue, so that Kuwait's income at the dawn of the twentieth century reached almost 23 million rupees⁽²⁾. And its income in one year (1906-1907 CE) from pearl trade only, reached one million three hundred and forty seven thousand rupees⁽³⁾, which was a huge number considering the general economic situation of the region⁽⁴⁾. This improvement in the economic situation probably increased the relative stability in spite of the lack of natural resources.

On the other hand, Mubarak turned to increasing taxes⁽⁵⁾, which annoyed the merchants. This was obvious from the

(1) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 218.

(2) Mussa Ghadban, "*al-tatawur al- iqtisadi fil-kuwait 1946-1973*" (Economic Development in Kuwait 1946-1973), 1st ed., Kuwait, Kuwait University, 2001, p. 52.

(3) Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al- akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), see prev., p. 119.

(4) Khaldun Hassan Al- Naqeeb, "*al-mujtama' wal-dawla fil-khalij wal-jazeera al'arabiya min manthur mukhtalif*" (Society and the State in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula from a Different Perspective), Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1st ed., Beirut, 1987, 2nd ed., Beirut, 1989, p. 93.

(5) Al- Rasheed says that he invented continuous fees, from *mekous* to shareholding of properties and buildings, saying that he was eager to accumulate money and always looking for ways to acquire some; see Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 220.

emigration of the three merchants (Hilal Fajhan al-Mutairi, Shamlan Bin Aly, and Ibrahim Bin Mudhaf) to Bahrain and Janna Island⁽¹⁾. But Sheikh Mubarak realised the enormity of losing them from the economic point of view, so he sent his son Sheikh Salim begging to please them, and in fact two of them returned. But Hilal Fajhan, one of the most important pearl traders in Kuwait, refused to return, until Sheikh Mubarak himself went to Bahrain and brought him back⁽²⁾. This reflects the interest Sheikh Mubarak showed in trade and traders at that time, and the importance of this class of people to the Kuwaiti economy.

Mubarak also encouraged the construction of big ships to transport merchandise between his Emirate and the different ports, particularly India. Often, his protection of Kuwaiti trade extended to the point of facing some British encroachments and interference. The British documents themselves reveal to us that Sheikh Mubarak was often annoyed when he received news about Kuwaiti merchants' losses abroad, or a slowdown in their trade; he even objected to the British authorities themselves when they interfered with the trade and the traders⁽³⁾.

(1) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), p. 151.

(2) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 292.

(3) This happened on the 16th of May 1912, when he sent a letter to Cox, the Political British Resident, objecting to the British authorities searching some of the ships belonging to prominent merchants (Khalifa Bin Shaheen Al- Ghanim, his uncle Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al- Ghanim, Abdul-Latif Bin Issa and Nasir Al- Badr). The Sheikh considered it unacceptable at that time. From Sheikh Mubarak to Cox, the British Political Resident, 16 May 1912, in Kuwait Political Agency: Arabic Documents, p. 733-734. See also Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 218-219.

The struggle between Sheikh Mubarak and Yusuf al-Ibrahim

Most local sources affirm that Yusuf al-Ibrahim had influence in Kuwait⁽¹⁾. al-Qinai says: “Abdullah al-Ibrahim came from a fine family in Kuwait, and he had marriage ties with al-Sabah. That family was one of the richest families in Kuwait at that time. He was bestowed with high standing and good fortune like no one else before since Kuwait’s foundation. Yusuf was a close friend of Muhammad Bin Sabah’s, and his orders were implemented and irrevocable”⁽²⁾. al-Rasheed indicates that, to Yusuf al-Ibrahim’s good fortune, when the crisis of which Muhammad and Jarrah were victims occurred, he was not in Kuwait. He says: “He was lucky that when the incident occurred he was in al-Sabiyah where the palace that he had built was, and Yusuf thanked destiny which had kept him away from Kuwait’s obscure atmosphere then, and put him in a bastion where he took refuge from Mubarak’s assaults”⁽³⁾.

(1) For more, see Al- Qinai, *Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait* (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 29.

(2) In his book on the Najdi dates, Sheikh Bassam attributes Yusuf Al- Ibrahim’s preference for Sheikh Abdullah’s children to their having parentage and relations by marriage. Sheikh Bassam sees that Al- Ibrahim likes Sheikh Muhammad’s children because their mother is the daughter of Ali Bin Jaber Al- Sabah. The latter’s mother is the daughter of Sheikh Ali Bin Muhammad Bin Ibrahim, and the grandfather of Yusuf Bin Abdullah Bin Issa, and Issa is Ali’s brother. Dr Maimunah Al- Sabah confirms this, as she sees that the relationship between Sheikh Muhammad and Yusuf Al- Ibrahim was not mere friendship, but was a relationship of parentage and relationship in marriage. He was also the cousin on the mother’s side of both the wives of Muhammad and Jarrah, the two daughters of Ali Al- Jaber Al- Sabah, whose mother was Sheikha Al- Ibrahim. For more, see Abdul-Rahman Salih Al Bassam, “*khizanat al- tawarikh al- najdiya*” (The Cabinet of the Najdi Dates), arrangement and correction by Abdullah Salih Al Bassam, Dar al- ‘Asima, 1st ed., part 5, 1998, p. 83.

(3) Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 149.

In truth, the confrontations between Sheikh Mubarak and Yusuf al-Ibrahim were felt in both the interior and exterior conditions of Kuwait. al-Ibrahim managed to consecrate his financial powers to create some kind of instability for Mubarak. He was able to make some regional alliances against the latter, like the one he made with Qatar's Emir Jassim Bin Thani for him to come to rescue; Abu-Hakima says: "It seems that there was an attempt to prepare a campaign to conquer Kuwait of which Qatar was part", but it did not take place⁽¹⁾.

Yusuf al-Ibrahim also contacted Mohamed Bin Rasheed, Ha'il's ruler 1873-1897 CE, to tempt him to conquer Kuwait, and additionally al-Ibrahim constantly antagonised the Ottomans against Mubarak.

The conflict between Sheikh Mubarak and Yusuf al-Ibrahim was also marked by constant disputes and battles, the most sanguine of which was the Battle of Sarif⁽²⁾ in March 1901 CE⁽³⁾. It was not enough for Yusuf al-Ibrahim to make alliances against Sheikh Mubarak; he also made serious attempts to get Sheikh Mubarak personally. al-Qinai says that Yusuf al-Ibrahim prepared around 13 ships equipped with arms and men, and according to him, his aim was "to attack Aly Mubarak by surprise, but Abu-Kaheel (one of Mubarak's men) warned Mubarak one day before the arrival of the ships, and the campaign failed"⁽⁴⁾. The problems

(1) Yusuf Al- Ibrahim previously knew about the animosity between Qatar's Emir and Sheikh Mubarak. See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 311.

(2) It had been preceded by some skirmishes in Al- Rakhimiya (wells), located in the previously neutral zone between Najd and Iraq.

(3) See Hussein Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 4, prev., p. 47.

(4) Al- Qinai, *Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait* (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 29.

of al-Rasheed, the rulers of Ha'il, also pressured Mubarak to a great extent⁽¹⁾, and Yusuf al-Ibrahim exploited that. Mubarak found himself forced to move quickly to face these threats, especially that Imam Abdul-Rahman Bin Faisal, heir of the Second Saudi State 1824-1891 CE had settled in Kuwait, and that breaking al Rasheed in Ha'il or the fall of Najd at the hands of Bin Saud would be like a safe haven for Mubarak and his Emirate. Therefore, Sheikh Mubarak set a huge campaign, of which one of the major aims was to put an end to al-Rasheed's⁽²⁾ influence in the region and finish his rule.

Battle of al-Sarif, 1901 CE

al-Qinai says: "When Mubarak learned about Yusuf al-Ibrahim's arrival to Ha'il, he was very annoyed and angered from Abdul-Aziz al-Mutib (Ha'il's Emir), and realised that war between them was bound to happen"⁽³⁾. al-Rasheed continues the scene by saying: "Mubarak saw he should forestall Ibn Rasheed in his very home... So he travelled in his direction with a powerful army which included many Arabians such as Mutair, al-Awazim,

(1) The raids perpetrated by the tribes affiliated to Ha'il exhausted him. Khalid Al- Saadun, "*al-'ilaqat bayn Najd wal-Kuwait (1902-1922)*" (The Relations between Najd and Kuwait, 1902-1922), see prev. p. 13, 43.

(2) Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Mit'ab was characterised by his bravery, forwardness and breaking in, so that his opponents named him "*al-jinaza*" (the funeral) because of his strength and the difficulty to fight against him. The princes of Al- Rasheed themselves described him as the hero of Najd and its brave heart. It is said that when Emir Abdul-Aziz heard the news of Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Rasheed's death, he said: "Thank God, now my life is good". For more, see Dari Bin Fuhayd Al- Rasheed, "*nabtha tareekhiya 'an najd*" (A Historical Brief on Najd), written by Wadie Al- Bustani, presented and reviewed by Abdul-Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, Riyadh, 1999, p. 200, 214.

(3) Al- Qinai, *Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait* (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 29.

al-Ejman, 'Urayb Dar, al-Muntafiq, al Murrah, al-Hawajir, a group from al-Dhafeer, and around eight hundred Kuwaiti warriors; Mubarak himself was the leader, in addition to Imam Abdul-Rahman Bin Faisal al Saud and his son the Emir Abdul-Aziz⁽¹⁾. al-Rasheed goes on: "The army marched filling the space with its numbers to which the mountains echoed and vibrated and from the roar of which a lion would tremble". The first practical steps of the battle were raids on the tribes of al-Rasheed in Najd and Ha'il. On the other hand, according to Sheikh Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed, Ibn Rasheed, who resentfully went to war because he had sensed that Sheikh Mubarak's forces were on their way to acquire more victories, and approached to threaten him personally, gathered his forces and amassed warriors particularly from adjoined tribes that came to him for support⁽²⁾. In fact, Mubarak's early victories were important and easy; he conquered al-Qassim and appointed its ruler⁽³⁾. al-Qinai says that "Ibn Rasheed descended in a place lower than the ground, between him and Mubarak's army was a plateau that obstructed the view, so he sent scouts from his cavalry uphill, and they returned to tell him what they had seen from the army"⁽⁴⁾. On the 17th of March 1901 CE, both armies, Kuwait and Ha'il's, collided from morning until noon. The beginning looked like a victory for the Kuwaiti army, as Ibn Rasheed's army, preceded by the *masyukah*⁽⁵⁾, retracted before

(1) In addition to his army's leaders, among whom Sheikh Hamud, Sheikh Khalifa and Sabah Bin Hamud; see Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 161.

(2) Dhafir Al-Ajami, "*jaysh al-kuwait fi 'asr Mubarak al-sabah 1896-1915*" (Kuwait's Army under Mubarak Al-Sabah, 1896-1915), 1st ed., Kuwait, no pub., 2000, p. 248-249.

(3) *Id.*, p. 247.

(4) Al-Qinai, *Safahat min tareekh al-Kuwait* (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 19.

(5) The *masyukah* is a few camels put at the frontline of the army to hold off the bullets from the cavaliers; see Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, previous, p. 46.

the Kuwaiti army twice, according to Sheikh Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed. However, a little while after the combat, Kuwait's army was dispersed and divided, and Sheikh Mubarak at this time was in the tent of Sultan al-Duwaish, Mutair's Sheikh. He rushed trying to bring order, but the disorder that occurred in one of his army's wings, as well as the death of his Chief of Cavalry, his brother Sheikh Hamud, then of his son Sabah, followed by that of Sheikh Khalifa Bin Abdullah, made things very difficult. Ibn Rasheed's forces attacked in a stronger, more systematic manner which resulted in the latter's victory⁽¹⁾ over the Kuwaiti army⁽²⁾. Ibn Rasheed's forces were not contented with this, and their men followed the Kuwaitis and the wounded to torture them and kill them. Sheikh Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed describes what Ibn Rasheed did by saying: "God and history will not excuse Ibn Rasheed for what he did and the torture he inflicted"⁽³⁾.

Also, in the same context, al-Shamlan records what was said by one of those who participated in the combat: "The battle started with some horse skirmish. Mubarak's army used rifles, while Ibn Rasheed's army used spears. Ibn Rasheed used the *masyukah*, and put the cavalry and infantry behind it. The beginning seemed to promise victory to the Kuwaitis, but some disorder occurred in one of the wings of the Kuwaiti army, which led to a systematic attack from Ibn Rasheed on the Kuwaiti army, and ultimately led to defeat"⁽⁴⁾. Upon hearing about the defeat of

(1) Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), see prev., 1988, p. 119.

(2) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 4, previous, p. 47.

(3) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 163.

(4) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 147. Al- Rasheed also says: "He killed their leaders, removed their arms and imposed huge taxes on them". For more, see Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 257.

Sheikh Mubarak's army at the hands of Ibn Rasheed, the Emir Abdul-Aziz rushed out of Riyadh and returned to Kuwait.

Rihani summarises what happened after this battle with expressive sentences indicating that Mubarak did not break, and did not lose his self-confidence or his confidence in his army in spite of the defeat inflicted to him, especially while preparing for his second campaign to confront Ibn Rasheed again. Rihani says: "The political atmosphere was cloudy in Baghdad and Basra, so Mubarak smiled while preparing his second campaign against Rasheed; he even laughed while marching on Jahra saying 'you want to besiege me by land and by sea? Here I came to you by sea and by land with the invincible forces'. While Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed says: "After Sarif's incident, Mubarak arrived with only two of his servants. He arrived having lost his great army and powerful soldiers, wearing the robe of failure"⁽¹⁾. The truth is that after the battle, Ibn Rasheed exerted his power and imposed his authority on many regions close to Kuwait's borders, in addition to his complete sovereignty over Najd⁽²⁾. To be fair, this particular battle will remain one of the most important of Kuwait's modern history; its importance comes from the fact that it showed at that time, early, the extent of the Kuwaiti army's strength that enabled it to make military moves to confront its enemies, and stand to face the military threats and challenges against Kuwait. However, some see that Sarif might have been the battle that put an end to Sheikh Mubarak's ambitions to build a great nation in the Arabian Peninsula⁽³⁾. And although Yusuf al-Ibrahim had no role, or was not mentioned (in the battle

(1) *Id.*, p. 165.

(2) Khalid Al- Saadun, "*al- 'ilaqat bayn Najd wal-Kuwait (1902-1922)*" (The Relations between Najd and Kuwait, 1902-1922), see prev., p. 62.

(3) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 312.

which occurred) in Sarif, some see that he was the most important reason behind its occurrence, and he continued afterwards to incite against Sheikh Mubarak⁽¹⁾.

As to Britain's position, one can say that at first, they did not approve of Mubarak going out to war; they warned him against this impulsiveness, and told him he was following a dangerous policy by keeping on provoking the Emir of Ha'il, and they advised him to remain calm⁽²⁾. But the end which their ally reached might have forced them to interfere and threaten Ibn Rasheed in Ha'il should he have tried to enter Kuwait.

Yusuf al-Ibrahim died on the way between Ha'il and Medina on the 12th of March 1906 CE, after a bitter conflict with Sheikh Mubarak, which lasted almost ten years or more. It was said that upon learning about Yusuf al-Ibrahim's death, Sheikh Mubarak said: "Thank God, that is the one who disturbed my peace of mind and wanted to remove me from the throne, but my luck beat his"⁽³⁾.

(1) Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), see prev., p. 120.

(2) Faisal Al- Samhan, "*ma' rakat al- sarif bayn al- masadir al- tareekhiya wal-riwayat al- shafahiya*" "The Battle of Sarif between Historical Sources and Oral Narratives), That al Salasil, Kuwait, 2007, p. 41-42. For more about the names of Kuwait's martyrs in its old battles, see Saad Al- Sha'ran, "*malamih kuwaitiya: (qira'a tashihiya li waqae' wa asma' tareekhiya)*" (Kuwaiti Aspects: "Correctional Reading of Historical Events and Names"), 2007; the book vastly and precisely recorded the names of the Kuwaiti martyrs in the different battles and struggles from the mouths of their contemporaries, or their children and grandchildren.

(3) This reflects to which extent Sheikh Mubarak relaxed after the death of Yusuf Al- Ibrahim who was the source of much discomfort. Rashid Al- Farhan, "*mukhtasar tareekh al- kuwait*" (Summary of Kuwait's History), Al- Afaq Library, 2nd ed., 2012.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Sheikh Mubarak and the International Conflict in the Region 1896-1915 CE

- The Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations prior to the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE.
- The Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations after the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE.
- Mubarak and the Russian struggle over Kuwait, demands for Russian protection (1901 CE).
- The Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE.
- The Convention of 1913 CE.
- Sheikh Mubarak and World War I.
- Sheikh Mubarak and the emergence of the Third Saudi State 1902 CE.
- Sheikh Mubarak and Prince Abdul-Aziz, the confrontation and lack of understanding.
- The issue of Ajman.

“Mubarak knew what he wanted; the Ottoman Sultan only got the respect of the Caliphate from him, as Mubarak insisted on preserving Kuwait’s independence and governing it.”

(Armstrong in his book “Lord of Arabia”)

Foreword:

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the general political conditions of the region of the Arabian Gulf dictated the Sheikhs of Kuwait to be careful in their political moves. The Ottoman Empire had actually entered the stage of gradual breakdown, and on the other hand, Britain became the sole power influencing the policies of the Arabian Gulf and the region, especially after binding a number of emirates by direct treaties with them. As to Germany, this newcomer and the new empire in Europe, it looked for a place to step in to support its emergence as an important power in Europe. Thus, the German Kaiser allied with the Ottoman Sultan, thus proclaiming himself a friend of the Sultan of the Muslims. Additionally, there were active Russian moves also ambitious to reach the warm waters across the Arabian Gulf.

The early signs of World War I (1914-1918 CE) were noticed through the strong conflict between the major powers, whether the Germans, the British, the French, or the Russians. It ultimately led to the disappearance of many small states and powers, and even major powers, as the Ottoman Empire collapsed, its regions were divided, and other regions were detached and annexed to different powers. Mubarak, who led Kuwait in a vital and critical period, succeeded in dealing with the regional powers, and he preferred to tackle the pressures on his Emirate with what reality and interests imposed, while other entities and resembling regions failed to do so. Other rulers (Khaz'al in Arabistan, Ibn Rasheed in Ha'il, and al-Sharif Hussein in Mecca) hesitated in making crucial decisions for their countries, so Kuwait remained, while Arabistan fell, the reign of al-Rasheed in Ha'il ended in 1921 CE, and the reign of al-Sharif Hussein in Mecca in 1925 CE, forever.

The Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations prior to the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE

The importance of reviewing the Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations in this chapter precisely is that the era of governance of Sheikh Mubarak is considered to be the decisive period in the history of Kuwait's relations with the Ottoman Empire. This period witnessed the beginning of the open conflict between them both, and the resistance to most of the Ottomans' attempts to impose their authority on the Emirate. At the end of that era, Mubarak frankly declared standing with the British and helped them in their war against the Germans and the Ottoman Empire. This declaration came many years before Kuwait signed an important treaty with Britain in the last decade of the nineteenth century, namely the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE⁽¹⁾.

Before reviewing the nature and the form of the relations between Kuwait and the Ottomans prior to the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE, it is important to learn about the Ottomans' conditions in the two regions closest to Kuwait: Basra and al-Ahsa. In Basra, the situation was not completely stable for the Ottomans, particularly with the tribes, as they had diverse and different loyalties. As to al-Ahsa, the Ottomans' relations with this region date back to 1550 CE when they usurped its sovereignty from the Portuguese and appointed their *Wali* in its capital, al-Hofuf⁽²⁾, until they were ousted by Barrak Bin 'Uray'ir, the leader of Bani Khalid in 1670 CE. Later, the conflict started between the Wahhabi *da'wa* and Bani Khalid, 1780-1795 CE. Then, the First Saudi State was able to fix itself in al-Ahsa, and to consolidate its authority there making it part of the First State.

(1) See Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*al-kuwait tareekh wa hadara 1613-1800*" (Kuwait, History and Civilisation, 1613-1800), part 1, 3rd ed., 2000, p. 91.

(2) Mohamed Abdullah Al- Ansari, "*taareekh al- ihsaa*" (Historiography of Al- Ahsa), Riyadh, Pat I, 1960, part 1, p. 121-122.

The Ottomans tried to retake it several times after that, but they failed until the year 1818 CE, when the First Saudi State fell at the hands of Mohamed Ali Pasha, whose son Ibrahim was able to conquer al-Ahsa⁽¹⁾. However, retreat therefrom happened very quickly, in 1819 CE⁽²⁾, and al-Ahsa remained⁽³⁾ after that in a continuous struggle, with diverse powers trying to control it. As for Kuwait, it remained in a nominal following relationship, in brief, limited to the religious attachment and the expression of respect. Kuwait did not allow any Ottoman direct political presence or influence on the land of the Emirate, and it was never proven that Kuwait fell in the direct realm of Ottoman rule, or of the *walis* of Basra. Also, there was no collection of taxes in Kuwait's ports as was the case in Basra. Neither was it proven that Basra or the Ottoman Empire ever interfered by sending military forces to defend Kuwait, or support the Emirate in any conflict it was engaged in with other powers in the region. Also, Kuwait did not have "permanent" Ottoman employees to administer its affairs, and no systems or rules related to the Ottoman side applied there.

In the issue of the 8th of January 1911 CE of the English newspaper The Times, Kuwait, in Mubarak's time, was described as independent from the Ottoman Caliphate, that its relationship

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- (1) Al- Ahsa remained under Ottoman rule until 1913, when Emir Abdul-Aziz Al- Saud ripped it from them, thus ending the era of Ottoman rule forever. See Mohamed Abdullah Al- Ansari, "*tuhfat al- mustafid bitarikh al- ihsaa fil qadim wal-jadid*" (The Masterpiece of the Beneficiary of Al- Ahsa's Old and New History), Riyadh, part I, 1960, part 1, p. 173.
- (2) Abdul-Aziz Suleiman Nawar, "*tareekh al- 'iraq al- hadeeth*" (Modern Iraq's History), Cairo, Dar al- Kitab, 1968, p. 189.
- (3) In 1840, Khurshid Pasha tried to seize Al- Ahsa, but he failed. Uthman Bin Bishr, "*'unwan al- majd fi tareekh najd*" (Glory's Name in Najd's History), Riyadh, undated, p. 89.

with the Caliphate came from utmost respect paid to the religious authority in the Muslim world, which the Ottoman Caliphate represented; and that Kuwait's ruler was completely independent⁽¹⁾. This was also transmitted by a German newspaper that described the situation in Kuwait by saying: "It seems that the British are playing a mysterious game in the Arab Republic of Kuwait"⁽²⁾.

Some evidence also points to the fact that Sheikh Mubarak's continued acceptance of and contentment with a friendly relationship with the Ottomans was, to a great extent, due and related to formalities pertaining to Kuwaiti interests and circumstances. It was also in order to avoid military escalation with the Ottomans, which would actually mean the loss of the Emirate, its conquest and its annexation, as well as the certain appointment of Ottoman employees like in Basra, Baghdad, and all the regions falling under direct Ottoman rule.

When Mubarak ascended to the throne, he made use of the previous situation and the friendly relations to earn more guarantees, and ensure some security for himself and his Emirate.

On the other hand, the Ottomans were conscious that trying to impose a new reality on Kuwait would make Mubarak turn to foreign powers, so they did not take any proactive steps. They pretended to have a neutral position in some conflicts between Mubarak and his enemies (Yusuf al-Ibrahim), although the sons of both Sheikhs Muhammad and Jarrah were in Basra at that time, under the protection of its *Wali* Hamdi Pasha who was on unfriendly terms with Sheikh Mubarak, and who tried several times to incite the Ottoman authorities against him. Also, the

(1) For more, see Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al-akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), prev., p. 21.

(2) The paper issued in Cologne, No. 15164, 31 December 1897, Youssef Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al-akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), see prev., p. 32.

Ottoman *walis* in Basra (Hamdi Pasha) were in contact with Yusuf al-Ibrahim, as well as Ibn Rasheed in Ha'il, and they coordinated together.

The Ottoman's might have interpreted Sheikh Mubarak's refusal, once, to go aboard one of the British ships as a sign of goodwill towards them⁽¹⁾. Perhaps this interpretation made the Ottomans abstain from supporting Qatar's Sheikh while he was preparing his campaign against Kuwait in the period between 1897 and 1898 CE, as there has been no news about the Ottomans' approval of this move, perhaps because the campaign never took place⁽²⁾.

It is worth pointing to the fact that the Ottomans did not acknowledge Mubarak's rule in the beginning. After Kuwait's people entrusted him with the throne, and on the 18th of June 1896, the Ottomans blamed Hamdi Pasha, Basra's *Wali*, for hiding news, and about Mubarak taking control of Kuwait. But Hamdi Pasha replied that he had informed the Ottoman Ministry of Interior, and that the *Vilayet* did nothing but wait for orders concerning what had been presented⁽³⁾. On the other hand, Sheikh Mubarak telegraphed Istanbul his complaint from Basra's *Wali*. At that time, Baghdad's *Wali* Rajab Pasha was a friend of Sheikh Mubarak's, so the latter asked him for help. In turn, Rajab Pasha asked in a telegraph to Istanbul, that the threats from Basra's *Wali* to Sheikh Mubarak be ended, reminding of the latter's role in the campaign on al-Ahsa in 1871 CE. In an

(1) That was due to his not receiving answers concerning his request to sign the protection treaty.

(2) See J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", part 1, vol. 4, prev., p. 201.

(3) Sultan Bin-Muhammad Al-Qasimi, "*bayan al-kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al-sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah), see prev., p. 26.

attempt to calm things down, the Sublime Porte in Istanbul secluded the *Wali*, Hamdi Pasha, and appointed Arif Pasha to replace him⁽¹⁾.

Moreover, the reports of the European consuls and envoys indicate that the Ottoman-Kuwaiti relations before learning about the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE were normal, and that the Ottomans had tried to give Sheikh Mubarak a monthly salary and one of the Ottoman titles, showing him appreciation⁽²⁾.

The Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations after the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE

Reviewing the Ottoman documents reveals that when the Ottomans learned about the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement, they attempted to speed up the formation of an Ottoman administration in Kuwait. In one of the cables addressed from Basra's *Wali*, he wrote: "Guaranteeing the goodwill of Kuwait's *Qaymaqam*⁽³⁾ and his submission is a necessity... I feel that the English have their eyes set on Kuwait more than before".⁽⁴⁾ And in another cable: "Looking at the importance of Kuwait's location and maintaining this location far from foreign interference is one of the most important matters to show interest in, and this requires that a number of soldiers live there. Yet, the al Sabah have long been ruling the country, and its administration has been confined to them; they will resist this. They will not accept it easily, and

(1) *Id.*, p. 35.

(2) Ottoman Archives, Istanbul, Yildiz, No. 4818, 3 February - 1315 AH, copied from Khaleef Al- Shammeri, "*al-mustawda' wal-mustahdar*" (The Deposited and the Summoned), M. A. Thesis, King Saud University, Dar Ninawa pub., Damascus, 2006, p. 177.

(3) Ottoman Archives, class. DH.KMS. 18/39.

(4) Coded telegraph in provenance from Basra *Vilayet* as a reply to what was dated 1st of August 1315 [1 rumi: 6 Rabee' al- Thani 1317 AH/13 August 1899]; - Ottoman Archive class. Y.A.RES. 104/30.

additionally, considering Mubarak's courtesy towards the English and their closeness, while taking such an action, the English interference will be as it is a matter of fact"⁽¹⁾. Furthermore, in a cable from the management of foreign affairs, reference number 1636, from the Ottoman Embassy in London to the Grand Vizier concerning their negotiations with the British about Kuwait's situation regarding security, there came: "The English ambassador has declared that the English government will not occupy Kuwait. They will not consider a protectorate there, at the condition that the Ottoman government does not drive soldiers there, and maintains its prevailing situation"⁽²⁾.

That was at the time when Britain was still trying to deny any relations regarding Kuwait, and claiming it only had friendly relations with Sheikh Mubarak⁽³⁾. However, with the perpetuation of the Ottoman attempts and pressures, the British Foreign Office sent a request to the British ambassador to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul (O'Connor), asking him to shed the light on the danger of the escalation against Kuwait, and the necessity to settle matters calmly. It added that Britain might have to interfere directly if the pressure on Mubarak continued⁽⁴⁾.

Considering the news that Sheikh Mubarak and the British had signed an agreement, the Ottomans probably felt that one more issue was about to be added to their problems in the region. The Mubarak after the agreement would be different from the Mubarak of the eve, as he had become supported by the most

(1) Ottoman Archives, class. Y.A.RES. 104/30.

(2) Ottoman Archives, class. Y.A.RES 114/46.

(3) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Qatar, see prev., p. 3, 1536.

(4) Salih Khidr Mohamed, "*nashat al-qunsuliya al-britaniya fil-kuwait*" (The Activities of the British Consulate in Kuwait), Sur Man Raa mag., Samarra University, vol. 6, 2010, p. 46.

powerful and influential force in the region, Britain. The Ottomans realised that the immediate (military) reaction should be avoided at that stage, so they followed other ways. In a display of power, they sent the Ottoman ship (Zuhaf) in 1901 CE to make a show near the Kuwaiti ports. On board was the Deputy of Basra, to warn Sheikh Mubarak and give him the choice between going to the Capital of the Caliphate where he would be appointed in the Empire's *Shura* (consultative) Council⁽¹⁾, and being expelled from Kuwait. The British navy confronted the issue and not only obstructed this Ottoman ship, but also forced it to return to Basra, and moreover, the British commandant informed Zuhaf's captain that he would not allow any Ottoman military brigade to land on Kuwait's territory⁽²⁾. On another front, the Ottomans also hurried to complete extending the telegraph line from al-Faw to al-Qutaif through Kuwaiti lands⁽³⁾.

The Ottomans, speaking for their *Wali*, also declared that they were about to send an Ottoman civil servant to Kuwait's port to collect the customs' incomes⁽⁴⁾ and to supervise the port⁽⁵⁾. Mubarak

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- (1) Rihani, "*muluk al- 'arab, al- hijaz al- yaman 'asseer lahij wal nawahi al- mahmiya*" (Kings of the Arabs, Hijaz, Yemen, 'Asir, Lahij and the Protected Areas), Dar al- Jeel, Beirut, 8th ed., 1987, p. 659.
 - (2) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Department of History, Qatar, part 3, see prev., p. 1543-2542.
 - (3) Ottoman Archives, Istanbul, Yildiz, No. 4818, 3 February - 1315 AH. See also J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Qatar, see prev., p. 3, 1536; see also Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), prev., p. 91.
 - (4) To know about the nature and the emergence of Kuwaiti customs, see Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*nashaat al- jamarik al- kuwatiya wa dawraha fi tad'im siyadat al- kuwait 'ala manafithha*" (The Emergence of the Kuwaiti Customs and their Role in Supporting Kuwait's Sovereignty over its Ports), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2000.
 - (5) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Department of History, Qatar, see prev., p. 572.

hurriedly sent a note refusing these formalities and requesting expeditiously a meeting with the British Resident in the Arabian Gulf⁽¹⁾. The Ottomans also made an escalation in 1902 CE by sending some forces to Bubiyan Island and the two regions of Umm Qasr and Safwan. They considered that these regions were not Kuwaiti and would be in the realm of the planned railway road (Berlin-Baghdad)⁽²⁾. Given this situation, it is possible to say that the problem with Kuwait had become one of boundaries rather than one of prevalence or affiliation. At the same time, Ibn al-Rasheed, the ruler of Ha'il, was moving towards Kuwait, also under Ottoman directions. Lorimer pointed to this fact, assuming the existence of a serious tendency from the Ottomans and Ibn al-Rasheed to incorporate Kuwait with Basra, and remove Sheikh Mubarak from power⁽³⁾. Add to this the visit paid by Basra's *Wali* to personally obtain the truth of the matter from Sheikh Mubarak. Sheikh Jaber, Sheikh Mubarak's son who met the *Wali*, assured that Kuwait was going to persevere in its policy of independence from any other power – except for the British. Sheikh Jaber said that Kuwait had "the intention to follow the State of the English because of the compassion it found therein, while from his State [meaning the Ottoman Empire], we only saw harm and pain"⁽⁴⁾.

(1) *Id.*, p. 1529; see also Nizar Abdul-Latif et al., "*al-hudud al-sharqiya lil-watan al-'arabi, dirasa tareekhiya*" (The Eastern Boundaries of the Arab World, a Historical Study), Baghdad, 1981, p. 106.

(2) See Saldanha, *prev.*, p. 177.

(3) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", Qatar, see *prev.*, p. 574.

(4) Abdullah Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*akhbar al-kuwait, rasail ali-bin gholoum rida*" (Kuwait's News, Ali Gholoum Rida's Letters), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2007, p. 37.

Mubarak absorbs the anger of the Ottomans

Sheikh Mubarak did not seriously seek to broadly clash with the Ottomans after the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE was revealed. In fact, he surprisingly sought to absorb their anger and release some of the tension with them several times. We see him offering a subvention of 5000 Liras for the Istanbul fire in 1904 CE, and 3000 Liras for the Italo-Turkish War in 1911 CE⁽¹⁾. He also donated one thousand Liras for the Hijaz railway project, in addition to helping in the war relief committee⁽²⁾. Mubarak also showed some sympathy for the Ottoman soldiers who had fled from al-Qassim in 1906 CE, and helped them reach Basra. It seems that these inclinations persuaded the Ottoman authorities⁽³⁾ to alleviate the sharpness of their tone towards Sheikh Mubarak, and even ask some *walis* in Basra to award him distinctions for his cooperation⁽⁴⁾.

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- (1) Even though they robbed his properties in Iraq, and refused to register a land the Sheikh of Al- Muntafiq had bought from Sa'doun Pasha, with the excuse that he did not have the Ottoman nationaliy. Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 184, 199, 200.
- (2) Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, see prev., p. 78-84.
- (3) Sheikh Mubarak also joined the Committee of Union and Progress when he saw that its influence was increasing, while Sultan Abdul-Hamid II's influence was decreasing. Among the members of the party were also Talib Al- Naqib and Sheikh Khaz'al, the Emir of Muhammerah. See Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 81; see also Inaam Mahdi Ali Al- Samman, "*hukm al- shaykh khaz'al fil-ahwaz*" (Sheikh Khaz'al's Reign in Al- Ahwaz), Dar al- Kanadi pub., Baghdad, undated, p. 69.
- (4) As indicated by the British Political Agent in Kuwait Lieutenant-Colonel Gray, translated document fo/371/2123. Najdat Fathi Safwat, "*al-jazeera al- 'arabiya fil-wathaiq al- britaniya (najd wal-hijaz) 1914-1915*" (The Arabian Peninsula in the British Documents {Najd and Hijaz}, 1914-1915), p. 265-266.

In 1914 CE, during the march of the British campaign arriving from India to Basra after World War I had started, and after the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces, we see Sheikh Mubarak keen on absorbing the anger of Kuwait's people who had refused to participate in military actions against the Ottoman forces. Sheikh Mubarak said, showing some compassion for the Ottomans: "I am jealous of my religion and of my state, but I agreed with the English on something that bears benefit to me and my nation"⁽¹⁾.

It is in this state of complications, entanglement and conflict that the Kuwaiti-Ottoman relations were during the reign of Sheikh Mubarak. Mubarak preferred to handle the Ottoman pressure according to the impositions of reality and benefits, refusing at times, accepting at other times, and he always repeated: "Had they been loyal to me, I would have been loyal to them". At the same time, he said: "If the father is harsh bringing up his son, he remains his father nevertheless"⁽²⁾.

While it was obvious that Sheikh Mubarak tried to alleviate the intensity of the conflict with the Ottomans, there were other serious concerns that appeared to the Ottomans regarding Mubarak. Particularly as they felt the coordination that was taking place between Mubarak, Khaz'al, the British and the Russians, was at the expense of Ottoman Iraq, the throne of which both Sheikh Mubarak and Sheikh Khaz'al might have been ambitious to take over.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 206.

(2) In return, sources indicate that Sultan Abdul-Hamid II kept holding onto Kuwait and refused to make any concessions to the British about it. See Khaleef Al- Shammeri, "*al-mustawda' wal-mustahdar*" (The Deposited and the Summoned), prev., p.178. See also Khalid Al- Saadun, "*al-'ilaqat al- saudiya al- kuwaitiya*", Sausi-Kuwait Relations), see prev., p. 34; also Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, see prev., p. 74.

The political decision in Kuwait regarding the Ottomans during Sheikh Mubarak's time was centred on the reality imposed by situations and circumstances. The rulers of Kuwait did not permit any political presence or serious authority on the Emirate's grounds. It was never proven that Kuwait entered the realm of direct Ottoman rule, and there were no Ottoman taxes collected from Kuwait's ports and lands. Nor did the Ottoman Empire interfere in the arrangement of governance, or the ruling family, as it used to happen in many places where the ruler was directly reinstated or appointed by the Sublime Porte in Istanbul⁽¹⁾. It is probably necessary to quote one of al-Rasheed's phrases written in his book and giving a precise, summarised, important description of Mubarak's view of the relations with the Ottomans. al-Rasheed says: "Mubarak wrote to the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud telling him that the government – and he meant the Ottoman Empire – was going to depart, inevitably, and that the victory would be to its opponents, the English"⁽²⁾.

Mubarak and the Russian struggle over Kuwait

Russia might have seen in Kuwait an appropriate passage to reach warm waters; this dream which kept haunting the Tsars for a very long time⁽³⁾, and was prescribed in the will of Tsar Peter the Great (1682 CE-1725 CE)⁽⁴⁾ where he incited them to move

(1) Like in other places such as Egypt, Basra and Baghdad.

(2) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 212.

(3) See "*al-itiḥād al-sovieti wa mantiqat al-khalij al-'arabi*" (The Soviet Union and the Region of the Arabian Gulf), *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*, No. 5, 2nd year, Jan. 1967, issued from Kuwait University, p. 88. See also Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, "*al-shaykh Mubarak bayn al-tatalu'at al-russiyya wal-masalih al-britaniya fil-kuwait (1896-1904)*" (Sheikh Mubarak between Russian Ambitions and British Interests in Kuwait, 1896-1904), prev.

(4) Laurence Lockhart, "The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia", University Press, Cambridge, 1958, p. 59.

forward and find a place with warm waters where to set foot⁽¹⁾. There is no bigger proof to that than his famous phrase: “Open for yourselves a route towards the Persian Gulf”⁽²⁾, particularly because most of the seas Russia overlooks are either closed or semi-closed seas⁽³⁾.

Actually, Russia’s moves to play an influential role in the region of the Arabian Gulf had become more evident and self-declared since the end of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding that these moves had shyly appeared in previous periods. Historical records indicate that Russia’s general interest in the region of the Arabian Gulf and its direction towards it increased since Sheikh Mubarak ascended the throne in 1896 CE. The Russians first tested the waters with Sheikh Mubarak and tried to earn his amiability. So they sent merchants and scientific delegations under the pretence of activating trade and combatting plague. The economic and trade proposals were targets and cover-ups for the Russian moves towards Kuwait, especially after the trade and economic interests generally became the most important basis for the Russians’ manoeuvres within the region. Sources indicate that since 1899 CE, Russian merchants started trying to test the waters with the authority in Kuwait, and

(1) See Lindsey Hughes, “Peter the Great, a Biography”, 1st ed., Yale University Press, London, 2004; see also Mustafa Abdul-Kader Al-Najjar, “*al-‘ilaqat al-dawliya li Russia wal-itihad al-sovieti bil-khalij al-‘arabi*” (Russia and the Soviet Union’s International Relations with the Arabian Gulf), Arab Gulf mag., Basra University.

(2) Percy Sykes, “A History of Persia”, vol. 2, London, 1915, p. 254, copied from Ali Aba-Hussain, “*lamha hawl al-‘ilaqat al-tarikhiya bayn russia wa duwal al-khalij al-‘arabiya*” (A Glimpse at the Historical Relations between Russia and the Arabian Gulf States), al-Watheeqa mag., Bahrain Historical Documents Centre, No. 35, 8th year, January 1999.

(3) Like the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, some other seas are also frozen most of the year.

measure the extent of its acceptance and approval of making relations and connections with the Russian party. Two tradesmen, Abbas Aliiev and Avanesof arrived to Kuwait via Basra in the same year, carrying orders issued from the Ottoman Empire to Sheikh Mubarak, asking him to offer all possible help. In June 1900 CE, University Doctor Tinikov from the University of St Petersburg, accompanied by a disguised Russian officer, took a trip to visit Kuwait and the region, and they made an offer to Sheikh Mubarak whereby Russia would obtain some privileges in his land. But Sheikh Mubarak did not make his decision then. The railway projects to connect the region of the Arabian Gulf to the east of the Mediterranean, which the Russians proposed to the Ottomans, were among the oldest railway projects in the East⁽¹⁾. The most important of these was Kapnist 1898 CE (from Tripoli in Greater Syria on the Mediterranean), ending in Kuwait on the Arabian Gulf. The Russians also promised those in charge to pay a few visits to Kuwait's region and inspect it to make sure it is appropriate to become a station to store coal and a port. The Russians also studied the idea of creating a maritime line that would be directed by the Russian Black Sea Company for maritime navigation⁽²⁾, of establishing a fixed coaling station to supply its

(1) India Office, p s/20/c/Russian Activities, In p.g., copied from Abdul-Aziz Abdul-Ghani, "*siyasat al- amn li hukumat al- hind fil-khalij al- 'arabi 1858-1914, dirasa wathaiqiya*" (Security Politics of the Government of India in the Arabian Gulf, 1858-1914, a Documentary Study), Riyadh, Dar al- Malik Abdul-Aziz Press, 1982, p. 287. See also Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*al-nashat al- russi fil-khalij, 1887-1907*" (Russian Activity in the Gulf, 1887-1907), Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, vol. 5, No. 18, 1979, p. 117.

(2) Especially that Russia had a strong presence on the other side of the ulf, in Iran. For more, see Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*al-nashat al- russi fil-khalij, 1887-1907*" (Russian Activity in the Gulf, 1887-1907), prev., p. 118.

ships travelling to the Arabian Gulf⁽¹⁾, and of forming a trading centre for the Russian ships sailing through the region of the Arabian Gulf. The Russians assigned Kruglov with the mission of studying the creation of the mentioned station, especially by the Kuwaiti Gulf of Kazma, characterised by its deep waters close to the shore.

Mubarak and demands for Russian protection (1901 CE)

The Russian government issued instructions to Ovseyenko, the Russian Vice Consul General in Bushehr asking him to do his best to find interests or rights for Russia in the Gulf region. This would enable building greater interests, which would be the gate for direct and indirect Russian interference in the region. It is worth noting that Ovseyenko was ordered to keep the English moves in the region of the Gulf under his observation, and to try to sow discord between the English and the Arab rulers and princes. The Russian documents indicate that Sheikh Mubarak had requested from Russia to make a protection agreement, and demanded Abbas Aliiev during his visit to Kuwait when he met with Sheikh Mubarak, to transmit a verbal message from the Sheikh to the Russians. The message's content was: "We asked him to inform you of what we have in mind"⁽²⁾, and that he was ready to empower the Russians to make the necessary formalities in order to ensure Kuwait's security, and also ready, if it was necessary, to raise the Russian flag over the independent Kuwaiti

(1) For more, see Nadia Walid Al-Dosari, "*muhawalat al-tadakhul al-russi fil-khalij al-arabi 1297-1325 AH/1880-1907 CE*" (Attempts of Russian Interference in the Arabian Gulf, 1325 AH/1880-1907 CE) King Abdul-Aziz's Circle, 2001, p. 129.

(2) Foreign Policy Archives of the Russian Federation, Embassy in Istanbul, file 1245, sheets 201-202, doc. 2, copied from Bondarevsky, "*al-kuwait wa 'ilaqatuha al-dawliya khilal al-qarn al-tasi' 'ashr wa awail al-qarn al-'ishrin*" (Kuwait and its International Relations throughout the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century), p. 457, ann. No. 2.

territory owned by al Sabah. He also said that if Russia did not respond to Sheikh Mubarak, he would turn to the British party⁽¹⁾.

Within this context, some sources mentioned that Sheikh Mubarak had previously threatened that if he did not get the protection agreement with the British, he would be obliged to make an agreement with the Ottomans, and maybe even with France. This is confirmed by what is said about Sheikh Mubarak assuring to Colonel Gaskin, the British Assistant Political Resident in the Gulf, during his visit to sign the agreement, that he had received French proposals⁽²⁾. In another document, Sheikh Mubarak wrote to the Russians: "I had previously informed you verbally that it was important to me that your eyes fall on us, and I now also in writing hereby request that your eyes fall on us"⁽³⁾. Therefore, Ovseyenko, the Russian Vice Consul General in Bushehr, informed the Russian Consul in Baghdad (Kruglov) about the matter in a letter which read: "The Sheikh of Kuwait requests our protection"⁽⁴⁾. This was well received by Kruglov who had been hoping for a strong effective Russian political presence on Kuwait's land. Hence, he wrote a report to his superiors in June 1901 CE, saying: "We are facing a new bitter historical reality, as

(1) Bondarevsky, "*al-kuwait wa 'ilaqatuha al-dawliya khilal al-qarn al-tasi' 'ashr wa awail al-qarn al-ishrin*" (Kuwait and its International Relations throughout the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century), p. 196-197, from doc. 2.

(2) Abdullah Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*akhbar al- kuwait, rasail ali-bin gholoum rida*" (Kuwait's News, Ali Gholoum Rida's Letters), see prev., p. 23.

(3) Foreign Policy Archives of the Russian Federation, Embassy in Istanbul, file 1245, sheets 201-204, doc. 2.

(4) Foreign Policy Archives of the Russian Federation, Political Archives, file 354, sheet 25, doc. 1; see also Nadia Walid Al- Dosari, "*muhawalat al- tadakhul al- russi fil-khalij al- arabi 1297-1325 AH/1880-1907 CE*" (Attempts of Russian Interference in the Arabian Gulf, 1325 AH/1880-1907 CE), prev., p. 49

Sheikh Mubarak is asking for our help”, expressing the wish to fulfil the Sheikh’s request⁽¹⁾. Notwithstanding that Mubarak had already signed an agreement with the British (the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement, January 1899 CE)!

Undoubtedly, the Russian moves towards Kuwait would not have taken this form of impulsiveness and seriousness had the British not suffered political repercussions and setbacks in that period, especially in their conflicts with Germany and France; so the Russian found it an opportunity to benefit from the political crisis endured by British policy.

However, Britain, in spite of its keenness on monitoring the Russians’ movements, was aware that they were not capable of changing the situation in their favour, so it did not give much attention to these meetings, and even when the news of the request of Russian protection was leaked, Britain doubted them. Even some British documents often put doubts on the veracity of the information, in spite of it being certified in the Russian documents. These Russian moves were described as primarily commercial and economic.

In truth, Sheikh Mubarak would not have been able to practice this political duplicity had there not been several parties and forces involved, noting that he was well aware of the reality of the international situation surrounding him, as a situation of colonial transformations aiming at spreading their authority in the region. His diplomatic manoeuvres and his attempt to attract the Russians sometimes, and retracting and refusing help at other

(1) For more, see Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, “*al-shaykh Mubarak bayn al-tatalu’at al-russiyya wal-masalih al-britaniyya fil-kuwait (1896-1904)*” (Sheikh Mubarak between Russian Ambitions and British Interests in Kuwait, 1896-1904), Arab Journal for the Humanities, Academic Publication Council, spring 2010, Kuwait University, No. 110.

times were therefore merely exerting pressure on the British to speed up signing a treaty he found the latter hesitating on.

The Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE

The constant Ottoman threats and Mubarak's anxiety therefrom, and his fear that the Ottomans would conquer the Emirate by force, were undoubtedly his main motive to turn towards the British. This was confirmed by what Gaskin, the British Assistant Resident, came up with, that the reason for which Mubarak had asked for protection from Britain was his wish to oblige the Ottomans to recognise him after the failure of his efforts in this direction⁽¹⁾. The Anglo-Kuwait agreement was an opportunity to stop the Ottomans as well as the influence of the colonial powers such as Russia and others, and was also a preparation to make Kuwait grow far from these conflicts, in a secure manner. Especially that it ensured that Kuwait would not be submitted to any other state or power, except for the relations with the British government as prescribed in the agreement⁽²⁾. Sources reveal that immediately after ascending to the throne, Sheikh Mubarak expressed a strong will to make a rapprochement with the British, especially after he had heard that the British Consul in Basra incited Britain against him when he conveyed to the British Ambassador in Istanbul that the

(1) See Badr Al-Din Abbas Al-Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-'arabi al hadeeth wal-mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, That al Salasil, Kuwait, 1st ed., 1988, p. 61.

(2) See Fattouh Al-Khatrash, "*tareekh al-'ilaqat al-siyasiya al-britaniya al-kuwaitiya 1821-1890 (Kuwait 1821-1890)*" (History of the Anglo-Kuwaiti Political Relations, 1821-1890 "Kuwait 1821-1890"), That al Salasil, Kuwait, 1974, p. 28. See also Badr Al-Din Abbas Al-Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-'arabi al hadeeth wal-mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, prev., p. 38.

presence of Sheikh Mubarak at the throne did not serve British interests⁽¹⁾. Therefore, Mubarak quickly sought to meet the British Resident in Bushehr, Colonel Malcolm John Meade. He negotiated with him, expressing his wish for more rapprochement, and also requesting a protection agreement between Kuwait and Britain⁽²⁾ like the ones with the other Sheikhs in the region of the Arabian Gulf⁽³⁾- particularly because his opponent Yusuf al-Ibrahim was continuing to incite the British against him.

Because the British were primarily interested that the Arabian Gulf remains open to India⁽⁴⁾, they welcomed Sheikh Mubarak's moves. They also assured him that they did not recognise Ottoman sovereignty over Kuwait, and that the request for protection was a matter they would implement when it became necessary⁽⁵⁾. Sir Arthur Godley, Permanent Undersecretary of State for India, frankly said: "We don't want Kuwait, but we don't want anyone else to have it"⁽⁶⁾.

(1) Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait),, part 2, see prev., p. 19.

(2) *Id.*, p. 19-20.

(3) See Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi al hadeeth wal-mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, prev., p. 60.

(4) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 317.

(5) Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait),, part 2, see prev., p. 20.

(6) For more, see Abdel-Raouf Sinno, "*itifaqiat britania wa mu'ahadatuha ma' imarat al- khalij al- 'arabiya (1798-1916), fusul fil-haymana wal-tafteet*" (Britain's Agreements and Treaties with the Arab Emirates of the Gulf {1798-1916}, Chapters of Dominance and Disintegration), *Tareekh al- "Arab wal 'Alam* magazine, 174/1998, p. 6-40; 175/1998, p. 22-39; 176/1998, p. 58-78.

Mubarak's success in leaking the information that if he did not get a protection agreement from Britain he would have to make an agreement with Russia⁽¹⁾ probably played an important role, as the British authorities hurried to take more determined steps towards this issue⁽²⁾. The following year, on the 5th of September 1897 John Meade and his assistant Gaskin visited Kuwait. They were on board R.I.M.S. Lawrence, and they held a meeting with Sheikh Mubarak to make sure of his request for protection. Gaskin indicated that Sheikh Mubarak wanted to put Kuwait under British protection like Bahrain and the Trucial Sheikhdoms. Sheikh Mubarak said that if Britain was ready to accept this, we would, in return, offer the help to ensure that Britain implements law and order in the region, using all his power which, according to him, consisted of 25 thousand tribesmen⁽³⁾. In fact, on the 23rd of January 1899 CE, Britain signed the agreement known as the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement⁽⁴⁾. Prior to signing the agreement and the end of British hesitation to accept it, a cable was sent from the British Foreign Office to the Indian Office in December 1898. It said that if the India government saw that the commitment to Kuwait's protection could happen without trouble or repercussions, Lord Salisbury would be ready to provide such protection and

(1) Fattouh Al- Khatrash, "*tareekh al- 'ilaqat al- siyasiya al- britaniya al- kuwaitiya 1890-1921*" (History of the Anglo-Kuwaiti Political Relations, 1890-1921), 2nd ed., Kuwait, That al Salasil pub., 1984, p.108; FO-78/5173/34840, From Viceroy, 8th of June 1901.

(2) Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton (Telegraphic), 18th January, 1899 Enclosure bin No. 42

(3) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi al hadeeth wal-mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, see prev., p. 61.

(4) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 408.

support it politically, so that the Sublime Porte would not make contradictory requests⁽¹⁾.

Mubarak's request was for the sake of protecting his Emirate, especially that he was following the consecutive development of events and the expected clash between the great powers, namely the Ottoman surge, the Russian movement, the Germans, the regional dangers from the local powers like Ibn Rasheed the ruler of Ha'il, and Yusuf al-Ibrahim. This treaty offered a great extent of security to the Emirate, particularly after Mubarak looked up the report by the British Vice Consul in Basra, and the reply of the Consul in Baghdad, Loch. The latter assured that the Ottomans would soon invade Kuwait, and that this would be an obstacle bringing much harm to the British interests⁽²⁾. Moreover, Britain was very anxious from the Germans' moves and their trying to gain Sheikh Mubarak's friendship and getting some privileges, among which the railway. The Germans had tried to propose the railway project "Berlin-Baghdad" which they suggested would be extended to Kuwait. They sent several delegations to study the question and test the waters, and the news that Sheikh Mubarak granted an audience to the German delegation in 1900 CE aroused strong resentment on the British side. This urged British politicians to send a message to Mubarak whereby "he was not to go into any private arrangements on the Kuwaiti territory, and that he had to wait for instructions from the government in India"⁽³⁾. Especially

(1) F.O. 406/14 Foreign Office to India Office, des 5. 1898, No.6, copied from Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi al hadeeth wal- mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, see prev., p. 63.

(2) Mohamed Adnan Murad, "*britannia wal- 'arab*" (Britain and the Arabs), Cairo, undated, p. 281.

(3) This is perhaps what led Mubarak not to show the Germans any positive signs towards their attempts, although he received them well, knowing about the friendly relations between the German Emperor at that time and the Ottoman Empire. Mubarak informed the Germans of his refusal of their proposition. FO-406-15, =

that it was rumoured that the Germans were planning on overtaking the Gulf of Kazma which belonged to Kuwait with no need for Sheikh Mubarak's permission⁽¹⁾, which meant the inevitable end of British influence in that important and vital part of the region of the Arabian Gulf.

Given all these challenges and threats, it was imperative for Mubarak to draw his policies and the policies of his Emirate, and to look for whoever would secure a stable situation for him and his Emirate⁽²⁾.



= Affairs of Kuwait, 1990, No. 12, Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury, received February No. 81, Confidential, Constantinople, January 26, 1900.

- (1) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi al hadeeth wal-mu'asar" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, see prev., p. 170.
- (2) J. G. Lorimer, "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", part 1, vol. 4, Sultan Qaboos University ed., p. 222.

This document or treaty was an act (law) written and acknowledged by both Britain, represented by Colonel John Meade, and Kuwait, represented by Sheikh Mubarak Bin Sabah, Sheikh of Kuwait, as the second party. As for the clauses of the agreement which took place on January 23rd, 1899 CE between Sheikh Mubarak and the British, they stipulated that Sheikh Mubarak, consensually and by his choice agreed that he and his heirs and successors would forever refuse agents or *qaymaqam* from any state or government to Kuwait, or any other part within its borders, without a license from the Glorious British Empire. The agreement also stated that Sheikh Mubarak was committed not to impose, sell, rent, mortgage or transfer in any other way, or give a piece of his territory to another state or to the citizens of another state without getting permission from Britain first. The clauses of the agreement also included every part of Sheikh Mubarak's territory – signed 23rd of January 1899 CE.

Remarkably, the agreement did not state Britain's commitment to offer material support or commitment to protect Kuwait. But it was understood in the negotiations carried between the representatives of the British government and Sheikh Mubarak that Britain was committed to protect Kuwait⁽¹⁾, and to annual financial subsidy⁽²⁾. Britain was also keen on keeping this agreement secret, as it did not wish to stir the Ottoman Empire or create new tensions with the European forces.

In 1904 CE, Britain established an agency in Kuwait. In November of the same year, this was followed by the proposal to establish a post office⁽³⁾. In the same year as well, Britain appointed

(1) Unwritten promise.

(2) See Sultan Bin-Muhammad Al- Qasimi, "*bayan al- kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al- sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah), prev., p. 78-83.

(3) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi al hadeeth wal-mu'asar*" (Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, see prev., p. 73.

its first Political Resident in Kuwait, Captain Knox⁽¹⁾. Also in 1904 CE, Sheikh Mubarak used the British party as a pressuring element in his dispute over his properties in Iraq, and to get a loan of one hundred thousand rupees from the Government of India⁽²⁾. British documents also reveal that Sheikh Mubarak agreed to rent a piece of land between al-Shuwaikh and the City of Kuwait to Britain in 1907 CE, for it to be a naval base and a coaling station⁽³⁾. There was also the agreement on the pearls in 1910 CE, and in 1912 CE, Sheikh Mubarak allowed the British to install the wireless telegraph line, in addition to signing an agreement on petroleum in 1913 CE.

The Anglo-Ottoman convention (agreement 1913 CE)

In 1913 CE, based on the events and the alliances the region was witnessing before World War I (1914 CE-1918 CE), and with the geological search the British royal delegation was undergoing at that time on the Kuwaiti soil to estimate the petroleum capacities there, the British, made an agreement with the Ottomans to redefine the region's frontiers, in an attempt to neutralise the Ottoman party. This agreement pledged that the Ottomans were to stop interfering in Kuwait's internal affairs⁽⁴⁾, and established the northern and southern Kuwaiti frontiers with the Ottoman

(1) *Id.*, p. 78.

(2) See Abdel-Raouf Sinno, "*itifaqiat britania wa mu'ahadatuha ma' imarat al- khalij al- 'arabiya (1798-1916), fusul fil-haymana wal-tafteet*" (Britain's Agreements and Treaties with the Arab Emirates of the Gulf {1798-1916}, Chapters of Dominance and Disintegration), prev., p. 25.

(3) Waleed Al- A'dhami, "*al-kuwait fil-wathaiq al- britaniya 1572-1960*" (Kuwait in the British Documents, 1572-1960), London, 1991, p. 38-41.

(4) See Abdel-Raouf Sinno, "*itifaqiat britania wa mu'ahadatuha ma' imarat al- khalij al- 'arabiya (1798-1916), fusul fil-haymana wal-tafteet*" (Britain's Agreements and Treaties with the Arab Emirates of the Gulf {1798-1916}, Chapters of Dominance and Disintegration), prev., p. 29.

provinces in Basra and al-Ahsa. The agreement also included considering Kuwait an Ottoman autonomous *kaza* (independent) following Ottoman Basra. The agreement also included a British pledge not to impose protection over Kuwait, and in return, the Ottoman Empire recognised the validity of the agreements which made Kuwait a British protectorate⁽¹⁾!!!

This agreement is undoubtedly one of the major agreements in the history of Kuwait, in spite of the strange contradictions therein. It recognises the authority of the British and their interests in Kuwait, as well as the validity of the agreements made - among which was the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE (through which Kuwait actually got out of the realm of Ottoman influence) - while at the same time it maintained the status of Kuwait as part of the Ottoman Empire!!!

Also, Britain's recognition of Ottoman sovereignty over al-Ahsa was in complete contradiction with real facts, as al-Ahsa had also actually gone out of the realm of direct Ottoman rule when it fell in the hands of Ibn Saud in 1913 CE. The strange thing is that this document was one of the scripts brought out by Iraq to justify the historical right and the invasion of 1990 CE, when it used it as a reference to prove Kuwait's belonging to Basra!!!

Sheikh Mubarak and World War I, 1914 CE

In the second decade of the twentieth century, the world globally witnessed a number of political and military developments that rapidly led to the First World War. This war started in July 1914 CE and led to the change of the landmarks of the geographic, political and military map, not only for the region of the Arabian

(1) An agreement has been signed with the initials of Edward Grey the British Foreign Secretary, and Ibrahim Haqqi, the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, the formalities for its ratification were not completed due to the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914.

Gulf, but also for the entire world. After the outbreak of World War I, many of the symbols of the connection between the Ottoman Empire and the regions where it exerted influence immediately fell, as well as the regions following it, particularly in the Arab regions. On the level of Kuwait's situation, it was not limited to the mere fall of the nominal relations between them, but it extended to playing a role in ending the Ottoman prevalence in the region as a whole. In fact, in August 1914 CE, Sheikh Mubarak entered the war against Germany, declaring his standing by Britain on the 21st of the same month. He pledged to expel the Ottomans from the islands near Kuwait, although the Ottoman Empire had not yet announced entering the war until that time.

In November 1914 CE, the Ottoman Empire officially declared entering the war joining Germany and the other Central Powers. Britain also declared official war on the Ottoman Empire, rushing to occupy al-Faw. Then, on the 22nd of November 1914 CE, the British forces succeeded in entering Basra⁽¹⁾. In the same month, the British Political Resident in the Gulf sent a note to Sheikh Mubarak affirming that his government endorsed and recognised the Sheikhdome of Kuwait as an independent government under British protection⁽²⁾. And in a letter sent from Knox, the acting British Political Resident in the Gulf, to Sheikh Mubarak, the British asked Sheikh Mubarak for his help by attacking Umm Qasr, Safwan and Bubiyan. And in doing so to rely on those he trusted from the reliable Sheikhs and rulers of the neighbouring areas – in order to break Basra's siege and liberate it. He was also asked to make the necessary arrangements to prevent the Ottoman supplies from reaching Basra. The text also included recognition of

(1) See Maimunah Al- Sabah, p. 313.

(2) Document retrieved from a letter from the British Political Resident in the Gulf to His Excellency Mubarak Al- Sabah, Sheikh of Kuwait, including specific commitments to him from the British Government, 3rd of November 1914.

Kuwait as a Sheikhdom with an independent government under British protection, with a pledge to fulfil Sheikh Mubarak's interests. This, in addition to solving the problem of the palm tree gardens located between al-Faw and Basra, so that they would remain exempted from fees, in his possession, and the possession of his branch after him⁽¹⁾. Thus, the First World War and Sheikh Mubarak's participation as a party in it directly determined many pending political issues, and mainly Kuwait's exit from the realm of any eventual future Ottoman arrangements in the region.

Sheikh Mubarak and the emergence of the Third Saudi State, 1902 CE

The First Saudi State reached its peak thanks to the alliance between al Saud and Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, but it fell before an external power, namely the Egyptian Ottoman power (Mohamed Ali Pasha) in 1818 CE. On the other hand, the emergence of the Third Saudi State has always been linked to Kuwait's name. Although there had been relations with both the First and Second Saudi States, the emergence of the Third Saudi State – which prevails to this very day – is always linked to the help offered by Kuwait to al Saud to retake the city of Riyadh, whence the re-emergence of their state. It is noteworthy that the family of Prince Abdul-Aziz Bin Saud went to several places where they did not find any help, and then returned to settle in Kuwait. Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah welcomed the residence of Imam Abdul-Rahman al-Faisal al Saud in Kuwait, and the Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Abdul-Rahman became part of Sheikh Mubarak's companionship with whom he liked to sit, in spite of his young age at that time. Prince Abdul-Aziz also benefitted from Sheikh Mubarak's friendship, learned from his company, and met many of his guests and his companions, Arab and foreign. It was

(1) Records of Kuwait, 1899-1961, vol. 2, 1921-1950, India Office P 395 Kuwait Administration.

therefore normal that Emir Abdul-Aziz understands Mubarak's support to him. His encouragement primarily aimed to make a balance among the powers surrounding Mubarak, and to directly put a limit to the power of al-Rasheed, Ha'il's ruler, disperse his efforts and lessen his danger towards Kuwait. This was actually translated to action when Sheikh Mubarak formed an alliance of some tribes⁽¹⁾, and these tribes subsequently became one of the most important elements in the direct military conflict between Kuwait and Ha'il during the reign of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah⁽²⁾.

Sources are no help to put forward Prince Abdul-Aziz's clear military role in the skirmishes that occurred before the Battle of Sarif in 1901 CE, except for the clash of the Kuwaiti army – which included Emir Abdul-Aziz – with the tail of Ibn Rasheed's army⁽³⁾. However, the Emir's role began to show clearly during the Battle of Sarif when Emir Abdul-Aziz was with the Najd community in Kuwait getting ready to recapture Riyadh⁽⁴⁾. In 1901 CE, while his father, the Imam Abdul Rahman, and Sheikh Mubarak were facing Ibn Rasheed's forces in Sarif, Emir Abdul-Aziz was able to

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- (1) The tribes Al- Muntafiq, Al- Dhafeer, Mutair, Al- Ejman, Banu Hajar, Al- Awazim, Al Murrah, and Emir Abdul Rahman Al Saud to fight Ibn Rasheed's forces. See Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 161; see also Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 312; see also Vladimir Lutsky, "Modern History of the Arab Countries", translated [to Arabic] by Afifa Al- Bustani, revised by Yuri Riyustin, Dar al- Takadum (Mir), Moscow, 1971, p. 426.
- (2) Hussein Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 36.
- (3) *Id.*, p. 40-41.
- (4) Abdullah Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, "*tareekh al- mamlaka al- 'arabiya al- saudiya*" (History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), part 2, 1st ed., Obekan Bookstore, Saudi-Arabia, 1995, p. 41; Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 50.

reach Riyadh and besiege the city's garrison. However, the moment he had reached it, he received the news of the defeat of his ally Sheikh Mubarak in Sarif, and he was obliged to withdraw from Riyadh, preferring to lose Riyadh than to lose his greatest supporter, Sheikh Mubarak⁽¹⁾.

In 1902 CE, Emir Abdul-Aziz got ready to leave Kuwait after Sheikh Mubarak prepared for him mounts, ammunition and supplies to help him fulfil his aim. Some even said⁽²⁾ that the total of what Sheikh Mubarak offered amounted to almost forty camels and thirty rifles, in addition to provisions. Forty men also accompanied him from Kuwait⁽³⁾. Abdul-Aziz did not go to Riyadh directly, as on his way he picked up a group of some of the tribesmen loyal to him⁽⁴⁾, so that the number of his combatants exceeded one thousand men. However, they kept retracting fearing Ibn Rasheed⁽⁵⁾, and also fearing the Ottoman Empire's threats that it would forbid the tribes cooperating with the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud from getting supplies from the ports of al-Ahsa and Qutair⁽⁶⁾. Therefore, only those who accompanied him from Kuwait remained with him on his journey to recapture Riyadh; so he took them to the area of Yabrin between Qatar and

(1) For more, see what Rihani wrote in his book "*muluk al- 'arab, najd al- kuwait arabistan al- bahrain al- iraq*" (Kings of the Arabs, Najd, Kuwait, Arabistan, Bahrain, Iraq), part 2, about Sheikh Mubarak, his political roles and his relations in the region.

(2) See Abdullah Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, "*tareekh al- mamlaka al- 'arabiya al- saudiya*" (History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), prev. p. 50.

(3) See Munira Al- 'Urinan, "*ilaqat najd bil-quwa al- muheeta*" (Najd's Relations with the Surrounding Forces), prev., p. 104-105.

(4) Abdullah Al- Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, "*tareekh al- mamlaka al- 'arabiya al- saudiya*" (History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), see prev. p. 51.

(5) See Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), prev., p. 122.

(6) *Id.*, p. 123.

Rub' al-Khali in order to rearrange his strategy to enter Riyadh which had two fortresses that belonged to Ibn Rasheed⁽¹⁾. Ibn Saud succeeded in penetrating the outer barricade, and sent for his brother Muhammad whom he had left with about twenty-three men in a place called al-Shamsiya⁽²⁾. The Emir Abdul-Aziz was able to conquer the Masmak fort⁽³⁾, and kill Ajlan⁽⁴⁾, Ibn Rasheed's agent in Riyadh, so that the caller announced: "The kingdom belongs to God, then to Abdul-Aziz Bin Abdul-Rahman"⁽⁵⁾. Abdul-Aziz's position was then established in Riyadh where welcoming people received him. Thus, the Third Saudi State started its first steps, and Prince Abdul-Aziz sent an envoy to inform his father and Sheikh Mubarak of his success. He asked his father Imam Abdul-Rahman to go to Riyadh with his mounts and all the members of his family. Mubarak was also happy with Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud's success in taking control of Riyadh, as he would be a support for him in the conflict with Ha'il's ruler. Sheikh Mubarak sent messages to the Ottoman Empire and to the British to reassure them and speak on behalf of the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud about the promises regarding ensuring security and stability in the region.⁽⁶⁾ On the other front, the Emir

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- (1) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 175.
- (2) "*Al-malik abdul-'aziz wa fath al- 'riyadh*" (King Abdul-Aziz and the Conquest of Riyadh), see prev., p. 104.
- (3) Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), prev., p. 127.
- (4) Dari Bin Fuhayd Al- Rasheed, "*nabtha tareekhiya 'an najd*" (A Historical Brief on Najd), written by Wadie Al- Bustani, presented and reviewed by Abdul-Salih Al- 'Uthaymin, Riyadh, 1999, p. 44.
- (5) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 177.
- (6) See Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, "*al-'ilaqat al- kuwaitiya al- sa'udiya taathir wa taathur bayn al- thawabit wa sira' al- masalih*" (The Kuwaiti-Saudi Relations, Affecting and Affected between Constants and Conflict of Interests), al- Mu'arikh al- Masry mag., Cairo University, No. 40, part I, January, 2012.

Abdul-Aziz was able to impose his authority on Riyadh, especially with the moral and material subventions he received from Sheikh Mubarak, as Sheikh Mubarak used to send him caravans equipped with food and ammunition. And when Mubarak learned that Ibn Rasheed was preparing to attack Riyadh and that he had ordered the al-Dhafeer tribes to attack Ibn Saud, Mubarak prepared an army first, and sent it to Ibn Saud⁽¹⁾. Also, in 1903 CE, the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud arrived to Kuwait in order to help attacking Sultan al-Duwaish (Prince of the Mutair tribe) when Sheikh Mubarak asked him for help after learning about al-Duwaish's preparations to attack Kuwait⁽²⁾. It is worth noting that al-Duwaish and Ibn Rasheed had become allies as a result of the Battle of Sarif. Sheikh Mubarak also had recourse to Emir Abdul-Aziz in the battle of Julaban (Laban Valley) in 1904 CE⁽³⁾, and in fact, they succeeded in defeating Sultan al-Duwaish who chose to retract facing the Kuwaiti army and Abdul-Aziz's forces. On the other side, Ibn Rasheed tried to grasp the opportunity and attack Riyadh, but the Emir Abdul-Aziz hurriedly asked for Sheikh Mubarak's succour saying: "My Father Mubarak, people of Kuwait, people of ardour, Ibn Rasheed attacked Riyadh taking the opportunity of my visit to you, so support"⁽⁴⁾. Mubarak then instructed to supply the ships with food and ammunition, and issued his orders to the army, which had just returned from al-Duwaish's war, to march on Riyadh to save Ibn Saud⁽⁵⁾.

(1) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 180.

(2) Al-Shamlan, "*min tareekh al-kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 148.

(3) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 180.

(4) *Id.*, p. 181.

(5) Khalid Al-Saadun, "*al-'ilaqat bayn Najd wal-Kuwait (1902-1922)*" (The Relations between Najd and Kuwait, 1902-1922), see prev., p. 275.

In the shadow of this moral, material and military support, Ibn Saud was able to reinforce his governance in Riyadh and in its neighbouring areas. This was confirmed by the British Political Agent in Kuwait who wrote in a letter to the British Resident in the Gulf sent in September 1904 CE, saying that it would be difficult for Ibn Saud to be able to assert his position without external help. He said that Ibn Saud would only find his ally Sheikh Mubarak to whom he would go back for every problem, as Sheikh Mubarak sent weekly subsidies of weapons, ammunition and provisions to Riyadh⁽¹⁾.

In 1910 CE, there were repeated attacks from some tribes allied with Ibn Rasheed and Sa'doun Pasha, one of the Sheikhs of al-Muntafiq. The historian Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed says that some tribes affiliated to Sa'doun Pasha attacked a Kuwaiti merchant; moreover, Sa'doun Pasha himself raided the Mutair tribes following Kuwait⁽²⁾. And al-Qinai says: "Sa'doun al-Mansour invaded the Mutair tribe, and it so happened that some of the Kuwaiti Bedouins were nearby, so they were taken with whoever was taken"⁽³⁾. Sheikh Jaber then immediately wrote about it to Sa'doun Pasha. The latter expressed his apologies and his readiness to pay back what had been taken from them. Sheikh Jaber accepted with forgiveness and sent a letter to his father informing him of what had happened. al-Qinai says: "When Mubarak read the letter he kept repeating 'Who are you to forgive while I am here... It is my decision and Sa'doun must disappear from the world of existence'". Afterwards, Mubarak prepared a military expedition, whereby he

(1) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al-kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 226.

(2) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 185.

(3) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 33.

sent a request to Emir Abdul-Aziz, asking him for help⁽¹⁾. The Emir Abdul-Aziz did not hesitate, and actually arrived to Kuwait; he tried to make Sheikh Mubarak hold back his wish, but he was unable to do so. The expedition marched, led by Sheikh Jaber Bin Mubarak and Ibn Saud (accompanied by around four hundred horsemen and warriors from Najd). The Kuwaiti army surprised Sa'doun Pasha with an attack where the Kuwaitis lost a great number of their forces, and the battle ended rapidly with the defeat of Kuwait's army, which lost around one hundred and fifty men. The historians say that this battle (March 1910 CE) was named *Hedeya* (gift) because the Kuwaiti army left behind an important booty without fighting. al-Qinai says: "The Kuwaitis threw their weapons and left their things, a cold booty as a gift for Sa'doun's people, so this battle was called *Hedeya*, because there was no combat among the warriors to cause this surrender"⁽²⁾.

Sheikh Mubarak later prepared for another expedition; al-Rasheed says: "Mubarak's temper did not soften after this defeat and the loss of this great army, but he planned for Sa'doun a raid which would leave nothing behind... Then he equipped his son with an army, accompanied by Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber". And indeed, the Kuwaiti army was able to attack some of the tribes affiliated to Sa'doun Pasha, and take some booty and money.

Sheikh Mubarak and Prince Abdul-Aziz, the confrontation and lack of understanding

In the course of his writing about the discord that occurred between Sheikh Mubarak and Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud towards the end of Mubarak's reign, al-Rasheed says: "I see that the real

(1) Dhafir Al- Ajami, "*jaysh al- kuwait fi 'asr Mubarak al- sabah 1896-1915*" (Kuwait's Army under Mubarak Al- Sabah, 1896-1915), see prev., p. 270.

(2) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 34.

reason behind the change of each one of them towards the other is the fear of both from the other's growth or lust for his power"⁽¹⁾.

Mubarak knew that Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud undoubtedly knew his family's history and its state, which extended and grew until it unified most of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, Prince Abdul-Aziz's success, the growth of his military power and his rapid expansion strongly aroused Mubarak's anxiety, particularly after the Battle of Rawdat Muhanna, which took place in 1906 CE, between the forces of Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Mit'ab al Rasheed and the forces of Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Saud, where Ibn Rasheed was killed, and the Ottoman garrison retreated⁽²⁾. There were also the negotiations that Emir Abdul-Aziz held directly with the Ottomans and the British. They made Mubarak suspect a direct threat to him, because Mubarak saw that the negotiations with the British and the Ottomans should have been through him, as he feared Kuwait's position could be weakened or become weaker in the frontier regions, especially with the tribes, if Emir Abdul-Aziz would side with the Ottomans, or commit to the British. If there was a necessity for the Emir Abdul-Aziz to deal directly with these two powers or one of them both, it was no less necessary that he take the custody of the Saudis who had departed from his land, with his support.

With all the evidence that proves that Emir Abdul-Aziz had become a power to be feared in the region, Mubarak was closely watching the situation and what was happening between Ibn Saud and Ha'il's rulers, the al Rasheed. Mubarak did not wish for any of them both to defeat the other, as he feared that if Ha'il would defeat Ibn Saud, it would make them the major power in the

(1) See Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 210; see also Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 187.

(2) Emir Abdul-Aziz Al Saud declared his control over Al- Qassim.

region, so they would head towards Kuwait right afterwards. As to Emir Abdul Aziz's victory, it would also lead to the expansion of his influence, which would result in Kuwait coming out unsafe in any of the two cases.

Therefore, with this anxiety and fear, Sheikh Mubarak started following a dual policy with his ally Emir Abdul-Aziz and with al Rasheed as well. The principle was to not favour any party over the other. He worked on weakening Ibn Rasheed's front making use of his strong relationship with Ibn Saud, and he used Ibn Rasheed's strength to sow the fear from him in Emir Abdul-Aziz's heart. It has been said⁽¹⁾ that a letter originally destined to Ibn Rasheed was sent by mistake to Emir Abdul-Aziz, and a letter originally written to Ibn Saud was sent by mistake to Ibn Rasheed. In both letters, Mubarak incited each of the two men against the other, and promised him support⁽²⁾. Then there was the Subaihiya⁽³⁾ Conference in 1914 CE. The conference was held in Kuwait with the background of Emir Abdul-Aziz's occupation of al-Ahsa in 1913 CE, and Sheikh Jaber, the son of Sheikh Mubarak was present and widely deepened the gap between the points of view of Sheikh Mubarak and Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud, as the results Sheikh Jaber reached did not please Sheikh Mubarak. However, the latter sent a letter to Emir Abdul-Aziz to congratulate him on the agreement.

(1) See Munira Al- 'Urinan, "*ilaqat najd bil-quwa al- muheeta*" (Najd's Relations with the Surrounding Forces), prev., p. 108-109.

(2) See Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 209-216 for a detailed description of the reasons for the disagreement which occurred between Sheikh Mubarak and Emir Abdul-Aziz.

(3) The Subaihiya Conference took place in Kuwait in 1914 between the Emir of Najd, Abdul-Aziz Al- Saud, and the Ottoman Empire. It is one of the first conferences to have taken place in Kuwait. For more, see Al- Hatim, "*min huna badaat al- kuwait*" (Kuwait Started Here), prev., p. 44.

The issue of al-Ajman widens the gap between Sheikh Mubarak and Ibn Saud

Rihani says that al-Ajman always rebelled against the Ottomans. He also says that Sheikh Mubarak fought them, and befriended them, but was unable to restrain them... The number of their combatants at that time reached five thousand⁽¹⁾.

The Battle of Malh, which took place in 1860 CE between al-Ajman, under the leadership of Rakan Bin Falah Bin Hithalayn, and the Saudis shows how Kuwait was sometimes the scene of political conflicts for the two parties. After the Battle of Malh, Abdullah Bin Faisal al Saud occupied a Ajman camp near al-Jahra, After this the al-Ajman were obliged to take refuge in Kuwait where they went under the protection of the Sheikh of Kuwait at that time, Sheikh Sabah II, whose protection they had asked for. When the Emir Abdullah al Saud sent one of his messengers to the Sheikh of Kuwait asking him to bring the al-Ajman out, Sheikh Sabah II refused⁽²⁾. Moreover, the defeat of al-Ajman by the Saudi forces in the Battle of al-Tab'a one year later, also near al-Jahra⁽³⁾, was the theatre of a new conflict between the Saudis and al-Ajman, where Kuwait did not stay away from anxiously watching what was going on, particularly because of the closeness of the Saudi military danger to Kuwait, one more time.

(1) Amin Rihani, *"tareekh najd wa mulhaqataha, Abdul-Aziz bin Abdul-Rahman al Faisal al Saud malik al- hijaz wa najd mulhaqataha"* (History of Najd and its Annexes, Abdul-Aziz bin Abdul-Rahman Al Faisal Al Saud King of Hijaz and Najd and its Annexes), Part II, Al- Fakhiriya Pub., 5th ed., 1981, p. 223.

(2) Mohamed Orabi Nakhla, *"tareekh al- ihsaa al- siyasi 1818-1913"* (Al-Ahsa's Political History, 1818-1913), Kuwait, 1980, p. 59.

(3) Mohamed Abdullah Al- Ansari, *"tuhfat al- mustafid bitarikh al- ihsaa fil qadim wal-jadid"* (The Masterpiece of the Beneficiary of Al- Ahsa's Old and New History), part I.

al-Ajman were also present in the conflict between the Saudis and the Ottomans, and they fought with the Saudis in the Battle of al-Khuwaira which took place around 1871 CE. Kuwait was also not far from this battle that Sheikh Mubarak followed closely, and he was personally present in some stages of the conflict between al-Ajman and the Saudis on one front, and the Ottomans on the other.

The issue of al-Ajman also came up with the Emir Abdu-Aziz Bin Saud to reflect to a great extent the quarrel between Sheikh Mubarak and Ibn Saud⁽¹⁾. After the Battle of Jarrab (1915 CE)⁽²⁾, and the conflict which arose between al-Ajman and Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Saud, the opportunity was presented to the latter to try and take revenge from them when Sheikh Mubarak⁽³⁾ asked him for help following al-Ajman's raid over some tribes affiliated to Kuwait. This pleased Emir Abdul-Aziz who sent a message to Mubarak saying: "I have suffered more from the Ajman than you have and I was patient and I endured, and now is the time of great heat, and it is not possible with its ardency to march with an army toward the homes of the Ajman"⁽⁴⁾. Emir Abdul-Aziz also

(1) Between Ibn Rasheed and Al Saud, where Ibn Rasheed was able to defeat the Saudi forces. See Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 214.

(2) Al- Ajman retracted from helping Emir Abdul-Aziz in his war with Ibn Rasheed and they withdrew from his army. For more, see Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd wa mulhaqataha, abdul-aziz bin abdul-rahman al faisal al saud malik al- hijaz wa najd mulhaqataha*" (History of Najd and its Annexes, Abdul-Aziz bin Abdul-Rahman Al Faisal Al Saud King of Hijaz and Najd and its Annexes), prev., p. 222.

(3) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 2, prev., p. 218.

(4) Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd wa mulhaqataha, abdul-aziz bin abdul-rahman al faisal al saud malik al- hijaz wa najd mulhaqataha*" (History of Najd and its Annexes, Abdul-Aziz bin Abdul-Rahman Al Faisal Al Saud King of Hijaz and Najd and its Annexes), see prev., p. 224.

put conditions to Sheikh Mubarak, namely that he supplies him with money and with all his needs of men and weapons, that he does not receive al-Ajman if they seek refuge in Kuwait, and that he does not mediate between them if they ask for truce. He said: "If I am determined to fight them, you must give me an oath that you will not receive them if they seek refuge by you, that you do not mediate to reconcile them with me and that you supply me with men and weapons"⁽¹⁾.

However, when al-Ajman learned that the Emir Abdul-Aziz agreed with Sheikh Mubarak to fight them, they went to al-Ahsa and stayed in Kanzan to the northeast therefrom. Emir Abdul-Aziz rushed to move towards them before the Kuwaiti army reached him. He arrived to al-Ahsa in June 1915 CE, with an army of four thousand men from Najd and al-Ahsa, so when Emir Abdul-Aziz arrived, al-Ajman sent to ask him for truce. Emir Abdul-Aziz accepted, with the condition that he would meet them on the following day for an agreement. However, his army clashed with al-Ajman in a violent battle where al-Ajman were able to defeat the Emir Abdul-Aziz and his forces. Emir Abdul-Aziz himself was wounded, and his brother Saad was killed. This pushed Emir Abdul-Aziz to ask for help from his father in Riyadh, and from Sheikh Mubarak in Kuwait, especially after al-Ajman withdrew northbound. Sheikh Mubarak sent his son Sheikh Salim to comply with Emir Abdul-Aziz's demand to consolidate his position. Meanwhile, al-Ajman headed towards Kuwait, but Emir Abdul-Aziz was also able to join them, and a battle between them took place (with the participation of the Kuwaiti army). However, Sheikh Mubarak's letter to his son Sheikh Salim fell in al-Ajman's hands and they produced it with what Sheikh Mubarak wrote to his son saying: "I sent you as a watcher not as a fighter. If Ibn Saud defeats them we are with them, and if they

(1) *Id.*, p. 225.

defeat him don't prevent them, and don't help them"⁽¹⁾. This made Emir Abdul-Aziz see that Sheikh Mubarak had broken the agreement, and this situation increased his anger against Kuwait and against Sheikh Mubarak. Emir Abdul-Aziz also sent a letter to Sheikh Mubarak where he blamed him for his position. But the latter replied: "I had asked you to bring me back from al-Ajman what had been stolen from me, I did not tell you to launch war against them or send them out of their homes"⁽²⁾.

This situation is probably what pushed Emir Abdul-Aziz to prepare for attacking Kuwait, but on the same night (the 29th of November 1915 CE)⁽³⁾, and when al-Ajman entered Kuwait, Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah passed away, and the Emir Abdul-Aziz stopped what he had intended to do. With Sheikh Mubarak's death, he who held Kuwait's destiny in his hand, as Dr Mylrea⁽⁴⁾ said, and with his disappearance from the scene, Emir Abdul-Aziz became the sole main strong player in the region. al-Rasheed says: "Mubarak died, and his death was life to Ibn Saud", adding: "The first disappeared, and his disappearance was the appearance of the second"⁽⁵⁾.

(1) *Id.*, p. 227.

(2) *Id.*, p. 228.

(3) Bassim Al- Loughani, "*al-shaikh Mubarak, majmu'a min al- wathaik wal rasail*" (Sheikh Mubarak, a Collection of Documents and Letters), Souad Al Sabah for Publishing and Distribution, 2015, p. 3.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 216.

(5) See *id.*

CHAPTER NINE

Kuwait during the Reigns of Sheikhs Jaber and Salim al-Mubarak 1915-1921 CE

- Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak, 1915-1917 CE.
- The first conference in Kuwait, 1916 CE.
- Sheikh Salim Bin Mubarak al-Sabah 1917-1921 CE.
- Sheikh Salim and Ibn Saud.
- Battle of Hamdh, 1920 CE.
- Third wall of Kuwait, 1920 CE.
- Battle of Jahra, 1920 CE.
- Attempts to pacify between Ibn Saud and Sheikh Salim.

“What was permissible for strong Kuwait during Mubarak’s reign would not be so after his death when Abdul-Aziz al Saud became the most powerful leader in the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula.”

(Ahmad Mustafa Abu-Hakima)

Foreword:

Death took Sheikh Mubarak away from political life at a very critical and crucial moment, simultaneous with an ignited international conflict in the area, in the midst of the First World War. It was a period when the stage of the distribution and division of the region had started, especially that the perishing Ottoman Empire was about to fall. It was also a period when Kuwait held more distance from most of the fighting nations' orbits, except for Britain with whom there was a particular situation.

With the loss of Mubarak, Kuwait lost the brilliance of power and authority in favour of Ibn Saud, especially as the latter was able to fill the emptiness. This specific issue was perhaps the catalyst of an ardent dispute between him and Sheikh Salim al-Mubarak particularly.

The reign of Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak, 1915-1917 CE

The short period during which Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak ruled and which witnessed a major historical event, namely World War I (1914 CE – 1918 CE) with all its events, was a very crucial period on all fronts and in different directions. Any radical change or uncalculated move in Kuwait's relations with the prevailing powers was filled with dangers and had its repercussions not only on Kuwait, but also on authority itself. It was obvious that Sheikh Jaber would - actually excluded that he would not - follow his father's example where ruling was concerned. The only exception would probably be the reflection of Sheikh Jaber's personality and his quiet nature on Kuwait's different interior and exterior issues. Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed describes Sheikh Jaber saying: "He held no grudges or hatred, his modesty made him loved to many of his subjects, and his keeping away from injustice and unfairness raised him in their eyes to a high

esteem”⁽¹⁾. Dickson confirmed it by saying that Sheikh Jaber was pleasant and forgiving⁽²⁾.

Sheikh Jaber and World War I

Before starting to explore the major issues of Sheikh Jaber’s reign, it is worth mentioning the exposure to the most important event at that time. That is the intensity of the First World War, and its direction towards changing the rules of the political game in the region, especially for the Ottomans, and their relationship with the places where they exerted authority, whether that was effective authority, or merely links and nominal relations.

The outbreak of the war occurred on the 28th of July 1914 CE, and one of its major causes was the horrific colonial competition between the European nations because of the Industrial Revolution. Also, there was growth of the impetus of European nationalism, and the emergence of international alliances and coalitions (the most important of these being the Central Powers consisting of Germany, the Ottoman Empire and Austro-Hungary, and the Allied Powers consisting of Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and the United States of America). Then there was the Balkan crisis, which was a direct result of the retreat of the Ottoman Empire and its authority in Europe. That crisis started with Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph’s annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 CE, and with the Bosnian Serbs’ demand to join Serbia. The second crisis occurred in 1913 CE, with the expansion of Serbia at the expense of the neighbouring regions (Macedonia), and with Bulgaria and Austro-Hungary not tolerating it.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 230.

(2) H. R. p. Dickson, “Kuwait and Her Neighbours”, see prev., p. 82.

On the 28th of June 1914 CE, a Serbian student shot the Austrian heir to the throne during his visit to the Bosnian capital. This incident was the spark that led to the outbreak of the war.

What concerns us particularly is to show the Ottoman Empire's situation and position in the war, and how it affected Kuwait. There were two opinions in the Ottoman Empire; the first was for entering the war, the second was against it. But with the intensification of the combat and the direct impact on the Ottoman Empire and its interests, the Ottoman Sultan ended the debate by declaring war against the Allies. The Ottoman Empire thus effectively entered the military conflict as an official party in November 1914 CE, on several fronts, mainly the Iraqi one.

As for the Arabs who were under Ottoman rule, encouraged by Britain, they revolted against the Ottoman Caliphate, and Kuwait, like most of the Arab region, was affected by the events. It had to take a clear position, especially given that it was tied to Britain by the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement. Sheikh Jaber declared that Kuwait was continuing to support the British in the war, and that was the same position that his father Sheikh Mubarak had announced on the 21st of August 1914 CE. Notwithstanding that Sheikh Mubarak's previous declaration to stand by Britain in its war came before even the Ottoman Empire itself announced its entering the war, as the Ottomans declared war in November 1914 CE.

The first conference in Kuwait, 1916 CE, Britain reassures its Arab allies

As a continuation of World War I's repercussions and their effect on the Arab region, including Kuwait, the first international conference in Kuwait was held on the 23rd of November 1916 CE. In addition to Sheikh Jaber, Emir Khaz'al and Emir Abdul-Aziz, many chiefs of Arab tribes affiliated to the English attended the

conference, especially that the conference was directly instigated by Sir Percy Cox, the British Chief Political Officer in the Arabian Gulf at that time. The purpose of the conference was to reassure the audience of British protection to them, and Britain's continued support to the Arab rulers affiliated to it. It was also to guarantee the continued support of the Arab Sheikhs to Britain in its war against the Ottoman Empire⁽¹⁾; that, in addition to reinforcing al-Sharif Hussein in Hijaz and support his revolt against the Ottomans⁽²⁾. Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak addressed the audience at the conference saying: "We, if the Arabs reach a consensus on something, we will abide by it"⁽³⁾.

al-Sharif Hussein expressed his delight with the conference⁽⁴⁾, and Sir Percy Cox asked for Sheikh Khaz'al and Sheikh Jaber to be informed of his appreciation for their holding this conference⁽⁵⁾. The reply of Sheikh Jaber and Sheikh Khaz'al came in one letter, where they both wished him more grace and happiness.

(1) For more on the nature of Hijaz's Ashraf and their names under the Ottoman Empire, see Hamad Mohamed Al- Kahtani, "*al-awda' al- iktisadiya wal-ijtima'iya fi iqlim al- hijaz (1297-1323 AH/1880-1905 CE)*" (Economic and Social Conditions in Hijaz "1297-1323 AH/1880-1905 CE"), 1st ed., Kuwait, 2001.

(2) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi*" (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, see prev., p. 189.

(3) The idea of the Arab unity goes back to the reign of Al- Sharif Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca, when he declared the Great Arab Revolt in 1916. For more, see Arnold Toynbee, "A Study of History", abridgement by D. C. Somervell, translated by Faruk Al- Hariri, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1960, p. 485; see also Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 231.

(4) Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 3, see prev., p. 109.

(5) *Id.*, p. 110.

This conference might reflect⁽¹⁾ the nature of the importance Britain gave to Kuwait particularly at that time, and its keenness to have the conference held on its territory. This explains Cox's keenness on granting Sheikh Jaber and the Emir Ibn Saud a British award, "Companion of the Order of the Star of India"⁽²⁾, to express his gratitude for the success of the conference and for their participation in it.

The internal situation in Kuwait during Sheikh Jaber's reign

al-Rasheed summarizes the most important aspects and the nature of Sheikh Jaber's handling of internal affairs in his Emirate by saying: "His very first deed was to exempt the Kuwaitis from the property tax which his father had imposed". He adds: "Jaber's reign over the Kuwaitis was a happy one, his days were blessed, vast revenues poured in, and they drove their commerce to far extents; he consoled and entertained, he aided and reinforced, he promptly sought after their comfort, and guarded them like he guarded himself and his family. Because of this, the Kuwaitis got attached to him like they were attached to their fathers, and they only received from him compassion, tenderness, affection and pity". And further: "There was nothing in his governance that

(1) The truth is that a look at the reality prevailing at that time reveals that Britain's interest was not only a strategy to get the support of the Arabs, but it was also a futuristic economic vision, especially after the appearance of petroleum in the region. Petroleum became the cornerstone of the British politics and its view of the Arabian Gulf as a whole, mainly because Britain realised that the Iranian petroleum had fallen in the trap of international politics since the Iranian ministry had issued a statement in 1916 allowing the Russians to invest petroleum in four northern provinces. Therefore, after the conference, Sheikh Khazz'al and Emir Abdul-Aziz went to Basra by official invitation from the British, in order to visit the headquarters of the British Army.

(2) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- 'arabi*" (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), part 2, see prev., p. 190.

could be criticised, except his reluctance to reform and his lack of interest in education”⁽¹⁾. During Sheikh Jaber’s reign, Kuwait’s trade was able to resist the economic crises that had hit the region due to the events of the war; the Kuwaiti trade ships were able to provide Kuwait and some of the neighbouring areas with provisions, even though the economic siege was at its worst. The Kuwaiti merchants continued to rent ships to work on, and transport merchandise and trades to several places, in addition to the construction of big ships, and the transportation of water from Shatt al-Arab⁽²⁾. Moreover, and contrary to expectations, the reign of Sheikh Jaber did not witness any armed conflicts with his father’s opponents, Ha’il’s rulers⁽³⁾. al-Rasheed says: “The relationship between them was strong”⁽⁴⁾. The period of Sheikh Jaber’s reign also witnessed an important visit from the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud; this visit reflected a renewal of the aspects of affection and the friendly relations between the two princes, especially after a period of estrangement and coolness between Kuwait and Emir Abdul-Aziz towards the end of Sheikh Mubarak’s reign⁽⁵⁾. Sheikh Jaber died on the 5th of February 1917

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- (1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 232.
- (2) Adel Mohamed Al- Abd Al- Ghani, “*al-iqtisad al- kuwaiti al- qadim*” (Kuwaiti Economy in the Past), see prev., p. 124.
- (3) However, Ibn Rasheed (Ha’il’s ruler) arrived once near Jahra with his troops. Sheikh Jaber feared he might have come to war, so he mobilised the Kuwaitis, and they fled immediately. Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed says: “As soon as Ibn Rasheed heard this, he left from Jahra”. See Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 231-232.
- (4) Especially after Emir Abdul-Aziz’s conquest of Al- Ahsa in 1913. See Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 231.
- (5) Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 183.

CE⁽¹⁾, after a short period of illness. al-Rasheed describes Sheikh Jaber's death by saying: "The entire Kuwait cried, and its lamentations pierced the clouds in the sky, the day Sheikh Jaber's mourning was announced... burning wails, cries that ignited fire in the space, and tears watered the ground with affluence; Jaber lived happy with his people, and he died commended"⁽²⁾.

The reign of Sheikh Salim Bin Mubarak al-Sabah 1917-1921CE

Sheikh Salim al-Mubarak was Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah's second son. He ascended to the throne immediately after the death of his brother Sheikh Jaber. Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed describes Sheikh Salim by saying: "He was so chaste that even his worst enemy did not say anything in defamation against him. He was often silent, but in hardship, his cruelty was harsh and merciless..."⁽³⁾ While Abu Hakima says about him: "Salim al-Mubarak was very restrained, holding on strictly to religion and its orthodox teachings... The English feared that Kuwait might manifestly become inclined to the Ottoman side"⁽⁴⁾.

As for Dickson, the British Political Agent in Kuwait, he describes Sheikh Salim as follows: "He was very stubborn, and spent his time in the desert".⁽⁵⁾ Actually, describing Sheikh Salim

(1) Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 3, see prev., p. 117.

(2) See Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 232.

(3) Adding that he had good command of grammar, that he had passion for literary books, and that he learned by heart some Arabic poems and some religious questions. See Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 232, 233.

(4) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 342.

(5) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev., p. 247.

as being stubborn might be due to Dickson favouring and being closer to Emir Abdul-Aziz, accompanying him and being influenced by the conflict that had arisen between the two parties. We can also read the same point of view in what Rihani wrote, throwing all the blame on Sheikh Salim for his struggle with Emir Abdul-Aziz: "On him [he means Sheikh Salim] falls almost all of the blame for the clash which happened between him and Ibn al-Saud"⁽¹⁾. However Rihani later describes Sheikh Salim saying: "He ruled during the Great War; his reign was famous for two things: the broadness of Kuwait's trade, and Jahra's disaster"⁽²⁾.

It seems that Sheikh Salim's direction, which showed, from an early time, an inclination towards more religiosity and caring about the Kuwaiti society, was met with welcoming and acceptance from the Kuwaitis. al-Rasheed says: "He cleansed the country, decreased the fees and brought them back to what it was before his father's reign; he also cancelled the fees Sheikh Mubarak had imposed on exports, and appointed chosen people in the districts", adding: "He was a bitter enemy to debauchery"⁽³⁾

With all the suffocating economic crises which the region lived because of the war, Sheikh Salim had to allow and turn a blind eye to the trade activities of Kuwaiti merchants, and especially allow sending supplies and provisions to Ottoman Syria and Iraq through the desert. Sheikh Salim even reduced the tax on this kind of trade and encouraged it. Britain quickly responded to this; Zakariya Qasim⁽⁴⁾ says that Britain threatened Sheikh Salim

(1) Rihani "*muluk al- 'arab*" (Kings of the Arabs), part 2, see prev., p. 663.

(2) *Id.*

(3) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 232-233.

(4) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*nashaat al- jamarik al- kuwatiya wa dawraha fi tad'im siyadat al- kuwait 'ala manafithha*" (The Emergence of the Kuwaiti Customs and their Role in Supporting Kuwait's Sovereignty over its Ports), see prev., p.74.

that it would not hold its promises of maintaining Kuwait's security if the latter exposed itself to the dangers of foreign conquest, and it asked him to stop his policy which was inclined to the Ottomans. Dickson confirms this as he indicates that Sheikh Salim received a warning from Britain that the pledges that were given to his father, including protection and aid, could not continue unless he forbade his citizens and the residents of his territory from performing any jobs that would harm the British interests⁽¹⁾. They even went as far as considering the ports of Kuwait hidden areas where transactions took place against them⁽²⁾. Britain also set a land blockade around the Kuwaiti desert, and made the exportation of merchandise from there to the neighbouring areas a specialty of only the merchants who carried signatures, whether from Ibn Saud or from his representatives. Moreover, they exerted control over the ships, and limited the quantities of incoming provisions and supplies, reinforced the surveillance on the Bedouins arriving from Medina, and confiscated the merchandise that exceeded necessity⁽³⁾.

Undoubtedly, Sheikh Salim who saw that most Arabs had been, and still were, loyal to the Ottoman Empire, and because of his religious nature, was inclined in the same direction. Perhaps,

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- (1) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev., p. 243-244. See also Hussein Khalaf Al- Sheikh Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 4, p. 296. This may concord with Hussein Khaz'al strange text where he says that Percy Cox asked Sheikh Khaz'al to take Kuwait's governance instead of Sheikh Salim. See also Rashid Al- Farhan, "*mukhtasar tareekh al- kuwait*" (Summary of Kuwait's History), prev. p. 121.
- (2) Jamal Zakariya Qassim, "*nashaat al- jamarik al- kuwatiya wa dawraha fi tad'im siyadat al- kuwait 'ala manafithha*" (The Emergence of the Kuwaiti Customs and their Role in Supporting Kuwait's Sovereignty over its Ports), see prev., p. 66-67.
- (3) Khaz'al, "*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*" (Political History of Kuwait), part 4, see prev., p. 40.

also, Sheikh Salim saw that Kuwait had become strongly affected economically by the policies, and by the siege imposed by the British, which harmed Kuwaiti merchants and trade. It was impossible to accept this issue or ignore it; especially that he saw that Kuwait was, first, a trade country and an open port, and that any attempt to change this situation would be equivalent to destroying Kuwait's economic status and its trade. It seems that the British escalation against Kuwait forced Sheikh Salim towards calmness. He issued a statement assuring his continued loyalty to Britain, saying: "Let it be known to all, those present and those gone, that I am a friend of the British government"⁽¹⁾. This incited Britain to also assure Sheikh Salim of the continuity of its previous commitments.

Sheikh Salim and the attempt of rearrangement with Ibn Saud

After the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I (1914 CE – 1918 CE), and the weakening of the power of their ally in Ha'il, al Rasheed, the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud was enjoying strong authority over wide parts of the region, especially after he defeated al-Sharif Hussein's forces in al-Khurma dispute (1919 CE) to the south of al-Ta'if. It seems, also, that the tense personal relationship between Sheikh Salim and Emir Abdul-Aziz affected the issues pertaining to Kuwait and the regions under Emir Abdul-Aziz's authority. Sheikh Salim quickly realised that with the change in the situation after the war, and the inclination of the balance of power in favour of Emir Abdul-Aziz, particularly given the huge expansion of his country, which had reached the borders of Kuwait, he had to reconsider the situation and the relationship with the Emir Abdul-Aziz. He recalled his father's position from Ibn Saud's expansion at the end of his reign, and harshness with

(1) Raheem Qadhim Al- Hashimi, "*tijarat al- asliha fil-khalij al- 'arabi, 1881-1914*" (Arms sales in the Arabian Gulf 1881-1914), 1st ed., no publisher, undated, p. 52.

a tendency to even more hardness facing the Saudi neighbour was actually translated into a concealed military clash between the two parties, in the battles of Hamdh and Jahra⁽¹⁾.

Battle of Hamdh, 1920 CE

The problem of the *Ikhwan* (Brethren) occurred and quickly revealed the depth and width of the disagreement between Kuwait, and Ibn Saud and his allies. In 1919 CE, the *Ikhwan*⁽²⁾ tried to build a village for themselves as a new migration⁽³⁾ in

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- (1) The fact that Sheikh Salim offered warm hospitality and graciousness to the delegations of Ha'il's ruler, Ibn Rasheed, increased the tension in the relations between the two emirs. In addition, Sheikh Salim's inclination and his standing before Emir Abdul-Aziz when he wanted to finish-off the Ajman after fighting with them in Al- Ahsa, as well as his allowing preaching meetings that propagated the Wahhabis and their doctrine, were factors that added to the tension between the two parties. On the other hand, Al- Rasheed mentions the words of Sheikh Salim's supporters: Emir Abdul-Aziz acting against Kuwait's interest, and being hard towards its people, Emir Abdul-Aziz's sponsorship of the Awazim who are tribes from Kuwait, the *Ikhwan* atonement of Kuwait's people including Sheikh Salim, Emir Abdul-Aziz's equivocations with Sheikh Salim; for more see Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), the reasons behind the animosity between Sheikh Salim and Emir Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, p. 244-248.
- (2) *Ikhwan*: A name given to the Bedouins who migrated from desert life to settle in Al- Hajar villages established by Emir Abdul-Aziz. They formed the stature of his army and were his main forces. In his book "*muluk al- 'arab*" (Kings of the Arabs), Rihani described them by saying: "... the most important category of combatants... they are Abdul-Aziz Bin Saud's soldiers who were yesterday migrating Bedouins..." – for more, see Rihani, "*muluk al- 'arab*" (Kings of the Arabs), part 2, prev., p. 565.
- (3) It was called "Al-Hajar" from migration in Arabic, in association with their migration from the desert life and with the migration (*hijra*) of the Prophet (PBUH). Hajar al- Ikhwan are villages that were built for the Bedouins to settle instead of their migrating and travelling life. Emir Abdul-Aziz ordered for a few villages to be built for these tribes to settle. It is believed that the first migration was that of the Mutair tribe, led by Faisal Al- Duwaish (Al-Artawiyah).

Qaryat al-Ulya⁽¹⁾ to the north of Bulbul⁽²⁾, on a land owned by Kuwait⁽³⁾. So Sheikh Salim sent a messenger to Ibn Shuqair⁽⁴⁾, one of the leaders of the Ikhwan, in order to stop the construction. He considered that the area was a land belonging to him and that they were not entitled to build on it without permission from him⁽⁵⁾, and that Ibn Saud had no authority over the land on which there was construction. Ibn Shuqair merely ignored Sheikh Salim's request and went on building⁽⁶⁾. When Sheikh Salim learned about that, he sent a brigade led by Sheikh Duaij Bin Salman al-Sabah, commander of the ground forces, accompanied by 200 cavaliers. Sheikh Duaij al-Sabah led this campaign heading towards Qaryat al-Ulya, and when he arrived, the tribes affiliated to Kuwait joined him. Sheikh Duaij asked Ibn Shuqair to stop construction in Qaryat al-Ulya, but Ibn Shuqair refused. And while Sheikh Duaij al-Sabah sent to ask Sheikh Salim about his instructions facing this obstinacy, Ibn Shuqair had recourse to the help of Faisal al-Duwaish (the leader of the *Ikhwan*)⁽⁷⁾. al-Duwaish succeeded in defeating the Kuwaitis in

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- (1) Qaryat al- Ulya is one of the very old towns located in the eastern region close to the Kuwaiti border. It was a source of water for the traveling Bedouins.
- (2) Bulbul is a place located to the south east of Juriya. It is the region where Sheikh Salim Al- Mubarak wanted to ensure his sovereignty and he attempted to build there, particularly because it has pearl diving places near it. However, Emir Abdul- Aziz objected to that.
- (3) They took permission to build from Ibn Saud.
- (4) Some Saudi sources believe it is Tarheeb not Hayif Ibn Shuqair.
- (5) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 248.
- (6) Badr Al- Din Abbas Al- Khususi, "*ma' rakit al- jahraa*" (The Battle of Jahra), That al Salasil, 1983 ed., p. 52-54.
- (7) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p.186.

that battle which was called Hamdh⁽¹⁾. Consequent to this defeat⁽²⁾ and of the *Ikhwan* seizing the spoils, Sheikh Salim sent a message to Ibn Saud objecting to the trespassing of the *Ikhwan*. However, Emir Abdul-Aziz also sent a reply to Sheikh Salim pointing that the disputed area did not belong to Kuwait⁽³⁾, and that Kuwait

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 248.

(2) Hussein Khaz’al, “*tareekh al- kuwait al siyasi*” (Political History of Kuwait), part 4, see prev., p. 236.

(3) Dr Sabah writes: “Although the reports of the British officials sustained Sheikh Salim’s point of view in holding on to his frontiers contested by Ibn Saud, the latter insisted that they belonged to him. He ordered the *Ikhwan* to build in these places, and to take them as migrant settlements. He then encouraged them to attack the Kuwaiti forces which had come out of Kuwait to reinforce the boundaries in this area. This is probably due to the negligence of the British government to take a serious stance regarding Sheikh Salim’s entitlement to the boundaries in these areas, according to the Anglo-Turkish agreement. This delayed the military Governor General from answering Sheikh Salim’s call for help. Britain then went further in seeking its own interests, and it cancelled the agreement on the Najdi-Kuwaiti boundaries. Sheikh Salim was disappointed at the annulment of the Anglo-Turkish agreement, because he could foresee the trespassing and defiance which would happen to the Kuwaiti boundaries. After a long correspondence between him, the British government through the High Commissioner in Baghdad, and Ibn Saud, the British government accepted for there to be arbitration, under the condition that all parties would accept the results of the arbitration. Sheikh Salim accepted these conditions on the 17th of September 1920, reconfirming his previous demands. Kuwait accepted while requiring the British government to guarantee that the Sheikh would not commit aggressive actions in the region he insisted was included by Kuwait’s gates. Imam Abdul-Aziz Al- Saud replied by saying that Sheikh Salim had no rights outside Kuwait’s gates, and that he only accepted that the Sheikh exerts authority over Kuwait City alone. He asked the Sheikh to withdraw his forces led by Sheikh Duaij Al- Salman Al- Sabah, and said he would only then withdraw his forces that were protecting the borders, led by his son Turki. At the same time, he sent a letter to Ibn Shuqair ordering him to build a fortress in Bulbul. The letter fell in Sheikh Salim’s hands and provoked his anger, especially because the letter =

had no right to Qaryat al-Ulya, or the Bulbul region; he wrote: “Know that you have no right to Bulbul or Qaryat al-Ulya”, but that he would nevertheless return the booty taken from Kuwait. On the other hand, Sheikh Salim wrote a letter to the emir of Ha'il, Abdullah Bin Mit'ab Bin Rasheed to ask him for his support⁽¹⁾. That was probably in order to get ready for a future battle.

Third wall of Kuwait, 1920 CE

It was built for defence purposes, and because of Sheikh Salim's fears from the possible attack of the *Ikhwan* on the city of Kuwait. al-Rasheed says: “As a result of Hamdh which inserted fear in the hearts, and took sleep away from the eyes, Sheikh Salim insisted on surrounding the city with a wall to push back attacks, extinguish the fire of fear which was alit, and alleviate the obsession which seized the people”⁽²⁾. It seems that after witnessing the defeat of the Kuwaiti army, and the fear and confusion that happened among the Kuwaitis in the city, Sheikh Salim tried to alleviate the repercussions of defeat, and to reassure the rest of Kuwait's people. Thus, he ordered the construction of

= had been sent after both parties had agreed to the terms and conditions of the arbitration, which they had signed with the British government. Thus, Ibn Shuqair rejected Sheikh Duaij request to stop construction in Jariya, unless the orders came from Ibn Saud. While Sheikh Duaij Al- Salman sent to the Sheikh to ask him for directions facing this obstinacy, Ibn Shuqair called for the succour of Faisal Al- Duwaish. The latter attacked and defeated the Kuwaiti forces in the Battle of Hamdh. Therefore, Sheikh Salim called on Ibn Tawala from Shammar. The latter joined Sheikh Duaij and they attacked the Ikhwan; they were victorious and they recollected some of the booty, then they went to Sabiyah, and then to Jahra”. For more, see Maimunah Al- Sabah, unpublished M. A. thesis, “*al-‘ilaqat al- kuwaitiya al- najdiya*” (The Kuwaiti-Najdi Relations), Kuwait University, 1975.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 250.

(2) Id.

a wall to push back raids and protect Kuwait from enemies. The construction of the wall started on the first day of Ramadan, corresponding to the 18th of May 1920, and was completed in the record time of about two months. It was built of mud, and it was about five miles long from the east to the west of the coast. The Kuwaitis considered this wall the embodiment of bonding and giving among the Kuwaiti society, particularly after the wall was able to ensure some security to the Kuwaitis⁽¹⁾.

Battle of Jahra, 1920 CE

Persevering in trying to secure Kuwait in its struggle with the *Ikhwan*, and after calling for the help of Ibn Rasheed, Ha'il's ruler, Sheikh Salim sent for Ibn Tawalah who ruled in the north of Kuwait⁽²⁾. He sent him money and ordered him and the commander of the Kuwaiti forces, Sheikh Duaij al-Sabah, to march towards, and raid the *Ikhwan*'s forces. On the 10th of October 1920 CE, with perpetuating tensions between both parties, all the evidence was confirming that the military confrontation between Kuwait and the *Ikhwan* was bound to happen. The outbreak of the battle happened in the morning of that day⁽³⁾. The *Ikhwan*'s attack started; their number had reached four thousand combatants⁽⁴⁾ divided into four groups, each group

(1) If not completely. The wall was totally removed in 1957.

(2) Al- Shamlan says that Ibn Saud instructed Al- Duwaish to attack Jahra in preparation for another attack on Kuwait. Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 186.

(3) Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), see prev., p. 273. See also Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 187.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 254. See also Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*Mubarak al- awal wa abna'uh, musahamathum fi khidmat al- watan*" (Mubarak I and His Sons, Their Contribution to the Nation's Service), prev. p. 69.

composed of around 1000 combatants, while the Kuwaiti forces were estimated at 1500 combatants. al-Rasheed, who witnessed the battle, described it saying: "The *Ikhwan* were falling countlessly, and the rest of them would have been completely achieved had the Kuwaitis not run out of ammunition, which made them flee"⁽¹⁾. Afterwards, the *Ikhwan* succeeded in defeating the Kuwaitis⁽²⁾, and Sheikh Salim took refuge in the Red Fort⁽³⁾, about which al-Rasheed says: "In the fort, the Kuwaitis' calamity was thirst"⁽⁴⁾; as the *Ikhwan* surrounded the fort and besieged it, hoping for Sheikh Salim's surrender. He adds: "I found him [meaning Sheikh Salim] in one of the palace's rooms, with a smile on his lips; I read courage, fortitude and calmness on his face; I found him not caring about this incident, and not reacting to it; I found him between his people and his servants, and it might have appeared to who scrutinised him that he was sure of his salvation"⁽⁵⁾. Dr Eleanor Calverley, the women's doctor in the American hospital, said: "We heard that Shaikh Salim and his army were already in Jahrah, with headquarters in that castle. There was no telegraph system nor any telephone, and it took so long to get news!"⁽⁶⁾ In an attempt to break the siege and ask for

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 254.

(2) In a telegraph to the English, Sheikh Salim says: "Our defence forces were led by our son Duaij Al- Sabah", see Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*Mubarak al- awal wa abna'uh, musahamathum fi khidmat al- watan*" (Mubarak I and His Sons, Their Contribution to the Nation's Service), prev. p. 69.

(3) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 257.

(4) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 255. See also Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 188.

(5) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 255. See also Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 189.

(6) Eleanor T. Calverley (M. D.), "My Arabian Days and Nights", New York, Crowell, 1958, p. 119.

quick help, Sheikh Salim sent two of his men (Marzouk and Murshid al-Shammeri)⁽¹⁾ to Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber to demand succour; Sheikh Ahmad was in the city of Kuwait at that time.

Given the bloodshed happening in the camp of the *Ikhwan*, al-Duwaish sent a message to Sheikh Salim proposing to him withdrawal, with conditions⁽²⁾, among which expiating the Turks, abandoning abominations, abandoning smoking, and returning to the Islamic religion⁽³⁾. But Sheikh Salim assured that the Kuwaitis abided by all the laws of Islam; he said: “We hold onto Islam, and we preserve its five pillars, and we have never abandoned faith; as to abandoning abominations and smoke, we erase from them what we can; and as to expiating the Turks, we have no proof of what necessitates expiating them”⁽⁴⁾. This response pushed the *Ikhwan* to reattempt breaking in the palace, repeating their famous acclamations: “Paradise’s winds are blowing, where are you who want it”⁽⁵⁾, but they failed, and on the 12th of October 1920 CE, the *Ikhwan* departed from Jahra. Notifications from the British followed this on the twentieth of the same month, through leaflets (thrown on them from airplanes), warning from the repercussions in case attacks were repeated⁽⁶⁾. After that, a meeting was held in the city of Kuwait, specifically in Abu Nashi Café, with the presence of the British Political Agent in Kuwait (More), who indicated that the Sheikh (Salim) was a friend of Britain’s, and that the *Ikhwan* had come without the knowledge

(1) Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 255, 256.

(2) For more, see Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 190.

(3) *Id.*

(4) *Id.*

(5) *Id.*, p. 192.

(6) *Id.*, p. 192-193.

of Ibn Saud, their friend at that time. But the *Ikhwan* replied that they had come under Ibn Saud's orders⁽¹⁾.

The Battle of Jahra created a new reality for the Kuwaitis. In this battle, Kuwait resisted the *Ikhwan*, one of the major tribal powers in the region, and one of Emir Abdul-Aziz's most important instruments in conquering several places. This battle showed that the Kuwaitis are perseverant in solidly standing to face any power attempting to touch upon their sovereignty,, even if it is the old and close ally, Ibn Saud. Actually, the struggle in Jahra with the *Ikhwan* was a struggle for survival and self-asserting. Had Kuwait fallen in Jahra, it would have also fallen from the political and geographic map of the region. The Battle of Jahra, behind all these events, also represented a real embodiment of the concept of union, compatriotic citizenship, and the general belonging to one identity, the identity of Kuwait. They were all behind the lines defending their nation under one flag and one leadership, a flag under which loyalty had become for the Emirate only, far from clannishness and tribalism.

Attempts to pacify between Ibn Saud and Sheikh Salim

Given the results, the consequences, and the boundary conflict between Kuwait and Riyadh which had turned into a military conflict that witnessed battles between the two parties, it became obvious to all the parties that it was time to calm down and reach a conciliatory agreement which would end the prevailing conflict. Therefore, in an attempt to calm the situation, with instigation from Britain and Sheikh Khaz'al, the Emir Abdul-Aziz responded to the efforts exploited to calm the situation between him and Sheikh Salim. a Kuwaiti delegation left in 1921 CE, headed by Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber (who was on good terms with Emir

(1) For more, see Khalid Al- Saadun, "*al-'ilaqat bayn Najd wal-Kuwait (1902-1922)*" (The Relations between Najd and Kuwait, 1902-1922), prev., p. 271.

Abdul-Aziz)⁽¹⁾, and also Sheikh Kasib the son of Sheikh Khaz'al. The delegation departed by sea on Sheikh Khaz'al's yacht in the direction of Bahrain, and from there to al-Ahsa to meet Ibn Saud⁽²⁾ who was camping in al-Khafs to the north of Riyadh. The Kuwaiti delegation arrived on the second of March 1921 CE, and met Emir Abdul-Aziz. An agreement was reached to end the frontiers crisis and sign a treaty on all what had been agreed upon. However, simultaneously, the news of Sheikh Salim's death arrived; he died on the 22nd of February 1921 CE⁽³⁾. Then, Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud stopped and told the Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber: "Now that matters are in your hands, I see no need for conditions or reservations, as I am for you a drawn sword ready to hit whoever you want... As for Kuwait's boundaries, they will extend to Riyadh's walls", continuing: "I do not accept that they become what we had decided earlier, and you have for this God's promise and pact... Then he took the paper and tore it". al-Shamlan completes the scene by saying: "He told him nice words, he showed him his affection".

Actually, had the text of the treaty, which the sources indicate had been agreed on between Emir Abdul-Aziz Bin Saud and Kuwait, been present, it would have directly determined the issue of the borders between the two parties. Especially later, at the Uqair Convention of 1922 CE, where big parts of the Kuwaiti land were cut to the profit of the Saudis.

(1) Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 194.

(2) *Id.*, p. 198.

(3) Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 211, 265, 275. See also Al- Shamlan, "*min tareekh al- kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 198.

CHAPTER TEN

Kuwait during the Reign of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber 1921-1950 CE

- Kuwait during the reign of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber; demands to return to joint governance.
- First *Shura* Council in the history of Kuwait, 1921 CE.
- Development of social mobility in Kuwait.
- Legislative Council, 1938 CE.
- British position concerning the attempts of 1938's Council to seize power.
- Uqair Convention, 1922 CE.
- The issue of *musabala* (trade).
- Petroleum exportation.

“This day is a happy day when we celebrate the exportation of the first shipment of Kuwait’s petroleum. Undoubtedly, every person from our people and our friends will rejoice with us from this event.”

(Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah - June 1946 CE)

Foreword:

It is no secret that the last developments, which the Arab region, including the Arabian Gulf, lived at the eve of the end of World War I were extremely complicated and dangerous. The exterior and interior situations surrounding the region generally, and Kuwait particularly, were entangled and complex. The end of the First World War marked the beginning of the end of kingdoms, the disappearance of states, and the collapse of alliances, and on the other hand new states, regions, and alliances were formed and emerged. In fact, before even the war or battles had ended, the actual implementation of the contents of the treaties marking the division between the Great Powers took place. The most important of these treaties was the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916 CE, when the Arab regions were divided between two spheres of influence. The first was under the authority of British influence, it consisted of Iraq, Eastern Jordan, and Palestine, the second was under the authority of French influence, and it consisted of Syria and Lebanon, while Egypt was under British colonialism, and France controlled the Maghreb.

The Paris Peace Conference, 1919 CE, set a new understanding of colonialism, which was called “mandates”. The idea of mandates was proposed by the American President Woodrow Wilson, and its principle was that the Allied Powers would be entrusted with the affairs of the nations who were not capable to stand by themselves, as they had long been under the sovereignty of the defeated states (like the Ottoman Empire, for example). The Mandatory powers were to assist these nations until they were able to manage their own affairs.

Going back to Kuwait’s situation, we note that it, too, was on a hard track; on the Iraqi side, after Britain had occupied Basra⁽¹⁾,

(1) June 1915.

then Amarah and Nasiriyah, followed by Baghdad and Mosul, Iraq became completely out of the Ottoman arrangements in the region, and directly entered the realm of British influence. a British mandate was officially imposed on Iraq⁽¹⁾, in compliance with the San Remo agreement of 1920 CE.

In July of the same year, there rose a revolt against the British presence, which pushed the British to establish a kingdom consisting of several provinces including Baghdad and Basra, later joined by Mosul, and Faisal Bin al-Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca's son, was proclaimed King there in 1921 CE, ruling Iraq for the British.

As for the Ottoman side, and after the defeat of the Ottomans in the First World War, the Ottoman Caliphate was on its way to disappear. This actually happened in 1924 CE, as the Ottoman Caliphate was officially erased, and the rise of the Turkish state to replace it was declared.

Regarding Najd and Ibn Saud - Ibn Saud's wide expansion whether in Ha'il, al-Ahsa, or Hijaz⁽²⁾, and the unification of most of the areas of the kingdom (the Arabian Peninsula) under his flag, also suggested a new reality. That is the reality that an important great power, headed by Ha'il and its rulers, had disappeared, or was on its way to disappear from the scene, together with the rule of al-Sharif Hussein and his family in Hijaz.

(1) Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), see prev., p. 332, 333.

See also Al- Mufid newspaper, No. 196, 1924.

(2) 1925. See details in Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), see prev., p. 326,327; Hafiz Wahba, "*jazeera al- 'arab*" (Arabian Peninsula), prev., p. 267, 268; Khair Al- Din Al- Zirikili, "*al-a 'lam*" (The Symbols), part 1, prev., p. 329-330.

There was also the Persian Empire, under the leadership of General Reza Khan. Driven by the ambitions of reality and the hopes of the past and set on to re-establish its past glory, it started expanding at the expense of the Emirates and the Arab regions on the shore, particularly Arabistan, which came out of World War I suffering from getting out of the British calculations. This eventually led to its complete loss after its Emir Khaz'al Bin Merdaw was taken prisoner in 1925 CE, and transferred to Tehran where he died in 1936 CE⁽¹⁾.

Concerning the conditions and the nature of the Kuwaiti relations with Britain, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber had to move quickly to deal with, and contain the former British discontent with Kuwait, which had resulted from what Britain had believed to be Sheikh Salim's inclination and help to the Ottomans. Sheikh Ahmad also had to deal with the problem of setting the boundaries with the two most important neighbours, the nascent Kingdom of Iraq and Riyadh.

Given this reality, we can realise that Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber had to move quickly to contain these issues, taking into consideration this heavy legacy, and the reality that the scenarios of interests change and fluctuate, and that the British were undisputedly the power with most influence and authority.

Regarding the internal affairs of Kuwait, given the sharp crossroads and entanglement, social mobility was born, together with popular pressure and requests to participate in governance, especially after Kuwait had endured many lost battles, a matter

(1) See Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, "*mubarak al-sabah wa khaz'al al-ka'bi 'awamil al-nagah wa tada'iyat al-inhiyar – 1896-1915 – dirasa mukrana*" (Mubarak Al-Sabah and Khaz'al Al-Kaabi, Factors of Success and the Implications of Failure), Journal of the Faculty of Arts Annals, Academic Publication Council, Kuwait University, 2013.

that affected it, and particularly affected merchants and trade. There was also the outcome of nationalist and patriotic thoughts, subsequently, which some groups of people called for. The Kuwaitis had sympathetically followed the popular movements of some Arab nations who had come out of the Ottoman rule to fall under the British mandate (Egypt, Iraq, Palestine), and other nations who had fallen under the French mandate (Syria and Lebanon); there was the Egyptian Revolution of 1919 CE, followed by the Iraqi Revolt in 1920 CE. It is under these circumstances that Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber ascended to Kuwait's throne.

Kuwait during the reign of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, 1921 CE; demands to return to joint governance

At the death of Sheikh Salim al-Mubarak on the 22nd of February 1921 CE, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, who was then thirty-five years old, was in Riyadh at the head of a delegation from Kuwait visiting Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud to discuss the pending issues between the two countries. The news of Sheikh Salim's death reached the delegation during this time⁽¹⁾. Naturally, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber was the most prominent candidate in the ruling family to govern Kuwait, particularly because before ascending to the throne, he was considered the personal representative of his uncle, Sheikh Salim, in several exterior and interior matters and obligations. Sheikh Ahmad quickly returned to Kuwait to be confronted with a document from the people containing demands to participate in politics and return to joint rule.

(1) Sheikh Ahmad Al- Jaber also participated in lifting the siege made by Al- Ajman on Emir Abdul-Aziz Al- Saud in Hofuf in 1915; see Ahmed Mustafa Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 353.

The first democratic experiment⁽¹⁾ in the history of Kuwait – with our reservations on this term – was undoubtedly the one that had led to the choice of Sabah I, and which represented in this early time a unique experience that the founding fathers had. The Emirate had worked with the principles of participation and council until the reign of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah (1896 CE–1915 CE) who ruled singlehandedly, and put these principles aside. But under the circumstances of Kuwait entering several wars, starting with Sarif, then Hedeya, Hamdh and Jahra, with the siege imposed on it during the First World War, the dissensions with the British during Sheikh Salim’s reign, and the conflict with Ibn Saud, this all formed some kind of unacceptance and discontent among the people, particularly the merchants. Voices were raised demanding to change the policy that led to wars and problems, and to return to the old system (council and joint rule) which had prevailed before the reign of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah, and which stood on council and consensus between the ruler and the ruled. As a consequence of all these circumstances, consultations happened between the Kuwaitis on the necessity to create a *Shura* (consultative) Council. Several merchants and intellectuals adopted this opinion and undertook the arrangement for a meeting at the office of Nasir al-Badr (one of the Kuwaiti merchants) in February 1921 CE, to discuss the issue. They agreed to choose only the ruler who would accept forming a *Shura* Council, assuring that their only goal behind this matter was to have some kind of popular participation in decision-making and in the administration of the Emirate’s affairs – and also assuring their refusal of the situations which had prevailed earlier⁽²⁾. The

(1) The use of the word here is not accurate, because there are instruments, obligations and principles that must prevail for democracy to be completed, and be called as such.

(2) See Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 195-197.

assembly wrote down a petition that included the following: “Mending the House of al-Sabah so that they encounter no disagreements while appointing the ruler, knowing that the candidates for this position are Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, Sheikh Hamad al-Mubarak and Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim. If there were a collective agreement on appointing one of these three men, the issue would be forwarded to the government [meaning Britain] for ratification, and the mentioned appointee would become in his capacity the Chair of the *Shura* Council. a determined number of people were to be elected from al Sabah and the people to administer the country’s affairs on the basis of justice and fairness”. Upon Sheikh Ahmad’s arrival to Kuwait returning from Riyadh in March 1921 CE, according to Khalid al-Adsani, “before Sheikh Ahmad had landed, as he was on a ship, and before the holders of the petition went up to him. The guards preceded them by his side assuring Sheikh Ahmad that what was about to be exposed to him had been unanimously agreed upon by the Kuwaitis, and at the same time, they advised him to fulfil the demands”⁽¹⁾.

With Sheikh Ahmad’s approval of this document, he was proclaimed ruler of the Emirate⁽²⁾, and his reign started on the 24th of March 1921 CE⁽³⁾; he thus became the tenth ruler in the history of Kuwait.

(1) Because refusing the demands would lead the assembled to give the *bay’a* to Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim, the temporary ruler (substitute). Al- Adsani says that the guards told Sheikh Ahmad: “Don’t worry about the Kuwaitis, they will have disagreements and everything will be clear for you afterwards”. Khalid Suleiman Al- Adsani, “*nisf ‘am lil hukm al- niyabi fil-kuwait*”, (Half a Year of Parliamentary Rule in Kuwait), see prev., p. 7.

(2) See Al- Shamlan, “*min tareekh al- kuwait*” (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 198. Yet, Amin Rihani says that he was elected ruler of Kuwait while he was still at Emir Saud’s in Hafr al- Atk; Amin Rihani, “*tareekh najd al- hadith*” (Modern History of Najd), see prev., p. 276.

(3) Ghanim Al- Najjar, “*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*” (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), Dar-Qortas, Kuwait, 2000, p. 14-15.

Actually, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's quiet nature, as well as the contentment and acceptance he received from the people of Kuwait, in addition to the support from the Emir Abdul-Aziz and Sheikh Khaz'al and their deep friendship with him, were all elements helping to choose him easily. Choosing him would be rather than to choose Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim who followed Sheikh Ahmad age-wise in the line of Mubarak al-Sabah's descendants, or to choose Sheikh Hamad al-Mubarak. Additionally, there was the concern that Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim (the strong competing candidate at the time) could possibly follow a difficult path, like his father's, in his relations with Britain. This would inevitably add to the problems with the British, as well as with Riyadh.

After ascending to the throne, Sheikh Ahmed also sent comforting messages to everyone, and especially to the ruling family, as he charged Sheikh Hamad al-Mubarak to be his vice-ruler, and also delegated several issues to Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim⁽¹⁾.

First *Shura* Council in the history of Kuwait, 1921 CE – an incomplete political experiment

There was something paradoxical in Sheikh Ahmed's response to the popular demands; the petition which he was presented with after his return, and which he approved, actually represents an incident that is indicative of the extent of authority and strong influence the merchants had acquired over the early political mobility in Kuwait. Also, most of the members of the proposed council (twelve members), were appointed by choice and not by election, and most of them were among the well-known merchants of Kuwait (except for a few intellectuals and *as'hab al-ra'y* [advocates of common sense]). The council was composed of the following members: Ahmed al-Sakr (Chair); Ahmed Fahd al-Kalid;

(1) See Al-Shamlan, "*min tareekh al-kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 199-200.

Abdul-Rahman al-Naqeeb; Mash'an al-Khodayr; Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai; Marzouk al-Dawud al-Badr; Shamlan Bin Ali Bin Seif; Hilal al-Mutairi; Ibrahim Bin Midf; Khalifa Bin Shahin al-Ghanim; Sheikh Abdul-Aziz al-Rasheed; Ahmed al-Hamaidy).

To be fair, the merchants in Kuwait at that time were actually considered the most eligible to lead the political mobility in Kuwait, and also the most financially capable to support this mobility and influence it. That was for several reasons, mainly that they feared the issuance of laws or ties which would set limits affecting their trades and adding to the complications of the economic situation in Kuwait; economy had been weakened as a consequence of the wars on one side, and the annoyances and siege by Emir Ibn Saud on another.

In fact, the council was chosen, and was described by one of its most important participants, Sheikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai, as having happened unexpectedly, and lacking homogeneity between its members; al-Qinai says: "... rich old men, chosen not elected". We might also sense the extent of the disagreement that had surrounded the members of the council, and which had reached its peak, from a letter presented to the British Agent that read: "This council... assembled members who do not recognize charcoal from dates and... who were not chosen by the people"⁽¹⁾.

We might be able to conclude directly from this comparison, that the Council was doomed to quick failure. Actually, it lasted merely two months, and thereafter broke up, then automatically dissolved itself, as many of its sessions had turned to debates and discussions between the members without actual results.

al-Rasheed, who was one of its members, said: "It is unfortunate that this little creature had a very short life; he [the Council] had

(1) Abdullah Al- Omar, '*irhasat al- dimuqratiya fil-kuwait*' (Indications of Democracy in Kuwait), Dar Qortas pub., Kuwait, 1st ed., 1994, p. 17.

barely started to rule when he died and was buried. There were contradictory opinions on who was to blame for the undermining of this project, and who bore the responsibility for its failure... As to me, and I was one of the members of this Council, I remove the responsibility from the Emir”⁽¹⁾; he meant the failure of the council and its dissolution.

This Council, and in spite of all the turmoil and failure that surrounded it in the end, will undoubtedly remain a special historical event in the history and path of the Kuwaiti democratic experiment and political mobility. It has been one of the very early democratic experiments, and a strong proof of the willingness of the people to participate and make decisions with the authority (on a realistic basis); that was an unusual matter at the time, and unfamiliar to the history of the peoples of the area. The council is also an early surge of the Kuwaitis’ capacity to change and participate in governance. The subsequent council of 1938 CE was considered an extension of this council (the *Shura* Council, 1921 CE) which is regarded as the first real political experiment in the political history of Kuwait.

Moreover, one can also remark on this council’s democratic experiment, that some of the members did not grasp “the nature of the epoch, the regional changes, and the prevailing balance, to their full extent; this eventually led to its failure”.

Development of social mobility in Kuwait

After the failure of the *Shura* Council in 1921 CE, and with the perseverance of social mobility and the attempts to reform the internal situation in Kuwait, also after some of the neighbouring countries witnessed reforms – such as Iraq who had developed a parliamentary system - it appeared that the Kuwaiti society insisted on continuing to demand for reforms. There were particularly

(1) Al- Rasheed, “*tareekh al- kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 365.

initiatives that mainly aimed at having a municipality (*baladiya*) and an education chamber (*majlis ma'arif*)... as well as other such specialised councils. It started with the creation of the Cultural Club (*al-nadi al-adabi*) in 1924 CE⁽¹⁾, to which al-Rasheed points saying: "A group of ardent young men wanted to establish a club in Kuwait, which would be the means to exchange opinions and thoughts". In the year 1930 CE, there was also an attempt adopted by Sheikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai to establish a city council (*majlis baladiya*)⁽²⁾ formed of people who were elected. Khalid Suleiman al-Adsani says that the demand to create a city council was in order "to supervise the cleaning of Kuwait and beautify it like the municipalities"⁽³⁾. The merchants accepted for a tax of a half percent to be imposed on their incomes from the sea trade in order to pay for the municipality.

In 1931 CE, continuing this mobility, the law of the municipality was issued; the content of its first clause was that the council (*majlis*) would be composed of twelve members, in addition to the Chairman, and the second clause specified that the Chairman would be from al Sabah, and that he would be appointed by the ruler. While the third clause determined who was entitled to vote. The *baladiya* is considered the first electoral experiment in Kuwait.

(1) Al-Rasheed held the first lecture there on rhetoric. Al-Rasheed, "*tareekh al-kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev. p. 13.

(2) Khalid Suleiman Al-Adsani, "*nisf 'am lil hukm al-niyabi fil-kuwait*", (Half a Year of Parliamentary Rule in Kuwait), see prev., p. 7.

(3) Undoubtedly, through these two councils, the *baladiya* and the *maarif*, Kuwait made big steps towards institutional work built on popular support. Political work and popular participation became more experienced and mature. However, with the clashes with the heads of these councils from the sons of the ruling family, Sheikh Ahmad cancelled the direct voting of the assembled, and was contented with appointment. For more, see Khalid Suleiman Al-Adsani, "*nisf 'am lil hukm al-niyabi fil-kuwait*", (Half a Year of Parliamentary Rule in Kuwait), see prev., p. 6.

In 1932 CE, the *baladiya* council actually started its tasks. These included planning, organisation, orientation, supervision and construction of institutions, thus expressing a new era of participation and interaction with the authorities, to fulfil the society's needs and offer services to the citizens.

In 1936 CE, the people asked for the creation of an education council (*majlis ma'arif*), especially because Kuwait had reasonably advanced in spreading formal education and schools, as there were the al-Mubarakiya and al-Ahmadiya Schools, as well as some simple educational institutions. In fact, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber approved the creation of this council, which was tasked with supervising the establishment of schools and financing them. In 1936 CE, fifty voters from the notables of Kuwait were invited to elect twelve members.

Although some merchants imposed on themselves the deduction of a tax to finance these councils and take charge of their expenditures in cooperation with the authorities, a struggle between the councils' members and some of the sons of the ruling family broke out about the working manner of these councils, namely the *baladiya* council and the *ma'arif* council. This struggle led to the resignation of several members objecting to these intrusions. Consequently, tension increased and those displeased with the authorities formed an opposition bloc. This uncovered a new era where the society was more motivated and keen on increased participation, and moved more aggressively towards the reform of the political situation.

First Legislative Council, 1938 CE

With the world starting to show new signs of a second world war, the picture was becoming clearer in several Arab nations, particularly on the developing social mobility front; it was no longer a matter restricted to authorities and ruling systems only. In Kuwait, with the continuing democratic experiments which

resulted in establishing the *baladiya*, the *ma'arif*, and a number of other institutions for civil services - which were all by election where the different sections of the society participated - the Kuwaitis became more aware of the importance and the effectiveness of participation in such democratic experiments.

The importance of the council of 1938 CE in particular probably lies in the fact that it represented a more mature experiment than its precedent in 1921 CE, and this was the real beginning of the formation of the indicators of the 1962 CE constitution. This experiment was also linked to internal, Arab, and external elements; and it was provided with a complete reform program⁽¹⁾, in a short period of approximately six months, from July to December 1938 CE.

In 1938 CE, under internal as well as external pressure, and with the events witnessed by some of the neighbouring countries (Iraq), there was a general direction and renewed will from the Kuwaitis to demand broad participation in governance, in order to achieve more reforms in the social, economic, and political life of the Emirate, and to put bases and systems which would govern the relationship between the people and the authorities in a more democratic manner.

Actually, the scenes of the council of 1938 CE did not come suddenly; they were preceded, as previously shown, by many facts and efforts, whether on the internal level or the external one, and which may be noted as follows:

- The previous experiment of the *Shura* Council of 1921 CE, which was still remembered then. Also, the fact that the Kuwaitis lived and practised another number of democratic experiments after the first one, such as the elections of the

(1) Ghanim Al- Najjar, "*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 23.

chambers of the *baladiya*, the *ma'arif*, health, and the *waqfs*, which participated in achieving a more mature and developed understanding of popular participation.

- The feeling of the Kuwaiti people that there was a need to fix the obvious deficiencies in the management of the country's vital facilities, especially as there were no directions to reform the prevailing situation.
- The openness and development of the Kuwaiti society, particularly regarding education and health, the appearance of journals, and the return of the scholars and what this represented to the society. The existence of a fertile environment to develop the national thoughts which were at the peak of their strength at that time, and to make them move in a more energetic and organised manner. These elements and the accompanying political events put strong pressure to change the aspects of the old Kuwaiti society, and make the wheel of modernisation move fast there.
- The support of Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim to the reform movement and the National Bloc in Kuwait made the changes take a faster pace, as this support participated in refuting the accusations that these trends were against the ruling regime and against the ruling family.
- The National Bloc⁽¹⁾ itself, as such formations were considered the political front which led the reform movement⁽²⁾ in Kuwait. Their main principles and aims were: "Faith that the Arab

(1) For more, see Falah Abdullah Al- Muderis, "*al-tajamu'at al- siyasiya al- kuwaitiya*" (Kuwaiti Political Groupings), Dar Qortas, Kuwait, 1994.

(2) The political activities in Kuwait generally were composed of different currents and groupings. Some of them seemed to have a clear and organised work vision on both popular and official fronts. Falah Abdullah Al- Muderis, "*al-tajamu'at al- siyasiya al- kuwaitiya*" (Kuwaiti Political Groupings), see prev.

Nation (*umma*) is one; and reviving the national spirit in the souls of individuals”, in addition to considering Kuwait an Arab country indivisible from the Arab World⁽¹⁾.

- There was also the position of the British and their orientation, represented by De Gaury, the Political Agent in Kuwait who was on unfriendly terms with Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, and who supported this mobility and the demanders of social reforms in the Emirate.

Undoubtedly, some of the reforms were affected by what was happening in other Arab countries. The authorities in Iraq, for example, played a major role during the reign of King Ghazi (1933 CE – 1939 CE) in inflaming the struggle between the National Bloc and the Kuwaiti authorities⁽²⁾, especially after the members of the National Bloc published their agenda in the Iraqi newspaper, al-Zaman. The newspaper was issued in Basra on the 3rd of April 1938 CE. Their requests included: “Opening schools to offer the people the opportunity to learn; build a hospital; organise the economic situation of the country, its expenditures and its revenues; improve its conditions on all fronts; close the doors of Kuwait to all the foreign refugees who have no ties with the Arab World; not to forbid any Arab from visiting Kuwait under any circumstances; make the necessary formalities to erase the misunderstandings with the Arab neighbours on this matter; that the Emir makes contact with all the levels of his people, that he listens to their complaints, and addresses their issues on a satisfactory basis; the people of Kuwait wished for their country to cooperate with Iraq in order to achieve the aims

(1) Yelena Melkumyan, “*dirasat fi tarikh al- kuwait al- hadeeth wal mu’asar*” (Studies in Kuwait’s Modern and Contemporary History), translated [to Arabic] by Maher Salama, 1st ed., Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 2011, p. 147.

(2) Ghanim Al- Najjar, “*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*” (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 25, 26.

of the reform projects, and improve them on scientific, cultural, commercial, and geographic bases". The members of the National Bloc also expedited a letter to Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber including their demands⁽¹⁾, saying:

"Your Highness, the basis on which the nation has given you *bay'a* [pledge of allegiance] on the first day of your reign is to make ruling between you and the nation on the basis of the *shura* imposed by Islam, and followed by the Rightly Guided Caliphs [*al-Khulafa' al-Rashidun*] in their golden times.... We hereby present a request to form a legislative council [*majlis tashri'*] composed of the country's freemen to supervise the organisation of its affairs", they concluded with the sentence: "Your loyal people"⁽²⁾. Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, in the presence of Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim, met with the delegation of the National Bloc, and informed them of the approval to hold elections⁽³⁾. a list was made, consisting of only 320 voters (because many of Kuwait's people were excluded – the Shi'a, the Ajam, the tribes, and those living in the villages on Kuwait's edges). They were to vote in the elections to choose the members of the council. In fact, after the required procedure which took place in al-Sakr's office, most of the members of the National Bloc succeeded in the elections⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Abdullah Al- Omar, '*irhasat al- dimuqratiya fil-kuwait*' (Indications of Democracy in Kuwait), see prev., p. 31.

(2) See complete text of the letter, Al- Diyin, "*malamih min al tareekh al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Aspects from the Political History of Kuwait), al- Tali'a, 2012, p. 7; see also Khalid Suleiman Al- Adsani, "*nisf 'am lil hukm al- niyabi fil-kuwait*", (Half a Year of Parliamentary Rule in Kuwait), prev., p. 25, 28; see also Abdullah Al- Omar, '*irhasat al- dimuqratiya fil-kuwait*' (Indications of Democracy in Kuwait), prev., p. 31.

(3) Khalid Suleiman Al- Adsani, "*nisf 'am lil hukm al- niyabi fil-kuwait*", (Half a Year of Parliamentary Rule in Kuwait), see prev., p. 28.

(4) The winners in the membership elections were: 1. Abdullah Hamad Al- Sakr. 2. Mohamed Thanyan Al- Ghanim. 3. Youssef Bin Issa Al- Qinaï. 4. Al- Sayid Ali Al- Sayid Suleiman Al- Rifai. 5. Mish'an Al- Khudayr Khalid. 6. Hamad =

Nevertheless, one must say that such pressure on the authorities was interpreted as interfering in governance matters, and this was confirmed when the council subsequently attempted to jump and grab more authority, and exploit the privileges they had been offered.

British position concerning the attempts of the Council to seize the three powers

Because of his position and support to this social mobility, there was an agreement that Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah⁽¹⁾ becomes the head of the council, and in fact, the council quickly started its tasks. The formulation of the Constitution was drafted during the first week of July 1938 CE. The jurisdiction of the Legislative Council was determined therein, and the project earned the unanimous approval of its members. It was presented to the Emir for ratification on the 9th of July 1938 CE. The draft of the Constitution read as follows:

Article 1: The people are the source of power, and they are represented by the council and its deputies. In article 2: The Legislative Council is the lawmaker⁽²⁾. Article 3: The Legislative Council is the competent authority for all treaties, licenses, interior and exterior agreements, and any new matter of this sort shall only be legal with the Council's approval and supervision. Article 4: The tasks of the Court of Appeal are to be temporarily

= Al- Dawud Al- Marzuq. 7. Suleiman Khalid Al- Adsani. 8. Abdul-Latif Mohamed Thanyan Al- Ghanim. 9. Youssef Salih Al- Humaidi. 10. Mishari Hassan Al- Badr. 11. Sultan Ibrahim Al- Kulayb. 12. Salih Uthman Al- Rashid. 13. Youssef Marzuq Al- Marzuq. 14. Khalid Abdul-Latif Al- Hamad.

(1) Abdullah Al- Omar, '*irhasat al- dimuqratiya fil-kuwait*' (Indications of Democracy in Kuwait), see prev., p. 33.

(2) (The laws on the country's budget, justice, national security, education, public health, improvements and reforms, emergency, and any other law required by the nation's interest).

given to the Legislative Council until an independent institution is formed for this purpose. Article 5: The Chair of the Legislative Council represents the executive power in the country.⁽¹⁾

It seems obvious, as previously mentioned, that this was strictly the first semi- constitutional basic document in Kuwait. It is also obvious that the major defect therein lied in the Council's attempt to seize all powers, and the attempt to widen its privileges and authority at the expense of the other authorities; the Legislative power of the Council actually acquired the three branches of authority – legislative, executive, and judicial. Moreover, the Council, which made the executive power within its person, was actually, by this act, stripping the ruler Ahmad al-Jaber the holder of the power himself, from his jurisdiction as a ruler.

As for Article 3 which made the Council the competent authority for all interior and exterior treaties and agreements, it led the members of the Council to a direct conflict with the British who

(1) It was formulated on the eleventh of Jumada, 8th of July 1938. The Council's most important achievements may be summarised as follows: creation of the committees for political affairs, finance, and education; inauguration of about ten new government offices, such as finance, police, security, passports...; setting systems, promulgating laws, and issuing decisions such as the Constitutional Act, the Council's internal regulations, a law for the elections of the Chamber of Commerce's members, draft legislation for the Kuwaiti nationality...; combatting bribery and corruption, setting a budget different from the ruler's, widening the scope of the *maarif* Council's privileges; cancelling the monopoly imposed on some activities and jobs; reform and the creation of a council for the financial office to supervise the regulation of taxes and the ways to spend them; cancelling the export taxes which had reached 20%, and the 10% from the taxes which the village people paid for the merchandise they bought from the city. For more, see Abdullah Al- Omar, '*irhasat al- dimuqratiya fil-kuwait*' (Indications of Democracy in Kuwait), prev., p. 35, 36.

had previously showed sympathy for this movement. But subsequently, with the legislation made by the Council, found themselves obliged to give up supporting it, and to even stand against it⁽¹⁾.

In August 1938 CE, in a show of power, the Council demanded from Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber to remove its two secretaries (al-Mulla Salih and Izzat Ja'far), accusing them of creating crises, and attempting to make discord between the Council and Sheikh Ahmad; this angered Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber.

At that time, the British Political Agent (De Gaury) assured to the members of the Council that any internal changes in Kuwait, like the establishment of the council, would not affect the position of the British Government, stating that the official relations of the latter were directly with Sheikh Ahmad, and that it was responsible for all foreign relations.

A crisis was established between the Council and Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, and each party insisted on maintaining their position; there was also an increase in the number of voices opposing and refusing the Council, particularly among those whose roles and opinions had been marginalized and excluded from the elections, like the Shi'a of Kuwait⁽²⁾. Additionally, some

(1) It made the Council the authority for all treaties and licenses, and this worried the British who feared that the revenue of all the future petroleum would be in the hands of the Council. In December 1938, Sheikh Jaber had sent the first instalments of the Kuwait Oil Company to the Legislative Council; noting that the 1899 agreement which had been signed by Sheikh Mubarak Al- Sabah on the 23rd of January 1899 made Kuwait's foreign affairs the responsibility of the British.

(2) A number of them sent a request to the British Political Agent asking to be granted the permission to vote, they were originally Iranian and requested a school particularly for them, and representation in the baladiya Council. Some say they organised riots where they condemned the Council, and called for its fall. From the report on the visit of the League of Arab States' delegation to the Arabian Gulf on =

people saw that the reforms of the Council did not match the conservative Kuwaiti social tradition, particularly where it concerned making a population census, and including women in this census, as it was not usual at that time to ask about women at their houses, or learn things related to them. All this led to a situation of anger amongst some people and some families.

With all the given circumstances, the crisis was worsened as a result of a quarrel which took place between those opposing and those approving of the Council, which led some of the members to go and secure themselves in Naif Palace.

Facing this, the authorities had recourse to the Bedouins and the men from the neighbouring villages, described by al-Adsani⁽¹⁾ as being armed; they surrounded Naif Palace, and actually started repeating the poetic and enthusiastic chants, and threatened to break into the Palace. Then, the Council's members also sent to their allies and supporters to explain to them the reality of what was happening, and to call for their help. Due to this crisis and tension, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's letter to Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim on the 21st of December 1938 CE, bore a decision to dissolve the Council. It stated: "To His Excellency the Chairman of the Legislative Council... greetings; kindly note that we have ordered the dissolution of the present Legislative Council...please

= the 10th of November 1964. See Sayed Nofal, "*al-awda' al-siyasiya li imarat al-khalij al-'arabi wa janub al-jazeera*" (Political Situation of the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf and the South of the Peninsula), p. 24 and after. See also Abdullah Yacoub Bishara, "*dawr al-umam al-mutahida fi istiqlal al-bahrain*" (The United Nations' Role in the Independence of Bahrain), *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*, No. 7, 2nd year, July 1976.

(1) Khalid Suleiman Al-Adsani, "*nisf 'am lil hukm al-niyabi fil-kuwait*", (Half a Year of Parliamentary Rule in Kuwait), see prev. p. 77.

comply with the order; regards”⁽¹⁾. With the development of events, and in an attempt of the authorities to calm the situation and return to dialogue, new elections took place a few days after the dissolution of the old council. The number of voters reached around 400, and twenty people won the membership of the Council. Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim was chosen to chair it. However, this Council did not get the same jurisdictions and privileges as the first Legislative Council of 1938 CE. There was a consensus on adopting the model of the Egyptian Constitution of 1923 CE to replace the previous basic document, but Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber preferred a constitution closer to the nature of the ruling system and authority in Kuwait, as it was a hereditary Emirate. He presented a project that included the annulation of the basic document that the previous Council had ratified.

On the 2nd of January 1939 CE, the members of the Council assembled to review the draft proposed by Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim, in order to ratify it after a clause had been added to enable the dissolution of the Legislative Council. Although the Council ratified it, Sheikh Ahmad did not approve it; and on the 7th of March 1939 CE, he ordered the dissolution of that Council as well. This dissolution was accompanied by some troublemaking, as the country witnessed bloody events where some people were killed, and others put under arrest⁽²⁾. Consequently, a number of

(1) In any case, and in spite of how it ended, this experiment had an important effect on the march of political and democratic mobility in Kuwait. It was more mature than its precedent in 1921, and although the Council did not last long (six months from July to December 1938), it remains the first real political assembly in the Emirate that, in addition to the merchants, included many individuals eager for reform. It is one of the earliest political movements which tried to move the political stagnation in the Emirate, based on the historical legacy (common rule).

(2) Bloody events seen in the assassination the chief of the port’s police, Mohamed Qatami; Additionally, Mohamed Al- Minees was executed, and several members of =

the Council members moved out of Kuwait, namely to Iraq, fearing being exposed to punishment or being arrested and questioned by the authorities.

On the 12th of March of the same year 1939 CE, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber announced the establishment of a consultative council, which was constituted of fourteen members, four of them from the ruling family, headed by Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim. However, this council also joined its predecessors, and quickly ended in failure after the withdrawal of its members, one after the other⁽¹⁾. a few months after this, the region and the world entered the events of the Second World War (1939 CE–19445 CE), leading to the temporary halt of social mobility in Kuwait.

Uqair Convention, 2nd of December 1922 CE

With the absence of Sheikh Mubarak, and after the First World War, Ibn Saud's terrific expansion towards Iraq and the Kuwaiti side, and other places as well, seriously pushed Britain to confront this new reality which Ibn Saud tried to impose on everybody.

The British had previously wanted to secure the petroleum sources after there were indications of its abundance in the area, especially Mosul's petroleum⁽²⁾, and this pushed them to create

= the Legislative Council were imprisoned, like Abdul-Latif Thanyan Al- Ghanim, Sayid Ali Suleiman, Mish'an Al- Khudayr, and Salih Rashed. Moreover, many members fled Kuwait for many years. See Abdullah Al- Omar, '*irhasat al- dimuqratiya fil-kuwait*' (Indications of Democracy in Kuwait), prev., p. 84.

(1) Abdul-Aziz Hussein, "*muhadarat 'an al- mujtama' al'arabi bil-kuwait*" (Lectures on the Arab Society in Kuwait), see prev., p. 67.

(2) See Sayed Nofal, "*al-awda' al- siyasiya li imarat al- khalij al- 'arabi wa janub al- jazeera*" (Political Situation of the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf and the South of the Peninsula), vol. I, Institute of Arab Research and Studies, 3rd ed., (1966-1967), American Interference and World Conflict, p. 94 and after.

The strange thing is that Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, the ruler of Kuwait himself, was neither invited nor informed of this convention where John More, the British Political Agent in Kuwait represented him. Sir Percy Cox was the chairman of the Convention. Abu-Hakima says: "What was permissible for strong Kuwait during Mubarak's reign would not be so after his death when Abdul-Aziz al Saud became the most powerful leader in the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula"⁽¹⁾.

Rihani also says: "In Uqair, to the south of the palace, tents were set up; a section of them were for the Iraqi delegation and the English, and a section... for the people of Najd"⁽²⁾. The events and debates of the convention started, and Ibn Saud suggested that drawing the borders should be according to the affiliation of the tribes and their loyalty, with the basis of abiding by the law of the desert. But his suggestion did not meet with the assembly's approval⁽³⁾.

Abu-Hakima says: "In the first sessions of the convention, Cox appeared keen on drawing the boundaries between the concerned countries (Kuwait, Iraq, and the Sultan of Najd), and they most probably ended to Kuwait being a boundary country dividing between the Saudis and the Iraqis"⁽⁴⁾.

Also, Dickson, who was attending as well, indicated that Cox asked the Iraqi representative, Sabih Beq, to present what he

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 355.

(2) Accompanying Sultan Abdul-Aziz; Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), see prev., p. 308.

(3) Emir Abdul-Aziz Al- Saud said: "We know for sure that Iraq's clans are not comfortable with a strong government"; see Amin Rihani, "*tareekh najd al- hadith*" (Modern History of Najd), prev., p. 309.

(4) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 357.

believed to be the right to his boundaries. So Iraq's representative stood and said: "Since God has created the world, and since history has been written, Iraq's borders have extended southwards twelve miles away from Riyadh, Ibn Saud's capital; the Red Sea borders it from the west, so that it includes Ha'il, Medina, and Yanbu'; and it extends eastwards to include al-Hofuf and al-Qutaif on the Persian Gulf; and God is my witness that these are the only real boundaries, undisputedly". Dickson continued that the moment Emir Abdul-Aziz's turn came, he shouted: "I know nothing about creation, but I know for sure that since the days of my great grandfather, Ibrahim al-Khalil, Najd's lands and the Bedouin world extended till Aleppo in the north, and the Orontes ('Asi) River to the north of Syria, and it included all the countries located to the right of the Euphrates, and from there to Basra on the Gulf"⁽¹⁾.

As a result of the dispute and not reaching solutions during five days since the beginning of the conference, on the sixth day, Percy Cox took a pen and drew the region's new map, where he determined the common boundaries between the three participants (Kuwait, Najd and Iraq), from the Gulf till the 'Unaizan Mountain near the Jordanian borders.

What directly concerns us here is the position of Kuwait on this map, according to which Iraq got lands that Ibn Saud was claiming; in return two thirds of Kuwait's lands were cut off by the English to compensate Ibn Saud. Abu-Hakima says: "In brief, the Uqair Convention which was signed by the concerned parties on the 2nd of December 1922 CE, took back Kuwait's southern border around one hundred and sixty miles, and this deduced land was annexed to Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud's properties"⁽²⁾.

(1) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev. p. 279.

(2) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 359.

Percy Cox also drew two neutral areas, between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait on the southern side, and between Iraq and Saudi Arabia in the north, in order to facilitate the circulation of the tribes and their movement in the region, and for the pasturages in general to be for all the parties. The neutral area between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia was put under British supervision. The treaty was signed by Dr Abdullah al-Damluji on behalf of Ibn Saud, and Major More for Kuwait. a Protocol was signed between Najd and Iraq on the same day⁽¹⁾.

Dickson refers to the position of Kuwait's representative, More, regarding this treaty by saying that signing it happened at the expense of a small, weak country, and that the purpose of signing it was to calm Ibn Saud who owned power and the capacity to make trouble. He assures that Major More did not utter a word, while he was supposed to defend Kuwait's interests⁽²⁾.

Abu-Hakima tells about Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, when he asked Cox about what had happened, and the reason for cutting off Kuwait's land in favour of Emir Abdul-Aziz. Cox explained this position by saying that it was due to Kuwait's weakness in comparison to what it had been during Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah's reign. Abu-Hakima added that Sheikh Ahmad asked Cox: "So does this mean that Kuwait can take back what was stolen from it if its Sheikh becomes as strong as Sheikh Mubarak without British opposition? To what Cox replied that there was no opposition"⁽³⁾. Dickson also reported that Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber got very affected and asked Percy Cox, when he gave him the

(1) Ghanim Al- Najjar, "*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev. p. 21.

(2) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev., p. 284.

(3) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 359.

news, why he had done that without asking him. So Cox replied that in that unfortunate event, the sword had been stronger than the pen, and that Ibn Saud, the powerful neighbour, would have taken the land by the force of weapons if it had not been given to him⁽¹⁾.

Dickson says that Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber in turn told Cox: "If Ibn Saud dies and I become strong like my grandfather Mubarak, will the British government mind if I refuse the unfair boundary line and take back the land that I have lost'... so Sir Cox laughed and said: 'No, and may God bless your efforts'"⁽²⁾.

In the end, Kuwait was obliged to accept this agreement; Abu-Hakima indicates that Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber "after seeing the amount of injustice which hit Kuwait by cutting-off around two-thirds of its land in favour of Ibn Saud, hesitated before signing the treaty; yet he signed, and damned it as he was signing it"⁽³⁾.

Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber and the issue of *musabala* (trade)

The economic problems prior to the appearance of petroleum, shed their shadow on both the interior and the exterior conditions in Kuwait, especially after the merchants felt that there were obvious attempts by the Emir Abdul-Aziz al Saud to narrow down

(1) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev., p. 287.

(2) Id.

(3) The fact that Britain felt, after the Uqair Convention, that it did not solve the border issues firmly, is probably what pushed it to try to organise another convention in 1923. It was known as The Second Kuwait Convention. It was held on the second of November 1923, after the last attempt to end the conflict between Iraq and Eastern Jordan, and trying to solve their problems with Abdul-Aziz Bin Saud. The efforts of the conference were surrounded by tension, and the work lasted until April 1924, with a failure end and no results. Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 359.

Kuwait's trade. He had tried several times to transfer the merchants to ports that were under his control, like al-Qutaif, Uqair, and Jubail, because he wanted to get the maximum revenue from the customs he imposed there.

Facing the loss of the balance of power in favour of Ibn Saud, with the latter always protesting to the insufficient share he got from the profits Kuwait made out of the Najdi trade, the renewal of the *musabala*⁽¹⁾ issue between Kuwait and the Saudis occurred. This happened when Ibn Saud tried to divert his citizens to get their supplies from the ports that were under his actual control. The justification for this was that their getting supplies from Kuwait and their dispersion in the desert without surveillance did not enable him to impose fees or taxes on the merchandise; he suggested the appointment of an employee in Kuwait to collect the taxes on his behalf upon departure. He began the construction of two new ports in Jubail and al-Qutaif to transfer the trading routes to his benefit. So Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber sent Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim to negotiate and reach a solution, but the negotiations with Emir Abdul-Aziz failed. In 1930 CE, during the negotiations with Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, Ibn Saud indicated that he was ready to lift the embargo in return for a share of the Kuwaiti customs' income; but Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber refused this. During the year 1931 CE, the British also tried to bring Ibn Saud to reach a settlement in this issue, and a suggestion to bring arbitrators from among Kuwait's and Najd's merchants was

(1) The *musabala* was a kind of trade used by the Bedouins of the Arabian Peninsula in the old times. It relied on barter where some sold a part or all of their goods, in return for money to accomplish their needs. Ibn Saud tried to push the merchants towards three places for *musabala*, Uqair, Qutaif and Jubail. For more, see Rihani, "*muluk al- 'arab*" (Kings of the Arabs), prev., p. 184-185, and Rihani, "*muluk al- 'arab*" (Kings of the Arabs), 1987 ed., p. 668.

approved. Moreover, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber visited Riyadh in April 1932 CE. However, the Saudis might have also been undergoing an economic crisis, and it had become obvious that the *musabala* issue between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia was not about to be radically solved, and the situation remained as it was.

Towards the end of 1934 CE, Britain had to interfere. It suggested that *musabala* remains between Najd and Kuwait, that the fees imposed on the merchandise going to Najd would not exceed 5%, that there would be cooperation between Kuwait and Najd, and that a civil servant would be appointed to supervise these matters and collect the fees under British supervision. In fact, Ibn Saud sent a representative, but he failed to comply with the agreement.

In the summer of 1935 CE, the problem of the *musabala* was shifted to immediate negotiations through the British suggestion to discuss the solutions offered by Kuwait⁽¹⁾. In 1936 CE, there was an agreement to prepare a draft regarding this issue. One of its clauses included forbidding trafficking. The British representative arrived to Kuwait on the 26th of January 1936 CE; he met with Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber, and asked for urgently applying what had been agreed upon, and for having the process of getting the merchandise out of Kuwait to Najd organised. But the Saudi party obstructed the course of the matter, hoping for submission to their requests. The question of the *musabala* lasted until the year 1942 CE, pending between the two parties. The discovery of petroleum in Kuwait and in the Saudi lands, located in the neutral zone close to the Kuwaiti territory, probably alleviated the sharpness of the tensions, and pushed to

(1) Which stipulated that the Saudis put some customs' posts on the boundaries with Kuwait.

end the disagreements, and subsequently resolve the problems once and for all.

Petroleum exportation

Undoubtedly, the period of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's reign was an important period. It was full of new conditions and big events, starting with the Shura Council in 1921 CE, then the loss of the two-thirds of Kuwait's space in Uqair in 1922 CE, passing by the 1938 CE Council and its events, and ending with the discovery of petroleum and its exportation officially on the 30th of June 1946 CE. a celebration attended by Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber was held on the occasion, where he said: "This day is a happy day when we celebrate the exportation of the first shipment of Kuwait's petroleum. Undoubtedly, every person from our people and our friends will rejoice with us from this event"⁽¹⁾.

The truth that can't be denied about Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's reign is that it was the beginning of, and the introduction to political mobility in Kuwait. This was extensively and effectively continued afterwards by his successor Abdullah al-Salim with the adoption of the Constitution, and the call for the elections of the National Assembly (*majlis al-ummah*), consequent to Kuwait's independence in 1961 CE.

We must also note the fact that the Kuwaiti society had changed as a result of social factors and modernity which began to surround the society, in addition to the increase in the number of educated people and migrations. There was economic change as well, which resulted from petroleum exportation, and led to more revenues and authority to the Emirate. This also required it to take measures towards more extended progress on all fronts,

(1) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev. p. 259; see also Yacoub Youssef Al- Hajji, "*al-kuwait al- qadeema, suwar wa thikrayat*" (Ancient Kuwait, Pictures and Memories), prev., p. 248.

education, health, and security, and also to increase the institutions and economic investments, like building the city of al-Ahmadi in 1948 CE, and the expansion in building water and electricity plants⁽¹⁾. The period of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's reign was accompanied by the emergence of the middle-class and the working class, and the increase in the number of the educated from both these classes. The societal and institutional progress also led to more development and construction in Kuwait. Moreover, there were scientific delegations, scholarships for Kuwaiti students to study abroad were offered, health services were also offered, and hospitals were built... there were other instruments of modernity and progress as well.

All this happened during Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's reign which lasted for twenty nine years, from 1921 CE to 1950 CE. He then died towards the end of the month of January 1950 CE, after having had a life full of events and changes, and having put Kuwait on the path of modernity, while shifting it from the phase of the emirate or sheikhdom, to the phase of the modern state, with all the institutions it requires.

(1) It happened simultaneously with British advice offered by the British Resident in the Gulf to the British Agent in Kuwait who in turn delivered the message to Sheikh Ahmad Al- Jaber, asking him to make reforms in the Emirate. See Al- Diyin, "*malamih min al tareekh al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Aspects from the Political History of Kuwait),

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Kuwait Between 1950 CE and 1977 CE

- Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim ascends to the throne.
- British position from Sheikh Abdullah taking power.
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- Conflict with the Authority.
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- The crisis at the Security Council and the position of the Arab League.
- Authority and its change of stance concerning reform movements in Kuwait.
- Kuwait's Constitution, 1962 CE, and the first National Assembly, 1963 CE.
- The reign of Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah 1965 CE – 1977 CE.

“Democratic life is the road of the people who respect their will in the free life, as there is no dignity without freedom, and no freedom without dignity.”

(Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim – eleventh ruler of Kuwait)

Foreword:

It was natural that Kuwait witnesses a recess in the process of political mobility in the last years of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber's reign, especially during the years of World War II (1939 CE-1945 CE) and the following years. And also after the exportation of petroleum, and the appearance of abundant financial revenues, of which the impact quickly appeared on the different aspects of social, political, economic, and cultural life in Kuwait.

Whoever has been following the development of the internal and external situations which surrounded Kuwait at that time can easily notice the size and effect of the change of conditions on the Kuwaiti society, especially concerning migrations, the appearance of the educated social elite, and the connection and interaction between the youth and the people of other nations like Egypt, Iraq and Syria. There was also modernity, and the trend of Arab nationalism which included criticism of the colonial policies, and which was extensively taking greater space among the Kuwaitis⁽¹⁾. In addition to all these changes, British influence had started to decline and retract, and new players appeared, the most important being the United States of America and the Soviet Union, with the open struggle between them to polarise more allies, and extend power. Additionally, there was the alert Iraqi neighbour and their problems with Kuwait.

In the midst of all this, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim ascended to the throne. He was one of the top leading people in the ruling family and the most prominent personality on the scene at that time. He ruled Kuwait during an era which can be called the era of labour, when the Emirate gave birth to the State, and the era

(1) Mufid Al- Zaidy, "*al-tayarat al-qawmiya fil-khalij al-'arabi 1938-1971*" (Nationalist Movements in the Arabian Gulf, 1938-1971), Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 2003, p. 171.

of completion of the requirements of independence and sovereignty, as well as the surge of more political participation.

Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim ascends to the throne (1950 CE-1965 CE)

Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim is the eldest son of Sheikh Salim al-Mubarak, the ninth ruler of Kuwait. He was educated in Kuwait, and was reputed for his modesty, and for his love for literature and inclination to poetry, much of which he learned by heart. Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim was given several names, the most common being "Father of the Constitution, or Father of Independence", which he was called during his reign which extended from 1950 CE to 1965 CE.

Dickson, the Political Resident, wrote about Sheikh Abdullah that all evidence indicated that he would trace the lines for his successors, and that he had taken a series of wise formalities in the field of civil service⁽¹⁾. Abu-Hakima mentioned that "Sheikh Abdullah was prepared for the role of the ruler before becoming a ruler; whoever follows Kuwait's circumstances will realise this"; he added: "The politics of Kuwait during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah remind one of the politics of the founder of Kuwait, Sheikh Abdullah I Bin Sabah"⁽²⁾. Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim was abroad when Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber passed away⁽³⁾, but he returned to Kuwait after his death to take hold of power there⁽⁴⁾.

(1) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", see prev. p. 11.

(2) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 373.

(3) He was in Oman.

(4) Al-Shamlan, "*min tareekh al-kuwait*" (From the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 209.

British position from Sheikh Abdullah taking power

When Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim ascended to the throne, the British first abstained from recognising him officially, until they received guarantees and reassuring messages from him personally. This situation of hesitating to recognise Sheikh Abdullah is what governed the mutual relations for almost one month. Actually, this situation might have been directly due to the previous experiences when Sheikh Abdullah was one of the most prominent figures of opposition in the ruling family al Sabah, and at the head of the most important attempts of early political reform in Kuwait.

He was the first chairman of the Legislative Council of 1938 CE, the chairman of the Council of 1939 CE, in addition to his being one of the candidates chosen by the people to rule in 1921 CE. With reference to a letter sent from the British Agent in Kuwait to the British Foreign Office on the 18th of January 1950 CE⁽¹⁾, Dr Ghanim al-Najjar⁽²⁾ points to the fact that Britain feared that Kuwait's governance would be taken over by a personality from the al Sabah family who might have inclinations contradictory to British interests. Therefore, it started making plans to interfere in the case this happened. Some British reports on Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim referred to him by saying that he had doubtful political inclinations towards Britain. One of the secret reports even went as far as saying that he was the leader of the pro-Nazis in Kuwait⁽³⁾. It is obvious that the British fears which reached Sheikh Abdullah' were due to their great anxiety and worry from everything that threatened their influence in the region, to the extent which

(1) Ghanim Al- Najjar, "*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 36.

(2) P.r.o.fo 371/82162+82009.

(3) Ghanim Al- Najjar, "*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 37.

made that anxiety tantamount to accusing its perpetrators of being pro-Nazi.

Because of all these fears, Britain put a number of conditions to accept officially recognising Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim. Among these, appointing an heir to the throne, and choosing British experts to be his aides⁽¹⁾. Sheikh Abdullah dealt with these demands calmly and carefully. The British, knowing from earlier the extent of acceptance and contentment the ruling family and the people felt towards him, were eventually obliged to accept to recognise his rule officially. The date of the investiture was fixed to the 25th of February 1950 CE; this is the day that subsequently became the National Independence Day of Kuwait⁽²⁾.

Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim and the Arab Nationalists in Kuwait

Since it first appeared, the Nationalist Movement⁽³⁾ has represented one of the most important trends of thought in the Arab countries. These opposition currents clearly and actively appeared during the first half of the twentieth century, which witnessed the peak of foreign control and struggle over the region. Therefore, it was not strange that Arab revolts break out, nor was the call for independent authority in the Arab countries, far from the Ottoman authority at that time. The Arab Congress (Paris)

(1) See letter from the British Political Agent in Kuwait to the Foreign Office dated 5/2/1950, and another letter dated 22/1/1950 - P.r.o.fo 371/82162.

(2) Ghanim Al- Najjar, “*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*” (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 37.

(3) In attempt to record and tackle Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim’s position with regard to the movements and reform demands, and mainly the Arab Nationalists Movement, see Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, “*mawqif al- shaykh ‘abdullah al- salim min al- tayar al- qawmi fil-kuwait iban al- azma 1961*” (Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim’s Stance from the Nationalist Movement in Kuwait During the Crisis of 1961), Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, November, 2014.

took place in 1913 CE⁽¹⁾. It was attended by Arab associations and nationalist personalities to express the nationalist and political thoughts and tendencies, which later entered a new phase after the Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule in 1916 CE⁽²⁾. This trend gained more strength after the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916 CE and the Balfour Declaration in 1917 CE. After the First and Second World Wars, the Arab Region started witnessing movements organised by the symbols of the Arab nationalist trend through the League of Nationalist Action and the Social Nationalist Party in Syria, and the al-Muthanna Club in Iraq. At the same time, symbols of this current became more active, like Sati' al-Husri, Constantin Zuraiq, and others⁽³⁾. Then, the Palestinian exodus (*nakba*) in 1948 occurred, and with it the loss of Palestine, an element which added to the momentum of the nationalist motion in most of the countries around the Arab World.

Undoubtedly, this motion directly affected the Kuwaiti society. With the spreading of education and the appearance of clubs, associations, and press, and with Kuwait receiving Arab intellectuals and teachers, in addition to the Arab communities and scientific delegations from countries like Egypt, Iraq and Greater Syria, there was a fertile land in Kuwait for the expansion of the nationalist

(1) Mufid Al- Zaidy, “*al-tayarat al- qawmiya fil-khalij al- ‘arabi 1938-1971*” (Nationalist Movements in the Arabian Gulf, 1938-1971), see prev., p. 167.

(2) Britain tried to exploit the wrath of some of the oppressed Arab people against the Ottoman Empire, based on the Turkification policy applied by the Unionists and their party who held onto the Ottoman traditions and principles. Thus, the Arab Revolt rose in June 1916, led by Al- Sharif Hussein who proclaimed himself King of the Arabs. For more, see Abdul-Razik Al- Hosni, “*tareekh al- ‘iraq al- siyasi al- hadeeth*” (Modern Political History of Iraq), part 2, 7th ed., 2008, p. 5.

(3) Mufid Al- Zaidy, “*al-tayarat al- qawmiya fil-khalij al- ‘arabi 1938-1971*” (Nationalist Movements in the Arabian Gulf, 1938-1971), see prev., p. 168.

trend. The press played an important role in exposing the opinions in favour of Arab Nationalism; some students were also a powerful voice abroad calling for Arab Nationalism and criticising colonial policies. The administration of Kuwait's delegation in Egypt⁽¹⁾ was even a centre for nationalist cadres among the Kuwaiti students. Dickson, the British Political Agent in Kuwait, said that the British pointed an accusing finger towards the Germans for enhancing the nationalist spirit in the Kuwaiti youth. They said that establishing a branch of the Youth Party in Kuwait happened with support from the German Minister Plenipotentiary in Baghdad, Fritz Grobba, aiming at upsetting British stability in Kuwait. This met with wide response from the Kuwaiti youth who contacted the two branches of the two youth parties in Iraq and Syria to understand the nature of the thoughts, and to coordinate⁽²⁾. However the real situation was, whether this information was right or wrong, the fact remains that this is proof of the early beginnings of nationalist awareness in Kuwait⁽³⁾.

Before that, Kuwait had witnessed the first announcement of a political meeting between the symbols of the nationalist current under the name "National Bloc" in 1938 CE – we previously referred to this bloc and to its role in forming the Council of 1938 CE⁽⁴⁾.

(1) *Id.*, p. 171.

(2) H. R. p. Dickson, "Kuwait and Her Neighbours", part 2, Kuwait, no pub., 1964, p. 133.

(3) Some of the Iraqi newspapers said that the goal of Kuwait's youth was to create a union of the Arab Gulf Emirates that might include Iraq. Mufid Al-Zaidy, "*al-tayarat al-qawmiya fil-khalij al-'arabi 1938-1971*" (Nationalist Movements in the Arabian Gulf, 1938-1971), see prev., p. 173. See also Al-Istiqlal Iraqi newspaper, 18/8/1935.

(4) The heads of this movement were among the most prominent Kuwaiti personalities who were able to have relations with Arab politicians. It is also worth noting that many of these personages were board members of different associations, among =

When Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim ascended to the throne, an active period started for this movement as well as other movements, in the sense that there was more active political appearance and mobility on both the popular and official fronts⁽¹⁾. Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim's previous position towards political mobility in Kuwait, and the fact that he understood the requirements of reform and the movements calling for it, made the transformations take a faster pace. These movements considered that Abdullah al-Salim's presence at the throne implied that the space had become prepared for them to move more freely. This trend, which originally appeared in the American University in Beirut, was launched, and a number of Kuwaiti students were enrolled for learning there. Among these was Dr Ahmed al-Khateeb who succeeded in the early fifties of the twentieth century, to form the first cells of the trend in Kuwait, and establish, with other colleagues, a branch of the movement of which he became one of the most important leaders. There were also Dr Khalid al-Wasmi⁽²⁾ and others⁽³⁾, thus investing the state of freedom and openness that Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim had provided. The year

= them the Alumni association, the economists, the teachers, the journalists... For more, see Yelena Melkumyan, "*dirasat fi tarikh al-kuwait al-hadeeth wal mu'asar*" (Studies in Kuwait's Modern and Contemporary History), prev., p. 147.

(1) See Falah Abdullah Al- Muderis, "*al-tajamu'at al- siyasiya al- kuwaitiya*" (Kuwaiti Political Groupings), prev.

(2) Khalid Al- Wasmi, History Professor at Kuwait University, former member of the National Council, one of the pioneers of the Arab Nationalists in Kuwait and one of the vanguards of the movement's first generation. He later became President of the Gulf branch of the Arab Nationalist movement, and one of the most effective in this current. Al- Wasmi has several important books that tackle the history of Oman and the Arabian Gulf in depth.

(3) See Falah Abdullah Al- Muderis, "*al-tajamu'at al- siyasiya al- kuwaitiya*" (Kuwaiti Political Groupings), prev.

1956 CE is considered the golden age of the nationalist trend, especially in the shadow of the efforts of Gamal Abdel-Nasser in Egypt⁽¹⁾, and his call for several principles, the most important of which were: “National independence, resistance to colonialism, control of national economy, and social development”. These were the principles that led Nasser to enjoy a prominent position in the circles of the Arab nationalists in general, and the circles of the Arabian Gulf in particular, among which Kuwait. There rose protests by the Aramco Company’s workers, and demonstrations and riots between 1952 CE and 1958 CE. Nasser’s photos were raised during these protests, when King Saud, during his visit to the region, rejected their demands to cancel the foreign bases (1956 CE). Some of the sons of the ruling families feared that Nasserism and the nationalist movements in the region of the Gulf were a real threat to their existence, as well as their families’ at the throne⁽²⁾. There was also the nationalisation of the Suez Canal and the Tripartite Aggression against Egypt in 1956 CE, pushing the symbols of the nationalist movement in Kuwait to launch propaganda campaigns, and pump more revolutionary activity; so the movement became more active in its political propaganda supporting Nasser and calling for the abolition of British interests in the region. It even called for Kuwaitis to volunteer in defence of Egypt. Dr Ahmed al-Khateeb’s clinic became the centre for the registration of the Kuwaiti and Arab volunteers. In spite of the State not adopting this path officially, it turned a blind eye to it and did not obstruct it.

(1) For more, see Malcolm H. Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal ‘Abd al- Nasir and His Rivals, 1958-1970*, Oxford University Press, 1971.

(2) Mufid Al- Zaidy, “*al-tayarat al- qawmiya fil-khalij al- ‘arabi 1938-1971*” (Nationalist Movements in the Arabian Gulf, 1938-1971), see prev., p. 158.

The Arab Nationalists lead the political mobility

The follower of the reform movements in Kuwait generally, and at their top the Arab Nationalist Movement, will remark that most of them marched and were directed towards the goal of reaching popular participation in governance. At the top of the list of what these movements called for was “that the people share in governance; not to marginalise the people’s role in decision making; to take wider steps towards merging Kuwait within the realm of the Arab action; the Arab issues, and the liberal and reform movements; also to narrow the scope of the role of some of the sons of the ruling family, particularly given their constant interference to undermine some of the previous elective and democratic experiments; and to separate the executive, legislative, and judicial powers”⁽¹⁾.

The cultural and professional clubs in Kuwait were also the theatre and the platform from where the opposition voices were raised, accompanying the activities of the Arab Nationalists, like the Teachers’ Club (*nadi al-mu’alimeen*), the Graduates Society (*jam’iyat al-kharijeen*), the Independence Club (*nadi al-istiqlal*), and from these clubs and political currents emerged magazines and newspapers like al-Ra’id (Pioneer), al-Iman (Faith), al-Irshad (Guidance), al-Tali’a (Vanguard)... and others. However, until that time, the government was not ready to take real steps towards rapprochement, or to fulfil demands it found had a high ceiling, beyond what was permissible. And although the authorities did not respond to the reform demands at the beginning, the activities

(1) For more, see Ghanim Al- Najjar, “*nashaat wa tatawur al- dimuqratiya bil-kuwait*” (Emergence and Development of Democracy in Kuwait), Gulf Development Forum, 31st annual meeting of the Legislative Councils of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Bahrain, 2010; see also Mohamed Al- Rumaihi, “*al-petrol wal-taghyir al- ijtimai’i fil-khalij al- ‘arabi*” (Petroleum and the Social Change in the Arabian Gulf), Kuwait, 1975, p. 119.

of the nationalist movements took a sharper turn yet, and started raising the tone for their demands, at the top of which were: destroying British influence, abolishing corruption, and sharing in governance. In the summer of 1953 CE, secret publications appeared in Kuwait demanding Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim for independence, for the declaration of the Constitution and for Parliamentary rule. In 1954 CE, this was followed by a group, who called themselves the Free Democrats, coming up with a statement denouncing the government and addressing it with severe criticism. The Teachers' club also distributed publications calling for more political reform; it put forward the authorities' negligence in this respect⁽¹⁾. In the same year, the authorities announced some decisions, among which going back to the principle of electing governmental councils and chambers (*waqfs*, *ma'arif*, *baladiya*). However, opposing voices from within the ruling family attracted more escalation and confrontation. al Khateeb says: "We presented a petition to Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim, asking for the formation of one elected council; there was an invitation to attend a meeting at the market (*souq*) on the 3rd of May 1954 CE to elect the Civil Executive Committee, but the authority refused to grant the authorisation to hold the meeting"⁽²⁾. With this continuing polarisation and confrontation, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim formed the Supreme Executive Committee to help with the burden of governance, but contrary to expectations, most of its members came from the ruling family⁽³⁾.

(1) Ghanim Al- Najjar, Ghanim Al- Najjar, "*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 48-49.

(2) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), supervised by Ghanim Al- Najjar, Arab Cultural Centre, Morocco, 1st ed., 2007, p. 181.

(3) It is equivalent to the Cabinet in our time. See Falah Al- Muderis, "*malamih awaliya hawl nashaat al- tajamu'at wal-tanthimat al- siyasiya fil-kuwait*" (Preliminary Aspects of the Political Groupings and Organisations in Kuwait), 2nd ed., Dar Qortas, 1999, p. 17.

In a development of the struggle, a group of merchants presented a petition to Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim⁽¹⁾ including objections and complaints from the inexistence of restrictions on the non-Arab migrations (particularly the Iranian) to Kuwait, from the ineffectiveness of the elections of the chambers' councils⁽²⁾, and from the financial expenditures with no control or supervision. This made Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim choose two people from the councils that had previously been elected to form another council with the task of offering him advice; this council was to remain in charge for two years. However, the merchants saw they should double the number. But on the 19th of July 1954 CE, a decree was issued ordering the formation of an executive committee consisting of six people⁽³⁾, three of which were members of the ruling family⁽⁴⁾. This was interpreted as ignoring the political movements even further, and particularly their leaders who saw that it was necessary to limit the roles of the members of the ruling family in the state's different administrations and institutions, and to give the people a bigger opportunity to share in the governing administration and in decision-making.

What worried the authorities in Kuwait from the nationalist movement even more, was that the Kuwaiti people sometimes raised Nasser's pictures; al-Khateeb indicates that once, "Sheikh

(1) Ghanim Al- Najjar, "*madkhal lil-tatawur al- siyasi fil-kuwait*" (Introduction to the Political Development in Kuwait), see prev., p. 53.

(2) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 181.

(3) *Id.*

(4) News travelled that the Saudis interfered and convinced Abdullah Al- Salim that approval meant compromising governance. Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 182.

Abdullah al-Salim expressed his anger telling one of his companions: 'Don't these people know that Abdullah al-Salim is the ruler of Kuwait?'. Simultaneously with the mobility of these movements, there were inclinations from some of their branches to go into armed conflict with the regimes and governments - this actually happened later in places like Kadhfar in Oman⁽¹⁾. a meeting took place in Beirut, where the Arab Nationalist Movement (branch of the Gulf) decided to adopt the strategy of armed conflict⁽²⁾.

Conflict with the Authority

On the 15th of August 1956 CE, the Arab Nationalists organised a public event in support of Egypt facing the British threats during the Suez War. This event was a direct reason to add to the crisis between the two parties, as the authorities stopped the event by force, which led to the injury of several people. These clashes were followed by other confrontations; in one of these, the security men asked the rebels to stop what they were doing, but the latter refused, so the security forces dealt with them brutally⁽³⁾. And as each party insisted on their position, the year 1959 CE was to bring more clashes between the Arab Nationalists and the Kuwaiti authorities. In the popular gathering organised at the Shuwaikh Secondary School to celebrate the first anniversary of the establishment of the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), Jassim al-Qatami, one of the personages of the

(1) In 1964.

(2) Hashim Behbehani, "*al-tareekh al- mukhtasar li harakat al- taharrur fi Oman*" (Historical Summary of the Liberation Movement in Oman), al- Alam Min Hawlina, a collection of researches on the Arabian Gulf, translated from foreign periodicals, Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, Basra University, 1990, p. 37.

(3) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 133.

movement at that time, made a speech. In the speech, he demanded Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim to let the Kuwaiti people participate in political life, and that the government adopts democratic life; he said that the time had come for a popular democratic rule where the Kuwaitis should have their constitution and their ministers⁽¹⁾. His tone was harsh and aggressive.

As a reaction to these demands, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim issued a decree where he indicated: "There is still a bad estimation of interests between the Arab Nationalists and the ruling power; some youth do not evaluate the repercussions of some issues, and are not as farsighted as the best interest of the country requires"⁽²⁾.

In an attempt to retake control of the situation, the authorities issued an announcement ordering the closing down of clubs and associations, and "not performing any activities there". The newspapers were also stopped, and the police issued a statement warning that it would be tracing whoever jeopardised with the regime, whether in the open or in hiding. It took more severe measures which touched upon the opposition symbols; some of them were imposed home detention, others had their passports retrieved, and many had their jobs terminated at their working places and were dismissed from their posts.

To go back to the facts which led to these conflicts between the authorities and the reform movements, the revealed truth is that Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim, like all the other rulers of the Gulf at that time, saw that the nationalist expansion threatened the authority of the ruling families in the Gulf region, one way or the other, especially after the decline and disappearance of the British military influence in many places. Also, the attempts of this movement to expand to some of the regions' other countries,

(1) *Id.*, p. 189.

(2) *Id.*

pushed by the hopes and ambitions of an Arab Nationalism nourished by a personality like Gamal Abdel-Nasser, and the persisting Saudi-Egyptian animosity after the North Yemen Civil War, in addition to the presence of Egyptian forces in Yemen, and the fall of some monarchical regimes and families, all these were factors that pushed to further conflicts, and gave excuses and justifications to each party that they respectively found acceptable.

Independence of Kuwait (1961 CE) and annulment of the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE

The concept of colonisation is usually linked to the expansion movement of the strong countries at the expense of the weak ones, whereby the former force the latter to be subdued, with the purpose of ripping them from their natural riches, and exploiting their human resources in order to serve their interests. Colonialism has several aspects like settlement, military occupation, protectorates, mandates, and other means to subject national decision and marginalise the role of the authorities and the people.

Therefore, one can say that the situation between Kuwait and Britain was a unique situation. Actually, Kuwait was the one to ask for British protection in 1899 CE, but there has been no evidence of material colonialism as it is known on the Kuwaiti territory. There were no regular armed forces or fixed military centres like for example, in the case of Egypt or Iraq with the British, or the case of Algeria with France. There was also no foreign settlement in Kuwait, no interference to choose the ruler or remove him, and no imposition of a government made of specific people, except for leaving external decisions in the hands of the British. Therefore, it is not overstating to say that Kuwait represented a unique model, not a colony the way it is understood, but a protection agreement between two parties, with arrangements and compromises agreed upon; the first party was Britain, the second party was Kuwait, an emirate small in size, surrounded

from all sides by greedy regional powers. In the parameters of profit and loss, Kuwait was undoubtedly the beneficiary from this situation and the signed agreement.

Before going into the direct effects resulting from Kuwait's independence, whether internally or externally, it is worth exposing the reasons behind speeding up Kuwait's independence, which can be summarised as follows:

First: The internal situation, especially the continuous political mobility which Kuwait witnessed, influenced by its Arab surrounding, particularly the nationalist movements.

Second: The personality of Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim who was inclined to independence; in most of the important stages in the record of the development of political mobility in Kuwait, he was known to have distinctive political activity, and supporting stands (the *Shura* Council of 1921 CE, and the Councils of 1938 CE and 1939 CE).

Third: Petroleum, which had started attracting more competitive powers⁽¹⁾.

Fourth: The appearance of new powers, most importantly the United States of America and the Soviet Union - with the Cold War, the beginnings of which had started to appear - and their capacity to bear the expenses and prevalence of military armies which Britain could not afford to do⁽²⁾.

(1) Maybe also Britain's view that with the increase in the liberation movements in different parts of the world, and the disappearance of colonialism – largely -, it was not proper to oppose the Arab liberation movements, especially because of its political failure in the Suez War and the coup in Iraq in 1958, led by Abd Al- Karim Qasim. The Iraqi monarchy was removed, the King was executed, the parliament dissolved, and Nuri Al- Said's government affiliated to it fell. Fred Halliday, "*al-sira3 al- siyasi fi shibh al- jazeera al- 'arabiya*" (Political Conflict in the Arabian Peninsula), Dar Al- Saqi, 2008, p. 99.

(2) All this led to the Gulf losing its value as a geopolitical cover for India, which it had lost. It could not afford to remain in the region under these conditions.

Fifth: Britain's feeling that it had become a nation suffering the consequences of a great war, the Second World War, 1939 CE-1945 CE, from which it came out drained of all power, heavily indebted, and having lost its most important colony, India.

Sixth: The leading personality of Gamal Abdel-Nasser and the pressures the British⁽¹⁾ were subjected to in most of the countries they were colonising, especially in the shadow of the independence and nationalist movements.

Seventh: The decisions of the United Nations after World War II, issued on the 14th of December 1960, offering independence and the right to self-determination to all colonised nations⁽²⁾.

Since ascending to the throne, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim has followed the politics of independence in many foreign issues. He even issued some decisions to organise the institutional conditions of the Emirate, and to reinforce its position abroad. So Kuwait joined some international institutions and organisations such as the UNESCO, the World Health Organisation, the International Civil Aviation, and the Universal Postal Union (between 1958 CE and 1960 CE). The year 1960 CE bore a new stage in the nature and conditions of Kuwait's foreign relations, especially with its Arab brethren. The Supreme Council discussed the question of Kuwait joining the Arab League, and delegations were sent to some Arab nations to test the waters regarding the matter, particularly because there were news about Kuwaiti-British negotiations concerning Kuwait's situation and its foreign affairs. There was

(1) Mussa Ghadban Al- Hatim, "*al-mustasharun al- britaniyun fil-kuwait 1934-1961*" (The British Counsellors in Kuwait 1934-1961), Journal of the Centre for the Studies of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula, Kuwait, No. 112, year 30, 2004, p. 266.

(2) 151425/40. The United Nations resolution 1514 (XV) stipulated that the General Assembly assured its faith in the importance of executing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and the right of the peoples to self-determination and national sovereignty.

also the move towards asking for independence from Britain - knowing that it had previously been indicated, on the 4th of February 1959 CE, in the House of Commons, that the Sheikhdom of Kuwait was an independent state that Her Majesty's Government was committed to protect. Also, and in an important step made by Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim, there were negotiations with the British Political Agent in Kuwait, John Richmond, which tackled giving Kuwait more independence in the foreign issues pertaining to its sovereignty, like receiving ambassadors and appointing consuls. Sheikh Abdullah also expressed Kuwait's wish to take over its own affairs, and be given more freedom in managing its international relations.

In fact, these demands made by Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim were seriously met by Britain. The British Political Agent in Kuwait sent a message to the British Foreign Office which included Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim's note with his wish to annul the Anglo-Kuwaiti Agreement signed by them both in 1899 CE, and exchange it with a friendship treaty which would preserve the relations between the two parties. On the 19th of June 1961⁽¹⁾, it was announced in a sudden manner that "the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of 1899 CE had been cancelled, and that the Emirate of Kuwait had gained its independence from Britain".

Actually, it was remarkable that the exchange of papers by which Kuwait would be gaining its independence was done quietly, and the event was not announced beforehand. Prior to the independence, there had been an agreement on the 19th of April 1961 CE in al-Seif Palace, which had been attended by Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim, the Political Resident in the Gulf, William Luce, and the Political Agent in Kuwait, John Richmond.

(1) Following correspondence between the British Political Resident, William Luce, and Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim Al- Sabah. Hassan Ali Al- Ibrahim, "*al-kuwait, dirasa siyasiya*" (Kuwait, a Political Study), Kuwait University, 1970, p. 12.

During this meeting, they agreed on a draft, which read that the British Government was committed to offer help to Kuwait based on its ruler's request. One of the first diplomats in Kuwait, Talaat Yacoub al-Ghoussein⁽¹⁾ describes this event by saying: "At nine o'clock in the morning of the 19th of June 1961 CE, a group of the Emiri (princely) Guards lined up to greet William Luce, the British Resident in the Gulf who had come to al-Seif's Palace accompanied by John Richmond, the British Agent in Kuwait. They headed with Bader al-Mulla towards Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim's office, where Abdul-Latif al-Nisf and Mohamed Darwish al-'Aradi were there to welcome them. Sheikh Abdullah was behind his desk at the back of the rooms. Luce was seated to his left, then Richmond, then Bader al-Mulla, and within minutes the exchange of documents' protocol took place; Luce signed his document addressed to Sheikh Abdullah, then Talaat al-Ghoussein stood up carrying Sheikh Abdullah's reply addressed to the British Resident, and Sheikh Abdullah signed it"⁽²⁾. Right after the declaration of independence, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim addressed a congratulating cable to the Kuwaiti people, felicitating them on acquiring independence⁽³⁾. It read: "My dear people, brothers and children... on this most beautiful day of our beloved nation... we

(1) A Kuwaiti diplomat of Palestinian origin. He was appointed Ambassador to the United States of America on the 10th of September 1963, then Ambassador to Japan in 1971 and to Morocco in 1978. For more, see Talaat Al- Ghoussein, "*khamis jinsiyat wal-watan wahid (muthakirat talaat yacoub al- ghoussein)*" (Five Nationalities and One Nation, Memoirs of Talaat Yacoub Al- Ghoussein), Kuwait, Kuwait Government Press, no pub., 1981.

(2) See Kazima Kuwaiti newspaper, Ghanim Al- Najjar, article "*fi lahathat al- i'lan*" (At the Moments of the Declaration), 4 July 2011.

(3) Mahmud Qal'aji, "*al-kuwait al- mustaqila al- dawla al- 'arabiya al- nashi'a*" (Independent Kuwait, the Rising Arab State), Maktab al- Khalij al- 'Arabi, Beirut, 1961, p. 128-132. See also Abdullah Hamdi, "*al-kuwai tuwajih al- mihna*" (Kuwait Faces the Crisis), Dar al- Nashr al- 'Arabi, Beirut, 1961, p. 14.

turn... a page from the past, with all what it bears; and it has been turned to open a new page embodied in this agreement you are presently reading, and by which Kuwait obtained its complete independence and its total sovereignty... I do not miss to mention the good spirit that governed the negotiations, and to record the tolerance, the good understanding and the genuine desire for agreement that marked the friend British party, which made reaching the required aim easy and simple. And finally, we wish, as we begin a new era, that Kuwait starts its launch by strengthening the bonds of friendship and brotherhood with its sister Arab states, to work in cooperation and collaboration for the best interest of the Arabs, and fulfil the wishes of the Arab nation. The new situation also requires us to work on becoming affiliated to the Arab League, the Organisation of the United Nations, and other associations that work for the good of the world, its security and its safety whenever it is possible. God grants success”⁽¹⁾. The Kuwaiti independence from the British was met with a strong supporting Arab echo, and statements and telegraphs kept arriving to the Kuwaiti leadership congratulating them on this independence. Moreover, the Arab League expressed its wish to deal with Kuwait as an independent state.

The Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis (1961 CE)

On the 20th of June 1961 CE, one day after independence, Abd al-Karim Qasim, the ruler of Iraq, sent a congratulation telegraph to Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim (which contained a vocabulary out of the diplomatic traditions and customs). It read: “I learned that the English recognised on the 19th of June 1961 CE the annulment of the forged, illegitimate agreement, which they had falsely concluded in 1899 CE... which had obliged the British to prepare false witnesses; we assure you that we, your brothers

(1) Al- Akhbar Archives, The Amiri Diwan of Kuwait, “50th Anniversary of the Independence of Kuwait”.

in the glorious Iraqi Republic, will remain undeceived by the colonial ploy”⁽¹⁾.

On the 25th of the same month, Abd al-Karim Qasim held a press conference where he openly declared that Kuwait belonged to Iraq⁽²⁾, that it was part of its lands⁽³⁾, and that there were no boundaries between Iraq and Kuwait⁽⁴⁾. He further addressed the press saying: “You have the liberty to announce that the boundaries of the Iraqi Republic extend till the south of Kuwait”⁽⁵⁾, indicating that Iraq did not recognise the alleged Kuwaiti independence, and that the Iraqi Republic had decided to claim the Kuwaiti land and not to leave one inch of it. He said: “Iraq will issue a presidential decree appointing the actual Sheikh of Kuwait *Qaymaqam* of Kuwait under Baghdad’s flag”. Abd al-Karim Qasim also threatened Kuwait’s ruler that “if he resisted or misbehaved, he would

(1) Khadduri, “*al-‘iraq al- jumhuri*” (Republican Iraq), al- Dar al- Mutaahida pub., 1974, p. 228; Humphrey Trevelyan, p. 184. See also telegraph’s text, Abdullah Zalata, “*azmat al- kuwait ‘am 1961, safahat min tareekh al ‘ilaqat al- kuwaitiya*” (Kuwait’s Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), Cairo, 1st ed., 1993, p. 69.

(2) Iraqi Foreign Ministry, Research and Information Centre, “*al-kuwait imara min dun istibdad*” (Kuwait, an Emirate with No Tyranny), Baghdad, 1985, p. 6.

(3) Special report on Kuwait, Baghdad, 1983, p. 11; Ismail Al- ‘Arif, “*asrar thawrat 14 tamuz wa taasis al- jumhuriya fil- ‘iraq*”, (The Secrets of the 14th of July Revolution and the Establishment of the Republic in Iraq), Al- Majid pub., London, 1986; see also Mohamed Nayef Al- Anzi, “*tarikh al- ‘ilaqat al- siyasiya bayn al- kuwait wal-iraq fil-fatra 1961-1973*” (History of the Political Relations between Kuwait and Iraq in the Period 1961-1973), 1st ed., Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2001.

(4) Al- Thawra newspaper, Iraq, No. 636, 27/6/1961. Humphrey Tevelyan, prev.

(5) Abdullah Zalata, “*azmat al- kuwait ‘am 1961, safahat min tareekh al ‘ilaqat al- kuwaitiya*” (Kuwait’s Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), see prev., p. 76.

endure severe punishment, and be counted as one of the rebels, warning him from accepting new colonialism”⁽¹⁾.

As a result of these threats, Kuwait issued a statement on the 26th of June 1961 CE replying to what had come in the press conference, condemning Qasim’s announcements; the Kuwaiti statement strongly condemned what the Iraqi leadership stated, assuring it was “and independent and sovereign Arab state”. And on the 26th of June, the same day the Kuwaiti statement was issued, the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the diplomatic representatives in Baghdad and handed them a memorandum where it assured that Kuwait was an indivisible part of Iraq⁽²⁾.

The position of the Arab press in general appeared to be sympathetic to the Kuwaiti side. Many of the Arabic newspapers described the Iraqi claims as intimidating, and a kind of conquest and expansion. They denied that the Iraqi claim for Kuwait was a natural or legitimate right. As a consequence of this situation, Britain declared that its government had the obligation to support and help the Kuwaiti government whenever it asked for it, in accordance with the friendship treaty”⁽³⁾. In fact, on the 30th

(1) Al- Khalil Fadeel Al- Kubeissi, “*siyasat al- ‘iraq al- kharijiya fil-mantiqa al- ‘arabiya 1950-1968*” (Iraq’s Foreign Relations in the Arab Region, 1950-1968), published Ph. D. Thesis, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, 1976, p. 776. See also Abdullah Al- Ashaal, “*qadiyat al- hudud fil khalij al- ‘arabi*” (The Question of Boundaries in the Arabian Gulf), Al- Ahram Centre for Political & Strategic Studies, Cairo, 1978, p. 26.

(2) Abdullah Zalata, “*azmat al- kuwait ‘am 1961, safahat min tareekh al ‘ilaqat al- kuwaitiya*” (Kuwait’s Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), see prev., p. 203.

(3) See Ahmed Al- Rasheedi, “*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, dirasa fi nashaat dawlat al- kuwait wa tatawur markazha al qanuni wa ‘ilaqatha bil-dawla*” (Kuwait from Emirate to State, Study of the Rise of the State of Kuwait and the Development of its Legal Status and its Relation to the State), prev., p. 484.

of June, Kuwait presented an official demand to Britain asking for protection, and ensuring the safety of its lands⁽¹⁾. With this demand, the Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis shifted from being an Arab and regional struggle to a sharper level, that of the United Nations Security Council.

The crisis at the Security Council

The Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis imposed on the regional and international parties together to deal with it with extreme care, especially with the Cold War between the two poles reaching its peak⁽²⁾. This is probably the reason behind directly internationalising the issue from the very beginning when its sparks started. In fact, the Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis was looked into at the Security Council⁽³⁾ from the 2nd till the 7th of July 1961 CE⁽⁴⁾. In the first session, after the President's speech to the Assembly, the Vice-Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union spoke, saying: "Britain's initiative to request an emergency meeting of the Council based on the demand of Kuwait's ruler puts doubts on the reality of the situation"; he also announced that the Soviets did not oppose looking into the crisis in general. To this, Britain's representative quickly replied that the British withdrawal would be under the condition that the Iraqi threats come to an end⁽⁵⁾, and that the British Government would withdraw its forces from Kuwait the

(1) *Id.*

(2) Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, "*al-itiḥād al-soviētī wal-azma al-kuwaitiyya al-'iraqīya 1961*" (The Soviet Union and the Kuwaiti-Iraqi Crisis, 1961), *al-Mu'arikh al-Masry* mag., January, 2014.

(3) Strangely, before the crisis, and even before the declaration of independence, Kuwait was able to join some of the international mechanisms of the United Nations!

(4) Yelena Melkumyan, "*dirasat fī tarīkh al-kuwait al-hadeeth wal mu'asar*" (Studies in Kuwait's Modern and Contemporary History), see prev., p. 105.

(5) Abdullah Zalata, "*azmat al-kuwait 'am 1961, safahat min tareekh al-'ilaqat al-kuwaitiyya*" (Kuwait's Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), see prev., p. 181-182.

moment Kuwait's ruler would be reassured that the threats against his country had ended, and that Britain wished to remain, in all sincerity, on friendly terms with Iraq. The Iraqi representative at the Council said that it was not in the Council's jurisdiction to look into the case, because Kuwait was not a member of the United Nations, and that only sovereign countries could present complaints. In return the British representative replied that Kuwait was a fully independent country, and that the British were there to fulfil the demand of Kuwait's ruler⁽¹⁾. On the fifth of July, the Security Council continued to discuss the issue. Iraq⁽²⁾ and the Soviet Union⁽³⁾ objected to the presence of the Kuwaiti representative who had been allowed to attend the sessions⁽⁴⁾. The Soviet deputy indicated that what Britain was doing was an example of the plans of the colonial countries that aimed at controlling the other peoples; he demanded that Britain withdraws its forces from Kuwait's territory immediately, and remarked that there were no Iraqi forces in Kuwait. Two draft resolutions were proposed to end the crisis during the same session. These two (contradictory) draft resolutions were proposed by Britain and the United Arab Republic. The British draft resolution called for the necessity that all states respect Kuwait's independence and the unity of its territory, whence it should join

(1) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 521.

(2) Yelena Melkumyan, "*dirasat fi tarikh al- kuwait al- hadeeth wal mu'asar*" (Studies in Kuwait's Modern and Contemporary History), see prev., p. 111.

(3) Abdullah Zalata, "*azmat al- kuwait 'am 1961, safahat min tareekh al 'ilaqat al- kuwaitiya*" (Kuwait's Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), see prev., p. 197.

(4) Falih Al- Doseri, "*al-azamat al- kuwaitiya al- 'iraqiya 1922-1961*" (Kuwaiti-Iraqi Crises 1922-1961), p. 168.

the Organisation of the United Nations⁽¹⁾. As to the second draft resolution that was proposed by the United Arab Republic, it suggested that the solution must be through peaceful means, and that it was necessary that the British withdraw their forces from Kuwait, then look into Kuwait's request to discuss Iraq's threat to it⁽²⁾. And on the seventh of July 1961 CE, the Security Council held a session to vote on the two draft resolutions presented, whereby the draft resolution proposed by the United Arab Republic failed after getting three votes only, while the British draft resolution won the "majority"⁽³⁾. However, the Russian veto was present to end Kuwait's hopes to join the United Nations⁽⁴⁾. Kuwait expressed its deep sorrow at the failure of the Security Council to solve the problem⁽⁵⁾.

The position of the Arab League from the Iraqi threats to Kuwait 1961 CE

On the Arab level, under the impact of the crisis between Kuwait and Iraq, Kuwait presented a request to join the Arab League on the 22nd of June 1961 CE. On the 27th of the same

(1) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 521.

(2) Id.

(3) Yelena Melkumyan, "*dirasat fi tarikh al- kuwait al- hadeeth wal mu'asar*" (Studies in Kuwait's Modern and Contemporary History), see prev., p. 124, see also Al- Akhbar Egyptian newspaper, No. 5876, 2/12/1961.

(4) Al- Akhbar Egyptian newspaper, No. 5753, 8/7/1961.

(5) In spite of the rigid Soviet stance regarding Kuwait in its crisis with Iraq in the Security Council, and given the intensifying Cold War between the United States and the Soviets, the British forces withdrew. In addition, Qasim was assassinated, and his allied regime fell in Baghdad, changing the Soviet position radically. In 1963, it officially recognised Kuwait, and even stood by it and recognised it internationally, and helped it to join some international organisations.

month, this was followed by a request for an emergency meeting to be held in order to discuss the Iraqi threats to Kuwait. In fact, resolution 1777 approved Kuwait's request to join the Arab League, on the 20th of July 1961 CE⁽¹⁾. Thus, Kuwait became the eleventh of its members, after nine of the actual members approved of its membership while Iraq abstained⁽²⁾. There was hasty communication between the member states to provide Kuwait with quick protection and form Arab forces⁽³⁾. a military delegation arrived to Kuwait⁽⁴⁾ after the Secretary-General of the League had agreed with Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim to allow the League's forces to be present on Kuwaiti ground to defend it. In return, Sheikh Abdullah officially asked Britain to withdraw its forces as soon as the Arab forces arrived as a replacement⁽⁵⁾.

Iraq's threat to withdraw from the Arab League was the direct reply to the League's position which it found supportive of Kuwait at the expense of Iraq in that crisis. The Saudi forces formed the biggest power in size after the withdrawal of the Egyptian forces as a consequence of the separation which had happened between Egypt and Syria (the United Arab Republic) in 1961 CE. The number of the soldiers of the Saudi forces reached 1281, while Jordan participated with 785 soldiers, Sudan with 112 soldiers,

(1) Hassan Al- Elwi, "*aswar al- teen 'uqdat al- kuwait wa ideologiyat al- dam*" (Mud Walls, Kuwait's Complex, and the Ideology of Annexation), Dar al- Kunuz, Beirut, 1995, p. 87.

(2) Hassan Ali Al- Ibrahim, "*al-kuwait, dirasa siyasiya*" (Kuwait, a Political Study), 3rd ed., Dar al- Oloum, Kuwait, 1980, p. 144.

(3) Al- Akhbar Egyptian newspaper, No. 5773, 3/8/1961.

(4) Martha Dukas, "*azmat al- kuwait, al- ilaqat al- kuwaitiya al- iraqiya 1961-1963*" (Kuwait's Crisis, Kuwaiti-Iraqi Relations, 1961-1963), Beirut, Dar al- Nahar, 1973, p. 58.

(5) Sayed Nofal, "*al-'amal al- 'arabi al- mushtarak*" (Common Arab Work), see prev., p. 110.

in addition to the forces of the United Arab Republic, which amounted to 159 soldiers⁽¹⁾.

In 1963 CE when the crisis ended and after the disappearance of Qasim's rule, there was an agreement to decrease the number of the Arab League's forces to be replaced by symbolic forces under the shadow of the League of Arab States.

Authority changes its stance from the reform movements

The follower of the mobility of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis will notice a change in the relations between Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim and the opposition movements in Kuwait generally. Sheikh Abdullah's feeling that the citizens surrounded him, and especially the Arab Nationalists, made him revise his position radically. The period that preceded 1961 CE, when the authority dealt harshly with demands for reform, had been subjected to factors that had led to this harsh treatment, but with the changed situation, it became different. Kuwait had become independent, Iraq was threatening, and the people were around their leadership. Masses assembled everywhere during the crisis, chanting: "Abu Salim, give us weapons"; and when Sheikh Abdullah asked about these crowds, he was told: 'They came to support you, and they are cheering to your life, and asking you to arm them in order to defend Kuwait'⁽²⁾.

The people surrounded the political leadership embodied in the person of Sheikh Abdullah; they were from all the categories of the Kuwaiti society and stood in one row behind him during this crisis. This fact played an important role, later, in providing the elements of reinforcement to the Kuwaiti opposition and its

(1) Al- Ahram Egyptian newspaper, 27th of July 1961.

(2) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 266.

members. Within this context, al-Khateeb says: “When the real picture about the Kuwaiti’s feelings towards him was made clear, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim rushed to national reconciliation”⁽¹⁾, and communication with the symbols of the movement. Abdullah al-Salim appointed Jassim al-Qatami⁽²⁾ at the head of the Kuwaiti Foreign Affairs, and a number of ambassadors were appointed from this current. “Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim also called upon some of those belonging to the other nationalist movements to participate in the consultative Supreme Council to help in governing administration”⁽³⁾.

There was also the reaction of Nasser himself, and his position which changed much of Sheikh Abdullah’s understanding of the Arab Nationalists and their demands, as it was obvious since the beginning of the crisis between Kuwait and Iraq in 1961 CE that Nasser was not very much inclined to Iraq’s position, and specifically Qasim’s position⁽⁴⁾. On the 20th of June 1961 CE, Egypt expressed Nasser’s position from the crisis, and it assured that Kuwait was part of the Arab World, and that it had always been independent⁽⁵⁾.

(1) *Id.*, p. 200.

(2) Jasim Al- Qatami, Deputy Minister of Kuwaiti Foreign Affairs; Yacoub Youssef Al- Humaidi and Abdullah Hassan Al- Rumi were also appointed. For more, see Ahmed Al- Khateeb, “*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- ‘amal al- watani wal-qawmi*” (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), prev., p. 200.

(3) (Like Abdul-Aziz Sakr and Youssef Al- Ghanim). *Id.*, p. 201.

(4) 200 of the Kuwaiti students studying in Egypt gathered. They issued a statement condemning the British interference in Qasim’s crisis, calling upon Abdel-Nasser and the Arab leaders to interfere to protect Kuwait. Martha Dukas, “*azmat al- kuwait, al- ilaqat al- kuwaitiya al- iraqiya 1961-1963*” (Kuwait’s Crisis, Kuwaiti-Iraqi Relations, 1961-1963), see previous, p. 33-34.

(5) Abdullah Zalata, “*azmat al- kuwait ‘am 1961, safahat min tareekh al ‘ilaqat al- kuwaitiya*” (Kuwait’s Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), see prev., p. 130-146.

Nasser's position from the crisis of 1961 CE was a reason for Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim to review his previous position which was based on the total contrast between the ruling families and the emerging republics; so there was Nasser himself, supporting Kuwait and its independence against Iraq's radicalism and its threat to use force⁽¹⁾. With the change of Sheikh Abdullah's position towards the nationalist movement after the crisis of 1961 CE, and the acceptance of Kuwait as a member of the League of Arab Nations, in harmony with the aims of Arab Nationalism, Kuwait became more involved in the circle of common Arab work, particularly in financial aid and the Arab issues in the international forums. Kuwait also opened its doors to all the Arab nationalities to work there⁽²⁾, and it gave strong support to the Palestinian issue. In this respect, Sheikh Abdullah said: "The only solution for Palestine is by force and revenge"⁽³⁾. In addition, Kuwait recognised Yemen's government (the Arab Republic of Yemen) in 1963 CE, and offered a loan to the Algerian revolution in 1963 CE⁽⁴⁾, whereby Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim declared: "Algeria's revolution is our revolution,

(1) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 264.

(2) Abdul-Rida Assiri, "*al-kuwait fil-siyasa al- dawliya al- mu'asara*" (Kuwait in Contemporary International Politics), 1993, p.105. See also Abdul-Latif Al- Hamad, "*thakirat al- 'ataa wal 'inmaa*" (Memories of Giving and Developing), Al- 'Arabi mag., August 2001, p. 95-98; see also Al- Bughdadi, "*al-shaikh Abdullah al- salim insan wa rajul dawla*" (Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim, Human Being and Statesman), 1st ed., Dar Qortas, Kuwait, 1994, p. 11.

(3) Al- Bughdadi, "*al-shaikh Abdullah al- salim insan wa rajul dawla*" (Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim, Human Being and Statesman), see prev., p. 57.

(4) Najat Abdul-Kadir Al- Jassim, "*al-qadaya al- 'arabiya fi majlis al- umma al- kuwaiti, 1963-1976*" (Arab Issues in the Kuwaiti National Council, 1963-1976), Dar Qortas, 2006, p. 48.

and its case is our case”⁽¹⁾. Kuwait also offered a financial loan under the request of Iraq’s government, in addition to another loan to Tunis in 1964 CE.

Thus, from reviewing the situation, the nature of the circumstances and the dynamics, and their change, the metamorphosis which happened to Kuwait’s role in the different Arab issues seems obvious, as well as how Kuwait became an active member in its Arab and Gulf area, directly interested in its issues and participating therein.

The Constitution, 1962 CE

Constitutions are of major importance to the lives of nations and peoples, because of the issues they regulate; they determine the state’s institutions, the jurisdiction of each of the powers, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, and duties and rights. Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim and the Kuwaitis became aware of the reality that the existence of a constitution⁽²⁾ for the independent State of Kuwait was the certain guarantee for it as a strong nation, capable to stand before challenges and crises, amidst an environment full of political changes, and amidst the regional and international aspirations⁽³⁾, especially that the organisations of political life in Kuwait were simple. Also, the authority had no choice at that stage other than to follow a different policy embodied in a collection of formalities and

(1) Al- Bughdadi, “*al-shaikh Abdullah al-salim insan wa rajul dawla*” (Sheikh Abdullah Al- Salim, Human Being and Statesman), see prev., p. 56.

(2) The Kuwaiti Constitution is composed of one hundred and eighty three articles and five chapters. For more, see The Amiri Diwan in the State of Kuwait, “*al-kuwait wal-dimuqratiya wa huquq al-insan wal-tanmiya al-iqtisadiya wal-ijtima’iya*” (Kuwait and Democracy, human rights, and Economic and Social Development), 1st ed., Publications of the Amiri Diwan, Kuwait, 1995, p. 99-140.

(3) Salah Al- Akkad, “*al-tayarat al-siyasiya fil-khalij al- ‘arabi fi bidayat al- ‘usur al-haditha hatta azmat (1990-1991)*” (The Political Currents in the Arabian Gulf Since the Beginning of Modern Times Till the Crisis of 1990-1991), see prev. p. 247-253.

reforms which aimed at more calmness and reform. After independence, on the 26th of August 1961 CE a princely decree was issued, to create a regulatory committee that would handle the making of a draft of a law according to which the members of the Constituent Assembly would be elected⁽¹⁾. This would be the assembly entrusted with the preparation of the draft of the Constitution and setting its principles⁽²⁾. The first clause of the decree stated that this Constituent Assembly (composed of twenty members elected by direct and secret general vote) was to draft a constitution enhancing a ruling system based on the democratic values inspired by Kuwait's reality and its people⁽³⁾. On the 20th of January 1962 CE, the Constituent Assembly held its first meeting after Abdul-Latif Thanian al-Ghanim was elected President of the Assembly, and Dr Ahmed al-Khateeb was elected Vice-President. The total number of sessions held by this Assembly was 32. And on the third of March of the same year, the members of the Constituent Assembly elected the members of the Constitutional Committee which had the task of preparing the Constitution's draft in its final form⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Ahmed Al- Diyin, "wiladat dostoor al- kuwait" (Birth of Kuwait's Constitution), 2nd ed., Dar Qortas, Kuwait, 1999, p. 8.

(2) It was the Constitutional Committee's mission to achieve the work that the Council was created for. It included a number of Kuwait's prominent people, whom everybody saw as loyal, learned and experienced; at the head, Sheikh Saad. See Abdullah Al- Ghoneim & team of researchers in the Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, "sumuw al- shaykh sa'd al- 'abdallah al- salim al- sabah, mas'uliya wa 'ataa" (His Highness Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah Al- Salim Al- Sabah, Responsibility and Devotion), Kuwait, 2004, p. 9-16.

(3) Ahmed Al- Diyin, "wiladat dostoor al- kuwait" (Birth of Kuwait's Constitution), 2nd ed., Dar Qortas, Kuwait, 1999, p. 8.

(4) Mohamed Abdul-Kadir Al- Jassim, "muthalath al- dimuqratiya" (Democracy's Triangle), 1st ed. Kuwait, 1992, p. 45. The committee was composed of Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah Al- Salim Al- Sabah who was Minister of Interior; Abdul-Latif Mohamed Al- Thanyan Al- Ghanim; Sheikh Hamud Al- Zayd Al- Khalid, Minister of Justice; Yacoub Youssef Al- Humaidi; and Saud Abdul-Aziz Abdul-Raziq.

Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah⁽¹⁾, member of the Committee (to draft the final constitution), at that time expressed the Authority's opinion on the Constitution in the process of being created by saying: "The main goal of the Constitution is to preserve national unity between the people and the rulers. May this Constitution be the constitution of national unity between the people and the rulers"⁽²⁾. This reflects the extent of conviction the authority had reached, that there should be political cooperation and common rule. Sheikh Saad's words assured that this Constitution had first of all to care about national unity as a basis. In fact, after more than ten months, the committee finished its work after continued discussions, sessions and debates, until the Constitution was achieved and presented to Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim on the 8th of November 1962 CE in al-Seif Palace. It was approved on the 11th of November 1962 without requirements to make any changes therein⁽³⁾.

First National Assembly, 1963 CE

To complete the requirements of democracy, on the 23rd of January 1963 CE, the first elections to vote for the first National Assembly (*majlis al umma*) according to the new constitution took place. 50 deputies won the elections, and then Abdul-Aziz Hamad al-Sakr was chosen to be President of this assembly, the first in the history of Kuwait after the declaration of the Constitution.

(1) See Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, "*al-shaykh sa'd al- 'abdullah: mn siyaghat al- dustur ila mu'ayashat al- dustur*" (Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah: From Drafting the Constitution to Coexisting with the Constitution), published in al- Mu'arikh al- Masry mag. – history and civilisation studies and researches – History Department, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University, January, 2009.

(2) See Records of the Constituent Assembly, Constitutional Committee, records of the second session, 24/3/1962. See also Ahmed Al- Diyin, "*wiladat dostoor al- kuwait*" (Birth of Kuwait's Constitution), prev., p. 12.

(3) It was published in the State's official journal - Kuwait, November 1962.

The voting process included all the regions of Kuwait, and everyone who was entitled to vote was allowed to vote freely. This resulted in a diverse variety of deputies. Kuwait was divided into 10 electoral circles. The winners of the first five places would earn seats in the National Assembly of Kuwait. On the 29th of January 1963 CE, Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim inaugurated the first session, he took oath as provided by the Constitution”, and he made a speech saying:

“We inaugurate the first session of the National Assembly, with which the period of the constitutional era begins in the independent State of Kuwait, at this stage which is considered one of the cycles of our rising nation’s march towards our utmost goal. I am happy to congratulate you with the people’s trust in you when they chose you to bear the charge of representing them. I repeat my recommendation to you (as a father to his sons), to be keen on preserving the unity in this Arab state which holds onto its religion and its traditions. I am happy on this glorious day of the history of our nation to swear in the name of the Great God that I will respect the Constitution and the State’s laws, will defend the freedoms of the people, its interests and its fortunes, and will preserve the independence of the nation and the safety of its land. God grants success”.

With this oath, parliamentary life started in Kuwait, with all the conflicts, achievements, successes and failures it has witnessed until this very day.

Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim died on the 24th of November 1965 CE after he fell ill during a session at the National Assembly, and Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah succeeded him to the throne.

The reign of Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah 1965 CE – 1977 CE

Sheikh Sabah al-Salim is the first heir to the throne in the history of Kuwait, as he was appointed in this position by

a princely decree issued on the 30th of October 1962 CE. He is the second ruler after the independence of the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Sabah al-Salim was appointed the first Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first Ministry on the 17th of January 1962 CE, and the first government in the Constitutional era was formed under his presidency.

In a report issued by Dayton Mak, the Chargé d’Affaires of the Foreign Office in Washington, he wrote about him saying that Sheikh Sabah al-Salim was probably the least controversial in al-Sabah family, that he had good intentions, and was friendly towards the United States⁽¹⁾.

One of the earlier British reports had referred to him before he ascended to the throne saying⁽²⁾ that the administration issues functioned normally with the leadership of executive directors, and that Sheikh Sabah al-Salim was the example of the successful president of the Police Directorate⁽³⁾. Also, Mr Bell, the British Political Agent, described him as a dedicated and enthusiastic Police leader⁽⁴⁾.

The interior situation in Kuwait during the reign of Sheikh Sabah al-Salim

During the reign of Sheikh Sabah al-Salim, Kuwait witnessed some important progress on the local level, especially in the fields of health, education, economy and sports. Kuwait was also more

(1) Telegraph No. 49, from the American Chargé d’Affaires to the Foreign Office in Washington, dated 9 October 1961.

(2) Dated 12 September 1940, prepared by R. J. Dabney, Deputy Political Resident.

(3) Letter from the Acting Political Agent in Kuwait to the Political Resident in Bushehr, dated 12 September 1940, found in ior:r 15/5/194.

(4) Robert L. Jarman, “Sabah al- Salim al- Sabah, Amir of Kuwait, 1965-77: A Political Biography” [Arabic], translated by Abdullah Bishara, Diplomatic Centre for Strategic Studies, 2002, p. 40.

occupied with supporting and establishing further modernity and building a state of welfare, thanks to the increasing petroleum profits which had started to affect the different aspects of life. More schools, educational institutions, hospitals and administrations were established, and more services to the citizens and those living on its territories were offered.

During the reign of Sheikh Sabah al-Salim, in 1966 CE, the University of Kuwait was established. The university started with the faculties of Arts, Science and Education. The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters was established in 1973 CE. The law concerning compulsory military service was also promulgated, as well as the law to nationalise the country's petroleum. In 1976 CE, he laid the cornerstone of the gas project in the Port of al-Ahmadi. Also in 1976 CE, the law to create reserves for the following generations was issued, stating cutting off 10% of the Emirate's revenues and preserving them for the future.

Showing signs of a premature conflict between the authorities and the Parliament, the crisis between the government and the National Assembly occurred in August 1976, to show early enough that the government would not tolerate more supervision from the Parliament over its authority. The government accused some of the deputies of being responsible for the delay in studying some law drafts proposed by the government. Sheikh Sabah al-Salim also announced some princely decrees to suspend working with a number of clauses from the Constitution, and put parliamentary life on hold; this was considered a setback of the democratic march, and a coup against the Constitution. Consequently, seven popular organisations issued a statement demanding the authorities to return to legitimacy and the constitutional law, and to retake the democratic gains as soon as possible⁽¹⁾.

(1) These organisations were: the Kuwait Trade Union Federation, the Writers' Association, the Society of Lawyers, the Kuwaiti Journalists Association, Istiqlal Club, Kuwait Teachers Society, and the National Federation for Kuwait Students.

On the exterior level, Sheikh Sabah al-Salim sought early during his reign to reinforce Kuwait's international position; he participated in solving the Saudi-Yemeni-Egyptian conflict in 1966 CE, where Kuwait played an effective role between the conflicting powers to contain the crisis. Sheikh Sabah al-Salim also reached the Neutral Zone Agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; the National Assembly of Kuwait ratified it in the same year, 1966 CE. Moreover, Kuwait helped financing and establishing several projects in a number of Arab countries, in addition to confirming its commitment to support the Palestinian issue, and particularly the issue of the Palestinian refugees.

Sheikh Sabah al-Salim also participated in the Arab League Summit held in Cairo in 1970 CE, which took place in order to try to find a solution to stop the bloodshed between the Palestinian factions and organisations, and the Jordanian army.

Kuwait and the Arab-Israeli War, 1973 CE

The Kuwaiti army is one of the first Arab armies to have joined the October war in 1973 CE. In June 1967, there was a military celebration at the school of infantry training in al-Jahra to bid farewell to the Yarmouk Brigade, where Sheikh Sabah al-Salim addressed the Kuwaiti army. He said: "Our nation has decided to settle this matter, and take the Israeli challenges, and fight the battle whenever it starts until its end", adding: "How I would have loved to be with you, as one of you, sharing dangers and destiny with you, in good times and bad times". In fact, the Kuwaiti force joined the Egyptian Seventh Division in Rafah within the region of the Arish operations, and on the 4th of June 1967, the Kuwaiti forces moved to the front line of the combat. When the Israeli attack started on the 5th of June of the same year, the Kuwaiti forces succeeded to withdraw with the Egyptian army with minimum loss, and the Yarmouk Brigade returned to the front after one month, and fought the War of Attrition with

the other combatting Arab countries on the fronts of Sinai and the Canal.

After the outbreak of the October 1973 CE war, the Yarmouk Brigade also participated on the Suez Cana front, and the Kuwaiti Airforce supported the Egyptian forces and sent a squadron of airplanes to the battlefield; additionally, Egyptian pilots were trained in Kuwait. On the Syrian side, Sheikh Sabah al-Salim ordered for some forces to be sent to the Golan front to participate and help the Syrian forces, and alleviate the pressure from them there⁽¹⁾.

On the 30th of December 1977 CE, Sheikh Sabah al-Salim had a sudden heart attack that killed him, ending his reign in Kuwait, an era which could be described as one of development, construction, completion of the requirements of modernity, progress and openness.

(1) For more, see Robert L. Jarman, "Sabah al- Salim al- Sabah, Amir of Kuwait, 1965-77: A Political Biography", see prev.

CHAPTER TWELVE

War with History Kuwait/Iraq

- Iraq, a history of conflict and instability, a look at the roots of the relation between Kuwait, and the Ottoman Iraq and its states.
- Crisis of the Zuhoor Radio Station, 1938 CE, and crisis of the Hashemite Federation (Arab Federation of Iraq and Jordan), 1958 CE.
- Kuwaiti-Iraqi crises in the Republic era after 1958 CE.
- Iran-Iraq War, 1980 CE.
- Saddam destroys the Gulf.
- Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, 2nd of August, 1990 CE.
- Kuwait Authority's management of the Iraqi invasion crisis from abroad, Jeddah's conference, Kuwaiti resistance.
- The United Nations Security Council and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
- Emergency Arab Summit in Cairo.
- Liberation of Kuwait, 26th of February, 1991 CE.

“The idea of Iraq’s conquest of Kuwait is an idea infiltrated in the minds of the Iraqi politicians since King Ghazi, followed by Abd al-Karim Qasim, till al-Saddam Hussein who adopted the idea and implemented it, when he actually invaded Kuwait on the 2nd of August 1990 CE.”

(Hassan al-Elwy – Iraqi writer)

Foreword:

At the dawn of Thursday, the 2nd of August 1990 CE, while Kuwait was welcoming the lights of a new day, one hundred thousand men from the presidential guard and the special forces belonging to the Iraqi army were crossing the Kuwaiti borders, heading towards the capital, Kuwait City, to take control of its territory and its cities. The Kuwaitis were awakened by the sounds of the cannons, the buzz of the planes and the squeak of the tanks, as their country was being occupied.

Like the Kuwaitis, the Arab World, and even the entire world were surprised by this complete organised invasion of the State of Kuwait by Iraq. In the first attempt to wipe away Kuwait's identity, Iraq began the first of its lies by pretending that the Iraqi forces had been called upon to help the Free Officers in their revolution against the ruling family in Kuwait, announcing the establishment of a new government there. There was also a declaration of the rise of the free Republic of Kuwait on the first day of the aggression. This statement was broadcasted and aired on television to the Kuwaiti people. On the 8th of August, the pretended president⁽¹⁾ who had been proclaimed ruler of Kuwait, announced unity with Iraq under the leadership of Saddam Hussein. The latter appeared to the Arab and Islamic world, tickling their emotions with words like "liberating Jerusalem passes through Kuwait, redistribution of wealth, protecting the capacities of the nation"... Slogans that, not surprisingly, found echo in the minds of certain Arab peoples hoping for a change in their reality, and looking for that leader

(1) One of the former officers, 'Alaa Hussein. After the invasion, he headed what was called the Provisional Government of Kuwait, formed by Saddam Hussein. After the declaration of Kuwait's annexation to Iraq on the 8th of August, he announced unity with Iraq, and he was appointed Vice-President. After liberation, the Kuwaiti judiciary condemned him to death, but the judgement was not executed.

who, they (falsely) imagined would bring back the ancient glory and victories of the Arabs.

These people missed the truth as Saddam's media and trumpets misled them, because the liberation of Jerusalem and Palestine was never ever to pass through the Emirate of Kuwait that had offered support, embraced the Palestinian brothers on its land, and offered to them means for a good life. Moreover, Jerusalem and Palestine are on the other side, closer to Iraq than to Kuwait and not in its direction as Saddam pretended. Additionally, the liberation of Jerusalem certainly cannot be through taking Kuwait as an Arab hostage in order to free another Arab hostage.

With even more absurdity, Saddam Hussein claimed that he was determined to apply the principle of wealth distribution, and that he would take the fortunes and petroleum – that he usurped from Kuwait – and distribute it among the poor of the Arab World. Some actually believed him in Yemen, Sudan, Tunis, Algeria, Mauritania, Palestine, Jordan, and others. But these peoples missed that Iraq in its entire history during the governance of Saddam Hussein and his regime, was a nation that was only offered war, destruction and poverty. Saddam himself only offered to Iraq itself the drainage of its capacities and force, and he pushed its sons in the furnace of battles with no aim except personal narcissist dreams.

It was also not strange that a few days after invasion, Iraq issued the book "Iraqi Identity for Kuwait" (*al-hawiya al-'iraqiya lil-Kuwait*). a poor book in its meaning and its content, written by a number of Iraqi historians and academicians, headed by the president of the Arab Historiographer Federation at that time, Mustafa al-Najjar⁽¹⁾, Mahmoud Ali al-Dawud and Abdul Rahman

(1) Bringing the book "*aradi al-kuwait imtidad lel aradi al- 'iraqiya wa juz' minha*" (The Kuwaiti Territories are an extension of the Iraqi Territories and a Part of them). See Mustafa Abdul-Kader Al- Najjar, Mahmud Al- Dawud & Abdul-Karim Al- 'Ani, "*Al-hawiya al- iraqiya lil-Kuwait – dirasa tarikhiya wathaiqiya*" (The Iraqi Identity of Kuwait – a Historical Documental Study), Baghdad, 1990, p.9.

Abd al-Karim al-'Ani. The book was loaded with vanities, and false pretences and justifications. The most obvious of these was the "principle of historical right", to prove that Kuwait was part of Iraq, that what the Iraqi regime had done was to bring back the branch to its origin, and that Kuwait was historically a part of the Ottoman Empire, under the jurisdiction of Ottoman Basra. It deliberately ignored the fact that the historical right was over and finished⁽¹⁾ and that it only had been used by the Zionists to justify the occupation of Palestine. The principle's "origin is to present false justifications for regional expansion from the side of a powerful country at the expense of another small or weak one"⁽²⁾; had this been applied in the world, all the countries would have been at war against each other.

Undoubtedly, the aspirations and pretences that were told - and are still told - about Kuwait from the Iraqi side, and all along its history, are claims and calumny with historical roots and motives. We previously showed that Kuwait was never a part of a real authority exerted by the Ottoman party, and that until this very day, we did not find any document that assures or proves that Kuwait as authority or as people has ever been governed by direct rule, at any time in its history, by an Ottoman *wali* who managed its affairs abroad, or its people's affairs internally. It has also never been proved that any ruler other than from the al Sabah has ever ruled at any point in time since Kuwait was founded. This is the established fact that nobody can change; Kuwait emerged and was established as an independent self-

(1) One can say that the Treaty of Sèvres 1920, then Lausanne 1922, directly put an end to the use some powers made of the historical right claims. Due to these treaties, the Ottoman Empire, for example renounced to all its properties, lands and privileges in the countries it had annexed before its defeat in the First World War.

(2) Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*tareekh al- atma' al- 'iraqiya fil-kuwait*" (History of Iraqs Greed in Kuwait), see prev., p. 153.

standing entity. Kuwait is a Kuwaiti production; since its establishment, no one but al Sabah has ruled it, and the relation of Kuwait with the Ottoman party was only a nominal one which the Kuwaitis were contented with for some administrative formalities, and they accepted honorary titles. They participated in some of their wars, and even the Ottomans themselves preserved this relationship with the Kuwaitis and accepted it the way it was. Iraq forgot that it was it that was part of and under direct rule of the Ottomans⁽¹⁾.

Iraq, a history of conflict and instability

During its long history, Iraq has suffered from many struggles and unrests. Looking at its ancient and modern history shows that it has been – at still is – exposed to destructive crises and conflicts. Its capital Baghdad has been subjected to destruction and devastation several times. The most important of these was the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate in 1256 CE at the hands of the Mongols⁽²⁾ who devastated it and assassinated Caliph al Mustansir, the last of the Caliphs of Bani Abbas in Baghdad, the dynasty that lasted around 525 years in the Caliphate. The arrival of the Mongols and the assassination of the Caliph mark the end of the actual Arab rule in Iraq, as the Caliphate was transferred to Mameluke Egypt.

Since the year 1514 CE, after the famous Battle of Chaldiran⁽³⁾, and after the fall of Mameluke Egypt and its annexation to the Ottoman Empire, the star of the Ottomans began to dawn as the

(1) Iraq had no sovereignty, boundaries or particular aspects before 1921.

(2) Yunan Labeed Rizq, “*nashaat dawlat al- ‘iraq wa qadiyat al- hudud al- kuwaitiya al- ‘iraqiya, 1919-1958*” (The emergence of the State of Iraq and the Question of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi Borders), p. 388-389.

(3) Ali Al- Wardi, “*lamhat ijtimaiyya min tareekh al- ‘iraq al- hadith*” (Social Glimpses at the Modern History of Kuwait), part. 1, Library of Alexandria, undated, p. 47.

new heir to the Islamic Caliphate, and the symbol of the Caliphate settled there for almost five centuries. In the year 1534 CE, the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (Kanuni) was able to conquer Baghdad, expel the Safavids and annex it to the Ottoman Empire. In that same year 1534 CE, the Ottoman Sultan found no necessity to infiltrate his forces in Basra, as the Ottomans were contented with the declaration of loyalty made by the Sheikh of al-Muntafiq and its holder, Rashid Bin Maghams⁽¹⁾; the annexation to the Ottoman Empire took place without combat, as it had previously happened with the Sharif of Mecca. But as soon as the Arab clans and tribes rebelled against the Ottoman Empire in Basra, the Ottoman forces marched towards it again and conquered it by force in 1546 CE. Hence, Iraq, till the Persian borders, became part of the properties of the Ottoman Empire, and under its military, political and administrative sovereignty. Although the Ottoman conquest was permeated by a transient period when the Shah of Iran was able to occupy Baghdad in 1623 CE, this did not prevent retaking it. Iraq, embodied in the Baghdad Vilayet, witnessed problems with Persia one more time, particularly after Karim Khan took hold of power, as the war enabled Persia to siege Basra and conquer it in 1775 CE broke⁽²⁾. This reality imposed that some of the trade routes of Basra's region, notably to India, be transferred to Kuwait and places nearby. Thus, Kuwait in this period quickly and soon revealed itself to the Ottoman *walis* in Iraq, and perhaps even to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul, as a trade replacement to their important trade centre in the region: Basra. In the year 1793 CE, after new disturbances

(1) See Abdul-Aziz Awad, "*dirasat fi tareekh al-khalij al-'arabi*" (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), prev., part 2, p. 31.

(2) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 77.

occurred in Basra, the British Resident moved to Kuwait and made it a new leadership headquarters; this lasted from 1793 CE to 1795 CE⁽¹⁾. In the years 1821 CE and 1822 CE, the British East India Company moved its offices to Kuwait, and then, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, in 1841 CE, Kuwait signed an agreement with the British (a treaty of maritime truce)⁽²⁾, as being an independent Emirate. At the same time, Iraq, and particularly Basra, was the theatre of trouble and rebellions that did not calm down, either on the level of the conflict with Persia, or on the internal tribal level. Early in the twentieth century during the First World War (1914 CE-1918 CE), Britain was able to liquidate the Ottoman influence in Iraq once and for all in 1917 CE; this was followed by the monarchy installed by the British in 1921 CE, whereby Faisal Bin al-Hussein was proclaimed King of Iraq under British mandate⁽³⁾.

Among the most important things one notices in the history of Iraq during all these eras, is that it is an agitated history filled with consecutive conflicts, a history where the children of Iraq did not rule their country by themselves. Iraq only acquired its entity and its independence as a state after the fall of the Ottoman Empire as a result of WWI at the beginning of the twentieth century, 1921 CE; and even the King who was proclaimed there was not literally Iraqi, as he was chosen by a colonial power (Britain) and ruled under its mandate.

(1) *Id.*, p. 51.

(2) John Kelly, "Britain and the Persian Gulf: 1795-1880", Oman, Ministry of Heritage and Culture, translated by Mohamed Amin Abdullah, 1979, p. 644-645.

(3) Abdul-Razik Al- Hosni, "*tareekh al- 'iraq al- siyasi al- hadeeth*" (Modern Political History of Iraq), part 2, 7th ed., al- Rafedain pub., 2008, p. 10.

The roots of the relation between Kuwait, and the Ottoman Iraq and its states

Geography and politics together played an important role in the nature of the relations between the Emirate of Kuwait and Ottoman Iraq, because of their location as neighbours⁽¹⁾. The Ottomans were used to give the name “Iraq” to a group of areas including the territories of Mosul, Basra and Baghdad, and the annexed places which were under the authority of these *wilayas*, and high authority in Iraq was always in the hands of the Ottoman Pasha of Baghdad⁽²⁾. Since the foundation of Kuwait, and the transfer of the British Agency there, the country has been a source of discomfort for the *wilaya* of Basra⁽³⁾, especially after the appearance of the commercial and economic importance of Kuwait as a successful trade replacement for this Ottoman *wilaya*. The relations between Kuwait and Basra were probably even more complicated because the latter had an appointee from the Ottoman Empire, and due to the proximity, this Ottoman *Wali* had to move in every crisis or event in order to communicate with

(1) Actually, the Ottoman Empire only looked at Southern Iraq as a financial source to the State’s treasury, particularly Basra.

(2) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 43.

(3) Al Basra was subjected to direct Ottoman rule only in 1546. Authority was directly in the hands of the *Wali* of Baghdad, and the *mutessellimiya* of Basra followed it administratively until 1875. Basra’s *mutessellimiya* then became a *wilaya* in order to honour its rulers from Al- Muntafiq who had participated in the campaign on Al- Ahsa in 1871. However, it was annexed administratively with Baghdad once more in 1880, and it remained so for about four years. In 1884, it was separated. For more, see Abdul-Aziz Awad, "*dirasat fi tareekh al- khalij al- ‘arabi*" (Studies in the History of the Arabian Gulf), see prev., part 2, p. 32; see also Alaa Mussa Qadhim, "*al- ‘iraq fil tareekh ‘asr al ghuzah*" (Iraq in History, Era of the Invaders), Dar al- Huriya Press, Baghdad, 1983.

Kuwait, because all the Ottoman communications with Kuwait happened through the *Wali* in Basra and Baghdad. This made the rulers of Kuwait practise more positive policies towards the Ottomans in Basra to comply with this situation, although, as previously mentioned, Kuwait's rulers never accepted the political presence or appointment of Ottoman controllers on the Emirate's territory. Again, it has not been proven that Kuwait was ever in the realm of direct Ottoman rule or the rule of Basra's *walis*. Moreover, the Ottomans had no share in the taxes collected from Kuwait's ports, and it has not been historically proven that Kuwait payed any regular *zakat* to the Ottoman Empire. Nor has it been proven that Basra or the Ottoman Empire ever interfered by sending military troops to defend Kuwait or support it in any conflict the Emirate was involved in with the other powers in the region. Nor did Kuwait implement any systems or laws linked to the Ottoman party, or to Ottoman Basra. Additionally, Kuwait itself was at some point in time the refuge of the rebels against the Ottoman *Wali* of Baghdad himself, let alone that the rulers of Kuwait independently signed treaties with major powers⁽¹⁾, and had relations with regions that were in conflict with the Ottoman Empire itself. An example of this was when Kuwait expressed friendly relations towards the Egyptian forces that had arrived to the Gulf during the reign of Mohamed Ali Pasha, as Kuwait's ruler Sheikh Jaber I welcomed Khurshid Pasha, the Egyptian delegate who had been sent by the head of the Egyptian forces to Kuwait in 1839 CE.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, after the appearance of the projects to extend the Berlin-Baghdad railway line, the Ottoman Empire started using its influence in Iraq and Basra to prove it had some rights in Kuwait, as at that time, pretences

(1) Like between Kuwait and Britain in 1841.

had emerged that Kuwait was under Basra's jurisdiction. But the Anglo-Kuwait Agreement of 1899 CE put an end, or to be more precise, set limits to the intensity of the Ottoman pretences, and restricted them to trying to acquire some islands which would be the terminal of the planned railway line.

There was also the first definition of the borders between Kuwait and the Ottoman Empire in 1913 CE, in compliance with the British-Ottoman Treaty that was signed in that year. The treaty included the recognition by the Ottomans of Kuwait's independence under the rule of al-Sabah, and the confirmation of the clarity of Kuwait's borders, completely separated from the Iraqi side, especially from Ottoman Basra. The seventh clause of the treaty specified that the beginning of the borderline signals was from the entrance of Khawr al-Zubayr in the north, directly passing to the south of Umm Qasr, Safwan, and Jabal Sanam until Wadi al-Batin; and that the islands of Bubiyan, Warbah, Failaka, Qaruh and Maskan belonged to Kuwait. Additionally, the sixth clause showed that the tribes included within these borders followed Kuwait⁽¹⁾. This treaty was an important reference to set the Kuwaiti-Iraqi borders subsequently, although it was not implemented due to the outbreak of the First World War. It was natural that Sheikh Mubarak puts reservations on some of its clauses, as he did not totally accept them, and he objected to the fifth and seventh clauses which provided that "Kuwait was an Ottoman *caza*", as they made Kuwait lose some parts of Umm Qasr and Safwan; yet Mubarak appealed for their subordination to Kuwait.

Nevertheless, while reviewing Kuwait's relations with the Iraqi party during the Ottoman era, one can assure that Kuwait was

(1) Sultan Bin-Muhammad Al-Qasimi, "*bayan al-kuwait: sirat hayat alshaykh Mubarak al-sabah*" (Declaration of Kuwait: Biography of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah), see prev., p. 425.

not related to Ottoman Iraq at any administrative, military or political level. It is even noticed that Iraq itself had not yet emerged as a state in the real sense, as Iraq until that time was not a state, and it did not have a political entity or borders, geography, or an independent nature and sovereignty (it was not a state of institutions in the real sense). It was, at that time, merely a number of *wilayas* such as Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul, *wilayas* governed by foreign individuals (Ottoman *walis*), and actually and directly subjected to the authority of the central state in Istanbul which administered the interior as well as exterior affairs of these *wilayas*. Contrary to this, Kuwait at this same time enjoyed a clear identity and an independent entity, having its interests, treaties, judicial system, and government invested in the authority of al Sabah.

Kuwait and Iraq during the monarchical era 1921 CE-1958 CE

In 1917 CE, authority in Iraq was completely shifted to the British who were obliged, under the pressures and revolutions, to establish a modern kingdom led by King Faisal I bin al-Sharif Hussein in 1921 CE, although they kept ruling behind the scenes and were the true holders of the reins there. In the span of thirty years (the monarchical period) 1921 CE-1958 CE, Iraq was governed by fifty four ministries; this reflects the fragility of its existing regimes and the flounder of its governments during that time. But what concerns us here is the shape of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations during the monarchical era, and the most important crises which broke out between the two parties during this period.

First: Crisis of the Zuhoor Radio Station, 1938 CE

When King Faisal, the first king of the Iraqi Kingdom, ascended to the throne (1921 CE-1933 CE), the Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations appeared quiet, especially under the shadow of his strong friendship with Kuwait's ruler Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber.

Both parties reached the point of setting boundaries between them in 1932 CE⁽¹⁾ (exchanged notes between Nuri al-Said and Kuwait's ruler Ahmad al-Jaber), with British mediation, relying on what had previously been agreed upon in the treaty of 1913 CE between the Ottoman Empire and Britain⁽²⁾. But after King Ghazi ascended to Iraq's throne, the picture changed, and the relations were marked by tension and disagreement, as Kuwait was surprised by an obvious increase in the voices calling for the annexation of Kuwait to Iraq. In 1935 CE, King Ghazi inaugurated a private radio station in his palace (the Zuhoor Palace), and directly dedicated it to broadcasting more pretences and demands concerning the Kuwaiti side, until the radio station became a platform to propagate the pretence that Kuwait followed Iraq, and to attack Kuwait's rulers⁽³⁾. King Ghazi sometimes personally broadcasted some of these inciting statements, and Iraqi sources started openly indicating that King Ghazi himself was planning

(1) In 1923, following the Uqair Convention in 1922, Sheikh Ahmad Al- Jaber wrote to the British Political Agent in Kuwait to ask him about the nature of the boundaries with Iraq. The Political Agent replied to Sheikh Ahmad Al- Jaber's letter saying that according to the British Political Agent in Baghdad, it was imperative that Iraq respects its international and legal pledges. Confirmed by the correspondence between the British Foreign Office and the Iraqi Prime Minister on the 17th of April 1924, these pledges were that Kuwait was an independent international political entity. On the 25th of July 1932, Nuri Al- Said's government in Iraq recognised the boundaries with Kuwait officially. That was done in order to enable Iraq to join the League of Nations.

(2) Maimunah Al- Sabah, "*tareekh al- atma' al- 'iraqiya fil-kuwait*" (History of Iraqs Greed in Kuwait), see prev., p. 82.

(3) Badr Khalid Al- Badr, "*nuri al- sa'id al- malik al- ghazi abd al- karim qasim wa mawaqifhum tijah al- kuwait*" (Nuri Al- Said, King Ghazi, Abd Al- Karim Qasim, their Stances towards Kuwait), Al- Qabas Kuwaiti Magazine, 27th of June 1993.

on attacking Kuwait, and that he had issued his orders⁽¹⁾ to the army in this respect. Naji Shawkat, the former Prime Minister of Iraq related that “King Ghazi decided to invade Kuwait, and he issued his orders to the army’s Commander-in-Chief; he also contacted the *mutasarif* of Basra’s province, Ali Mahmoud al-Sheikh, and asked him to help in the invasion process with some of the army’s divisions linked to Basra”⁽²⁾. However, his death in April 1939 CE occurred before he had accomplished this⁽³⁾.

Second: Crisis of the Hashemite Federation (Arab Federation of Iraq and Jordan), 1958 CE

In 1955 CE, the Turkish-Iraqi agreement was announced; it was to be the main core⁽⁴⁾ for the Baghdad Pact⁽⁵⁾, which was meant to be a barrier to stop the Soviet expansions and ambitions. This pact was subsequently followed by the announcement of the emergence of the Hashemite Federation on the 14th of February 1958 CE, between the Kingdom of Iraq and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Since the first days after this federation was proclaimed, the Iraqi party expressed an intense will to include Kuwait, for it to become “Iraq-Jordan-Kuwait”. But Kuwait

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- (1) See article “al-khalfiya al- tarikhiya wal-siyasia li kuwait al- ‘iraq al- kuwait ‘iraqiya, sir safhat 1962” (The Historical and Political Background of Iraq’s Kuwait, Kuwait is Iraqi), published in Afaq ‘Arabiya, 1990, fifteenth year, p. 15.
 - (2) Hassan Al- Elwi, “*aswar al- teen ‘uqdat al- kuwait wa ideologiyat al- dam*” (Mud Walls, Kuwait’s Complex, and the Ideology of Annexation), see prev., p. 63.
 - (3) F.O. No. 13/23180, 8 March 1939, Sir Peterson, London.
 - (4) It was created with the purpose of defending the Middle East from the Soviet threat. J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, A Documentary Record, 1535-1956, vol. 2, p. 390-391.
 - (5) To increase Soviet concerns. In spite of the attempts made by Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister, to add the United States to the Pact, the American party refused. *Id.*, (Arab Administration), portfolio No. 1523, file No. 6/3/4, report No. 79, dated 8 February 1956.

refused to be part of the federation when it saw that monarchic Iraq had ulterior motives and directions which aimed at beyond what was announced. Particularly because strategically, the Federation had been formed as a reply to the rise of the United Arab Republic between Egypt and Syria, as Iraq saw this Egyptian-Syrian rapprochement as a direct threat to it. Perhaps the Hashemite Federation was also an attempt for Iraq to make use of Kuwait's important material capacities at that time, in order to cover the expenses of undertaking such a project, and guarantee Kuwait's participation in the expenses for Jordan's defence⁽¹⁾. During the negotiations that took place to prepare for this alliance, Iraq suggested to Britain that Kuwait be given independence so that it would become a member of the Hashemite federation as an independent state. Iraq also presented to Kuwait a memorandum saying: "Kuwait keeps its Sheikh and the governing system there. Its citizens are to enjoy all the rights enjoyed by the citizens of the Federation; they have freedom of movement, housing and residence; the foundation of a united assembly and the unification of programs, the organisation of the roads and means of communication"; but Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim refused to join the Federation or to accept what came in the memorandum. Later, after the coup against King Faisal II and his execution, Abd al-Karim Qasim, the new Prime Minister, dissolved the Federation, describing it as "not a real federation, but a support to the corrupt monarchic system" which had ruled Iraq, as he saw it⁽²⁾.

(1) Mohamed Fadil Al- Jamali, "*al- 'iraq al- hadeeth*" (Modern Iraq), Beirut, undated, p. 22; see also Al- Elwi, Hassan, "*aswar al- teen 'uqdat al- kuwait wa ideologiyat al- dam*" (Mud Walls, Kuwait's Complex, and the Ideology of Annexation), prev., p. 68.

(2) Zalata, Abdullah, "*azmat al- kuwait 'am 1961, safahat min tareekh al 'ilaqat al- kuwaitiya*" (Kuwait's Crisis, 1961, Pages from the Kuwaiti Relations), see prev., p. 44.

Kuwaiti-Iraqi crises in the Republic era after 1958 CE

First: The crisis of 1961 CE. Following the coup led by Abd al-Karim Qasim in Iraq in 1958 CE⁽¹⁾ officially ending the Iraqi monarchy, Kuwait recognised the new regime and worked on developing good relations with it. Kuwait organised popular and official visits to Iraq, the most important of which was the popular delegation headed by Jassim al-Qatami and Ahmed al-Khateeb, who met the then Prime Minister Abd al-Karim Qasim⁽²⁾, and conveyed to him the congratulations of the Kuwaiti leadership⁽³⁾, and its support to the change occurring in the sister neighbour⁽⁴⁾. And in an indication of Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim's personal desire to open a new page with the neighbour Iraq, he, in person, visited Iraq, and during his visit, met with Abd al-Karim Qasim and a number of the formed Iraqi government's

(1) For more, see Sobhi Abdul-Hamid, "*thawrat 14 tamuz 1958 fil- 'iraq*" (Iraq's 14th of July 1958 Revolution), 2nd ed., al- Dar al- 'Arabiya lil-Mawsu'at, Beirut, 1994; see also Hassan Al- Elwi, "*abd al- karim qasim ru'yah ba'd al 'ishrin*" (Abd Al- Karim Qasim, Seen after Twenty), 1st ed. Dar al- Kitab al- Islami, Qom, 2005.

(2) For more, see Fawzi, Ahmed, "*abd al- karim qasim wa sa'atuh al- akhira*" (Abd Al- Karim Qasim in His Last Hours), 1st ed., Dar al- Huriya pub., Baghdad, 1988; Abdul-Latif Al- Shawaf, "*abd al- karim aasim wa 'iraqiyun akharun, thikrayat wa intiba'at*" (Abd Al- Karim Qasim and other Iraqis, Memories and Impressions), 1st ed., Dar al- Waraq pub., Beirut, 2004.

(3) The Prime Minister, Abd Al- Karim Qasim spoke to this delegation saying: "I welcome you to your homeland amidst your brothers and families; there is no difference between you and them. Now you have arrived among your brothers in your home. Thank God who has removed the obstacles between us and made you go and come in your places without influence from a foreigner who rules you". Al- Bilad newspaper, Iraq, No. 5309, 29/8/1958.

(4) Ahmed Al- Khateeb, "*al-kuwait min al- imara ila al- dawla, thikrayat al- 'amal al- watani wal-qawmi*" (Kuwait, from Emirate to State, Memoirs from Patriotic and National Work), see prev., p. 187.

ministers⁽¹⁾. This visit mainly aimed at sending the message to the Iraqi leadership, that Kuwait welcomed the change that had occurred⁽²⁾. However, in spite of these good initiatives on behalf of Kuwait, it was not obvious whether Abd al-Karim Qasim's government was responsive, and soon, after the Kuwaiti independence in 1961 CE, he announced his open request to conquer Kuwait, hence the eruption of the crisis of 1961 CE, which was known as the Kuwaiti-Iraqi crisis⁽³⁾. This crisis revealed the Soviet position as more obstinate and rigid towards Kuwait, in favour of Iraq.

Actually, the Soviet Union probably wanted, through this crisis, to draw the attention of the other Western powers, and especially the United States, to the fact that it was still interested in the region of the Gulf and the Middle East. Iraq was the most suitable party to the Soviets' ambitions, and was the main entrance for them to the region of the Gulf because of its location, and its capability to be the link between the Soviets and the region in general. With the British interference, it was imperative in order for the Soviets to fulfil their ambitions, that they strongly support their Iraqi ally. However, with the end of the crisis, the withdrawal of the British troops, Qasim's assassination and the

(1) For more, see Mushrif Wasmi Al-Shammeri, "*siyasat al-kuwait al-kharijiya fil mantiqa al-'arabiya lil fatra 1961-1983*" (Kuwait's Foreign Politics in the Arab Region in the Period 1961-1983, unpublished M. A. thesis, College of Law and Politics, Baghdad University, 1984.

(2) Khalid Yihia Ahmed Al-Jabury, "*al-kuwait wa muhawalat isti'aditha fil-tareekh al-muassar*" (Kuwait, Trials to Retake it in Contemporary History), 1st ed., Dar al-Kalima pub., Baghdad, 1993, p. 50.

(3) Abdullah Mohamed Al-Hajeri, "*al-itihad al-sovieti wal-azma al-kuwaitiya al-'iraqiya 1961*" (The Soviet Union and the Kuwaiti-Iraqi Crisis, 1961), al-Mu'arikh al-Masry mag., January, 2014.

fall of his regime after Abdul Salam Arif's coup⁽¹⁾, the year 1963 CE brought a complete change in the Soviet stance. and Moscow officially recognised Kuwait, and offered help for Kuwait to join the United Nations, which in fact took place in the same year. The Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs then, Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, sent a telegram to the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs saying: "With great joy, I express to Your Excellency the gratitude of the people and government of Kuwait for the positive role of your delegation in asking for my country to join, as a member, the Organisation of United Nations in May 1963 CE"⁽²⁾. Hence, the cooperation and diplomatic relations between Kuwait and Iraq started, taking a different path after the conflict and struggle which had lasted all along the reign of Abd al-Karim Qasim; and particularly, as the Kuwaiti government offered economic help to Iraq.

Second: The Samita crisis. It appears that Kuwait's refusal to annex the islands of Warbah and Bubiyan to Iraq or renting them to it provoked strong anger on the Iraqi side. On the 20th of March 1970 CE, Kuwait was taken by surprise when an Iraqi troop moved within the Kuwaiti territory, attacking two of the frontier posts, one of them being Samita⁽³⁾, and the other al-Jawda. The Iraqi forces invaded the police station at the Kuwaiti frontier in

(1) In 1963.

(2) Foreign Policy Archives of the Russian Federation, Kuwait department, p. 13; copied from Yelena Melkumyan, "*dirasat fi tarikh al-kuwait al-hadeeth wal mu'asar*" (Studies in Kuwait's Modern and Contemporary History), see prev., p. 137.

(3) Dhafir Mohamed Al- Ajami's article "*al-i'tidaa 'ala al-samita 20 maris 1973: dawr al-hajis al-tareekhi fi rasm nadhariyat al-amn al-kuwaitiya*" (The Attacking on Samita, 20 March 1973: the Historical Role of Premonition in Drawing the Theory of Kuwait's Security), Alaan Kuwaiti electronic news, 21 March 2009.

Samita and were infiltrated within the Kuwaiti land over three miles; when the Kuwaiti forces tried to oppose the attack and confront it, two Kuwaitis fell martyrs and two were wounded, while one Iraqi soldier was killed⁽¹⁾. The Iraqis justified this violation by saying that reaching the Iraqi port of Umm al-Qasr required passing through Kuwaiti territory, and that what pushed them to do so was to confront Iranian dangers⁽²⁾. The situation was aggravated, and there were Arab efforts to contain the crisis; Kuwait insisted on the withdrawal of the Iraqi troops, and the Arab League also asked Iraq to withdraw its forces immediately. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf nations also declared their support to Kuwait, and in fact, after receiving a Kuwaiti loan, Iraq withdrew its troops from Samita in mid-April 1973 CE⁽³⁾.

Iran-Iraq War, 1980 CE

On the seventh of September 1980 CE, the Iran-Iraq War broke out, that war which raged for eight years. Far from the reasons of the war and the motives behind it, what concerns us is Kuwait's position therefrom, and the nature of its management of the crisis. Undoubtedly, and from the first beginnings of the spark of this war, Kuwait has been keen on supporting the Iraqi

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- (1) Abdullah Al- Ghoneim & team of researchers in the Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, "*sumuw al- shaykh sa'd al- 'abdallah al- salim al- sabah, mas'uliya wa 'ataa*" (His Highness Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah Al- Salim Al- Sabah, Responsibility and Devotion), Kuwait, 2004, p. 186.
- (2) Especially that the port of Umm Qasr is no further than 60 kilometres away from the Iranian port Abadan. For more, see "*Al-kuwait wujudan wa hududan*" (Kuwait, Presence and Boundaries), prev.
- (3) Dhafir Mohamed Al- Ajami's article "*al-i'tidaa 'ala al- samita 20 maris 1973: dawr al- hajis al- tareekhi fi rasm nadhariyat al- amn al- kuwaitiya*" (The Attacking on Samita, 20 March 1973: the Historical Role of Premonition in Drawing the Theory of Kuwait's Security),

side⁽¹⁾. It has not hesitated to offer facilities and some important support to the Iraqi forces, especially financial support that reached the point of enabling Iraq to export its petroleum resources from the Kuwaiti ports. Kuwait also continued to offer big loans, as well as financial and logistic aid to Iraq, in spite of the real dangers it encountered due to the military operations going on between Iran and Iraq at that time. They had reached the point that some rockets fell over Kuwaiti soil because the military operations were taking place near its borders - not to mention the violations and abuses that touched some Kuwaiti ships and petroleum tankers in the waters of the Gulf⁽²⁾.

Kuwait, a new adventure for Saddam Hussein

With the end of the Iran-Iraq War, the Iraqi regime in Baghdad had the conviction that military action was the quick choice to solve its problems (which it had created for itself), especially the economic and social problems, particularly as the other choices and their horizons had been blocked. The most important givens of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti crisis after the end of the war with Iran were basically two main ones: the first economic, the second political⁽³⁾. After an exhausting war that lasted eight years, the return of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi soldiers from the war front, and the decrease in petroleum prices, the regime in Iraq faced a real problem that was mainly reflected in the signs of an imminent economic crash, due to the exhausted economy on all fronts. There were also the huge losses in all the country's utilities and the collapse of its infrastructure that had been targeted during the

(1) This comes, in spite of all other considerations, from the perspective of Arabism and prioritising the principles of nationalism.

(2) For more, see Field Marshall Abd Al- Halim Abu-Ghazala, *"al-harb al- 'iraqiya al- iraniya 1980-1988, (The Iraqi-Iranian War, 1980-1988)*, Cairo, 1993.

(3) See Geoff Simons, "Future Iraq: US Policy in Reshaping the Middle East" [Arabic], Beirut, Dar Al- Saqi, 2004, p. 235-254.

war, the deterioration of the petroleum prices, and the disturbed social conditions. Additionally, there were the preludes to the fall of the Soviet Union, the revolutions of the democracies (The Singing Revolution) in Eastern Europe, and the beginning of the rise of the monopoly of power represented in the United States of America. There was also the situation of emptiness lived by the Arab World, and the disappearance of Iran from the political and military scene of the region, which was in Iraq's advantage. This was the reality lived by the Iraqi leaders; and escaping from this critical reality, or from bearing responsibility, the Iraqi leaders started blaming Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, and throwing on them the responsibility of the deterioration in the petroleum prices, as it accused them of increasing production and going beyond the share determined by the OPEC. Iraq added another accusation to Kuwait, that of trespassing and stealing petroleum from the Iraqi Rumaila field. Also, that with the premeditated intention of harming Iraq, Kuwait took the decision of increasing petroleum production on the day following the end of the Iran-Iraq War. Saddam Hussein considered this to be treason and provocation, and considered that Kuwait was trying to strangle him and prevent him from reaching the waters of the Gulf by refusing to rent to him the two islands of Warbah and Bubiyan⁽¹⁾.

Saddam menaces the Gulf

After the Iran-Iraq War (eight years long), Kuwait, continuing its support and strong help, expressed its readiness to rebuild Iraq after the destruction the war had perpetrated in the different Iraqi sectors, particularly the economic sector and its infrastructure

(1) Hans-Christof von Sponeck, *"tashreeh al- 'iraq: "uqubat al- tadmeer al- shamil allati sabaqat al- ghazw"* (Iraq's Autopsy: the Sanctions of Mass Destruction which Preceded the Invasion), translated [to Arabic] by Ahmed Hassan and Omar Al- Ayubi, Beirut, Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 2005, p. 310-311.

and utilities⁽¹⁾, but this was useless with the cautious, exhausted Iraqi political leadership. On the 23rd of February 1990 CE, the leaders of what was called the Arab Cooperation Council in Amman - which included Egypt, Iraq, Yemen and Jordan – convened; and in an early Iraqi attempt to contain and surround the Gulf states, Saddam insinuated in one of the meetings: “The country which has authority in the Gulf gets dominance over its petroleum”. On the following day, the 24th of February 1990 CE, Saddam Hussein threatened Kuwait by saying: “Kuwait is demanding from us the amount of 30 billion dollars, and if they do not cancel these debts and pay 30 other billions, I shall take deterrent measures”⁽²⁾

Responding to attempts to calm the situation and to present an Arab solution, an emergency meeting was held in May 1990 CE in Baghdad. Saddam Hussein accused Kuwait of launching an economic war on Iraq, of stealing Iraqi petroleum, of being responsible for the decline in petroleum prices, of currency speculation with the Iraqi dinar, and of seeking to empty Iraq from anything with material value⁽³⁾.

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- (1) Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, “*al-‘udwan al- ‘iraqi ‘ala al- kuwait, al- haqiqa wal-maasah*” (The Iraqi Aggression on Kuwait, the Reality and the Tragedy), Kuwait, 3rd ed., 1996, p. 67-68.
 - (2) Salinger, Pierre & Eric Laurent, “*Guerre du Golfe. Le dossier secret*” (Gulf War. The Secret Dossier) [Arabic], 11th ed., Beirut, Al- Matbou’at Co. pub., 1993, p. 14. See also Salah Montassir, “*harb al- khalij asrar wa wathaiq al- mu’amara min al takhteet ila al- tanfith*” (The Gulf War, Secrets and Documents of the Conspiracy from Planification to Execution), 1991. Although later, in a meeting with one of the German newspapers (Von Presse), Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah denied what had been rumoured about this matter. He said that he had tried to explain to Izzat Ibrahim that being indebted to Kuwait was useful for scheduling his debts to the creditors. Meeting with Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah, interview with Von Presse magazine, 19 October 1990; see also “*jarimat ghazw al- kuwait*” (The Crime of Kuwait’s Invasion), Kuwaiti Media Centre Cairo pub., 1991, p. 609.
 - (3) Saddam Hussein’s speech at the Ninth Arab Summit in Baghdad, May 1990. See also text in “*yawmiyat wa wathaiq al- wihda al- ‘arabiya 1989-1993*” Arab Unity’s Journal and Documents, p. 744.

Moreover, increasing the escalation, Iraq sent a memorandum to the League of Arab States dated 15th of July 1990 CE, complaining from having endured enormous financial losses between 1981 CE and 1990 CE. It stated that the amount of these losses had reached billions, among which two billion and four hundred million dollars were the price of the petroleum stolen from the Rumaila field⁽¹⁾. Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah (Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time) replied to this memorandum on the 19th of July of the same year, by a letter to the League of Arab States where he denied the Iraqi allegations and called for calmness, for logic to be the judge and for sticking to its judgement. On the 21st of July 1990 CE, the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs sent another memorandum to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, whereby he accused the Kuwaiti officials of stealing the Iraqi fortune, and said that Kuwait slowed down the coordination of efforts between the two countries. This Iraqi political escalation was followed by an intensive media escalation. On the 23rd of July, the Iraqi media started attacking the person of the Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, and on the 24th of July this was followed by news that there were Iraqi troops on the Kuwaiti side. This pushed some Arab leaders to move quickly in order to try and mend the rift, so the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak visited Iraq on the 24th of the same month. He received a promise and assurance from Saddam that there would be no recourse to force, as Saddam Hussein told his Egyptian homologue: "I shall not use military force as long as there are negotiations between Kuwait and Iraq, but Brother Mubarak, please do not inform the Kuwaitis of this so that they don't become more arrogant and

(1) Pierre Salinger & Eric Laurent, "*Guerre du Golfe. Le dossier secret*" (Gulf War. The Secret Dossier) [Arabic], 1st ed. Ozal pub., Beirut, Lebanon, 1991, p. 58.

pretentious”⁽¹⁾. On the 31st of July 1990 CE, Saudi Arabia also took the initiative of hosting Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah, the Kuwaiti heir to the throne, and Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, the Iraqi Vice-President to negotiate and attempt to make an rapprochement between the points of view of the two countries. However, after only a few hours from the beginning of the meeting, it was obvious that these negotiations also were on their way to failure. This confirms that there were premeditated intentions, and that Iraq, according to its reports, had actually mobilized close to one hundred thousand soldiers on the frontiers⁽²⁾, before the meeting between Izzat Ibrahim and Sheikh Saad. The documents discovered after the war revealed that the orders to move had been given in the morning of Tuesday the 31st of July 1990 CE, at 11:30 am, before the delegation had arrived to Jeddah. Only a few hours had passed after the return of the Iraqi delegation, then the world was surprised by the Iraqi forces sweeping Kuwait and invading it.

The invasion, 2nd of August 1990 CE

At that time, the world was going through the most important historical turnings since the Second World War (like the fall of the Communist regimes and the disappearance of the socialist camp); and new relations between the powers, with undetermined aspects, appeared on the international front. The most characteristic of these was that the polarisation and duality that had rested on the balance of power between the Eastern and Western camps had disappeared. Under these circumstances, the Iraqi Ba’athist regime decided to undergo a new bloody adventure, and that was the invasion of Kuwait. An invasion which created a profound

(1) *Id.*, p. 64.

(2) *Id.*, p. 93-100; see also Abdul-Rahim Abdul-Hadi Abu-Talib, “‘azmat al-‘iraq wal-kuwait” (Iraq and Kuwait Crises), p. 63-64.

division in the Arab World at the level of the ruling regimes and the peoples, particularly the Arab peoples.

Internal situation in Kuwait at the eve of the Iraqi invasion

Globally, one can summarise the internal situation in Kuwait only one day before the invasion as follows:

First: The authorities in Kuwait did not expect Iraq to perpetrate the military act against it in such a wide and global way - although Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, had answered Sheikh Jaber's pertinent questioning in one of the Kuwaiti Cabinet's meetings that preceded the invasion. The Emir had asked about the limits of the Iraqi threats and their danger, and Sheikh Sabah had replied by saying: "There is a real possibility of an Iraqi military attack, and the situation at the frontiers is explosive"⁽¹⁾.

Second: The authorities in Kuwait gave the different parties, Arab leaderships and institutions, the space to solve the crisis through diplomatic means and without escalation.

Third: The Kuwaiti authority was keen on not letting the crisis go out of the realm of Arab work, in order to avoid the occurrence of a direct clash that might have led Iraq to take steps that were more dangerous. Kuwait avoided making any provocative act, be it by military mobilisation or by calling upon foreign powers, as this would have obstructed the existing attempts and efforts.

Fourth: Kuwait failed to manage the crisis through the media before the invasion, by showing the reality and truth of its position, and by refuting the Iraqi allegations; in the meantime, the huge Iraqi media instrument succeeded in mobilising the Arab street in Saddam's favour.

(1) Pierre Salinger & Eric Laurent, "*Guerre du Golfe. Le dossier secret*" (Gulf War. The Secret Dossier), see prev., p. 61.

Undoubtedly, after its war against Iran ended, the Iraqi authority faced a new very dangerous reality, a reality menacing its very existence, a reality getting out of which required – as usual for the Iraqi politicians – a new military adventure, where the people would be absented one more time. Saddam found the solution to all these critical facts in invading the neighbour Kuwait, and conquering the capacities of its people and resources, especially since Kuwait enjoys such huge petroleum reserves within its land. Also, one cannot neglect the personality of Saddam himself, this personality always inclined to violence, fond of absolute leadership, and fanatic in opinion; so how was Saddam going to face his people with a war which had lasted eight years and ended up with bigger losses in all aspects than achieved gains⁽¹⁾.

In a testimony to history, Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah as an eyewitness said that at exactly one thirty at the dawn of Thursday, the Minister of Defence informed him: “I am sorry to tell you that the Iraqi forces crept now, and occupied the Kuwaiti centres”⁽²⁾. The Kuwaiti Ministry of Defence issued a statement

(1) In addition to partisanship, sectarianism and racial conflicts which started to appear because of the war. Even the Iraqi army coming out of the war, after eight years, had exhausted all the human forces capable of working and producing for the army, and it had become a burden on the state. The incoming workforce also became more numerous than the Iraqi workforce due to the war. When the Iran-Iraq war broke out, Iraq had close to 30 billion dollars; when the war ended, Iraq was indebted by more than 100 billion dollars. See Salinger, Pierre & Eric Laurent, “*al-mufakira al-makhfiya li harb al-khalij: ru'yat muttali' 'ala al-'ad alaksi lil azma'*”, (The Hidden Agenda behind the Gulf War: Viewed by an Informed about the Reverse Count of the Crisis), Beirut, Al-Matbou'at Co. pub., 1991, p. 17.

(2) Abdullah Al- Ghoneim & team of researchers in the Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, “*sumuw al-shaykh sa'd al-'abdallah al-salim al-sabah, mas'uliya wa 'ataa'*” (His Highness Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, Responsibility and Devotion), see prev., p. 208.

assuring that Kuwait would use its natural and legitimate right to self-defence and the defence of the nation with all available means.

And in an attempt to quickly control the Kuwaiti land, an Iraqi marine infantry regiment attacked the island of Bubiyan from the south; there was also systematic attack on the island of Failaka and fighting with its guards. As to the frontier inside Kuwait, Iraqi forces descended air and marine forces in the first hours of the invasion of the capital, directly targeting “Dasman Palace” and the Emiri Guard. And in Jahra, some of the Kuwaiti army’s units fought with the invader’s forces in inequivalent battles like the Battle of Jal al-Layyah, the Battle of Jal al-Mutla’, the Battle of the Bridges (al-Josour) and the Battle of Jal al-Atraf. But with the absence of a Kuwaiti military capacity able to stop the Iraqi march, by the end of the 2nd of August, the Iraqi forces had controlled most of the Kuwaiti land, except for the island of Failaka, where its guards kept defending it. But on the 3rd of August, most of the Kuwaiti cities and governorates had fallen militarily in the Iraqis’ hands. And on the 4th of August, the Iraqi authority pretended to form a temporary Kuwaiti government, to give the impression that the Iraqi forces were called to the country and that it was not an invasion as imagined, but an internal revolution against the ruling family in Kuwait. Iraq issued a statement where it pretended there was a revolution, and that the Iraqi army interfered at the request of the Provisional Government of Free Kuwait, as it called it. It pretended that it was going to withdraw after the stability of the situation, which would not take longer than a few days or weeks. The government appointed by the invader remained for a few days, but on the eighth of August, the annexation of Kuwait to Iraq was announced, and it was considered the nineteenth province in the Iraqi administrative divisions⁽¹⁾. Iraq also issued a statement saying: “The foreign colonialists who ruled the country in Kuwait... and humiliated the Kuwaiti people, and imposed a general state of

(1) “*Al-kuwait wujudan wa hududan*” (Kuwait, Presence and Boundaries) 3rd ed., 1997, see prev., p. 19.

terror and repression, and suppressed freedoms, and cut-off the living resources...” adding: “after stability, the Provisional Government of Free Kuwait will hold free elections to elect the parliament...”⁽¹⁾

This statement was followed by other statements inviting the Kuwaitis to return to practising their jobs, also pretending that this step was made to achieve Arab unity, and the fair distribution of the Arab wealth, using the misleading slogan “liberating Jerusalem passes through the Kuwaiti lands”⁽²⁾.

On the other hand, the Security Council and the Arab League rejected the pretence of the provisional new government appointed by Iraq with the leadership of Alaa Hussein Ali. They called for the necessity to withdraw from Kuwait; but Iraq refused these resolutions, based on that Kuwait was part of its land, propagating the idea of Iraq’s historic right to Kuwait. Hence, a new problematic of the crisis appeared on the political scene, the war through history; whereby Iraq assured that Kuwait was an indivisible part of Iraq, that it was one of its provinces, and that it was even called Kazima. Iraq also pretended that the Kuwaiti dinar was equivalent to the Iraqi dinar, and in more challenge, the regime worked on changing the cars’ license plates to Iraqi ones, and they decorated the Kuwaiti streets with Iraqi flags and Saddam Hussein’s photos. The Iraqi media started focusing on the religious and holy aspects in its discourses and speeches⁽³⁾,

(1) “*Al ghazw al ‘iraqi lil-kuwait, nadwa bahthiya*” (Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait, Research Seminar), ‘Alam al- Mi’rifa, No. 195, 1995, p. 162.

(2) Abdullah Al- Ashaal, “*maasat al- ‘iraq, al- bidaya wal-nihaya*” (Iraq’s Tragedy, the Beginning and the End), Cairo, Muassassat al- Tobgui, 2004, p. 25; Eliyahu Kanovsky, “Economic Implications for the Region and World Oil Market”, London, 1987, p. 5-234.

(3) Ahmed Raif, “*ala hafat al- karisa: awraq azmat al- khalij al- siriyah*” (On the Edge of the Catastrophe, Secret Papers from the Gulf Crisis), Cairo, 1st ed., Al Zahraa for Arab Media, Centre for Studies and Translation, 1991.

and it linked its withdrawal from Kuwait with the withdrawal of Israel from the places it occupied in 1967 CE, in order to arouse the Arab and Muslim sentiment in Iraq's favour.

Kuwaiti Authority's management of the Iraqi invasion crisis from abroad, Jeddah's conference

With the development of events, the entrance of Iraq in the Kuwaiti lands, and its control over all the institutions of the State, it was necessary to move the legitimacy embodied in the Prince out of Kuwait. Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah said in his comment on the Kuwaiti leadership moving out to manage the crisis from abroad: "My contact with His Highness at these crucial moments, and agreeing with him to move out of Dasman Palace was the best and most dangerous decision in my life. The Divine protection saved the legitimacy and saved Kuwait... The lapse of time between our leaving the Dasman Palace and their starting to attack it was not longer than half an hour"⁽¹⁾.

Nuwaisib, on the borders with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was the destination of the Kuwaiti leadership, and from there they moved to the Saudi al-Khafagi station near the Kuwaiti borders, then from there to the city of Dammam, then to al-Ta'if, which was the headquarters where the crisis was managed from in its first stages.

The (legitimate) Kuwaiti government took the city of al-Ta'if as its temporary headquarters. It remained there playing its role and accomplishing its duties with nationalism and defiance. The leadership also immediately started administering the affairs of the nation and the citizens. It carried to all the Kuwaitis the voice

(1) Abdullah Al- Ghoneim & team of researchers in the Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, "*sumuw al- shaykh sa'd al- 'abdallah al- salim al- sabah, mas'uliya wa 'ataa*" (His Highness Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah Al- Salim Al- Sabah, Responsibility and Devotion), see prev., p. 211.

of Sheikh Jaber beginning his speech with verses from the Holy Quran, urging to spend dear and precious efforts for the nation, for the reinstatement of justice, emphasising the spirit of challenge, calling for resistance. He clotured by saying: “Brothers and Sisters, if the aggressor has been able to conquer our land, it will not be able to conquer our will and determination”. Sheik Saad al-Abdullah’s voice was also raised to announce that Kuwait was facing treachery, and that the sons of Kuwait, its army’s men and its people were deterring the aggressor, and repelling the attacker, in spite of the huge difference between the parties of the two powers. He said: “We will continue with God’s help to repel the aggressors until we purify our good land”⁽¹⁾.

In a new historical scene by the Kuwaiti people after the one of the crisis of 1961 CE, a conference was held in Jeddah, and the Kuwaiti people renewed the *bay’a* to Sheikh Jaber and the al Sabah. They thus assured to the world that the people surrounded their legitimate leadership, the al Sabah, and that there was no alternative to this legitimacy. Those assembled came out with one vision of Kuwait after the invasion, that of being under the flag holding onto the constitutional legitimacy. It was also agreed that after the liberation, the parliamentary life would be re-established, and the democratic path would be corrected. The Kuwaiti leadership assured the Kuwaiti people during this conference that they would not bargain the safety and the independence of any inch of the Kuwaiti land, and that they would not accept any solution other than the total execution of the resolutions of the emergency Arab summit held in Cairo on the 10th of August 1990 CE, in addition to the resolutions of the

(1) Maimunah Al- Sabah, “*sa’d al- kuwait rajul al- dawla allathi la yushaq lah ghubar wa farisha al- watani al- shahm wa batal al- tahrir*” (Saad of Kuwait, the Outstanding Statesman, its Gallant, Patriotic Knight, and the Hero of Liberation).

United Nations Security Council which called for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Iraq⁽¹⁾.

Kuwaiti resistance

From the first hours of the Iraqi invasion, it was obvious that there was a wide popular rejection, and disbelief of what was happening among all the classes of the Kuwaiti population. There were international reactions, and big Kuwaiti popular refusal to give in to the *de facto* as they held onto legitimacy. However, Iraq faced all the rejection with more torture of and vengeance from the citizens and the State's institutions, as wide destruction started in the public and private properties; the Iraqi soldiers took everything their hands were laid on and moved it to Iraq. The soldiers under orders from the Iraqi authorities did not hesitate to torture and kill civilian unarmed Kuwaiti citizens for the smallest reason, or torturing and humiliating against all international legislations and laws, and against the humanitarian rights of any country under occupation.

Under these circumstances, the enthusiasm of the popular resistance to refuse the invasion set off, first through social and financial committees, and offering help. The health, social, and specialised committees started the cleaning process and help, and the Kuwaiti youth offered care to those who needed it in spite of the brutality and harshness of the Iraqi reaction to the Kuwaiti resistance generally, and to the committees particularly. The Kuwaiti resistance also took different shapes, such as writing antagonistic slogans calling for resistance on the walls of public

(1) Speech of His Highness the Heir to the Throne and Prime Minister at the opening of the Popular Congress in Jeddah on the 13th of October 1990. Salah Al- Akkad, p. 394, Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait; Abdullah Al- Ghoneim & team of researchers in the Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, "*sumuw al- shaykh sa'd al- 'abdallah al- salim al- sabah, mas'uliya wa 'ataa*" (His Highness Sheikh Saad Al- Abdullah Al- Salim Al- Sabah, Responsibility and Devotion), p. 110.

buildings, and wiping the names and numbers of the suburbs, areas, streets and houses in order to misdirect the Iraqis. The Kuwaitis did not hesitate to go forward and offer support and help to the resisting combatants. In an important development, the security committees of the Kuwaiti youth started providing the combatants with weapons and protecting the residential areas. Resistance committees also started being formed to detect the places where the Iraqi forces were. One of the honourable examples of the Kuwaiti resistance was what happened at the Battle of “Bayt al-Qurain”, where there occurred a famous battle between the Kuwaiti resisting combatants and the soldiers of the Iraqi invasion on the 24th of February 1991 CE. At the outcome of the battle, 12 of the resisting combatants, led by Sayed Hadi Sayed Mohamed Elwi, fell as martyrs; this Kuwaiti group was working on military attrition and dispersal of the enemy, whether by targeting machinery or sniping individuals, in addition to their capacity to destroy some military trucks, and protecting some areas and buildings⁽¹⁾.

(1) The Bayt Al- Qurain group was formed of : Sayid Hadi Sayid Mohamed Elwi, head of the group; Amer Farag Al- Anzi; Youssef Khidr Youssef Ali, Badr Nasir Abdullah Al- Aidan, Ibrahim Ali Safar Mansur, Abdullah Abdul-Nabi Mandani; Khalil Khair-Allah Abdul-Karim Al- Baloushi; Khalid Ahmed Mohamed Al- Kandari; Hussein Ali Gholoum Rida; Mubarak Ali Safar Mansur; Jassim Mohamed Ali Gholoum; Mohamed Uthman Ali Al- Shayi'. This diversity in the members of the resistance group reflects that all the classes of the Kuwaiti society insisted on resisting and repelling the enemy. This incident led by some of the nation's sons who gave their lives with their companions will remain a historical scene showing to which extent the Kuwaitis concerted and united during the invasion, and the capacity of Kuwait's children to overcome incidents with determination and faith.

The United Nations Security Council and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait

To the United Nations Security Council, the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait represented a shocking violation of international law. Therefore, after a few hours from the invasion, the Council strongly condemned this aggression, and assured the illegitimacy of what was taking place. Also, Kuwait and the United States asked for an emergency assembly of the Security Council, and the Security Council resolution 660 was passed on the 2nd of August 1990 CE, condemning the invasion and demanding the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait without any ties or any conditions. Four days after this resolution, on the sixth of August 1990 CE, the Security Council passed its resolution 661, expressing its extreme worry over the perpetuation of the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait and the defiance to the international legitimacy. It assured the natural right to self-defence against the aggressor, whether individually or in group, and the right to reply to the armed attack perpetrated by Iraq against Kuwait, in accordance with article 51 of the Charter. The Council also passed the resolution that Iraq had violated the authority of the legitimate government in Kuwait⁽¹⁾.

On 25th of August 1990 CE, the Council issued its resolution 665, whereby it indicated its insistence on ending the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait; and by the authority invested in that Council, it issued a resolution to impose sanctions on Iraq, in accordance with chapter seven of the Charter. This was followed by resolution 678 on the 29th of November 1990 CE, determining the 15th of January 1991 CE as a date for Iraq to end its occupation of Kuwait and withdraw its forces therefrom. There was a warning that in case of refusal and perpetuation of the

(1) See the book on the mapping of the boundaries between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq as acknowledged by the United Nations, prepared by Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, p. 6-17.

occupation, the Coalition powers “would use all the necessary means to end the invasion, including resorting to military power and using it”.

The Iraqi invasion deepens the conflict between the Arab states

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait caused a real crisis⁽¹⁾ in the Arab World, as although all of the Arab states declared that they did not accept the invasion, some of the positions and directions of these countries implied, through their political moves and diplomatic announcements, that they supported Iraq. a quick look at the stance of the Arab states during the crisis reveals to us that they were divided into two camps:

1. The camp supporting Kuwait; this camp included Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Lebanon, Somalia and Djibouti – in addition to the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.
2. The opposing camp, which included Yemen, Algeria, Jordan, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Libya, Tunisia, Mauritania and Sudan⁽²⁾.

Emergency Arab Summit in Cairo, 10th of August 1990 CE

The Council of the League of Arab States rushed to assemble on the 2nd of August 1990 CE, condemning the Iraqi aggression, and demanding the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraq⁽³⁾. On the 8th of August 1990 CE, the speech of the Egyptian

(1) The term “crisis” has been used to express several meanings on different levels, some personal, others national or international... etc. Raymond Tanter (& Richard H. Ullman ed.), “Theory and Policy in International Relations”, New Jersey, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1972, p. 126.

(2) “*Al-kuwait wujudan wa hududan*” (Kuwait, Presence and Boundaries) 3rd ed., 1997, see prev., p. 27.

(3) Maimunah Al- Sabah, “*tareekh al- atma’ al- ‘iraqiya fil-kuwait*” (History of Iraqs Greed in Kuwait), see prev., p. 199.

President Hosni Mubarak where he said “if we do not rectify the situation, war is inevitable”, bore the invitation to convene for an emergency Arab summit in Cairo. The Secretary-General of the Arab League commented on the invitation by saying: “It is the first time the invitation is made to the members through media broadcast”; this was tantamount to a message to everyone, reflecting and showing the danger of the Arab situation. The 10th of August⁽¹⁾ was set as a date for this anticipated summit to convene. The summit was attended by twenty out of the twenty-one Arab member states of the Arab League (fourteen presidents and kings and five delegations, in addition to the Palestinian Liberation Organisation; Tunisia was absent)⁽²⁾. With the beginning of the conference’s morning session, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia presented a draft resolution. It established the obligation and the confirmation to condemn the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait, Kuwait’s sovereignty and its independence, and the return of the legitimate ruling regime there; the Saudi draft resolution also included a request to move Arab forces to help its armed forces in defending its territory. (The Iraqi delegation was headed by Taha Yassin Ramadan, while the Kuwaiti delegation was headed by Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah).

The session witnessed a provocative statement made by the Iraqi delegation, that the invasion of Kuwait was the retaking of the Iraqi historic right to Kuwait. This statement created an atmosphere filled with tension, further blocked the horizon, and

(1) For example, Tunisia asked for postponement, and it was striking that King Al- Hassan II did not attend the summit. In the morning of the 10th of August, the previous meeting of the Arab Foreign Ministers and their delegations promised more misunderstandings and differences in the points of view.

(2) Present were: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Morocco, Somalia, Djibouti, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, Jordan, Palestine, Libya, Mauritania, Sudan and Iraq.

increased the dimension of the confusion which had occurred between the presidents and leaders of the delegations of the states participating in the conference, especially after the affronts, clashes and altercations⁽¹⁾ which took place between some delegations, whence the morning session was adjourned. At a quarter past seven in the evening of the same day, the evening closed session convened. The Egyptian President appeared even more tense and anxious that the summit would fail to reach a solution; he pointed to the Saudi draft resolution, and said that he would put it to the vote, asking those who approved it to raise their hands. In spite of some voices raised to oppose and others to approve the suggestion of the Egyptian President to put the draft resolution to vote, the matter was determined and votes counted. In fact, twelve states approved the Saudi draft resolution, namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Morocco, Somalia, Djibouti, Lebanon, and Syria, in addition to Egypt; while Iraq, Libya and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation⁽²⁾ voted against the draft; Sudan, Jordan and Mauritania had reservations on the draft⁽³⁾, while Algeria and Yemen abstained from voting, in addition to the absence of Tunisia⁽⁴⁾. With the end of the vote, the

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- (1) That was when there was news that the Iraqi President told a speech where he attacked Saudi Arabia and Egypt.
- (2) Later, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation declared that it did not oppose the Summit's decisions, and that abstaining from voting was to try and calm the situation, and in order for the decisions to be approved by all participating parties. It said that it supported a solution that would guarantee the safety and security of all, including Iraq, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Arab region as a whole.
- (3) Pierre Salinger & Eric Laurent, "*Guerre du Golfe. Le dossier secret*" (Gulf War. The Secret Dossier), see prev., p. 207.
- (4) See Kuwaiti National Assembly, Secretariat General, Research and Information Sector, Studies and Research Administration, "The relations crisis between Kuwait and the countries which stood by the Iraqi aggression", Marc 1997, prepared by Mudhfir Abdullah Al- Awadi, supervise by Ramzi Salama, p. 10.

summit came to an end, approving the Saudi draft resolution and adjourning the session.

We notice through these positions the extent of confusion, blurred picture and profound complexity of the crisis Iraq put the Arab Nation in, putting at stake its destiny, to the unknown. We also see that the crisis revealed the depth and disparity of the Arab-Arab discord, the disintegration and the loss of the capacity to unite around a determined opinion in unison.

Liberation of Kuwait, 26th of February 1991 CE

Facing the refusal of Iraq to abide by the international legitimacy, and its perpetuating occupation of Kuwait challenging international will, a military coalition was quickly formed, composed of 32 states, against Iraq and led by the United States of America - the biggest and most prominent power. The purpose was to execute the resolutions of the Security Council concerning the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait, unconditionally and with no reservation. These states were: Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, Italy, Argentina, Australia, Senegal, South Korea, Spain, Czechoslovakia, New Zealand, Holland, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, the United States of America and Britain.

After the military build-up, headed by Dar' al-Jazeera (which belongs to the Gulf Cooperation Council) which had been formed in 1984 CE, and which was the core of the effective cooperation of the Council's states in the Liberation War, with global consensus, the military troops immediately started to prepare for the liberation of Kuwait.

In fact, the battle of the liberation of Kuwait, or the "Desert Storm", started at the dawn of Thursday, the 17th of January 1991 CE, i.e. only one day after the end of the time limit given by

the Security Council to Iraq; it started with heavy air strikes on the Iraqi forces and their troops.

These strikes undoubtedly exhausted the Iraqi army, and destroyed large parts of the capacities that would allow it to remain and continue; it made the Iraqi military leadership realise that the continuation of its presence in Kuwait was a draining and highly costly process, on both the human and economic fronts.

In any case, after the exhausting air strikes' introduction, and at four o'clock at the dawn of the 24th of February 1991 CE, the ground warfare started, and the coalition forces were able to enter the Kuwaiti and Iraqi territories. The ground forces were divided into three major divisions; the first division moved towards liberating Kuwait; the second division surrounded the Iraqi army's wing in the west of Kuwait, and the third division moved in the extreme west to enter the Iraqi land and cut all the supplies to the Iraqi army.

Because of this land war, all the Kuwaiti territory was liberated; the official liberation of Kuwait took place on the 26th of February 1991 CE, after seven months of occupation. The military operations ceased in the middle of the night 27th-28th of February 1991 CE. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, commented in the morning of Thursday the 28th of February saying: "We hope this is the beginning of the end of this horrific tragedy". On the 2nd of March 1991 CE, the Security Council passed a resolution to stop military operations, and asked Iraq to inform the United Nations about the unconventional weapons it owned, and to release all the war prisoners it held. Additionally, it asked it to admit to its responsibility for the losses and harms that occurred due to the invasion of Kuwait. Iraq accepted these conditions on the 28th of March 1991 CE.

Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah was among the first leaders from al Sabah to return to Kuwait immediately after the liberation,

as in compliance with the martial law, he became the conventional ruler of the country. He presided the first meeting of the Cabinet on the Kuwaiti territory after the liberation, and he announced a general curfew in the country from ten o'clock in the evening to four o'clock in the morning, in order to complete the restoration of all aspects of security and stability in the country. After four months of application of these rules, they were lifted on the 26th of June 1991 CE.

The war ended after Iraq had vastly destroyed Kuwait's infrastructure and institutions, and pillaged and stole everything that fell under the Iraqi soldiers' hands. Additionally, for more intentional destruction, Iraq set fire and demolished more than 737 Kuwaiti oil wells before its withdrawal. These wells kept burning for nine months after the end of the war. Moreover, some sources have estimated that the quantity of petroleum Iraq pumped in the waters of the Arabian Gulf amounts to close to one million tons. Working on putting out the fire in the wells started in March 1991 CE, and on the 6th of November of the same year, the last inflamed well in Kuwait was extinguished.

On 3rd of April 1991 CE, the Council passed resolution 687 to confirm the commitment of all the member states of the United Nations to the sovereignty of the two states, Kuwait and Iraq, and their political independence. In the month of May 1991 CE, the Secretary-General of the United Nations also ordered the formation of a demarcation commission to configure the boundaries between the two countries. In the middle of April 1992 CE, the United Nations' demarcation commission announced the end of the configuration of the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait. It was done in accordance with the agreements and correspondence between both countries and in accordance with the resolution 833, which had been adopted with consensus on the 27th of May 1993 CE, making the Kuwaiti-Iraqi boundaries confirmed

international borders under the supervision of the United Nations Organisation itself.

In May 1993 CE, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, who was then Minister of Foreign affairs, sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, expressing the appreciation of Kuwait and its pride of the historical role played by the United Nations to end the operation of configuring the borders. The letter described the issue as having always been the major dangerous and real threat to the security and stability of the region.⁽¹⁾

(1) See the records of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros-Ghali, on the 24th of May 1993.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Aspects of the Activities of the Kuwaiti Society in Old Times

- Kuwait, the desert and the sea.
- The most important commercial activities and aspects in old times.
- Trade.
- Pearl hunting.
- Shipbuilding.
- Social activities in old Kuwait (learning, health, judiciary).
- Aspects from the old Kuwaiti legacy (Kuwait's flag, the Diwanis).

“The Kuwaiti society before petroleum is a Bedouin maritime society, pulled to the desert by parentage, and to the sea for a reason.”

(Abdul-Aziz Hussein)

Foreword:

In the old times, before the discovery of petroleum, the Kuwaiti society was a simple, quiet society, characterised by its bonding, solidarity and group work; a society conscious that the principles of counselling (*shura*) and common rule were the main guarantee for its unity and cohesion. It was a society which tolerated migrations and showed some important positivity to adhere them; a society distinguished by its flexibility and its capacity to open up to all cultures; a society always showing a big capability to confront and challenge; it was able to succeed, and preserve its existence and its entity, distinguished, far from fanaticism and sectarianism. Also, trade particularly played an important role in the openness of Kuwait and the Kuwaitis to the different peoples and cultures, as the Kuwaiti ships used to reach India and the African shores. Diving and pasturing were the bases on which the economy of the simple society stood; this economy was able, in a relatively short time, to grow and prosper, and even surpass that of many of the neighbouring areas.

The desert and the sea

The Kuwaiti society, like all the societies of the Gulf, is an entity where individuals are linked by diverse relations⁽¹⁾, which are also subjected to change, plurality and diversity⁽²⁾. Historical

(1) The Arabs used to call the village people “*hadira*” or “*hadirin*”, and the people of the land “*badiya*” or “*badin*”. Ibn Khaldun says that it appeared that Bedouins life was more advanced than cities and the towns, and were their origin since life in the cities and the towns were from the revenues of luxury and opulence that were inferior to the revenues of living necessity. For more, see Ibn Khaldun’s introduction, part 1, p. 127.

(2) Tawfik Al- Madini, “*al-mujtama’ al- madani wal dawla al- siyasiya fil watan al- ‘arabi, dirasah min manshurat itihad kuttab al- ‘arab*” (The Civil Society and the Political State in the Arab World, a Study from the Publications of the Arab Writers Federation), 1997.

evidence indicates that the Kuwaiti society, since its first stages, had inborn keenness on becoming a trade society far from tribal fanaticism or sectarian division, particularly after the Kuwaitis, individuals and groups, became attached with their loyalty to the legitimacy of the ruling authority embodied in the family al Sabah. With the arrival of these groups of al-Utub, their settlement in “Kuwait”, and the establishment of their authority, they were forming the nucleus that soon attracted many other groups of people who came from other neighbouring or near areas. And after that, Kuwait started its gradual march towards the transformation into a new demographic attraction centre in the region of the northwest of the Arabian Gulf.

It was not strange that after its trade development and flourishing, Kuwait received more consecutive migrations, especially from the desert, where there is pressure from the situation of instability and poverty that characterise life in the desert. Gradually, the nature of the society after establishment started appearing, as well as the agglomerations of the population which lived there, this simple society, the aspects’ nature of which were determined by two major factors, the first: “tribalism”, the second: “family”. These two factors represented the simplest form of the concept of “population”. There was also this integration between both land and sea activities that represented another side of this simple society that developed and got shaped within the context of achieving complete settlement, as both parties were able to acquire and live in the Kuwaiti cities and villages which embraced them as one tissue. This was probably the most important and prominent thing which distinguished Kuwait from the other neighbouring trade regions since its foundation⁽¹⁾.

(1) Had the Kuwaiti community not been qualified to absorb all these migrations, it would not have been able, later, to integrate and fuse everyone in the life of the new community. And the city would have failed to assimilate all these consecutive =

The most important commercial activities and aspects in Kuwait in old times

Due to the lack of fresh water, the harsh climate and the sandy nature of its land, most of which is not suitable for agriculture, Kuwait since its foundation had to search for trade relations and commercial activities that would secure life for it and for its inhabitants. This would be through trade, transportation, fishing and pearl hunting, or other similar activities⁽¹⁾.

First: Trade

The Kuwaitis took the reasons of trade and considered them necessary to compensate them for what the desert nature of Kuwait failed to give them; trade in Kuwait in the old times was the cornerstone of economy. And it seems that the first aspects of the tendency of Kuwait's children to be tradesmen, as mentioned by the historians, were reflected in their division of tasks amongst themselves: governance by al Sabah, maritime works by the Jalahma, and trade and its issues by al Khalifa⁽²⁾. The low custom fees also participated in attracting more trade and traders to Kuwait's ports⁽³⁾, particularly as trade, broadly speaking, was the

= migrations or to benefit from them (cohabitation and population integration). For more see the study by Abdullah Al- Hajeri, tackling the problematic of the historical roots of the Bedouin and city duality in Kuwait since the foundation until 1962. Arab Journal for Human Science, Majlis al- Nashr al- 'Ilmi, Kuwait University, 2013.

(1) See also Adel Mohamed Al- Abd Al- Ghani, "*al-iqtisad al- kuwaiti al- qadim*" (Kuwaiti Economy in the Past), Qabas Press, 1987, Preface.

(2) This narrative might be the first recorded historical sign of the Utub's direction towards trade since the foundation. Sources also prove the arrival of the Utub themselves aboard a huge fleet of ships that many writings and indications of the Western travellers mentioned. The Ottoman document that we referred to previously also tackled this.

(3) It is common knowledge that the custom fees were set according to the country's financial needs.

only source of income, given the absence of other natural resources. At the beginning, these fees stayed out of any legal realm that would organise them, and they were taken as payment in kind. When trade expanded, a 1% tax was imposed on imports only, and then it was raised to 2%. In 1865 CE, the fees increased to 3%, then to 4%. During the reign of Sheikh Mubarak, it was decided that there should be special regulations for it; he founded and established the first independent office through which financial revenues were collected through the means recognised at that time. Listing and recording were made through this office, within the prevailing possibilities and the level of trade performance; the fees were raised to 5% on imports, including the merchandise which arrived from the Ottoman lands.

The authorities also realised the importance of trade and its role as a main economic affluent to its sources of revenue, so it purposefully did not raise the taxes and the *mekous*, as this appeared to be an imperative and important matter that attracted the merchants, and encouraged the ships to anchor in the Port of Kuwait. Also, due to the facilities offered by the authorities, Kuwait became an important substitute to the other ports, mainly Basra and al-Qutaif which had higher taxes; this factor was an additional reason which participated in attracting the ships as well as the trade agencies of the European companies. Additionally, there was care and security, and the reputation of the Kuwaiti rulers to be correct and fair, and to offer care and security to its visitors. Additionally, the authorities' interest in land trade and land transportation generally made the integration between both sea and land activities more active and positive. It enabled the merchants to transport their merchandises quickly, in a way that made land trade a completing element to the maritime trade activity. Land caravans transported what the Kuwaiti ships brought, or other merchandise, whether from India, East Africa, Baghdad, or Aleppo in northern Syria, then these merchandises

would be on their way to Europe and the other regions, and commercial outlets⁽¹⁾. Medical doctor Edward Ives decided to travel with one of the caravans from Kuwait; he landed on the island of Kharg where Kniphausen (the director of the Dutch Agency in Bushehr) hosted him. Ives and his companions agreed with Kuwait's Sheikh to be transported from Kuwait through its territory by land to complete their trip to Europe. The caravan was composed, according to him, of five thousand camels, and five thousand men who drove them⁽²⁾. This huge number shows us the extent and the size of the land activity in the City of Kuwait at that time. The reports of the British authorities confirm this, as they relate that Kuwaitis enjoyed security and peace, that Kuwait's Sheikh possessed wide power and authority, and that the desert's tribes owed him... all along the shore⁽³⁾.

This local trade of the Kuwaiti merchants with the nearby regions formed another important vital affluent to the Kuwaiti economy. Many local texts recorded the forms of these trades, particularly the *musabala*; it is said that the Kuwaiti merchants were reputed to give to those they worked with, from Najd and the close regions, time to pay. Also, the famous Najdi horses were exported to Baghdad through Kuwait⁽⁴⁾.

(1) The Kuwaitis' skills were made clear when the Sublime Porte issued a decree towards the end of the eighteenth century, forbidding the Christian ships from trading through the Red Sea, where there are the holy sites near Mecca and Medina. This decree made the Arabian Gulf's ports generally gain much importance, as they became the centres from where the merchandises were exported to India and the East. Since Kuwait was one of the most active of these ports, it benefitted a lot from this situation.

(2) As Dr Edward Ives said in 1758 in his report; see B. J. Slot, "Kuwait: The Growth of a Historic Identity", prev., p. 145-147.

(3) Id., p. 139.

(4) Abu-Hakima pointed to Arab horses imported from Kuwait and Basra, exported to India in 1816, amounting to 1500 horses. Ahmed Mustafa Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al-kuwait al-hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 105-106.

Second: Pearl hunting and extracting

In the old times, the sea represented a source of sustenance and livelihood. It also played an important role in forming the nature, order and shape of the Kuwaiti society, because of the different living activities it provided. The profession of pearl hunting or diving for pearls was closely linked to the Kuwaitis' lives since the foundation⁽¹⁾. Pearl hunting and extraction was the most important old economic profession performed by the Kuwaitis⁽²⁾, and one that they were known for⁽³⁾. al-Rasheed says: "Pearls in Kuwait are of a great importance felt by each individual of its people, young or old, poor or wealthy..." he adds: "A large number of Kuwait's people work in pearls"⁽⁴⁾. As to al-Qinai, he writes: "The conditions of the pearl hunter at the beginning were very feeble... then his living improved because of the rise in the pearls' prices... then the diver was upgraded, and most of Kuwait's fortune came from pearl hunting". While al-Shamlan relates: "The big majority of the Bedouins were divers, i.e. 90% of the general population were divers, and this matter is surprising and astonishing"⁽⁵⁾. With the end of the season of pasturage and the approaching summer, Kuwait's Bedouins used to go to the city of Kuwait and its villages; they would go in the sea during diving

(1) Abdullah Youssef Al- Ghoneim, "*al lu'lu'*", (The Pearls), 2nd ed., Kuwait, 1998.

(2) Seif Marzuq Al- Shamlan, "*tareekh al- ghous 'ala al- lu'lu' fil-Kuwait wal-khalij al- 'arabi'*" (History of Pearl Diving in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf), part I, Kuwait, 1975, p. 39.

(3) Yacoub Youssef Al- Hajji, "*min al- folklore al- bahari al- kuwaiti'*" (Kuwaiti Maritime Folklore), Kuwait, Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 2009, p. 40.

(4) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait'*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 72.

(5) Seif Marzuq Al- Shamlan, "*tareekh al- ghous 'ala al- lu'lu' fil-Kuwait wal-khalij al- 'arabi'*" (History of Pearl Diving in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf), see prev., p. 379.

season to find sustenance therein; then after the end of the diving season, the Bedouins would go back to their pasturages and their previous living places. The profession of pearl hunting and extracting was undoubtedly a hard and dangerous job, especially considering the dangers that the divers were exposed to under the water, which often took their lives.

Pearl hunting has a specific season that starts in the month of May of every year, and generally ends in the month of September⁽¹⁾ or October. This period is the one considered most appropriate for pearl hunting, due to the convenience of the sea currents and the blowing of the wind, and especially because divers cannot work in the cold weather in winter⁽²⁾. Those who work in pearl hunting are divided in two groups; the first group are those who extract it first-hand from the sea, and those who help them in this task; they are called the “divers”. The second group are those who trade with the pearls, the “*tawawish*”⁽³⁾. The beginning of the diving season is called “*al-raqbah*”, and the return is called “*al-qifa*”.

The crew on the diving ship is composed of several individuals. al Shamlan indicates that the number of sailors differs from one ship to the other; “once, the number of sailors on a Kuwaiti ship called ‘Nayef’ amounted to one hundred and nine individuals”⁽⁴⁾; groups were divided, each to do a certain job, and the most important jobs the diving ships’ crews were famous for were:

(1) Mohamed Yacoub Al-Bakr Al-Hadaq, “*mawsu’at sayd al-samak fil-kuwait*” (Encyclopaedia of Fishing in Kuwait), 1st ed., Kuwait, Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 2000.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheed, “*tareekh al-kuwait*” (History of Kuwait), see prev., p.73.

(3) Those working on the diving ships are called “*bahara*” (sailors).

(4) Al-Shamlan, “*tareekh al-ghous ‘ala al-lu’lu’ fil-Kuwait wal-khalij al-‘arabi*” (History of Pearl Diving in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf), see prev., p. 272.

The *nawakhetha*: He is the leader of the ship and its captain. He is responsible for the ship and its crew, in addition to being responsible for determining the places where to dive and look for the pearl cultures, “*al-hayrat*”. The *nawakhetha* must have the capacity to know the courses and routes, and be familiar with the naval directions. The *nawakhetha* was also to make all the decisions; he was the one entitled to give permission to the sailors to leave the ship, and he guaranteed the safety of its crew. There is also the *mjaddami*: This is a title given to the chief of the sailors, who is responsible for managing the ship from the inside. Then there is the *ghaiss*, the person who dived at the bottom of the sea looking for the shells; the *saib*, the person in charge of drawing the diver when the latter pulls the rope (*al-aid*), in addition to the job of the assistant *ghaiss* to open the shells. Finally, there is the *neham*, who is the person that chants the folk songs to encourage the ship’s crew during their journey. al-Qinai says: “The sailors follow the ship which has a *neham* with a pleasant voice”. There is also the job of the “*radif*” who are the youngsters performing tasks below the *saib*.

The diving tools used by the divers

The divers perform their task hunting for pearls with some tools including⁽¹⁾:

- *al-fitam*: a nose pin made from the animals’ bones; the divers use it to control their breathing.
- *al-hajar*: a piece of heavy lead or stone that helps the diver to descend to the bottom of the sea.
- *al-aid*: The diver’s security rope through which the *ghaiss* is pulled and drawn from the bottom of the sea to the surface of the water.

(1) For more, see Al- Shamlan, “*tareekh al- ghous ‘ala al- lu’lu’ fil-Kuwait wal-khalij al- ‘arabi*” (History of Pearl Diving in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf), prev., p. 363.

- *al-talay*: a long rope left at the back of the ship; it is used as a rescue rope for the divers.
- *al-diyin*: a basket or a nosebag that the diver attaches to his neck to gather the shells.
- *al-khabt*: Palms put on the fingers of both hands to protect them from the corals⁽¹⁾.

About the names of the pearls, al-Rasheed says that one pearl is called “*hasbah*”, while the more beautiful is called *jiwan*, then *khesna*, then *quluwa* then *na’ima* and *buqua*; the one with intense blue is called *sinjabaassi*. The most important places where these pearls were extracted were Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and al-Qutaif. Pearls extracted from these areas were considered the best and finest. Bahrain was one of the most famous markets for the Kuwaitis after Bombay, where pearl marketing was concerned; many Kuwaiti merchants preferred to sell the pearls there due to its closeness, and the easiness to reach it. However, with the end of the first quarter of last century, after the appearance of the artificial Japanese pearls⁽²⁾ in 1928 CE, one can say that the pearl hunting job has been hit by recession, as many of the Kuwaitis working in this profession had to abandon it and look for other jobs.

Third: Fishing

The profession of fishing comes after pearl hunting and trade transport as one of the sources of revenue in Kuwait before the appearance of petroleum. The Kuwaiti shores were famous for

(1) According to Al- Qinaï, the most famous divers in the old times were the houses of Ibn Rumi, Ali Bin Saeif, Abu Qumaz, Abu Rasli, Al- Dabous, Saud Al- Mutairi, Al- Falah, Nahidh, Ibn Midf, and Al- Mana’i. See Al- Qinaï, “*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*” (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., p. 70-72; see also Al- Shamlan, “*tareekh al- ghous ‘ala al- lu’lu’ fil-Kuwait wal-khalij al- ‘arabi*” (History of Pearl Diving in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf), prev., p. 305.

(2) Abdullah Youssef Al- Ghoneim, “*al lu’lu’*”, (The Pearls), see prev.

their quietness and warmth, and for the abundance and variety of fish types there. Before petroleum, fish was undoubtedly considered one of the main foods to many of the citizens living on its coasts, and an important source of income for them. Moreover, the diversity of fish types present in the Arabian Gulf's waters generally has helped the first Kuwaitis to specialise in this job and be famous for it. The Kuwaitis have learned about the different types of fish which they used for eating or trading; among the most important types were the *sobayti* (sea bream), *zobaydi* (silver pomfret), *hamoor* (Arabian grouper), *sabbour* (pulasa), *nuwaybi* (silver croaker), *meyd* (mullet)... and others. The Kuwaitis used to dry and salt the fish to profit from it; either by selling it in the other inland regions of the Arabian Peninsula, or by consumption and storage. As to the means of fishing, they were diverse; the most important way may have been fishing with the *qarqoor* which is a kind of fishing tools that has an opening which lets the fish in; it is made mostly of palm leaves and wire; the length of one *qarqoor* is between half a metre and two metres. The bait used was usually the small fish or shells and some algae. The *qarqoors* were placed at the bottom of shallow water between the corals; the hamour fish as well as other fish used to be the biggest part of the catch⁽¹⁾. This job did not stop after the discovery of petroleum like shipbuilding and pearl hunting did, as fishing remains an important landmark of the old Kuwaiti legacy⁽²⁾.

Fourth: Shipbuilding

Throughout its history, Kuwait has been famous for embracing many of the important professions and best shipbuilders in the region. Also, Kuwait's ships since old times have been characterised

(1) There is also the "*haddaq*" where nylon threads of different sizes are used. In addition to the most famous traditional method, fishing nets.

(2) For more, see Adel Mohamed Al- Abd Al- Ghani, "*al-iqtisad al- kuwaiti al- qadim*" (Kuwaiti Economy in the Past), prev.

by their solidity and quality; Dickson, the British Agent in Kuwait said that the best and finest ships in the Gulf were built in Kuwait. In his book "Sons of Sindbad", Alan Villiers, the Australian traveller says that Kuwait's sea façade extends over two miles, and is composed of one big workshop to build transportation ships. Shipbuilding was called "caulking", and the "caulker" was the ship maker. Caulking included a number of workers supervised by the "chief of the caulkers" or "the professor", as he was called⁽¹⁾. The professor had an assistant called the *mjaddami*, who also replaced him if he was absent.

Material used for shipbuilding in the old times:

To build ships in the old times, they used wood, iron, nails, clangour, garner for paint and varnish, in addition to ropes and cords that were used to fill the gaps between the logs.

Kinds of ships used in Kuwait in the old times:

Since old times, there have been many kinds of ships in Kuwait. Some have been used for diving, some for transportation and trade between the different ports and countries, and some for traveling. Some of the ship makers in Kuwait in old times were known as the *Bahrainis*, in relation to some people who had come from Bahrain, Muscat and some of the ports on the eastern side of the Gulf, and worked in this profession⁽²⁾.

(1) See Suleiman Al- Awadi, "*kuwait al- madi*" (The Past Kuwait), 1st ed., 1987, p. 15.

Some say that in 1912, Kuwait owned about 461 diving ships, with an average of 20 divers per ship. As to Raunkiaer who visited Kuwait in 1912, he reported that Kuwait owned some 500 ships for pearl diving, and that each ship needed 30 individuals to work on it. See Abdul-Mo'ti, "*al-kuwait bi 'uyun al- akhareen*" (Kuwait through the Eyes of the Others), prev., p. 120.

(2) For more, see Adel Mohamed Al- Abd Al- Ghani, "*al-iqtisad al- kuwaiti al- qadim*" (Kuwaiti Economy in the Past), prev.

The most important kinds of ships in the old times were:

The boom: a kind of sailing vessel with a pointed front; the small ones were used for diving, while the big ones were used for the trade journeys. The boom are divided into several types, (*boom safar, boom qita', boom maa, boom ghous, boom hamal mashy, boom tashala*). The Kuwaitis also called the boom “*al-baghlah*”, as Rihani indicates⁽¹⁾.

The jalbout: a ship built with the front shaped as a right angle, and a back almost square, made of wood painted with bitumen then covered with iron sheets, according to Rihani⁽²⁾. It is considered the main diving ship, and is divided into several types, (*jalbout qita', jalbout ghous, jalbout tawash, jalbout safar, jalbout keet, jalbout kitr*).

There are also the *shou'i*, the *bateel*, the *sanbook*, the *baqara*, and the *warajiyah*, which were kinds of ships different in size and shape; some were used for fishing close to the shores, some were used for the pearl hunting journeys, some were used for diving and fishing together. As an example, the *baqara* was a kind of ship that was used for quick water transportation between the big ships and the Gulf shores. The *qara* was mostly used for diving in short distances. As to the *hawri*, it was one of the smallest ships in size, and it was made of tree trunks; the trunks were carved and levelled in the shape of a boat. There was also the *warajiyah*, which is made in the shape of a small boat, and is usually used for fishing near the shores. The *warajiyah* is characterised by its simplicity and beauty of its appearance, and the cheapness of the material with which it is built. The *warajiyah* was given as an example, and is famous in the Kuwaiti legacy,

(1) Rihani, “*muluk al- ‘arab, al- hijaz al- yaman ‘asseer lahij wal nawahi al- mahmiya*” (Kings of the Arabs, Hijaz, Yemen, ‘Asir, Lahij and the Protected Areas), see prev., p. 667.

(2) *Id.*

“*warajiyah* bleeds itself by itself”; this is said about anything that fixes itself by itself⁽¹⁾.

The works and journeys of the Kuwaiti ships have expanded until they reached several countries in East Africa and the Indian subcontinent. Some even reached Mozambique⁽²⁾.

Social activities in old Kuwait

Learning

Learning in Kuwait in the old times was linked to the economic and social conditions prevailing at that time, and that was due to poverty, the narrow economic base, the need for a sector of services and the lack of presence of educated people. Education in Kuwait went through two stages; the first one was prior to the formal education, and was the period of religious education and *kuttab*s (schools). The second period was the period of formal education in formal schools, the first of which was the al-Mubarakiya School inaugurated in 1911 CE.

First: Religious education

1. **The Mosques:** The Mosques and the circles of knowledge and learning which were held there at the hands of some *ulemas* represented the first form of unformal education in Kuwait. Usually, education in the Mosques was restricted to learning the disciplines of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *hadeeth*, *tafseer* (interpretation), reading of the Quran... and other

(1) See Yacoub Youssef Al-Hajji, “*al-kuwait al-qadeema, suwar wa thikrayat*” (Ancient Kuwait, Pictures and Memories), prev., p. 27.

(2) Yacoub Youssef Al-Ghoneim, “*malamih min tareekh al-kuwait*” (Aspects from the History of Kuwait), Kuwait, 1999, p. 31. Among the signs that show Kuwait’s pride of its maritime legacy nowadays, is that its flag is decorated with the image of a Kuwaiti *boom* ship, making it the emblem of the state, as well as the national coins. It expresses the deep attachment of Kuwait and its people to its legacy related to the sea in general, and to shipbuilding and expertise therein in particular.

sciences related to these branches. However, with the expansion and growth of trade which Kuwait was starting to witness, there was an imperative need in the society for the existence of educational systems, other than the Mosques, which would perform the task with more specialisation and quality, and these were the *kuttab*s⁽¹⁾.

2. **The *kuttab*s:** According to al-Qinai, there was no education to mention in Kuwait when it was founded, but there were the *kuttab*s where young children learned the principles of writing and mathematics, and reading the Quran in the old way. The tutor was called “*mutawa*”. Undoubtedly, the *kuttab* played a major role in the education process in Kuwait in the past. The *kuttab* was the only way to teach youngsters in Kuwait the principles of reading, writing, and mathematics, and to learn the Holy Quran in this period preceding the construction of schools and the introduction of formal education. Education in the *kuttab* was restricted to limited social classes (the financially well off). Also, the interest in educating the males was more widespread than educating the females, in such a way that it reflected the reality of the basic requirements, and the societal and economic conditions of the simple Kuwaiti society at that time. The person in charge of the learning process at the *kuttab* was the *mulla* or the *mutawa*'⁽²⁾ for the males' education – or the *mutawa'a* for

(1) Mohamed Bin Abdul-Rahman, “*al-ta'lim fi makka wal-madina fi akher al- 'ahd al- 'uthmani*” (Education in Mecca and Medina at the End of the Ottoman Reign), 3rd ed., Riyadh, Dar al- 'Ulum, 1985, p. 125.

(2) The *mutawa*' had no binds and was not under authorities' directions, nor did he have a stable financial income, yet he was chosen naturally according to his work and capacities. For more, see Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, “*britannia wal-musa'adat al- ta'limiya al- kuwaitiya li imarat al- sahil al- mutasalih (1953-1971)*” (Britain and the Kuwaiti Educational Aid to the Trucial States, 1953-1971), Arts and Social Sciences Annals, thesis 330, yearbook 31, Academic Publication Council, Kuwait University, March 2011.

the females' education. The *kuttab* in the past also had some traditions it was famous for. The student would pay the *mutawa'* fees called "*dakhala*", which was money or a gift paid to the *mulla* or *mutawa'* the first time the boy would join the *kuttab*; then there was the *khamissiya* which was a small financial sum or gift in kind which was paid by the student or his family every Thursday. There were also the *nafila*, '*idiya*, *fitra*, *juz'* and *khatma*, all money or gifts also paid to the *mutawa'* at the different religious occasions such as *Mouled al-Nabi* (the Prophet's birth), or the *Fitr* and *Adha* feasts; or the child would learn a *juz'* (part) or *khatma* from the Quran.

The *mutawa'* had particular ways to punish the negligent. There was a famous sentence amongst the students' parents in the past: "You get the meat and we get the bones"⁽¹⁾, which meant leaving the door of punishment open to the *mutawa'* the way he saw suitable to chastise the boy if he made a mistake. Among the most famous punishments undertaken were to beat with the stick, called "*juhaisha*" or "*falqa*", besides the "*sanqa*", which is a chain, the tip of which is fixed by a heavy piece of wood, and the other tip attaches the boy's foot. Although there were no programs or curricula the *mutawa'* had to follow, this traditional way of learning has participated with an active role in spreading education, and has represented the first nucleus of education in Kuwait in the old times.

Second: Formal education

The first formal school to be established in Kuwait was the Mubarakiya School, in 1911 CE. The idea of establishing it came during a celebration at Sheikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai's office. The merchants imposed taxes on themselves to finance it together

(1) Abdullah Khalid Al- Hatim, "*min huna badaat al- kuwait*" (Kuwait Started Here), prev., p. 77-80.

with the people's donations. The second step came with the opening of the Ahmadiya School in 1921 CE, which largely relied on support from the people. However, education in both these schools did not meet with the modern developments that were taking place in some of the countries like Egypt, Syria and Iraq, for example, as both these schools lacked classes for girls. In 1936 CE, due to the political development witnessed by Kuwait, especially after the creation of the *baladiya* councils and others, the *majlis al-ma'arif* (Ministry of Education) was founded. This was an important step towards the development of the educational conditions in Kuwait. Formal education started taking a more systematic shape, and educational programs, which were as close as possible to the programs of some of the other Arab nations, were ratified. Some new disciplines were introduced, like the English language and mathematics. The number of students at both the Mubarakiya and Ahmadiya schools was estimated at 600 students, and the teachers were 26⁽¹⁾. The *idarat al ma'arif* (administration) which is the equivalent of the first official council for education in Kuwait, proceeded to bring the first Arab delegation from Palestine in 1936 CE; delegations followed consecutively after that, and new schools were inaugurated until in 1945 CE they were 17 schools, including 3635 students (males and females)⁽²⁾. In 1937 CE, the first school for girls was established⁽³⁾, and the number of girls who attended it at the beginning was estimated at 140; they had five mistresses⁽⁴⁾. With

(1) Al-Farhan, "*mukhtasar tareekh al-kuwait*" (Summary of Kuwait's History), see prev., p. 112.

(2) Yacoub Youssef Al-Hajji, "*al-kuwait al-qadeema, suwar wa thikrayat*" (Ancient Kuwait, Pictures and Memories), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 1st ed., 2001, p. 33-39.

(3) *Id.*, 3rd ed., 2004, p. 108.

(4) Al-Farhan, "*mukhtasar tareekh al-kuwait*" (Summary of Kuwait's History), see prev., p. 112.

the beginning of petroleum production and its exportation in 1946 CE, a big number of its revenue was transferred to raise the social and living standards; this made education take a bigger place in the interest of the authorities that gave it special consideration, and provided it with more interest. In 1950 CE-1951 CE, the number of male students reached four thousand five hundred and twenty, in addition to approximately one thousand seven hundred and seventy two female students⁽¹⁾. In 1953 CE, Thanaweyat al-Shuyukh was inaugurated, and in 1960 CE the number of schools in Kuwait had reached around one hundred and twelve schools distributed between kindergarten, primary, middle, secondary and institutes⁽²⁾. Then, after independence and the declaration of the Constitution, the law of compulsory education was passed in 1965 CE, followed in 1966 CE by the law to regulate higher education, and the creation of the University of Kuwait by a Princely decree in April 1966 CE. The university began teaching on the 15th of October of the same year; it started with the faculties of science, literature and education, under the name *koliyat al-‘ulum wal adab wal tarbiya* (College of Science, Literature and Education). The University College for Women was also established four years after the declaration of independence, and in April 1967 CE, a Princely decree was issued to create the faculties of law, *shari’a*, commerce, economics and political science. It was followed by the establishment of the colleges of business administration, medicine, engineering and petroleum, social sciences, *shari’a* and Islamic studies, the faculties of allied health sciences and nursing, the faculty of pharmacology, and the faculty of dentistry. The university’s march continues till this

(1) *Id.*

(2) According to Al- Farhan, these statistics include the schools of the cities, towns, villages and islands. For more, see Al- Farhan, “*mukhtasar tareekh al- kuwait*” (Summary of Kuwait’s History), prev., p. 112.

very day with close to sixteen additional faculties for higher studies.

Health in Kuwait in the past

Undoubtedly, Kuwait, like all the regions of the Arabian Gulf, has used popular medicine since the old times. This meaning herbs, desert plants, burning, as the inhabitants of Kuwait and the Gulf have not known modern medicine until the dawn of the twentieth century, and that was due to poverty, lack of education, and the absence of hospitals, doctors and care centres. Abu-Hakima says: "Kuwait had a good reputation among the nations of the Arabian Gulf regarding health"⁽¹⁾, although Sheikh Youssef Bin Issa al-Qinai says: "As to health, tell me about it, the people of Kuwait have been there for over 200 years, and there is no medicine there except the old people's"⁽²⁾.

As to Lorimer⁽³⁾, he reviews the health conditions in the Gulf and says that the Arabian Gulf has known many epidemics like Cholera that hit Kuwait, transmitted by the sailors and the fishing boats, and Plague which spread in the Arabian Gulf and was called "black death". Kuwait was also subjected to waves of this epidemic through Basra in 1773 CE⁽⁴⁾, then again in 1831 CE. The local narrative tells that when this disease attacked Kuwait, most of the houses were emptied from their inhabitants, and the people failed to bury their dead in the cemeteries, so they

(1) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth* (1750 - 1965 CE)" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 203.

(2) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 21.

(3) Lorimer, J. G., "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia", part 6, Qatar ed., 1968, p. 3645-3710.

(4) Khalid Fahd Al- Jarallah, "*tareekh al- khadamat al- sihiya fil-kuwait min al nashaa hatta al- istiqlal*" (History of Health Services in Kuwait since Foundation until Independence), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, 1996, p. 19.

buried them in their houses. Then, the epidemic of Smallpox hit Kuwait in 1932 CE⁽¹⁾, and the deaths were estimated at three thousand; the Kuwaitis called that year the year of the Smallpox⁽²⁾.

The missionary delegations introduced medical services more broadly in 1910 CE, and they helped spread the modern medical treatments⁽³⁾. This probably happened after Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah asked Dr Bennett, - one of the missionaries who used to treat Sheikh Mubarak's daughter when he visited his friend Sheikh Khaz'al, the ruler of al-Muhammerah - to come to Kuwait and work there⁽⁴⁾; this must have encouraged the missionaries to go to Sheikh Mubarak and make a request to establish a dispensary. The dispensary was actually inaugurated, followed by the construction of the first governmental hospital in Kuwait in 1913 CE⁽⁵⁾. This hospital was also called the American Hospital, and it was one of the very first hospitals in the region of the Arabian Gulf (in spite of the goals and the preaching performed by the medical delegation). Among the first doctors to work in this

(1) It is a contagious disease transmitted from one person to the other; it is characterised by a rash of black bubbles on the skin.

(2) Khalid Fahd Al- Jarallah, "*tareekh al- khadamat al- sihiya fil-kuwait min al nashaa hatta al- istiqlal*" (History of Health Services in Kuwait since Foundation until Independence), see prev., p. 37.

(3) *Id.*, p. 44.

(4) See Abdullah Mohamed Al- Hajeri, "*mubarak al- sabah wa khaz'al al- ka'bi 'awamil al- nagah wa tada'iyat al- inhiyar - 1896-1915 - dirasa mukrana*" (Mubarak Al- Sabah and Khaz'al Al- Kaabi, Factors of Success and the Implications of Failure), Journal of the Faculty of Arts Annals, Academic Publication Council, Kuwait University, 2013.

(5) "*Al-qawafil wal-rahalat al- irsaliya al- amrikiya fi mudun al- khalij wal-jazeera al- 'arabiya - 1901-1928*" (American Missionary Caravans and Journeys in the Cities of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula, 1901-1928), translated by Khalid Al- Bassam, 2nd ed., Dar Qortas, Kuwait, 2000, p. 100.

hospital were Dr Bennett, Eleanor Calverley, and Mary Allsen⁽¹⁾. Calverley records her testimony on the medical conditions in Kuwait by saying that Kuwait was a clean and healthy place in comparison to its neighbours⁽²⁾. The charity organisation that was established in Kuwait in 1912 CE also helped the poor, the needy and the orphans by opening the first national polyclinic to cure the poor Kuwaitis, as a reply to the preaching activities. The organisation called a Turkish doctor, but the organisation's activity stopped after approximately one year because of the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 CE.

Kuwait officially started to offer formal medical services in 1932 CE after the opening of *da'irat al-baladiya* (municipal district), and the *baladiya* supervised the vaccines' campaigns which were launched in 1932 CE. In 1936 CE, the public health department (*da'irat al-sihha al-'ama*) was created. In 1938, the legislations passed by the Legislative Council provided for the enactment of a health law that would safeguard the country from the dangers of epidemics. Additionally, in 1939 CE, the first governmental dispensary was inaugurated; it had only one doctor. It was followed in 1944 CE by the inauguration of a dispensary for women. And in 1949 CE, the first governmental hospital was opened and was called *al-mustashfa al-amiri* (the Princely Hospital)⁽³⁾, under the auspices of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber. At the beginning, the hospital had 45 beds, an operating room, a pharmacy and a laboratory. In 1950 CE, the sections of preventive medicine, radiology and laboratories were established. In 1954 CE, a hospital for common diseases was established. In 1955 CE, a centre to

(1) "*Tareekh al-ta'lim fi dawlat al-kuwait*" (History of Education in the State of Kuwait), Centre for Research and Studies of Kuwait, Kuwait 2002, p. 125-126.

(2) Abdullah Khalid Al-Hatim, "*min huna badaat al-kuwait*" (Kuwait Started Here), prev., p. 49.

(3) Suleiman Al-Awadi, "*kuwait al-madi*" (The Past Kuwait), see prev., 80.

combat Tuberculosis was established, as well as centres for maternal and infant health. Additionally, in 1960 CE there was a celebration for the inaugural of al-Ahmadi Hospital, and subsequently, the opening of hospitals, medical centres and dispensaries perpetuated⁽¹⁾, after they had been in the past just simple services matching the nature of the life and conditions that prevailed then.

The judiciary in old Kuwait

The judiciary in Kuwait since its foundation was a judiciary that relied mostly on authority itself. In the beginning, the ruler was the one who had the role of the judge in many issues; al-Rasheed assures: "al-Sabah did not charge anyone with the judiciary when they first came to Kuwait's land; the one who handled it then was the one who was chosen by the rivals". He added that the people of the desert had what was known as the *salifa* or the custom (*'urf*)⁽²⁾. Also, Lorimer, referring to the reign of Sheikh Sabah II said that the Sheikh used to retain the political power, but the legislative power was in the hands of a judge⁽³⁾. As to Abu-Hakima, he says: "The local narrative... shows clearly that the judgements considered in Kuwait then did not follow the rules of the *sharia* as much as they followed the *salifa*"⁽⁴⁾. Perhaps with the development of the society, and the variety and entanglement of its complications, the system of appointing judges for them to be a reference to solve the legal

(1) Khalid Fahd Al- Jarallah, "*tareekh al- khadamat al- sihiya fil-kuwait min al nashaa hatta al- istiqlal*" (History of Health Services in Kuwait since Foundation until Independence), see prev.

(2) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 92.

(3) Khalifa Al- Waqyan, "*al-thaqafa fil-kuwait, bawakir itijahat*" (Culture in Kuwait, Early Directions), 1st ed., Kuwait, 2006.

(4) See Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), prev., p. 34.

disputes and conflicts between the people started to be followed; yet the ruler still reserved in many cases his role as the judge among all. However, in the twentieth century, in 1931 CE specifically, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah ordered the creation of a courts' chamber in Kuwait. About the first person who was in charge of the Kuwaiti judiciary in the past, al-Rasheed⁽¹⁾ and Abu-Hakima⁽²⁾ said that it was Sheikh Mohamed Bin Fayrouz. al-Qinai⁽³⁾ handled the list of consecutive judges in Kuwait since Sheikh Mohamed Bin Fayrouz until the end of Sheikh Mubarak's reign, and he mentioned that they were nine judges, and probably most of them were from the al-Adsani family⁽⁴⁾.

The Kuwaiti flag

After its foundation, Kuwait did not have a particular flag. Until the period of Sheikh Mubarak's reign and prior to independence, Kuwait has known many flags, and the looks of

(1) Abdul-Aziz Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 92.

(2) Abu-Hakima, "*tareekh al- kuwait al- hadeeth (1750 - 1965 CE)*" (Modern History of Kuwait [1750 - 1965 CE]), see prev., p. 35.

(3) Al- Qinai completes the scene by saying: "It is said that after Ibn Fayrouz, the position of the Judge was held by a man from Al Jalil, and when Mohamed bin Abdul-Rahman Al- Adsani arrived from Al- Ahsa, he resigned from his position. See Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), prev., on the history of the Kuwaiti judiciary, p. 38-40. Al- Rasheed also mentions that due to a conflict between Sheikh Mohamed Salih Al- 'Adsani and Sheikh Ali Al- Sharikh on a religious issue, Sheikh Ali Al- Sharikh became in charge of the judiciary in compliance with the wish of Kuwait's ruler then, Sheikh Abdullah Al- Sabah. Ibn Rasheed says: "Sheikh Abdullah Al- Sabah called Sheikh Ali and charged him with the judiciary telling him, 'I will give you a free hand to do the duty, even on me'." See Al- Rasheed, "*tareekh al- kuwait*" (History of Kuwait), prev., p. 94.

(4) Al- Qinai, "*Safahat min tareekh al- Kuwait*" (Pages from the History of Kuwait), see prev., p. 38.

the Kuwaiti flag have changed many times. It is believed that the first flag in Kuwait was the *Salimi* flag (a red flag with a white dented band close to the mast); this is the flag that was raised during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah I⁽¹⁾. As to the second flag which was raised by Kuwait, it was the Ottoman flag, around the year 1871 CE, after the agreement and conciliation which took place with Midhat Pasha, the Ottoman *Wali* in Baghdad at that time, following his famous campaign in al-Ahsa. Then the third flag was raised; it was red in colour, with the word “Kuwait” (in Arabic) marked in the middle of it; it is one of the well-known flags in the history of Kuwait⁽²⁾. Lorimer says that Sheikh Mubarak used to say that he, and before him his father and his grandfather had raised the flag with the crescent on it as a symbol of Islam not as subordination to the Ottomans⁽³⁾. After the Battle of Sarif in 1901 CE, Sheikh Mubarak raised a new flag in 1903 CE, red in colour with the words *tawakalna ‘ala Allah* (we trust in God) written on it. Also in 1914 CE, Sheikh Mubarak raised a flag consisting of a red background and in the midst of it the word “Kuwait” in Arabic. This flag remained the recognised national flag until the reign of Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber who added to it the sentence “*la ilah illa Allah Mohamed rasul Allah*” (there is no god but God, Mohamed is God’s messenger). Then in 1940 CE, the al Sabah drawing known as the claw (*burthun*) was added⁽⁴⁾. In 1961 CE, after independence, the four coloured flag

(1) “*‘Alam al-kuwait, rihlat maatayn wa khamsin ‘am*” (Kuwait’s Flag, a Journey of Two Hundred and Fifty Years), *Sijil al-Ahdath al-Jariya*, (registry of current events), No. 34, ninth year, April – May – June 2005, p. 61.

(2) During the reign of Sheikh Salim Al- Mubarak, the two *shihadas* were added to it.

(3) Lorimer, J. G., “Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia”, part 3, see prev., p. 1562.

(4) Yacoub Youssef Al- Hajji, “*al-kuwait al- qadeema, suwar wa thikrayat*” (Ancient Kuwait, Pictures and Memories), see prev., p. 68.

was raised (the actual flag); since that time, a law concerning it has been promulgated, law 26 for the year 1962 CE to specify its shape and its colours. The flag has a rectangular shape, its length is the double of its width; it is divided in three equal horizontal parts, the top part is green, then white and then red. The actual flag also has a trapezoid in black colour with its largest base towards the mast⁽¹⁾.

The *Diwaniyas* and their role in the old Kuwaiti society

Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al Sabah says: "Democracy is a Kuwaiti choice... and the Kuwaiti democracy is not artificial, it has Kuwaiti roots and origin, it is of Kuwaiti method and values⁽²⁾... our democracy is not imported, it is deep-rooted in the souls of the Kuwaitis"⁽³⁾.

Undoubtedly, linking between the contemporary democratic practices in Kuwait and the practices of the old Kuwaiti society based on counselling and participation is a matter that characterises this society as democratic since foundation and establishment. For example, in the old times, the *diwaniya* played an important role in the life of the Kuwaiti society to root and consolidate democracy in that society; it is one of the tools of the social, cultural and intellectual legacy of the Kuwaitis. The *diwaniya* is also the most important cultural traditions inherited by Kuwait's children⁽⁴⁾. Nowadays, the *diwans* are among the characteristic phenomena of the Gulf society, and especially Kuwait, particularly

(1) See Abdullah Khalid Al- Hatim, "*min huna badaat al- kuwait*" (Kuwait Started Here), prev., p. 383.

(2) From Sheikh Jaber Al- Ahmad Al- Sabah's speech in March 1992.

(3) Sheikh Jaber Al- Ahmad Al- Sabah's speech at the first anniversary of Kuwait's Liberation, 22nd of February, 1992.

(4) See Khalid Al- Maqames, "*al-diwaniya al- kuwaitiya wa taathiraha fil-hayah al- niyabiya*" (The Kuwaiti Diwaniyas and their Influence on Parliamentary Life), 1st ed., 1986, p. 17.

that it is described as the political, democratic, cultural and social breather of the citizens⁽¹⁾. It is also the sole regular forum to the public and the private, where the global societal conditions are tackled, whether political, cultural, economic, or pertaining to the community. The participation of the *diwaniya* in the political field was more obvious during the political crises (1921 CE – 1938 CE), and during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 CE. Its role appeared to be very active from the very first moments of the invasion; the *diwanis* were like political and social organisation through which the secret organisations of the Kuwaiti resistance appeared. The elements of the resistance disappeared inside the *diwanis*; additionally, they organised the arrangements and groupings after or before any new resistance operation. Moreover, there were the cooperative committees that started to be formed and shaped inside the Kuwaiti *diwaniya*, and the administrative divisions were determined through it. The Kuwaitis used to store medicines, appliances and surgical instruments, and others in the *diwans*.

It also had a media role that was obvious since the first moments of the invasion. The occupying Iraqi forces had imposed almost complete media blindness in Kuwait, and this pushed some of the *diwans* to specialise in gathering news through the radio stations and television channels; some people were selected to gather and analyse the news, then broadcast it. There were also *diwans* specialised in transmitting the Kuwaiti government's follow-up operations in al-Ta'if. Also, some intellectuals in Kuwait started visiting the *diwans* to explain and analyse the development of the events. Based on all this the *diwanis* started asserting themselves and their roles as a centre and a point to plan the

(1) See Mohamed Abdullah Al- Hajeri, "The Development of Political Interaction in Kuwait through the 'Diwanis' from their Beginnings until the Year 1999", Journal of the Islamic Law and Culture, Vol. 12, No. 1, April 2010.

administration of the country's affairs after the liberation. The political associations organised their seminars in the presence of the other associations, whether opposing or supporting, like the democratic and Islamic association, and the national association, given the absence of the parliament, the Cabinet, and the rest of the institutions.

Also, during the periods when the National Assembly (*majlis al-umma*) was dissolved, the *diwans* were used as instruments to pressure the government to bring back parliamentary life after it had been suspended - although they were sometimes subjected to constriction, and the restriction of the political activities taking place there⁽¹⁾.

Nowadays, the *diwaniya* is still the most influential and active phenomenon, because it has been able to maintain a healthy and effective political and social participation through obvious realms. It is the most mature and most linked with the general good, in accordance with the mechanisms of the traditional, ancient and historical heritage, so that some described the *diwaniyas* as being the unofficial parliaments.

(1) Mary Ann Tetreault, "Kuwait Democratic Reform Movement", Middle-East executive report, in Shafiq Al-Ghabra, "Voluntary Associations in Kuwait: The Foundation of a new System?", Middle-East Journal, 1990.

Epilogue

What concerns us at the end of this historical narrative is the confirmation that Kuwait and its society is a pure Kuwaiti product, an emirate which was made and founded by the first fathers of its children; they ruled it by themselves; they encountered difficulties; they lived and faced huge pains and events between victories and defeats, hopes and ambitions... They resisted, they resisted and they won... a nation that they made and preserved, independent and unsubverted, an open country, accepting different cultures and migrations. Kuwait and its history stayed witness to their glorious works and doings... What we have reviewed through this historical narrative is only a confirmation that the Kuwaiti identity has never been linked to the city of Kuwait, or its walls, or its villages, or its tribes, but it has been linked to the capacity of this diversified society to succeed, to march under the umbrella of a clear political system. The historical reading of the history of our nation and our society will stay honourable, and an important affluent to guarantee the continuing brilliance of the Kuwaiti identity and its distinction.

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