



'The Bedoun': Kuwaitis without an Identity

Abdullah M. Alhajeri

To cite this article: Abdullah M. Alhajeri (2015) 'The Bedoun': Kuwaitis without an Identity, Middle Eastern Studies, 51:1, 17-27, DOI: [10.1080/00263206.2014.941357](https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2014.941357)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2014.941357>



Published online: 09 Sep 2014.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 716



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)

‘The Bedoun’: Kuwaitis without an Identity

ABDULLAH M. ALHAJERI*

Kuwaiti identity, from the early beginnings, has always been structurally complex, based on two components: The first component is represented by the Bedouin tribes who settled in Kuwait; the second component is represented by the small groups and individuals who were already living in ‘Al-Kut’¹ or those who came and settled after the arrival of the tribes.² These two components constituted the community of the Emirate which unified all those groups in a coordinated, harmonious social, political and cultural system. However, researchers were unable to determine the exact nature of the social makeup of the residents of Kuwait prior to the arrival of ‘Al-Utoob’ tribes,³ and later the selection of the ‘Al-Sabah’ branch, which is one of the three branches that immigrated to Kuwait, in addition to ‘Al-Khalifa’ and ‘Al-Jalahmiah’, to rule the Emirate. Consequently, the Emirate evolved and had its own community system whose coordination and harmony are the bases of the political philosophy of the Emirate and its basic social foundations.

In order to achieve social growth in the Emirate, the rulers from the Al-Sabah family set out to promote the commercial and economic nature of the inhabitants who were a mixture of various emigrant tribes and nationalities from the neighbouring regions in the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Iran and the Levant, in addition to minorities from other regions. This community started building partnerships and cooperation with various adjacent areas by virtue of natural extension and proximity.

In fact, the issue of *Bedoun* did not constitute, in the early beginnings, a problem for the population of Kuwait. This issue did not exist until nearly the mid-twentieth century, when it began to emerge and impose itself strongly following the 1959 Nationality Law, and it began to surface more clearly after Independence in 1961.

Many researchers believe that the origins of *Bedoun* go back to Arab tribes, like Shummar, Enezeh, Al-Dhafeer and al-Khawaled, in addition to the Syrian semi-desert – Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.⁴ There were also numbers of emigrants from the eastern coast of the Arabian Gulf (for example, Arabs and Persians from Iran), in addition to the Northern Tribes.⁵ The reasons for those migrations may vary between security, political, social, economic and tribal, but what is sure is that

*Associate Professor of Contemporary and Modern History of Kuwait, Faculty of Arts – History Department, Kuwait University, PO Box 23558, Safat 13096, Sabahiya B.4 St.9 H.189, Kuwait. E-mail: abdullaa@yahoo.com

all these reasons have combined and overlapped in a complex formation that contributed to the creation and the exacerbation of the issue of *Bedoun* in Kuwait later on.

There is no one definite, conclusive definition of the word '*Bedoun*' in Kuwait. Ever since the problem emerged, accurately determining its designation and nature were subject to many determinants, factors and influences, especially political ones, but many of the definitions that describe the term Kuwaiti *Bedoun* apply, more or less, to the concept of 'lack of citizenship for an individual, and hence a foreigner'. Neither this situation nor the label is limited to Kuwait as it is spread widely in some Gulf States.⁶ However, the legal definition of the term '*Bedoun*' remains the dominant one. A Kuwait law expert explains it thus: 'The term is mostly used to refer to those social groups who have not been able to prove their citizenship and did not provide proof of affiliation and access to nationality of another state'.⁷

Moreover, careful historical surveying of the label '*Bedoun*' in Kuwait reveals that the authorities were not clear as to how to deal with those people. Although they were historically labelled '*Bedoun*', the designation did not find its way as yet in the state's official documents,⁸ as all were citizens of the State of Kuwait in the 1950s. In the 1960s, the term Kuwaiti 'Semi-desert' or 'Desert People' was used to refer to the stateless people. However, in the 1970s the term '*Bedoun*' appeared for the first time referring to those stateless people, followed in the 1980s⁹ by the term 'non-Kuwaiti', symbolized by the authorities as 'NK'. Later on, before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990, this group was termed 'unidentified nationality', but after the liberation a new label was used: 'Unknown Identity', which later changed to 'Illegal Residents'. The authorities, from the 1960s, treated those people like Kuwaitis, except for political rights. They were not discriminated against in jobs and various social rights relating to education and health care, just like other Kuwaiti citizens.

Since independence in 1961, the authorities have treated the stateless people in a straightforward way, especially since many have lived in Kuwait for a long time, and many have kinship links and relationships by marriage with established Kuwaiti families. In addition, the government needs their skills in various fields of work or in the army; therefore, they were readily employed in various ministries, especially the Defence Ministry, where they formed a large percentage of the army personnel. From social and humane perspectives, their children were accepted in public schools, and they and their families enjoyed health care. However, in time, and with the large increases in migrants to Kuwait, and considering the government's commitment to their naturalization and employment, the authorities began to feel growing pressure and started to treat the stateless people more cautiously and stringently; it can be said that the authorities (represented by the government) started to deny them many of their rights and gradually relieved itself from its commitments towards them.

***Bedoun*: Stateless Kuwaitis or without Nationality**

To start with, we can safely say that the term *foreigner* does not in any way apply to the vast majority of Kuwaiti *Bedoun*, since, according to the Declaration of Human Rights approved by the United Nations¹⁰ on 13 December 1985, Article 2, the word *foreigner* indicates that he/she most likely does not have historical or social links

with the country he/she lives in. This description is entirely inconsistent with the fact that the stateless people in Kuwait are already long-term residents in Kuwaiti territory. Moreover, the younger generation have been born and educated in Kuwait and are connected by marriage with a lot of Kuwaiti families and tribes, which makes describing them as foreigners incorrect.

The Kuwaiti decree, issued in 1959, defined Kuwaitis precisely as 'those who settled in Kuwait before 1920, and continued to reside therein'. However, the researcher will find this definition very puzzling, because although the decree accurately determined those who count as Kuwaitis, it did not specify the criteria used to assign citizenship for Kuwaitis, excluding the others, especially since an authentic census of the inhabitants in the various historical periods of Kuwait was only carried out in 1962, which clearly makes the decree's description a limited one, resulting in the exclusion of individuals who did meet the official criteria from the official records of the state. Hence, the above specification greatly helped to create and aggravate the problem later on.

If we sift through the literature, and local historical records, which mention the number of inhabitants in Kuwait, we often find severe contradictions. For example, Carsten Niebuhr, who wrote about Kuwait during his visit to the Arabian Peninsula from 1763–65, mentioned that the population was 10,000 people, dropping to 300 in summer.¹¹ Others¹² mentioned that the population of Kuwait in 1830 decreased to about 4,000 people because of the spread of the plague,¹³ but in 1900 the number reached 10,000–12,000 inhabitants. In 1937, there were about 75,000, while in 1948 the number reached about 85,000.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti historian Abdulaziz Al-Rashid offers a local account, saying that, 'The plague that hit Kuwait in 1868 almost wiped out the entire population had it not been for its people who came back'.¹⁵ This local account confirms that most censuses depend on incorrect data, and that local tales had a big role in promoting them without grounds or real, monitored controls.

It can be said that immigration to Kuwait or the population numbers specifically before 1962 did not have official records, adequate input, or properly documented estimates, especially statistics for births and deaths.¹⁶ When the state started to pay attention to the matter, especially between 1962 and 1967, many immigrants had already entered the country illegally, and the official government departments then could not enumerate them in an accurate and organized manner.¹⁷

It is worth mentioning that some tribes and clans that resided in Kuwait before 1921 obtained citizenship by establishment,¹⁸ although the authorities knew well that many of these tribes and clans had connections in the neighbouring regions,¹⁹ and lived in Kuwait on and off. Based on this, the authorities have admittedly established the important principle which reserves the right of branches, families and members of these tribes and clans in the regions adjacent to the cities and villages and in the Kuwaiti desert to gain citizenship, with the full knowledge that these groups lived a nomadic life and moved permanently and did not settle in a specific city or village (but they were dependants of and subject to the rule of the Sheikh of the Emirate from the Al-Sabah family), as was the case during the era of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah (1896–1915). Thus, many members of these tribes, clans and families had the right later on to acquire Kuwaiti citizenship in light of the privileges provided by the government.

Many individuals and groups did settle in Kuwait without acquiring nationality, but later, according to the authority's domestic laws, they were considered aliens (non-citizens); at the same time, according to international law, they were considered stateless.²⁰ But this does not mean that Kuwaiti *Bedoun* do not have the identity of the areas from which they migrated or where they used to live, or even do not have connections and tribal affiliations, many of which are in the areas of land under the authority of Kuwait in the first place.

Anyone who examines the historical development of this problem will find that a large part of it relates to the structure and mobility of the population in the Gulf region before the establishment of the state and the independence of the countries of the region. Before the issuance of the Citizenship Law,²¹ national ID cards (and passports) were given to Kuwaitis in the era of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber (1921–50); Kuwaiti passports were issued in 1936, but it is not clear on what basis those passports were given, or according to what standards they were granted to individuals, especially since it was not clear who was Kuwaiti because of the lack of a citizenship law before 1959.²² Moreover, the Kuwaiti Citizenship Law number 2 was legislated in 1948, and it was unknown to many and therefore could not limit the number of Kuwaiti citizens at that time.²³

An observer of the evolution of the situation will note that the ruling establishment (the authority) in many cases used the power²⁴ that could be provided by some tribes and people living on the outskirts of Kuwait²⁵ as a political card during the crises that Kuwait underwent. At one of the meetings of the Legislative Council in 1938, the subject of immigrants was one of the items discussed ('the status of non-Arab elements'), and at that time when the question about any intention to deport any of these elements (called 'incidental refugees') was raised, the answer of the representatives of the Council was that anyone who lived in Kuwait before the end of the First World War was a national.²⁶ This brings us back to square one, which is: based on those facts, what are the standards employed in the origination of Kuwaiti identity and citizenship?

This shows that the historical problem of *Bedoun* is largely the result of the ambivalent treatment by the authorities at the different stages. Those who lived in Kuwait before 1920 are called citizens by establishment,²⁷ but until 1938 and later there was no clear and decisive mechanism to tackle the problem in a systematic manner based on clearly defined criteria. It seems that the authority itself was not willing to engage with the problem, especially with the increase in drilling for oil and the attempt of every authority to claim sovereignty over the greater part of the land and tribes to establish a legitimate claim even for a small portion of the oil revenues, or to use them as political chips in any future negotiations (as in the issue of demarcation of the borders between Saudi Arabia and Oman and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and the attempt of Saudi Arabia to attract tribes into the region in what is known as the Buraimi problem).

However, in spite of that fluctuation and the incomplete treatment, the authorities could not allow naturalization without controls. The authorities' cause of statelessness – which started to develop and grow after 1938 due to the regulations and policies of the Legislative Council, after it was confined to the sweeping powers of the emir,²⁸ found it necessary to resort to modern legislation which could form the identity of the new state in a more organized way, unlike the tribal affiliations, relationships of kinship,

intermarriage and places of concentration that controlled the affiliations of many of the population, so that citizenship becomes the only criterion governing the relationship between the individual and the state.

In one of the statistics that dealt with the community and population status of Kuwait, the results for the period between 1860 and 1975 were as follows: 1860, 10,000 inhabitants; 1937, 75,000; 1952, 160,000. In 1957, on 27 February, the first official census was carried out by the Department of Social Affairs, data collection was completed in two days, so on 1 March 1957, the total population of Kuwait was 206,473 (132,058 males, and 74,415 females); the number of Kuwaitis was 113,622 (59,154 males, and 54,468 females), and the number of expatriates was 92,851, which means that the ratio of Kuwaitis was about 55 per cent. In 1975 the total number of inhabitants was about 991,392; the ratio of Kuwaitis fell to 47.4 per cent.

Those estimates clearly indicate an increase in population size in the period following the discovery of oil, reaching 6 per cent in two years (1950–52). This could be an indication of the mechanism, status and shape of the demography, especially when we know that the increase in the year 1965 reached 47 per cent of the total number of inhabitants, with an annual ratio close to 14 per cent.²⁹ Hence, we can understand that the growing pressures of the population, the migrants and the displaced to Kuwait compelled the state to deal with the issue one way or another, so it found itself forced to grant Kuwaiti citizenship to many and to naturalize a lot of those present on its territory, whether nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes, so that the number of those who obtained Kuwaiti citizenship between 1965 and 1975 reached 55,000,³⁰ in addition to the many families that were resident in the neighbouring Arab countries and returned to settle in Kuwait. There was also the short-term stability and continued migration of residents of the desert to the villages and cities within the borders of the Emirate.³¹

In the relatively short period between 1965 and 1970, we find that the ratio of Kuwaitis in 1965 was 52.7 per cent, and the ratio of non-Kuwaitis was 40.7 per cent, while in 1970 the ratio of Kuwaitis fell to about 46.4, and the ratio of non-Kuwaitis was 45.3 per cent of the total population.³² Based on the above statistics, we find that the number of non-Kuwaitis, whether *Bedoun* or otherwise, residing in Kuwait until 1970 is significantly more than the number of indigenous people and formed a clear disparity in the fabric of the demography of the state,³³ but the government considered that a normal situation and had not taken any measures to reduce or control it, especially after population growth began to rise by about 19.6 per cent annually. This high rate could be acceptable if population growth was the result of a natural and proper process, but it is noticeable that this increase was the result of successive migration processes, as well as the naturalization process that the state adopted or was forced to adopt.³⁴ But overwhelming population growth in the number of expatriates and immigrants to Kuwait was an accelerating pressure factor, and the state failed to control its mechanisms or subject it to firm measures. Thus not accommodating these numbers and naturalizing them meant more problems for the state, which was keen to avoid any situation that increased internal pressures, not to mention external harassment and threats. Granting Kuwaiti citizenship to more immigrants, especially from the desert and nearby areas, put real pressure on what used to be a heterogeneous and stable population structure.³⁵ The state conceived that one solution to this problem was to speed up naturalization on a political basis,

especially for the tribes of the south, so the naturalization of its members was greatly expanded, unlike the northern tribes. The reason might be that the authorities had suspicions of impending problems with the Iraqi side.

Although it was possible for the state to extensively grant citizenship in order for the Kuwaiti Bedouins who lived on its territory and in the surrounding areas on its borders with some neighbouring countries to be able to earn their living before the appearance of oil, it is unacceptable for the state to extensively grant citizenship to some immigrant individuals and groups without regard to whether they are eligible for nationality or not, because of the long-run consequences of their acquisition of Kuwaiti citizenship. That was a strong motivation for more individuals and groups to come to Kuwait who either wanted to get citizenship or who saw that being close to their relatives, who had already obtained citizenship, would provide them with a source of livelihood.

Since 1957, the word 'non-Kuwaiti' began to appear in the state's official records and statistics, and consequently they began to appear as ratios next to Kuwaiti ratios in the various population statistics, demographic reports and others. After the issuance of the Citizenship Law in 1959, many people, including individuals, inhabitants and immigrants from neighbouring areas started to demand citizenship, but the standards and regulations established by the state at that time stood in the way of many being eligible for citizenship,³⁶ especially when the state conceived that the expansion of citizenship might pose a future danger because of the consequent legal obligations, political rights, and the like. At the same time, the authorities were aware that many of these tribes and their members who migrated to Kuwait belong to the same ethnic, religious and cultural components of the indigenous population of Kuwait (most likely, the vast majority came from the Arabian Peninsula,³⁷ in addition to some who came from Mesopotamia and Persia, and small groups from the Levant). Here lies the real problem: an analysis of the authorities' approach to the issue from the beginning shows that they wanted to maintain as far as possible the credibility of its commitment to the process of naturalization, but at the same time wanted to avoid the negative consequences of naturalization on the demographic composition of the country, on its legal and political status, as well as on its borders, which means that there was a desire for naturalization but also fear of its consequences, and therefore hesitation to settle the matter once and for all.

Aggravation of the Problem because of Oil

Kuwaiti society witnessed a fundamental change both economically and demographically as a result of the discovery of oil. This society in which the majority of the population came from the Arabian Peninsula found itself after the discovery of oil changing into a vast field of work and a magnet to immigrants. The change started with the exportation of the first shipment of oil in 1946 with the presence of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber; the revenues of that shipment reached about \$800,000, creating a clear shift in the Emirate's income and consequently the income of its people. In turn, the oil revenues were followed by enormous population increases, so in the period extending from the 1950s to the 1980s the population of Kuwait increased about ten times, and consequently the urban areas on which the people lived also increased about ten times.³⁸

That increase in the urban areas meant more internal and external migration. The internal migration was by the Bedouins who lived in the expansive Kuwaiti desert, and the external migration was from neighbouring areas and countries. That human influx led to the establishment of a number of government departments, including passports and nationality.³⁹ Nonetheless, since the state found itself required to provide social, cultural, health and habitation services, it did not mitigate the increase in the severity of the problem, because people were increasing in numbers. Whenever the state improved its services, there was increasingly more migration,⁴⁰ and this in itself is a serious imbalance in the elements of the equation. Kuwait's urgent need in the boom of the transition to oil revenues forced the authorities to accept these migrants, and to work on further expansion in the provision of services.

Indeed, the failure of the government to take firm action regarding the quality of immigrants was also a catalyst that led to the arrival of many individuals and groups who were not qualified, did not have technical experience, or were illiterate,⁴¹ in addition to the illegal migration of a lot of infiltrators.⁴² The results of such migration to Kuwait represented year after year a continuing aggravation to the cause of this category that did not bear the nationality of the countries of origin that carry nationality but deserved Kuwaiti nationality or aspired to acquire it.⁴³

Meanwhile, the authorities turned a blind eye to areas of concentrated population densities of migrants and expats, which the state could not accommodate in terms of size and density; nor could many of these groups in these areas integrate fully into Kuwaiti society,⁴⁴ which failed in turn to absorb these people, with cultures, customs and traditions that were considered by many Kuwaitis as alien to their society. In the past, migration was in small numbers over intermittent intervals, so they could be accommodated and co-existed with.⁴⁵

That complex situation was the result of citizenship and naturalization laws and the population 'shift' (the *Bedoun* themselves),⁴⁶ because many of them failed to prove eligibility for citizenship but continued to adhere and submit to the various influences (tribal, nomadic, religious, or customs and traditions) which led to the loss of their rights. We should also not rule out the factor of widespread illiteracy, which effectively contributed to the lack of realization of these groups of the importance of acquiring citizenship, especially since the country was going through a transitional phase between a primitive tribal society to a society of civil institutions and a constitutional system.

But this also does not absolve the government of stalling, disregard and hesitation. All these may be reasons behind the cancellation by many people of their identities of origin and their claim of belonging to that segment in the hope of one day obtaining Kuwaiti citizenship. They wanted to take advantage of the economic benefits conferred by the state on its citizens, and the *Bedoun* as well; the state used to employ them and treat them as citizens.

It also became apparent later that shortening the period of the announcement on the request of the Kuwaiti citizenship, and the weakness of the campaign for awareness of the importance of acquiring citizenship at that time, especially among the population living outside the city after 1959, were significant reasons for the loss of the rights of many. Moreover, the requirement of residency in Kuwait between 1920 and 1950 as a condition for citizenship of various degrees may have contributed to the increase of the problem for this group, especially if we know that there were not

any official, documented and accurate statistics that can be referred to in order to ensure the naturalization of all those eligible. All this should be seen in light of the continuous expansion of the oil companies, which compelled the state to build many houses for these groups that wanted stability in what was considered at the time as necessary measures on the part of the government for resettlement and naturalization.⁴⁷

The considerations established by the state in the naturalizing mechanisms raised a lot of questions; for example, in al-Jahra, those who obtained Kuwaiti nationality when they arrived represented 23.2 per cent, while those who received citizenship in Mina Abdullah constituted only 5 per cent. This forces the researcher not to neglect the key factors in trying to explain it, which are elections, the opposition, attracting votes and eliminating some of the leaders; the use of naturalization as an electoral pressure was practised extensively against the opposition.⁴⁸

Moreover, leaving the process of determining entitlement to citizenship in the hands of the committees formed mostly from urban areas was a predictor of further aggravation, complexity and entanglement of the case. Besides, the law itself gave the minister of the interior the right to grant citizenship to whomever he sees fit, provided the person has a legitimate source of income, has a good reputation, has not been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude or dishonesty, has performed services needed by the country, or rendered the country great services. The person should have resided in Kuwait from 1965, or before, and maintained residency until the issuance of the decree. These negative points added to the problem and significantly increased its severity later. Presenting a birth certificate, a marriage contract, or title to a property, with the testimony of witnesses in front of a committee composed by order of the minister of the interior were enough to get citizenship.⁴⁹ In addition, the government can grant citizenship to an alien who requests it, provided he has lived in the country legally for 15 years for non-Arabs and ten years for an Arab resident with a legitimate uninterrupted residency. It is noteworthy that in the reign of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem, citizenship was granted to anyone belonging to the tribes who had residency and obtained a high-school diploma.⁵⁰ The authorities' characterization of the problem of *Bedoun* as citizens of neighbouring or Arab countries who arrived in Kuwait from the beginning of the 1950s and the establishment of the oil companies, and increased in numbers, many of them hiding their identity of origin is not a justifiable or acceptable interpretation. Even recognizing the existence of such cases, this cannot be the rule. The correct view is that the authorities overlooked or ignored the problem in some periods at a time when the problem was intensifying and becoming more complex.

The state's preoccupation, with the political changes and the need to achieve a critical balance between the internal currents, and the changes that have occurred in Kuwait as a whole, including the population increases, was to provide more services in the absence of plans for a phased or radical solution to the problem of the increasing numbers of those who had not received citizenship while it was obtained by their relatives and many of their tribesmen, the continuous increases in the numbers of those who concealed their nationality, were infiltrators or illegal residents.

Overlooking all these things was a critical factor in the later explosion of the problem of *Bedoun*, which worries the authority, the government and the society. While it may have been acceptable two or more decades ago, today, in light of freedom and

democratic practices and others, it is now essential to solve this issue with all of its legal, political, and moral determinants.

***Bedoun* is an Issue with Several Determinants**

A historical survey of the issue of *Bedoun* does not offer a final solution without addressing the political, legal, social and moral determinants as well. There is no doubt that the absence of many determinants, the most important of which are political, in the treatment of this issue led to its aggravation. The outcome in the end may be the same – there must be a drastic solution, whether long-term or short-term. Through tracing the historical development of the problem, the researcher discovered that the authorities have always dealt with it from several different perspectives, most of which tend to serve the interests of the political framework of the state.

We are in no way blaming one party more than the others, but at the same time we assert that the absence or lack of cooperation between different institutions in the country, especially the legislative institutions, and the negative role of the authorities was the direct cause of the complexity of the case.⁵¹ We also cannot accept the authorities' view and its perspective of the issue, which considers that the existence of this category in Kuwait is illegal, and that they must return to their countries of origin and settle their legal status.

On the other hand, we cannot overlook that many of the members of this group are Arab nomads who lived in the neighbouring countries since the borders were open between the Gulf States before and after the issuance of the nationality laws. Furthermore, the citizenship laws and the way they were advertised, the spread of illiteracy and ignorance of the issues of civil life, and the refusal by some of them to obtain their identity by naturalization instead of by establishment made them fail to claim an identity card and register themselves as citizens of the state in which they live.

Granting citizenship to the *Bedoun* and giving them their civil rights involves the sovereignty of the state. Denying a legal and social right to a large segment is an extremely dangerous issue (for refusing to give them this right) and may lead to a real threat to the security and national identity of the community. On the other hand, those who see granting citizenship to the *Bedoun* and giving them their full rights as a historical and moral necessity may well be forcing the state to carry security, political, economic and probably social burdens it is unable to deal with at the moment.⁵² The issue will therefore continue to represent a real problem of tangled dimensions that needs a lot of effort from all parties of the community to solve it.

Notes

1. 'Al-Kut' was the old name of the Emirate of Kuwait. It was also called 'Al-Qrain'. For more information, see A. Al-Rasheed, *The History of Kuwait*, edited and annotated by Y.A. Al-Rasheed (Beirut: Al-Hayat Library), p.32.
2. Kuwait City was made up of several different social groups that blended into a unified society. There was social and economic interaction between those old groups and the groups that arrived from different areas: Najd, Al-Hijaz, Basra and others in varying degrees. For more, see B.A. Al-Khususi, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of Kuwait in the Modern Era*, 2nd ed. (Kuwait: Dar Alslasel Publishing, 1983), p.262.

3. Tribes represented by Al-Sabah, Al-Khalifa and Al-Jalahmah. See H.K.a.-S. Khaza'al, *Political History of Kuwait*, Part 1, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Al-Hilal, 1962), p.37. See also H.K.a.-S. Khaza'al, *History of Arabian Peninsula in the Era of Sheikh Mohammad Bin Abdulwahab* (Beirut: Dar Al-Hayat Printing, 1968), p.351.
4. S. Al-Shurai and A. Watfa, 'The Attitudes of Kuwait Students Toward the "Bidun": A Sociological Reading in the Dimensions of the Issue and its Implication', *Journal of Education* (Kuwait: Kuwait University, 2011), Vol.25, No.99, pp.15–75.
5. Some believe that the fall of Khaz'al in Arabistan, and the migration of more than 10,000 Iranians to Kuwait in 1939 was the main reason for a census project introduced by the Kuwaiti Legislative Council in its final days to discover the number of Kuwaitis of Iranian origin among the new immigrants, but the project was not carried out. For more information, see K. Al-Naqeeb, *The Struggle between Tribe and Democracy: The Case of Kuwait*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Al-Saqi, 1996), p.33.
6. See A. Al-Tamimi, Abdulmalek. *History of People in the Gulf region* (Kuwait: Publishing House dar al-qurtas, 2004), pp.103–20.
7. R.H. Al-Enizi, *Bedoun in Kuwait: A Legal Study of the Legitimacy of their Residency*, 1st ed. (Kuwait: Dar Al-Qurdhas for Publishing and Distribution, 1994), p.5.
8. Especially because there are no specific titles for Kuwaiti citizenship.
9. The cabinet decided in 1985 to cancel the term 'Bedoun' and use instead the term 'Non-Kuwaiti', and asked the people in question to submit their original nationalities to modify their status and offer them a valid residency for five years.
10. A foreigner is 'one who lives in a country of which he is not a citizen'.
11. The decrease is because most people go diving.
12. Mister Maker (a foreign traveller).
13. F.H.Y. Al-Abdulrazzaq, *Water and Population in Kuwait*, 1st ed. (Kuwait: Dar Al-Salasel Publishing, 1974), p.177.
14. H. Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait* (Kuwait: Dar Al-Salasel, 1981), p.169.
15. See Al-Rashid, *History of Kuwait*, p.96.
16. Although Kuwait had quasi-administrative systems that have been established early, like the Customs Department established by Mubarak Al-Sabah in 1899. See Al-Naqeeb, *The Struggle between Tribe and Democracy*, p.29.
17. Al-Abdulrazzaq, *Water and Population in Kuwait*, p.177.
18. Provided they continuously resided in Kuwait until the day of enforcing the law issued on 14 Jan. 1959. The law also considered Kuwaitis as those who settled in Kuwait before 1920, and still resided therein until the day of its publication.
19. Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, p.234.
20. According to the definition in Article 1 of the United Nations Convention relating to the status of stateless people, ratified in 1954, 'a stateless person is the one who is not considered a citizen by any state according to its legislations' – Al-Enizi, *Bedoun in Kuwait*, p.5.
21. The Citizenship Law No. 15 for the year 1959 on Kuwaiti citizenship governs citizenship and naturalization. Although Law No. 2 in 1948 organizing Kuwait citizenship had been issued earlier, it was not put into actual application until the issuance of Law No. 15 in 1959.
22. See R. Al-Enizi, *Kuwaiti Citizenship – A Study of the General Theory of Citizenship and the Emiri Decree No. 15 in 1959 Regarding Kuwaiti Citizenship and its Modifications*, 3rd ed. (Kuwait: 2000), p.19.
23. Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, p.230.
24. Until shortly before the year 1946.
25. Y. Al-Qina'e, *Pages from the History of Kuwait* (Cairo: Dar Sa'd, 1946), p.91.
26. Al-Naqeeb, *The Struggle between Tribe and Democracy*, p.33.
27. Those who arrived later got citizenship by naturalization or acquisition. According to the Law of 1959, Article 2 of Kuwaiti Citizenship Law: 'The Kuwaiti is anyone born – inside Kuwait or abroad – to a Kuwaiti father'. The explanatory notes of the rulings of Kuwaiti Citizenship Law commented on this Article as follows: 'Ever since the Kuwaiti was defined by the citizenship of establishment as stated above, it becomes easy to set an essential rule in citizenship issues which states that citizenship is acquired by bloodline; i.e. from father to offspring'.
28. Al-Naqeeb, *The Struggle between Tribe and Democracy*, p.29.

29. For more statistics and review of population numbers, see Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, pp.169–71, 184, 187.
30. In 1982 the number even reached about 137,000 people. For more, see Al-Naqeeb, *The Struggle between Tribe and Democracy*, p.39.
31. Al-Abdulrazeq, *Water and Population in Kuwait*, p.177.
32. Ibid., p.177.
33. M.R. Al-Feel, 'Historical Geography Of Kuwait', With Chains, Second Edition, 1985, pp.151–4, 156, 159.
34. O. Alfara, p.39.
35. M.A. Abd Al-Rasoul: Alfara, quoting Al-Naqeeb, Hind (p.184), *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, p. 185.
36. Al-Tamimi, Abdulmalek. *History of People in the Gulf region*, p.15. Also see Qabas newspaper, 20 August 2003, p.12. The most important condition was a proof of residence in the census of 1965.
37. R. Mallakh, *Economic Development and Regional Cooperation* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968) pp.5–6.
38. Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, p.163.
39. From 1954 to 1961, in addition to the following departments: Public Works, Police, Health, Customs, Housing, Justice, Publications, State Properties, Real Estate Registration, Finance, Electricity, Education, Ports, Municipality, Social Affairs, Post, Radio. See Al-Naqeeb, *The Struggle between Tribe and Democracy*, p.35.
40. For example, after *Nakba* (Catastrophe) in 1948, some Palestinians immigrated to Kuwait for better living conditions, and many of them were absorbed into government departments, industrial and commercial establishments, and others. See Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, p.164.
41. Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, p.165.
42. Infiltrators were carried in mostly for a fee. There was also quasi-legitimate infiltration, where many individuals who had a legitimate residency in Kuwait stayed on after the expiration of their residency and did not renew it or refer to the authorities, and thus considered illegitimate infiltrators. See M.A.: Abdo Mohammed Mahjoub introduction to studies Bedouin communities (methodology and application). Edition 2. (Kuwait: Kuwait Agency Publications), pp.275, 286–9.
43. Whether they deserve it or not.
44. Some populated areas have already begun to suffer from lack of some basic services.
45. Which helps to absorb them, but despite the shift to oil and the massive revenues the state failed to accommodate these groups, especially after some Arab countries started to urge their citizens to emigrate as labour to take advantage of them economically as well as get rid of any signs of grumbling due to the decline in income and the like in their own countries.
46. Especially after the discovery of oil – and demarcation of borders and independence in 1961 – the most important of which was the Al-Aqeer Treaty in 1922 which largely determined the features of the Emirate and its final borders in a modern international sense. Usually a society consists of population groups or social strata within environments that form the elements of their economic life and social behaviours in a stable framework. For more, see I.M. Al-Hasan, *Social Structure and Class* (Beirut: Dar Al-Olama', 1985), p.9.
47. Al-Naqeeb, *Social Development and its Impact on the Resettlement of the Bedouin in Kuwait*, pp.222–7.
48. S. Al-Sa'idi, a study in *Al-Qabas* newspaper, Kuwait: 14 Sept. 2003, p.12.
49. H. Al-Hidaw, Citizenship and the status of foreigners and their provisions in the Kuwaiti law, First Edition, 0.1973, p.93/94/107
50. But that measure was stopped soon after.
51. Without neglecting the divisions and the personal reservations by some of the committees set up to give Kuwaiti nationality and identity to some applicants.
52. A.A. Wadhfa, 'Bedoun in the Arabian Gulf: A Sociological Perspective', *Gulf Centre for Research*, Vol.78 (2011), pp.32–6.