

## The Politics of Protection in the Gulf: The Arab Rulers and the British Resident in the Nineteenth Century\*

*James Onley*

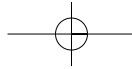
If Great Britain has become, in any sense, the arbiter and guardian of the Gulf, it has not been through a restless ambition urging her on to the control of the waste places of the earth, but in obedience to the calls that have been made upon her in the past to enforce peace between warring tribes, to give a free course to trade, to hold back the arm of the marauder and the oppressor, to stand between the slave-dealer and his victim.

Confidential Foreign Office memorandum, 1908<sup>1</sup>

Was Britain's role as 'arbiter and guardian of the Gulf' one it assumed in response to appeals from the Gulf Arabs, as the imperial memorandum claims? Or was British protection imposed on the Gulf Arabs, as some historians are now arguing? To address this highly contentious issue, this study considers British involvement in the Gulf in relation to the political system of nineteenth-century Eastern Arabia. What was the nature of Britain's relationship with the Gulf rulers from an Arab perspective? How did Britain's Political Resident in the Gulf fit into the regional political system? Through the process of answering

---

\* This article is based on research conducted in Bahrain, funded by the Bahrain-British Foundation; in London at the Oriental and India Office Collections (OIOC) of the British Library, funded partly by the Society for Arabian Studies; and in Oxford at the Middle East Centre of St. Antony's College. For reading drafts of this article and offering helpful comments, I am indebted to James Piscatori, Frauke Heard-Bey, Ahmad Al-Shahi and Gloria Onley. For helpful discussions on the article's subject, I would also like to thank Paul Dresch, Jill Crystal, Ali Akbar Bushiri, Nelida Fuccaro, Yoav Alon and Samer El-Karanshaw.



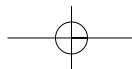
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

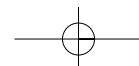
these questions, this study shows that Anglo–Arab relations cannot be explained solely by reference to the Anglo–Arab treaties, but that a detailed examination of the Gulf rulers’ involvement in the politics of protection is necessary to provide a realistic evaluation of what Britain’s presence meant in the Gulf.

### 1. Historical Background

British India’s initial interest in Eastern Arabia grew out of its need to protect its ships and subjects in Arabian waters. From 1797 onward, maritime toll-levying and raiding by Arabs of the lower Gulf—similar to bedouin practices along desert trade routes—increasingly threatened British Indian shipping.<sup>2</sup> To put an end to these practices, which they considered extortion and piracy, in 1806 the British blockaded a fleet of dhows belonging to the Qawāsīm (singular Qāsīmī), who they believed to be responsible, and in 1809 and 1819 sent naval expeditions against Qasimi ports on the southeast Persian coast and on the ‘Pirate Coast’, as they termed the Coast of Oman (the present-day U.A.E). After the second expedition, the British were able to impose an anti-piracy treaty—known as the General Treaty of 1820—on the rulers and governors of the Pirate Coast. The Rulers of Bahrain, who wished to avoid maritime toll-paying, were admitted to the Treaty at their request. To manage British India’s relations with these rulers, supervise the enforcement of the General Treaty, and protect British India’s ships and subjects in Arabian waters, the British created the post of Political Agent for the Lower Gulf, headquartered on Qishm Island in the Strait of Hormuz. Two years later, in 1822, the British transferred this post to Bushire on the southwest Persian coast and amalgamated it with the much older post of Bushire Resident. The new post of ‘Resident in the Persian Gulf’—‘Political Resident in the Persian Gulf’ (PRPG) after the 1850s—was responsible for Britain’s relations with the entire Gulf region.<sup>3</sup> To support the Resident in his role, the British assigned a naval squadron to the Gulf to patrol its waters—a system known as ‘watch and cruise’. The Gulf Squadron was under the command of the ‘Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf’ (SNO PG) and was headquartered at the entrance to the Gulf, first on Qishm Island (1821–63, 1869–79) and then on neighbouring Henjam Island (1879–1935).<sup>4</sup>

After the imposition of the General Treaty, Gulf rulers consented to other treaties over the course of the century. The most important of these were the Maritime Truces, which established the Pax Britannica in the Gulf. The first Maritime Truce, signed in 1835 by the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, ‘Ajman and the Qāsīmī empire (Sharjah, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah, Rams, Dibba, Khor Fakkan, Fujairah, Kalba, Mughu, Lingah and Qishm Island), was an experimental ban on maritime warfare during the pearling season. The Truce was a great success and a second Truce was arranged the following year, which





JAMES ONLEY

the newly-independent Ruler of Umm al-Qaiwain also signed. After a series of annual twelve-month truces and a ten-year Truce in 1843, the rulers signed a Perpetual Maritime Truce in 1853. In recognition of the shaikhdoms' membership in the Maritime Truce, the British referred to them as the 'Trucial States' and to the Coast of Oman as the 'Trucial Coast'.<sup>5</sup> The British eventually invited the rulers of Bahrain and Qatar to join the Truce in 1861 and 1916 respectively. Under the terms of the Truce, the Gulf rulers gave up their right to wage war by sea in return for British protection against maritime aggression. This arrangement, known as the 'trucial system', cast Britain in the role of 'arbiter and guardian of the Gulf'. Later on, the rulers also signed Exclusive Agreements (Bahrain in 1880, the Trucial States in 1892, Kuwait in 1899, Najd and Hasa in 1915, Qatar in 1916) binding them into exclusive treaty relations with, and ceding control of their external affairs to, the British Government.<sup>6</sup> Although these states were still foreign territory and their rulers remained as heads of state, their status vis-à-vis the Government of India placed them within the sphere of Britain's Indian Empire.<sup>7</sup>

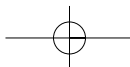
## 2. The State of the Debate

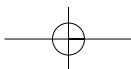
The Gulf's best-known historians, J.G. Lorimer and J.B. Kelly, paint a positive picture of Britain's role as 'arbiter and guardian of the Gulf'.<sup>8</sup> Kelly concludes his *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1795-1880* by commenting that Britain's position in the Gulf rested, above all, 'upon the exertions and sacrifices of the men who brought peace, justice, and the rule of law to the Gulf in the nineteenth century, and in so doing wrote one of the most honourable pages in the history of the British Empire.'<sup>9</sup>

Since the 1980s, however, a different view of Britain's role in the Gulf, represented by the works of Khaldoun Al-Naqeeb, Jacqueline Ismael, Abdullah Taryam and the Ruler of Sharjah, Shaikh Sultan bin Muhammad al-Qasimi, has emerged in the historiography.<sup>10</sup> Al-Qasimi, for example, argues in *The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf* that the works of Lorimer and Kelly

emphasize a complete misunderstanding of the history of the area and the factors involved. The people of the Gulf were normal people with normal human ambitions. ... The only abnormal factor was the introduction of a foreign people whose aim was to dominate and exploit. The intruders were the forces of British imperialism, who knew very well and often testified that the indigenous people of the Gulf were only interested in the peaceful pursuits of pearl diving and trading.<sup>11</sup>

He contends that Kelly's account agrees with Lorimer's because 'Kelly's purpose was to support rather than challenge Lorimer's work. In a sense he was





## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

more royalist than the king and his adoption of the imperialist point of view was almost more unquestioning than that of the imperialistic functionaries themselves.<sup>12</sup> Sultan al-Qasimi believes that historians who present Britain's role in the Gulf as a positive one have a hidden, imperial agenda. They 'want us to believe', says al-Qasimi, 'that the Arabs of the Gulf were saved ... by the benevolent efforts of the British East India Company, whose intervention in the Gulf was for the sole purpose of preserving law and order [and that the] resulting British domination of the Gulf for almost two centuries was a responsibility thrust upon the British almost against their will.'<sup>13</sup>

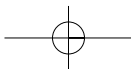
Did the Gulf Arabs truly benefit from British hegemony or were they merely exploited by it? Was British protection imposed on the Gulf Arabs, or was the role of protector imposed on the British? This study attempts to resolve the argument between these opposing points of view by examining the politics of protection in the Gulf.

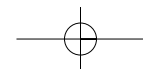
### 3. The Study's Approach

The history of Anglo–Arab relations in the Gulf has been overshadowed by the general assumption that all the Anglo–Arab treaties were imposed by Britain. Lorimer and Kelly have rationalized the imposition as necessary acts of benevolence; Sultan al-Qasimi and others have described it as imperialistic domination. This study challenges the assumption of imposition by considering Britain's presence in the Gulf from the perspective of the nineteenth-century Gulf Arab rulers. It draws on a number of historical, political and anthropological studies of Eastern Arabia to define the political reality of these rulers and their shaikhdoms. It examines the economic, military and social foundations of Gulf rulership to show how Eastern Arabian politics were shaped by the ever-present need for protection and the Arabian custom of protection-seeking. That Gulf rulers sought out protector-protégé relationships as a survival strategy is apparent from the well-documented history of Bahrain, in this respect a typical Gulf shaikhdom. The history of Bahrain's involvement with other regional powers is the key to understanding Bahrain's evolving relationship with Britain and throws new light on the role of Britain in the Gulf in the nineteenth century.

### 4. The Economic Foundations of Rulership

Fierce competition between and within ruling families for control of the limited economic resources in the Gulf created an atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity.<sup>14</sup> The possession of scarce resources carried with it the endless problem of protection. It created what one Gulf Resident described as 'a condition wherein every man's hand was ever prone to be raised against his neighbour.'<sup>15</sup>





JAMES ONLEY

As a result, the need for protection dominated and shaped regional politics more than any other factor.

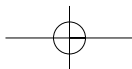
Eastern Arabia's harsh environment constrained lucrative economic activity along the coast to the exportation of pearls and dates, the importation of goods from abroad, shipping, and ship-building.<sup>16</sup> Economic activities of any note were limited to twenty-five coastal towns—Kuwait, Qatif, Dammām (then on Dammām Island), 'Uqayr, Manamah, Muharraq, Zubarah, Khor Ḥassān (now Khuwayr), Ḥuwaylah, Bid' (now a district of Doha<sup>17</sup>), Wakrah, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, 'Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah, Rams, Dibba, Khor Fakkan, Fujairah, Sohar, Matrah, Muscat and Sur—each of which had its own cycle of prosperity and decline within the nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, the majority of these towns were controlled by just three ruling families: the Āl Khalifah of Bahrain, the Qawāsīm of the Coast of Oman, and the Āl Bū Sa'īd of Muscat. The locations of the towns can be seen on Map 1, below.

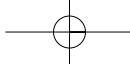
In the first half of the nineteenth century, Bahrain competed with Kuwait as Eastern Arabia's second busiest port after Muscat. In the 1870s, under the stability of Shaikh 'Īsā bin 'Alī Āl Khalifah's rule (1869–1923), Bahrain rivalled and then replaced Muscat in this regard. Writing in 1874, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Ross (Resident 1872–91) noted: 'The chief ports and centres of trade in the Gulf are Bushire, Lingah, Bundar Abbas, and Bahrein. Bahrein is conveniently situated to be an *entrepôt* for the Arabia trade and is much used as such. The commercial importance of these islands is not inconsiderable. With the exception of the Islands of Bahrein, the trade of the Arab ports is comparatively petty.'<sup>19</sup> To illustrate Ross' observation, compare Bahrain's imports/exports of 1874 with those of Muscat and the Trucial States in Table 1, below.<sup>20</sup>

Table 1. Bahrain, Muscat and Trucial States Imports/Exports during 1874.

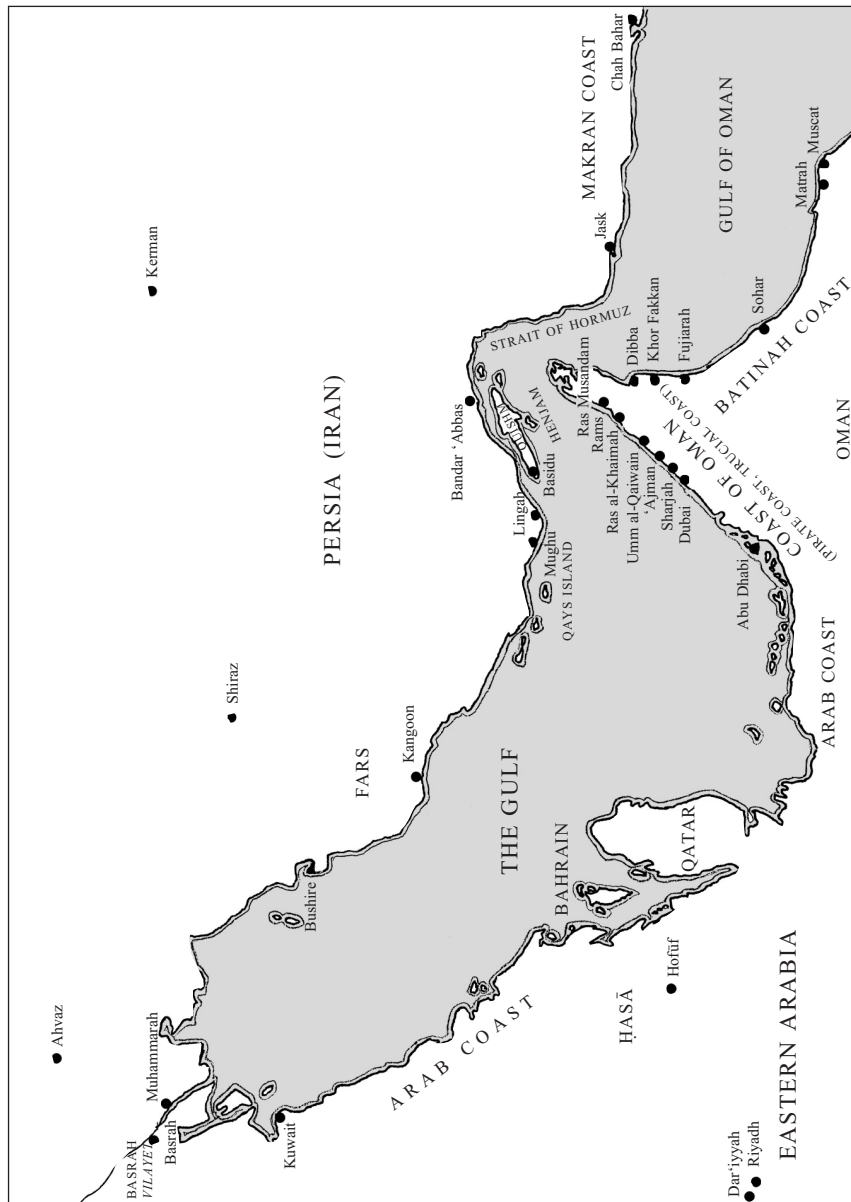
Shaikhdom	Imports in 1874		Exports in 1874	
	Rupees	Pounds	Rupees	Pounds
Bahrain	3,144,295	314,429	2,952,650	295,265
Muscat	3,167,672 <sup>21</sup>	316,767	1,623,024 <sup>22</sup>	162,302
Trucial States <sup>23</sup>	2,276,500	227,650	1,364,500	136,450

Bahrain's imports were virtually identical to Muscat's, while its exports nearly equalled those of the other seven states combined: Rs 2,987,524 (£298,752).<sup>24</sup> Clearly, Bahrain's function as an *entrepôt* was of considerable importance to its economy.

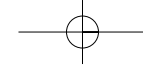




THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF



Map 1. The locations of towns of economic note.

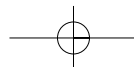


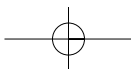
JAMES ONLEY

A shaikhdom's most vulnerable source of income was its pearling fleets. Before oil, the pearling industry was the Gulf's largest single income source and its biggest employer.<sup>25</sup> The richest pearl banks in the Gulf were in Bahraini waters. These yielded an estimated profit for Bahrain of Rs 4,000,000 in 1873 and Rs 16,100,000 in 1905.<sup>26</sup> In the latter year, Bahrain's pearling industry employed 17,500 men—approximately 70 per cent of Bahrain's male population over the age of fourteen.<sup>27</sup>

It follows that the prosperity of a Gulf shaikhdom, and that of Bahrain in particular, was linked to a ruler's ability to safeguard his commercial ports and surrounding waters. A further problem was the security of ships and caravans travelling between a shaikhdom and distant markets. Rulers and tribes who controlled the maritime and overland trade routes connecting Eastern Arabia's towns with distant markets often levied tolls on those who used them in the form of *hūwah* (a 'brotherhood fee' for protection) or *ḡuwayzah* (a fee for free passage). A merchant who travelled along controlled routes had to call at the principal towns of the controllers and pay a fee to guarantee his safe passage.<sup>28</sup> If he did not, and was subsequently intercepted by one of the controller's patrols, his ship or caravan would be raided. Such raids could be fatal. Before the anti-piracy treaty of 1820, ships sailing through the Gulf had to pay *hūwah* or *ḡuwayzah* to the imams of Muscat<sup>29</sup> (who controlled the Gulf of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz), the rulers of the Qāsimī empire (who controlled the lower Gulf between Lingah and Sharjah) and the rulers of the Ka'b (who controlled the sea route between Bushire and Basra). The mainland equivalents of the maritime toll-collectors were the amirs of Najd and Hasa and the amirs of Ḥā'il who controlled most of the overland trade routes of Eastern and Central Arabia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>30</sup> The ruling families of Kuwait, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Dubai did not control these routes and therefore rarely, if ever, engaged in toll-levying.

Two other forms of raiding also threatened caravans and ships. Before the Maritime Truce of 1835, all rulers, including those who did not control a trade route, used privateers as well as their own military forces to engage in the wartime raiding (*ḡazū*) of their enemies.<sup>31</sup> As the amirs of Najd and Hasa—political leaders of the Wahhabis (the Unitarian or *Muwahḥidūn* sect of Islam founded by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Wahhāb)—regarded all non-Wahhabis as their enemies, they engaged in *ḡazū* to a far greater extent than other Arab rulers and repeatedly raided the coastal shaikhdoms overland throughout the nineteenth century. Pearling fleets were the most vulnerable to *ḡazū*, as raiders always knew where to find them. A successful raid on a pearling fleet could plunge a shaikhdom into deep recession. The other form of raiding was piracy, in the usual meaning of the term. To the British, the different kinds of maritime raiding





THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

were all piracy. And it is apparent that they all interfered with the economic well-being of the Gulf shaikhdoms.

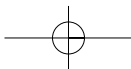
While Gulf rulers profited directly from shipping and pearling through their own extensive involvement in them, they also obtained revenue by taxing subjects who engaged in these trades. The collection of taxes carried with it a responsibility to protect the taxpayers.<sup>32</sup> For general merchants and their cargo fleets, taxes took the form of customs duties. For pearl merchants and their pearling fleets, they took the form of a pearl-boat tax. In return for these taxes, before the Maritime Truce, the rulers stationed war dhows in their ports and at the pearling banks to provide protection. If a ruler could not protect his merchants and their fleets (especially their pearling fleets) from raiding and extortion, or if he made excessive financial demands on them, the merchants would often migrate to other shaikhdoms.<sup>33</sup> The threat of migration gave the merchants some political leverage to limit the power of the rulers and discourage them from levying an arbitrary general tax (known as *šūfah*) or confiscating their property.<sup>34</sup> As Lieutenant Arnold Kemball (Assistant Resident 1841–52) observed in 1845, ‘the loss of authority and revenue consequent on their secession ... act ... as a salutary check on the tyranny and oppression of the respective chiefs.’<sup>35</sup> The option of migration was also exercised by tribes under the rulers’ protection and control.<sup>36</sup>

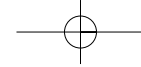
The provision of protection could also generate revenue in the form of tribute from submissive tribes (tribute relations will be discussed in more detail in Section 7). The Āl Khalifah of Bahrain collected tribute from a large number of tribes in Qatar between the 1760s and 1860s. The amount of tribute they received before the mid-nineteenth century is unknown, but by the 1860s they were collecting Ks 9,000 (Rs 3,600) annually.<sup>37</sup> This was not high by Arabian standards; the Amir of Ḥā’il, for example, collected £40,000 (Rs 400,000) from his dependants in 1876.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, although there was a decline in status and prestige when the Āl Khalifah lost most of their tributary network in Qatar in 1871, Bahrain’s economy was not affected.

What clearly emerges from this overview of the Gulf shaikhdoms’ economy is the high vulnerability of the main sources of income to raiding, the extent to which raiding could interfere with the economic well-being of a shaikhdom, and the resulting importance of protection. The next section examines how the Gulf rulers were able to provide the necessary protection.

### 5. The Military Foundations of Rulership

Without military power, a ruler could not protect and maintain the economic well-being and political integrity of his shaikhdom. Henry Rosenfeld has observed in Arabia ‘an interlocking hierarchical social structure status-scale ...





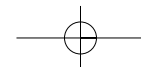
JAMES ONLEY

based on military power and the ability to control certain territory and groups and maintain independence from other groups.<sup>39</sup> In other words, the greater a ruler's military strength, the more territory and economic resources he could control, and the higher his status in regional politics. Borders naturally fluctuated according to rulers' military abilities. If a ruler was succeeded by one of significantly greater or lesser ability, there were often territorial consequences. There are countless examples of village shaikhs asserting their independence and of town rulers taking villages under their control.<sup>40</sup> The majority of Gulf Arab rulers lacked the resources they needed to guarantee the constant security of their shaikhdoms. Their personal military forces were small, leaving the rulers vulnerable to antagonistic regional powers, or alliances formed against them.<sup>41</sup>

In 1905, for example, Lorimer estimated the Āl Khalifah to have 540 armed retainers or *fidāwīyah* (singular *fidāwī*) in full-time service in Bahrain, only 200 of whom had rifles.<sup>42</sup> Most were recruited from the Na'im tribe in Qatar and the Dawwdah clan of the Banī Khālid tribe in Hasa.<sup>43</sup> Numbers were higher in the years before British protection. In the late 1820s, for example, the British estimated the Āl Khalifah to employ around 1,100 *fidāwīyah* and, in an emergency, to have the potential of mustering a further 18–20,000 tribesmen capable of bearing arms.<sup>44</sup> Military forces in the full-time employ of Gulf rulers in the nineteenth century ranged in size from 200 to 2,000 men.<sup>45</sup> All rulers relied upon tribal alliances either to redress the balance when faced by a stronger enemy, or to gain an advantage over an enemy of equal strength.<sup>46</sup> The rulers of Bahrain, for example, maintained an alliance with the Na'im from c.1766 to 1937—the Na'im providing the Ruler with warriors in times of need, the Ruler providing the Na'im with reciprocal military support and subsidies to secure their loyalty.<sup>47</sup> Lorimer estimated the Na'im to have, at most, 400 fighting men in 1905, of whom less than half were generally present in Bahrain at any one time.<sup>48</sup> Alliances did not always work, of course, nor did they always last. In the ever-changing political environment of the Gulf, rulers were quick to seize advantages and abandon liabilities with the result that alliances themselves were ever-shifting.<sup>49</sup> One's allies were often fair weather friends. The consistent loyalty of the Na'im to the Āl Khalifah was quite exceptional, as was the enduring friendship of the Āl Ṣabāḥ—the only branch of the 'Utūb tribal confederation, to which the Āl Khalifah belonged, never to take up arms against the rulers of Bahrain.

## 6. The Social Foundations of Rulership

Money and arms enabled a shaikh to rise above the position of tribal leader and become a ruler, but he could not do this without first securing: (1) support from family members; (2) approval from the affluent merchants and leaders of tribal



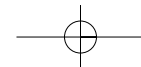
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

sections; and (3) legitimacy in the eyes of his people. The first two conditions are self-explanatory, so attention here will be given mainly to legitimacy.<sup>50</sup> A ruler normally gained legitimacy through his own personal attributes and through observing the social obligations of rulership. Harold Dickson identifies four social foundations of rulership in his celebrated *Arab of the Desert* (1949).<sup>51</sup>

The first consisted of the ruler's personal attributes. He is expected to be a wise, eloquent, persuasive, able and courageous leader. As Paul Harrison puts it: 'The ablest ruler is the man wanted and the one who is eventually secured.'<sup>52</sup> But these qualities alone are not enough. To be a successful ruler, a shaikh must have *hazz* (luck). In the highly adversarial environment of the Gulf, a ruler's *hazz* was considered essential for a tribe's prosperity. 'The Badawin has no use for a man having courage and leadership in plenty if *hadh* is lacking', notes Dickson. 'A lucky general is what the tribesman wants in war, and, still more important, he wants a lucky shaikh in peace, for to him the whole daily round and welfare of the tribe is bound up in this word *hadh*.'<sup>53</sup> If a ruler could guarantee victory on the battlefield, his subjects would place great confidence in him as a protector. Conversely, a ruler unlucky in war would soon find himself without allies. Beyond this, a shaikh's rulership also depended upon his respect for the opinion of the important and influential men who commanded large political followings within his shaikhdom. A ruler always had the option of imposing his will, but this undermined his influence and legitimacy. He would quickly lose the support and loyalty of his most important followers. A ruler must consult with those who matter, therefore, before undertaking a new policy or embarking on a course of action. Once a decision was reached, however, leadership lay with the ruler. So long as the ruler adheres to the conditions of the decision, his orders must be obeyed.<sup>54</sup>

The second requirement is that a ruler is expected to be a 'father to his people', with all the responsibilities that entails.<sup>55</sup> For the majority of his subjects, these responsibilities originate from the payment and collection of tax or tribute. When a person pays tax to his ruler, that ruler becomes responsible for his protection (physically as well as diplomatically) from all quarters, as if he were the payer's father. Likewise, the ruler is expected to know his people as if they were his own family.<sup>56</sup> At least this is the ideal against which his rulership is measured. The payer-payee relationship will be discussed in more detail in Sections 7-9.

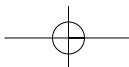
The third requirement, and related to the second, is that a ruler is expected to keep an open house. As a 'father' of his people, he must be accessible to them.<sup>57</sup> This is the purpose of the ruler's majlis, a regular, often daily, council held at his residence. The practice is comparable to the European custom of holding court, except that majlis is informal and access is unrestricted. Literally anyone



JAMES ONLEY

with an enquiry, a request, or a case may attend majlis to present it to the ruler.<sup>58</sup> Once he has settled a case, the ruler is also responsible for its enforcement.<sup>59</sup> The position of arbiter is a prestigious one in Arabian society. The settling of cases reinforces a ruler's legitimacy in the eyes of his subjects.<sup>60</sup>

The fourth requirement, and related to the third, is that a ruler is expected to be generous.<sup>61</sup> Tremendous importance is attached to a ruler's reputation for generosity. The greater his generosity, the greater his popularity, the greater his legitimacy, and the greater his influence.<sup>62</sup> The obligation to hold an open house placed the ruler in the additional role of host (*muḍayyif*). Dickson notes that 'a guest (*ḍayf*) is a very sacred person indeed, and the unwritten laws of hospitality lay down that such a person ... be entertained, fed and looked after in a fitting manner, and to the best of the host's power.'<sup>63</sup> A *muḍayyif* was also obligated to protect his *ḍayf* and treat him with honour and respect.<sup>64</sup> Understandably, it is important for the ruler of a shaikhdom to be known as its most generous host. A ruler must hold feasts, distribute gifts, and grant favours to those who visit him. This belief is reflected in a saying of the Shammar tribe of Najd: *al-amīr sayf wa mansaf* (the amir is someone who owns a sword and gives food), meaning the true ruler is someone who commands coercive force and is generous.<sup>65</sup> 'No name has a more unworthy meaning', explains Dickson, 'or leaves a nastier taste in the mouth of the Badawin, than the epithet *bakhil*, or "stingy one". Once this name *bakhil* sticks to a chief, his influence is at an end.'<sup>66</sup> As noted above, a ruler's subjects expect assistance and protection in return for their taxes. In return for assistance and protection, a ruler is entitled to their loyalty.<sup>67</sup> A ruler's reputation for generosity counts most with those who pay no tax: the shaikhs of his family and his tribal allies. In return for their loyalty, he must spend lavishly on them, paying them salaries and subsidies.<sup>68</sup> Madawi Al-Rasheed argues that rulers 'maintained a tradition of subsidizing these shaikhs through the continuous distribution of cash and gifts of rice, coffee, sugar, camels, and weapons. These gifts acted as a bribe to maintain the allegiance of the shaikhs, who remained to a great extent autonomous.'<sup>69</sup> As Lieutenant Arnold Kemball (Assistant Resident 1841–52) noted in 1845: 'Of so great importance is [the Bedouin tribes'] alliance or forbearance considered by the maritime chieftains, that these ... find it their best policy to conciliate them by repeated and considerable presents.'<sup>70</sup> Payments to secure loyalty accounted for the majority of a ruler's expenses, as is evident from the British estimate from 1905 of the expenses of Shaikh 'Īsā bin 'Alī of Bahrain (Ruler 1869–1923) in Table 2, below.<sup>71</sup> Most of the Rs 56,000 Shaikh 'Īsā spent on subsidies and presents went to the Na'im tribe. Colonel Edward Ross (Resident 1872–91) observed in 1877 that, 'were he to offend the Naim by withholding presents or preventing their visiting Bahrein, the result would probably be that they would unite with the Beni Hajir in forming a hostile coalition against



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

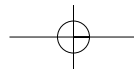
Table 2. British estimate from 1905 of the expenses of Shaikh 'Īsā bin 'Alī of Bahrain (Ruler 1869–1923)

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Rupees</i>	<i>Pounds</i>
personal expenses (including salaries of <i>fidāwīyah</i> )	33.3%	100,000	6,666
family allowances to the Āl Khalifah	33.3%	100,000	6,666
subsidies and presents to bedouin	18.7%	56,000	3,733
special expenses (marriages, journeys, etc.)	10.0%	30,000	2,000
administration expenses	4.7%	14,000	933
	100%	Rs 300,000	£20,000

him.<sup>72</sup> Without payments, the Shaikh could not have obtained the one hundred armed retainers (*fidāwīyah*) from the Na'im he employed that year.<sup>73</sup> Money enabled a ruler to reward or bribe people for their loyalty, most importantly his *fidāwīyah*, who enforced his will, and his fellow shaikhs.

The principal difference between the leading shaikh of a tribe and the ruling shaikh of a shaikhdom was the latter's command of *fidāwīyah*. While both shaikhs had authority derived from their leadership qualities and social status, only the latter had the coercive power to collect taxes and tribute, enforce laws, and punish criminals.<sup>74</sup> Both led, but only the latter ruled. Only the latter had the ability to control enough people and territory to constitute a shaikhdom or emirate. The key to rulership was the consistent loyalty of one's people, but even the ablest leader could not secure this without money. That no shaikh could rule his people without a command of economic power explains why all rulerships were town-based, at the heart of economic activity in the Gulf.<sup>75</sup> A town fort, therefore, symbolized both control of a town and the rulership of a shaikh. It also symbolized the difference between a ruler of a shaikhdom and a leader of a tribe, who lived in a tent. Peter Lienhardt explains that, 'when rulers have been overthrown, the seizing of the fort has often been the main stepping stone to power.'<sup>76</sup> The British, too, drew upon the symbolism of forts to great effect. If a ruler seriously breached the terms of the General Treaty or Maritime Truce and then ignored the Resident's instructions for reparation, the Resident usually threatened to bombard the ruler's fort. In the rare instances when the Resident was forced to follow through on his threat, the ruler suffered a powerful blow to his rulership. In the case of Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah of Bahrain (Ruler 1843–68), it symbolized the end of his rulership.

The rulers, Peter Lienhardt tells us, 'held their power in order to do a job for the people, keeping order and managing defence, and were not there either by any absolute right or by brute force'.<sup>77</sup> Nor were they 'regarded as being



JAMES ONLEY

indispensable for the conduct of the affairs of their people'.<sup>78</sup> Therefore a ruler who ignored his social obligations, or fulfilled them poorly, risked both the loss of important and affluent members of his shaikhdom to migration and the loss of his rulership to a rival member of his family.<sup>79</sup>

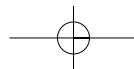
### 7. The Collection and Payment of Tribute

Sections 4–6 have explained the economic, military and social foundations of rulership, the causes of regional instability, and a shaikhdom's ever-present need for protection. This, and the remaining sections, examine the implications these factors had for the regional political system and for Britain's involvement in the Gulf.

If a ruler faced the impending attack of a much stronger enemy, he would typically seek the protection of a regional power to ward off the threat. These protectors gave guarantees of defence in return for subservience or the relinquishment of some degree of independence. The protégé's payment of tribute symbolized this and had a transforming effect.<sup>80</sup> The protector regarded his tributary as a part of his own tribe.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, the protector regarded his tributary's territory as *his* territory, but with one important distinction. The protector considered such land, especially if it was at some distance from his shaikhdom, to be a 'dependency' rather than a part of his shaikhdom. The protector usually left the governing of his dependency to the local ruler or tribal leader who had submitted to his authority.<sup>82</sup> When he did, the only noticeable difference between an independent shaikhdom and a dependency apart from the tribute payments was that the dependants or protégés owed allegiance to their protector as if they were his own subjects. Indeed, he considered them his subjects.

Custom dictated the amount of tribute an individual protégé should pay his protector, if he were to pay any at all.<sup>83</sup> Custom did not dictate what a protégé ruler should pay, however, although he was usually able to negotiate the payment. If the parties failed to agree on the amount, they would often enlist a neutral ruler to arbitrate. Tribute was normally paid annually and could take many forms: a fixed sum of money; a share of the annual customs revenue; a share of the agricultural produce (mainly dates); a certain number of horses, camels, etc.; provision of men for military service; and even *zakāt* (enjoined Islamic alms that, in the Sunni interpretation, Muslim officials normally collect from Muslim subjects).<sup>84</sup> Tribute was typically imposed as *hūwah*. In its original form, *hūwah* was a 'brotherhood fee' paid voluntarily by the weak to the strong in return for protection.<sup>85</sup> The protector became, in effect, his protégé's big brother, with all the responsibilities that entailed.

A would-be attacker's forceful imposition of *hūwah* as a 'protection tax' on an opponent, however, symbolized not brotherly relations but political



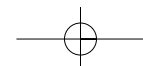
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

domination.<sup>86</sup> Militarily-strong rulers would often threaten to attack weaker rulers with the intention of tribute collection, not military conquest. The same tactic was employed by those who controlled Arabia's trade routes and imposed tolls (often as *hūwah*) on those who used them. If the ruler of a shaikhdom, captain of a ship, or leader of a caravan refused to pay tribute to a would-be attacker, he risked military conquest or raiding. Payment in this context depended largely upon the payer's belief in the likelihood of attack. There had to be a threat, or a perceived future threat; no threat, no tribute. From a Western perspective this looked like extortion—an Arabian form of protection-racketeering. But there was one important difference: the 'extortionist' assumed responsibility for the complete protection of his 'victim'. Where actual war was involved, tribute could have the positive effect of transforming an adversarial relationship into a protective one, and was the customary method of settling a conflict. Paul Harrison observed in 1924 that 'the amount of tribute extorted is simply the measure of the balance reached between [the] two contending forces.'<sup>87</sup>

Henry Rosenfeld tells us how a group's increased power typically resulted in 'increased tribute payments, tributary groups and honour', while decreased power meant 'less ability to receive tribute, less recognition and, as the group itself becomes tributary, [a] gradual reduction on the status scale of honour.'<sup>88</sup> Madawi Al-Rasheed elaborates on this analysis:

The inter-connection between military power and economic power was a cyclical process. The two factors, power and tribute, were interdependent; the alteration of one factor automatically affected the other. The more power the amirs had, the more they were able to collect tribute. Equally, more tribute meant more power. The reverse of the cycle was also possible. Less military power meant no effective control over trade, pilgrims, and subjects, consequently, less tribute. Any decrease in tribute meant less subsidies, less loyalty, and a diminished ability to invest in the means of coercion. As a result, the amirs' power would inevitably be affected and would tend to decrease.<sup>89</sup>

Tribute payment created what Rosenfeld calls the 'web of overlordship and the recognition of a hierarchy of dominance' in Arabia.<sup>90</sup> Personal honour and status relations were at the centre of Arabian politics in the nineteenth century, as they are today. Just as one speaks of 'status relations' and not 'class relations' at the personal level in Arabia,<sup>91</sup> so are regional relations a reflection of status relations between rulers vis-à-vis their military power. Iraq's financial demands on Kuwait in the months preceding the August 1990 invasion, for example, resemble the familiar pattern of tribute-collection followed by Gulf Arab rulers in the nineteenth century.



JAMES ONLEY

## 8. The Āl Khalifah's Tribute Relations

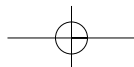
The long history of the Āl Khalifah's tribute relations with the imams of Muscat and the amirs of Najd, and with their own dependent tribes in Qatar, illustrates the centrality of the tribute system in Arabian power politics. It also provides the best context for understanding how their political relations with the British Government evolved into a protégé-protector relationship.<sup>92</sup>

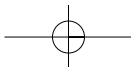
The Āl Khalifah had an extensive tributary network in Qatar (see Table 3, below). The Āl Khalifah collected tribute from these tribes, but often had to pay tribute themselves to the imams of Muscat or the amirs of Najd.

Table 3. *The Āl Khalifah's dependants and dependencies in Qatar, c.1766–1871*<sup>93</sup>

<i>Tribes</i>	<i>Locations</i>
Āl Bū 'Aynayn	Bid', Ḥuwaylah, Ruways, Fuwayriṭ and Wakrah? <sup>94</sup>
'Aḡmān	Bid' and Wakrah
Āl Bin 'Alī	Fuwayriṭ, Ḥuwaylah and Bid'
'Amāmarah	Bid'? and Wakrah?
Kalb	Ḥuwaylah
Kibīсах	Khor Ḥassān
Āl Bū Kuwārah	Sumaysimah, Fuwayriṭ, Ḥuwaylah, Ruways, Abu Ḥulūf and Ḍa'a'in?
Ma'ādīḍ (Āl Thānī)	Fuwayriṭ, Bid', Wakrah? and Lūsayl?
Mahandah	Khor Ṣaqīq? and Ḍahīrah?
Manāna'ah	Abu Ḥulūf
Āl Musallam	Ḥuwaylah, Bid', Fuwayriṭ? and Wakrah?
Na'im 1	interior of eastern and northern Qatar
Na'im 2	interior of western Qatar and Zubarah
Sādah	Ruways
Sūdān	Bid' and Fuwayriṭ

In 1799, the Imam of Muscat, Sayyid Sulṭān (1792–1804), attacked Bahrain on the pretext that Bahraini ships were failing to pay him *ḥūwah* or *ḡuwayzah* for their passage through the Strait of Hormuz. The Āl Khalifah managed to repel his attack.<sup>95</sup> In 1800, he threatened another attack, this time demanding that the Āl Khalifah pay him tribute. The Rulers of Bahrain, Shaikhs Salmān bin Aḥmad (1796–1825) and 'Abd Allāh bin Aḥmad Āl Khalifah (1796–1843), initially sought the protection of the Persian Governor of Bushire, but this came to nothing. Eventually the Rulers yielded to Sayyid Sulṭān and agreed to pay him tribute. Within the year, however, they repudiated the agreement. Soon



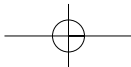


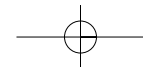
THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

after, Sayyid Sulṭān made good his threat and attacked Bahrain with the assistance of the Governor of Bushire, forcing the Āl Khalifah to escape to Zubarah and Kuwait. Before Sayyid Sulṭān returned to Muscat, he installed his twelve-year-old son, Sālim, as Governor of Bahrain and placed a garrison at ‘Arād Fort on Muharraḡ Island. The Rulers turned to the Wahhabi Amir of Najd, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin Muḡammad Āl Su‘ūd (1765–1803), for assistance to regain Bahrain. The Amir agreed, but only if they paid him tribute and recognized his authority. They accepted the Amir’s terms and the next year they successfully retook Bahrain with Wahhabi assistance. One of the conditions of the arrangement, however, was that Zubarah would be given over to the Wahhabis and that the Rulers of Bahrain would send members of their families to reside in the town as a guarantee for their loyalty.

The Āl Khalifah continued with this arrangement and paid tribute to the Wahhabis until 1805, when they sought the protection of the new Imam of Muscat, Sayyid Badr bin Saif Al-Bu-Sa‘īd (r. 1804–7), to throw off the Wahhabi yoke. Sayyid Badr arrived at Zubarah with a war fleet to protect the Rulers while they evacuated their families to Bahrain. The Rulers then proposed to Captain David Seton (British Resident in Muscat, 1800–09) that they and Sayyid Badr would be able to keep the Wahhabis at bay in the Gulf if the British Government of Bombay would promise the occasional assistance of one or two British gunboats. This was the first recorded instance of the Āl Khalifah requesting British protection. Seton forwarded their proposal with his favourable recommendation in the light of the Government’s anti-Wahhabi stance. The Governor of Bombay rejected the request, however, not wanting to become involved in the political affairs of Bahrain. It would be another thirty-four years before the British began to respond favourably to the Āl Khalifah’s requests for protection. Their request refused, the Āl Khalifah continued to pay Sayyid Badr tribute until the following year, when they were able to repudiate their agreement with him and reassert their independence.

In 1809, a powerful enemy and former ally of the Āl Khalifah, Shaikh Raḡmah bin Ġābir, Ruler of the Āl Ġalāhimah, allied himself with the Amir of Najd, Su‘ūd bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Āl Su‘ūd (1803–14), so as better to pursue his vendetta against the Āl Khalifah. Later that year, the Wahhabis occupied Zubarah. The next year, Amir Su‘ūd and Shaikh Raḡmah sent a fleet of forty dhows to Bahrain and captured the island. Amir Su‘ūd installed a garrison at ‘Arād Fort on Muharraḡ Island and summoned the Rulers of Bahrain to either Dar‘iyyah or Riyadh (accounts differ), where they were detained as hostages.<sup>96</sup> Amir Su‘ūd then appointed a *wakīl* (agent), ‘Abd Allāh bin ‘Ufayṣān, to supervise the government of Bahrain, Zubarah and Qatif. Members of the Āl Khalifah were appointed governors of Bahrain and Zubarah and made to pay tribute to the *wakīl*. Shaikh ‘Abd al-Raḡmān bin Rāṣīd Āl Khalifah, a cousin of the two





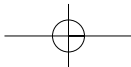
JAMES ONLEY

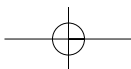
exiled Rulers, escaped to Muscat and asked Sayyid Sa'īd bin Ahmed Al-Bu-Sa'īd (r. 1807–56) for assistance. The following year, in 1811, Shaikh 'Abd al-Raḥmān returned to Bahrain with a military force led by the Imam. The force inflicted a serious naval defeat on the Āl Ġalāhimah, captured the *wakīl* and expelled the Wahhabi garrison from Bahrain.<sup>97</sup> Amir Su'ūd later permitted the two Rulers to return to Bahrain after they had sworn allegiance to him.<sup>98</sup>

Upon their return to Bahrain, the Rulers resumed their tribute payments to the Imam of Muscat for five years, until 1816, when they again sought Wahhabi protection and a military alliance with the Qawāsīm to throw off the hold of Muscat for a fifth time. Shaikh Raḥmah Āl Ġalāhimah then sought the protection of Sayyid Sa'īd so as to be able to resume his vendetta against the Āl Khalifah. Later that year, Sayyid Sa'īd and Shaikh Raḥmah attacked Bahrain, but the Āl Khalifah succeeded in repelling them with the support of the Wahhabis and the Qawāsīm. The Qawāsīm were Wahhabi dependants at the time and therefore an ally of the Āl Khalifah. The following years did not fare well for the Āl Khalifah's protector and ally, however. In 1817, Wahhabi forces withdrew from the Gulf to battle an invading Egyptian army in Najd. They did not return to the Gulf in force until the late 1820s. In December 1819, the British launched their anti-piracy expedition against the Qawāsīm, destroying much of the Qāsīmī fleet by early January 1820.

Sayyid Sa'īd took advantage of this turn of events and threatened to attack Bahrain in January 1820. The Āl Khalifah, without protectors or allies, had no choice but to offer full submission. They agreed to pay MTD (Maria Theresa Dollars) 30,000 in tribute annually to the Imam, on condition that he release the prisoners and property he had captured from the Āl Khalifah. The parties asked the Bushire Resident, Captain William Bruce (1804–22), to guarantee the agreement, but he refused. It would be many years before the Resident would finally agree to play the role of guarantor in the Gulf. The parties went ahead with the agreement, but the Āl Khalifah paid only MTD 12,000 of the tribute before they, once again, repudiated the agreement the following year. In 1822, Sayyid Sa'īd again prepared to attack Bahrain, but the Governor of Bombay sent letters to both parties urging them to settle the matter peacefully. He suggested that the Āl Khalifah should pay the tribute only if it had been a regular and long-established custom, otherwise Sayyid Sa'īd should withdraw his demands. Sayyid Sa'īd called off his attack. In 1823, Shaikh 'Abd Allāh (Ruler 1796–1843) asked Captain John MacLeod (Resident 1822–23), during his visit to Bahrain, if the General Treaty of 1820, which the Shaikh had signed three years before, entitled him to British protection. MacLeod informed him that it did not.

In 1828, a rumour spread that Sayyid Sa'īd was once again preparing to attack Bahrain. When Captain David Wilson (Resident 1827–31) questioned Sayyid



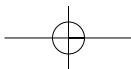


THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

Sa'īd about this, he denied it and even sent presents to the Rulers of Bahrain. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh was suspicious and asked Wilson to intervene, but he declined, not wanting to become unnecessarily involved in Bahraini affairs. In October, Sayyid Sa'īd launched his attack on Bahrain, joined by a force led by Shaikh Ṭaḥnūn bin Ṣaḥbūṭ Al-Nahyan of Abu Dhabi (Ruler 1818–33). The Āl Khalifah managed to rout the combined force, however, and Sayyid Sa'īd narrowly escaped with his life. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh again addressed Captain Wilson, complaining that Shaikh Ṭaḥnūn had broken the terms of the General Treaty of 1820 and requesting his intervention. Wilson again declined the Shaikh's request, pointing out that the treaty banned only piracy, not open and declared warfare. It would be another seven years before the trucial system (1835–1971) banned maritime warfare between its members, and another thirty-three before Bahrain joined it.

The following year, in 1829, Sayyid Sa'īd sent out hints that he intended to launch yet another attack on Bahrain (the seventh Muscati attack since 1799). At this point, Captain Wilson offered to mediate between the two parties. This is the first recorded instance of the Gulf Resident offering to play such a role in regional politics, a role he would come to play more frequently as the century progressed. Both sides readily accepted Wilson's offer, but the negotiations came to a standstill when Wilson rejected Shaikh 'Abd Allāh and Sayyid Sa'īd's condition that he guarantee any settlement they agreed upon. Eventually, the Ruler of Bushire, Shaikh Muḥammad bin Nāṣir al-Maḍkūr, mediated a peace settlement among Sayyid Sa'īd, Shaikh Ṭaḥnūn of Abu Dhabi and Shaikh 'Abd Allāh, guaranteeing the peace between them. Sayyid Sa'īd dropped his demands for tribute, in return for which all three parties agreed not to interfere in the affairs of the others and to come to each other's aid if attacked by a fourth party. Sayyid Sa'īd and his successors never reasserted their tributary claims over Bahrain again.

In 1830, the Amir of Najd and Hasa, Turkī bin 'Abd Allāh Āl Su'ūd (1823–34), demanded that Shaikh 'Abd Allāh pay him *zakāt* plus an additional MTD 40,000 as compensation for horses supposedly left behind in Bahrain when the Wahhabis had withdrawn from the Gulf thirteen years before. Amir Turkī also demanded that the Shaikh surrender the fort on Dammām Island, which the Āl Khalifah had captured from the Āl Ġalāhimah in 1826. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh immediately sent word to Captain Wilson in Bushire, requesting his mediation and protection, but Wilson refused the Shaikh's request. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh then sent a *wakīl* to Amir Turkī in Riyadh to negotiate a settlement. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh agreed to pay *zakāt* and acknowledge his overlordship in return for the Amir's promise to protect Bahrain. He refused to surrender the fort, however, because of the Amir's intention to hand it over to Shaikh Raḥmah Āl Ġalāhimah's son, Baṣīr, who was then a Wahhabi protégé. The Amir dropped



JAMES ONLEY

the issue of Dammām in consideration of the Shaikh's submission and settled Shaikh Bašīr on neighbouring Tārūt Island opposite Qatif instead. This naturally aroused Shaikh 'Abd Allāh's suspicions.

In 1833, Shaikh Bašīr threw off his allegiance to the Wahhabi Amir and sought the protection and assistance of Sayyid Sa'īd in Muscat to further his vendetta against the Āl Khalifah. In 1834, Shaikh 'Abd Allāh renounced his allegiance to the Amir and blockaded the Wahhabi ports of Qatif and 'Uqayr, on the shore opposite Bahrain, and occupied Tārūt Island. In May, the Shaikh's nephew and co-Ruler, Shaikh Khalifah bin Salmān (1825–34), died. Shaikh 'Abd Allāh prevented Shaikh Khalifah's son, Muḥammad, from taking his father's place and assumed the sole rulership of Bahrain. But Shaikh 'Abd Allāh was a weak Ruler. His governors, all sons and near relations, flouted his authority. Soon their misgovernment and abuses began to unsettle the shaikhdom and its dependencies. Things had deteriorated so much by 1836 that Shaikh 'Abd Allāh took the unusual step of informing the head of the merchant community of Manamah, in the presence of the Resident's Native Agent in Bahrain, Hajji Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣafar (1833–42), that he could no longer protect the merchants or provide them with redress. A rapid depopulation of merchants followed and the shaikhdom's economy declined. These factors seriously undermined the economic and social foundations of the Āl Khalifah's power and influence. That year, the Persian Prince-Governor of Fars, in Shiraz, took advantage of the deteriorating situation and threatened to attack Bahrain unless Shaikh 'Abd Allāh acknowledged Persian authority and paid him tribute. Unable to organize a united front to this new threat, the Shaikh had no option but to return, for a fifth time, to the Wahhabi fold for protection. Amir Fayṣal bin Turkī Āl Su'ūd (1834–37, 1843–65) promised to supply troops for the protection of Bahrain in return for Shaikh 'Abd Allāh's submission, payment of a nominal tribute of MTD 2,000, and termination of his blockade of Qatif and 'Uqayr.

In 1837, Wahhabi influence again receded from the Gulf in the face of yet another Egyptian army and Shaikh 'Abd Allāh ceased to pay tribute. By January 1839, the Egyptian army had occupied the principal ports and towns of Hasa. The Commander of the army, Khurshid Pasha, immediately despatched a *wakīl* to Bahrain to tell Shaikh 'Abd Allāh that he was expected to pay Khurshid the tribute he had previously paid the Wahhabi Amir of Najd and Hasa. The Shaikh declared he could not do this because he was under Persian protection. He then sent a letter to the Prince-Governor of Fars in Shiraz asking for his protection and stating that he was willing to pay tribute. The Prince-Governor soon sent a *wakīl* to Bahrain to present the Shaikh with a *hil'ah* (robe of honour) and to collect the tribute he had been promised. By this time, however, it had become clear to Shaikh 'Abd Allāh that the Persians did not have the naval force necessary to protect Bahrain. The Shaikh changed his mind and paid Khurshid

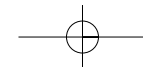
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

the MTD 2,000 in tribute he had demanded. The tribute payments lasted only two years, however, for the Egyptian army withdrew from Hasa the following summer.

In 1842, civil war broke out between two factions of the Āl Khalifah in Bahrain. The following year, in 1843, Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh was ousted from his rulership by his great-nephew, Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah (Ruler 1843–68), whom he had prevented from assuming the joint rulership of Bahrain seven years before. The same year, Amir Fayṣal returned to power after the Egyptian withdrawal from Arabia. He called upon the new Ruler of Bahrain to acknowledge Wahhabi authority for a sixth time and to resume tribute payments, with arrears. Shaikh Muḥammad agreed to the Amir’s demand, but subsequently failed to deliver up the tribute. After two years of non-payment, the Wahhabis had had enough. When Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh turned to the Wahhabis in 1845 to help him regain his rulership of Bahrain, they supported his cause. In October, the Wahhabi Governor of Qatif began preparing for an attack on Bahrain in conjunction with Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh. However, Shaikh Muḥammad discovered the plan and placed Qatif and ‘Uqayr under blockade. The Governor of Qatif asked the Resident, Major Samuel Hennell (1838–41, 1843–52), for assistance, threatening to resort to piracy if he did not. Hennell responded by despatching two gunboats to Qatif as a warning to the Governor.<sup>99</sup>

In October 1846, the Governor of Qatif asked Hennell for permission to call upon the rulers of the Coast of Oman to assist him against Shaikh Muḥammad, but Hennell refused his request, explaining that the rulers were prevented by the Maritime Truce from waging war by sea. The following month, Shaikh Muḥammad made a similar request to Hennell, which was likewise refused.<sup>100</sup> The blockade continued, therefore, until early 1847, when one of Shaikh Muḥammad’s allies, the ‘Amayr tribe, left him and went over to the Wahhabis. This tipped the balance in favour of the Wahhabis and Shaikh Muḥammad decided to enter into negotiations. In August he agreed to acknowledge Amir Fayṣal’s authority for a seventh time and pay MTD 4,000 (approximately Rs 8,000)<sup>101</sup> annually as *zakāt*, in return for which Amir Fayṣal promised not to aid and abet Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh and his sons (then residing on Wahhabi-controlled Dammām Island) in their bid to retake Bahrain. He also promised to refrain from attacking Shaikh Muḥammad’s tribal dependants in Qatar. The tribute Shaikh Muḥammad collected from these tribes defrayed the cost of his tribute to the Wahhabi Amir.

Angered by this arrangement, Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh left Dammām, seeking alliances elsewhere. He first sought the help of the Āl Bin ‘Alī tribe and, later, the Imam of Muscat. Twice, in May 1847 and again in February 1849, Shaikh Muḥammad asked Hennell for protection against attacks by Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s allies. The British Government refused both requests as it did not want

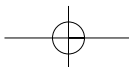


JAMES ONLEY

to become unnecessarily entangled in Bahraini affairs. Shortly after Shaikh Muḥammad's second request, however, Shaikh 'Abd Allāh died and with him the principal threat to Shaikh Muḥammad's rulership.<sup>102</sup>

In 1850, Shaikh Muḥammad stopped his tribute payments to Amir Fayṣal and the Amir began to threaten Bahrain once more. This time, Shaikh Muḥammad opened correspondence with the Ottoman Sharif of Mecca, asking to be placed under Ottoman protection and offering to pay tribute. In April 1851, Amir Fayṣal occupied the Āl Khalifah's dependencies in eastern Qatar and sent Shaikh Muḥammad excessive demands for tribute. A few months later, the dependent tribes renounced their allegiance to Shaikh Muḥammad and joined the Wahhabi fold. At this point, Shaikh Muḥammad asked for Hennell's intervention, but Hennell replied that he could do nothing until he received instructions from India. When Hennell learned of Shaikh Muḥammad's offer of tribute to the Ottoman Porte the following month, however, he decided not to wait. The British Government, he knew, would not welcome the establishment of Ottoman authority over Bahrain, as this would inhibit the General Treaty's enforcement in Bahraini waters. In early July he sent the Gulf Squadron to Bahrain with orders to defend the island from the Wahhabis, thus neutralizing the Shaikh's need for Ottoman protection. When the Squadron arrived at Bahrain, Shaikh Muḥammad came on board the Commander's boat and expressed great satisfaction at the Squadron's arrival to protect Bahrain.<sup>103</sup> In August, Hennell sent a letter to Amir Fayṣal warning him that the Gulf Squadron would not permit him to invade Bahrain.<sup>104</sup> A few weeks later, at Hennell's encouragement, Shaikh Muḥammad finally agreed to resume his tribute payments of MTD 4,000 to the Amir. The Shaikh lifted his blockade of Qatif, Wahhabi forces withdrew from Qatar and the Gulf Squadron departed Bahraini waters.<sup>105</sup>

Not long after Shaikh 'Abd Allāh's death in 1849, Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah learned that the former Ruler's eldest son, Muḥammad bin 'Abd Allāh, desired the rulership of Bahrain and was actively seeking support from Gulf rulers towards this end. Thus, when Amir Fayṣal permitted Shaikh Muḥammad bin 'Abd Allāh and his brothers to settle within his domain on Dammām Island in 1852, Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah was naturally alarmed. He complained bitterly to the Amir and ceased his tribute payments in protest. The new Resident, Captain Arnold Kemball (1852–55), managed to persuade the Shaikh to resume the payments, however, and the impending conflict was avoided.<sup>106</sup> The following year, the Shaikh appealed to the Imam of Muscat for support, but he was not interested. The Shaikh then turned to the Ottoman Viceroy of Egypt for support. The Viceroy sent a *wakīl* to Bahrain to discuss the situation, but nothing came of it as the Viceroy was in no position to offer the Shaikh any material assistance. The next year, in 1854, the Ottoman *Mutaṣarrif* (Governor) of Basra informed the Shaikh that if he wished to place himself under Ottoman pro-



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

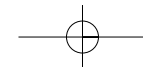
tection, he should apply to him. Amir Fayṣal learned of the Shaikh's activities and punished him by launching an attack upon Bahrain in July, but the Shaikh's forces managed to repel the attack. In retaliation, Shaikh Muḥammad sent his fleet to blockade Dammām and Qatif. When Kemball learned of the attack, he immediately set sail for Bahrain with the Gulf Squadron to prevent a second assault. Over the following ten months, Kemball managed to mediate a settlement between Shaikh Muḥammad and Amir Fayṣal, whereby the Shaikh would continue to pay the tribute, but Kemball refused to guarantee the settlement's enforcement personally. Despite this, the settlement lasted for four years.<sup>107</sup>

In 1859, Shaikh Muḥammad again ceased his payments to Amir Fayṣal. That summer the Amir gave instructions to Shaikh Muḥammad bin 'Abd Allāh (still residing on Dammām Island) and the Governor of Qatif to begin preparations to invade Bahrain. In September, the Resident, Captain Felix Jones (1855–62), heard of the impending invasion, wrote to the Amir to call off the attack and sent some gunboats across to Bahrain. One of the gunboat commanders met Shaikh Muḥammad and warned him not to attack. The Shaikh replied that, since Britain intended to defend Bahrain, he would call off the invasion. Despite the Shaikh's assurances, Jones recognized that the threat posed by the exiled Āl 'Abd Allāh branch of the Āl Khalifah to the Āl Salmān branch was undermining regional stability. He accordingly recommended to his superiors in India that Shaikh Muḥammad bin 'Abd Allāh be declared an enemy of the peace and be forbidden to reside any closer to Bahrain than Kuwait or the Persian coast. The Government agreed with Jones' recommendation and, in February 1860, authorized him to eject Shaikh Muḥammad from Dammām, which he finally did in November 1861.<sup>108</sup>

Despite Britain's *de facto* assumption of responsibility for the defence of Bahrain, Shaikh Muḥammad remained unsatisfied. J.B. Kelly offers the most plausible explanation for the Shaikh's unhappiness:

Implicit in the protection afforded Muhammad ibn Khalifah by the British Government against the Wahhabis was an understanding that he himself should not disturb the peace of the Gulf, and, in particular, that he should do nothing to provoke the Amir Faisal. This restraint on his conduct was not to Muhammad ibn Khalifah's taste: now that Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah and his followers at Dammam had been rendered harmless by the British intervention of September 1859, Muhammad ibn Khalifah wanted to push his advantage to the limit and crush the fugitives completely.<sup>109</sup>

This explains why Shaikh Muḥammad subsequently tried to break free of his commitments to his new-found protector by simultaneously seeking Persian and Ottoman protection. In 1859, the Shaikh sent formal requests to the Prince-Governor of Fars and the Ottoman *Vali* (Governor-General) of Baghdad to place

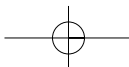


JAMES ONLEY

Bahrain under the protection of their respective governments. The Persians responded by sending a *wakīl* to Bahrain in March 1860 to present the Shaikh with a royal proclamation (*firmān*) and jewelled sword from the Shah, and a robe of honour (*hil'ah*) from the Prince-Governor of Fars. Shaikh Muḥammad responded by publicly announcing Bahrain to be a dependency of Persia, raising the Persian flag on his fort, and writing to the Shah and Prince-Governor declaring his allegiance and promising to pay tribute. The following month, however, an Ottoman *wakīl* arrived from Baghdad. The Shaikh told him he had already declared his allegiance to the Shah, but would renounce it if the Ottoman Porte could offer him better terms and greater protection than Persia. After two days of negotiations, the Ottoman *wakīl* convinced the Shaikh that he had more to gain by being an Ottoman subject. The Shaikh accordingly renounced his allegiance to the Shah, hauled down the Persian flag on his fort, raised the Ottoman flag, and presented the *wakīl* with a letter for the *Vali* of Baghdad promising to pay MTD 7,000 in tribute annually. The Ottoman *wakīl* then returned to Baghdad. The Persian *wakīl* refused to acknowledge the Shaikh's change of allegiance, however, and remained in Bahrain. As both *wakīls* had been unaccompanied by military force, Jones ignored Shaikh Muḥammad's double dealings, regarded Bahrain as still independent and continued to hold the Shaikh to his treaty commitments to the British Government.<sup>110</sup>

During this time, Shaikh Muḥammad also tried to release himself from the restrictions of British protection by violating the norms of behaviour expected of a protégé: he began insulting Jones; insulting and threatening Jones' Native Agent in Bahrain, Hajji Jāsīm (1842–62); bullying and extorting money from the British-Indian merchant community in Manamah; and raiding ships at Qatif and Dammām in open defiance of the General Treaty. In response, Jones despatched a gunboat to lie at anchor off the coast of Bahrain throughout the summer and autumn as a check on the Shaikh's activities.<sup>111</sup> In early May 1861, Shaikh Muḥammad intensified his efforts. He blockaded Qatif and Dammām and increased his raiding of local shipping. He also increased his oppression of the British Indian merchant community, forcing many to flee. His *fidāwīyah* harassed, insulted and threatened Hajji Jāsīm.<sup>112</sup>

When Jones heard of these recent developments, he sailed to Bahrain with the full Gulf Squadron. He arrived on 18 May and immediately sent a letter to the Shaikh reminding him of his commitments under the General Treaty of 1820, demanding that he call off the blockade, and assuring him that the Gulf Squadron would protect Bahrain against a Wahhabi invasion.<sup>113</sup> The Shaikh consulted the Persian *wakīl*, asking if the Persian Government was willing to help him resist the British. The *wakīl* lied, telling him that a French warship was on its way to support him. Encouraged, the Shaikh chose to wait for the arrival of the ship, to continue his blockade and raiding, and to ignore Jones.

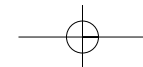


## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

Jones waited patiently for a week, during which time he had two meetings with the Ruler's brother and Governor of Manamah, Shaikh 'Ali bin Khalifah (c.1843–68). During these meetings, the Shaikh explained to Jones that 'Protection is imperative.' It was the Āl Khalifah's paramount concern. That said, he disliked his brother's association with the Persians, believing it to be counter-productive.<sup>114</sup> After eight days of waiting, Jones instructed the Squadron Commander to take action.<sup>115</sup> On 28 May, Jones directed his Native Agent and all British-Indian subjects, whose protection he was responsible for, to evacuate Bahrain and warned Shaikh Muḥammad against pillaging the possessions they left behind.<sup>116</sup> During the evacuation, however, the Shaikh's men seized and threatened the *nakhodahs* (skippers) of the dhows taking the Indians to safety.<sup>117</sup> The Squadron Commander responded quickly by seizing two of Shaikh Muḥammad's war dhows blockading Qatif. This had the desired effect: the Shaikh capitulated and later withdrew his blockade.

Jones realized that the only way to hold the Shaikh to his treaty commitments to the British Government in future would be to allow Bahrain to become a member of the Perpetual Maritime Truce. He believed the reasons for previously excluding Bahrain to be 'scarcely valid'. The exclusion of Bahrain from the Truce, 'has been highly detrimental to our policy for some time past. Treaties though not infallible with Arab tribes, no more than with other nations, have with them an importance which it is unwise to neglect.'<sup>118</sup> He accordingly drew up a Friendly Convention binding the Shaikh to abstain from all maritime warfare on condition of protection from similar aggressions. The Convention further provided for the protection of British subjects in Bahrain from attack and extortion.<sup>119</sup> He summoned Shaikh 'Alī aboard his ship and presented him with the Convention, which the Shaikh delivered to Shaikh Muḥammad and the elder shaikhs of the Āl Khalifah for their consideration. The elders and Shaikh 'Alī expressed 'great satisfaction' with the Convention and Shaikh Muḥammad 'observe[d] nothing but what is right and just for the interests of all parties'.<sup>120</sup> They signed the Convention on 31 May 1861, making Bahrain a British-protected state. After the signing, Jones returned one of Shaikh Muḥammad's dhows, but retained the other as a guarantee for future behaviour.<sup>121</sup>

As Bahrain could be defended by naval means alone, its incorporation into the trucial system was to have two serious consequences. The first was for the Āl Khalifah's tributary relations with the tribes of Qatar. Although their dependants were also now subject to the trucial system, Qatar could not be defended solely by sea. Jones therefore encouraged Shaikh Muḥammad to keep paying tribute to Amir Fayṣal to secure Qatar from mainland attack, which he did. What Shaikh Muḥammad does not seem to have realised, however, is that British maritime protection of his dependants included protection from maritime aggressions by *him*.



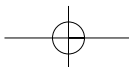
JAMES ONLEY

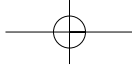
The second consequence was for Shaikh Muḥammad's rulership. So long as the British Government chose to extend its maritime protection to the Ruler's territorial possessions, the Ruler was obligated to abstain from maritime aggression. However, it was not a case of British protection lasting only so long as the Ruler chose to observe the Truce. A treaty violation would not result in Britain withdrawing its protection from the Ruler's territory, although it might result in Britain withdrawing its protection from the Ruler. The British Government made its conditional protection of the Ruler's position quite clear to Shaikh Muḥammad's successors, as typified by this policy statement from 1874: 'so long as [the Chief of Bahrein] adheres to his Treaty obligations the British Government will protect him: but if such protection is to be accorded him, he must not be the aggressor, or undertake measures which will involve him in complications.'<sup>122</sup>

These consequences of the trucial system did not become apparent until 1867, when a dispute erupted between the Āl Khalifah and their dependants over the amount of tribute they were asked to pay. The Governor in Wakrah, Shaikh Aḥmad Āl Khalifah, handled the situation badly and the tribes rebelled, forcing him to flee with his family and belongings to Khor Ḥassān. The Governor returned in October 1867 with the Ruler of Bahrain, the Ruler's brother, Shaikh 'Ali, and the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Zāyid bin Khalifah Al-Nahyan (1855–1909), at the head of a combined force of 3,700 armed men and 94 dhows. They raided Wakrah, Bid', Doha and other ports, taking away an estimated MTD 200,000 (Rs 400,000) in booty. The following June, the Qatari tribes sailed to Bahrain to avenge the raid, but were intercepted off the northern Qatari coast by a Bahraini war fleet. A bloody battle ensued in which around sixty dhows were sunk and 1,000 men killed.

The Resident, Colonel Lewis Pelly (1862–72), naturally regarded these conflicts as a gross violation of the Perpetual Maritime Truce. As the Government of India had disbanded the Gulf Squadron (along with the Indian Navy) four years previously, Pelly's ability to enforce reparation was severely limited. He attempted to do it through correspondence alone, but Shaikh Muḥammad and Shaikh Zāyid evaded the issue, confident that Pelly could do nothing. In early June 1868, nearly a year after the raid on Qatar, the Government of Bombay finally promised to send three gunboats to the Gulf so Pelly could settle this outstanding issue. In mid-August, shortly before the arrival of the gunboats, Pelly sent the Rulers a verbal warning through their *wakīls* at Bushire, which he later repeated in a letter to Shaikh Muḥammad:

you have mistaken the moderation and forbearance of the British Government for an absence of force, and an inability to fulfil its functions as arbitrator of the maritime truce. The British Indian Government have at length most reluctantly found themselves compelled to resolve that your conduct calls for exemplary punishment ...<sup>123</sup>



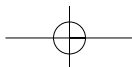


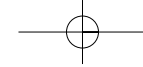
THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

When Shaikh Muḥammad received this warning, he fled to Khor Ḥassān to escape punishment.

A few days later, when the gunboats arrived at Bushire, Pelly set sail for the Arab coast, calling first at Wakrah and then at Bahrain. When Pelly arrived off the coast of Muharraḡ on 6 September, he found Shaikh 'Alī in temporary charge of the shaikhdom. Shaikh 'Alī sent a *wakīl* to Pelly, informing him that the treaty violations were entirely the fault of Shaikh Muḥammad and that 'there was no alternative other than the ruin of [Bahrain], or the removal of Shaikh Mahomed from power'.<sup>124</sup> Later that day, Shaikh 'Alī joined Pelly onboard ship with an assembly of Bahrain's senior shaikhs. They told Pelly that they considered Shaikh Muḥammad to have forfeited his rulership and asked for time to propose 'an arrangement under which all the demands and interests could be satisfied'.<sup>125</sup> Pelly agreed and the shaikhs departed. After two days of consultations, they returned and handed Pelly the text of a declaration terminating Shaikh Muḥammad's rulership and entrusting Shaikh 'Alī to act in his place.<sup>126</sup> It further stated that Shaikh 'Alī would pay an initial fine of MTD 25,000 (Rs 50,000) and return all booty to Qatar. This would be followed by three further annual payments of the same amount. All payments were to be given to the victims of the raid. Pelly accepted the declaration, but insisted on the destruction of Shaikh Muḥammad's fort (on a small island off the coast of Muharraḡ) and his war dhows as a symbolic destruction of his rulership. Pelly explains how he 'took the Gunboats *Clyde* and *Hugh Rose* up the creek which leads to Moharraḡ Fort, and, anchoring those vessels within 300 yards of the walls, destroyed both fort and cannon, and burnt Mahomed's three war craft lying immediately under the walls of the fort.' The fort, he discovered, 'was of solid stone and required considerable pounding from the 10-inch guns of the *Clyde* and *Hugh Rose*'.<sup>127</sup> In a further symbolic act, Pelly sent the *Clyde* 'to lie at anchor under Shaikh Ali's fort [in Manamah], thus affording him the benefit of our moral support and recognition'.<sup>128</sup>

Pelly then departed with the two remaining gunboats, the *Hugh Rose* and *Vigilant*, to meet with the Āl Khalifah's dependants at Qatar. He obtained from them a promise to return to their former relations with the Āl Khalifah. In an effort to prevent future disputes, he then imposed a new tribute arrangement on the Āl Khalifah and their dependants—an arrangement which provides an interesting example of how complex the tribute system could become. The shaikhs of the Āl Bū 'Aynayn, Kalb, Āl Bū Kuwārah, Ma'āḡīḡ (Āl Thānī), Mahandah, Āl Musallam, Na'im and Sūdān of eastern and northern Qatar were to pay Ks 4,000 (Rs 1,600) to the Na'im of western Qatar on behalf of Shaikh 'Alī and a further Ks 5,000 (Rs 2,000) to the Resident, who was to transmit it to Shaikh 'Alī. The Ks 4,000 would keep the Na'im loyal to Shaikh 'Alī who, in turn, would ensure that the Na'im did not attack the tribes of eastern and northern



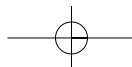


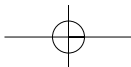
JAMES ONLEY

Qatar. Shaikh ‘Alī was to hand over the Ks 5,000 he received to the Amir of Najd and Hasa who, in turn, would promise not to attack the Āl Khalifah’s dependants in Qatar.<sup>129</sup> Pelly’s imposed arrangement was fundamentally flawed, however. The basis of tribute relations was a protector’s ability to both protect and punish his protégés—an ability the Ruler of Bahrain now lacked because of the Maritime Truce. The new arrangement would not last for long.

In December 1870, civil war broke out in the Amirate of Najd and Hasa. The Amir, ‘Abd Allāh bin Fayṣal Al Su‘ūd, appealed to the Ottoman *Vali* of Baghdad, Midhat Pasha, for help. In April 1871, Midhat Pasha sent a military expedition to Hasa to restore order, declaring Hasa and Najd to be part of the Ottoman Empire. By June, Ottoman forces were in control of Qatif and Dammām. In early July, the Commander of the Ottoman expedition, Nafiz Pasha, despatched a steamer to accompany the Ruler of Kuwait, ‘Abd Allāh bin Ṣabāḥ Āl Ṣabāḥ (1866–92), to Bid‘ in order to persuade the Governor of Bid‘ to acknowledge Ottoman suzerainty. Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh failed to persuade the Governor, but he won over the Governor’s son, Shaikh Qāsim bin Muḥammad Āl Thānī. Qāsim was given four Ottoman flags. He raised one over his own fort in Bid‘, sent a second to his father, a third to the Governor of Khor Ṣāqīq and a fourth to the Governor of ‘Udayd. When their annual tribute to the Ruler of Bahrain became due later that year, the tribal leaders withheld their payment. The Āl Khalifah were prevented from launching a punitive expedition against their Qatari dependants by the Maritime Truce, but the Wahhabis were now free to raid Qatar, which they soon did. In January 1872, Midhat Pasha despatched an infantry battalion to Bid‘ to defend eastern Qatar and to establish a garrison. After repulsing the Wahhabi raiders, the battalion re-embarked a few weeks later, leaving behind a garrison of 100 troops with field guns.<sup>130</sup> This marked the end of the Āl Khalifah’s tributary relations with eastern and northern Qatar and soon threatened their tributary relations with western Qatar.

In July 1873, a rumour reached the Ruler of Bahrain, Shaikh ‘Īsā bin ‘Alī (1869–1923), that an Ottoman official had arrived in Zubarah with an escort of 100 soldiers and had asked the Shaikh of the branch of the Na‘īm tribe living there to become an Ottoman subject. The Resident, Colonel Edward Ross (1872–91), sent his Assistant, Major Charles Grant, to investigate. Shaikh ‘Īsā told Grant that the Na‘īm, as his subjects, were entitled to British protection from the Ottomans. Grant discovered that the Ottoman visit had indeed taken place, although he dismissed the alleged purpose of the visit as ‘mere coffee-room gossip’.<sup>131</sup> Nevertheless, the implications were clear. While Britain was not obligated to protect the Ruler’s mainland dependencies from attack by land, there would still be a serious risk of confrontation with the Ottoman authorities if Britain acknowledged the Ruler’s right to protect the Na‘īm. Deliberations passed between India and Bushire on the issue. By the end of the year, the





THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

Indian Foreign Department, anxious to avoid such a confrontation, settled upon a policy of denying recognition of these dependencies and of forbidding the Ruler to defend them either militarily or politically.<sup>132</sup>

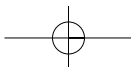
While the British Government would continue to defend Bahrain, it would only support the Ruler's position in Bahrain so long as he continued to observe the treaties and uphold the Pax Britannica.<sup>133</sup> Thus prevented from affording protection to his dependants in western Qatar, the Ruler's authority there became merely nominal. In 1878, his enemies attacked Zubarah, destroying the town and scattering its inhabitants. Had the Resident permitted the Ruler to defend Zubarah, the town might have been saved and his authority preserved. To bolster his authority and influence with the shaikhs of the Na'im, the Ruler increased his subsidies to their leading shaikhs. He continued to pay these subsidies until 1937, when the Āl Thānī of eastern Qatar defeated the Na'im in battle, bringing the whole of Qatar under their control. The Na'im migrated to Bahrain soon after, thus bringing to a close 171 years of Āl Khalifah overlordship in Qatar.<sup>134</sup>

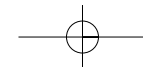
### 9. Protection-seeking and the Protector-protégé Relationship

Hitherto, historians have explained the relations between, and the protection-seeking tactics of, the Gulf Arab rulers as a result of rational calculations of self-interest and shrewd pragmatism. No historical explanation has yet taken into account Arabian political culture. The tribute system of Eastern Arabia was based upon the Arabian custom of protection-seeking. Its norms and obligations and the resulting protector-protégé relationship provided the rulers with an effective survival strategy in the face of Arabia's ever-shifting power dynamics. In so far as the need for protection weighed heavily upon the minds of the rulers, these customary norms and obligations shaped the conduct of regional relations—including, in time, Anglo–Arab relations.

As political relations between the shaikhdoms were really relations between individual shaikhs, studies of protection-seeking customs at the individual level are relevant to the study of regional political relations in the Gulf. Paul Dresch has examined how protection operates on a personal level in South Arabia.<sup>135</sup> The same practices are described in Harold Dickson's study of Eastern Arabia, although his analysis is not as extensive.<sup>136</sup> Just as personal honour was central to regional political relations, so too was it central to the politics of protection.

If someone requests protection, honour demands that protection be given.<sup>137</sup> Once this happens, Dresch notes, the protégé (*al-dahīl* or *al-ġār*) is 'on the honour' (*fī waġhi-hi*) of his protector (*muġawwir*).<sup>138</sup> The protégé is henceforth in his charge and must be defended by him.<sup>139</sup> Protégés of the same protector



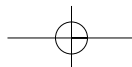


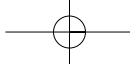
JAMES ONLEY

are forbidden to offend or attack each other, just as all others—including the protector himself—are forbidden to violate the protection placed over them.<sup>140</sup> For a protector to offend his own protégé is the greatest disgrace of all.<sup>141</sup> This law of entering another's protection, known as *dahālah* (entering), is a sacred and honoured custom in Arabia.<sup>142</sup> One claims *dahālah* by saying *anā dahīlak* or *anā dahīl 'ala Allāh wa-'alayk* (I am your protégé, I enter upon God's pardon and yours).<sup>143</sup> Dresch describes this as entering the 'personal peace' of another. Every tribesman has a 'peace' by virtue of his personal honour.<sup>144</sup> If a protégé offends someone else, especially a fellow protégé, or otherwise behaves badly, he violates this 'peace' and insults the honour (*wağh*) of his protector. When this happens, the protector may justifiably take action against his protégé or revoke his protection. The penalties for violating *dahālah* and insulting a person's honour are severe.<sup>145</sup> The onus is on the protector to exact compensation or take revenge on behalf of the victim. If he cannot, he must personally compensate the victim out of his own pocket. Only compensation or revenge will wipe out the disgrace to the protector and restore the honour of his protégé. If a third party offends someone living in the 'peace' of another and escapes being penalized, he has not only affronted the protector's honour, but also disgraced him by revealing his inadequacy as a protector. In this system of protection, a protégé is answerable to his protector who, in turn, is answerable to the public for the actions of his protégé. If one has a claim against a protégé, he must go to the protector, not the protégé.<sup>146</sup> This effectively casts the protector in the secondary roles of mediator, arbiter and guarantor of settlements. If one side breaks a settlement, the settlement's guarantor must intervene on the side of the victim.<sup>147</sup> These norms and expectations eventually shaped Anglo-Arab relations.

Dresch notes that one may become the protégé of another without demeaning himself. The protégé has a 'peace' of his own and one day the protector may be in need of it.<sup>148</sup> A ruler who seeks protection, however, loses some of his personal honour and prestige, as Rosenfeld's comments above suggest. Protégés of rulers—be they individuals, tribes, or other rulers—normally paid tribute to their protector.<sup>149</sup> In this sense, protégés become like a ruler's own subjects, from whom he collects taxes such as *zakāt*. In both cases the payee is obligated to protect the payer.

If a ruler was unable to secure, or unwilling to accept, the protection of a regional power, or an alliance with a less powerful ruler, and faced certain defeat in battle against his enemy, he had one last resort. It was acceptable for him to place himself under his enemy's protection as a form of reluctant nominal subservience. This was a political compromise preferable to outright military defeat. A skilful ruler might even use such a temporary submission to his advantage. This practice may originate from the tactic Bedouin warriors resorted to



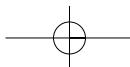


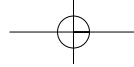
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

in the face of certain death in battle, whereby the supplicant says to his enemy, *yā fulān anā fi waġh-ak* (O so-and-so, I place myself under your protection/on your honour). If he gets the reply, *inta fi waġhī, sallim silāhak* (You are under my protection/on my honour, hand over your arms), the supplicant is safe. The protector must then defend the supplicant with his life until the battle, and possibly the war, is over. The supplicant becomes, effectively, a prisoner of war and is not free to go on his way.<sup>150</sup>

For a ruler, there was little advantage in surrendering after the commencement of hostilities; only his life would be spared. It was far better for him to offer submission before battle, then his rulership would be spared as well. If he did this, he became a protégé and was required to pay tribute as a sign of submission and political subordination. Henceforth, the ruler's shaikhdom was considered a dependency of his protector, as discussed in Section 7. The ruler became, in effect, a governor who ruled on behalf of his protector.<sup>151</sup> Unlike a military conquest, a submission was not normally followed by military occupation, although the protector might send a political agent (*wakīl* or *mu'tamad*) to reside at the ruler's court, making the ruler's submission largely symbolic and the incorporation often nominal. This was for a good reason. For, as Frauke Heard-Bey notes, a tribe under the protection of a more powerful tribe typically rebelled if its protector imposed its own governor.<sup>152</sup> A protector would normally send a *wakīl* or impose his own governor in only two circumstances, therefore: (1) if he was distrustful enough of his protégé; or (2) if the dependency had a mixed tribal population and no ruler, making problematic the appointment of one of the local tribal leaders to the governorship. If the dependency was inhabited or dominated by only one tribe, the protector was well advised to leave the administration in the hands of the ruler or leader of that tribe.<sup>153</sup> With his rulership intact, a submissive ruler or tribal leader would pay tribute and bide his time until he was able to reassert his independence, often by securing the protection of another regional power or an alliance with a less powerful ruler or tribal leader. For powerful rulers and tribes, these submissions were often nominal and always temporary, lasting no more than a few years. For weak rulers and tribes, submission involved a greater loss of autonomy and tended to be more permanent, lasting for decades or even generations, as did the tribute payments.

Frauke Heard-Bey also explains how the greater the geographical distance between a governor and his ruler, the greater the governor's independence, and the less his ruler's personal influence was felt in the town, district or dependency under the governor's supervision.<sup>154</sup> Another factor was a ruler's choice of governor. The stronger the bonds of trust between governor and ruler, the more a ruler could delegate authority without the risk of secession. 'This is the reason', says Heard-Bey, 'why most Rulers put a brother or a son in charge of





JAMES ONLEY

an important dependency, but this was not always a sure safeguard against secessionist movements, either led by the *wali* [governor] or perpetrated by the inhabitants themselves.<sup>155</sup>

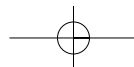
### 10. The Āl Khalifah's Rule of Qatar and Bahrain

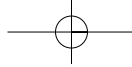
The centrality of protection and the implications it had for Gulf rulership and Anglo–Arab relations are well illustrated by the Āl Khalifah's rule of Qatar and Bahrain. Three patterns in particular emerge: the identification of rulerships and governorships with forts or fortified buildings (see Map 2), the remarkable autonomy of governors, and the high turnover of allies and protectors. Historical accounts of the first 35 years of Āl Khalifah rule in Bahrain vary widely. What follows is a synthesis of the various accounts.

When the Āl Khalifah made Zubarah the capital of their new shaikhdom in 1766, they constructed Marayr Fort to protect the town and solidify their rulership on the west coast of Qatar.<sup>156</sup> After his conquest of Bahrain in 1782–83, Shaikh Aḥmad bin Khalifah '*al-Fātiḥ*' (Ruler 1783–96) appointed Shaikh 'Alī bin Fāris Āl Khalifah, a close relative, Governor of Bahrain.<sup>157</sup> Shaikh 'Alī resided in Dīwān Fort in Manamah (also known as Manamah Fort, the present-day Police Fort), then on the southern outskirts of Manamah.<sup>158</sup> Shaikh Aḥmad also placed Bahrain Fort—five kilometres west of Manamah at the former commercial centre of Bahrain—in the care of one of his military commanders, a protégé tribal leader named 'Aḡāḡ.<sup>159</sup> Between 1783 and 1796, the capital of the Āl Khalifah shaikhdom alternated between Zubarah, where Shaikh Aḥmad resided during the winter, and Dīwān Fort in Manamah, where he lived during the summer.<sup>160</sup>

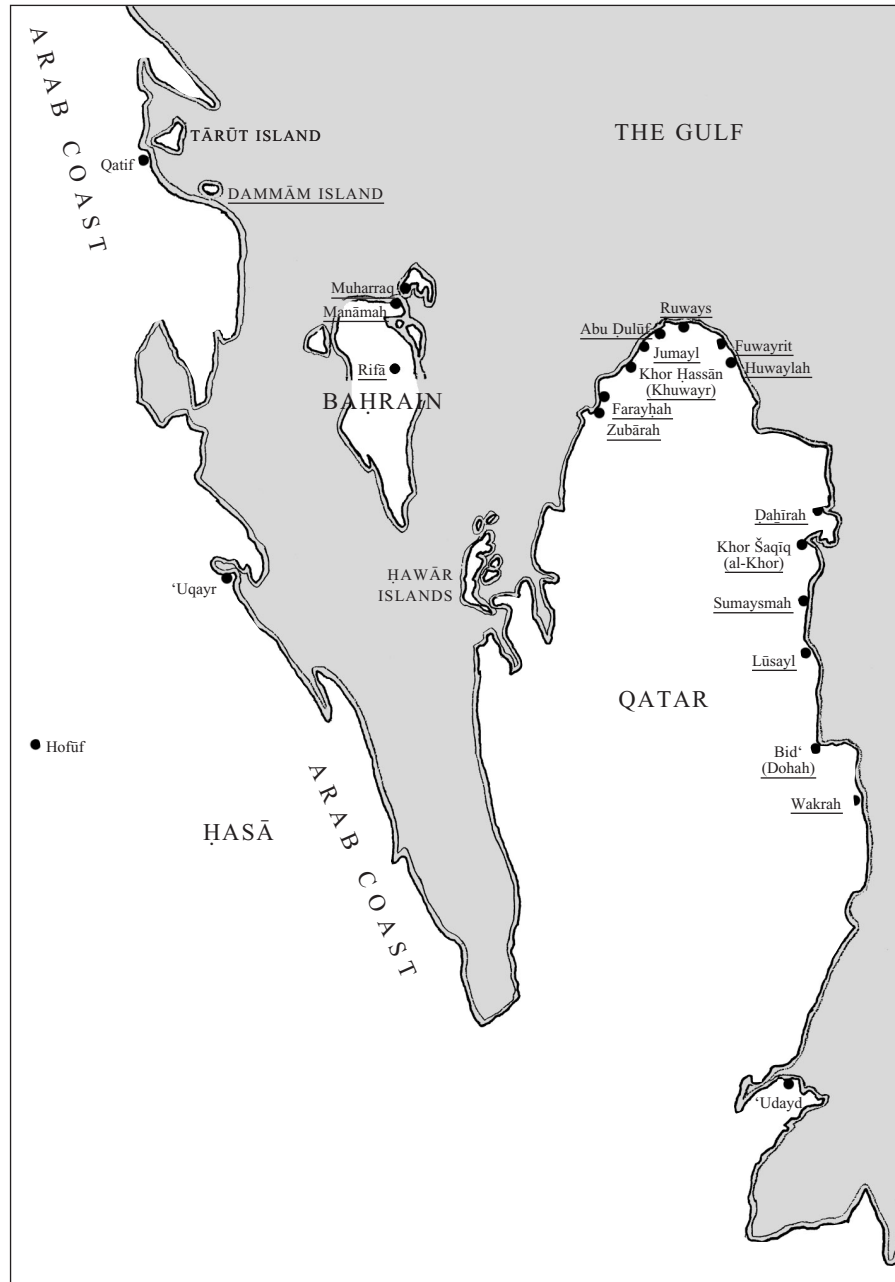
When Shaikh Aḥmad died in 1796 in Manamah, his sons, Salmān and 'Abd Allāh were residing in Zubarah.<sup>161</sup> They assumed joint rulership of the shaikhdom, with the elder son, Salmān, holding most of the power.<sup>162</sup> At the time, Zubarah was under siege by the Wahhabis and Salmān made the decision to evacuate to Bahrain.<sup>163</sup> By 1800, Salmān had most likely moved to Muharraq, where he almost certainly had command of 'Arād Fort.<sup>164</sup> 'Abd Allāh may have initially moved to Manamah, taking up residence in Dīwān Fort, but by 1819 he was living in Muharraq.<sup>165</sup> In 1816, Salmān retired from active rulership and moved to Rifā' Fort at some distance from Muharraq at the centre of Bahrain Island.<sup>166</sup> Thereafter, 'Abd Allāh became the *de facto* Ruler of Bahrain.<sup>167</sup>

'Abd Allāh's rise to power was symbolized by his construction of Abū Māhir Fort (also known as Muharraq Fort) upon the ruins of a much older fort on Abū Māhir Island. Abū Māhir was an ideal fortress island, just off the shore of Muharraq town but connected to it at low tide by a sand bar. The fort stood on the island's southern tip, at the end of a sandy point jutting out into Bahrain's

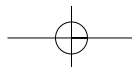


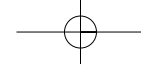


THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF



Map 2. The locations of towns (underlined) governed by the Āl Khalifah or their protégés.





JAMES ONLEY

main harbour, Khor al-Qulay‘ah. It commanded both the entrance of the harbour and Muharraq’s principal water source, an underwater spring, making it the most important fort in Bahrain.<sup>168</sup>

After the Āl Khalifah moved to Bahrain, the island shaikhdom was rapidly divided into a number of governorships, with each governor occupying or building his own fort. Drawings of the main forts, comparing their size and design, are shown in Figure 1, below. Once their rule became secure in Bahrain, the Āl Khalifah rulers and governors shifted their primary residences from their forts to *qaṣrs* (fortified palaces) and *bayts* (mansions), such as Qaṣr Khalifah in Manamah (built c.1829), Qaṣr Rifā‘ in Rifā‘ and Bayt ‘Īsā in Muharraq (built c.1820–30s).<sup>169</sup>

The most populous governorships in Bahrain were the towns of Muharraq, Abū Māhir, Ḥidd, Manamah, ‘Awālī, Rifā‘ and Buḍayyi‘, and the island of Sītrah (whose governor controlled a large coastal area on eastern Bahrain

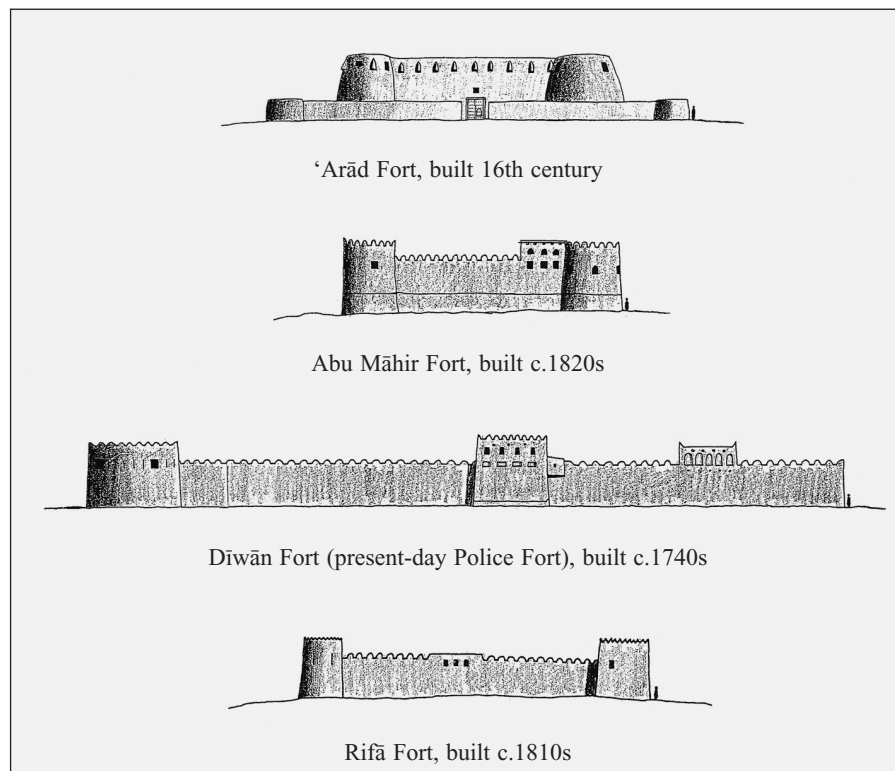
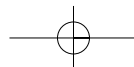


Figure 1. The main forts of Bahrain (scale indicated by the man beside each fort).

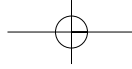


## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

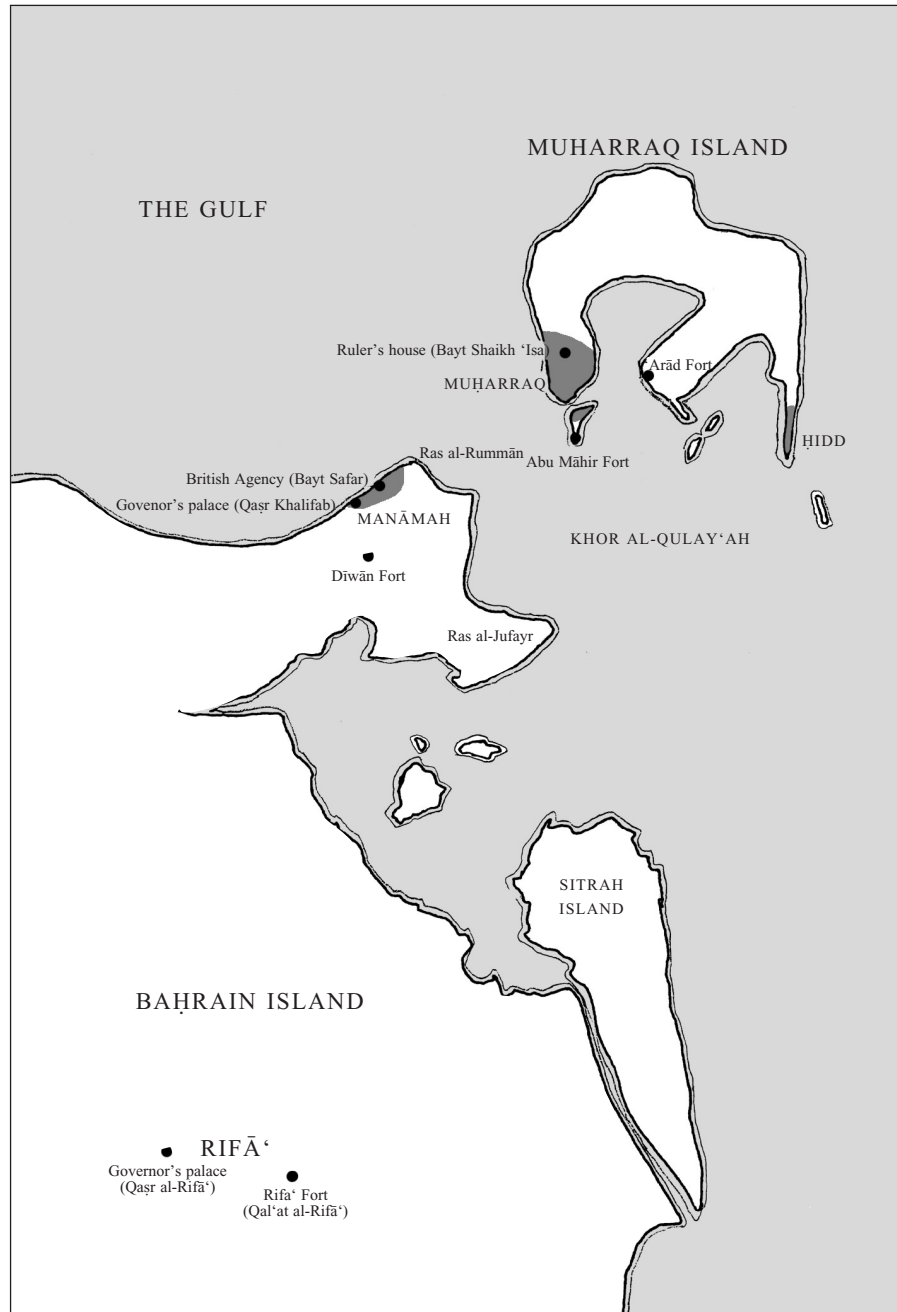
Island). There were many more governorships of villages and rural estates. Captain George Brucks of the Indian Navy, who visited Bahrain in 1827, noted that there were about 50 forts or fortified buildings in different parts of the islands, suggesting the existence of an equal number of governorships.<sup>170</sup> Many of these were held by members of the Āl Khalifah, including the Ruler himself. Fuad Khuri has identified 29 towns, villages and rural estates personally governed by eleven Āl Khalifah shaikhs in the late nineteenth century.<sup>171</sup> Other governorships were held by protégé tribal leaders or high-ranking *fidāwīyah*.<sup>172</sup> The Āl Khalifah and their governors ruled an island population, estimated at 60,000 in 1827 and 100,000 in 1905,<sup>173</sup> composed mostly of *Bahārinah* (the Shi‘i Arabs of Bahrain) and tribes from Qatar, Hasa and Najd; as well as several thousand *Hawalāh* (Arabs from Persia<sup>174</sup>); several thousand *Mawālī* (African slaves and former slaves); and a few hundred ‘*Aḡam* (expatriate Persians), *Banias* (Hindu merchants from India) and *Khojahs* (Isma‘ili merchants from western India).<sup>175</sup>

The governors had a high degree of autonomy and collected their own taxes.<sup>176</sup> Rulers had only a loose control over their governors. When Lieutenant John MacLeod (Resident 1822–23) visited Bahrain in January 1823, for instance, he observed that ‘the authority of the Shaikhs of Bahrain in their own dominions did not appear to be so absolute as might have been expected’.<sup>177</sup> This seems to have been a common state of affairs throughout much of Eastern Arabia, a point reflected in the ambivalence of the words for ‘governor’ and ‘ruler’ used by most ruling families. Before independence, the Āl Khalifah used the title of *amīr* (meaning commander, ruler, chief and prince) for their governors of towns, while the ruling families of the Trucial States used the title of *wālī* (governor). Both groups of families used the title of *ḥākīm* (meaning both governor and ruler) for their rulers.<sup>178</sup> Upon independence, the rulers of Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar adopted the title of amir, while the rulers of the United Arab Emirates, paradoxically, retained the title of *ḥākīm*. The Āl Su‘ūd of Najd and the Āl Rašīd of Ḥā’il used the title of amir for their rulers in the nineteenth century, while today the Āl Su‘ūd use it only for their provincial governors.<sup>179</sup> British officials generally used the title of ‘chief’ in the nineteenth century and ‘ruler’ from the 1910s onward. In the interests of clarity, when referring to Gulf shaikhdoms, this study has employed the titles of Ruler (for *ḥākīm*, amir and chief) and governor (for *wālī* and *amīr*).

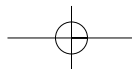
Beyond the Bahrain islands, the Āl Khalifah directly governed at various times at least seven of their dependencies: the island of Dammām off the coast of Hasa, and the towns of Zubarah, Khor Ḥassān, Ruways, Ḥuwaylah, Bid‘ and Wakrah, in Qatar. The locations of these towns can be seen on Map 3, below. Zubarah, on Qatar’s western coast, was directly governed by the Āl Khalifah for 103 years; first by the rulers themselves from 1766 to 1796, and



JAMES ONLEY



Map 3. Locations of the main forts and buildings of Baḥrain.



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

Table 4. Occasions when the *Āl Khalifah* sought military alliances<sup>180</sup>

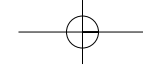
<i>Allies</i>	<i>Dates</i>
1. <i>Āl Ṣabāḥ</i> rulers of Kuwait	1770, 1782–83, 1811, 1843 <sup>181</sup>
2. <i>Āl Ġalāḥimah</i> shaikhs of Ruways and Qays Island	1782–83, 1842 <sup>182</sup>
3. <i>Āl Bin ‘Alī</i> shaikhs of Qays Island and Bid‘	1842, 1847
4. Na‘im shaikhs of Qatar	c.1766–1937
5. Qāsimī rulers of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah	1816–1819, 1843, 1867
6. <i>Āl Maktūm</i> Ruler of Dubai	1843
7. Bani Hāġir tribe of Hasa	1843, 1869
8. <i>Āl Nahyān</i> rulers of Abu Dhabi	1829, 1867

Occasions when the *Āl Khalifah* sought or accepted protection<sup>183</sup>

<i>Protectors</i>	<i>Dates</i>
1. Bani Khalid rulers of Hasa	1716–95
2. Persian prince-governors of Fars	c.1784–89, 1839, 1843, 1859–60
3. Persian Governor of Bushire	1799
4. Wahhabi (Su‘ūdī) amirs of Najd and Hasa	1801–05, 1810–11, 1816–17, 1830–33, 1836, 1843, 1847–50, 1851–55, 1856–9 1861–65, 1867–71
5. <i>Āl Bū Sa‘īd</i> imams of Muscat	1800, 1801, 1805–06, 1811–16, 1820–1821, 1829
6. Commander of the Egyptian army in Hasa	1839–40
7. Ottoman Viceroy of Egypt	1853
8. Ottoman Sharif of Mecca	1853
9. Ottoman <i>Vali</i> of Baghdad	1859–60
10. British Residents in the Gulf	1805, 1823, 1830, 1838, 1839, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1851, 1854, 1859, 1861, 1869, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1887, 1888, 1892, 1895

then intermittently by a series of family members until 1869. The governorships of the *Āl Khalifah*'s remaining dependencies in Qatar were all held by protégé tribal leaders, the most well-known being Shaikh Muḥammad bin Thānī, the *Āl Khalifah*'s Governor of Bid‘ (1847–71), who later became the first independent Ruler of Qatar (1871–76).

The governing of a ruler's shaikhdom and dependencies by a number of semi-autonomous governors, some of whom might be rivals for the rulership, meant



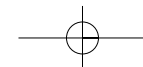
JAMES ONLEY

that a ruler's authority rested, not only on a general acceptance of his rule and his command of economic resources and armed retainers, but ultimately on his superior ability to protect his subjects and dependants. A ruler's presumed or actual skill at forging military alliances, and devising effective protection-seeking tactics when his shaikhdom and dependencies were threatened, was what kept him in power over his governors. The internal structure of his shaikhdom and dependencies thus motivated him to obtain the most powerful protector he could—hence the frequent appeals of the rulers of Bahrain for British protection.

The protection of the Āl Khalifah's shaikhdom and dependencies from antagonistic regional powers was an on-going problem for the rulers of Bahrain. Often they lacked sufficient military resources and were forced to seek or accept outside support (see Table 4, above). The Āl Khalifah may have had an unusually high number of protectors, but they were by no means unusual in having been protégés. All the ruling families of the Gulf today have been the protégés of regional and extra-regional powers in the past. In the nineteenth and twentieth century, most of them sought British protection. The reason was simple: the Resident had the greatest coercive power in the Gulf at his command: the Gulf Squadron. The Resident had a better chance than any other regional protector of punishing and exacting compensation from offenders. As a result, British protection was the least likely to be violated.

By allying with a powerful protector like the British Government, a ruler also reinforced his own position. If a ruler could create the impression amongst his family and governors that he alone had access to the Resident and that the beneficial connection would be lost without him, he gained security for his rulership against internal rivals.<sup>184</sup> In the act of protecting a shaikhdom, either militarily or politically, Britain also enhanced the political status of the ruler and his shaikhdom within the regional political system. British protection 'bestowed a legal status on the concept of "shaykhdom",' as J.E. Peterson puts it.<sup>185</sup> It also served as recognition of shaikhly families as sovereign governments, reinforcing their independence within the regional political system. Peter Lienhardt explains that British protection and recognition accorded the rulers 'a status higher than the traditional way of life had allowed them', reinforcing their authority within their shaikhdoms and dependencies.<sup>186</sup> The withdrawal of British protection and recognition from a shaikhdom or its dependencies, therefore, made a ruler vulnerable to a family coup d'état or a tribal secession respectively.

Despite the advantages British protection brought, it proved to be a double-edged sword for the rulers. It came at a high price: accountability to the Resident for any action he disapproved of. Accountability was common to both British and Arabian understandings of the protégé-protector relationship, of course, but the problem for the rulers was that the Resident was able to hold them



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

thoroughly accountable. Once a Gulf Arab ruler obtained a promise of British protection, he disregarded it at his peril, as Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh bin Aḥmad Āl Khalifah (Ruler 1796–1843) and Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah Āl Khalifah (Ruler 1843–68) discovered at the cost of their rulerships.

### 11. The Protection-seeking Tactics of Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh

The tactics of Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh bin Aḥmad Āl Khalifah (Ruler of Bahrain 1796–1843) provide a good illustration of the complexities of protection-seeking in regional politics.

In November 1838, the Shaikh submitted a request to the Resident, Captain Samuel Hennell (1838–41, 1843–52), for British protection against an Egyptian army that had recently occupied Najd and was now pushing towards Hasa.<sup>187</sup> Hennell drew up a full report on the Egyptian threat to Bahrain and submitted it, along with Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s request, to his superiors in India. Approval for a formal commitment to protect Bahrain must come from the East India Company’s Secret Committee of the Court of Directors in London, came the reply. Until the Court’s views were known, the Company authorized Hennell to intervene militarily if the Egyptians invaded. The Commander of the Royal Navy squadron in the Gulf at the time, Rear-Admiral Sir Frederick Maitland, verbally informed Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh of this temporary measure. Meanwhile, Hennell opened up diplomatic channels with the Commander of the Egyptian army, Khurshid Pasha, to discourage him from invading Bahrain.

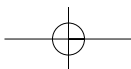
By January 1839, the Egyptian army had occupied all the main ports of Hasa and Khurshid Pasha despatched a *wakīl* to Bahrain demanding tribute from Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh. With the British response still pending, the Shaikh decided to hedge his bets. As mentioned above, he first sought Persian protection but, realizing that Persia could not protect him, changed his mind and placed himself under the protection of the Egyptian army. He chose this course of action instead of holding out for a formal commitment of British protection partly because of Khurshid’s generous terms: the Commander would send no *wakīl* to reside in Bahrain and would abstain from interfering in Bahraini affairs. In return, Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh must pay a yearly tribute of MTD 2,000. The Shaikh considered this ‘a trifling and merely pecuniary sacrifice’ for the ‘virtual immunity from disturbance’ he received in return.<sup>188</sup>

In July, Hennell received authority from London to offer only a verbal promise to the Shaikh of the temporary protection of the Royal Navy squadron in the Gulf. When Hennell made the offer to the Shaikh, he declined it, arguing that he could not repudiate his agreement with Khurshid Pasha for anything less than a formal, written promise of British protection. This seems to have been an attempt by the Shaikh to play Hennell off against Khurshid to obtain a more

JAMES ONLEY

permanent form of protection for his rulership. The Shaikh may have had this end in mind when he submitted to Khurshid in the first place. In the end, his bid to turn Bahrain into a British protectorate was unsuccessful. Hennell had no authority to provide the Shaikh with a written promise of temporary defence, let alone permanent protection, and the Court of Directors in London considered a regular protectorate inexpedient.<sup>189</sup> Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s bid for lasting security from his many foes and rivals had disastrous long-term consequences. Captain Hennell and Lieutenant Arnold Kemball (Assistant Resident 1841–52) considered Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh ‘to have forfeited the friendship of the British Government’ when the Shaikh chose Egyptian over British protection. The Secret Committee in London even discussed ‘the possibility of his being displaced by a more favourably disposed Shaikh’.<sup>190</sup> Unfortunately for Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh, the Egyptian army withdrew from Hasa and Najd the following summer. Within a few years he would need military assistance again. This time, promises of British protection would not be forthcoming.

After the withdrawal of the Egyptian army in 1840, a group of concerned Ḥasawīyah (Arabs from Hasa) sent a representative to Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh with a proposition. Would he send his grand-nephew, Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah, to the mainland to wrest the governorship of Hasa from Wahhabi hands? Khurshid Pasha had placed the current Wahhabi Amir, Khālid ibn Su‘ūd (1837–41), in power after his conquest of Najd. The Ḥasawīyah thought ill of Amir Khālid and believed Āl Khalifah rule would be preferable to his.<sup>191</sup> Six years before, Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh had blocked his grand-nephew’s assumption of the joint rulership of Bahrain after the death of the young Shaikh’s father, Shaikh Khalifah bin Salmān (joint Ruler 1825–34). It appears that Shaikh Muḥammad believed his great-uncle was obliged to support the proposal of the Ḥasawīyah as compensation for this denial. But Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh did not agree and rejected the plan. A violent difference of opinion resulted between the Shaikh and his grand-nephew over the summer. Shaikh Muḥammad asked for British assistance to overthrow his great-uncle, but Captain Hennell declined to interfere in the affair and told the Shaikh he must settle his differences with the Ruler on his own.<sup>192</sup> Shaikh Muḥammad then left Bahrain for Khor Ḥassān, where he began organizing opposition to Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh. Shaikh Muḥammad returned to Bahrain in 1842 at the invitation of Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh in the hope of reconciling their differences, but his visit led only to confrontation. A dispute quickly broke out between Shaikh Muḥammad and one of Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s sons, sparking the Bahraini civil war of 1842–43.<sup>193</sup> The camps divided, Shaikh Muḥammad gathering his supporters in Manamah and Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh gathering his in Muharraq. A military build-up ensued, with both sides recruiting Bedouin warriors from the mainland. Skirmishes between the two camps soon began, during which a brother of Shaikh Muḥammad and a



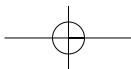
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

grandson of Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh were killed. In June, Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh attacked and captured Manamah. Shaikh Muḥammad fled to the mainland.<sup>194</sup>

Back on the mainland, Shaikh Muḥammad sought Wahhabi support for an eventual counter-attack on Bahrain. He also enlisted the support of Shaikh Bašīr bin Raḥmah Āl Ġalāhimah and Shaikh ‘Īsā bin Ṭarīf Āl Bin ‘Alī of Qays Island.<sup>195</sup> Shaikhs Bašīr and ‘Īsā seem to have feared the Resident’s support of Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh, for they sought the permission of Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Robertson (officiating Resident 1842–43) before agreeing to join Shaikh Muḥammad, as mentioned briefly before. Recalling the Egyptian episode of 1839–40, Robertson had no interest in rescuing Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s rulership. He sanctioned the Shaikhs’ request to oust Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh from Bahrain.<sup>196</sup> In November 1842, Robertson despatched Lieutenant Kemball, his Assistant, to Bahrain to warn Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh about this. Robertson likely intended the warning as notice of the withdrawal of British support for the Shaikh’s rulership. The Shaikh received Kemball’s words with ‘much surprise and apprehension’.<sup>197</sup> Resorting to a previous tactic, he threatened to seek the protection of the Wahhabi Amir, of whom the British disapproved.<sup>198</sup> But the threat fell on deaf ears. In February 1843 Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh again appealed to the Resident, but he did not reply. The Shaikh made his request for a third time the following month and the Resident finally issued a refusal.<sup>199</sup>

In March 1843 Shaikh Muḥammad recaptured Manamah. Shortly afterwards, the Qays Island shaikhs arrived in Manamah with several hundred armed men and preparations began for the final assault on Muharraḡ. The allies attacked Muharraḡ in April 1843 and overwhelmed Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s forces. The Shaikh capitulated and was permitted to leave for exile on Dammām Island, where his son, Mubārak, was Governor.<sup>200</sup> Shaikh Muḥammad’s allies, the Āl Ġalāhimah and Āl Bin ‘Alī of Qays Island, then returned to Qatar, which they had left in 1826 and 1835 respectively, and settled at the Āl Khalifah’s dependency of Bid‘.

Over the summer Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh turned to Bushire, Dubai and Sharjah for military assistance to regain his rulership. Kemball, now acting Resident in Bushire (April–December 1843), refused the Shaikh’s request and forbade the Rulers of Dubai and Sharjah to assist him.<sup>201</sup> While he indicated that the Maritime Truce had determined his decision, Kemball’s real motive was obviously his dislike of the Shaikh.<sup>202</sup> In fact, the Maritime Truce barred members from maritime warfare against each other, not against outsiders like Bahrain. Kemball then offered to mediate in the dispute, although he would not guarantee any settlement reached. But Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh did not accept the offer.<sup>203</sup> His requests denied, Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh resorted to his previous tactics. During October 1843–March 1844 he attempted to play the Prince–Governor of Fars off against Kemball and later against Captain Samuel Hennell (Resident 1843–52)



JAMES ONLEY

by threatening 'to throw himself into the arms of Persia' to regain his rulership of Bahrain, if the British would not help him.<sup>204</sup> Both Kemball and Hennell refused to help. In the end, the Shaikh's threat came to nothing as the Prince-Governor failed to deliver the 100 cavalry and 500 infantry the Shaikh had asked for.<sup>205</sup> In December 1843 Shaikh 'Abd Allāh tried a different approach, arguing that, as a signatory of the General Treaty of 1820, he was entitled to British naval protection from his foes. This was a common interpretation of the General Treaty by the Gulf rulers, first made in 1823 by Shaikh 'Abd Allāh himself and by Shaikh Sulṭān bin Ṣaqr al-Qāsimī of Sharjah (Ruler 1803–66).<sup>206</sup> Hennell rejected the interpretation,<sup>207</sup> as had all Residents prior to Britain's incorporation of the Coast of Oman and Bahrain into the trucial system in 1835 and 1861 respectively. In January 1844, the Shaikh argued that Hennell was to blame for his ousting because the British Government had lulled him into a false sense of security.<sup>208</sup> The Resident was, therefore, obligated to restore him to power. Hennell rejected the Shaikh's argument. In March 1844 the Shaikh again pleaded hard for the Resident's support and protection, but to no avail.<sup>209</sup> Shaikh 'Abd Allāh made his last bid for British support later that year. Trying the same tactic as before, he threatened to ally himself with the Amir of Najd and Hasa unless the Resident helped him retake Bahrain. Again, Hennell refused to help.<sup>210</sup>

At this point the Shaikh gave up on Hennell and took matters into his own hands. In October 1845 he made an attempt on Bahrain with the military assistance of the Wahhabi Governor of Qatif, but Shaikh Muḥammad foiled the operation almost before it began.<sup>211</sup> In June 1846, the Prince-Governor of Fars renewed his offer of military assistance to Shaikh 'Abd Allāh, but the Shaikh declined, not believing in it.<sup>212</sup> He made a second attempt on Bahrain in 1847, this time with the military assistance of Shaikh 'Īsā bin Ṭarīf Āl Bin 'Alī, who had helped oust him four years before, but Shaikh Muḥammad's military defeated the force near Fuwayriṭ in northern Qatar and killed Shaikh 'Īsā in battle.<sup>213</sup> In 1848 the Persian Consul-General in Baghdad assured Shaikh 'Abd Allāh of the support of the Persian Government should he again try to retake Bahrain. The Consul-General broke off his correspondence with the Shaikh at the insistence of the British Resident in Baghdad, however.<sup>214</sup> In 1849 Shaikh 'Abd Allāh set sail for Zanzibar in the hope of winning the support of his life-long enemy, Sayyid Sa'īd (Imam of Muscat and Zanzibar 1807–56). He died en route at Muscat, an old and bitter man.

This illustration of protection-seeking is drawn from just ten years in the life of one Gulf Arab ruler. Before the 1839 Egyptian occupation of Hasa, Shaikh 'Abd Allāh made at least ten requests for protection from various regional powers between 1796 and 1838, two of which were addressed to the British Resident. During 1843–44, he made repeated requests for British protection,

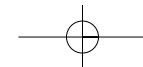
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

as detailed above. Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh’s successors, Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah (Ruler 1843–68), Shaikh ‘Alī bin Khalifah (Ruler 1868–69), Shaikh Muḥammad bin ‘Abd Allāh (Ruler 1869) and Shaikh ‘Īsā bin ‘Alī (Ruler 1869–1923), all made requests for either British, Persian, Ottoman, Wahhabi, or Muscati protection, or military alliances with less powerful rulers, whenever trouble threatened, often using the same tactics as Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh in attempting to play rival powers off against each other. This cyclical pattern of protection-seeking persisted until the British Government finally accepted responsibility for Bahrain’s defence in 1861 and diplomatic representation in 1880.

## 12. Britain and the Role of Protector

Before Britain accepted formal responsibility for the maritime protection of the Trucial States in 1835, the British Government had been extremely reluctant for a variety of reasons to assume the role of protector in the Gulf. The principal concerns were, first, that it might draw Britain into the unstable and unpredictable affairs of the mainland, forcing it to commit military forces there. Even the island shaikhdom of Bahrain had mainland dependencies. Shortly after the establishment of the Gulf Residency, Britain realized that the Pax Britannica would be more effectively maintained without land forces. The high death rate of the first Gulf garrison—444 soldiers and 10 officers killed in battles against just one interior Omani tribe during 1820–21 and the decimation of the garrison by disease during 1821–22—prompted Britain to withdraw its land forces from the Gulf in early 1823.<sup>215</sup> Thereafter, Britain limited its military activity to the range of its naval guns. It re-constituted its Gulf garrison only in wartime or when war threatened (1856–58, 1914–18, 1939–45 and 1961–71). Added to this was the problem that the imams of Muscat, the amirs of Najd and Hasa, the Persian prince-governors of Fars, and the Ottoman *valis* of Baghdad all claimed Bahrain as a dependency and had attempted to subjugate it at one time or another. Successive Residents feared, rightly, that the protection of Bahrain would bring them into conflict with these regional powers.

The second principal concern was that permanent British protection might encourage despotism, as it had in some Indian princely states. The third, that the British Government would lose political leverage with the Gulf rulers if it switched from a conditional to an unconditional protection policy. The fourth, that permanent protection would shoulder Britain with the role of guarantor of the state. The British Government feared that such a role might considerably add to the Resident’s burdens by placing upon him ‘the onus and responsibility of being the arbiter in every dispute, and [the] settlement of endless claims’, to use the words of Major James Morrison (Resident 1835–37).<sup>216</sup>



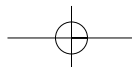
JAMES ONLEY

Possible misunderstandings about what the Gulf rulers were asking of the Resident might have also contributed to the British Government's reluctance to assume a protective role in the Gulf. The British concept of protection relied on the protector's ability to defend his protégé physically and bring an attacker to justice. As a deterrent to attack, it relied on a would-be attacker's respect for the *firepower* of the protector. The Arabian concept relied more on a would-be attacker's respect for the *honour* of the protector. It also relied on the protector's secondary roles of mediator, arbiter and guarantor of settlements, to provide a peaceful channel for would-be attackers to settle their differences with the protégé, as discussed above. It seems that early Residents either misunderstood or rejected the duties of this role, in which Gulf rulers were trying to cast them. Many rulers were frustrated by the failure of successive Residents to live up to these expectations. For instance, early Residents were usually willing to mediate between rulers, but they refused to play the role of guarantor for the settlements reached, as illustrated by the history of the Āl Khalifah's tribute payments to the amirs of Najd and Hasa and the imams of Muscat. Settlement negotiations usually broke down as a result, as Lieutenant Arnold Kemball (Assistant Resident 1841–52, Resident 1852–55) observed in 1844:

Experience has shown that the most solemn engagements between these chieftains ... formed without the guarantee of the [British] Government, are no security whatever for the maintenance of peace ... [They] deem the guarantee of the British to any sort of arrangement a sine qua non ... Attempts have been made to induce the several chiefs to enter into a mutual agreement among themselves, without British guarantee ... but these have ever been rendered nugatory by Arab pride and sense of honour.<sup>217</sup>

The greatest frustration, of course, came from early Residents' routine rejection of the rulers' requests for protection in the first place.

Before the first Maritime Truce in 1835, an experimental ban on maritime warfare during the pearling season, Residents feared that a larger naval presence and corresponding expenditure would be necessary if Britain were to assume responsibility for the maritime protection of the Gulf shajhdoms. The acting Resident who proposed the truce to the rulers of the Coast of Oman, Lieutenant Samuel Hennell (1834–35), did so only because of the rulers' enthusiastic support for the idea.<sup>218</sup> So desirable was British protection in Eastern Arabia that, shortly after the signing of the General Treaty of 1820, the principal pearl merchants of Sharjah offered to pay *hūwah* to the Government of India at the rate of MTD 20 (Rs 40) per boat if the Gulf Squadron would permanently station a gunboat at the pearl banks to protect their pearling fleets.<sup>219</sup> British reports on the first Maritime Truces clearly indicate that its annual renewal was a product of the initiative and insistence of the majority of the rulers, and was not imposed



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

upon them by the Resident. When the time came for the Truce's first renewal in April 1836, Lieutenant Kemball, observed that it was renewed 'with the undisguised satisfaction of the respective chiefs'.<sup>220</sup>

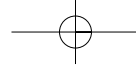
The idea to extend the Truce's coverage beyond the summer pearling season into a perpetual ban on all maritime warfare was first proposed by Shaikh Sulṭān bin Ṣaqr al-Qāsimī of Sharjah in September 1836, just sixteen months after the introduction of the first Maritime Truce. The Resident, Major James Morrison, rejected the Shaikh's proposal. The British Government, Morrison explained, lacked the resources to enforce a perpetual truce. Or so he believed.<sup>221</sup> The British were also convinced that, so long as the ban on maritime warfare permitted rulers to pursue feuds outside of the pearling season, they would be content 'to allow their feuds and animosities to remain in abeyance, under the idea that after a specified date it would always be in their power to indulge their deeply rooted feelings of animosity, should they feel disposed to do so.'<sup>222</sup> Were the ban to become perpetual, it could not provide for this. Lieutenant Samuel Hennell (Assistant Resident 1826–34, 1835–38) explained in 1830 that precluding the rulers

from avenging insults, or taking satisfaction for wrongs, whether real or imaginary, would so embitter the sentiments of hatred entertained [by the rulers] towards each other, that a series of aggressions and retaliations would speedily arise, which would only tend to defeat the very object for which the peace had been negotiated.<sup>223</sup>

In 1838, when Captain Hennell, now Gulf Resident (1838–41, 1843–52), toured the Coast of Oman to renew the Maritime Truce for a third time, Shaikh Sulṭān bin Ṣaqr al-Qāsimī 'not only expressed his earnest desire for a renewal of the truce, but added that it would afford him sincere pleasure if it could be changed into the establishment of a permanent peace upon the seas.'<sup>224</sup> Hennell rejected the Shaikh's proposal, for the reasons just mentioned. Undeterred, the Shaikh urged the Resident to agree to an annual twelve-month truce instead. As the other rulers consented to the Shaikh's proposal, Hennell drew up a new truce accordingly, which the rulers readily signed.<sup>225</sup>

So successful were the annually-renewed Truces, that the Resident agreed to guarantee a ten-year Maritime Truce in 1843. The following year, Lieutenant Kemball observed that the rulers 'are now quite as much interested in its maintenance as ourselves; and of this they exhibited ample proof in their united readiness to renew it for so long a period as ten years, or even more, had such been desired or deemed expedient.'<sup>226</sup> J.B. Kelly explains that

so changed had the shaikhs' outlook become by the time of the conclusion of the Ten Years' Truce that they often acted on their own initiative to punish infractions of the truce by their subjects, even before these had been brought to



JAMES ONLEY

the notice of the Resident. Sometimes they even went further and acted to prevent the commission of piracy. The Shaikh of 'Ajman, for example, when a Qasimi vessel from Lingah ran aground in a storm off 'Ajman in 1845, hastened to the scene with his brothers, sword in hand, and swore to cut down the first man who tried to plunder the vessel.<sup>227</sup>

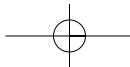
After the successful completion of the ten-year Truce in 1853, it was evident to the British that their fears and convictions had been seriously misplaced. That year, the Resident finally invited the rulers of the Coast of Oman to sign a Perpetual Maritime Truce, seventeen years after the Ruler of Sharjah first proposed the idea. All the rulers signed without hesitation.

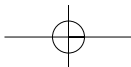
The slow realization that earlier British fears were misplaced is reflected also in the British Government's gradual change in attitude towards the protection of Bahrain. Until 1838, it maintained a straightforward "no protection" policy for the reason mentioned above.<sup>228</sup> From 1839 to 1860, it observed an "unofficial protection only" policy, albeit on condition of the Resident's approval of the Ruler.<sup>229</sup> In 1861, after the Ruler of Bahrain became increasingly warlike, the British Government adopted a "permanent protection" policy and admitted Bahrain to the Perpetual Maritime Truce, making itself Bahrain's Protecting Power, as discussed above.<sup>230</sup> Finally, in 1880, it assumed responsibility for Bahrain's foreign affairs.<sup>231</sup> After 1861, it was able to maintain political leverage with the Ruler of Bahrain and avoid encouraging despotism, as experienced in the Indian princely states, by limiting its protection to the shaikhdom. It would not guarantee the Ruler's position within the shaikhdom. Time and time again, the Resident informed the Ruler that,

it was highly desirable that the Chief of Bahrein should learn to rely on his own resources for the maintenance of his position, for as long as he could count on the constant presence of foreign support he would surely remain careless and pathetic and disinclined to exert himself in strengthening his position by good administration and a conciliatory policy towards his people.<sup>232</sup>

The only way the Ruler could secure British support for his rulership in moments of crisis was if the Resident wished it to continue. All the crucial rulers were in the same position. This motivated most of the rulers most of the time to maintain good relations with the Resident.

The strength of the British position in the Gulf in the nineteenth century was that it alone had the power to stop the cyclical pattern of protection-seeking, raiding and invasion amongst the rulers. Residents could use this position to their advantage as an indirect method of keeping in power those rulers who co-operated with them to maintain the Pax Britannica, and keeping out of power those who did not. For example, as related in the previous section, in 1842





#### THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Robertson (officiating Resident 1842–43) granted permission to two rulers wishing to help Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah (Ruler 1843–68) oust Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh bin Aḥmad (Ruler 1796–1843) from his rulership of Bahrain. They succeeded the following year. A few months later, when the same two rulers sought the Resident’s permission to help Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh regain his rulership, Lieutenant Arnold Kemball (acting Resident 1843) forbade them to interfere, depriving the Shaikh of allies.

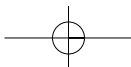
After 1861, Residents employed more direct methods in Bahrain, intervening personally to remove rulers unwilling to co-operate with them and installing shaikhs who would uphold the Pax Britannica. This happened three times while Bahrain was under British protection. In 1868, Colonel Lewis Pelly helped the Āl Khalifah depose Shaikh Muḥammad bin Khalifah and recognized the Ruler’s brother, Shaikh ‘Alī bin Khalifah, as the new Ruler. The following year, Shaikh ‘Alī was overthrown and killed by Shaikhs Muḥammad bin Khalifah and Muḥammad bin ‘Abd Allāh. Pelly imprisoned the Shaikhs and engineered the accession of the late Ruler’s son, Shaikh ‘Īsā bin ‘Alī. Fifty-four years later, in 1923, Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart Knox forcibly retired Shaikh ‘Īsā from active rulership and handed the reins of government to his son, Shaikh Ḥamad bin ‘Īsā.

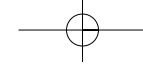
#### Conclusion

Was Britain’s role as ‘arbiter and guardian of the Gulf’ one it assumed in response to appeals from the Gulf Arabs, as the 1908 Foreign Office memorandum quoted at the beginning of this study claims, or was British protection imposed as a form of domination, as some historians are now arguing?

This study has shown how the Gulf Arab rulers, faced by the endless problem of protection, defended their shaikhdoms during the nineteenth century by entering into culturally-sanctioned protector-protégé relationships. It has shown that the rulers tried to impose the role of protector on the Resident and the British Government from the very outset of the Gulf Residency and that, in time, the Resident came to accept the role of ‘arbiter and guardian of the Gulf’ and to behave, on the whole, as the rulers expected a protector to behave. This legitimized Britain’s presence within the regional political system in terms of Eastern Arabian culture and meant that the Resident’s authority in the Gulf was not based solely on treaties. From the rulers’ perspective, the Resident was a Gulf ruler himself, except that he was the most powerful and influential ruler they had ever known. The Gulf rulers gave him the respectful titles of *Ra’īs al-ḥalīġ* (Chief of the Gulf) and *Faḥāmat al-Ra’īs* (His Excellency the Chief).<sup>233</sup>

Although it cut off Bahrain from its dependencies in Qatar, the Pax Britannica in the Gulf benefited the shaikhdoms, including Bahrain, as much as it did the British. This explains why the Pax was so successful: it was largely self-





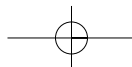
JAMES ONLEY

enforcing. To assume, as many now do, that Britain imposed its protection on the Gulf shaikhdoms against the will of their rulers, is not only to ignore the Eastern Arabian tradition of protection-seeking and the successful use the rulers made of it, but also to completely disregard the historical record, set forth in this study, which shows that the treaties were initiated as much by the Gulf rulers as by the British, and that it was mainly the rulers who worked towards the establishment of the Perpetual Maritime Truce. British protection was not imposed on the Gulf shaikhdoms, but sought after and welcomed by the Gulf rulers.

The view of British protection as unsolicited and unwanted arose only when memories of the turbulent years before the Maritime Truce became distant, when the benefits of British protection became less apparent, and when Britain's exclusive presence (based on the Exclusive Agreements) was felt by some Gulf Arabs to be less beneficial to the shaikhdoms than to Britain.<sup>234</sup> Even so, the need for British protection remained. In 1968, when the British Government declared it could no longer afford the £12,000,000 per annum to keep its forces in the Gulf and would be withdrawing its military in 1971, the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Zāyid bin Sulṭān Āl Nahyān, offered to pay for the military presence himself. The Ruler of Dubai made a similar offer, adding that he believed all four oil-producing states under British protection—Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Dubai and Qatar—would be willing to cover the cost. The British Government declined these offers, however, and withdrew its forces in December 1971.<sup>235</sup> One need only compare this with Britain's withdrawal from Egypt, Palestine, or Aden to appreciate the difference between Britain's involvement in the Gulf and its involvement in the rest of the Arab world.

### Abbreviations

Asst.	Assistant
<i>BJMES</i>	<i>British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies</i>
For.	Foreign
Gov.	Governor
Govt.	Government
IO	India Office, London
<i>JRAI</i>	<i>The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland</i>
<i>JRGS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
Ks	Krans (principal unit of currency of Persia)
<i>MEJ</i>	<i>Middle East Journal</i>
MESA	Middle East Studies Association of North America
MTD	Maria Theresa Dollars
n.	footnote
OIOC	Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library, London
offg.	officiating



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

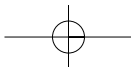
PA	Political Agent
Pol.	Political
PRPG	Political Resident in the Persian Gulf
Rs	Rupees
Sec.	Secretary
SNOPG	Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf

**Bibliography***1. Primary sources*

- Aitchison, Sir C.U. *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Vol. XI: *The Treaties, &c., Relating to Aden and the South Western Coast of Arabia, the Arab Principalities in the Persian Gulf, Muscat (Oman), Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province*. Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1933.
- Belgrave, Sir C. *Personal Column*. London: Hutchinson, 1960.
- Bennett, T.J. 'The Past and Present Connection of England with the Persian Gulf', *Journal of the Society of Arts*, Vol. L, (13 June 1902), 634–52.
- Disbrowe, Lt. H.F. 'Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein), 1844–1853' (1853), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, New Series. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856, 407–25.
- Durand, Capt. E.L. 'Notes on the Pearl Fisheries of the Persian Gulf', Govt. of India, *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for the Year 1877–78*. Calcutta: Foreign Dept. Press, 1878, Appendix A, 27–41.
- Govt. of Bombay, Political Dept. *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, New Series. Compiled and edited by R.H. Thomas. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856.
- Govt. of India, Foreign Dept. *Report on the Administration of the Bushire Residency including that of the Muscat Political Agency for 1873–74*. Calcutta: Foreign Dept. Press, 1874.
- . *Reports on the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the Years 1874–88*. Calcutta: Foreign Dept. Press, 1875–81; Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1882–87.
- . *Administration Reports of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the Years 1889–1908*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1888–1909.
- Hawley, Sir D. *Desert Wind and Tropic Storm: An Autobiography*. Wilby: Michael Russell, 2000.
- Hennell, Lt. S. 'Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1817 to 1831' (1832), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, New Series. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856, 372–82.
- H.M. Govt., Admiralty War Staff. *A Handbook of Arabia*, Vol. 1: *General*. London: Intelligence Div., Admiralty War Staff, 1916.
- India Office. Correspondence relating to areas outside India for 1840. L/P&S/9/116, OIOC, London.

## JAMES ONLEY

- . Correspondence for 1840. L/P&S/5/261, OIOC, London
- . Correspondence for 1851. L/P&S/5/471, OIOC, London
- . Native letters outward for 1856–72. R/15/1/180–82, OIOC, London.
- . Correspondence relating to areas outside India for 1861. L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
- . Correspondence relating to areas outside India for 1869. L/P&S/9/15, OIOC, London.
- . Sketch of Abu Mahir Fort, Bahrain, 1868. W/L/P&S/5/15, OIOC, London.
- . Memorandum on Bahrain, 1875. R/15/1/192, OIOC, London.
- . Political and Secret Dept. subject files for 1905. L/P&S/10/81, OIOC, London.
- . ‘Confidential memorandum respecting British interests in the Persian Gulf’, Foreign Office, 12 Feb. 1908. L/P&S/18/B166, OIOC, London.
- Kemball, Lt. A.B. ‘Chronological Table of Events Connected with the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716–1844’ (1844), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, New Series. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856, 140–52.
- . ‘Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1832 to 1844’ (1844), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, 382–407.
- . ‘Observations on the Past Policy of the British Government towards the Arab Tribes of the Persian Gulf’ (1844), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, 61–74.
- . ‘Memoranda on the Resources, Localities, and Relations of the Tribes Inhabiting the Arabian Shores of the Persian Gulf’ (1845), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, 91–119.
- . ‘Statistical and Miscellaneous Information Connected with the Possessions, Revenues, Families, etc. ... of the Ruler of Bahrain’ (1854), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, 285–97.
- Lorimer, J.G. *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Vol. I: *Historical*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1915.
- . *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Vol. II: *Geographical and Statistical*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1908.
- Miles, S.B. *The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf*. London: Harrison & Sons, 1919.
- Palgrave, W.G. *Personal Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862–63)*. 1st ed. London: Macmillan, 1865.
- Pelly, Lt.-Col. L. *Report on a Journey to Riyadh in Central Arabia (1865)*. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1866.
- Saldanha, J.A. *Précis of Bahrein Affairs, 1854–1904*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1904.
- . *Précis of Katar Affairs, 1873–1904*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1904.
- . *Précis of Commerce and Communications in the Persian Gulf, 1801–1905*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1906.
- . *Précis of Correspondence Regarding the Affairs of the Persian Gulf, 1801–1853*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1906.

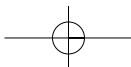


## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

- . *Précis of Correspondence Regarding the Trucial Chiefs, 1854–1905*. Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1906.
- Taylor, Capt. R. 'Extracts from Brief Notes containing Historical and Other Information connected with the Province of Oman; Muskat and the Adjoining Country; the Islands of Bahrain, Ormus, Kishm, and Karrack; and Other Ports in the Persian Gulf' (1818), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, New Series. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856, 1–40.
- Warden, F. 'Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716 to 1817' (1817), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, No. XXIV, New Series. Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856, 362–72.
- Whitlock, Lt. H.H. 'An Account of Arabs who inhabit the Coast between Ras-el-Kheimah and Abothubee in the Gulf of Persia, generally called the Pirate Coast', *Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society*, Vol. I. Bombay: American Mission Press, 1844.
- Wilson, Maj. D. 'Memorandum Respecting the Pearl Fisheries in the Persian Gulf', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. III (1833), 283–86.

## 2. Secondary sources

- Abu Hakima, A.M. *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750–1800: The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait*. Beirut: Khayats, 1965.
- . 'The Development of the Gulf States', *The Arabian Peninsula: Society and Politics*. Edited by D. Hopwood. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972, 31–53.
- Alghanim, S. *The Reign of Mubarak Al-Sabah, Shaikh of Kuwait 1896–1915*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1998.
- Ancombe, F.F. *The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1997.
- Al-Baharna, H.M. *The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States: A Study of Their Treaty Relations and Their International Problems*. Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1968.
- . 'The Consequences of Britain's Exclusive Treaties: A Gulf View', *The Arab Gulf and the West*. Edited by B.R. Pridham. London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Balfour-Paul, G. *The End of Empire in the Middle East: Britain's Relinquishment of Power in Her Last Three Arab Dependencies*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991.
- Belgrave, Sir C. *The Pirate Coast*. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1966.
- Busch, B.C. *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894–1914*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1967.
- Choueiri, Y.M. *Modern Arab Historiography: Historical Discourse and the Nation-State*. London: Curzon, 2002.
- Crystall, J. 'Authoritarianism and Its Adversaries in the Arab World', *World Politics*, Vol. 46 (Jan. 1994), 262–89.
- . *Oil and Politics in the Gulf, Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*. Revised ed. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995.
- Davies, C.E. 'Britain, Trade and Piracy: The British Expeditions against Ras al-Khaima

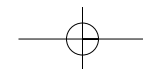


JAMES ONLEY

- of 1809–10 and 1819–20', *Global Interests in the Arab Gulf*. Edited by C.E. Davies. Exeter: Univ. of Exeter Press, 1992, 29–66.
- . *The Blood-Red Arab Flag: An Investigation into Qasimi Piracy, 1797–1820*. Exeter: Univ. of Exeter Press, 1997.
- Dickson, H.R.P. *The Arab of the Desert: A Glimpse into Badawin Life in Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1949.
- Dresch, P. *Tribes, Government and History in Yemen*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989.
- Farah, T. *Protection and Politics in Bahrain, 1869–1915*. Lebanon: American Univ. of Beirut, 1985.
- Fattah, H. *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745–1900*. Albany: S.U.N.Y. Press, 1997.
- Freitag, U. 'Writing Arab History: The Search for the Nation', *BJMES*, Vol. 21 (1994), 19–37.
- Fuccaro, N. 'Understanding the Urban History of Bahrain', *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, No. 17 (Fall 2000), 49–81.
- Geller, E. and Waterbury, J., eds. *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1977.
- Ghareeb, E. and Al-Abed, I., eds. *Perspectives on the United Arab Emirates*. London: Trident Press, 1997.
- Govt. of Bahrain, Directorate of Museums. *Al-baḥrayn: ḥadārah wa-ta'rīh [Bahrain: Culture and History]*. Bahrain: Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Information, 1997.
- Gulf Panorama. *Old Days*. Manamah: Oriental Press, 1986.
- Harrison, P.W. *The Arab at Home*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1924.
- Hawley, Sir D. *The Trucial States*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970.
- Heard-Bey, F. *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*. 2nd ed. London: Longman, 1996.
- . 'The Tribal Society of the UAE and its Traditional Economy', *Perspectives on the United Arab Emirates*. Edited by E. Ghareeb and I. Al-Abed. London: Trident Press, 1997, 254–72.
- Hopwood, D., ed. *The Arabian Peninsula: Society and Politics*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972.
- Ismael, J.S. *Kuwait: Dependency and Class in a Rentier State*. Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press, 1993.
- Kelly, J.B. 'The Legal and Historical Basis of the British Position in the Persian Gulf', *St. Antony's Papers*, No. 4: *Middle Eastern Affairs*, Vol. I. London: Chatto & Windus, 1958, 119–40.
- . *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1795–1880*. Berkeley: Univ. of Berkeley Press, 1967.
- . *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*. London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980.
- Al-Khalifa, H.I. *First Light: Modern Bahrain and Its Heritage*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1994.
- Khuri, F.I. *Tribe and State in Bahrain: The Transformation of Social and Political Authority in an Arab State*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980.
- . 'From Tribe to State in Bahrain', *Arab Society: Social Science Perspectives*. Edited by S.E. Ibrahim and N.S. Hopkins. Cairo: A.U.C. Press, 1985, 432–47.

## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

- . *Tents and Pyramids: Games and Ideology in Arab Culture from Backgammon to Autocratic Rule*. London: Saqi Books, 1990.
- Landen, R.G. 'The Arab Gulf in the Arab World 1800–1918', *Arab Affairs*, Vol. I (Summer 1986), 57–71.
- Lawson, F.H. *Bahrain: The Modernization of Autocracy*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1989.
- Lienhardt, P. 'The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf: An Essay in Nineteenth Century History', *Arabian Studies*, Vol. II. Edited by R.B. Sergeant and R.L. Bidwell. London: C. Hurst & Co., 1975.
- . *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*. Edited by A. Al-Shahi. London: Palgrave, 2001.
- Moyse-Bartlett, H. *The Pirates of Trucial Oman*. London: Macdonald, 1966.
- Al-Muraikhi, K.M. *Glimpses of Bahrain from Its Past*. Bahrain: Ministry of Information, 1991.
- . *Events Enfolded in Time: A Journey into Bahrain's Past*. Bahrain: n.p., 1997.
- Al-Naqeeb, K.H. *Society and State in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula: A Different Perspective*. Translated by L. M. Kenny. Edited by I. Hayani. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Newbury, C. 'Patrons, Clients, and Empire: The Subordination of Indigenous Hierarchies in Asia and Africa', *Journal of World History*, Vol. II, No. 2 (Fall 2000), 227–63.
- Niblock, T., ed. *Social and Economic Development in the Arab Gulf*. London: Croom Helm, 1980.
- Onley, J.A. 'A Rose by Any Other Name: Bahrain and the Indian States under the Raj, 1880–1947', conference paper presented at MESA 1999, Washington DC.
- . 'Duty Without Dominion? British Influence and Control in Bahrain, 1820–1947', conference paper presented at MESA 2000, Orlando, Florida, 2000.
- . *The Infrastructure of Informal Empire: A Study of Britain's Native Agency in Bahrain, 1816–1900*. Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 2001.
- Peterson, J.E. 'Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia', *Middle East Journal*, Vol. XXXI (Summer 1977), 297–312.
- Pridham, B.R., ed. *The Arab Gulf and the West*. London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Al-Qasimi, S.M. *The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf*. London: Routledge, 1986.
- Al-Rasheed, M. *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidis of Saudi Arabia*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1991.
- . 'The Rashidi Dynasty: Political Centralization among the Shammar of North Arabia', *New Arabian Studies*, Vol. II. Edited by R.L. Bidwell, J.R. Smart and G.R. Smith. Exeter: Univ. of Exeter Press, 1994, 140–53.
- R[isso] Dubuisson, P. 'Qasimi Piracy and the General Treaty of Peace (1820)', *Arabian Studies*, Vol. IV. Edited by R. Sergeant and R. Bidwell. London: C. Hurst & Co., 1978, 47–57.
- Risso, P. 'Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Piracy: Maritime Violence in the Western Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf Region during a Long Eighteenth Century', *Journal of World History*, Vol. 12 (Fall 2001), 293–319.
- Rosenfeld, H. 'The Social Composition of the Military in the Process of State Formation in the Arabian Desert', Parts I & II, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 95 (1965), 75–86 and 174–94.

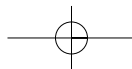


JAMES ONLEY

- Roberts, D. 'The Consequences of the Exclusive Treaties: A British View', *The Arab Gulf and the West*. Edited by B.R. Pridham. London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Standish, J.F. 'British Maritime Policy in the Persian Gulf', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. III, No. 4 (1967), 324–54.
- . *Persian and the Gulf: Retrospect and Prospect*. London: Curzon, 1998.
- Taryam, A.O. *The Establishment of the United Arab Emirates, 1950–85*. London: Croom Helm, 1987.
- Tuson, P. *The Records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Persian Gulf. IOR R/15*. London: India Office Records, 1979.
- . 'Introduction', *Records of Qatar*, Vol. 1: 1820–1853. Slough: Archive Editions, 1991.
- . 'Introduction', *Records of Qatar*, Vol. 2: 1854–1879. Slough: Archive Editions, 1991.
- Vassiliev, A. *The History of Saudi Arabia*. London: Saqi Books, 1998.
- Walls, A.G. *Arad Fort, Bahrain*. Manamah: Govt. Press, Ministry of Information, 1987.
- Ward, P. *Bahrain: A Travel Guide*. Cambridge: Oleander Press, 1993.
- Wheatcroft, A. *Bahrain in Original Photographs, 1880–1961*. London: Kegan Paul, 1988.
- Wright, Sir D. *The English Amongst the Persians during the Qajar Period, 1787–1921*. London: Heinemann, 1977.
- Zahlan, R.S. *The Creation of Qatar*. London: Croom Helm, 1979.
- . 'Hegemony, Dependence and Development in the Gulf', *Social and Economic Development in the Arab Gulf*. Edited by T. Niblock. London: Croom Helm, 1980.

### Notes

1. Confidential FO memorandum respecting British interests in the Persian Gulf, 12 Feb. 1908, 5–6, L/P&S/18/B166, OIOC, London.
2. For more details of this episode in Gulf history, see C. Belgrave, *The Pirate Coast* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1966); H. Moyse-Bartlett, *The Pirates of Trucial Oman* (London: Macdonald, 1966); S.M. Al-Qasimi, *The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf* (London: Croom Helm, 1986); C.E. Davies, *The Blood-Red Arab Flag: An Investigation into Qasimi Piracy, 1797–1820* (Exeter: Univ. of Exeter Press, 1997); P. R[isso] Dubuisson, 'Qasimi Piracy and the General Treaty of Peace (1820)', *Arabian Studies*, vol. iv (1978), 47–57; and P. Risso, 'Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Piracy: Maritime Violence in the Western Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf Region during a Long Eighteenth Century', *Journal of World History*, vol. 12 (fall 2001), 293–319.
3. For a history of the Gulf Residency, see D. Wright, *The English Amongst the Persians during the Qajar Period, 1787–1921* (London: Heinemann, 1977), 62–93; P. Tuson, *The Records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Persian Gulf. IOR R/15* (London: India Office Records, 1979), 1–9; and G. Balfour-Paul, *The End of Empire in the Middle East: Britain's Relinquishment of Power in Her Last Three Arab Dependencies* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 96–136.
4. The title SNOFG was used only after 1869. Earlier variants were the 'Senior Indian Marine Officer in the Persian Gulf' (1822–30), the 'Senior Indian Naval Officer in



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

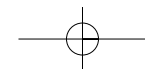
- the Persian Gulf' (1830–63) and the 'Commodore at Bassadore' (1822–63). For the sake of simplicity, SNO PG is used for all four.
5. Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah became separate Trucial States in 1869, although the British Govt. did not recognize this until 1921. Fujairah did not follow suit until 1901 and 1952 respectively.
  6. For analysis of the treaties, see J.B. Kelly, 'The Legal and Historical Basis of the British Position in the Persian Gulf', *St. Antony's Papers*, no. 4: *Middle Eastern Affairs*, vol. i (London: Chatto & Windus, 1958), 119–40; D. Roberts, 'The Consequences of the Exclusive Treaties: A British View', *The Arab Gulf and the West*, edited by B.R. Pridham (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 1–14; H.M. Al-Baharna, 'The Consequences of Britain's Exclusive Treaties: A Gulf View', *The Arab Gulf and the West*, 15–37; and Al-Baharna, *The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States: A Study of Their Treaty Relations and Their International Problems* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1968).
  7. For details, see J. Onley, 'A Rose by Any Other Name: Bahrain and the Indian States under the Raj, 1880–1947' (conference paper presented at MESA 1999, Washington DC) and idem., *The Infrastructure of Informal Empire: A Study of Britain's Native Agency in Bahrain, 1816–1900* (Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 2001).
  8. J.G. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, vol. i: Historical (Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1915), vol. ii: *Geographical and Statistical* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1908) and J.B. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1795–1880* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968).
  9. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 837.
  10. K.H. Al-Naqeeb, *Society and State in the Gulf Arab Peninsula: A Different Perspective* (London: Routledge, 1990), 27, 32, 45–52, 58–9, 62–3, 68, 71–5, 121; J.S. Ismael, *Kuwait: Dependency and Class in a Rentier States* (Gainesville: Univ. of Florida Press, 1993), 38–40, 43, 47–8, 51, 57; A.O. Taryam, *The Establishment of the United Arab Emirates, 1950–85* (London: Croom Helm, 1987); and S.M. Al-Qasimi, *The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf* (London: Routledge, 1986). For an analysis of Arab historical revisionism, see U. Freitag, 'Writing Arab History: The Search for the Nation', *BJMES*, vol. 21 (1994), 19–37 and Y.M. Choueiri, *Modern Arab Historiography: Historical Discourse and the Nation-State* (London: Curzon, 2002).
  11. Al-Qasimi, *The Myth*, xiv.
  12. Ibid., xiii.
  13. Ibid., xv.
  14. R.G. Landen, 'The Arab Gulf in the Arab World 1800–1918', *Arab Affairs*, vol. i (summer 1986), 59, 64.
  15. Pelly (PRPG) to Gonne (Sec., Bombay For. Dept.), 19 June 1869, L/P&S/9/15, OIOC, London.
  16. For more details, see H. Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia, and the Gulf, 1745–1900* (Albany: S.U.N.Y. Press, 1997), 63–90; F. Heard-Bey, *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1996), 164–97; idem., 'The Tribal Society of the UAE and its Traditional Economy', *Perspectives on the United Arab Emirates*, edited by E. Ghareeb and I. Al-Abed

## JAMES ONLEY

- (London: Trident Press, 1997), 254–72; and P. Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, edited by A. Al-Shahi (London: Palgrave, 2001), 24–32, 114–64.
17. Doha and Bid' were separate towns in the nineteenth century. During his visit to them in early 1863, William Palgrave noted that Doha was about half the size of Bid'. W.G. Palgrave, *Personal Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia* (London: Macmillan, 1865), 236–7.
  18. Trade reports on the Gulf ports in the nineteenth century can be found in the Govt. of India's annual *Reports on the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the Years 1874–1900* (Calcutta: For. Dept. Press, 1875–81; Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1882–1900) and Saldanha's *Précis of Commerce and Communications in the Persian Gulf, 1801–1905* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1906). For an assessment of Bahrain's economy, see Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 233–53 and A.M. Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750–1800: The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait* (Beirut: Khayats, 1965), 165–80.
  19. Govt. of India, *Report on the Administration of the Bushire Residency, 1873–74* (Calcutta: For. Dept. Press, 1874), 10, 15.
  20. Saldanha, *Précis of Commerce*, 170, 173, 176, 179, 182, 184.
  21. Or MTD 1,466,515. British trade reports on Muscat were always listed in Maria Theresa Dollars.
  22. Or MTD 751,400.
  23. The table identifies the Trucial States as the 'Arab Coast'.
  24. Saldanha, *Précis of Commerce*, 170, 176, 182.
  25. See, for example, Maj. D. Wilson, 'Memorandum Respecting the Pearl Fisheries in the Persian Gulf', *JRGS*, vol. iii (1833), 283–6; Capt. E.L. Durand, 'Notes on the Pearl Fisheries of the Persian Gulf', Govt. of India, *Report on the Administration of the Persian Gulf Political Agency for the Year 1877–78* (Calcutta: For. Dept. Press, 1878), appendix a, 27–41; and Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 29–30.
  26. Govt. of India, *Report on the Administration of the Bushire Residency for 1873–74*, 15 and Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 246.
  27. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 238, 243 and R.S. Zahlan, 'Hegemony, Dependence and Development in the Gulf', *Social and Economic Development in the Arab Gulf*, edited by T. Niblock (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 63.
  28. S.B. Miles, *The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1919), 291; Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade*, 5–6, 31, 36–8, 47–9, 60, 126; F.I. Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain: The Transformation of Social and Political Authority in an Arab State* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980), 19–20; M. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis: The Rashidis of Saudi Arabia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1990), 111–17; Al-Naqeeb, *Society and State in the Gulf Arab Peninsula*, 11, 13–16; Davies, *The Blood-Red Arab Flag*, 263; and Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia*, 170 (n. 1).
  29. The British referred to the Ruler of Muscat as the 'Imam of Muscat' (often spelt 'Imaum') until the mid-nineteenth century and as the 'Sultan of Muscat' thereafter. The Ruler himself used the title of Imam until 1786, after which he used the title of Sayyid (Lord). The British Government first referred to the Ruler as the 'Sultan

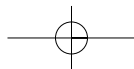
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

- of Muscat' in the Anglo-Muscati Treaty of 1839. For more details, see Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 11–12.
30. Fattah, *The Politics of Regional Trade*, 48–51, 54 and Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 95–132.
  31. Davies, *The Blood-Red Arab Flag*, 263–4 and Heard-Bey, *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, 228–9. Patricia Risso prefers to describe *ḡazū* as 'piracy'. P. R[isso] Dubuisson, 'Qasimi Piracy and the General Treaty of Peace (1820)', 47.
  32. H. Rosenfeld, 'The Social Composition of the Military in the Process of State Formation in the Arabian Desert', part ii, *JRAI*, vol. 95 (1965), 184 and H.R.P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert: A Glimpse into Badawin Life in Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1949), 440–1, 443–4.
  33. P. Lienhardt, 'The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf: An Essay in Nineteenth Century History', *Arabian Studies*, vol. ii (1975), 64–5; idem., *Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 19–20, 222–3; and Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf, Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 4, 21, 24–5.
  34. Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia*, 35, 181 and Lienhardt, *Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 21, 186, 200–1.
  35. Lt. A.B. Kemball, 'Memoranda on the Resources, Localities and Relations of the Tribes Inhabiting the Arabian Shores of the Persian Gulf' (1845), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, no. xxiv, new series (Bombay: Bombay Education Society Press, 1856), 94.
  36. Ibid. and Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 66–7, 97.
  37. C.U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, vol. xi: *The Treaties, &c., Relating to Aden and the South Western Coast of Arabia, the Arab Principalities in the Persian Gulf, Muscat (Oman), Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province* (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1933), 193 and R.S. Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 42–3.
  38. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 114.
  39. Rosenfeld, 'The Social Composition of the Military', part i, 79.
  40. Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 15.
  41. For a discussion of the military in nineteenth century Arabia, see Rosenfeld, 'The Social Composition of the Military', parts i and ii, 75–86, 174–94; Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 133–58; and Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf*, 60.
  42. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 252.
  43. Ibid., 1010–14 and H.M. Govt., *A Handbook of Arabia* (London: Intelligence Div., 1916), 84–5, 608.
  44. Capt. G.B. Brucks, 'Memoir Descriptive of the Navigation of the Gulf of Persia', part 1 (1829), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, no. xxiv, 566.
  45. Rosenfeld, 'Social Composition of the Military', part ii, 178.
  46. There has been extensive work on alliance-seeking in Arabia. See Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*; F.F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1997); Alghanim, *The Reign of Mubarak Al-Sabah: Shaikh of Kuwait, 1896–1915*



JAMES ONLEY

- (London: I.B. Taurus, 1998) and F.I. Khuri, *Tents and Pyramids: Games and Ideology in Arab Culture from Backgammon to Autocratic Rule* (London: Saqi Books, 1990), 114–17.
47. For a discussion of the subsidy system, see Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 81–2, 116.
  48. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 252.
  49. Landen, 'The Arab Gulf in the Arab World 1800–1918', 59 and Al-Rasheed, 'The Rashidi Dynasty: Political Centralization among the Shammar of North Arabia', *New Arabian Studies*, vol. ii (1994), 152 (n. 20).
  50. For a discussion of the first two conditions, see Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 184–6, 212–14.
  51. H.R.P. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert: A Glimpse into Badawin Life in Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1949), 52–53, 118, 120–21.
  52. P.W. Harrison, *The Arab at Home* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell & Co., 1924), 126. Also see 139–45.
  53. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 52.
  54. *Ibid.*, 53 and Lienhardt, 'The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf', 68.
  55. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 53.
  56. *Ibid.*, 441.
  57. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 53.
  58. For more details, see Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 197–9, 206.
  59. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 93.
  60. Harrison, *The Arab at Home*, 150.
  61. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 53.
  62. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 115 and Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 31, 229.
  63. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 118.
  64. P. Dresch, *Tribes, Government and History in Yemen* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 59–61, 63–4, 122–3, 373.
  65. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 115.
  66. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 53.
  67. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 116.
  68. *Ibid.*, 115–16; Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 118, 188, 200; C. Belgrave, *Personal Column* (London: Hutchinson, 1960), 37; and T. Farah, *Protection and Politics in Bahrain, 1869–1915* (Lebanon: American Univ. of Beirut, 1985), 14.
  69. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 81–82 and Al-Rasheed, 'The Rashidi Dynasty', 146.
  70. Kemball, 'Memoranda on ... the Tribes ...' (1845), 94.
  71. This is the earliest estimate available. Capt. F.B. Prideaux (PA, Bahrain) to Maj. P.Z. Cox (PRPG), 24 June 1905, L/P&S/10/81, register no. 1508/1905, OIOC, London. This is reproduced in Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 251.
  72. Ross to Sec., Indian For. Dept., 3 Nov. 1877, Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs, 1854–1904* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1904), 50.
  73. Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs*, 49.
  74. Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 209–10; Khuri, *Tribe and State in*



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

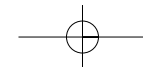
- Bahrain*, 51–2; idem., ‘From Tribe to State in Bahrain’, *Arab Society: Social Science Perspectives*, edited by S.E. Ibrahim and N.S. Hopkins (Cairo: A.U.C. Press, 1985), 435.
75. Idem., ‘The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf’, 69 and Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 435.
76. Lienhardt, ‘The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf’, 69.
77. Ibid., 68. Lienhardt was summarizing the ideas of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Al-Rashid in *Ta’rīḥ al-kuwayt* [History of Kuwait] (Cairo, 1926).
78. Lienhardt, *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 19–21.
79. Idem., ‘The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf’, 63–5, 72–3 and idem., *The Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 19–23.
80. Rosenfeld, ‘Social Composition of the Military’, part i, 78–9 and Landen, ‘The Arab Gulf in the Arab World 1800–1918’, 59.
81. Rosenfeld, ‘Social Composition of the Military’, part i, 76.
82. Harrison, *The Arab at Home*, 125.
83. For examples of customary tribute payments, see Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 443–44 and Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 113–14.
84. For more information on *zakāt*, see Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 440–1 and Heard-Bey, *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, 161.
85. Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 20.
86. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 115. Al-Rasheed discusses *ḥūwah* at length on 111–17.
87. Harrison, *The Arab at Home*, 156.
88. Rosenfeld, ‘Social Composition of the Military’, part i, 79.
89. Al-Rasheed, *Politics in an Arabian Oasis*, 116–17.
90. Rosenfeld, ‘Social Composition of the Military’, part i, 85 (n. 3).
91. Ibid., 79.
92. Unless otherwise indicated, the following account is based on Govt. of Bombay, *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, no. xxiv (1856), 91–119, 140–52, 361–425; Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs* (1904), 1–36, 152; Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 169–277, 841–8, 851–9, 879–80; Miles, *The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf*, 291–7, 318, 322, 329; and Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 103–4, 121–2, 126, 221–2, 229–30, 303–5.
93. These are the dependent tribes the Resident identified in 1869 (reprinted in Aitchison’s *Treaties*), with the exception of the ‘Aḡmān, Āl Bin ‘Alī, Kibīṣah, Manāna‘ah and Sādah, whom the British had identified in previous years. This list is based on a compilation from: Aitchison, *Treaties*, vol. xi, 193; Brucks, ‘Memoir Descriptive’, part 1 (1829), 559–63; Kemball, ‘Memoranda on ... the Tribes ...’ (1845), 104–8; Kemball, ‘Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1832 to 1844’ (1844), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, no. xxiv, 390; Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 840 and vol. ii, 754, 1530–5; and Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, 18–19, 33–4, 36–7, 39, 41–3.
94. ? indicates the known location of a tribe at the time of Lorimer’s investigations during 1904–07. This may or may not have been the tribe’s location at the time of Āl Khalifah’s overlordship of eastern and northern Qatar (c.1766–1871). See Lorimer’s footnote comments on this: *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 1505 (n. \*).

JAMES ONLEY

95. There is some confusion over the precise dates of the two Muscati attacks on, and occupation of, Bahrain between 1799 and 1801. See Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 104 (n. 1).
96. Davies, *The Blood-Red Arab Flag*, 327.
97. Alexei Vassiliev incorrectly identifies the force as British. Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia* (London: Saqi Books, 1998), 108. In marked contrast to the sources above, Charles Davies argues that it was the *wakil*'s brother, Fahd bin Sulaymān bin 'Ufaysān, who was captured. Davies, *The Blood-Red Arab Flag*, 327.
98. Davies, 327.
99. Kemball, 'Historical Sketch ... 1832 to 1844' (1844), 414.
100. *Ibid.*, 415.
101. Lorimer misprints \$4,000 as 84,000. *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 880. For the correct amount, see Lt. H.F. Disbrowe, 'Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein), 1844–1853' (1853), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, no. xxiv, 416.
102. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 384–5.
103. Comdr. Porter (SNOPG) to Hennell, 21 July 1851, L/P&S/5/471, 6, OIOC, London.
104. Hennell to Malet, 9 Aug. 1851, L/P&S/5/471, 28–9, OIOC, London.
105. Disbrowe, 'Historical Sketch ... 1844 to 1853' (1853), 423 and Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 399–402.
106. Disbrowe, 'Historical Sketch ... 1844 to 1853' (1853), 424.
107. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 501–10.
108. *Ibid.*, 512–14, 523, 528.
109. *Ibid.*, 514.
110. *Ibid.*, 515–16, 518.
111. *Ibid.*, 514, 524.
112. Jasim to Jones, 23 May 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
113. Jones to Muḥammad bin Khalifah, 18 May 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
114. 'Purport of two conversations held between Capt. Jones and Ali ben Khaleefa', 21 & 23 May 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
115. Jones to Comdr. Drought, 26 May 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
116. Jones to Muḥammad bin Khalifah, 28 May 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
117. Marginal note, *ibid.*
118. Jones to Chief Sec., Bombay Govt., 1 June 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
119. *Ibid.* and Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 525–7.
120. Muḥammad bin Khalifah to Jones, 31 May 1861 and Jones to Chief Sec., Bombay Govt., 1 June 1861, L/P&S/9/162, OIOC, London.
121. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 525–7.
122. Henvey (offg. Under-Sec., Indian For. Dept.) to Ross (PRPG), 10 Dec. 1874, qtd. in Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 761.
123. Pelly to Muḥammad bin Khalifah, 2 Sept. 1868, enclosed in Gonne (Sec., Bombay Pol. Dept.) to Seton-Karr (Sec., Indian For. Dept.), 9 Oct. 1868, L/P&S/5/261, OIOC, London.
124. Pelly to Gonne, 25 Sept. 1868, L/P&S/5/261, 2, OIOC, London.
125. *Ibid.*, 3.

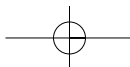
## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

126. Ibid. and Agreement of 6 Sept. 1868 (signed 9 Sept.), Aitchinson, *Treaties*, vol. xi, 193, 236–7. Kelly asserts, incorrectly, that it was Pelly who deposed the Ruler. *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 674.
127. Pelly to Gonne (Sec., Bombay Pol. Dept.), 25 Sept. 1868, L/P&S/5/261, 4, OIOC, London.
128. Ibid.
129. Pelly to Sec., Bombay Pol. Dept., 12 Apr. 1869, L/P&S/9/15, 127–8, OIOC, London; Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 895; and Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 675, 732. For more details of the events of 1867–68, see Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs*, 13–18; Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 672–6; and Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, 41–2, 44–5 (n. 9–13).
130. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 730, 738; Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, 46; P. Tuson, 'Introduction', *Records of Qatar*, vol. 2: 1854–1879 (Slough: Archive Editions, 1991), xi; and F.F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf*, 32–3, 190 (n. 74).
131. Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs*, 35.
132. Talal Farah has done an extensive analysis of this British policy towards Zubarah and the Na'im. Farah, *Protection and Politics in Bahrain*, 37–68. Also see Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs*, 13–18, 35–37; idem., *Précis of Katar Affairs*, 1873–1904 (Calcutta: Superintendent of Govt. Printing, 1904), 1–10; Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 906; Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 761–2, 789–91, 795, 798, 842–51; and Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, 47–50.
133. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 761.
134. Belgrave, *Personal Column*, 152–9 and Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, 85–90.
135. P. Dresch, *Tribes, Government and History in Yemen* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989).
136. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 133–5, 349–50, 440–1, 443–4.
137. Dresch, *Tribes*, 258.
138. Dresch refers to the protégé as *al-ğār*, but *al-dahīl* was more common in Eastern Arabia.
139. Dresch, *Tribes*, 59. *wağh* literally means 'face' and *fī wağhihi* means 'in his face'.
140. Ibid., 59–60.
141. Ibid., 60–1.
142. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 133–4 and H. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 3rd ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Spoken Language Services, 1976), 273.
143. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 133–4.
144. Dresch, *Tribes*, 59, 62, 64.
145. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 135.
146. Dresch, *Tribes*, 60–1.
147. Lienhardt, 'The Authority of Shaykhs in the Gulf', 73.
148. Dresch, *Tribes*, 64.
149. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 440–1, 443–4.
150. Dickson, *The Arab of the Desert*, 125.
151. Harrison, *The Arab at Home*, 126.
152. Heard-Bey, *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, 101–2.
153. I am indebted to Frauke Heard-Bey of the Centre for Documentation and Research, Abu Dhabi for this information.



JAMES ONLEY

154. Heard-Bey, *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, 81.
155. *Ibid.*, 81–2.
156. Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia*, 65–76, 88–9, 108–17, 181; History of ‘Utub tribe, enclosed in Jasim to Ross (PRPG), 11 Sept. 1873, R/15/1/192, OIOC, London; Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 24; and H.I. Al-Khalifa, *First Light: Modern Bahrain and Its Heritage* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1994), 37, 41–3.
157. Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia*, 117; Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 25; P. Ward, *Bahrain: A Travel Guide* (Cambridge: Oleander Press, 1993), 9; Al-Khalifa, *First Light*, 54 and correspondence with ‘Ali Akbar Bushiri, 8 Sept. 2001, Bahrain.
158. For a history and description of Dīwān Fort, see Belgrave, *Personal Column*, 34. For images, see Belgrave, 33; Gulf Panorama, *Old Days* (Manamah: Oriental Press, 1986), 43; K.M. Al-Muraikhi, *Events Enfolded in Time: A Journey into Bahrain’s Past* (Bahrain: n.p., 1997), 130, 189; and A. Wheatcroft, *Bahrain in Original Photographs, 1880–1961* (London: Kegan Paul, 1988), 67.
159. Al-Khalifa, *First Light*, 54 and correspondence with ‘Ali Akbar Bushiri, 8 Sept. 2001, Bahrain.
160. Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia*, 117; Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 25; Ward, *Bahrain*, 9; and correspondence with ‘Ali Akbar Bushiri, 8 Sept. 2001, Bahrain.
161. Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia*, 117; Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 28–9; Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 26; F.H. Lawson, *Bahrain: The Modernization of Autocracy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), 30; and correspondence with ‘Ali Akbar Bushiri, 8 Sept. 2001, Bahrain.
162. Ahmad Abu Hakima is the only historian who believes Salmān ruled alone before the 1810s. *History of Eastern Arabia*, 197.
163. Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 26; Lawson, *Bahrain*, 30; and correspondence with ‘Ali Akbar Bushiri, 8 Sept. 2001, Bahrain.
164. For history and detailed study of ‘Arād Fort, see A.G. Walls, *Arad Fort, Bahrain* (Bahrain: Ministry of Info., 1987).
165. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 850 and Belgrave, *The Pirate Coast*, 75.
166. *Ibid.* and Ward, *Bahrain*, 195. Abu Hakima and Kelly say Salmān moved to Rifā‘ in 1796, while Khuri says 1800.
167. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 844, 850.
168. For an analysis of Abū Māhir Fort’s strategic positioning, see Walls, *Arad Fort*, 35, 41–3 and Brucks, ‘Memoir Descriptive’, part 1 (1829), 568. For a history see K.M. Al-Muraikhi, *Glimpses of Bahrain from Its Past* (Bahrain: Ministry of Information, 1997), 262. For images, see Lewis (PRPG) to Bombay Govt., 25 Sept. 1868, appendix 4, W/L/P&S/5/15, OIOC and Ward, *Bahrain*, 114.
169. For histories and images of Qaṣr Khalifah, Qaṣr Rifā‘ and Bayt ‘Īsā, see Govt. of Bahrain, *Al-baḥrayn: haḍārah wa-ta’rīḥ* (Bahrain: Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Info., 1997), 238–9, 303 and Ward, *Bahrain*, 92–7, 196.
170. Brucks, ‘Memoir Descriptive’, part 1 (1829), 568.
171. Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 43–4.
172. *Ibid.*, 43, 51–2.



## THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION IN THE GULF

173. Brucks, 'Memoir Descriptive', part 1 (1829), 566 and Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i: 238.
174. The *Hawalah* are Sunni Arabs from southern Persia who link themselves genealogically to one of the tribes of Arabia. Many could be described as 'Persianized Arabs' in the nineteenth century. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i: 754–55 and Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 2, 4.
175. For a detailed census from 1905, see Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 237–41.
176. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. ii, 248; Khuri, *Tribe and State in Bahrain*, 44–53; and Farah, *Protection and Politics in Bahrain*, 10, 45.
177. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 850.
178. See the Gulf Residency's few surviving files of Arabic correspondence. These cover the years 1856–72 and can be found in R/15/1/180–182, OIOC. Also see Lienhardt, *Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 185 and H.A. Qafisheh, *NTC's Gulf Arabic-English Dictionary* (Chicago: NTC Publishing Group, 1997), 17, 153.
179. Qafisheh, *Gulf Arabic-English Dictionary*, 17.
180. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 842–946.
181. The Āl Ṣabāḥ were ancient allies of the Āl Khalifah. These dates indicate those times when the Āl Ṣabāḥ came, or were asked to come, to the military assistance of the Āl Khalifah.
182. The Āl Ġalāhimah were also ancient allies, but fell out with the Āl Khalifah in 1783. These dates indicate those times when the Āl Ġalāhimah came to the military assistance of the Āl Khalifah.
183. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 842–946.
184. My thanks to Yoav Alon of St. Antony's College, Oxford for this insight.
185. J.E. Peterson, 'Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia', *MEJ*, vol. xxi (1977), 302.
186. Lienhardt, *Shaikhdoms of Eastern Arabia*, 15.
187. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 863–5.
188. *Ibid.*, 865.
189. *Ibid.*, 866.
190. *Ibid.*
191. *Ibid.*, 866–7.
192. Dr T. MacKenzie (acting Asst. PRPG) to Secret Committee, Court of Directors, London, 18 Sept. 1840, L/P&S/9/116, 223, OIOC, London.
193. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 867.
194. *Ibid.*, 868.
195. The Āl Ġalāhimah were a former ally of the Āl Khalifah and the Āl Bin 'Alī a former dependant. They broke with Āl Khalifah in 1783 and 1835 respectively. Shaikh Bašīr was the son of Shaikh Raḥmah, the Ruler of the Āl Ġalāhimah who waged war against the Āl Khalifah from 1783 until his death in 1826.
196. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 868.
197. Kemball, 'Historical Sketch ... 1832 to 1844' (1844), 396.
198. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 869.
199. Kemball, 'Historical Sketch ... 1832 to 1844' (1844), 397, 397–8 (n. \*).
200. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 870.
201. *Ibid.*, 872–3.
202. Kemball, 'Historical Sketch ... 1832 to 1844' (1844), 405–6.

## JAMES ONLEY

203. Ibid., 402 and Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 873.
204. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 873.
205. Ibid., 874.
206. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 202.
207. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 874.
208. For details of his argument, see Lt. Kemball's own account of the incident in 'Historical Sketch ... 1832 to 1844' (1844), 397–8 (n. \*).
209. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, vol. i, 874.
210. Ibid., 876.
211. Ibid., 877, 879–80.
212. Ibid., 877.
213. Ibid., 878.
214. Ibid., 878–9.
215. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 167–192.
216. Paraphrase of Morrison (PRPG) to Sulṭān al-Qāsimī, Sept. 1836, qtd. in Kemball, 'Observations on the Past Policy of the British Government towards the Arab Tribes of the Persian Gulf' (1844), *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, no. xxiv, 69.
217. Kemball, 'Observations on the Past Policy' (1844), 62–3, 68, 73.
218. Ibid., 68.
219. Ibid., 68 (n. \*).
220. Ibid., 69.
221. Ibid.
222. Hennell (Asst. PRPG) to Sec., Bombay Pol. Dept., 19 Apr. 1830, qtd. in Kemball, 70 (n. \*).
223. Ibid.
224. Kemball, 'Observations on the Past Policy' (1844), 69–70.
225. Ibid., 70.
226. Ibid., 74.
227. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, 369.
228. For details of this policy and the motives behind it, see Kemball, 'Observations on the Past Policy' (1844), 69 (n. \*).
229. Kemball, 'Historical Sketch ... 1832 to 1844' (1844), 288–89 and Disbrowe, 'Historical Sketch ... from 1844 to 1853' (1853), 417, 420.
230. Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs*, 10–11.
231. Ibid., 67–8.
232. Paraphrase of a report by Col. Ross (PRPG), July 1874, Saldanha, *Précis of Bahrein Affairs*, 41.
233. D. Hawley, *Desert Wind and Tropic Storm: An Autobiography* (Wilby: Michael Russell, 2000), 44.
234. My thanks to Frauke Heard-Bey of the Centre for Documentation and Research, Abu Dhabi for this insight.
235. J.B. Kelly, *Arabia, the Gulf and the West* (London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980), 49–50.