

TRIBE AND STATE IN BAHRAIN

The Transformation of
Social and Political Authority
in an Arab State

Fuad I. Khuri

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To Dana

Lo! Allah changeth not the condition of a folk
until they [first] change that which is in their
hearts.

Qur'an 13:11

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A Note on Arabic Words

Proper names of people and places sometimes spelled in English with *e* or *o* will be written with *a*, *i*, or *u*, following their pronunciation in classical Arabic. Thus, Mohammad will be written Muhammad; Nedj, Najd, and so on. Excepted from this rule are those words that have acquired standardized spelling in English, such as emir or emirate.

The *Al* that precedes a noun will be written with capital *A* if it means family, and with small *a* if it refers to the definite article *the*. The ^cayn and the hamza are not written down when they occur either at the beginning or the end of a proper noun; ^cAli is written Ali, and Shi^ca is written as such. In concepts and technical words, the ^cayn and the hamza are written wherever they occur, and the words are italicized on first usage to indicate their foreign origin. Exact transliterations of technical words and concepts are arranged alphabetically in a list at the end of the book, following their pronunciation in classical Arabic and the transliteration system published in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 2, no. 4 (1971).

1 Introduction

This book is a study of political authority in Bahrain, a small country (area 552 square kilometers and population about 240,000) that has only recently become an independent state.¹ It is a study in rapid social change brought about by colonialism and by the transformation of an impoverished economy based on pearl diving, palm cultivation, and fishing into a complex of modern economic institutions based on oil production. *Tribe and State in Bahrain* focuses on two general themes: the changing authority system vis-à-vis colonial rule and socioeconomic transformations, and the impact of these forces on the processes of interaction between tribe, peasantry, and urban society. Emphasis is placed upon the shifting socioeconomic bases of power and the emergence and formation of new groups and institutions. Equal emphasis is placed upon the way tribe, peasantry, and urban society have been adjusting to each other within the authority system and amid political and socioeconomic change. "System" here implies continuous "interaction between a structure and its environment" (Bailey 1969, p. 10).

One of the main assumptions of this work is that tribe, peasantry, and urban society, because they coexist simultaneously--sometimes within the same city--and partake of the same economic structure, cannot be dealt with as if they were simply evolutionary stages in the development of human civilization, or ecosystems operating differently in separable ecological niches. In the context of Bahrain, these are different forms of social organization that relate to society variably through different constitutions and through controlling varied social and economic resources.

Tribesmen manipulate kinship principles to regulate marriage, social interaction, and the redistribution of power, force, wealth, and bene-

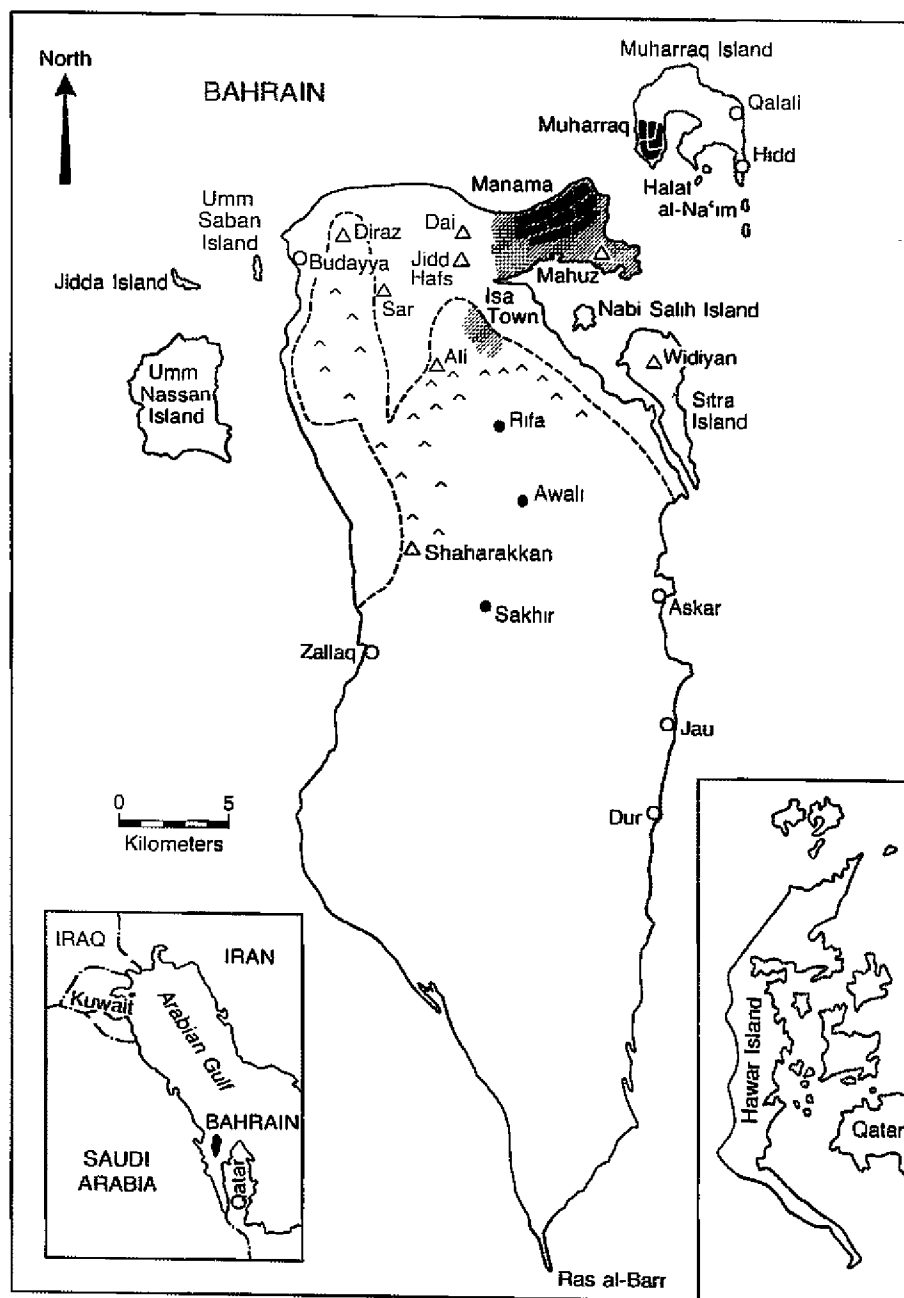
1 fits. Tribes or segments of tribes, though spread over different

localities in Bahrain, the Gulf, or mainland Arabia, are socially united through an intricate system of traditional tribal alliances that cut across independent states. Within the same state they seek social distinctness through formally controlled inmarriages and visitations (see chaps. 7 and 11), and by regulating their juristic dealings according to a separate (Maliki) law in Islam. The tribally organized segment of society in Bahrain, and generally in the Gulf and Arabia, has maintained control of the major economic resources: pearls, dates, and nowadays oil. This does not mean that tribalism, as a form of social organization, remained unchanged; it did change to suit the emerging socioeconomic conditions and the bureaucratic structure of government. This book is essentially an attempt to summarize these changes as they have taken place in Bahrain over a span of about two centuries.

Peasants, on the other hand, are organized in "village" communities bound by Shi^Ca ritual and law (the Ja^Cfari law) and by a high rate of community inmarriages, which seem to continue in the face of geographic mobility and change of residence. Unlike tribesmen, whose social structure is built into different and fluctuating forms of kinship, peasants have a community-based form of organization. In Bahrain they are Shi^Ca cultivators who claim to be the original inhabitants of the island and who, for this reason, call themselves *bahrani* as opposed to *bahraini*, a word they use to refer to the Sunni.²

However, what is called a village in Bahrain today has that character only in social and historical perspective--not politically, administratively, or economically. The boundaries of a "village" still may be determined in terms of the family groups composing it, and in this sense it is a markedly separable community. Except for marriage and ritual, which are community bound, the "village" is part of a larger politico-economic structure (see Appendix A). In a household survey of fifteen different villages or quarters of towns scattered over the country (see map 1), commuters between places of work and residence--whether they live in what is conventionally called village, town, or city--were found to make up between 64.2 and 90.7 percent of the total working force.

The urban population is organized in ethnically and religiously homogeneous neighborhoods, sometimes associated with distinct crafts and economic engagements (see Appendix A). The urban Sunni, who work mostly in trade, commerce, or civil and military employments, have two traditions of origin: the Hawala and the Najdi. The Hawala trace origin to



- Cultivated area lies north of this line
- Settlements with pearl fishing tradition
- △ Settlements with palm cultivation tradition
- ▨ Suburban settlements
- △ Prehistoric tumuli

different localities in southern Iran but link themselves genealogically to different ancient tribes in the Gulf and Arabia; hence the word *hawala*, which they say suggests the process of retransformation back to Arabism. Well-known family names such as Kanu, Fakhru, Bastaki, and Khunji among the Hawala are all place names in southern Iran. Indeed, the Hawala had little stability of population in the Gulf. Many came to Bahrain after the shifts of trade routes from the eastern to the western coast of the Gulf, the increase of pearl production in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and, recently, the development of oil. Some of them have only lately settled in Bahrain; their fathers or grandfathers still speak Persian. Others have been there much longer but distinguish themselves from other Sunni by following the Shafi'i law in Islamic jurisdiction. Unlike the Shi'a of Persian origin, they are almost completely "arabized," absorbed into the urban Sunni population.

The Najdi tradition encompasses those families such as Al-Zayyani, Al-Higris, Al-Qusaihi, and Al-Dawawida, who have settled in Bahrain since the Al-Khalifa occupied the island in 1783. They are of direct Arab origin but are nontribal and urban, distinguished from the tribal Sunni by following the Hanbali law in Islam. Except for the police force, where they are more heavily represented than other Sunni groups, the Najdis concentrate in almost the same occupations as the Hawala.

Like the urban Sunni, the urban Shi'a work in trade, commerce, or civil employment, but they are considerably less well represented in the police force and the military. They concentrate instead in fruit and vegetable retail trade and in a variety of native crafts (see Appendix A). A large number of families among the urban Shi'a trace their origin to al-Hasa province in Saudi Arabia where the Shi'a population of that country lives; others trace their roots to different village communities in Bahrain. On purely religious grounds, they are indistinguishable from the "rural" folk with whom they share the same Ja'fari law and Shi'a rituals (see chap. 4).

One must realize, however, that rural, urban, city, town, and village are not clear cut social categories when applied to Bahraini society today--they are historical traditions and must be understood in this context. Physical proximity between settlements (it takes fifteen to twenty minutes on the average to commute between any two settlements in Bahrain), accentuated by modern transportation and economic integration, has rendered Bahrain a "metrocommunity" of a sort, combining a metropolis and a

series of little "villages." The knowledge Bahrainis have of their society and its various groups is reminiscent of little communities with intensive face-to-face interaction. There is hardly a public figure or a man of means who is not known in person, by name, or by social origin. People and places are perceived with such obvious intimacy that the boundaries between private and public life is difficult to draw. I had friends and informants who could tell me the various family groups in Bahrain, the social categories they belong to, the history of their settlement in the country, their size, marriage patterns, occupations, and educational achievements. People have the same intimate awareness of palm groves, fish traps, freshwater springs, and religious shrines: they know them by name, location, use, and history of ownership. I will say much more about this later; here it is enough to note that Bahrain has recently attained a metropolis-state structure superimposed upon a series of little communities.

Colonial rule and the development of oil are singled out in this book as the two major processes that modified the authority system in Bahrain; the first by creating a bureaucracy, and the second by transforming the economic order and the social organization associated with it. Instituting bureaucracy changed the formal structure of authority and modified the mode of interaction among tribe, peasantry, and urban society. It altered tribal alliances and provided the regime with instruments of intervention that, while creating a single authority system, simultaneously consolidated the power of the ruling family and led to their exclusiveness.

Just as colonial intervention changed the formal organization of authority and restructured the social boundaries between groups, the development of the oil industry wiped out the fundamental elements of traditional economy and transformed the social bases of power, thus creating new political formulations. New social forms, mainly salaried labor and enlightened Arab nationalists, began to emerge in the fifties and sixties and to challenge the legitimacy of the ruling regime. In the seventies, however, the unprecedented influx of foreign labor, made possible by increased oil prices that multiplied the service and construction sectors of the economy, discouraged the rise of organized labor. The influx of foreign laborers of varied social and cultural backgrounds, estimated to be sixty thousand or more, enticed Bahraini workers to seek jobs in civil employment and in services, which diminished

labor's capacity for collective action. Because the employment market fluctuates swiftly, grievances are not given time to stabilize and therefore cluster in repeated protests. It appears that continued rapid economic and social change militates against the rise of organized protests or rebellions. More likely, such protests and rebellions can be expected to occur as soon as the economic system and the job market begin to stabilize, bringing to light the conflicts of collective interests.

This expectation is supported by the circumstance that development of oil intensified collective differentiation and deepened discrepancies between social groups (see chap. 7). It is true that the bulk of the population is now better fed, educated, sheltered, and clothed, but it is also true that discrepancies and discriminations between social groups were never so acutely and collectively felt as they are today. In the absence of a policy of social development, unbalanced economic growth deepens the rift between the poor and the rich, the center and the periphery, the elite and the masses and strengthens the collective sense of deprivation. Because of this, organized protests and rebellions tend to take place at the early stage of economic and technological growth when the state institutions are not sufficiently developed to ensure a fair policy of redistribution, continuously bridging the gaps between social groups.

The effect of colonial rule and oil development on the authority system and the interplay between tribe, peasantry, and urban society takes place within existing social institutions. Subsequently, to deal with the changing authority system we must examine the changing social institutions to which political authority is linked. Indeed, the definition of authority adopted here is broad enough to include the social bases of power, the formation of groups, and the various resources they control. Data on land tenure, palm cultivation, pearl production, fish traps, industrial projects, patterns of employment, occupational variations, educational facilities, household organizations, patterns of marriage, voluntary associations, sports clubs, organized protests and rebellions, labor movements, political parties, Shi^ca funeral houses, and leadership all must be assessed. Since these data relate to the formation of sociopolitical groups and shape the interaction between them, they are part of the changing authority system.

Social institutions and forces in Bahrain have had different effects upon the authority system at different points in history. This principle

describes in brief the general style of analysis, mode of presentation, and research methods (see Appendix B) adopted in this book. The sequence of chapters is in fact intended to underline it.

Chapter 2, "The Scramble," shows how foreign intervention, combined with the tribal structure of the Gulf, helped consolidate the authority of individual ruling families in separate trading, fishing, and pearling centers. Some of these centers became, after the development of oil, independent sovereign states. These states are small in area and in population--Bahrain, the smallest in area, has about 240,000 people; the United Arab Emirates, a federation that comprises seven principalities and was formerly known as the Trucial Coast, is the largest in area (77,700 square kilometers) but has a little fewer than 150,000 people, with Dubai having the largest population (60,000). The conditions that brought these small principalities to statehood, enjoying international recognition as separate and independent countries, are at once historical and sociological.

Historically, these states came to prominence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries after the market demand for pearls increased and trade routes shifted from the eastern to the western part of the Gulf. Bahrain and many of the oil-producing states of the Gulf today were in the recent past mercantile centers regulating trade between Europe and the Far East, and between these areas and mainland Arabia. They became separate political units through an intricate balance of power involving Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire as well as the regional power blocs of Iran, Oman, and Saudi Arabia. At various times in history these blocs exchanged control over the Gulf emirates, holding them as dependencies or as parts of larger empires.

Sociologically, each of these new states constitutes a single tribal domain, a sphere of influence controlled by a dominant tribe or segment of a tribe. The Al-Khalifa control Bahrain; Al-Sabah, Kuwait; Al-Thani, Qatar; Al-Buflah, Abu Dhabi; Al-Buflasa, Dubai; Al-Jawasim--sometimes pronounced Al-Qawasim--Ras al-Khaima and Sharja; Al-Bukhuraiban, Ajman; Al-Bi^cAli, Umm al-Quwain; Al-Sharqi, Fujaira. Many of these tribes or segments of tribes share the same genealogical origin; Al-Khalifa and Al-Sabah, for example, are Utub of Anaiza origin, and Al-Buflah and Al-Buflasa are of Bani Yas origin. Although linked genealogically, these tribes or segments of tribes each constitute a single polity, a state structure built into a tribal system.

The metaphor "scramble" is used to signify the intertribal wars that were frequent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and also the resulting dispersal of family groups, tribes, or segments of tribes in different localities of the Gulf. At this time in the history of the gulf, autonomous groups revolving around rich and enterprising cores of tribesmen dominated trade and the pearl diving industry. Although they operated within specific territories, the autonomy of the tribe mattered more than the sovereignty of the territory. Only after British interference, which aimed to alleviate intertribal conflicts and achieve economic and commercial stability, was sovereignty fixed within territorial bounds. This shift in the authority system from sovereignty of the group to sovereignty over a territory was marked officially by the General Treaty of Peace concluded in 1820 between British officials in the Gulf and various tribal chiefs living there (see chap. 2).

Territorializing authority while checking intertribal wars intensified intratribal conflicts; as of 1835, British imperial officials in the Gulf continuously had to intervene in Bahrain to ensure peaceful passage of power from one ruler to another. In Bahrain, stability of succession at the top shifted the areas of conflict within the ruling family from brothers to uncles and nephews. This conflict was deeply embedded in the feudal type of estate system, which implied continuous transfer of property from the ruler's brothers to his sons (see chap. 3).

Once intertribal wars were checked and intratribal conflicts contained through the imposition of primogeniture as the rule of succession to high office, Bahrain began to enjoy a rather stable polity and economy --an era exemplified by Isa bin Ali's reign from 1869 to 1923. In this era two institutions bearing upon the authority system came to prominence: tribal councils and religious courts. Chapter 3 focuses on the principles of tribal rule and its economic contents expressed in pearl production, palm cultivation, and fish traps; chapter 4 discusses the interplay between tribal law and Islamic law and the mutual adjustments between them, with an obvious variation between the sunni and the Shi^ca. Tribal councils (*majalis*) were meant to control the economic resources of the country and the processes of production and redistribution. Religious courts, on the other hand, dealt with personal affairs relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, and debts. Rarely if ever did religious law take precedence over tribal dictates. However, because Sunni religious law was enforced by coercion and Shi^ca law by sanction, Shi^ca jurists rose to

power not only as legal experts--functionaries of tribal government--but also as political leaders challenging the legitimacy of tribal rule. I argue in chapter 4 that Shi^Ca religious courts functioned like tribal councils and therefore presented themselves as alternatives to tribal regimes. In these two chapters on councils and courts the social framework of economic action and the variation of economic roles between tribe, peasantry, and urban society are discussed in detail.

The chapters on tribal government and economy, councils and courts, constitute the baseline for the change that came about through the administrative reforms of the twenties (chaps. 5 and 6) and the development of oil in the thirties (chaps. 7 and 8). In each of these phases the authority system was altered and modified in accord with the rise of new institutions and socioeconomic transformations.

Introduced over a span of about ten years, the reforms established for the first time a "legitimacy" of government based, at least in theory, upon "rational law" and "general rules" of organization (Weber 1954, p. 2). Instituting bureaucracy and specialized offices created a single authority system in the country and thus reinforced tribal authority and power, this time through "right of law" rather than by physical coercion. It likewise changed the boundaries of interaction between the ruling family and its previous allies. After the reforms, the tribal alliances--maintained and reinforced by outmarriages--that the ruling family had used to balance opposition were gradually ignored. Outmarriage for men of the ruling family subsequently was drastically curtailed (see chap. 11). Bureaucratic structures and specialized offices replaced tribal alliances as instruments of control and intervention and subsequently undermined the importance of outmarriage as a political weapon.

Not unexpectedly, tribesmen, peasants, and urban residents reacted differently to this process of bureaucratization, each group from a different perspective shaped by its internal constitution, its formal status, the resources it controlled, and its share of public wealth, power, and benefits. Tribes or segments of tribes, who had previously had sovereignty and the freedom to operate independently of any centralized authority, opposed the reforms and worked to strangle them; the Shi^Ca peasants or urbanites, who suffered from the lack of standardized law, supported the reforms and worked to enforce them (see chap. 5).

Not only did social origin affect reaction to the reforms and their implementation, it also modified recruitment to specialized offices--

the police force, the courts of justice, the municipal organizations, and other public offices (see chap. 6). In brief, the tribal element in Bahrain became dominant in government and in the power-oriented offices and departments such as interior, justice, defense, and internal security; the urbanites dominated technically oriented departments such as water, electricity, education, development, and health. The social bases of recruitment to these offices and departments, laid down in the twenties, continued with only mild modification until the seventies, in spite of the development of oil and the rise of new social and political forces. In the postoil era, this phenomenon strained relations between the tribally organized segment of society and these newly emerging forces, resulting in several organized protests and rebellions aiming to modernize the "political system."

With the development of oil, new institutions and social forces, or old institutions that had taken on new meanings, began to exert pressure on the authority system. The most striking feature of this process of change was the transformation of sharecroppers in palm cultivation and pearl production into salaried labor constituting about 70 percent of the total work force (chap. 7). Although the oil economy enabled the state to invest increasingly in public education, health, and social welfare, it simultaneously created visible collective inequalities between social groups. These inequalities constituted politically manipulatable material that, combined with Arab nationalistic movements, produced several protests and rebellions challenging the legitimacy of the regime and the ideology and policy of government. While colonial intervention worked to institute a "modern" bureaucracy, the emerging social and political forces created by the oil market worked to "modernize" the existing political system.

Because organized political parties have been banned in Bahrain, political action has centered on two types of voluntary associations--sports or cultural clubs, and religious centers called "funeral houses" among the Shi^ca. Chapter 8 discusses these two types of associations at length: their origin, development, and proliferation, and the way that they grew after the development of oil to express factional, local politics and political and social trends. These associations changed from prestige investments of notable and successful individuals to an expression of new collectivities and clusters of class interests. Their pro-

liferation and fragmentation both reflect a fragmented society and also express official policy.

Chapters 9 and 10, on protests, rebellions, and the legitimacy of authority, take up political action itself and show how groups and categories, neighborhoods and communities, tribes, peasants, and urbanites, students and salaried labor, Sunni or Shi'a, are mobilized by informal networks based in religious centers, pan-Arab movements, or socialistically oriented parties operating underground. One of the main conclusions of chapter 9 is that the absence of legally organized political parties considerably diminishes the capacity of opposition to sustain the prolonged confrontation with the ruling regime that eventually brings to light the internal contradictions of the opposition and destroys it from within. Lacking formal organization and hierarchy of office, on the one hand, and being mobilized by informal networks built around the personal influence of social notables on the other, opposition may grow to encompass a large part of the populace; but, in spite of this growth, it remains incapable of continued, systematic political action.

The examination of crisis situations, organized protests, and rebellions, and the official response to them, makes it unmistakably clear that "tribalism," as it emerged lately in Bahrain, tolerates a wide variety of modernizing innovations in government and society short of tampering with two matters--a standardized code of justice and a system of national representation. All committees, councils, boards, municipalities--even parliaments and assemblies--that have been established in Bahrain since 1919 were composed partly of elected and partly of appointed members. The most common pattern, except in the national parliament and the constitutional assembly (see chap. 10), was to have membership half elected and half appointed, with the chair given to an appointed member.

Chapter 10 brings the discussion up to August 1975, when the Bahrain parliament, established two years earlier, was dissolved. The conclusion, chapter 11, argues that the dissolution of parliament was basically intended to contain the increasing power of opposition that the foundation of the parliament itself had helped to create and strengthen. At no time in the political history of Bahrain did the "religionists" prove to be such staunch allies of the "leftists" as they were after the institution of parliament and the politicizing of social and economic issues. The experience of Bahrain shows that "tribalism" is not a single phenomenon,

an undifferentiated whole, a petrified social system, or simply a stage in the evolution of human civilization; it emerged in Bahrain as a socio-political force, a political party, opposing other forces and parties with comparable vested interests. Tribe or state in Bahrain, I conclude, is not entirely a Bahraini question; it is part of a wider political setting in the Gulf and Arabia.

2 The Scramble

During the eighteenth century, a large number of Arab tribes converged on the western and eastern coasts of the Arabian Gulf to take part in the growing Eastern trade. Many of these tribes, or segments of tribes, began to consolidate their authority in particular trading centers along the western coast, after trade routes shifted in this direction and the demand for pearls increased. The pearl banks were within fifty kilometers of the shore, stretching from Kuwait in the north to Ras Musandam in the south. As tribal groups struggled for control of seafaring, pearl diving, and trading centers, land and sea wars erupted, hindering international trade.

With this disruption, British imperial authorities intervened and put a stop to these wars in the early nineteenth century. The tribes or segments of tribes that happened to be in de facto control of given pieces of territory were granted de jure, legitimate right to them, according to several independent "treaties of peace" concluded between Great Britain and various tribal chiefs--hence, the "scramble." I use the term to underline the frequency of intertribal wars, the dispersal of tribal groups, the haphazard division of emirates, and the incidental rise of particular families to power.

The Gulf and Eastern Trade

Since ancient times the Arabian Gulf has been one of the main sea highways linking East and West; it is paralleled only by the Red Sea. Whereas Red Sea traffic reached Europe through the port of Alexandria, Gulf traffic reached it through Antioch. Navigation in the Arabian Gulf was being practiced as long ago as the third millennium B.C., when, according to an Assyrian tablet, Sargon the Great (2872 B.C.) is said to
13 have sailed to the "lower sea," meaning the gulf. Archaeological remains

excavated in Bahrain and elsewhere in the Gulf during the past two or three decades indicate that the Akkadian civilization of Niduk-ki and the Assyrian civilization of Tilwun or Dilmun were situated on the islands of Bahrain.

Sea traffic from the Gulf to Mesopotamia, carrying copper, gold, precious stones, ivory, teakwood, frankincense, and spices, also linked this country with India and the ancient Far East. Mesopotamia grew so dependent upon these commodities that Nebuchadnezzar II (604-561 B.C.) constructed a harbor in the south to receive the cargo and a fortress town, Teridon, west of the Euphrates to protect the trade routes against Arab raids. Maritime trade, still confined to journeys along the coast, began to decline--first under the Persian Empire during the Achaemenian dynasty (sixth to fourth centuries B.C.), then under the Roman Empire, when the trade drifted from the Gulf to the Red Sea.

Just before the Christian era, navigation in the Gulf improved technically. Greek and Roman writers mention that maritime communication between East and West had by then become firmly established and that the vessels navigated the open ocean. Alexander's expedition to the East during the Hellenic era did not add much to the technical advancement of sea communication in the Indian Ocean; it simply stimulated maritime trade there. Relying on Phoenician sailors to colonize the Gulf, he never advanced beyond Ras Musandam (Hourani 1951, p. 13). Alexander's reliance on the Phoenicians does not mean they had been navigating the Gulf either before or after the Hellenic era. The emperor was familiar with Phoenician maritime skills and tried unsuccessfully to use them in his eastern expeditions.

Until further evidence demonstrates otherwise, we can assume that the navigation of the Gulf has been always in the hands of the Arabs. The Persians are not known in history for their maritime skills or seafaring adventures; until recently all those who practiced seafaring on the eastern coast of the Gulf were Arabs (Belgrave 1972, p. 16; Landen 1967, p. 24). At several intervals in history "a strong Persian element" was found in the ports of the Gulf, as Hourani indicates (1951, p. 38), but this does not mean the settlers were mariners.

Until the accession of the Abbassids in Baghdad in A.D. 749, trade in the Gulf suffered repeated setbacks. The carriers of Islam at this time were the northern Arabs who were not inclined toward seafaring. The location of Arab capitals first in Hijaz and then in Damascus

stimulated trade on the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. When the Abbassids came to power, the Gulf trade entered a golden age that lasted until the coming of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Accounts of this trade are found in the writings of Arab and Muslim historians and geographers in a continuous line from Baladhiri, Yaqubi, and Tabari, who wrote in the ninth century, to Abu Ghazi and Sadiq Isfahani, who wrote in the seventeenth. They wrote on a wide variety of subjects, from trading posts, ports, ships, towns, cities, to customs and other cultural practices and beliefs.

The expansion of Islam into the subcontinents of Iran and India gave fresh impetus to maritime trade in the Gulf. Three prominent ports were established, Siraf on the eastern side, Basra, which replaced Apologos (Ubullah), in the north, and Masqat in the south on the Omani coast. By exploiting the monsoon winds, Arab seamen and merchants in the eighth through thirteenth centuries became regular visitors to the ports of the East African coast and the Malabar coast of India. From the seventh to the ninth century they traded with China (Toussaint 1966, p. 50), and in the tenth century they were sailing to Sumatra and Java (Hourani 1951, p. 78). Trade with East Africa had been established long before the Abbassids came to power, but they stimulated it greatly. Indeed, so numerous were the Zinj slaves in southern Iraq (brought mainly from East Africa) that in the second half of the ninth century they staged a revolt against Abbassid rule. Besides slaves, imports from East Africa included ivory and ambergris, and from India and the Far East, silk fabrics, camphor, musk, and spices. Exports included fabrics of linen, cotton, and wool, perhaps rugs, woodwork, metalwork, iron ore and bullion, and perhaps dates.

Before the Portuguese arrived, the Arabs of the Gulf, especially those of Oman and Yemen, were in full control of the East-West trade, which seems to have enriched those who took part in it. The ports serving this trade became conspicuously prosperous; in them "lofty palaces and other stately buildings came to prominence" (Wilson 1928, p. 10). Arab merchants and shipowners settled in Siam, Java, and Sumatra, marrying native women and introducing Arabic as the lingua franca in all the ports between Masqat and China. Basra and the various ports that lie southeast of Bushire, close to the deep water (forty to fifty fathoms) where navigation was safe and relatively easy, benefitted most from this trade. Northwest of Bushire and southward to Hormuz, the Gulf

is extremely shallow, with an intricate maze of shoals, reefs, and small islands--less inviting to navigation but rich in fish and pearls. This side of the Gulf came to world prominence in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries when pearl fishing became an appealing economic enterprise.

Such was Arab supremacy in the Indian Ocean when in 1498 the Portuguese discovered the sea route to India via the Cape of Good Hope. The loss of this supremacy came gradually. Initially the Portuguese merchants used the established system without destroying it, taking advantage of whatever skills were made available to them. Vasco de Gama's maiden voyage to India was made successful by a native Arab pilot, Shihab al-Din Ahmed ibn-Majid, who conducted the Portuguese squadron from Malindi in East Africa across the ocean to Calicut in India.

Concerned mainly with the small luxury trade of spices and, to a lesser extent, pearls, the Portuguese introduced no new economic elements into the Eastern trade. They traded for spices in India and for pearls in Bahrain and its vicinity. To protect their trading empire in the East, they tried, with Albuquerque's guidance, to build a series of forts at the gates of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. They attempted to capture Aden to control the Red Sea traffic, Hormuz to control traffic through the Gulf to Basra and other ports on the eastern side, and Diu and Goa to maintain sovereignty over other districts in India. They failed to control Aden, but they did hold Hormuz at the mouth of the Gulf and accordingly controlled the trade that flowed through it to Basra and Masqat. A remnant of the Portuguese fort at Bahrain--originally an Arab fortress, as recent excavations indicate (Bibby 1972, pp. 99-113)--is still in evidence. Their forts in Masqat and its surroundings have been adapted and imitated by many succeeding Arab dynasties.

The Portuguese ruled their Eastern trading empire by the sword. They trampled upon local trade, compelling the natives to buy from Portuguese stores at prices the Europeans fixed and to ship their wares on Portuguese vessels (Curzon 1892, p. 418). Their tough, uncompromising policy aroused several rebellions, which were ruthlessly suppressed (Belgrave 1972, p. 8; Bent 1890). They remained in the Gulf about 150 years but did not wander beyond the sea and the garrison. They were unable to sink roots, however superficial or marginal, in any segment of society.¹ Their effects on life-style, language, architecture, and the authority system were virtually nil. Their oppressive measures earned

them nothing but the enmity of the native population, and when their grip on trade and garrison began to loosen in the seventeenth century they were instantly obliterated. A combination of forces--European competition, the persistent longing of the emperors and kings of Iran to expand their dominion into the Gulf, plus native Arab resentment--worked to put an end to Portuguese rule and monopoly. They were ousted from Bahrain in 1602, from Hormuz in 1622, and from Masqat, their last stronghold in the Gulf, in 1651 or 1652, according to Badger (1871, p. xxvii).

The Dutch made their first appearance in the Indian Ocean in 1596 or 1597, and in 1591 the British dispatched a special mission to the area to explore trade possibilities.² These preliminary efforts culminated in a diplomatic offensive to earn favorable trading concessions, especially from Iran, one of the few countries that had a formalized central (not necessarily centralized) government. Soon the European merchants and emissaries realized that these concessions did not mean much, in that the southeast coast of Iran, the center of East-West trade in the Gulf at the time, was a peripheral area little subject to the dictates of the central government. To protect their commercial interests or to earn exclusive trading rights, they sometimes appeased local chiefs and sometimes threatened them with force. A series of "factories" for selling, bartering, or buying goods were founded in the main port towns on the eastern coast of the Gulf in Jask, Bandar Abbass, and later on in Bushire. The struggle for trading rights and concessions instigated a series of petty wars between the European powers in the Gulf, in which local power blocs took an active part. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese monopoly of mercantile trade was practically destroyed. While the Dutch captured the spice trade, the Omanis siezed the fortresses.

The Dutch supremacy did not last long. The outbreak of wars in Europe, the Dutch failure to suppress "piracy," and the coming of the British East India Company as a political force rather than merely a commercial firm weakened the Dutch position. At the beginning of the eighteenth century they began to give in to the British, and by about 1766 they were forced to abandon their last post on Kharj Island. By this time British influence and trade had become supreme in the Gulf, often with Persian help, in spite of some short-lived interruptions by the French in 1763.³

The opening of the oceanic trade to the European navigator, the

merchant, and the soldier, and the penetration of this trade deep into the Gulf waters brought considerable changes. Traditional trade routes connecting the head of the Gulf with Aleppo and Antioch and the Red Sea with the Mediterranean soon lost their importance to the trading posts along the Gulf and the Omani coasts. At this time Arab tribes, or segments of tribes, from the mainland of Arabia or Southern Persia began to flock to the coast to establish trading, fishing, and pearl diving centers. The weakening of the Persian Empire under Shah Hussain in the eighteenth century accelerated the founding of separate commercial pearl diving posts, particularly along the eastern side of the Gulf.

The first to take advantage of this developing political situation were the Omani Arabs. Naval defeats by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century had taught them to build a strong navy that included vessels copied from the Portuguese caravels and rigged with square sails (Toussaint 1966, p. 140). After they ousted the Portuguese from Masqat, the Omanis extended their operation to East Africa, seizing Mombasa, Pemba, and Zanzibar, and pushed the Portuguese southward to Mozambique. Turning northeastward, they seized Bahrain from the Persians about 1717 and captured a number of islands off the Iranian coast about 1720. Under Nadir Shah (1737-44) the Persians recaptured Bahrain, only to lose it in 1783 to the Utub, who attacked the island from their new trading and pearl fishing base at Zubara. Meanwhile a new religious force, the Wahhabis from the Arabian mainland, assuming the character of a militant national movement, attacked Baghdad and Kuwait, captured Hasa, Qatif, Bahrain, and Buraimi, and threatened Oman itself. By 1803 the Wahhabis had established their supremacy over the Arabian coast of the inner Gulf, including the "Pirate Coast."⁴

In the second part of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth, the ancient practice of "piracy" became more systematic, threatening trade routes inside and sometimes outside the Gulf. Why "piracy" increased at this time is a question that requires systematic research. I suggest only that it was not simply guerrilla warfare at sea, as Berreby (1959, pp. 28-41) argues, caused by the Arab's loss of sea trade. To the contrary, one can argue that the opening of the Indian Ocean to European trade stimulated, at least initially, rather than destroyed local Arab trade. In the eighteenth century Arab trade was revived by the Omanis, who extended their operations to East Africa, Arabia, and parts of Iraq. It was only later in the nineteenth century,

when pearl fishing in the Gulf became an inviting economic enterprise, that Arab seafaring activities were seriously hit. "Piracy" increased as a result of two things: the weakening of the formal authority of Iran or, for that matter, any other local power with centrally controlled government; and the unprecedented increase in the volume of cargo exchanged between ports within and outside the Gulf.

In the eighteenth century Iran had to contend with several internal rebellions and wars with Russia and the Ottoman Empire, considerably weakening her influence in the Gulf. In those days Iran's stronghold of government centered on the northern plateau, and everything else, including the Gulf, was peripheral. When the plateau was strong and politically stable, it incorporated the peripheries around it; when it was weak, the peripheries assumed local, semiautonomous rule. Remember, Iran at this point in history had no strong naval power; its steep, arid shores had never sustained a stable maritime population of any consequence. Under Karim Khan Zand (1750-73), the naval power of Iran was manned and captained mainly by Arabs who lived on the Iranian shores of the Gulf (Landen 1967, p. 24; Abu-Bakima 1965, pp. 35-36, 78). Without naval power of its own, Iran seemed suitable as a noncompetitive ally to British imperial authorities in the Gulf, whose interests, operations, and policies were largely directed toward sea trade. Except for some brief intervals, Iran was Britain's constant ally in the Gulf; a strong Iran meant a stable and active market in the area.

The Gulf Arabs, on the other hand, were seafaring people and therefore at least potentially competitive with British interests. Only when the British were faced with both a troubled Iran and the newly emerging and aggressive Wahhabi movement did they ally themselves with the Bu Said dynasty of Oman in about 1793—an alliance that checked the advance of the Wahhabis into the inner Gulf and curtailed piracy, however slightly. The British fought only piracy against their own ships. A "pirate" who avoided British ships was considered an ally, like the Omani pirates and the notorious Rahmah bin Jabir al-Jalahima, who ravaged the Gulf for about a quarter of a century (Belgrave 1972, pp. 121-32).

At any rate, what was considered piracy was not clear. Under the pretense of fighting "piracy," British naval vessels destroyed numerous merchant ships sailing between Gulf ports. The pirates, moreover, always refrained from attacking the ships of allies who paid them a protection fee, a custom reminiscent of the fees exacted by Arab tribes from the

caravans that linked the Gulf or the Red Sea ports with the northern cities of Syria and Egypt. Defined in this way, piracy was a tribute the weak paid to the strong, a kind of business that flourished with trade.

The so-called pirates were mainly the strong Qawasim Arabs of Sharja and Ras al-Khaima, who had bases on both sides of the Gulf.⁵ They initially attacked native vessels who refused to pay the tribute, which they called enemy ships; those who paid the tribute were considered allies and were granted safe passage. Later on, in 1797, as they grew bold and experienced, they attacked two British vessels, the *Bassein* and the *Viper*, and in 1806 they captured the British East India Company's cruiser *Sylph* and attempted to capture the fourteen-gun brig *Nautilus*. In keeping with their traditions, the Qawasim simultaneously requested that the East India Company pay them tribute for safe navigation. Instead, the British India Company dispatched three naval expeditions, in 1806, 1809, and 1819, that sacked Ras al-Khaima, the Qawasim's last stronghold. In the last expedition the Qawasim boats were taken or burned and their forts were destroyed.

When "piracy" in the Gulf was stamped out, tribal autonomy in external affairs was likewise restrained. The custom of strong tribes' exacting protection fees from the enterprising weaker ones was checked. Immediately after the destruction of Ras al-Khaima, a "General Treaty of Peace" was drawn on 8 January 1820 whereby the tribal chiefs of the new "Trucial Coast" agreed to refrain from "plunder and piracy" at sea. To enforce the treaty, a British squadron was temporarily stationed at Ras al-Khaima; later it moved to Basidu on Qishim Island and established a naval base there. This marked the beginning of the Pax Britannica in the Gulf, or what the nationalists call the Gulfian peace.

It was a "beginning" in the full sense of the word. By failing to check intertribal conflict on land and sea, the treaty permitted continuing wars and consequent harassment of trade. Many a tribal chief who attacked enemy ships claimed it was an act of war (rather than an act of "plunder and piracy") and therefore not subject to British intervention. Intertribal wars continued with even greater ferocity, now accentuated by the rivalry over pearl fishing and territorial rights. In a new effort to restrict war between tribes or segments of tribes, which interfered with trade and pearl production, in 1835 the British authorities introduced a new treaty, the "Maritime Truce," whose terms prohibited

any form of hostility at sea, but not necessarily on land. This treaty, initially concluded for six months but renewed at various intervals until 1853, was difficult to keep; intertribal wars in the Gulf always involved sea maneuvers. In 1853 a new treaty, the "Treaty of Peace in Perpetuity," was drawn up. Any act of aggression at sea, according to the terms of this treaty, must be referred to the British authorities; the injured party should not itself retaliate. Bahrain was made party to this treaty in 1861.

Why should British authorities have involved themselves in the Gulf at all? I will discuss this very briefly before dealing with the rise of Al-Khalifa to power in Bahrain. By the middle of the nineteenth century a new economic order, born of the industrial revolution, gradually began to emerge in Europe. The old mercantile system, which in the East had flourished on the spice trade, gave way to a new industrial capitalism concerned mainly with markets and the supply of raw materials. European presence in the East was no longer restricted to traveling merchants; instead, colonists and planters settled down in sizable numbers, either personally administering large cash-crop plantations or providing incentives to raise these crops. Coffee, cocoa, cotton, tea, and rubber became the dominant crops of many countries in the East, Africa, and the New World. In Bahrain, pearl fishing became the main occupation of tribes or segments of tribes, enjoying an ever growing international market. The shift from a subsistence economy to cash crops created a worldwide demand for labor, which was initially met by the slave trade. After this trade was abolished in the first half of the nineteenth century, the demand was met by the "coolie" trade. Cheap labor was transferred from the subcontinent of India to South Africa, East Africa, Aden, Ceylon, Burma, and Malaya, and toward the end of the nineteenth century many workers were sent to West Indian and Pacific colonies.

Along with the settlement of European colonists in the East and the subjection of the entire Indian subcontinent to British rule came the need for more direct involvement in Eastern affairs. Diplomatic and administrative functions in the colonies east of Suez, previously in the hands of the East India Company, were transferred to the crown in 1858, first under the Bombay government and then, in 1873, under the government of India. By holding the entire subcontinent of India, the British were able to expand their trade to China and the Indonesian archipelago. Immediately after the Opium War with China in 1842, four ports (Amoy,

Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai) were opened to foreign trade; Hong Kong became a British colony. In 1851 Cape Town became the terminus of a regular line between the East and England. In the meantime, the volume of Eastern trade had increased tremendously, enhanced partly by steamships with steel boilers and partly by the spread of cotton production in the East. After the American Civil War and the subsequent shortage of cotton supplies from the New World, India and Egypt became the main suppliers of this commodity. The increasing volume of Eastern trade led to the rise of large navigation companies in Europe, which gradually put the "country" captain, navigating on his own, out of work.

The British control of sea traffic in the Indian Ocean and the partial dependence of industry upon Eastern markets and raw materials made it necessary for Great Britain to tighten her grip on political affairs and to indulge in local struggles for power. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which invited other European countries to take part in Eastern trade, simply deepened British involvement in the East. Britain's immediate reaction to the opening of the Suez Canal was to expand her influence in that direction. The British brought Egypt under control in 1882 and established themselves in Somaliland in 1884 and Sudan in 1898. In the Gulf, they became intolerant of intertribal wars and petty struggles for power, as is shown in the number of their treaties with the various tribal chiefs.

In 1869, the same year the Suez Canal was opened to international trade, the British directly intervened in Bahrain to end a family squabble between Al-Khalifa claimants, and, after some consultation with the prominent members of this family, they appointed Isa bin Ali ruler of Bahrain and its dependencies. Britain's involvement in local political affairs and her decision in 1820 to style herself policeman of the Gulf opened a new phase in the history of the area, altering the formal authority system. Whoever was granted the right to negotiate and sign a treaty with British imperial authorities was likewise accorded a "legitimate" right to the territory he, or his tribe, happened to occupy at that time. It was through this series of treaties concluded in the nineteenth century that the initial foundations of the small but sovereign states of the contemporary Gulf were laid.

The Rise of Al-Khalifa to Power in Bahrain

The ruling family of Al-Khalifa came to prominence in Bahrain in

1766, when they established Zubara on the Qatar Promontory as a center for their trading, seafaring, and pearl fishing operations.⁶ Zubara was founded at a time when British supremacy in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf was well established and when the regional power blocs were facing a variety of internal rebellions and external threats of war. Iran had to contend with the Afghani invasion and with a series of wars with Russia and the Ottoman Empire. The Wahhabi movement was still in its formative period, its operations confined mainly to central Arabia and to Najd and its vicinity. The pattern of formalized authority in the Gulf was such that when a superpower, an imperial organization, rose to dominance and held the periphery (in this case the Gulf) as a dependency, it forced the dependency to pay tribute but did not alter its inner structure. The tribal groups of the Gulf thus continued to exist, in one form or another, in spite of external imperial domination. When no superpower was dominant, each tribe or segment of tribe assumed independence and tried to expand its own territories at the expense of its neighbors.

The tribes who controlled the Gulf territories in the middle of the nineteenth century were the Bani Ka'b Arabs of Dawraq; the Arabs of Bandar Riq and Bushire on the Persian littoral; and the Qawasim, the Bani Khalid, and the Utub on the Arabian littoral. The Qawasim were in control of al-Sir, which was equivalent to the "Pirate Coast"--that is, the present United Arab Emirates; the Bani Khalid were in control of eastern Arabia, and the Utub were established in Kuwait and Qatar. The Utub in Kuwait and in Zubara (Qatar) were under the protection of Bani Khalid until 1777, when the latter crumbled under Wahhabi attacks. To be protected meant holding a weaker position, which was true of the Al-Sabah, the Utub of Kuwait, and Al-Khalifa, the Utub of Zubara, who were mainly merchant families of tribal origin.

The first historical account of the Utub was recorded in 1716 in Kuwait (Warden 1856, p. 140). The Al-Khalifa quote three chiefs--Faisal, Muhammad, and Khalifa, who lived in Kuwait before the family left for Zubara in 1766 under the leadership of Muhammad bin Khalifa. In his historical notes on the Utub, Francis Warden indicates that it was the growing importance of pearl production, and the trade associated with it, that prompted Al-Khalifa to move southward to Zubara (Warden 1856, pp. 362-63). Supporting this view is the fact that the departing faction of Al-Khalifa first sailed to Bahrain in search of a pearl fishing and trading base. When they were prevented from settling in Bahrain by

Al-Madhkur, who held the island as a dependency of Iran, they sailed to Zubara.

Within a very short time they transformed Zubara from a piece of wilderness into a flourishing town rich in trade and pearl fishing. Zubara lies at the foot of a deep bay on the western side of Qatar; its vicinity was relatively rich in pasture but poor in water, with the closest supply about five miles from the town. Immediately after their arrival, Al-Khalifa were able to pacify Al-Musallam, the rulers of Qatar, who were also under Bani Khalid protection. To enhance Zubara's defense, Al-Khalifa constructed Murair fort at the edge of the town, accessible by sea during high tide (al-Nabahani 1923, p. 121). A combination of factors--wars between Bani Khalid and the Wahhabis, the occupation of Basra by Iran (1775-79), and the relaxed policy of imports and exports, helped build Zubara into a strong commercial center, rivaling other ports in the area. As soon as Al-Khalifa established themselves firmly in Zubara, they were joined by many other Utub tribes from Kuwait, of whom the most eminent were Al-Jabir, better known later as Al-Jalahima and famous for their maritime skills.

Zubara's prominence in trade and pearl production under Al-Khalifa hegemony created irreconcilable conflicts within the Utub alliance and earned the enmity of other ports in the Gulf. The first group to secede from the alliance were Al-Jalahima, who, when denied a larger share of the revenues of the town, retreated in protest to Reveish, a short distance east of Zubara, and built a strong naval force there. Wary of the naval power of Al-Jalahima, Al-Khalifa attacked Reveish, sacked it and killed the Al-Jalahima chief in the process--making them the unchallenged leaders of the Utub in the Qatar area.

About 1775, while the Iranian troops under Karim Khan Zand were besieging Basra, the Arab tribes of Bushire, Bandar Riq, and Dawraq joined forces and attacked Zubara, only to be defeated by the united Al-Khalifa/ Al-Jalahima front. After the death of Karim Khan in 1779, which marked the end of Iran's imperial presence in the Gulf, the tribes on the Persian and the Arabian littorals engaged in a number of raids, attacks, and wars. Two attacks were launched by Nasr bin Madhkur of the Matarish Arabs of Oman against Zubara, held then by Al-Khalifa. Nasr was then governing Bahrain as a dependency of the Persian Empire. Defeating him twice, Al-Khalifa followed Nasr to Bahrain, occupied it, and drove him out to his original base in Bushire. They were led by

Ahmad bin Muhammad, who succeeded his brother Khalifa in 1782 when he died on his pilgrimage to Mecca. In their occupation of Bahrain, Al-Khalifa were assisted by many tribal groups originating in Qatar or the Gulf, the most notable being Al-Musallam of Huwaila, Al-BinAli of Furaihat, Al-Sudan of Dawha, Al-BiAinain of Wakrah, Kisbisa of Khur Hasan, Sulutah of Dawha, Manna^ca of Abu Shaluf, and Na^cim nomads from the interior. Later these tribal groups became an integral part of the tribal segment of Bahrain society, whom I will refer to as Al-Khalifa allies.

Although many tribal factions took part in the occupation of Bahrain, including the Utub of Kuwait, it was clear that Al-Khalifa had the leading role. After occupying the island, Ahmad, who earned the title of conqueror (*al-fatih*), retained Zubara as the base of operations and appointed a senior member of his family to supervise the affairs of the occupied territory. The Al-Khalifa resident ruler used the Diwan fort, constructed by Nadir Shah in the 1740s, as the seat of local government. Ahmad Al-Khalifa spent summers in Bahrain and continued to govern it from Zubara until his death in 1796. He was buried in the al-Hura district, then at the outskirts of Manama.

Except for the secession of Al-Jalahima from the Utub alliance, the reign of Ahmad was one of peace and tranquillity. Denied the shares they expected from their participation in the conquest of Bahrain, Al-Jalahima, now under the leadership of the four sons of Jabir, fled to Sharja and Bushire. Such mass emigration was an implicit declaration of war. The party concerned would soon assemble, build its forces, and attack the area it had left. Al-Jalahima assembled in Khur Hasan under the leadership of the notorious "pirate" Rahma bin Jabir, who carried a deep grudge against Al-Khalifa of Bahrain. From Khur Hasan and other parts of the Gulf he harassed Al-Khalifa boats at sea and conspired against their hold of the island until he was dramatically slain in 1826. The famous pilot Ahmad bin Salman Al-Khalifa had overtaken Rahma's vessel, and the defenders were falling one after the other. Rahma, blind by then, held his eight-year-old son in his arms and set fire to the powder magazine on his ship. Everyone was killed including Ahmad bin Salman, who had boarded the vessel.

The reign of Ahmad (1783-96) witnessed considerable growth in trade and pearl production. Most of the Indian cargo between Masqat and Basra, valued at "ten lacks of rupees per annum" (Lorimer 1970b, p. 841), passed

through Bahraini ports. This economic boom and political stability, however, did not last long. Between 1795 and 1869, Al-Khalifa had to face attacks, invasions, and wars and much internal strife and political dissent; some of their enemies were seeking conquest, others revenge. Surprisingly, they remained in control of the island, playing one enemy against the other, using the sword in some cases and diplomacy in others. The first to threaten Al-Khalifa were the Wahhabis, who captured al-Hasa in 1795 and from there began to descend upon Zubara. They besieged and occupied the town in 1796 after it was completely demolished by Salman bin Ahmad, who succeeded his father and became the chief of Al-Khalifa and their allies. After his defeat in Zubara, Salman and his followers retreated to Bahrain and settled in Jau on the east coast of the island. In about 1800 they left Jau for Muharraq and for Rifa (Wahba 1935, p. 108), where Salman built an impressive citadel still used by his descendants.

In 1799 the 'imam of Masqat attacked Bahrain on the pretense that Al-Khalifa were not paying him tribute for their passage through the Strait of Hormuz, then under his control. His attack was repulsed, but in 1800 he occupied the island and took twenty-five Al-Khalifa hostages to Masqat. To protect his newly occupied territory, the 'imam built a fort at Arad in Muharraq Island and appointed his son Salim an agent to manage the affairs of Bahrain. In 1801, after the Omani fleet left Bahrain, Al-Khalifa, who had retreated to Zubara, recaptured the island and drove the Omanis away. In 1802 the Omanis retaliated, but this time they were badly defeated at the hands of Al-Khalifa—supported by the Wahhabis, who were threatening Oman itself. Between 1803 and 1809, Bahrain fell under Wahhabi protection. In 1810 they appointed a resident agent to deal with Bahraini affairs.

Taking advantage of the Egyptian advance on the western frontier of Wahhabi territory, in 1811 Al-Khalifa, with the help of Al-Fadil, sought alliance with the 'imam of Masqat to regain their supremacy in Bahrain. They remained allies of Masqat, paying tribute to the 'imam until 1813, when the latter failed in his expedition against the Al-Qawasim of Ras al-Khaima, recently converted to Wahhabism. Encouraged by the 'imam's failure, Al-Khalifa declared themselves free of all previous commitments to Oman.

Meanwhile, the Qawasim were crushed by the three naval expeditions dispatched by British authorities to deal with "piracy," and the General

Treaty of Peace was subsequently concluded in 1820. Bahrain was made party to this treaty not because Al-Khalifa practiced piracy, but because they provided a marketplace for plundered goods. To contain piracy and slow down the Wahhabi advance in eastern Arabia, the British sought alliance with Oman and Iran, sometimes explicitly through treaties and sometimes confidentially through preferential treatment. According to an unauthorized agreement between a certain Captain W. Bruce, the British political resident in the Gulf, and Mirza Zaki Khan, the minister to the prince governor of Shiraz, the alliance with Oman gave the sultan a free hand in trade, war, and slavery and gave Iran a claim over Bahrain. Iran repeatedly invoked this claim until 1971, when Bahrain achieved independence. In the nineteenth century the threat to Bahrain came from Oman, not from Iran or the Wahhabis, who were temporarily pacified by the Egyptian invasion. The Omanis tried four times, in 1816, 1820, 1822, and 1828, to subdue Bahrain, but they were repeatedly repulsed. In their last expedition the Omani troops were smashed by Al-Khalifa, led then by Abdullah bin Ahmad, who was commanding the fleet and ruling at Muharraq Island, and by Khalifa bin Salman (Abdullah's nephew), who was commanding the cavalry and ruling at Manama Island. The sultan himself, suffering a wound in his foot, barely managed to escape from this battle.

The Omani invasion of 1828 was the last battle against foreign threats that Al-Khalifa had to fight on Bahrain soil. The General Treaty of Peace and the subsequent treaties concluded in 1861, 1880, and 1892 neutralized external forces threatening the island from all sources: France, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, Iran, the Wahhabis, the Omanis, and even dissident factions within Al-Khalifa in Bahrain.⁷ This series of treaties induced greater, and gradually more direct, British involvement in the internal affairs of Bahrain, reaching a climax in 1919 immediately after the First World War. The details of this involvement and its effect on the authority system are discussed in greater detail in chapter 5. Now I wish to consider the internal strife and dissent that took place between 1825 and 1869 after the external forces that threatened the island's security were neutralized.

The fall of Zubara in 1796 and the subsequent departure of Al-Khalifa to Bahrain marked the beginning of a new era in the island. Little information is available on Ahmad's reign in Bahrain before the fall of Zubara, but it is likely that he held it the same way Nasr bin Madkhur did—as occupied territory, exacting as much tribute and taxes

as possible. It is doubtful that Ahmad ever interfered in the organization of Bahrain society as successive rulers of Al-Khalifa did. Confiscation of land and property and the destruction of the loci of local power, which were in Shi^ca hands, must have taken place after Salman bin Ahmad and his followers settled at Manama Island, and Abdullah, Salman's brother, settled at Muharraq Island. Even this confiscation of property and breaking up of power came over a long stretch of time beginning with the early nineteenth century and ending in the early 1930s, when the cadastral survey of Bahrain and the allocation of property to private landholders were completed. Al-Khalifa consolidated their authority in Bahrain by holding it as feudal estates. They collected rents from palm groves, fish traps, ports, and shops and imposed pearl fishing and poll taxes, especially on the Shi^ca population. This is discussed in detail in the next chapter, on tribal rule and economy. What must be stressed at this point is that Al-Khalifa rule of Bahrain brought in two corollary processes--a strong Sunni Arab tribal presence and, subsequently, the alienation of the native Shi^ca population from tribal rule.

Documentation on the internal structure, organization, and administration of Bahrain society before the Al-Khalifa conquest is lacking. We know, however, that it was held as a dependency of Iran but ruled directly by Al-Madhkur, a Sunni tribe of Arab Omani origin, who lived in Bushire and controlled Bahrain from there, maintaining a symbolic presence on the island. It is certain that they were collecting taxes and tithes, part of which they were paying over to the Iranian authorities. How and by whom these taxes and tithes were collected, to whom were they paid, who paid them, how law was administered and order enforced, what government structure was in effect--these questions and others are left unanswered.

The Shi^ca make a religious interpretation of some of these puzzling questions. They say that Bahrain had three hundred villages and thirty cities and towns before the Al-Khalifa conquest, each ruled by a jurist who was well versed in Shi^ca law. These three hundred and thirty jurists were organized into a hierarchy headed by a council of three, elected by an assembly of thirty-three who, in turn, were acclaimed to power by the jurists of the whole country. Land and property were held individually according to the Islamic law of '*ihya*' (usufruct), which literally means "bringing back to life." According to this law, whoever cultivates or continues to cultivate a plot of land earns the right of its usage--a

right he passes on to his children. All land in Islam is *rahmaniyah*, meaning it belongs to God; man has only the right to cultivate and pasture. If a plot is left fallow for some time, it becomes *rahmaniyah* and liable to reallocation. Allocation or reallocation of this type of land was controlled by the religious courts who received tithes.

It is very difficult to either substantiate or refute historically the Shi^Ca conception of Bahrain society before the Al-Khalifa conquest. But it is hard to believe that such a neat, stable organization could have existed in the islands of Bahrain, repeatedly occupied by various conquest tribes or empires. The number of villages, estimated at three hundred, and the number of cities and towns, estimated at thirty, may be more of a mental construct, a reflection of the "magic" number three, than a historical and sociological reality. A comprehensive survey of land tenure counted only fifty-two village settlements composing seventy-three nuclear villages, of which eight had long ago been deserted and left in ruins. If there had been three hundred and thirty villages, towns, and cities in Bahrain before the Al-Khalifa conquest, historical records, which by the eighteenth century were rather accurate, would surely have mentioned them. Additionally, the hierarchical administration the Shi^Ca speak of does not seem to have, or to ever have had, any parallel anywhere in the Shi^Ca world and accordingly must be dealt with as an index of conceived, idealized reality.

This idealized Shi^Ca conception of Bahrain society before the Al-Khalifa conquest might very well be a mythical reaction to their physical and social agonies during and after the conquest. The Al-Khalifa conquest brought with it a strong presence of Sunni Arab tribes who, while contributing to Arabize the island, intensified struggles for power between Al-Khalifa claimants and between them and their tribal allies. Interfactional wars between Al-Khalifa claimants did more damage to Bahrain society and economy than did the invasions of their enemies. Among the groups who stood to suffer most were the Shi^Ca, who lived both in villages and in cities. As soon as they were relieved of external threats of war in 1828, the ruling family of Al-Khalifa embarked on a series of devastating interfactional conflicts that continually wracked the island until 1869.

Al-Khalifa began to divide into two opposed factions immediately after their departure from Zubara and their settlement in Bahrain, with Salman bin Ahmad and his followers settling at Manama Island and his

brother Abdullah settling at Muharraq Island. At that time the two islands were separated by a narrow inlet that hindered communication. Gradually Abdullah came to rule almost independently in Muharraq and Salman in Manama, each retaining a separate tribal administration. This duality of the ruling regime, "corulership" as Goody (1966, p. 5) calls it, deepened the rift between Al-Abdullah and Al-Salman and eventually created an unworkable arrangement. The conflict between them was heightened in 1834 after the death of Khalifa bin Salman, who succeeded his father in 1826. On the death of Khalifa, his uncle Abdullah, who by now had crowned his rule of Muharraq by successful raids against the Wahhabis in Qatif and Uqair, became sole ruler of Bahrain. The rulers of Bahrain at this time had claims over many ports and forts between Dammam and Qatar on the mainland. In 1835 Abdullah bin Ahmad had to contend with a rebellion in Qatar engineered by one of his sons, supported by Isa bin Tarif, chief of the Huwaila tribes then composed of Al-BinAli and Al-BuAinain. Abdullah ruthlessly crushed the rebellion in Qatar, but he lost the support of Al-BinAli and Al-BuAinain, who promptly seceded from the Utub alliance. Likewise, in 1842 he entered into an open conflict with Muhammad bin Khalifa, then ruling in Manama after his father's death in 1835.

Meanwhile, Abdullah's sons were taking advantage of their father's old age, feuds, raids, and wars to engage in oppressive extortion from merchants, traders, pearl dealers, cultivators, and even British subjects. Abdullah's appeasement of the Egyptian troops who occupied al-Hasa (1838-40) earned him the enmity of the British authorities in the Gulf. The raids, feuds, and petty wars he conducted brought nothing but chaos to Bahrain society. Between 1835 and 1843, for example, Bahraini trade declined to half what it was in earlier years. Additionally, tribal wars in Bahrain were such that Al-Khalifa were incapable of organizing military action without recruiting *badu* fighters from the mainland. These fighters were attracted to the war by the chance for loot and spoils. They knew that once the war was over the ruling family would have to reimpose its authority and again control the available resources. The continuous feuds and wars during the later part of Abdullah's reign exposed the population of Bahrain, particularly the Shi^Ca, to all kinds of extortion and plunder, forcing many to emigrate to other ports and cities of the Gulf, notably to Muhammarah (Khurramshah) in Iran.

Upon his defeat, Muhammad bin Khalifa (Abdullah's brother's son's son) left Bahrain for Riyad to seek assistance from the Wahhabis, who seem to have always exploited internal friction to force their conquest. With Wahhabi support, Muhammad established himself at Murair fort in Zubara, where he was joined by Isa bin Tarif Al-BinAli and Bishr bin Rahma Al-Jalahima, who had retreated to Qais Island after their defeat in the Qatar rebellion. With Ali bin Khalifa, Muhammad's brother, who was operating from Manama, they attacked Bahrain and defeated Abdullah and his sons in Muharraaq. After his defeat Abdullah retreated to Dammam fort, held by his son Mubarak, and began to harass Bahraini boats from there. To regain his position in Bahrain, he tried to ally himself with various chiefs of the Trucial Coast and Iran, but his attempts did not bear fruit because of British intervention and mediation and the Wahhabi capture of Dammam in 1844.

The fall of Dammam forced Abdullah and his sons to settle in Naband on the Iraqi coast. After the British laid siege to this port when some "piratical" actions were committed from it, Abdullah retreated to Qatif. From Qatif in 1845, he organized an unsuccessful military expedition against Bahrain, and upon his defeat he retreated to Kuwait and then to Tarut Island opposite Dammam. In 1846, while he was preparing another military expedition against Bahrain--this time in alliance with Isa bin Tarif Al-BinAli and with the implicit support of the ruler of Kuwait--Muhammad bin Khalifa attacked them at Fuwairat in Qatar, slew bin Tarif, and forced his granduncle to seek refuge in Masqat, where he died in 1849. This scenario of tribal wars between 1842 and 1846 left Al-Salman branch of Al-Khalifa in complete control of Bahrain, which has continued until the present day.

Al-Salman control of Bahrain, however, was not left unchallenged. Various claims to the island were advanced by the Wahhabis, the Turks, and the Iranians. Muhammad bin Khalifa tried to balance the Turkish and the Iranian claims by pretending to side with both at the same time. It is said he possessed both Turkish and Iranian flags and hoisted either one to appease whoever approached him first. While trying to balance Turkish and Iranian claims, he took more decisive measures against the Wahhabis, who were forcing their conquest through the sons of Abdullah. He blockaded the Wahhabi coast at Qatif and Dammam, refusing to cease even after the British confidentially offered to guarantee the security of Bahrain.

Wanting to keep Bahrain under their control without being officially responsible for it, the British used diplomacy to neutralize Turkish and Iranian claims and military muscle to bring Muhammad bin Khalifa back into line. They besieged his war fleet in Bahrain, captured two war vessels, *Tawila* and *Hamarah*, and forced him to call off the blockade. British intervention ended in the treaty of 1861, in which the ruler of Bahrain pledged himself to abstain from "the prosecution of war, piracy and slavery at sea" in return for British protection.⁸ By signing this treaty Bahrain became party to the Perpetual Treaty of Peace concluded earlier with the chiefs of the Trucial Coast. The conclusion of this treaty was followed by British bombardment of Dammam, with the object of forcing the Wahhabis to withdraw their support from Muhammad bin Abdullah, now the claimant to the principality of Bahrain against his cousin Muhammad bin Khalifa. Consequently Muhammad bin Abdullah, with several of his brothers, left Dammam for Qais Island.

In 1867 trouble again erupted in Qatar with a mutiny in Wakrah and Dawha against Bahrain's resident ruler, Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Khalifa, for having seized a badu emissary deported to Bahrain. The mutiny was quelled by removing Ahmad to Khur Hasan and inviting Jasim bin Muhammad Al-Thani, one of the chiefs of Al-Thani in Dawha, to Bahrain to negotiate a more lasting arrangement for the administration of Qatar. Upon his arrival, Jasim was put in prison. Apparently Muhammad bin Khalifa's reconciliatory policy was meant only to gain time to prepare for the attack on Qatar. In October 1867, in alliance with the chief of Abu Dhabi, Muhammad bin Khalifa ruthlessly sacked Wakrah and Dawha. The victims of the invasion appealed to the Wahhabis for redress--an appeal that produced a few scattered naval skirmishes against Bahraini boats but did not threaten Al-Khalifa's hold on the island.

Considering the invasion of Qatar a clear violation of the terms of the Perpetual Treaty of Peace, in September 1868 the British dispatched three warships, under Colonel Pelly's command, to deal with the unruly shaikh of Bahrain. To escape the British expedition Muhammad bin Khalifa fled to Qatar, leaving Bahrain in the hands of his brother Ali, who was ruling in Manama. Ali submitted to British demands, which included the transfer of Bahraini war vessels to the British navy and the payment of \$100,000 (in Maria Theresa dollars) as a fine to be distributed to the injured parties in the Qatar invasion. The British then burned the Al-Khalifa war fleet and destroyed the fort of Abu-Mahir in

Muharraq. Now ruler of Bahrain, Shaikh Ali successfully negotiated with the British to allow his brother Muhammad to return to Bahrain. Upon his return Muhammad indulged in what the British official sources called "a course of intrigues" (Lorimer 1970b, p. 897) and consequently was deported to Kuwait. From Kuwait he moved to Qatif and, with the help of Nasir bin Mubarak bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, organized a badu war party, mainly from Bani Hajar, and descended upon Bahrain. There they were joined by Muhammad bin Abdullah, who was ruling in Rifa town under Shaikh Ali's regime. A ferocious battle ensued in which Ali and his brother Ibrahim were killed; shortly afterward, Muhammad bin Abdullah gained ascendancy and established himself in Muharraq, leaving Manama to be pillaged by his badu recruits.

His reign, however, lasted only two months. In November 1869 the British navy, again under Colonel Pelly's command, intervened and in a few days destroyed the rebels' strongholds at Muharraq and Manama. Nasir bin Mubarak managed to escape, but Muhammad bin Khalifa, Muhammad bin Abdullah, Nasir bin Ahmad, and two other ringleaders were captured and exiled to Bombay. The last two Al-Khalifa shaikhs died in exile, and Muhammad bin Khalifa was transferred to Aden in 1877 and released in 1880. He then left for Mecca, where he lived until his death in 1890. In 1869 Isa bin Ali was brought in from Qatar and, with Al-Khalifa consent, was made ruler of Bahrain Islands, a position he retained until he abdicated in 1923. Members of the Abdullah branch of Al-Khalifa were never again allowed to set foot in Bahrain. Today some of them live in AinDar of the al-Hasa province of Saudi Arabia, some in Qatar, and some in Kuwait; only one nuclear family lives in Bahrain.

This drastic British move, which aroused much protest from Turkey and Iran, coincided with the opening of the Suez Canal. From here on, Bahraini foreign relations and defense fell entirely into British hands. The rulers of Bahrain were denied the right to own a war fleet or to lease territory to foreign powers for diplomatic or commercial purposes without British approval.⁹ They were even denied the right to assume jurisdiction over foreigners, including mainland Arabs, Iranians, Ottomans, and Europeans, who collectively amounted to a large segment of the population.¹⁰ This problem, and its effect on the emerging authority system, is discussed at some length in chapters 5 and 6 on the rise of bureaucracy and the institution of specialized offices. Before taking it up I must discuss the baseline of change, tribal rule and economy,

which were particularly well represented in Isa bin Ali's reign (1869-23), though they existed long before that. His reign is one of the best models for this type of rule and economy in the Gulf.

3 Tribal Rule and Economy: The Councils

By 1869, once external threats of war were neutralized and internal strife somewhat contained, Bahrain began to enjoy a stabilized form of tribal rule, closer in form and content to a feudal estate system than to a lineage structure. Acephaly, segmentation, lack of hierarchy, and balance of opposition, the basic qualities of a lineage system, are more applicable to a *badu* (nomadic) camping unit that subsists by herding camels and sheep than to a *hadar* (sedentary), heterogeneous society like Bahrain, with a long tradition of cultivation, craftsmanship, pearling, trading, and seafaring.

To understand political authority in Bahrain in this feudal type of setting we must study the tribal councils (*majalis*) and religious courts (*al-qada' al-shar'ī*), which signified the autonomy of various tribal and religious groups. It is very difficult to fit these councils and courts into a hierarchy or a pyramidlike bureaucracy, linking lower offices with higher ones through a graded system of authority. The authority they exercised was derived primarily from the power each group wielded in society through the economic resources it controlled. To use Weber's phrase, it was a "traditional authority" built into a "patrimonial administration" (Weber 1947, pp. 351-54). Isa bin Ali's council, which represented Al-Khalifa power, ranked supreme in the country. Through it he controlled the distribution of palm tree estates and pearl diving rights, the management of the ports, the collection of a variety of taxes, and the recruitment of forced labor. Public crime was referred to him only when local councils and courts had failed to resolve the conflict. His interference, however, was voluntary, not mandatory, a form of mediation that carried with it the threat to use force if necessary.

The word *majlis* can refer to a spacious room in the house used to
35 receive guests or to hold formal or informal meetings, and also to the

group of men or consultants who confer at these meetings. Its social and political significance, however, has varied with the status of the head of the household and his power in society. The councils of Isa bin Ali and of other Al-Khalifa chiefs or their allies were meeting places for lobbying and decision-making. In these meetings, held at specific times of day, tribal chiefs took counsel with close relatives, consultants, intimates, supporters, or guests. They discussed a wide variety of subjects: tribal history, religion, law and justice, treaties with foreign powers, marriages that might have political significance, boat construction, pearl production, palm cultivation, date crops, trade, markets, prices, wages, weather, and any news items of the day. Conflicts were resolved in private with the parties concerned; only intimates were consulted on controversial issues. Private matters were decided upon in confidence with tribal chiefs in a specialized room, often adjacent to the majlis, built for this purpose. Decisions were proclaimed officially by the ruler, called *shuyukh* (the plural of shaikh), or whoever represented him in the country. These decisions were arrived at, however, after intensive negotiations with the parties concerned and consultations with intimates and some learned men in society.

Al-Khalifa's authority was diffusely shared with many tribes or segments of tribes, each according to its capacity and power. This diffuse authority can be assessed by discussing how economic resources and public services were controlled and administered. The tribal councils, where decisions were made, were more concerned with the management of resources than with social and personal affairs; the latter were left to religiously trained jurists. Social groups were left free to operate independently as long as this freedom did not impinge upon the maximal exploitation of resources. Logically, then, the tight control maintained over the Shi^a, as opposed to the relaxed measures of the tribal Sunni, was a product of Shi^a engagement in palm cultivation and Sunni engagement in pearling. To maximize the returns from palm cultivation, gardens were divided into several estates, each managed by an Al-Khalifa shaikh. By contrast, the returns of pearl production were maximized by granting pearling enterprisers (the tribes) considerable freedom of operation. Before the development of oil, palm cultivation, fishing, and pearl production constituted the backbone of the Bahraini economy; pearls provided cash, and fish, dates, and rice were the staples.

Palm Cultivation and the Management of the Estates

To explain the sociology of date production, it is necessary to begin with a detailed description of the technology of palm cultivation. Only one-twelfth of Bahrain land is cultivable, and only one-twentieth is actually cultivated. The cultivated part is along the coast, stretching from the northern shores to the northeast, the area that contains the water.¹ The cultivated land comprises twelve types of plots: *jubar*, *satr*, *^cikra*, *sirma*, *daliyah*, *dulab*, *nakhl*, *rafd*, *barriyah*, *zira^ca*, *maz^can*, and *barr*. The relative frequency of each is shown in table 1, according to the classification of the cadastral survey taken in the twenties and continually updated until the present.

Table 1
Frequency of Land Types

Types	Number of Plots	Percentage
Jubar, satr, and ^c ikra	1,211	12.0%
Sirma	1,234	12.2
Daliyah	1,254	12.4
Dulab	514	5.1
Nakhl	3,349	33.0
Rafd and barriyah	180	1.8
Zira ^c a	187	1.8
Maz ^c an	489	4.8
Barr or 'ard	1,709	16.9
Total	10,127	100.0

The first three types of plots are odd shapes of various sizes, with little agricultural value. They are units of property that interpenetrate a more standardized pattern of land divisions. The first two, for example, are very narrow strips of land along an irrigation ditch, or between two plots. A *^cikra* is almost always a very small piece of land, so small that it is left uncultivated in the middle of somebody else's property. A *sirma*, sometimes called *qit^ca*, is usually a small palm grove between 9 and 15 meters wide and between 15 and 30 meters long. It is often near the village and thus is used for raising vegetables and green spices for the household. A *daliyah* is also a palm grove, but it tends

to be square and larger than a *siṛma*. The length of its sides varies between 18 and 30 meters. It is called *daliyah* after *dalū*, the pail used for carrying water from a stream. A *dulab* (wheel) is a relatively large palm grove; its width varies from 30 to 60 meters and its length from 60 to 122 meters. It is called *dulab* because it is irrigated by wheels once turned by oxen.

Nakhla (palm trees), the most frequent type, constituting about one-third of the total cultivated lots (see table 1), vary tremendously in shape and size. Shapes are square, rectangular, circular, semicircular, and rhomboid. Size varies from about 60 to 153 meters in width to about 300 to 1,524 meters in length or diameter, considerably larger than any of the types mentioned above. Palm groves of the *nakhla* type are irrigated through deep, wide ditches that carry water from the closest fresh-water springs. The most famous of these springs was Adhari, southeast of Manama near al-Khamis.² Each palm grove is given a proper name that expresses its size or location, the religious affiliation or family origin of the owner, its method of irrigation, or the type of palm trees it contains. Or it may carry the name of a famous religious shrine, place, event, or Islamic hero or have a descriptive name connoting beauty, vastness, prolificity, or some other quality of man or nature. Unlike fish traps, whose names sometimes connote sexual activity of a sort, the names of palm groves are almost always efficacious.

Rafd is a small cultivated but unirrigated plot higher than the water table around it. Palm trees grown on this type of land, which are called *jalha*, are normally planted in deep pits close to the water beds and raised year after year till they reach the surface of the ground. Palm trees grown here take longer to bear fruit, but once they mature they do not need irrigation. Like *rafd*, *barriyah* land is not irrigated, but it is vast in area and its palm trees are more scattered. *Zira^ca* refers to land used for raising vegetables or fodder; such a plot is about 183 meters wide by 183 or 213 meters long. Sometimes small palm trees are grown on this type of land, and when they mature they are called *nakhla*. The last two types of plots are always left uncultivated; *maz^can* is used as a summer resort, and *barr* for the construction of houses.

Although some vegetables and fodder were grown in Bahrain before the development of oil, the great bulk of cultivation was confined to palm trees, and dates constituted one of the basics of the Bahraini diet.

With the development of oil and changing dietary habits, dates have lost their value, and palm cultivation has declined. (The details will be discussed in chapter 7, on oil and the socioeconomic transformation.) There are at least twenty-three varieties of dates, which mature at roughly two-week intervals from May to October. They vary in shape, color, taste, and usability. Some are eaten fresh, such as *mubashur*, *khilas*, *kilali*, and *farra'*; others are used as dried dates (*tamr*), such as *raziz*, *marzaban*, and *khinaizi*. The last two are often boiled and made into molasses for use in cooking and in bread. Some, such as *hasib*, *salm*, and *naghil*, are slightly bitter and are often used for animal feed. Colors range from shades of yellowish brown to shades of reddish brown. The Bahrainis recognize many stages of growth and ripeness. The date fruit is called *tali*^c when it is in flower, *habambu* when the fruit appears, *khalal* when green, *bishr* when it begins to ripen, becoming yellow or red, *rutab* when fresh and slightly sweet in taste, *tamr* when dried for storage.

The culture of the palm tree in Bahrain is as elaborate as the culture of the camel among the pastoral nomads in central Arabia. It is only an emphasis on the exotic that has made Arabs in general known particularly for camel breeding. The Arabs of Bahrain, like others in the Gulf, live off the sea and the palm tree, not off the camel. Palm tree branches (*si^cf*) are used to build dwellings. Leafless branches (*qidhf*) are used for making beds, roofs, or fish traps. Bunches of palm (*idq*^c) are used for sweeping, the flowers and buds for medicine, and the leaves for matting and basket-making. The inner, soft part of the tree is eaten as food; the kernels are used as animal feed. A whole variety of dishes are prepared with dates or syrup. Many songs, stories, legends, and proverbs are composed about the palm tree. Even human beings are sometimes classified according to the various types of dates; a pretty girl is *khilas*, which is often eaten fresh, and a thickheaded person is *naghil*, which is slightly bitter in taste.

Palm tree cultivation requires considerable intensity of labor. Trees are planted, not sown. Every year or so, there grow at the bottom of the trunk from one to four sprouts (*fasil*) that must be removed by a delicate and tedious operation without damaging the inner, soft part of the tree. Should this part be damaged, the tree will dry up and die. Should the sprout be pulled out without its tiny roots, it will bud again but never grow if replanted. The sprouts are planted in pits that vary

in depth depending upon size. Small sprouts require shallow pits about 45 centimeters deep; big ones need pits about 152 centimeters deep. A mature tree needs an area of about 25 square meters, and so a plot 150 by 150 meters can accommodate 800 to 1,000 trees. It takes about seven years of care and cultivation before a palm tree bears fruit. A mature tree yields between 136 and 272 kilograms a year. Every year a palm tree must be pruned once and the bark that grows around the trunk removed; otherwise insects find shelter there and eventually damage the tree. The soil must be plowed or dug twice a year, and the weeds must be continually uprooted. A palm grove is irrigated once a week, and the ditches are cleaned once a year. Rain and irrigation fill the ditches with silt that must be removed so the water flows freely. Flowers must be fertilized by a male tree planted in the middle of the palm grove. Before the fruits ripen, they are picked daily, one by one, usually by children, then are dried or are boiled for molasses by women. Dates are packed in big baskets (*quillat* or *jilf*) made of palm leaves for storage or export.³

Palm cultivation is a full-time, year-round job for all members of the family—children, adult men, and women. In Bahrain the cultivators were the Shi^ca, who claim to be the original inhabitants of the island and thus the owners of the land and palm groves. Every palm grove that carries a separate name was once a unit of property, as was well recognized in the cadastral survey of the twenties. It was on this basis that individual groves were allocated to private holders. To assess the patterns of ownership that existed in Bahrain before the Al-Khalifa conquest is very difficult. Shi^ca religious authorities believe that the Islamic law of '*ihya*' (Usufruct), as outlined in chapter 2, was followed. I saw two documents of '*ihya*' issued by Shi^ca religious authorities in the 1920s, the same time that the cadastral survey was carried out. The timing of these documents obviously arouses suspicion about their validity as indexes of the land tenure system before the Al-Khalifa conquest. For lack of documentary data to the contrary, these documents suggest either that the Shi^ca courts were attempting to challenge the rulings of the cadastral survey, which took into account the de facto administration of land, thus favoring the ruling family, or that, having lost their land, the Shi^ca religiously idealized the system of government before the Al-Khalifa conquest.

The Management of the Estates

When they first invaded Bahrain, Al-Khalifa obviously did not own land there; it was only gradually that titles of landownership were transferred to them. Oral tradition says they initially confiscated the land of those who opposed them and granted land to those who supported them. A number of Shi^ca merchants who did not oppose the Al-Khalifa conquest were permitted to retain their property; the most outstanding examples were Al-Jishshi of Bilad al-Qadim and Husain al-Maqabi of Maqaba. However, as their political grip on the country tightened, the cultivated land Al-Khalifa directly "administered" expanded. They imposed a poll tax (*rqabiyyah*) and a water tax (*dawb*), especially on cultivators who worked their own land. If a cultivator failed to pay these two taxes, his property was confiscated and consequently added to the "estate" land administered directly. The estates were held collectively by the regime but were individually bestowed upon Al-Khalifa shaikhs as "benefices" for management. Within each estate there were two types of property titles--those directly administered by Al-Khalifa shaikhs, which were farmed out to cultivators as "fiefs," and those cultivated by private landholders, which were taxed. In this sense Al-Khalifa shaikhs were simultaneously rulers and landlords; rulers in the sense of collecting taxes, settling disputes, and holding court, and landlords in the sense of administering that part of the estate that they claimed as theirs. The plots administered directly as fiefs were converted into titles of private ownership according to the administration reforms of the twenties. Other plots were registered in the name of whoever happened to claim them. The variation of patterns of ownership by social categories and types of plots is indicated in table 2. The details are discussed in chapter 5, on the rise of bureaucracy.

According to the cadastral survey of the twenties Bahrain had 10,127 plots, divided into several land types, excluding houses or other construction. Many plots of various types and sizes may be owned by the same person, and so the number of plots in the country does not correspond to the number of landholders. During Isa bin Ali's reign these plots were divided into several estates (*muqata^cat*), ruled and administered by Al-Khalifa shaikhs who, toward the end of Isa's regime, were mostly brothers and sons. The administrators and rulers of particular estates are not accurately known, first for lack of documents and second because they were a controversial issue among Al-Khalifa themselves--

Table 2
Ownership of Land Types

Land Types	Patterns of Ownership							Total Number of Plots	
	Al-Khalifa	Sunni Waqf	Shi'a Waqf	Government Land	Dhurriyah Waqfa	Warathat Property ^b	Private Property	Others	Total
Jubar, satr, and Cakra	11.6%	0.7%	33.6%	0.7%	0.3%	3.9%	48.6%	0.6%	100%
Sitma	7.3	0.7	17.9	0.5	0.6	1.9	70.3	0.8	100
Daliyah	4.8	2.2	19.2	1.4	0.6	3.5	67.4	0.9	100
Dulab	7.0	0	12.0	0.8	0.5	4.9	74.1	0.7	100
Nakhl	23.0	1.3	9.0	1.0	0.4	3.8	61.0	0.5	100
Rafd and barriyah	26.0	0	1.7	0	0	17.0	55.3	0	100
Zira ^c	11.8	0	8.0	1.6	0.5	2.7	75.4	0	100
Maz'an	8.8	1.4	2.7	2.5	0.2	1.0	82.6	0.8	100
Barr or 'ard	9.9	0	7.0	14.7	0.3	2.2	64.7	1.2	100
									1,709

^aAny property a person pledges for the use of his progeny (*dhurriyah*). It cannot be alienated by succeeding generations unless it is specified to the contrary.

^bProperty held collectively by a body of heirs.

"controversial" because it was on the basis of these claims of "administration" that claims of ownership were made later on in the twenties. Oral tradition indicates, however, that the shuyukh himself administered the estates of Muharraq, Sanabis, al-Hidd, al-Dair, al-Hajar, al-Qadam and Tubli in addition to the cities of Manama and Muharraq. His son Abdullah ruled in Jidd Hafs and Buri; Hamad in Bilad al-Qadim and Karrana; Muhammad in Karmabad, al-Qal^a, Jidd Ali, Ghraifa, and Jufair. His grandson Salman bin Hamad ruled in Diraz, Bani Jamra, and al-Kuraiyah, and Khalifa bin Salman ruled in al-Zinj. His brother Khalid bin Ali ruled in Sitra and Nabi Salih islands. His nephew Ali bin Ahmad bin Ali ruled in Sihla al-Fawqiyah and in Mani or Salihiyah, and Ibrahim bin Khalid ruled in Jabalat Habshi. Other somewhat distant relations ruled in the rest of the country. Ali and Khalifa, the sons of Muhammad bin Khalifa, ruled in Arad, Ali, Salambad, and Dar Chulaib, and in al-Shakhura, respectively, Humud bin Sabah ruled in al-Kawara and Jardab and his brother Jabir in al-Hujair. Figure 1 shows the genealogical links

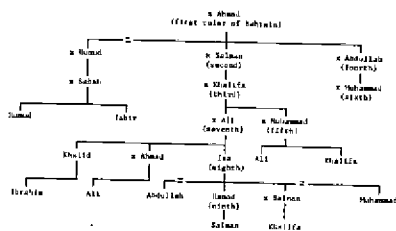


Fig. 1. Al-Khalifa feudal shaikhs toward the end of the nineteenth century: x = dead at the time others were ruling; — = —, stepbrothers with different mothers.

between Al-Khalifa shaikhs who ruled and administered the various estates of Bahrain at the turn of the nineteenth century. Al-Ghatam, who were—and still are—staunch allies of Al-Khalifa, ruled in al-Ikur, Ma^camir, and Farisiyah. About this time, many of the estates ruled and administered by distant relatives or allies were transferred to sons and grandsons.

These estates were neither standardized in size nor fixed in number. They shrank and expanded depending upon the shaikh's power and influence. In principle titles were hereditary; in practice they shifted from one shaikh to another, always favoring the ruler's brothers, sons, and grandsons. Within this category, the sons born to the ruler from the first

Al-Khalifa mother have always been favored over other sons or grandsons. As relations move away from the ruler's line of descent, they lose power, and therefore privileges and rights--a principle followed in the distribution of estates in the past as well as in the distribution of allowances and government posts in Bahrain today (see chaps. 5 and 6). This tendency has become clearly visible with the adoption of primogeniture as a rule of succession. It was customary among Al-Khalifa, as it has been among other tribal groups in Arabia, that the right to govern is earned--that is, it belongs to the strong man, with no reference to clearly fixed rules of succession. However, in their efforts to induce stability of rule in Bahrain after the continual disturbances between Al-Khalifa claimants, the British encouraged in 1835, and guaranteed in 1869, the succession of the eldest son, which had considerable impact on the management of the estates and the control of resources.

The ruler of Bahrain granted the estates as "benefices" (Weber 1947, p. 63) to Al-Khalifa shaikhs without giving them the authority of inheritance. In other words, if the ruling tribal landlord of an estate dies, his children have no right to the estate. The ruler reallocates the estate to another landlord, depending upon the rising power balance. When the ruler himself dies and is succeeded by another, there is considerable reshuffling in the allocation of the estates. Given succession of the eldest son, the management of the estates would have to be continuously transferred from the brothers and sons of previous rulers to the brothers and sons of successors.

When Isa bin Ali took over government in Bahrain in 1869, he was only twenty-one (Rumaihi 1973, p. 12); his brothers Khalid and Ahmad and his cousins, the sons of Muhammad bin Khalifa, had a considerable share in the management of the estates. When his sons grew up they usurped many of these estates, with their father's help, and administered them to their advantage. The protests and rebellions of Ali bin Ahmad in 1898 and of Khalifa bin Muhammad in 1911 were directed mostly against the ruler whom they accused of having confiscated their property. (For exact genealogical links, see fig. 1.) Their protests and appeals to British and Ottoman authorities against their uncle, then ruler of Bahrain, went unnoticed.⁴ After the enforcement of primogeniture, conflict among Al-Khalifa claimants shifted from brothers, where the dispute lay until 1835 to uncles and nephews, where it seems to have continued until the present.

Given the limited economy of Bahrain and the organization of tribal government, a ruling shuyukh either controlled the resources through his brothers and sons or faced the inevitability of losing office. In the absence of a bureaucracy and hierarchy of office, the ruler had to rely upon elementary social relationships to control resources and the power bases associated with them. The allocation of authority to brothers and sons assured the regime, at least temporarily, of continuous support built upon family loyalties and parental dominance. I say "temporarily" because there have been many instances of rebellion, as we have seen in chapter 2, between fathers and sons, brothers and brothers. This generalization is only a tendency and need not explain every rebellion against the regime in power.

Also, I have deliberately chosen the word "parental" instead of paternal to emphasize the role of the mother. It is often the brothers born to the same mother who seem to share power and authority--particularly if the mother herself belongs to the ruling family. Isa bin Ali and his brothers Khalid and Ahmad, who took part in the administration of Bahrain in the early part of Isa's reign, were born to Ali of the same Al-Khalifa mother. Hamad and Abdullah, the two forceful and sometimes discordant figures in the administration of Bahrain toward the end of Isa's reign, were born to Isa of different Al-Khalifa mothers. Hamad's mother was the daughter of Muhammad bin Salman, son of Ahmad the Conqueror, the first ruler of Bahrain, and Abdullah's mother Aisha, who was reputed to have a very strong personality, was the daughter of Muhammad bin Khalifa, the fifth ruler. The conflict arose because Hamad was the son of the senior Al-Khalifa wife, and thus according to custom the first choice for succession, and Abdullah was the son of the strong wife who had influence.

The privileges and rights granted to the ruling landlord shaikh, the authority he exercised, and the autonomy he enjoyed, were the same in kind, if not in degree, as those exercised by the ruler, the shuyukh. Every shaikh exercised his authority independently of the ruler in his estate, which included several villages and hamlets and the cultivated land around them. The palm groves he administered directly were farmed out as "fiefs" (Weber 1947, p. 63) to a proxy called a *wazir*, chosen from the class of cultivators. There was one wazir for each village or hamlet (see Appendix D for details). The wazir, which means "minister" in Arabic, was simply a renter of palm gardens who, in turn, sublet them

to other agents and then to individual cultivators. Between the cultivator and the ruling shaikh was a chain of from two to five renters and "subletters," each raising the rent to make a profit. The relationship between the shuyukh and the landlord shaikh was one of "benefice"--that is, a bundle of rights granted on a personal basis without hereditary succession. The relationship between the ruling landlord and the wazir or other renters, on the other hand, was one of "fief"--a series of contractual agreements implying specific reciprocal obligations (Weber 1947, p. 63). The rent was always paid in kind and in services, which included dates, vegetables, wood for fuel, labor, and sometimes chickens, eggs, fish, and dried shrimp. It also included the raising and fattening of cattle, sheep, or goats owned by the lord but kept in the tenant's home-
stead and cared for by him.

Until the administration reforms of the twenties, all rent contracts were concluded orally, which led to many disagreements between the landlord and his tenants. The terms of the contract were meant to initiate a relationship rather than a definite and mutually binding agreement. Rents increased and decreased with yield; the higher the yield, the higher the rent, and vice versa. In these situations the powerless cultivator was left with the bare necessities of survival. After the administration reforms of the twenties and upon the insistence of the Shi'a, the terms of the contract were written down, with great attention to specifics. In addition to the amount of dates agreed upon, the contract specified the type of work required from the cultivator. This included cleaning ditches for irrigation, pruning trees, fertilizing flowers, and uprooting sprouts and weeds. Other service, such as forced labor, fattening of animals, and providing fish, fuel, and eggs, were eliminated.

Unlike sharecropping, where the tenant is entitled to a specified percentage of the product, however small or large, renting palm groves required the cultivator to abide by the terms of the contract irrespective of the volume of the yields. Palm cultivation, however, is reliable. Although the yields of palm groves vary with type of soil, maturity and kind of tree, methods of irrigation and intensity of care, they nevertheless can be estimated, within these limits, with a good measure of accuracy. Date crops seem to vary the least with weather. Renting palm gardens was a market transaction free of coercion; no cultivator was forced to enter into a bid against his wishes. In practice, the

Shi^Ca competed against each other for renting contracts, for in those days palm cultivation was the only source of subsistence available to them.

To maximize rents, the landlord shaikhs were advised by specialists who had knowledge of the soil, date crops, water resources, irrigation, types of palm trees, and the like. The specialists spent most of their time in the gardens, continuously advising the Al-Khalifa shaikh on rents and cultivation, thus forming a part of his administrative staff. Many a wazir who had dealt with a particular shaikh for a long period became a trusted agent, sometimes acting as a special advisor. Through their connections with Al-Khalifa shaikhs, the wazires, who were all Shi^Ca, earned high status and wielded influence in their respective villages. Those who were able to accumulate wealth still enjoy a leading position in their communities.

The contracts of rent between wazirs and ruling lords were negotiated and agreed upon annually, irrespective of the favorable relationships that bound the two together. The stability of the wazir's position depended entirely upon the mutual understanding and trust that governed the wazir/shaikh relationships in terms of the contracts of rent. In other words, the wazir's influence was not built into his position; it was derived from the contract of rent and from the character of the social relationships he established with the ruling landlord. A favorable relationship often took the form of clientage and continued undisturbed for several generations. In brief, the wazir/shaikh relationship was, in essence, contractual and sometimes wrapped with all sorts of mutual understanding and trust.

In his estate, the Al-Khalifa shaikh ruled as a sovereign. He collected taxes, claimed forced labor (*sukhra*), settled disputes, and defended the subjects of his estate against foreign intruders, even if these belonged to the ruling family itself. To perform these tasks, the ruling lord was assisted by a council (*majlis*) composed of relatives, consultants, and intimates, and by an administrative staff composed mainly wazirs, *kikhda*s, and *fidawis*. The wazir was the proxy and a renter of palm groves; the *kikhda* was a tax collector; and the *fidawis* were the military arm and coercive instrument of the estate. The first two categories were recruited from Shi^Ca villages on the estate, the last from "stray" Sunni Arabs who had no traceable tribal origin, from slaves of African origin, and from Baluchis. More will be said about the *fidawis* when the shuyukh's estate is discussed.

Many forms of taxes were collected from the Bahrainis during Isa bin Ali's reign--pearling tax, poll tax, water tax for irrigation, and some say a tax collected from the Shi^Ca for organizing processions in 'Ashura'. What concerns us here, however, are the poll tax (*rqabiyyah*) and the water tax (*dawb*), for they related directly to the management of the estates based on palm cultivation. The poll tax and the water tax were neither standardized nor fixed. They were collected only from the Shi^Ca, on the grounds that they did not serve in the military. It should be added that they were not invited to do so. Not all the Shi^Ca were required to pay the tax; those who worked in palm gardens administered directly by Al-Khalifa were exempt from such payments. Even those villages that had a mixed economy composed of cultivation and crafts, whose families were loyal to the ruling shaikh and provided him with tribute and services, were not subject to taxation. Such was the case with a large number of people living in Ali and Sitra. Others who had no solid cultivation base and, at the same time, offered little tribute or services, like Diraz and Bani Jamra, were heavily taxed.

The poll tax, which was collected from adult males, varied between one-half rupee and two rupees a month (a rupee equals 45 U.S. cents), depending on the economic status of the person; the better-off paid higher taxes. The water tax was collected only upon the use of water for irrigation and varied with the person, the ruling landlord, and the length of time the water was used. In this sense, it was a form of compensation for the use of water, payable in cash or in kind after harvest. In those Shi^Ca villages where heavy taxes were levied, the wazir and the kikhda were regarded with suspicion and disgust. After the administration reforms of the twenties, many a wazir or kikhda who lived in these villages found it necessary to move out and settle in the city of Manama--escaping the "burden of the past," as one interviewee put it.

Forced labor, likewise, was not subjected to systematic and standardized methods of tenure, as it was in traditional African societies. In Bahrain it was practiced intermittently to fulfill a specific task. Forced labor was sought for ditch-digging, a variety of construction schemes, transporting commodities, procuring water, and a host of other tasks that did not require specialized skills and that could be accomplished in one or two days. It was sought haphazardly, according to no definite plan or schedule of services, seasonal or otherwise. Whenever labor was needed, the fidawis of a ruling shaikh rounded up a group of

adult men from the marketplace or from public roads while they were commuting between field and village or between villages. The laborers were then directed by force to the intended task; once the task was completed, they were released. This haphazard method of securing labor was a source of conflict between lord and tenants, the ruler and employers in the city, and sometimes between one shaikh and another. Many a shaikh protested against or sometimes quarreled with another for having forced his "cultivators," the renters of his palm gardens, to work without compensation. Acts of this order were considered trespass of rights and a personal insult committed by one ruling shaikh against another.

*The Ruler's Authority and the Autonomy
of Al-Khalifa Estates*

It must not be assumed from the preceding discussion that every shaikh ruled his estate while living within its territorial limits, and that every estate had a separate administrative staff composed of wazirs, kikhdas, and fidawis. None of the ruling shaikhs lived in the villages of Shi^Ca cultivators, and few lived within the territorial limits of the estates they administered. To be close to the loci of power, most lived in Muharraq city, where the ruler of the country and his council resided. Part of the administrative staff, the Shi^Ca wazirs and kikhdas, lived within the estate, but members of the council and the Sunni fidawis lived wherever the ruling shaikh lived. Ruling sons tended to live close to their father, the ruler of the country; brothers and nephews lived close to their own estates. By living close to their estates, brothers and nephews were able to build a relatively autonomous administrative structure, sometimes challenging the authority of the regime itself, as mentioned earlier.

Ruling sons who managed separate estates formed an integral part of the regime in power, acting for, with, or sometimes against its interest. The conduct of the ruling shaikhs reflected upon the quality and reputation of the regime without being an essential part of it administratively. Within his estate, the autonomy of the ruling shaikh was not qualitatively different from that of the shuyukh in his estate. Indeed, many of the complaints about Isa bin Ali's reign in Bahrain, accumulated by Major Daly, the British political agent in the twenties, were provoked by the actions and deeds of ruling brothers, sons, nephews, cousins, and sometimes wives.⁵ Having no standardized, officially recognized allow-

ances or bureaucratically defined offices, ruling shaikhs resorted to physical coercion to exact as much tribute, tax, or whatever as they could from the people. In brief, they were the "government" without offices, the "administration" without bureaucracy, the "state" without public delegation or consent, standardized law, or equity.

The shuyukh was *primus inter paris*, a coordinator of activities and the head of the most powerful council (*majlis*) in the country, distinguished from the rest by being called *diwan*. Only in relation to foreign policy was the shuyukh an independent executive, a role imposed upon him by the necessities of international power politics. The difference between him and other ruling shaikhs was the volume of resources and assets he controlled. As the head of the most influential and powerful council in the country, the shuyukh ruled over a large number of estates and the two major cities of Manama and Muharraq. He controlled the ports, the markets, and a number of palm estates, all of which produced a large part of the country's revenues.

The distinction between public revenues and the ruler's private purse was not made; government, authority, and economic rights were considered privately appropriated advantages. The 5 percent tax on imports, the unfixed tax on exports, the poll tax, the pearling tax, the value of rentals on shops and floors in the market, the dues and duties of the port--all were theoretically considered public revenues belonging to the *diwan* but were in reality treated like private earnings. The costs of administration were defrayed by the ruler's personal means. He spent a large part of the revenues on his retinue, which included *fidawis*, servants, guards, clerks, and favorites, on guests and gifts, and sometimes on tribute to neighboring dominant power blocs. Expenditure on roads, schools, and maintenance of public facilities received little or no attention. Public expenditure was understood to be synonymous with acts of welfare and charity granted on a purely personal basis by the regime to the wretched, the miserable, or the physically unfit. In the words of Weber, there was no "clear-cut separation between the sphere of authority and the individual's private capacity apart from his authority" (1947, p. 61).

To manage his large estates and the markets and ports of the cities of Manama and Muharraq, the shuyukh had a large administrative staff under his direct personal control. To avoid trespass of authority or conflict of roles between him and other Al-Khalifa ruling shaikhs, he

refrained from employing close relatives: sons, brothers, cousins, and nephews. Instead, he allocated to these relatives separate estates, which, as we have just seen, they managed with complete autonomy. The members of the Al-Khalifa family he employed were distant relatives, usually born to Al-Khalifa fathers and "foreign" girls. Such was the case, for example with Abdul-Rahman bin Abdul-Wahab, who was the ruler's overseer of palm tree estates.

The cities of Manama and Muharraq, the centers of trade and pearl industry, were governed through an administrative apparatus called the *'imara*, composed of an *emir* and about thirty *fidawis*. The *emir*, which means "prince" in Arabic, was a high-ranked *fidawi* who had earned the confidence and trust of the ruler. Only in Rifa town, inhabited mainly by Sunni Arab tribes, was the *emir* an Al-Khalifa *shaikh*--Khalid bin Ali, the brother of the ruler. It was simply more fitting for the Sunni Arab tribes, who were allies of Al-Khalifa, to be ruled by an Al-Khalifa *emir* of "noble" origin, so to speak, than by an *emir* who was a commoner. The *emirs* and *fidawis* of Manama and Muharraq belonged to the bani khdair ("the green stock") category, which referred to people who had no clear tribal origin: Baluchis, Omanis, "stray" Arabs who had lost tribal affiliation, and people of African origin. Around the latter part of Isa bin Ali's reign, the *emirs* of Manama and Muharraq Salih bin Rshaid, Fahd bin Jallal, or Ali bin Husain al-Qamari, were Arabs who had no clear genealogically traceable tribal origins. Tribes in Bahrain always claim clearly traceable genealogies.

The *emirs* and the *fidawis* were essentially a "coercive apparatus" whose task was to execute the will of the ruler, or whoever else acted on his behalf, specifically the Sunni Islamic jurist who deliberated on marriage, divorce, inheritance, and other family affairs. They enforced order in the market (*suq*), arresting, interrogating, and punishing wrongdoers without appeal to higher authorities. They had headquarters in an open space, near the *suq*, where they kept a large board into which several locks were fastened. This board was the prison where culprits were kept or flogged while their legs were fettered.

In practice the *fidawis* often took the law into their own hands, acting in the confidence of the ruler without prior consultation. Physical power was the language of law. They carried sticks and never hesitated to strike those who refused to acquiesce to their orders. During the agitations for reforms in the twenties, many of the complaints the

Bahrainis had against Isa bin Ali's rule centered on the arbitrary way the fidawis of Al-Khalifa shaikhs handled law and order.⁶ It was through the fidawis, however, that the ruler collected taxes, tributes, and rent on shops and floors in the market from the urban population of Manama and Muharraq. Other towns, such as al-Hidd and Rifa, where the tribal allies of Al-Khalifa lived, were not taxed. Highly placed, rich merchants did not pay taxes; they presented "gifts," delivered to the ruler in person, to his intimates, or sometimes to his foreign guests. In return for these gifts the merchants were granted special favors on duties, prices, wages, imports, exports, and other matters related to trade. There were no standardized controls on these market regulators, and this gave the merchants a free hand to seek maximal profits.

The policy of governing the cities of Manama and Muharraq through the bani khdair category was followed in other activities that came under the personal control of the shuyukh. The port, for example, was farmed out to the Hindu firm of Messrs. Gangaram Trikamdas and Company until 1924, when it was put under government supervision with a British official responsible for its management.⁷ His private secretary was an urban Arab who did not belong to any of the major tribal groups living in Bahrain. His counsel and confidant Almas was of African origin. When Almas died in 1910 an elaborate funeral ceremony was held in his honor.

Between the shuyukh and his personal aides there existed a kind of diffuse, multiplex relationship, involving the social image of the ruler. The same principle holds for the Al-Khalifa ruling shaikhs and their personal aides: slaves, fidawis, clerks, and guards. To honor the aides was to honor the master, and to insult them was to insult him. Whereas the relationships between the shuyukh or the shaikhs and their personal aides were diffuse and multiplex, those between them and the wazirs or kikhdas were specific and "simple"--market transactions that did not involve the social image of either party. The first category was Sunni, the second Shi^ca. In other words, relationships that resulted from acts such as renting palm groves, shops, ports, or any other market transaction did not implicate the sovereignty of the regime, whereas those resulting from acts of government did. Market transactions implying capital investment were "universalized" (to use Parsons's terminology)⁸ and confined to the Shi^ca or foreigners; government deliberations, by contrast, were "particularized" and confined mainly to the Sunni.

This distinction between the Shi^ca and the Sunni in government and

the administration of estates continued in Bahrain, of course in modified forms, through the reforms of the 1920s and the independence of the 1970s. The Shi^ca tend to dominate in those departments and offices that are technically oriented--finance, electricity, water, health, and so on; the Sunni, especially those of tribal origin, dominate in those that relate directly to power and authority--military, police, justice, interior, emigration, and the like.

Fish Traps

Unlike palm cultivation, which was tightly controlled by the ruling family, fish traps (*hudur*) were left free of al-Khalifa control. Fish had no capital value; they were neither imported like rice nor exported like dates and neither increased nor decreased taxes. They were used for daily local consumption, as part of the subsistence economy of every household. There were few people in Bahrain who did not engage in one form or another of fishing. The sea around Bahrain is rich in fish of many species, each known for a different season. People's knowledge of the sea, of the various species of fish and their behavior, and of the methods of fishing is as elaborate and complex as the northern Arabs' knowledge of the camel and the desert. However interesting ethnographically, this subject has little bearing on the authority system that prevailed in Bahrain before the administrative reforms of the twenties. Only one method of fishing--fish traps--is relevant to my inquiry and will accordingly be considered in detail.

According to the cadastral survey records taken in 1934, there were about 868 fish traps scattered around the shores of the northern half of the island. A good number of these traps have now been either abandoned or destroyed through land reclamation, the expansion of Manama port, or recently the construction of the dry dock. Like palm groves, fish traps are given proper names at the time of construction. The names do not change even though the traps are modified or sold. Whereas names of palm groves tend to be efficacious, names of fish traps, which generally have an arrowhead shape, tend to be erotic (see fig. 2). Traps exploit the movement of the fish and the tide. During high tide the fish move toward the shore searching for food; during low tide they rush back into the deep water. The distance between the shore and the deep water, the tidal land, is highly variable and in some places is as much as eight kilometers.

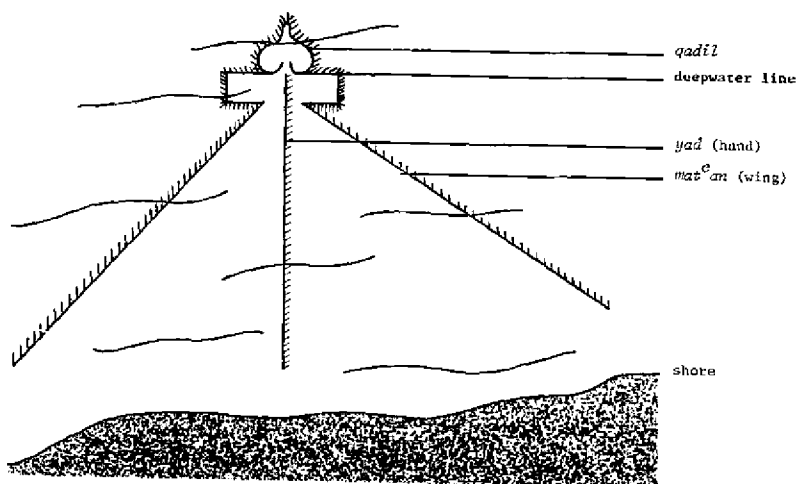


Fig. 2. Diagram of a fish trap.

On their way back to the deep water, the fish are caught between the two wings (*mat^{am}*) of the trap and gradually move with the tide along the hand (*yad*) to the deepwater dip (*qadil*), where they are caught (see fig. 2). The trap is made of rows of palm reeds implanted in the seabed, the lower part, the *qadil*, being wrapped with barbed wire to prevent the escape of small fish. The hand and wings reach far into the shallow water, and the *qadil* extends to the deepwater line, the *qadil* never exceeding sixty to ninety centimeters deep in low tide.

Traps are built by specialized fishermen called *rassamin*, and it takes from one to two weeks to complete one, depending upon its size. They are not uniform in size, length, depth, the area they cover, or the type of fish for which they are designed. Different species of fish have different swimming habits and therefore require different traps. The wings are tilted left or right in accordance with the direction of the shore and the tideways, so as to engulf the heaviest tidal currents possible; the heavier the current, the more fish it carries. The annual catch varies between seasons and traps. Some traps deliver many tons, others only several kilograms, enough for daily consumption. Fishermen collect the catch twice a day during low tide, occasionally using donkey-pulled carts that they drive to the deepwater line.

Like palm groves, fish traps are owned by private holders who rent them to fishermen by the year. Unlike palm groves, however, the rent of fish traps is always paid in cash. The rental varies between U.S. \$150 and \$5,000 a year depending upon the quality of the trap and the kind and amount of fish it catches. The number of traps rented for U.S. \$5,000

is very limited, about ten at the most; they are off Sitra Island and are famous for trapping prawns. The ruling family of Al-Khalifa has owned a very small percentage (3.74) of the total number of fish traps (see table 3). Those members of the ruling family owning fish traps, unlike those owning palm groves, were distant relatives to the ruler and therefore economically weak.

Table 3
Ownership of Fish Traps

Type of Owner	Number of Fish Traps	Percentage
Al-Khalifa	36	3.7
Sunni waqf	2	0.2
Shi ^c a waqf	157	16.3
Government	74	7.7
Dhurriyah waqf ^a	27	2.8
Warathat property ^b	184	19.2
Private property	482	50.1
Total	962	100.0

^aAny property a person pledges for the use of his progeny (*dhurriyah*). It cannot be alienated by succeeding generations unless it is specified to the contrary.

^bProperty held collectively by a body of heirs.

Although the ruling family of Al-Khalifa tightly controlled and exploited the capital-raising enterprises such as the date crop, the port, the market, and water resources, they did not interfere in the organization of the subsistence-oriented enterprises such as fish traps and other forms of fishing. Because of their subsistence value, large percentages (38.23) of fish traps were owned by collective bodies including the Shi^ca waqf department, *dhurriyah waqf*, and a body of heirs (*warathat*). There seems to have existed an organic relationship between collective forms of ownership and subsistence-oriented economics, on the one hand, and between private forms of ownership and market-oriented enterprises on the other. With regard to Bahrain these relationships offer a fascinating theoretical issue. It appears that the ruling family, whose corporate and solidary character was derived from kinship affiliations, seemed to exercise a market form of control over its resources.

By contrast, the ritually bound Shi^ca practiced a collective form of control. Almost all the fish traps owned collectively were the property of Shi^ca families and religious institutions.

Pearl Production and Tribal Settlements

Whereas palm cultivation was directly controlled by Al-Khalifa shaikhs of different orders, pearl production fell almost entirely into the hands of enterprising Arab tribesmen. Each group of them was an autonomous unit governed by a tribal chief or chiefs assisted by a council composed of fellow tribesmen and other intimates. Within their domain, tribal chiefs and councils ruled as sovereigns, maintaining order, settling disputes, holding court, and resolving conflict. Short of tax collection, their autonomy was no different from that of the ruler and other Al-Khalifa shaikhs, each within his own estate or domain. Coordination between these autonomous tribal domains and Al-Khalifa ruler of the country was achieved by mutual consultations carried out in the latter's council, attended regularly by tribal chiefs. Failing to attend these meetings consistently was construed as refusing to submit to Al-Khalifa authority. Such was the case with al-Dawasir chiefs, who attended only when officially invited.

The Pearl Market

Pearling in the Gulf has been known since the earliest days of history. The Babylonians called pearls "fish eyes." Pre-Islamic poetry referred to them as "the tears of the beloved." The Holy Qur'an considered them property of paradise, a part of the combination composed of fairies, golden bracelets, and silk clothes (Qur'an 17:23; 22:33; 27:24). Many of Arab poets, historians, and geographers wrote detailed accounts of pearls--their kinds, formations, and usages--and of the boats, divers, merchants, and entrepreneurs.⁹ It was in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, however, that pearl production achieved economic consequence. Earlier it was simply a luxury business that engaged adventurers and fortune seekers. Leonard Rosenthal, writing in 1919, mentioned that the Gulf was producing between forty and sixty million gems a year, as opposed to fifteen to twenty million produced elsewhere. He added that in 1915-16 the United States alone bought more than sixty million gems valued at "much more than several million francs" (Rosenthal 1919, p. 101).

With the enforcement of peace and stability in the Gulf in the 1820s, pearl production steadily increased. No statistical data are available for the years before 1875-76, which, to my knowledge, was the time the commercial reports on the Gulf began to be regularly submitted to the Bombay government. The value of pearl exports from Bahrain alone rose from about 180,000 pounds sterling a year in 1875-76 to about a million between 1900 and 1909.¹⁰ These estimates were undervalued considering that a large number of gems found their way to the market without official registration. The value of the pearl catch fluctuated between seasons, as did the value of exports in relation to the total export value. In 1875-76, the value of pearl exports was 76.4 percent of the total value of exports, estimated to be 244,291 pounds sterling; in 1895-96, it was 55.01 percent of a total estimate of 467,110 pounds sterling; in 1915-16, it was 49.9 percent of a total estimate of 24,593 pounds sterling; in 1925-26, it was reduced to only 16.5 percent of a total estimate of 88,349 pounds sterling.¹¹ This does not mean that the value of pearl exports was necessarily determined by the size of the catch. Marketing followed international prices more than the volume of the catch--the supply. When prices were low, pearl dealers marketed only enough gems to defray the costs of production--and withheld the rest for coming years, awaiting better prices.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, pearls were exported to Bombay, and from there to other world markets. This commercial link between the Gulf and India created, especially in Bahrain, a large body of Indian merchants, called Banyan, who had the advantage of long-range credit terms with Bombay and consequently dominated the external trade in this commodity.

The Banyan merchants did not hold a monopoly on the pearl market, nor did they deal directly with pearl producers. They were the end of a chain of pearl brokers who exported the commodity to Bombay. Between the Banyan merchant and the pearl diver was a series of Arab middlemen, dealers, and merchants. At the turn of the century European merchants began to come to Bahrain. They would stay a week or two at the end of the season, buy the pearls they needed, and return to Europe. At the same time many Bahraini merchants started to frequent the European market, selling pearls.

Never in the history of the Gulf had pearls been so essential to the livelihood of thousands of divers, boat-builders, traders, dealers,

and merchants as they were in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth. The industry was so central that both the population of Bahrain and its crime rate were directly affected by the catch. In lean years the population dropped considerably and the incidence of crime, especially theft, rose. Just before the First World War, about twenty thousand adult men, a little less than a half of the male population, were employed in pearl production. The total population of Bahrain was then about one hundred thousand.¹² The number of pearl boats was estimated to be about nine hundred, with an average crew of twenty. Pearl boats were not standardized in size; some carried one hundred sailors, others only five.¹³

The pearl banks stretched eighty kilometers from the shores of Kuwait in the north to Umm al-Qiwayn in the south. They were known to be the traditional domain of Arab tribes living on the western side of the Gulf. The fisheries were common property; no individual chief had the right to grant concessions to outside parties. Believing that the shallow waters were dependent on the deeper waters for their supply of pearl oysters, tribal chiefs objected to foreigners' fishing not only on the shoals they exploited, but also in the deeper water beyond. Only in principle were the pearl banks common property; in practice, some tribes earned the right of usufruct over particular banks and not others. The banks of Bahrain, for example, were in the Hirat area, stretching from thirty to eighty kilometers to the north and the northeast of the island.¹⁴

The pearling season opened in May, when *al-barik* winds blew from the north, and ended in October. The ruler of Bahrain officially proclaimed the opening and closing of the diving season, called *al-ghaws*, which lasted for four months and ten days. Two other seasons took place without official recognition, *khanjiyah*, which started and ended before the official season and lasted about twenty to twenty-five days, and *tarsha*, which lasted one or two weeks in winter, according to no fixed schedule. Diving then was closer to shore. Many of the Shi^ca of Bahrain practiced the second type of diving. The opening day (*al-rakba*) of the official season was a rich social activity in which a large segment of the Bahrain population took part. A pilot who lived through the pearling days summarized the occasion in few words:

The ports were, like beehives, boiling with divers. Some were loading the boats with supplies of rice bags and date baskets; some were fixing the sails; some were exchanging notes with pilots and

merchants on unpaid bills, debts, contracts, and the like. Crowds of women and children stood by the shore waving hands and handkerchiefs, bidding goodbye to husbands, brothers and sons at the rhythm of seawaves and the tunes of pearl-songs mixed with cries of babies. A young man who did not have the opportunity to take part in pearl fishing found himself a victim of lonesomeness and boredom.

The supplies always included rice, dates, sugar, butter, dried limes, and coffee or tea. Meals at sea included these foods plus fresh fish caught on the spot. The volume of supplies varied with the size of the crew and the means of the pilot. A well-equipped pearling boat was provisioned for about a month; others carried food for only a few days. Once the initial stock was gone, new supplies were purchased either from merchants at the pearl banks, called *tawawish* (the floaters), who exacted very high prices, or in the city after the boat had returned to shore. A pilot who was short of capital and therefore had no long-term supplies had to sell his pearl catch day by day to provide for his crew. This pressed him to sell pearls at low prices and buy supplies at high prices, thus lowering his profits and those of the crew as well. Divers were employed on a "shareholding" basis: the higher the catch the higher the profits; the higher the profits the higher the shares. A pilot who was short of capital thus had difficulty recruiting good divers, which gradually drove the pearl industry into the hands of a few rich merchants, called by the people the "kings of pearl."

Mode of Production: Contractual Agreements and the Cycle of Debts

The crew (*jawwa*) was composed of six categories of workers: a pilot (*nukhada*), a foreman (*muqaddam*), who was assistant to the pilot, several divers (*ghasa*), many pullers (*suyub*), a few apprentices (*radif*), and one or two servants or cooks (*tabbab*). The pilot was often the owner of the boat and was almost always of tribal origin, a member of the pearling tribe. When the boat was owned by a merchant or an entrepreneur who did not himself go to sea, the pilot was called *ja^cdi* and had the same authority as if he were the owner. The rest of the crew, who held *amil* or *madyan* contracts with the pilot, were slaves, Baluchis, or southern Persians. The pilot was the final authority aboard the ship; he tried and punished wrongdoers and solved daily problems as they happened. In this capacity he was assisted by the foreman, recruited from the bani khdaïr category and known for his muscular power and loyalty to the pilot. If a crime was committed on board, the pilot dealt with

it decisively on the basis of "eye for eye and tooth for tooth." If it proved to be beyond his knowledge of customary law, the culprit was dealt with after the boat returned to shore.

Apprentices and cooks were younger in age and fewer in number than divers and pullers. The ages of divers and pullers ranged between fifteen and sixty, a category referred to collectively as *al-shabab* (the youth). There were always more pullers than divers; the ratio was about six to four. The diver searched for pearl oysters at the bottom of the sea, about twenty fathoms deep at the most.¹⁵ He stayed down about a minute and half, until he was so short of breath he could not pull himself up to the surface. Given the natural diving technology of the time, it was economically advantageous for the diver to stay under water as long as possible. To descend faster, he tied a stone weight to one foot and jumped into the water. When the diver reached the bottom, where the oysters were found, the puller who attended him pulled the stone back into the boat. The diver wore leather finger covers (*khibt*) to dislodge the shells and shut his nostrils with a clip (*fitam*) made of sheep horn to keep water out of his nose. He put the shells he found in a string bag (*dayyin*) hung around his neck by a semicircular piece of wood. As soon as he was short of breath, he signaled his puller to draw him to the surface by a rope tied to the other end of the string bag. On the surface the diver rested awhile in the water, then repeated the operation.

Divers and pullers were divided into two teams in hot weather and three in cold weather, replacing each other after each ten dives or so. Divers had greater social prestige than pullers but were exposed to several hazards. A diver's skill was measured by how long he could stay under water; the more skillful he was, the higher the loan advance granted to him before and after the diving season. A good diver could make about a hundred dives a day.

Pullers were recruited on the basis of physical fitness and loyalty to the particular divers they worked with. Divers had the right to select their own pullers. Pullers were well fed, but divers were served light meals to keep their weight down. Many divers suffered from ear trouble; the rupture of the eardrum was considered to be a sign of proficiency in diving. Blindness was comparatively frequent among divers.

The oysters each diver collected during the day were piled in the middle of the boat, to be opened in the morning or toward the end of the

day by divers and pullers together, under the strict supervision of the pilot and his foreman. The empty shells were thrown back into the sea in the belief that they fertilized the pearl fields. Any pearls found were quickly handed over to the pilot, who kept them in a "sea chest" ready for this purpose. The catch belonged to the crew as a body; each one received a fixed share according to the task he performed, not on the basis of his productivity. No diver knew exactly which pearls he had found; there was a deliberate effort to suppress individual successes.

The pilot had the authority to sell the catch according to various contractual agreements established earlier with divers and merchants. These agreements were of four kinds: *amil* (agent), *madyan* (in debt), *khamas* (fifth), and *axil* (segregated). *Amil* contracts required the pilot to sell the pearl catch to the merchant who had initially provided the diving supplies without interest. It also required, at least in principle, that the sale be witnessed by not less than two-thirds of the crew, divers and pullers. But few divers or pullers, or sometimes even pilots, knew how to price pearls and assess the market value of the catch, for this required an up-to-date knowledge of market value, which varied with size, color, clarity, and shape and with flaws such as spots, cracks, and cavities. Since the merchant had superior knowledge of quality, price, and market, he accordingly had the best of the deal. Bound by the terms of the contract, pilots and divers could not play one merchant against the other; the prices they solicited depended entirely on their bargaining skills. Pilot and merchant often shared the same social background, sometimes belonging to the same family or tribe, which affected the pricing of the catch to the disadvantage of the divers and pullers.

After deducting all the expenses of the boat, the net profits were divided among the crew by the following principle: a diver was given three shares, a puller two, and an apprentice half the share of a puller. The pilot was given the shares of five divers; if he was a *ja^cdi* he received the shares of three divers. The foreman was employed at the expense of the pilot, and the servants or cooks at the expense of the divers and pullers. Immediately after the Second World War, an official source estimated that the average share was about five hundred rupees a year.¹⁶ A pilot I interviewed estimated the shares at from two hundred rupees to about one thousand. Dividing the shares was difficult and caused many conflicts between pilots and divers or pullers. The

regime thus set up a special court, the *salifa*, to deal with pearling debt claims, division of shares, interest charges, and the like, apart from the Islamic court. The judge of the *salifa* court was always of tribal origin, kin to pilots and merchants. More will be said about this court later.

By contrast, *madyan* contracts granted the pilot the right to sell the catch to whoever offered the best prices and, in return, allowed the merchant to charge the pilot interest on the invested capital. The interest amounted to about 10 percent during the diving season and about 20 percent off season. In spite of these contractual rights, pilots still preferred to sell their catch to the merchants who had initially provided them with capital so as to establish a favorable relationship for future investments. The same official source quoted above estimated that about 90 percent of the pilots were unable to buy supplies without the merchants' financial support. Divers and pullers often avoided working on a boat subject to *madyan* contracts, for they were likely to be exposed to all kinds of injustices, abuses, and behind-the-scenes dealings, even though the division of shares in this system was the same as in the previous one.

The two other types of contracts, *khamas* and *camil*, were mainly between pilots and divers, excluding the merchants altogether. This does not mean that merchants in the first two types of contracts dealt directly with divers or pullers--they never did. Merchants dealt with pilots and pearls and nothing else. The pilot recruited divers and pullers and pledged himself for debts and loans. But in the first two types of contracts, *camil* and *madyan*, the contracts between pilots and divers implicated the merchants; in the second two types they did not. In *khamas* contracts the crew bought their own supplies, elected the pilot, and together sold the pearls. According to these contracts neither the pilot nor the merchant had a right to market the pearl catch. The price of the catch was divided between the members of the crew according to the formula mentioned earlier, with one exception: the pilot was given either one-tenth of the profits or the shares of three divers. In the *khamas* system, the authority of the pilot was restricted to buying and storing supplies. Pearlery bound by *khamas* contracts were mostly divers of tribal origin or, to a much lesser extent, native Shi'a of Bahrain. This form of contract was much more widespread in other pearl diving centers

in the Gulf than in Bahrain, where contracts of the ^camil or madyan types were usual.

Unlike the khamas, ^cazil contracts were dyadic, between the pilot and an individual diver. The pilot agreed to provide the diver with diving facilities and, in return, to receive one-fifth of the catch. According to these contracts the diver had to cover his own daily expenses. The pearls he caught, the selling of the pearls, the expenditure at sea, all were entirely the diver's responsibility, which he did not share with other divers or pullers. This kind of contract coexisted with ^camil and madyan types but not with khamas contracts, and it was practiced by a few outstanding divers of various social backgrounds.

One can argue that the same contractual relationships that prevailed in palm cultivation were followed, with some necessary minor adjustments, in pearl production. In palm cultivation, the rents on gardens increased or decreased with the yield; the higher the yield, the higher the rent collected, irrespective of the original contractual agreement. Likewise in pearl production, the interest exacted from pilot by merchant and from diver or puller by pilot, according to the ^camil and madyan contracts that prevailed in Bahrain, increased with the pearl catch. The larger the catch, the larger the loan granted; the larger the loan, the higher the interest. The contractual agreements between pilots and divers or pullers were not entirely subject to clear-cut terms; they were bound by several social and personal considerations. It was a contractual agreement in form and a relationship in content; because of this, it is more fitting to call it, contradictorily, a "contractual relationship."

Whether the catch was large or small, the divers or pullers continued to be in debt to the pilot, who in turn was in debt to the merchant. Larger loans were granted to the more skillful divers, which meant that the more skillful were further in debt. To appreciate this interpretation one must remember that merchants and pilots had a monopoly on the marketing of pearls (in ^camil and madyan contracts) and that divers and pullers were instrumental in production. In return for their labor, divers and pullers received varying shares of the profits. However, it was not the principle of shareholding or the division of shares that constituted the significant content of the pilot-diver (or puller) contractual relationship, either economically or sociologically. It was, rather, the mode of payment that defined the socioeconomic content of this relationship. Payments were in the form of loans, which put the

diver and the puller continuously in debt to the pilot, and the pilot to the merchant.

There were three types of loan payments: *tisqam*, *silfa*, and *kharjiyah*. The first was the loan paid to divers and pullers at the end of the official season and at times included payment in kind: rice, sugar, dates, and coffee. The second was granted at the beginning of the diving season and was meant to support the families of divers and pullers while the men worked at sea. The third was the money given to the men while at sea, to accommodate their personal needs, served by a multitude of sea traders, the floaters. Loans varied from one hundred to eight hundred rupees depending upon the quality of the diver or puller--the more skillful were granted bigger loans. Granting bigger loans to skillful divers was intended to keep them in debt and therefore in continuous service to the creditor. These loans were granted on the assumption that the previous bill had not been settled; it appeared that the relationship was never intended to be finally settled. Only pilots kept records of debts and loans to divers and pullers; some of them charged exorbitant interest, at times reaching 40 or 50 percent.¹⁷

Loan payments obligated the diver or puller (the debtor) to the continuous service of the pilot (creditor). Divers and pullers could not break these cyclic debts unless they paid off the entire loan. After several years of service, the loans accumulated interest to such an extent that no diver or puller could possibly pay it purely on his own without seeking a new loan from another pilot-creditor. This meant that a diver or puller could shift from one pilot to another but not entirely out of the system. What made things even more difficult was that loans were hereditary, passing from fathers to sons. True, a few divers and pullers were compensated generously for hard work and loyalty, but these benefits were granted on personal grounds and did not alter the contractual relationships themselves.

Unlike palm cultivation, which was a year-round process, pearl production was seasonal. Many divers or pullers were unemployed during the off season and therefore had to be subsidized for survival; hence the loan payments. Those skillful divers who earned more than others of their own accord fell victim to prestige spending and did not accumulate wealth. In other words, a combination of social customs and contractual transactions did not allow divers or pullers to free their pledged labor and offer it as a market commodity. Only after the administrative re-

forms of the 1920s and the development of the oil market in the 1930s were they able to do so with some success.

Pearl Production and Tribal Settlements

As the ruling family of Al-Khalifa maximized the returns of palm cultivation by tightly controlling the Shi'a cultivators, they increased the returns of pearl production by granting the enterprising Sunni tribes considerable freedom of operation. Pearl production fell almost entirely into the hands of tribal settlements scattered along the coastline in the northern half of the island (see Appendix A). Each of these tribes had roots, alliances, and tribal followings on the mainland, either in Qatar or in central Arabia. The power and influence these tribes or segments of tribes exerted in Bahrain, and the autonomy they exercised, were dependent upon the entire tribal power structure of the Gulf and Arabia. Al-Dawasir of Budayya and Zallaq, for example, were the most powerful, influential, and autonomous of all tribal groups because they were relatively numerous, wealthy, and, above all, able to mobilize a wide variety of tribal alliances on the mainland. Other tribes exercised autonomy as granted them by the Al-Khalifa ruler.

Within their settlements, tribal chiefs exercised complete autonomy. They held regular councils attended by kinsmen, consultants, and intimates. They tried and punished malefactors independently of the regime in power. Their autonomy was symbolized by the possession of the "board of locks" used also by the emirs of Manama and Muharraq, and by their exemption from taxes. What taxes they paid were tariff rates imposed on imports and exports. A crime, civil or otherwise, that did not involve any one of these chiefs, or any of their subjects within the settlement, was referred to a specialized court, the *salifa*, which dealt with loan payments and debts. The *salifa* judge was formally appointed by the ruler of the country in agreement with the chiefs of the pearling tribes. He was a pilot or a merchant, or on good terms with either category, and was always of tribal affiliation.¹⁸ The judge held hearings in the coffee shop and ruled according to conventional wisdom, political instincts, and personal whims, generally taking the side of the powerful to avoid conflict. It is interesting that debts, normally dealt with in the Islamic religious court, were in the pearl industry dealt with according to tribal law, least subject to standardization.

The administrative staff of the estates, composed of wazirs, kikhdas, and fidawis, was not imposed upon the pearling tribal settlements. Each tribal chief had his own fidawis to enforce order and execute tribal rulings. Not everyone who lived in these settlements was a tribesman; given the mode of pearl production described earlier, this should not be expected. Tribesmen were a minority living among a larger body of retinue, divers, pullers, pilots, guards, and sometimes slaves. The tribal chief, however, was always a tribesman and a "king of pearls" (a rich and successful merchant), a combination that summed up the connection between pearl production and tribal culture. Arab tribes claimed ownership and exploited the pearl banks, organized diving expeditions, and subjected the mode of production to customary law, which varied with status, person, and circumstance. In general pilots and entrepreneur merchants were Arab tribesmen, export merchants were Banyan of Indian origin, and divers and pullers were Baluchis, south Persians, and people of African origin. Only a few of the native Arab Shi^C worked as divers or pullers. Many of them were sea traders (floaters) and pearl brokers (*dallal*), the same occupations they shared with the urban Sunni population of Hawala or Arab origin.

The ruling family of Al-Khalifa never tried to control the pearl industry directly; they simply provided pearlers with a base of operations, interfering as little as possible in their internal affairs. Before the administration reforms of the twenties, they did not impose license fees on pearling boats, nor did they tax the catch directly. Their only precedent was to require a Bahraini pilot who found a gem worth ten thousand rupees or more to pay 10 percent of its value to the ruler.¹⁹ These relaxed measures were meant to attract as many pearling tribes as possible, thus increasing the volume of exports and, correspondingly, the tax due on each. Besides, pearlers stimulated the local market and increased rents on shops and floors. In their turn, tribes or segments of tribes resisted interference in their affairs and considered it a limitation of sovereignty. They dealt with the regime as sovereigns and threatened to "emigrate" en mass from Bahrain at the slightest hint of intrusion or limitation of their freedom of action. This was what happened with the BinAli tribe in 1895 after an irreconcilable conflict with Al-Khalifa over a petty affair of invasion of privacy, and with Al-Dawasir in 1923 when their freedom of operation was restricted. Emigration of pearling tribes threatened the regime in two ways: it meant a decline in

the volume of exports and imports and therefore in the taxes due on these, and it was a threat of war. Many an emigrating tribe left for the mainland to organize war parties against the regime and harass its boats and trade.

Obviously, while Al-Khalifa subjected the cultivator, the craftsman, or the petty trader to strict measures of control, they were rather permissive with the pearlers. Their strictness in one case and permissiveness in the other do not mean they oppressed the Shi^ca and treated the Sunni as sovereigns. They were attempting to maximize their benefits from both economic engagements. The tribesmen--the Sunni--who were pearlers, resisted intrusion and limitation of sovereignty and produced better under permissive conditions.

The reason pearling came under the control of tribesmen reflected the kind of polity that evolved in the Gulf in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. In the absence of state structures with standardized and centralized systems of authority, tribal groupings and alliances--who have the power to control government, decision-making, and thus natural resources--emerged as the logical forms of social organization. The Shi^ca and the urban Sunni, lacking tribal organization, prevailed in those occupations and careers that were not directly related to government and the control of resources.

Tribal councils were associated with government, sovereignty of tribes, and the control of economic resources. The rulings of the councils were not subject to standardized law or procedures of application. By contrast, the courts (*al-qada'*) fell entirely into the hands of Islamic jurists who followed the dictates of religious law (*shari'a*) derived directly from the Qur'an or indirectly from the Hadith on the bases of the precedence and ascription (*'isnad*). They are referred to as "jurists," not judges, because they ruled by consensus--what Weber (1954, p. 20) calls "conventions" lacking coercive power. "Customary" law, the decisions of tribal councils, was enforced by coercion.

There have been four juristic groups in Bahrain: the urban Hawala, who followed the *Shafi'a* law; the urban Najdis, who followed the *Hanbali* law; the tribal Arab Sunni, who followed the *Maliki* law; and the Shi'a Arabs or Persians who followed the *Jafari* law. Urban or tribal, the Sunni community was served during Isa bin Ali's reign by one jurist (*qadi*), Jasim al-Mihza, who held court in his own house. He was appointed by the ruler to deliberate on personal matters and family affairs: marriage, divorce, family relationships, inheritance, and sometimes debts and property rights. He sometimes dealt with petty crimes--theft, forgery, invasion of privacy, and other forms of personal misconduct--as they were referred to him. As forms of debt, pearl fishing loan payments were not subjected to his authority. In his rulings the jurist was guided by the dictates of Islamic law, which speaks clearly against interest charges, implied in the contractual relationships between divers, pilots, and merchants in the pearl industry. Instead, loan payments were assigned to the *salifa* court, which was under the control of pearl fishing tribes. Cases of debt, property, or misconduct brought before the Sunni jurist largely involved the urban population. The Sunni jurist was an *honoratoire*

who ruled in conjunction with the tribal chief, accomodating Islamic law to tribal forms of government. The singularity of the Sunni religious court was not so much a measure of centralized authority as an accessory function of tribal government.

Unlike the Sunni court, which was under the authority of a single *qadi* officially recognized by the regime, the Shi^ca courts were spread in varying degrees throughout the Shi^ca communities. The difference between the Sunni and the Shi^ca jurists did not lie in the operational schemes they followed or in the methods they used to derive law from the Qur'an or the Hadith. Rather, they differed in the character of the social forces that brought them to power—the sociology of religion.

The classical distinction between Sunni and Shi^ca law—that one is based on analogy (*qiyas*) and the other on interpretation (*'ijtihad*)—glosses over the structural parallels between them. In the two procedures, the jurists follow the principles of precedence and ascription; they differ in the sources they quote and the value they ascribe to each. While the Sunni take Abu Huraira's narration, for example, to be closest to reality, the Shi^ca place trust in Abu al-Abbass's narration. Interpretation in Shi^ca jurisdiction does not refer to the workings of the rational, the logico-philosophical derivation of reality; on the contrary, it has a religious-metaphysical connotation.

According to Shi^ca theology, the human mind is incapable of understanding the intrinsic meaning (*al-batin*) of the revealed text; it appreciates the extrinsic meaning (*al-zahir*) only. Therefore what man knows is only an interpretation of the text and not the text itself. The text is a secret known only to God or whoever he entrusts (such as the 'imam) to explain it to man. Among the Sunni the 'imam is a leader in prayer; among the Shi^ca he is chosen (by God) to set man on the right path. Putting these theological issues aside, the difference between Sunni and Shi^ca jurisdiction lies more in the sociology of law than in its contextual meaning, applications, or methods of derivation.

Shi^ca Rituals and Religious Men

The Shi^ca of Bahrain recognize three categories of religious men: the *shaikh* or *qadi*, the *khatib* or *mulla*, and the *sayyid*. The shaikhs or qadis are the jurists who rule as magistrates, well versed in Islamic law. The khatibs or mullas are the ministers who deal with ethics, religious history, rituals, and traditions. The sayyids are those who

claim descent from the house of Ali, the first Shi^Ca 'imam, and have no particular claim to religious knowledge. It is possible, however, for the roles implied by the three categories to be combined in one person, as in the case of some *mujtahids* (interpreters). A *mujtahid* is the highest authority on law and theology combined, and may at times be a descendant of the Holy House. They are normally found in specialized Shi^Ca seminaries and rarely serve in public; Bahrain at present has no *mujtahids*.

The Jurists

The Shi^Ca jurists deal with the personal and family affairs of the laity—a considerable task given the quality of the cases brought to their attention. The court records I checked in Bahrain covered a whole variety of issues pertaining to family relationships, sexual perversions, divorce, cursing, and the failure to support a wife, parent, or child or to fulfill a promise. Family problems are held in great secrecy. Only the jurist knows about them, and this gives him tremendous power of interference—a privilege often translated into social power. By contrast, the cases brought before the Sunni *qadi* have been rather formal, pertaining mainly to marriage and divorce. the difference between the Sunni *qadi* deliberating on formal matters and the Shi^Ca *qadi* ruling on formal as well as on private affairs can be explained on two grounds: the influence of religion on the Shi^Ca, and the fact that the Shi^Ca jurists emerge spontaneously, without government intervention.

The social influence of religion has been much stronger on the Shi^Ca than on the Sunni. To oversimplify, religion to the Sunni (this is derived from Bahraini data only) is a matter between man and God vis-à-vis the Islamic teachings as revealed in the Qur'an. "Tribal" law takes precedence over religious law in regulating inter- and intragroup affairs. To the Shi^Ca, on the other hand, religion is a group affair linking the less knowledgeable with the more knowledgeable. In Sunni conventional practices, salvation could be attained by observing the necessary rulings of the faith, which formally amount to five, in this order of importance: confession of faith (*al-shahada*), daily prayer (*al-salat*), almsgiving or tithing (*al-zakat*), fasting at Ramadan (*al-saam*), and pilgrimage (*al-hajj*) if one can afford it. In Shi^Ca practice, salvation is sought by observing these necessary rulings plus following the paths of the learned men, a phenomenon they call *taqlid*--religious imitation.

Imitation is a logical outcome of the Shi^Ca belief that the text

contains two meanings, the extrinsic, which is known to everybody and includes the five necessary rulings of the faith, and the intrinsic, which is known only to the learned few and the select. The paths of the learned regulate a whole range of behaviors--drinking coffee or eating food prepared by non-Muslims, the treatment of female patients by male doctors, the teaching of female students by male instructors, and many other acts of this order. In this context "interpretation" (*'jtihad*), which is popularly believed to be an instrument of change, may in reality obstruct change. Implicit in the principle of "interpretation" is the belief that all proper behavior can be derived from Islamic tradition, which imposes upon the convert a constant obligation to know the official religious stand on the day-to-day activities of life. If he is ignorant of the intrinsic meaning of the revealed text and lacks the specialized skills to derive laws of conduct from tradition, the layman should follow the behavior of those who have a claim to knowledge--the learned men. Whose path to follow or whom to imitate is left to the free choice of the individual. On this issue the Shi^ca of Bahrain are divided into two factions, *al-'akhbar* and *al-'usul*, a division that prevails in the Gulf and Arabia more than anywhere else in the Shi^ca world. It is not accurately known how this division arose in history; it existed in Bahrain long before the Al-Khalifa invasion, and it helped in the conquest. The difference between *al-'akhbar* and *al-'usul*, which concerns us here, is that the former permit the "imitation" of the learned 'imam whether dead or alive; the latter, only if alive.

Sociologically speaking, the difference is much deeper than it may seem. The 'akhbar who allow "imitation" of a dead 'imam, thus permit the continual emergence of religious leaders who play simultaneously the role of the imitators and the imitated. They are the imitators in the sense that they follow the path of a dead 'imam, and they are the imitated because they prescribe in practice the model to be followed. Combining the two roles in one person has produced several religious brokers whose task has been to unite the people in a single system of religiousness. Allowing the imitation of dead 'imams, the 'akhbar in contemporary Bahrain hold Friday prayer after three living shaikhs: Ibrahim bin Nasir Al-Mubarak, who lives in the village of Ali, Abd al-Husain bin Salman of Jidd Hafs, and Mansur bin Muhammad bin Salman, who lives in Sitra. The 'usul, on the other hand, do not hold Friday prayer, for lack of a just 'imam living at present in Bahrain.

To assume this duality of roles (the "imitator" and the "imitated"), the shaikh must be well versed in religious law and must act according to religious teachings. He must have knowledge and, at the same time, be able to live up to its demands. I had the opportunity to meet several times with one of the three shaikhs after whom the 'akhbar pray; he impressed me as a serene and quiet person who outwardly leads an austere life. In public meetings he does not raise his voice--he whispers to an assistant called *rajjal* who then repeats the pronouncements of the shaikh in louder voice. He has a reputation for concluding marriage contracts and resists the temptation of divorcing people. Rarely, if ever, does he mix with people in public places; he is always visited at home. He keeps four wives at a time, "in order to establish justice among them." In other words, he takes the Qur'anic precept (marry two, three, or four, and should you be fearful of injustice marry one) as a challenge he wants to accomplish. A man of his status, who carries the burden of the ideal in society, often falls into contradictions. Although he leads an austere life, he is a proprietor of several modern apartment houses from which he draws a very high income. Although he has the reputation of refusing to deliberate on cases of divorce, because he likes to see the faithful united rather than separated, he himself has divorced twice.

Between the ordinary Shi^ca and those men who provide the community with demonstrable models of "imitation" lie several shaikhs of lower quality, but who all fulfill the role of the "imitator-imitated." The socioreligious value of these shaikhs is a source of controversy among the Shi^ca of Bahrain. There is consensus regarding the qualities a shaikh must possess to be an "imitatable" model, but there is disagreement over whether a particular shaikh does, in practice, possess these qualities. Judgment on this issue is often tempered by elementary social relationships and political outlooks: kinship affiliation, village of origin, political convictions, modernity, and the like.

The Mullas or Khatibs

The word khatib is applied to mullas of high reputation. Unlike the jurists who receive formal training in law and theology, many of the mullas have acquired the skills of the profession through personal experience and self-education. Whoever acquires the ability to speak on the martyrdom of Husain in the context of Shi^ca traditions and history almost automatically becomes a mulla. The Shi^ca have turned the incident

of Husain's rebellion against Yazid, the second Omayyad caliph, into a very elaborate ritual that lasts for thirteen days, from the first to the thirteenth of Muharram. The ritual formally ends on the tenth day when Husain is murdered, but it continues informally through the thirteenth. On the eleventh and twelfth days the womenfolk of Husain are taken captive, first to Kufa, then to Damascus, and are eventually returned to Medina in Hijaz. On the thirteenth day of the ritual Zain al-Abidin, the sick son of Husain who survived the battle, returns to Karbala to bury the dead.

The details of the ritual need not and do not correspond to the facts of history. The mullas conform to the essentials of the rebellion but vary tremendously on the details, each according to his level of achievement and the quality of his audience. I will briefly mention some of the general characteristics related to the social position of the mulla and thus to the authority system, reflecting my own understanding of the ritual, not necessarily official views. My understanding is derived from direct observation and participation, not from theological texts on the subject.

The ritual begins on the first day of Muharram and ends on the thirteenth, reaching its climax on the tenth, the day Iman Husain was slain by the Omayyad troops. Between the first day and the sixth, the mullas relate Husain's military expedition against Yazid from his starting point at Medina until he arrived in Karbala by way of Mecca. They prepare the audience for the battle, which, according to the ritual, comes on the seventh day. In these six days the mullas expound on the uncompromising stand of Husain on matters of principle. This refers specifically to his right to the caliphate, according to Shi^c traditions.¹ The mullas refer to the many temptations for Husain to abandon his cause, temptations he utterly rejected. They believe Husain was chosen to be a martyr; he knew in advance that he was "destined" to lose the battle and be slain at Karbala. His martyrdom was meant to demonstrate to the faithful that "giving away one's blood for a right is an act of eternal justice," as one mulla put it. The determination of Husain to fight in spite of the temptations not to do so or of his prior knowledge of the fateful result are strongly projected in the ritual against the vulnerability of humankind, who easily fall victim to temptations and mundane matters: material gain, positions of power, worldly pleasures, the fear of loss of wealth.

Although it revolves around the person of Husain, the ritual of

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the hero who fears only God and fights injustice tirelessly, with vehemence and zeal. Al-Qasim, who joined the battle while young and married Husain's daughter Sakina only few moments before his death, is seen as a symbol of human tenderness, softness, and warmth mixed with courage and rebellious zeal. Qasim's day of the ritual is observed with great reverence by the Shi^ca women of Bahrain, who light candles for the occasion. In the past many marriages were concluded on this day, thus combining joy and grief. One khatib who was well versed in social sciences took note of al-Qasim's day to speak to the audience on the right of women to modern education and freedom of decision--subjects on which the Shi^ca of Bahrain have been deeply divided politically. Ali al-Akbar, the son of Husain, is taken as a symbol of family unity, solidarity, and corporate action. He came to the rescue of his father, who was left alone on the battlefield suffering from the loss of brothers, nephews, and cousins. Many a mulla on this occasion focuses on parent-child relationships and the rules that govern them in Islam. Husain is martyrdom itself, the summary of sacrifice, the model 'imam to be "imitated," the "right" (*al-haq*) that should never fail or be compromised. (*Haq* in Arabic is also "truth.")

In spite of this variation in symbolic values, the martyrs are ritualistically murdered in more or less the same way. Each charges against the enemy single-handed and kills as many enemy troops as the mulla sees fit. Some mullas estimate the number of enemy soldiers killed at the hands of one martyr at a few hundred, some estimate it at a few thousand, and a few estimate it in the millions. The number here is exaggerated to indicate the potency of the martyr. Official Shi^ca sources estimate that the number of troops fighting on Husain's side varied between forty-five and eighty-two and that the enemy forces were about thirty thousand (al-Maqram 1972, pp. 270-72).² After he makes his first round, the martyr seeks water to quench his thirst, which he is always denied by the enemy, who had laid siege to the only freshwater spring (al-Mashra^ca) on the battlefield. The martyr returns to Husain's camp, where he quenches his thirst miraculously by sucking Husain's finger, tongue, or ring. When the martyr charges again and kills more and more of the enemy troops, he eventually falls into a trap and is then "treacherously" murdered. He is always mercilessly murdered by a cheat (*mal^cun*) using all sorts of deceptive tricks. His body is mutilated piece by piece in the ritual. The heads of the martyrs are severed and

on the eleventh of Muharram are taken to Damascus along with the women captives. The audience responds to the murder of the martyrs with loud cries of grief. Public opinion asserts that a mulla who cannot make his audience cry is "no good." Once the ritual comes to end, and it often lasts about an hour, those who have been shedding real tears quickly shift back to ordinary moods.

The mullas I knew well can be divided into two broad categories: those who focus on the "historical" happenings of the battle (*al-sira*), and those who take the battle as a symbol signifying the right of rebellion against injustices, wherever and whatever they be. The first type approach the ritual in a very routine, stereotypic manner. Many of the mullas who belong to this category have memorized the details of the battle and simply recite them on various occasions. They never alter the text to accommodate the contents of the ritual to the rising sociopolitical circumstances of the day. The second category, on the other hand, observe as little routine as possible and try to relate the events of the battle to current issues. It was this category of the mullas who were active in the labor unrest and constitutional rebellion of the mid-fifties.

Almost all the Shi'a of Bahrain participate in the ritual, each according to his ability and means. Men and young boys attend the ritual in a "funeral house" built for this purpose (see chap. 8 for details); women and young girls gather in groups outside the funeral house or close to it in private houses in the neighborhood. They hear the mulla's speech broadcast through several loudspeakers installed around the funeral house to reach the audience in the vicinity. Whether the participants assemble inside the funeral house, in the open air, in the neighboring houses, or each in his own house, they all react to the murder of the martyr with cries of grief. They say that "crying for the martyr assures the faithful of a place in paradise." Beginning with the murder of al-Qasim on the eighth day, several groups, predominantly of young men, roam the streets in well-ordered processions, beating their chests rhythmically in time with various chants composed for the purpose. The organization and political value of these processions will be discussed at greater length in chap. 8; the power of a funeral house is measured by the intensity and magnitude of the processions identified with it.

The chants indicate the political inclinations of the groups composing the processions: people with socialist tendencies focus on labor oppressions and inequalities of treatment, and religionists stress the

theme of Shi^ca oppression. On the tenth day, the murder of Husain, these processions increase greatly in number and intensity, each "funeral house" trying to conduct as elaborate a scene as possible. Acts and scenes are so varied that they cannot be fully described in a few words; only the most striking features are mentioned here. One procession advances at the sound of drums with the participants beating their backs with bundles of wire (*sangal*), or with chains whose ends are tied to sharp bits of steel that continually make slight wounds around the waist, gradually biting into the outer layer of the skin. The members of another procession, wearing white robes, beat their closely shaved heads with swords, chanting rhythmically, "Haidar, Haidar . . .," referring to Imam Ali.³ The blood that splatters over their bodies is intended to illustrate the horror of life when injustice prevails in the world. Justice, which here has a metaphysical connotation, will be restored only with the return of the Hidden Twelfth Imam.

Between the processions there march a number of separate small groups, each depicting a particular scene of the battle. These scenes include stray horses or camels covered with sheets of green and black cloth, indicating that their murdered knights belonged to the House of Ali; or huge paintings of Husain being slain by al-Shimr or grasping his infant son to protect him from the enemy; or a young child in grief mounted on a horse treading lonely on earth, in reference to Zain al-Abidin, the only male child who survived the battle. The Shi^ca of Bahrain, unlike the Shi^ca of Lebanon, do not enact the happenings of the battle in one play, known as the passion play. Instead, they enact a variety of scenes taken from the battle, which include the return of the women captives to Medina, the marriage of al-Qasim to his cousin Sakina, the daughter of Husain, or the burial of the martyrs. The last one refers to the belief that Zain al-Abidin returned to Karbala on the thirteenth day of Muharram and buried the martyrs who had died in defense of the Shi^ca cause.

On the tenth day these processions start early in the morning, about eight o'clock, and continue until one or two in the afternoon. The line of participants in Manama, when I observed them in 1975, continued about four hours. When the processions end, each wounded participant retreats to his own "funeral house" to wash his blood away by "Husain's water," believed to heal the wounds instantaneously. After washing their wounds the participants are offered a free meal, called *‘atish al-Husain* (literally the rice of Husain), to which other people are invited. Whoever

wishes to enter a funeral house and partake of ^Caish al-Husain is welcome to do so. It often happens, however, that only those who belong politically to a "funeral house" partake of its meals.

Other Shi^a Rituals

Muharram opens a series of mourning days (*taharim*) that continue throughout the next lunar month of Safar. On the twenty-fifth of Muharram, the Shi^a of Bahrain observe the death of Zain al-Abidin; on the seventh of Safar the death of Imam al-Hasan (the second 'imam); on the seventeenth the death of Imam al-Rida (the eighth 'imam); on the twentieth the "Return of the Head," which refers to the miraculous return of the head of Husain from Damascus to join his body, left in Karbala. They also observe the death of Maryam (Virgin Mary) on the twenty-fifth of Safar, that of Muslim bin Uqail's children on the twenth-sixth, that of Prophet Yahya on the twenty-seventh, and the death of Prophet Muhammad on the twenty-eighth. (The Sunni Muslims observe the birth and death of Prophet Muhammad on the same day, the twelfth of Rabi Awwal.) The end of Safar, which is a month of mourning, is celebrated by a ritual, called "the Burning of Safar," in which women and children rush to the shore and dump torches into the sea, chanting "Away with Safar and its miseries."

Other rituals of death are observed at different times of the Islamic calendar. The death of Hasan al-Askari (the eleventh 'imam) is observed on the eighth of Rabi Awwal, that of Fatima al-Zahra (Ali's wife and Prophet Muhammad's daughter) on the first of Jamadi, of Imam al-Sadiq (the sixth 'imam) on the seventeenth of Rajab, and that of Imam Musa al-Kazim on the twenty-fifth. The death of Imam Ali is observed for three days between the nineteenth and the twenty-first of Ramadan.

On these numerous occasions of death, which are collectively called *taharim*, the Shi^a stop working and assemble in their own funeral houses to read the life history (*sira*) of the 'imam or prophet concerned. A special text is written for almost every ceremonial death. When the appropriate text is not available, excerpts from the battle of Karbala and the murder of Husain are used instead.⁴

These calendric, formal, and public rituals are reinforced by frequent, intensive rituals held especially by women in private homes. Women of the same neighborhood hold ceremonial sessions (*'ada*) once a week either alternately in each other's houses or in the house of the mulla's wife. In these sessions they read the texts written about the

death of the 'imams, each group choosing the text that interests them most. The murder of Husain is most commonly used. The ^cada sessions include women and girls of all ages and sometimes infant boys. Participants who are six years old and over respond to the death of the 'imam with cries of grief, which marks the end of the ritual.

Parallel to these rituals of death (*wafiyyat*) are an almost equivalent number of rituals of birth (*mawlid*), held for every 'imam or prophet. It happens sometimes that the two are written in the same text. The difference between them, however, is sociologically sharp. Unlike rituals of death, rituals of birth are informal and joyful, engaging mainly the female sector of society. They are not solemn occasions and therefore do not follow a fixed calendar. They are held on social occasions such as marriage, circumcision, the birth of a child, or the seventh day of pilgrimage. On the seventh day of a man's pilgrimage to Mecca, his wife, relatives, or neighbors may hold a *mawlid* for him in Bahrain. In rituals of death, the Shi^ca often focus on the murder of Husain; in rituals of birth they relate to the birth of Prophet Muhammad. They explain this difference on the grounds that the birth of Prophet Muhammad was the "honor" of Islam; the murder of Husain was its shame. Birth rituals are conducted at ease and in a relaxed atmosphere and often include consuming a variety of foods and drinks--salted seeds and nuts, fresh fruits, tea--and smoking the waterpipe (*qidu*); interspersed with songs, gossips, and cheers of joy. The food is eaten while the birth ritual is being carried on; in death rituals, it is eaten only after it has ended.

Additionally, women of the same neighborhood or kinship group hold a variety of vowing rituals at home in which they read excerpts from a text called *Hallal al-Mashakil* (the Problem Solver). This text relates in essence the story of Imam Ali with Abdullah al-Hattab. Unlike birth rituals, which center on social institutions (marriage, pilgrimage, birth), vowing rituals are occasioned by personal crises--sickness, disappointment in love, wanting a male child, and other problems of this order. These rituals always involve a visit to one of the several Shi^ca shrines scattered over the island. Sa^csa^c shrine is in the vicinity of the village of Askar, Maytham shrine in al-Jufair, al-Alawiya in Jabalat Habshi, Abd al-Aziz in al-Khamis, al-Amir Zaid in Malichiyah. Shrines are the burial places of renowned jurists, theologians, heroes of war, or men of letters. They are distinguished from other constructions by the

green and blue flags implanted on the tomb. In tribal Bahrain, before the administration reforms of the 1920s, these shrines and the donations given to them were supervised by the religious shaikhs; today they come under the authority of the Shi^ca Endowment Department in the Ministry of Justice.

This discussion of the variety of Shi^ca rituals is intended to show the kind of religious culture religious men deal with. The mullas are the specialists on ritualistic life, and many of them compose or copy the texts used in these rituals. They lead in ceremonies upon invitation, a task for which they are given an honorarium that varies with the reputation of the mulla and the social position of the organizer(s). In 'Ashura', for example, mullas are hired by various "funeral houses" for a "bargained" honorarium that varies between U.S. \$150 and \$2,000. In 1975 the few noted mullas who received high pay were Iraqi by nationality, which created considerable dissatisfaction among the Bahraini specialists. The honoraria mullas collect form only part of their income; they have other occupations as well: commission agents, real-estate agents, heads of Qur'anic schools, private tutors, and the like.

The jurists who are trained in law, on the other hand, earn their livelihood through entirely different means. After the administration reforms of the 1920s, some of them became government appointees receiving fixed salaries. They earn much more, however, by making themselves available at home to conclude marriage contracts or deliberate on divorces. They collect, as they did before the administration reforms, one-fifth of the bridewealth or a fixed fee of about U.S. \$5 on every marriage or divorce they conclude. The fees vary with the means of the client--wealthy clients pay higher fees. The jurists are entitled to what is known as "the right of the imamate" (*haq al-'imama*), which includes in theory one-fifth of the bridewealth pledged by the husband to the wife at the time of marriage, one-fifth of the expenses of pilgrimage to Mecca or to the holy shrines of Najaf and Karbala, and one-fifth of an individual's annual savings. In practice, the fifth is never calculated mathematically, not even by the most successful merchants. These fifths are never handed over to the jurist as if they were a form of tax; they are granted as honoraria on different occasions. One of the most common ways of granting a "fifth" to a religious jurist is to invite him for lunch or dinner, or hold a feast in his honor, and at the end of the meal confidentially pass him an honorarium. Given the strong social pressure for

upward mobility in Bahrain nowadays, in the case of some jurists these honoraria may amount to a respectable income.

Ideally, the jurist uses part of the money to cover the bare necessities of life, which are difficult to define in precise terms; the rest must be used to support religious education. Many jurists in Bahrain have been trained at the hands of renowned tutors (*allama*) in the Shi'a seminary at Najaf, where students choose their own tutors. It often happens that a tutor of means, who is capable of supporting his students, attracts more novices than tutors who are poor. The means of the tutor depends upon the subsidies he receives from his trainees who, after graduation, serve in different parts of the Shi'a world. Part of the fifth a jurist collects locally should go, in principle, to his tutor in Najaf. Whether it does is difficult to verify. It may also happen that a jurist may contribute to the costs of training a novice, a relative or otherwise, in Islamic law at Najaf.

The 'Asyad

The 'asyad are those who claim descent from the House of Ali. They are delimited by genealogy, not by religious training or knowledge. They are distinguished from the jurists or the mullas by wearing black or green turbans; black signifies the Hashimite house and green the Alawite house.⁵ Unless they belong to either house, the mullas do not distinguish themselves by dress or color; they dress the same way commoners do. Jurists and mullas acquire status and position by achievement, by training in religious law and traditions. There is no consensus on who is a sayyid, nor is there a standard method by which such claims are legitimized. It is a claim that is very difficult to prove historically; a sayyid is simply the son of another sayyid, an inherited title. The Shi'a of Bahrain are divided upon this issue. None of the 'asyad I learned about enjoys the consensus of the community with regard to his noble "holy" descent. They come from all walks of life: the rich and the poor, the employed and the unemployed, the literate and the illiterate, the educated and the uneducated, the merchant and the jurist, the mulla and the khatib, the teacher and the technician, the petty trader and the tradesman, the clerk and the taxi driver. Some of them are highly revered; others are treated with marks of subordination. As a matter of fact, those who are not distinguished socially do not make it a point to

flaunt their noble origin in day-to-day interaction.

It is my impression that mullas and khatibs of foreign origin seem to claim descent from the House of Ali much more often than the locals, and that this category is more prone to these pretensions than the jurist category. Claiming descent from the House of Ali earns social prestige for the rich and modifies their interaction with the laity. It may earn the poor a livelihood. Some of the Shi^Ca find it religiously imperative to contribute to the livelihood of a poor sayyid. Donations of this sort are considered *zakat*, a form of tithe required by religious law. By contrast, donations given to the poor are considered charity (*sadaqa*), recommended but not required by Islamic teachings.

Tribal Rule and Religious Authorities

I will now discuss how the Shi^Ca religious authorities were fitted into tribal rule and government during Isa bin Ali's reign. Unlike the tribal councils, who were concerned with the control and exploitation of economic resources, the religious courts dealt with people's social and personal affairs. The Sunni court was incorporated into the regime as a subsidiary function of "government," accommodating religious law to the dictates of tribal domination. Its rulings were sometimes enforced by the emirs and fidawis of Manama and Muharra--especially if those rulings concerned the urban population of nontribal origin. Aside from prayer, hardly any ritual in Sunni Islam calls for specialized religious knowledge. In collective prayers, often held on Fridays, any person may serve as leader ('imam) if so designated by the congregation. The religiously oriented Sunni in Bahrain hold "circles" (*halaqat*) in which the participants take turns reading religious texts and reciting poetry in praise of Prophet Muhammad. These are voluntary gatherings of worship attended by friends and neighbors, none claiming expert knowledge of religion.

Unlike the Sunni court, the Shi^Ca court always resisted incorporation into the government structure, and consequently its rulings were sanctioned only by consensus derived from religious precepts. Of the three categories of Shi^Ca religious men, only the jurists exercised authority derived from their knowledge of religious law. The mullas and the 'asyad had moral pressure reinforcing religious sanctions but had no authority to deal with law as such. It was the jurists who held court, reconciled personal and group conflicts, and deliberated on a variety of personal misconduct. They received zakat and various forms of tithes

and supervised endowment land pledged for the Martyr Husain.

Before the 1920s, endowment land included shrines, fish traps, palm groves, cultivated land, houses, and shops, which collectively amounted to a sizable source of revenue. It was "revenue" because the income of the Shi^Ca jurists was meant to be redistributed to other religious services. Redistribution is an act of government, which imposed upon the Shi^Ca jurists dual and contradictory roles. Whereas in the eyes of the tribal regime they were simply religious specialists and leaders, their followers treated them as the "legitimate" government. This duality of role has been the source of many conflicts between Shi^Ca religious authorities and the regime in power. It has also been the source of continual accusations of corruption directed against the jurists by Shi^Ca factions and government authorities.

According to the cadastral survey of the mid-twenties, the Shi^Ca endowment properties far exceeded the Sunni endowments (see tables 2 and 3). Before the implementation of Bahrain reforms in the twenties, this sizable property was under the personal supervision of Shi^Ca jurists. This means that they, unlike the Sunni jurists, had the makings of a tribal council in terms of controlling resources and exercising authority independent of the regime. Endowment land was reallocated to individual cultivators on the same terms of tenure as land the landlord allocated to renters. The Shi^Ca populace sought the counsel of the jurists in almost the same fashion as tribesmen sought counsel from their chiefs. The difference was in content, not form. The jurists were guided in their deliberations by the principles of Islamic law; the chiefs followed customary practices guided by the character of individual cases. In the first case we have an instance of what Weber calls "rationally substantive" law, and in the second an instance of "irrationally substantive" law (1954, p. 1). In brief, the Shi^Ca courts represented an alternative to the regime controlled by Sunni tribes.

The Shi^Ca jurists were not official appointees; they emerged as leaders from the ranks of the people. Having no hierarchy of office, they acquired status by their personal skills and popular appeal. Though they were graded differently by their followers, these gradations were informally determined by their following, not by a bureaucratic structure. Some jurists became paramount and rich, wielding power far beyond their immediate localities; others remained influential at the small-group level. Those who ruled supreme in the country, such as Shaikh Khalaf al-Usfur,

necessarily conflicted with the Sunni tribal regime whose authority they challenged. Unlike Jasim al-Mihza, a Sunni jurist whose "office" was an integral part of tribal "government," Khalaf al-Usfur operated independent of the regime, exercising authority as conferred upon him by the Shi^Ca, not as granted by the ruler. His authority and power were correctly construed as a rejection of government.

Led by their dignitaries, the Shi^Ca were the most active in agitating for the administration reforms of the twenties, which opposed the entire structure and procedures of tribal rule and government and the traditions on which they were founded. However, the unconditional Shi^Ca support of the reforms was not motivated by modernizing tendencies so much as by the rejection of the tribal Sunni rule. Their religious representatives in the parliament of 1973-75 tried to block various attempts to "modernize" law and some state services (see chap. 10 for details).

Using tribal rule and economy, the councils and the courts, as a baseline for change, I will proceed to discuss the changes that have taken place within the authority system as a result of colonial intervention. Emphasis will again be placed upon the interplay between tribe, peasantry, and urban society vis-à-vis the implementation of Bahrain reforms.

The reforms of the twenties laid the foundations of a civil bureaucracy characterized, at least in theory, by centralization of authority, hierarchy of office, and standardization and equity of law. No bureaucracy operates mechanically; it is always fashioned by the social order it serves. The definition of bureaucracy as an organization that provides "precision, speed, consistency, availability of records, continuity, possibility of secrecy, unity, rigorous coordination, and minimization of friction and of expense of materials and personnel" (Weber 1954, p. 349) is an ideal type always modified by social and cultural dictates. The bureaucracy that emerged in Bahrain in the twenties and continued, with some mild modifications, until the present was shaped largely by colonial intervention, the development of oil, the achievement of self-rule, the social composition of the country, and the tribal order of government. I will first discuss the sequence of events that compelled Bahrain to establish a "bureaucracy," known historically as the administration reforms, then I will take up the contents of these reforms as they vary between tribe, peasantry, and urban society.

Duality of Authority: The Colonial "Agent" and
the Ruling Tribal Chief

Bureaucracy in Bahrain did not emerge abruptly according to a master plan designed by British imperial policy. Rather, it evolved gradually in response to particular historical incidents and to a complex scenario of local power politics. Bahrain was not intentionally selected as a subject of reforms; it was chosen initially as a center for British commercial operations in the Gulf, and this gradually created the imperative for reforms. As I mentioned in chapter 2, the presence of Great Britain in the Gulf effectively began in 1820 with the conclusion of the

General Treaty of Peace. Until the turn of the nineteenth century, British interests were commercial, with little concern for local administrative affairs. Local British officials were concerned mainly with port facilities, pearl production, exports and imports, and a general political order that stimulated international trade.¹ Bahrain at that time came under the imperial authority of the Political Residency at Bushire and was served by an Indian assistant (the latest was Agha Muhammad Rahim) who maintained an office in Manama. This arrangement started in 1829 and continued until 1900, when a British officer was appointed to the post. In 1904 the imperial officer at Manama was changed from an assistant to a political agent, which marked a new era in British-Bahrain relations and subsequently the beginning of change in the authority system.² In 1935 a British naval base was established in Bahrain, and in 1946 the Political Residency was transferred to this island.

As an island, a key port for eastern Arabia, and a center of transit trade and of pearling, as of 1820 Bahrain began to enjoy a special status in Great Britain's Gulf policy. The exclusive agreements of 1880 and 1892 made Bahrain virtually a protectorate. According to the terms of these treaties, the ruler agreed to let Britain control foreign relations and protect the island from any external aggression. He also agreed to accept British "advice" concerning succession, customs, and port facilities.³ Meanwhile, the pearl boom of the second half of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, occasioned by political stability in the Gulf and the growing international pearl market, brought to Bahrain a large number of foreigners who worked as divers, pullers, merchants, or entrepreneurs. This unprecedented influx of foreigners created the problem of jurisdiction over non-Bahraini subjects. Before 1904 this question had not officially been raised; it was understood that British officials in Bahrain would deal with the few European pearl traders who worked there. This included the German firm of Messrs. Prins and Sturffen of Hamburg, who opened a branch business in Bahrain in 1902 for buying oyster shells, and about fifty pearl traders of Jewish background who came in about the 1890s. The ruler or rulers of Bahrain dealt with the rest of the population, as described in chapter 4.

In 1904 a quarrel took place between the employees of the German firm and the fidawis of Ali bin Ahmad, the ruler's nephew, over the issue of forced labor, followed by an attack against the firm led by the Al-

Khalifa shaikh. British officials quickly intervened, stopped the conflict, and earned new concessions from the ruler in the process. He agreed to exile Ali bin Ahmad to Bombay for five years, abolish forced labor for foreigners, and let British officials supervise the affairs of the foreign communities.⁴ This 1904 agreement was immediately put into practice, long before it was formally acknowledged by the ruler in 1909.

The contents of this agreement were not initially considered as serious as they later turned out to be. In a country like Bahrain, with no population census, emigration office, or nationally recognized naturalization policy, "foreigner" was difficult to define. The problem was further complicated by the fluctuating foreign population that worked in pearl production and by the repeated Iranian, Wahhabi, and Turkish claims to Bahrain. Taking advantage of the order in council of 1904, these countries placed their subjects who were working in pearl production in Bahrain under the jurisdiction of the British Agency--a move that undermined the sovereignty of Bahrain. By 1911 subjects of Great Britain, India, Germany, America, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, as well as non-Bahraini Arabs, were placed in the charge of the British Agency in Manama.⁵ With regard to Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, the issue was highly controversial; a large part of Bahrain population at that time could claim, on purely social grounds, to belong to any one of these countries. Such was the case with the Arabs of Najdi origin who claimed to be subjects of Saudi Arabia, the Persians who were Sunni or Shi^ca, and some of the Arab Shi^ca who claimed to be Iranians.

The lack of a precise formal definition of "foreigner" allowed several abuses to creep into the system. Under the pretense that he was a subject of Iran, the Persian merchant Abdul-Nabi Kal-Ewarz issued formal documents to anyone traveling to Iran. By the same token, the British Agency dealt with cases that otherwise would naturally have fallen under the ruler's authority. The agency freed a large number of slaves,⁶ protected several Arab women accused by their families of dishonorable behavior,⁷ and gave refuge to many non-Bahraini Arab merchants and outcasts who had committed fraud, burglary, and other "customary" criminal acts⁸--"customary" because the agency was guided in its deliberations by the Indian criminal and civil codes that did not altogether conform to local practices.

In brief, the order in council created a dual authority system in the country, one system represented by the ruler and the other by the

agency. Between 1904, when jurisdiction over foreigners was granted to the British Agency, and 1923, when the administration reforms were introduced, the two authority systems in the country often conflicted over who governed whom and according to which rules and laws. Wanting to exercise his authority over the Najdi, the Gulfian, the "Turkish," and the Shi^ca Arabs, the ruler of Bahrain claimed them as his subjects; the agency in turn considered it its own right and duty to claim them according to the order in council of 1904.⁹ ("Turkish" referred to Arabs under Ottoman rule.) His authority thus challenged, the ruler silently rebelled against British officials by continually deferring action on port and customs improvements he considered "the darlings of British trade," according to oral tradition. In view of the increased volume of imports and exports, the British officials repeatedly recommended, or advised, that the ruler of Bahrain improve port facilities and customs, but to no avail.¹⁰

The conflict inherent in the dual-authority system that emerged after 1904 coupled with the general dissatisfaction of British officers with the performance of the regime regarding the improvement of port facilities and customs, deepened British involvement in the local administrative affairs of Bahrain. This involvement was heightened by the events of the First World War, which at times threatened the British imperial presence in the Gulf. Fearing the fall of the British Empire and dissatisfied with the way they limited his authority, the ruler opened negotiations with the Turks. In the meantime the Wahhabis, who by then occupied the eastern province of Arabia, began to look to Bahrain. Iran and Turkey had never abandoned their claims to the island. Their position somewhat threatened, the British simply tightened their hold over the country. They learned that, except for some members of the ruling family, the Bahrainis were not in sympathy with the allies.¹¹ They attributed this lack of sympathy, on the one hand, to the passive attitude of the British toward the Shi^ca oppressions by the ruling regime, and on the other, to their hesitance to enforce administrative reforms.¹²

Reforms by Consent

Immediately after the First World War, the British reconsidered their policy in Bahrain. They appointed to the post of political agent many officers who had served in Iraq and had academic training in Arabic language, culture, and society. Captain N. N. E. Bray was appointed in 1918, followed in six months by Major H. R. P. Dickson. Major C. K. Daly was

appointed in 1920 and served until 1926.¹³ With the appointment of Captain Bray, British policy in the Gulf moved beyond simply recommending reforms to the ruler and hoping he would actually carry them out. Bahrain reforms had been a subject of debate between the political agent in Bahrain, the political resident at Bushire, the Bombay government, and the Foreign Office since the turn of the century. Whereas the first two were pressing for reforms, the last were advising a "cautious policy." After the war, however, British local officials in Bahrain were instructed to "seek the amelioration of the internal government by indirect and pacific means and by gaining the confidence and trust of the Shaikh."¹⁴

To meet this end, Captain Bray arranged for Shaikh Abdullah, the ruler's second son, to visit London in 1919. He considered the visit a reward for Abdullah's sympathetic attitudes during the war and an opportunity to build his interest in modern forms of administration. In agreement with his father, Shaikh Abdullah understood the visit differently. While in London, he tried to convince the British government to reconsider her policy in Bahrain and restore to the ruler the authority he had before 1904. Specifically, he demanded that the chief of Bahrain be placed on a par with other neighboring Arab rulers--that he exercise full jurisdiction over all subjects in his territory, be given the authority to select the members of the Customary Council (*al-majlis al-²urf*), and have the exclusive privilege of a direct reference to a higher authority.¹⁵ No formal commitment was made to Shaikh Abdullah on any of these points; his requests were officially rejected in 1920. On his way back to Bahrain, he stopped in Cairo and learned about various independence movements in Egypt. With the collaboration of some of the local urban merchants in Bahrain, he opened the first formal school in the country, al-Hidaya al-Khalifiyah, and staffed it mainly with Egyptian and Syrian teachers.

In the meantime Major Dickson, who was convinced that "British prestige rested on fear and not on respect," became the political agent in Bahrain.¹⁶ He sought to introduce reforms through the civil courts, municipal organizations, schools, and other modernizing institutions. In 1919 he established a Joint Court presided over by the political agent and Shaikh Abdullah to deal with cases brought by foreigners against Bahraini subjects. In July 1920 he organized a Municipal Council of eight members, four of whom were appointed by the ruler to represent the Bahrainis and four by the political agent to represent the foreign com-

munities. Shaikh Abdullah was appointed president of the Municipal Council, and Muhammad Roshan Akhtar, a British subject of Indian origin, was its secretary. The council was entrusted with civil responsibilities--public hygiene, transportation, traffic, water, and electricity. It was also given the right to organize and supervise a small team of municipal guards as substitutes for the 'imara and the fidawis, which were abolished.

Dickson followed the same policy of recruitment in organizing the Customary Council, whereby five of the ten members were chosen to represent the Bahrainis, and the other five the foreign communities. The Customary Council was given the right to deliberate on commercial matters, including pearling. In 1923 it replaced the salifa court when the latter was abolished. In 1920 the regime appointed for the first time a new Shi^ca qadi, al-Shaikh Sulaiman bin Ahmad al-Hirz of Jidd Hafs, to deliberate on Shi^ca law. The appointment came to symbolize a significant departure from previous practices whereby the Shi^ca jurists simply emerged as social leaders from the ranks of the people.¹⁷

During Dickson's days the reforms focused on courts and municipal organizations. They were intended to eliminate the dual authority system that arose in the country after 1904 and that led to many disagreements and conflicts between the political agent and the ruler. These reforms simply shifted the stage of disagreement from private parlors to the Joint Court and the Municipal Council, without necessarily eliminating the conflict inherent in the two contradictory authority systems. Dickson's effort to create a single joint authority system was correctly construed by the ruler and other intimates as an attempt to undermine their unchallenged, unchecked dominance. Not only did the inclusion of "foreign" representatives in the newly established courts and councils limit the generalized and diffuse authority of the Al-Khalifa regime, it also made this authority subject to public delegation, however mildly.

Instead of utterly rejecting the reforms, the regime worked to strangle them from within. On several occasions Shaikh Abdullah, who was head of the Municipal Council and the ruler's representative on the Joint Court, tried to render these offices inoperative on the grounds that they opposed customary (tribal law) practices. The ruler took advantage of the divided opinion between the various offices in the British imperial hierarchy--between the political agent and the political resident at Bushire on one hand and the Bombay government and the Foreign Office

on the other--to continuously pressure the local agent to give up the attempted reforms. Many petitions prepared mainly by Shaikh Abdullah's friends and associates were sent to the political resident and Bombay government protesting Dickson's reform schemes. Those friends and associates included Hafiz Wahba, Jasim M. al-Shirawi, who was director of Muharraq port, Abdul-Wahab al-Zayyani, who was a famous merchant, and many other patriots based either in the al-Hidaya School or in the Adabi Literary Club.

Colonial Intervention and Tribal Resistance

About this time Dickson was transferred from Bahrain. This was interpreted to mean that British officials had surrendered to local pressure and shelved the attempted reforms. But the appointment of his successor, Major C. K. Daly, soon proved these hopes unfounded. A few months after Daly's arrival, events in Bahrain took a sharp turn. Unlike his predecessor, who had deep respect for native customary practices, preferring to ease reforms in through persuasion and conversion, Major Daly was insistently tough, uncompromising, and power-minded. The two years he had spent in Iraq during the rebellion of 1918-20, trying unsuccessfully to force administrative reforms, made him all the more determined to carry out similar reforms in Bahrain. His political tactics were entirely different from Dickson's. As soon as he took charge of the agency, he began to deliberately undermine Shaikh Abdullah's authority, power, and influence, knowing in advance that Abdullah enjoyed support among the tribesmen.

Though Shaikh Abdullah's visit to London had not earned the Al-Khalifa regime the authority it had enjoyed earlier, it had surely boosted Abdullah's image in Bahrain. After the visit, he assumed many public responsibilities at the expense of Shaikh Hamad, the eldest living son of the ruler, who was designated heir apparent in 1893 with the approval of the Bombay government. To undermine Abdullah's authority, Major Daly had Shaikh Hamad replace Abdullah on the Joint Court and the Municipal Council, and at the same time he had Khan Behadur Muhammad al-Sharif, a notable merchant of Persian origin, replace Muhammad Roshan Akhtar as secretary of Manama municipality. At this time the Persian subjects in Bahrain were estimated to be about twelve thousand, whereas the Arab subjects were eighty-two thousand.¹⁸ Likewise, the "enlightened" circle of teachers and men of letters who worked closely with Shaikh Abdullah in

the al-Hidaya School and the Literary Club was promptly disbanded.¹⁹ These measures were intended not to weaken Shaikh Abdullah personally so much as to undermine what this young and dynamic leader stood for in local politics; he was the symbol of tribal power.

Instead of seeking to ameliorate local administration by "indirect and pacific means and by gaining the confidence and trust of the Shaikh," as he was instructed to do by Bombay government, Major Daly manipulated for this purpose the traditional contradictions of Bahraini polity. He found in Shaikh Hamad, whom the British recognized as heir apparent in 1901, an ally whose authority and power were overshadowed by the towering figure of Shaikh Abdullah.²⁰ Daly's initial offensive against tribal rule was to restore to Shaikh Hamad the authority to manage public affairs, in this way driving a wedge between Shaikh Abdullah, who was supported by the ruler and his tribal allies, and his brother, Shaikh Hamad, who was supported by the political agent.

At the insistence of the political agent and with the agreement of Shaikh Abdullah and the ruler, Shaikh Hamad was entrusted in 1921 with the "management of public business."²¹ This was immediately followed by the appointment of Muhammad al-Sharif to the secretariat of the Manama municipality--an appointment that marked the mobilization of the Shi^ca (about half the population) against tribal power. In a few months the administration reforms became the major political issue in the country, dividing Bahrain into many competing factions. These factions gradually evolved into two polarities: one composed of peasant and urban Shi^ca who favored the reforms, and the other of tribal groups who opposed them. The Al-Khalifa ruling family was divided on the issue: some supported the reforms and worked for their implementation; some strongly rejected them and worked for their suspension. Shaikh Hamad and his immediate intimates, supported by the political agent, headed the first faction; Shaikh Abdullah and the ruler, supported by the tribesmen, headed the second.

In 1921 and 1922 the two polarities engaged in an undeclared war of petitions and counter-petitions submitted to the political agent, the political resident at Bushire, the Bombay government, and on a few occasions to the Foreign Office. On 7 June 1921 a large Shi^ca deputation of about fifty dignitaries visited the agency and submitted to Major Daly a petition in his support, requesting the implementation of reforms. In this petition they included a lengthy poem in praise of Daly and the

reforms. On 21 December that same year they submitted to the political resident another petition asking to be put under British protection. Major Daly himself submitted to the Bombay government, through the political resident at Bushire, a long report in which he included specific incidents of corruption in the tribal administration, mismanagement of public services, and the "atrocities and oppressions committed by the regime" especially at the hands of Shaikh Abdullah against the local Shi^ca population.²²

The rejectors of the reforms, in their turn, petitioned against the reforms, requesting the dismissal of Major Daly and Shaikh Hamad and the restoration of power to the ruler. Chief among the petitioners were the pearl merchants, the pilots, and the tribal chiefs.²³ The merchants feared the loss of privileges in trade, port facilities, and custom duties--many paid only a token tax on their imports, often in the form of gifts. Tribal chiefs and pilots considered the reforms an encroachment on their sovereignty and a limitation of their "freedom in pearl production." To them the sovereignty of tribal groups was synonymous with that of independent states. They abhorred the idea of being treated like other subjects in the country, as the reforms proposed to treat them with reference to taxes and courts of justice. Standardization and equity of law meant to them submission to a superior power, which they referred to in their private talks as "the British tribe."

Uncertain of what disturbances the bureaucratic reforms might cause in the Gulf, the Bombay government preferred to move slowly, dealing with each incident according to its own circumstances. During 1921 and 1922 no significant action was taken. In the meantime, the protagonists in Bahrain were becoming impatient with the lack of reforms and continued to press for action. In January 1922 the Shi^ca submitted another petition, but to no avail. In May Major Daly wrote that "the Shi^ca hopes for reforms had fizzled,"²⁴ and in December he warned that the pressure for reforms may "have lapsed indefinitely."²⁵ The rejectors of the reforms interpreted the delay of action on behalf of Bombay government as inaction and proceeded to strangle the reforms by physical violence. Two parties were very active in this regard, though for different reasons. The first was the Al-Khalifa faction, headed by the ruler, who saw in the reforms the waning of their dominance; the second, composed of the Dawasir tribe and some merchants of Najdi origin, saw in them a limitation of tribal authority.

Being the strongest tribal group in Bahrain, the Dawasir never recognized Shiakh Hamad as successor, nor did they pay taxes to the Al-Khalifa regime, on the grounds that such payment implied a submissive status in tribal politics. In May 1922 they visited Najd and earned from the Wahhabi emir his support against the reforms. It was not clear why the Wahhabi emir worked against the reforms--perhaps he saw them as a potential threat to the theocratic state he was establishing in Arabia, or perhaps he wanted to use the disturbance as a Trojan horse with which he could enter Bahrain. The last alternative conformed to his tactics of expansion and the annexation of new territories. His presence in al-Hasa province, while the disturbances were building momentum in Bahrain in 1923, confirmed the second interpretation. Also, his representative in Bahrain, Abdul Aziz al-Qusaibi, one of the renowned kings of pearls, was strongly opposed to the reforms.

The rejectors of the reforms were united negatively rather than positively. They rejected the reforms but disagreed on what alternative type of government should be established in Bahrain. It is doubtful that they ever coordinated their tactics of resistance. While opposing the reforms, they were maneuvering against each other.

The Outbreak of Violence

In 1923 violence took on an entirely new turn. Only a few scattered skirmishes had occurred earlier, most notably an incident of firing at the police posts in Manama and the murder of a policeman in January 1922. The party that did the firing remained unidentified, but it was suspected that they were in accordance with the ruling regime.²⁶ In spring 1923 many unprecedented acts of violence took place, wrecking the peaceful negotiations for reforms. Violence followed the lines of social and ethnic cleavage: urban Sunni of Najdi origin against urban Shi^ca of Persian origin, and Sunni tribes against Shi^ca peasants.

In March 1923 the Dawasir of Budayya attacked the Shi^ca village of Barbar, followed by the Najdi-Persian riots in Manama between 1 and 11 May, and on 20 April. The first riots allegedly started when a Persian stole a watch from his Najdi employee.²⁷ On 12 May Abdul-Aziz bin Sa^cud, the emir of Najd, moved to Hufuf to be close to the succeeding events in Bahrain. On that very day the Dawasir took law into their hands and attacked the Shi^ca village of Ali. About the same time the sons of Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al-Khalifa attacked a Shi^ca village in Sitra. In

these riots, raids, and attacks twelve persons died and many were wounded; several houses were burned, property looted, and women raped.²⁸

These disturbances were meant to intimidate Shaikh Hamad, embarrass Major Daly, and weaken Shi^ca support for the suggested reforms. Shaikh Hamad and Major Daly responded swiftly and decisively. On 14 May 1923 two British military vessels, *Triad* and *Crocus*, arrived in Bahrain, followed on 17 May by the transfer of "the active conduct of affairs"²⁹ to Shaikh Hamad, and on 24 May by instructions to the customs officer to transfer the revenues to Hamad. On the same day the emir of Najd left al-Hasa for Riyadh, and on 29 May his agent al-Qusaibi was deported from Bahrain according to a new agreement between Shaikh Hamad and British officials, granting them "the lawful authority to deport foreigners."³⁰ Likewise, a handful of merchants who opposed the reforms, such as Abdul-Wahhab al-Zayyani and Ahmad bin Luhaj, were deported to Bombay.

To put an end to the generalized and diffuse authority of the regime, on 21 May the British requested the ruler to retire in favor of the heir apparent. He refused to do so on the grounds that he should "consult the tribes first" and was subsequently forced to abdicate on 26 May. The ceremony of abdication was a moving incident. S. G. Knox, the political resident at Bushire announced the forced resignation of Shaikh Isa and the appointment of Shaikh Hamad as "deputy ruler" to an assembly of two hundred to three hundred Bahraini notables gathered for this purpose. The ruler accepted the verdict reluctantly.³¹

The forced abdication of the ruler and the immediate implementation of the administration reforms did not put down resistance. The chiefs of various tribal groups, the *nukhadas*, and many of the urban Sunni merchants continued to oppose the reforms and the newly established regime. They submitted many petitions to the political resident and the Bombay government, requesting the transfer of Major Daly and the restoration of public authority to the ruler.³² Specifically, they requested the elimination of the Municipal Council and the reinstitution of the 'imara system and the salifa court. In turn, the Shi^ca submitted counterpetitions supporting Hamad and Daly and the reforms.³³ In response to these petitions and counterpetitions, the Foreign Office warned on 14 June 1923 that "the Political Agent of Bahrain must not be tempted to interfere too much and too directly in the Shaikh's affairs; otherwise he may become the actual administrator and not simply a counsellor."³⁴

How much was "too much and too directly" was never specified by the

Foreign Office. The Bahraini archives left me with the impression that the British officials who served in the imperial bureaucracy were granted tremendous freedom of operation. They were formulators of policy, not simply executives; for this reason, I have been using the phrase "British officials" in describing British policy in the Gulf. A great part of Bahraini administration reforms were the makings of Major Daly, who gradually dragged the political resident, the Bombay government, and occasionally the Foreign Office into the scene.

After the abdication of Shaikh Isa, public authority fell entirely in the hands of Hamad, who tried to deal with the disturbances according to a formalized criminal procedure. The appeal to a court hearing was a drastic departure from tribal practices, which had predominantly used vengeance as a means of correcting injustices. To frustrate the proceedings of the court, the accused parties, the chiefs of the Dawasir tribe and the sons of Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al-Khalifa assumed collective responsibility for the crimes committed against the Shi^ca villages of Ali and Sitra and threatened the Shi^ca witnesses lest they provide incriminating evidence. On 19 June 1923 two Dawasir vessels closed in on a pearl boat manned by Shi^ca divers and beat the crew. On 23 June, Ahmad bin Abdullah, the hawkish chief of the Dawasir, was detained for a few days and forced to pay compensation for those wounded or killed in the attack on Ali village. This was the first time in the history of Bahrain that a tribe of the Dawasir stature was brought to court under the authority of public law. The fine was paid by subscription, to which many urban Sunni merchants donated.

A little while after this (10 July 1923), two Shi^ca mullas, Abdullah bin Ahmad and Hasan bin Ramadan, were murdered near Budayya in revenge for the role they played in the trials of the Ali outrage. The mullas encouraged the Shi^ca of Ali to "stand on their feet" and provide the court with the necessary evidence incriminating the Dawasir.³⁵ The court inflicted a fine of fifteen thousand rupees on Ahmad bin Abdullah for the murder of the mullas, which was duly paid. Not long afterward, Ahmad and the greater part of the Dawasir tribe (about two thousand) left Bahrain for the island of Raka in Dammam on the eastern coast of Arabia. The rest of the tribe, about one thousand, remained in Budayya under the leadership of Shaikh Isa bin Sa^cd al-Dawsari.

The division of the Dawasir into two factions, one living in Bahrain and the other in Dammam, was rightly understood as a threat to the safety

of the country. The Dawasir could raid Bahrain and retreat to the mainland overnight. The threat was the more serious in view of the Wahhabi ambition to subdue Bahrain Islands. Immediately after the Dawasir arrived in Damman, the Wahhabi emir of Najd promised not to tax them and gave their emigration a religious tone. He called them *muhajirun* (the emigrants); emigration is a missionlike activity in Islam. To safeguard his country's interests, Shaikh Hamad issued an ultimatum warning the Dawasir to either return to their base or leave Bahrain altogether as a body. A little before the deadline set on 18 July 1923 had expired, Isa bin Sa^cd and the rest of the Dawasir left Budayya.

Fearing a Dawasir reprisal, the new regime in Bahrain sent a small force to occupy Budayya and dispatched a British naval force to patrol the pearl banks. The regime prevented the Dawasir from diving on the Bahraini banks, denied them the customary privilege of using the Bahraini undercurrent freshwater springs at Khur Fasht, freed their divers from all contractual debts, and confiscated their property, planning to disperse it by public auction. Additionally, the Dawasir had to endure several hardships in Damman. The emir of Najd, who granted them protection, wanted them to settle in Jubail, where they would easily be accessible to his forces. They settled, instead in Damman, which becomes an island at high tide and therefore is a natural fortress against possible future aggression. While landing at Damman amid high waves, they lost several boats; they also had six casualties in an internal fight over the partition of land.³⁶

The Dawasir's departure from Bahrain and their resettlement in Damman weakened them economically and politically; they were never able to regain their supremacy in pearl fishing and trade. Their fleet, which at one time boasted four hundred boats, was reduced to fewer than two hundred; their settlement at Budayya, which numbered between three thousand and four thousand residents, was reduced by a third. A little after their settlement in Damman, the Wahhabi emir changed his policy and imposed upon them the *zakat* (tax) and a levy of religious warriors.

Confronted with these difficulties, in 1926 they appealed to the Bahraini government for reconciliation and permission to return to their base at Budayya. Shaikh Hamad had never broken relations with them; he had retained in his personal service the brother of their chief, Abdul-Latif bin Ibrahim al-Dawsari. After some negotiations with the political agents, the political resident, and the deputy ruler, the regime decided in March 1927 to allow the Dawasir to return to Bahrain under the follow-

ing conditions: pay a state tax like other subjects of Bahrain; submit themselves to formalized criminal procedures; accept the presence of a permanent police station at Budayya; and recognize the ruler of Bahrain as the highest authority in the country. The ruler was given the authority to appoint and dismiss their chiefs as deemed necessary. Only one chief, Abdul-Latif bin Ibrahim, accepted these terms, returning to Bahrain with about three hundred of his followers. The two other chiefs, Ahmad bin Abdullah and Isa bin Sa^Cd, remained in Dammam. Those who returned were granted ten thousand rupees as working capital to rebuild their pearling enterprises.³⁷

The Dawasir were undoubtedly the backbone of resistance to reforms, but they were by no means the only party who objected. Equally opposed to the reforms was the Al-Khalifa faction led by the ruler, his wife Aisha, and his brother Khalid, who was the emir of Rifa town. After the abdication of Shaikh Isa, Sahikh Abdullah, who had a strong dislike for Major Daly, concerned himself with the problem of unity within the ruling family. He chose to be a conciliator, not a party to conflict, and he resolved many disagreements between Shaikh Isa and the new regime. Like the Dawasir's attack on Barbar and Ali, the first Sitra outrage carried out by the sons of Khalid bin Ali put the new regime's power to test. In both cases the attackers were Sunni tribes and the victims Shi^Ca peasants. The Shi^Ca were the object of attack not because of their religious beliefs, but because of their spontaneous support of the reforms sponsored by Major Daly and Shaikh Hamad.

Unlike the attack on the village of Ali, which incriminated the Dawasir, the attack on Sitra incriminated an Al-Khalifa faction. This confronted Shaikh Hamad with a dilemma. Whereas tribal alignment required him to side with the group he belonged to, rightly or wrongly, public law required him to follow fixed and formalized criminal procedures. The first reflected his status, the second his office. To reconcile this apparent contradiction between status and office, he agreed to banish his first cousins, the sons of Shaikh Khalid bin Ali, but he paid their expenses. Before banishment, they attacked Sitra again in January 1924, taking vengeance on the persons who had given evidence at the formal trials. Launching the attack from mainland Arabia, they wounded and killed several Shi^Ca, including women and children.³⁸ Thousands of the Shi^Ca flocked in protest to the political agency, surrounded it for several days, and demanded immediate action. After a lengthy trial the defendants, including the sons of Shaikh Khalid, received death

sentences; to the relief of Shaikh Hamad, they escaped before the execution. Nevertheless, this was the first time in the tribal history of the country that a court procedure decreed punishment for members of the ruling family, a point of departure for bureaucracy in Bahrain marked by a shift from private to public law. Subsequently, and aside from an assassination attempt on Shaikh Hamad on 13 October 1926, no major disturbance took place. Ibrahim, the son of Shaikh Khalid, was found guilty of the assassination attempt in 1929, but instead of bringing him to court Shaikh Hamad placed him in his personal service in the newly built palace at Sakhir.³⁹ With the objectors subdued, the reforms were fully set in operation.

The Abolishment of the "Feudal" Tribal Estates

While creating a bureaucratic structure implying centralization of authority and hierarchy of office, the reforms of the twenties altogether ignored the issue of legitimacy of government. The question of public delegation, consent, or any other form of representation was not even raised. In other words, the reforms laid down the foundations of a "modern" bureaucracy without establishing a "modern" political system. It is possible to distinguish here between the reforms of the twenties, which were mainly administrative, and those of the fifties and seventies, which were somewhat political. The deputy ruler--the highest authority in the country--assumed office according to customary practices, not according to formalized procedures of representation.

The administrative and bureaucratic reforms undermined the political and economic authority of tribal groups and limited the privileges of the urban merchant class. It became obvious that to be successful the reforms required the reorganization of economic resources and public services, including pearl production, palm cultivation, fish traps, imports, exports, or port facilities, constantly distinguishing between public funds and private earnings and property. This separation marked a major shift from tribal practices, whereby all revenues were treated as the personal property of the regime, to the formalization of public rights. I would like to discuss in some detail how these rights were put in operation, which may provide planners, reformers, and agents of change with a demonstrative model for the rise of bureaucracy in tribally oriented societies. However diversified, the reforms put into action between 1919 and 1927 could be grouped under two headings, the abolishing of the "feudal"

estates, and the institution of specialized offices. The first is discussed in this chapter, the second in the next.

The first step taken in the process of bureaucratization and the building of state institutions was to abolish the "estate" system and the tribal-feudal government associated with it. The cities came under the jurisdiction of municipal councils that replaced the 'imara. The fidawis were replaced by municipal guard, and the emir by a council of which half was appointed by the regime and the other elected by popular vote. The practice of renting ports and places in the market was discontinued. The revenues of the ports were added to the public treasury, and those of the marketplaces to the municipality budget. A small house tax was imposed on Manama city to cover municipal expenses. In later years municipal expenses were covered by continuous subsidies from the national budget.

Only Manama municipality was established in the twenties; other municipalities were established at different times in different cities. Muharraq municipality was established in 1927, Rifa in 1952, al-Hidd in 1956, Sitra in 1957, Jidd Hafs in 1968. Sitra and Jidd Hafs municipalities included many of the neighboring villages. Not all municipal councils were partially legitimized by popular vote; in Rifa, Sitra, and Jidd Hafs municipalities, all members of the councils were appointed by the central government. As a means of achieving public representation, elections have always been a problem in Bahrain polity, from the Manama municipal elections of 1920 to the parliamentary elections of 1973. I will discuss this in greater detail in chapter 10; suffice it to say here that several election procedures were tried, some based on ethnic representation and some on city quarters, but all were discontinued.⁴⁰

In 1951 a central department was established to oversee all municipal activities. The country was divided into fourteen municipal areas, each represented by a formally appointed official. The officials together constituted the central municipal council. In 1957 a *makhtara* institution was established in every village left outside the fourteen municipal areas, headed by a mukhtar appointed by government. The appointed mukhtar was a community member of the village he represented. In 1971 and 1974 the municipalities and the makhtaras were combined into one ministry, the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs. These institutions have always been extensions of the central administrative system, entrusted with supervising public sanitation, transportation, marketplaces, traffic,

construction, and other civil affairs of this order.⁴¹ They have by no means been forms of local government subject to popular vote or public delegation.

Public Rights and Private Properties

In villages subsisting on palm cultivation, the feudal-tribal estate system was discontinued through an intensive cadastral survey that began in the early twenties and was completed in the early thirties. The practice of renting palm gardens was subjected to a written contractual agreement between owner and cultivator, with the terms clearly spelled out. The cadastral survey and the registration of private properties were carried out by an Indian team headed initially by Rai Sahib Chand Puri, and after a short time by a Punjabi Indian, Khan Sahib Muhammad Khalil, who retired in 1954. According to the survey, six categories of ownership were recognized: private property, Sunni *waqf*, Shi'a *waqf*, government land, *dhurriyah waqf*, and *warathat* property. Their relative incidence and the meaning of each are detailed in table 2.

In principle, the procedure followed in the cadastral survey was simple: claims to property were determined by how long the land had been occupied; ten years or more constituted a right to property. If occupation was less than ten years the property had to be adjusted in court. In practice, however, the procedure proved much more complicated than it sounded on paper. The problem was to translate a complex system of usufruct and rent to property titles. Neither the feudal practice of "estate management" nor the Islamic law of "*ihya*" required the registration of property. Only documents of purchase concluded between two persons in front of witnesses had the semblance of land registration. Before the cadastral survey was taken, these documents referred to plots by names that did not have precisely specified boundaries. Besides, the meaning of "occupation" was not clear; did it refer to actual cultivation of plots, or to "administration" of estates, or to the authority to lease or rent?

With regard to Al-Khalifa property, claims of ownership were based upon "gift declarations" issued by the ruler Shaikh Isa to sons, grandsons, brothers, and other close relatives. This is a sample of these declarations:

Say I, Isa bin Ali Al-Khalifa, granted [so and so] the land of [such and such a village] which boundaries are well

known to the public. This is a gift on our behalf while we are in complete control of our faculties.

Signature

Date

These gift declarations were letters of appointment to the administration of estates, which included in the "feudal" setting the right to tax, to recruit forced labor, to rent out palm gardens, to charge a fee for water usage, and also to pasture and fatten domestic animals. It is necessary to mention here that palm gardens owned by Al-Khalifa families who were distant relatives of the ruler were always excluded from feudal estates. Many of these gardens were bought at a market price from the ruling regime and were considered to be covered by documents of purchase, valid claims of property. Excluding these plots, the new regime had to deal with the problem of translating "estate" administration into terms of occupation and then to titles of ownership. The problem was not easy. If claims of "administration" were considered terms of "occupation," what would happen to two people who had administered the same estate at different times? And what would happen to an individual plot that had been part of the directly administered Al-Khalifa estate for less than ten years? Given that a new ruler always tried to consolidate his authority by continually passing titles of estate administration from brothers, nephews, and cousins to sons and grandsons, these questions became controversial political issues within the ruling family. That Isa bin Ali in the later years of his reign pledged the same "estate" to more than one close relative simply added to the confusion. It also happened frequently that the estate he pledged included plots already claimed by the native Shi^c population.

On the basis of these gift declarations, Isa bin Ali's three living sons and one grandson claimed titles to the open land over the water-bearing coastal area of northern Bahrain. The cadastral survey that was meant to reduce conflict between members of the ruling family thus heightened rivalry between various claimants. After lengthy negotiations and consultations with the political resident, the deputy ruler, and the advisor, it was decided in 1932 to restrict these gift declarations to the living sons of Shaikh Isa and to exclude from these estates plots that were already registered as private property. It was also decided that these gift declarations did not give the recipients the right to collect taxes or recruit forced labor. At any rate, by 1932 tax collection and forced labor within the estates were abolished altogether. The boundaries

of the estates pledged were drawn by an appointed committee that included a number of local people who had good knowledge of plots, properties, and established titles. Unregistered tracts that included open land that had no water rights and did not produce rent were considered the property of the government.⁴²

These decisions did not solve all the problems arising from land registration and property titles. To deal with conflicting claims of property within Al-Khalifa family, it was decided in 1932 to establish an officially recognized "family court." This court gradually became the major formal "office" that had the right to deliberate on the general affairs of the ruling family. Initially, it dealt not only with conflicting property claims, but also with the problem of alienation of Al-Khalifa property. Once their property rights were settled, many of the Al-Khalifa tried to sell land to Bahraini merchant prospectors. In the thirties, for example, there were about fourteen such sales pending in court. This rather high incidence of selling property to merchants alarmed the ruling regime, who saw in it a potential threat to family unity and eventually a loss of power. The tight collective control over economic resources has always contributed to the unity of the ruling family. "Control" in this sense does not mean ownership. The "family court" of Al-Khalifa requested that every member of the family (collective control) offer his privately owned land first to the government or to another Al-Khalifa person. If both declined to buy, he could then sell it to an outsider. Once this ruling was put into practice the market value of land was lowered, and few sales were concluded. When Bahrain began to experience tremendous urban growth in the sixties and seventies, this ruling was applied with much more tolerance, to the advantage of private owners.

Conventional wisdom has it that most of the cultivated land has been owned by the ruling family. It was estimated by an official source, before the cadastral survey, that Al-Khalifa owned about two-thirds of all the palm gardens in the country.⁴³ The count taken from the land tenure records did not confirm these estimates (see table 2). The incident of ownership varied with the type of field or plot; the highest incidence of Al-Khalifa ownership was in palm gardens, amounting to 23 percent of the total number of gardens (3,349) in Bahrain. The Al-Khalifa family numbers about 2,000 individuals in 400 families, which means that they own an average of about three palm gardens per family. This average

glosses over an intricate sociological phenomenon; many of the Al-Khalifa families own one plot or none at all. Ownership of relatively large tracts is concentrated in Isa bin Ali's direct descendants, favoring close relatives of the ruler in power.

After the cadastral survey was completed, it was found that many units had been left unregistered. Some people feared that registration of land was a prelude to confiscation and did not bother to claim the plots they owned; others were not able to produce the necessary evidence of ownership. Unregistered plots remained under the control of the government, which gradually dispensed them to close relatives as gifts or token purchases. The pressure of urban and suburban growth recently compelled the regime to grant a large number of small building plots to the public as gifts on the basis of personal letters of appeal submitted to the ruler.

Rent-producing estates such as shops and places in the market that were not claimed by any individual member of the ruling family fell under the authority of the family court. The revenues from these estates plus one-third of the oil revenues granted to the family (reduced to one-sixth in the seventies) constituted the "family" budget, which amounted to about U.S. \$15,000,000 in 1974. A large part of this budget is distributed by an Al-Khalifa committee to members of the ruling family in various proportions according to the following rules of descent, as applied in 1975. The first category of relatives, which included the second descending generation beginning with Isa bin Ali--namely, the sons of Shaikh Hamad, Muhammad and Abdullah, received U.S. \$3,000 a month each. The second category, which included the third generation, received U.S. \$1,200 a month each. The third category, which included the fourth descending generation, received about U.S. \$250 a month each. Other members of the ruling family each received a share between U.S. \$150 and \$75 a month.

The largest landowning category in Bahrain is private landholders, followed by members of the Al-Khalifa family, particularly in regard to palm gardens of the *nakhil* or *sira*^c types that have a market value. The Shi^c waqf seem to "own" the larger part of the other types of plots, except for open land, which is largely owned by the government. *Warathat* property owned collectively by a group of heirs has a low incidence compared with other forms of ownership. The lowest incidence is *dhurriyah waqf*, which amounts to a small fraction of the percentile distribution

(see table 2). Because of its relatively low incidence, the *dhurriyah* *waqf*--which was enthusiastically debated in the parliament of Bahrain in the early part of 1975--did not deserve the attention it received. In the debate, the Religious Bloc, composed entirely of Shi^ca religious men, strongly opposed the mild change the government wanted to introduce. Supported by the People's Bloc, the Religious Bloc defeated the motion (see details in chap. 10). Paradoxically, rumor had it that the suggested change in law was meant to deal with a large tract of cultivated land in the village of Bilad al-Qadim pledged to the progeny of the former ruler of Bahrain.

The category of private landholders includes a large variety of people of urban and rural origins, Shi^ca and Sunni. Statistical information about the patterns of ownership of these groups is not available. My impression is that the types of land classified as *nakl* or *dulab*, which have a market value, are largely owned by the urban merchant class, Shi^ca or Sunni. The other types of land classified as *jubar*, *sirna*, or *daliyah*, which have a subsistence value, are largely owned by "village" inhabitants or by urbanites of immediate "village" origin. The inhabitants of such settlements as Ali, Diraz, Bani Jamra, Sitra, or Shaharak--own most of the smaller plots belonging to these "villages."

It is also noticeable that Shi^ca *waqf* property exceeds by far Sunni *waqf* property (see table 2), which reflects not only the influence of religion on the Shi^ca but the general structure of their communities as well. Most of the Shi^ca of Bahrain are organized around individual "village" communities composed of several small kindreds linked by intermarriages, mainly of paternal or maternal cousins. According to our household survey, the incidence of first-cousin marriages (FaBrDa, FaSiDa, MoBrDa, MoSiDa) amounts to about 41 percent of the total number of marriages. The incidence of in-village marriages ranges between 60 and 70 percent. The incidence of marriages contracted between people related either by descent or by affinity amounts to about 82 percent of all marriages, irrespective of whether they belong to the same village.

It is not my intention to discuss the sociology of marriage among the Shi^ca in Bahrain. I simply want to show the kind of "alliances" created by marriage as opposed to "descent" groups in the Shi^ca villages of Bahrain.⁴⁴ Unilineal groups created by descent, which prevail among the Sunni tribes, are almost nonexistent in Shi^ca villages. The lack of unilineal descent groups, accompanied by a high rate of emigration, has

created in Shi^ca villages, for lack of rightful heirs, a large number of unclaimed plots. This is especially true under Islamic law, which favors descent groups in inheritance. Lack of heirs or claimants to property meant that the plot would either be registered as government property or added to the estates calimed by the ruling family. If a plot is claimed as Shi^ca waqf endowed for Martyr Hussain, the other two claims are automatically nullified, which is what happened. This is perhaps the reason that the Shi^ca waqf owns more property exactly in those areas claimed by the ruling family. The custom among Al-Khalifa was to avoid claiming land already pledged for religious purposes.

In addition to property registration, a series of laws were introduced regulating the lord-tenant relationship. The practice of renting the land was continued but subjected to government supervision. The contracting parties were requested to submit a statement to government authorities, in which the terms of the contract were clearly spelled out; one copy was kept by each party. The positions of the wazir and the kikhda were abolished, and so were the poll tax, water tax, forced labor, and the custom of fattening animals and releasing camels to graze at random in cultivated fields. The number of camels living on the islands was restricted. The ruler was allowed to keep fifteen camels, the deputy ruler fifty, and the other members of Al-Khalifa were each allowed to keep a maximum of five camels, of which two could be milch, breeding camels. A tax of ten rupees was imposed on each male camel and six rupees on milch camels. All of the ruler's camels and ten of the deputy ruler's were exempted from taxes. The rest of the camels in Bahrain were shipped back to the mainland to be added to the flocks already owned there by some Al-Khalifa emirs.⁴⁵

An entirely new taxation system was imposed. Taxation became solely the privilege of the state; all other taxes were abolished. In keeping with Islamic religious law, it was thought admissibile to impose a tax amounting to one-tenth of the yields of palm gardens watered by flow and one-twentieth on gardens watered by lift; one-tenth on fish caught in fish traps and one-twentieth on fish caught in the open sea.⁴⁶ For lack of trained personnel and strong state institutions, however, this scheme was never put into practice, at least not in a standard way. The revenues the government could easily collect at first were the various fees they charged on land registration, contractual agreements for palm cultivation, and the registration of pearl fishing boats. Pearl fishing boats were

required to pay a registration fee that varied with the size of the crew. Boats accomodating fewer than five sailors were charged a fee of seventy-five rupees annually; between six and fifteen, a fee of one hundred rupees; above sixteen sailors, a fee of two hundred rupees. Anyone who failed to register his boat was fined five thousand rupees, and the boat was confiscated.⁴⁷ All boats were marked with the letter B, denoting Bahrain. These revenues and taxes together constituted only one-third of the total budget; the rest was raised through customs. In 1930, custom revenues constituted 97 percent of the total budget.⁴⁸ When pearl production and trade slackened in the early thirties, the country faced serious financial problems. Except for the development of oil in 1933, Bahrain would have become bankrupt, and the bureaucracy established in the early twenties would have withered away.

Reforms in Pearl Production

In pearl fishing communities, the autonomy of tribal councils was checked by regulating and standardizing the contractual agreements between pilots, merchants, and divers and subjecting them to government supervision and court deliberations. Pearl fishing reforms implemented between 1921 and 1923 were the testing point for the entire body of reforms introduced afterward, for the pearl industry formed the economic backbone of tribal presence in Bahrain and strongly resisted the reforms. The moment pearl reforms were enforced and tribal resistance broken, other innovations flowed in almost automatically.

To minimize the merchants' monopoly on pearl fishing, the reforms separated commercial activities from the production of pearls. Merchants who did not own boats were forbidden to grant debts to pilots, which restricted the contracts of debt to pilots and divers who were physically engaged in pearl fishing. These contracts of debt were then subjected to strict measures of control whose aim was to protect the interests of the divers. Pilots were requested to record the accounts of every diver in a special "book" kept in the diver's possession. New accounts were opened in the "diver's book," with the balances proved in the Islamic court of justice. Accounts had to be validated annually, whereas in earlier practice some accounts covered as much as eighteen years. The pilots were required to keep a "general account" showing the outlay on each boat, the value of pearls sold, and the shares of each diver.

To free the diver from being indentured to a pilot through a con-

tinuous claim of debt, loan payments were limited to a maximum of two hundred rupees. The practice of granting advances in kind--such as rice, sugar, tobacco, and coffee--to divers at an undeclared price was discontinued, as was the custom of holding the son responsible for his dead father's debt. Debt transactions that were not registered in the government offices were not officially recognized. Before the reforms, debts ranged from fifty rupees to more than one thousand rupees a year; after the reforms, they averaged about two hundred rupees.⁴⁹ It was also decided that the divers' accounts were to be settled first if a pilot declared bankruptcy. To oversee the implementation of these reforms, new courts were established and the old salifa court was abolished. The new courts included both the Islamic court and the Bahrain courts presided over by an Al-Khalifa judge and Sir Charles Belgrave.

In the early stage of implementation, the pearl reforms were opposed by merchants, pilots, and divers collectively, each group for a different reason. The divers and pullers whose advances were restricted continued to protest the "reforms" in open demonstrations at the beginning or end of every diving season, the time when loan payments were made. These demonstrations reached a climax in 1932, when several hundred divers attacked the police station and the bazaar, releasing the prisoners and looting the shops. As demonstrators clashed with the police, four people were killed and many were wounded. The pilots, who were mostly illiterate, found it difficult to perform the bookkeeping imposed upon them by the new laws. The merchants, who saw in the reforms a limitation on their monopoly, encouraged the demonstrations--some even instigated them. After these clashes and demonstrations it was agreed to have the advances decided upon by a joint committee representing the pearl merchants and the government. In spite of this compromise some Sunni merchants, especially those of Najdi origin, and some Arabian tribes, especially the Dawasir, left Bahrain to continue their pearl fishing in other parts of the Gulf. As a result of their leaving Bahrain, the value of pearl imports and exports in 1921, 1922, and 1923 dropped to about half that of previous years.⁵⁰ As soon as pearl production regained its momentum, it faced new relapses caused by the marketing of cultured pearls, depletion of pearl banks, and the development of oil. More will be said about this in chapter 7. Let us turn now to the second aspect of the reforms--the institution and development of specialized offices.

6 The Institution and Development of Specialized Offices

New laws require new offices to enforce them; otherwise they succumb to customary practices that do not vary significantly from traditional ways. The new laws established in Bahrain made it imperative that the regime simultaneously institute related, but specialized, offices and courts. In the process, tribal chiefs and religious jurists were turned into government executives with fixed salaries. "Benefices" and "fiefs" and the patrimonial administration they implied were abolished. In theory, and to some extent in practice, government was subjected to a single authority system operating within uniform laws.

One of the most immediate effects of this shift from benefices and fiefs to a centralized authority system was the large number of Al-Khalifa minor shaikhs who became unemployed and virtually without sufficient means of livelihood. They were the people who had lived off the diffuse and unspecialized "offices" (status) of tribal government. Many were illiterate and could not be readily employed in the newly established bureaucracy; the literate among them were employed in high offices. The social status of the Al-Khalifa family did not allow these minor shaikhs to engage in the ordinary vocations available at that time--"at that time" because in recent years many of the Al-Khalifa shaikhs have received professional training in engineering, business administration, anthropology, law, and so on, and have been employed in these areas. To accomodate a large number of unemployed shaikhs in the early twenties, a specific amount, estimated to be thirty thousand rupees in 1923, was entered in the budget as allowances to Al-Khalifa. This was in addition to a considerable pension list and the monthly salaries of officials.¹ In 1930, 50 percent of the revenues, amounting to about a million rupees, was allocated as allowances and salaries to every member of the ruling family.²

109 The principle of granting allowances to the ruling family set a precedent

that still continues in varying degrees. It is also followed in all the other oil-producing countries of the Gulf and Arabia.

The transition from feudal-tribal rule and government to a "centralized bureaucracy" (Bradbury 1968, p. 249) was not smooth and easy. Many difficulties emerged, calling for continual reformulation of policy. To this end, the new office of "advisor" to the ruler was created and was occupied between 1926 and 1957 by Sir Charles Belgrave. During this period, Charles Belgrave was known in Bahrain as "the advisor." Throughout his career, Belgrave tried to accommodate the new laws and offices to the Bahrain setting, adding some and eliminating others. In all fairness, the initial task of breaking through the tribal system had been done by Major C. K. Daly. From 1926 onward, the Advisorate and the Political Agency became separate offices; the first dealt with Bahrain internal affairs and the second with British imperial policy. The new specialized offices created in Bahrain focused on the court system, the state police, and the various service and civil departments that became specialized and independent ministries after the achievement of self-rule in 1971. I will discuss the development of each of these offices in some detail and show how they were modified by tribal, peasant, or urban affinities.

The Court System

Before the implementation of Bahrain reforms, justice was administered by tribal councils and religious courts as discussed at some length in chapters 3 and 4. In 1919 the Joint Court presided over by the ruler and the British political agent was the first "formal" court instituted in the country to deal with cases brought to it by foreign subjects against Bahrain nationals. It was "formal" in the sense that it was guided by standardized codes; they used first the Indian penal code, then the Sudanese code, then the British criminal code, changing from one to the other wherever it conflicted with local customs. Civil law was far easier to implement than criminal law; it was derived from proclamations and ordinances issued by the ruler over the past years covering matters related to land tenure, property rights, fishing rights, cultivation, water distribution, electricity installations, schooling, traffic, and transportation. The lack of a standardized penal code has always been a problem in judicial and political life in Bahrain. There is a serious attempt today to formulate such a code in consultation with Jordanian and Egyptian experts, but this has not yet been completed.³ More will

be said about this issue in chapter 9, which covers organized protests and rebellions.

The salifa court that dealt with diving cases was abolished; the cases that had come under its jurisdiction were referred to the Joint Court, the Shari^c Court, or the Customary Council, also called the Commercial Council (*majlis tijara*). This council was a very old judicial institution in Bahrain. It consisted of three or four local merchants who deliberated on cases pertaining to foreign trade. Making decisions by consensus, it had no precedents and met only upon request. It was guided in its deliberations by a written text called *qanun al-safar*, prepared and published in Kuwait about the turn of the nineteenth century. Before the reforms were implemented, the Commercial Council operated independently of the tribal councils and religious courts. In the early stages of the reforms, the council was entrusted with the authority to deliberate on pearl diving cases in addition to trade and commerce. To formalize its deliberations, the council was enlarged to eleven members and later twenty-two members, some of whom were, for the first time, foreign subjects appointed by the ruler. The council was presided over by an Al-Khalifa judge, who convened the court regularly on specified days of the week.⁴ When Bahrain Court was established in 1926, the council assumed an advisory capacity and judged the cases referred to it by the court only.

The Bahrain Court, initially instituted to deal with cases between Bahraini subjects, was the highest court of the government. Appeals to a higher level were made only to the ruler himself until 1939, when an appeals court was established. The Bahrain Court was presided over jointly by the advisor and Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Rahman Al-Khalifa, but after a family dispute Muhammad was replaced by Shaikh Salman bin Hamad, who served intermittently until 1934. In subsequent years, many other Al-Khalifa shaikhs who were close relatives of the ruler presided over the court. The average number of cases tried by the Bahrain Court in 1926 was fourteen hundred; this necessitated the institution of the Bahrain Lower Court in 1927. The Lower Court dealt with minor civil crimes and with cases whose value did not exceed four hundred rupees.⁵

In spite of these additions, several hundred cases were left pending every year, but this was not entirely due to the inefficiency of judges or to the complexity of court procedures. Rather, it was the quality of cases brought to court that prolonged trials and delayed decisions.

There was a tendency among plaintiffs and defendants alike to produce evidence in installments; every time the court convened to reconsider a case, new evidence was presented. The continuous intercessions made by outsiders on behalf of one party or the other further complicated the trials. Besides, the judges, who were not trained in law, were susceptible to personal pressures.⁶

The Sunni and Shi^ca courts were incorporated into a central judicial system. The Sunni jurist Jasim al-Mihza, who held court in his house for many years, was replaced in 1926, because of his old age and blindness, by three judges whom the Bahrainis called the "three Abdul-Latifs": Abdul-Latif bin Muhammad al-Sa^cd of Manama, Abdul-Latif bin Ali al-Jawdar of Muharraq, and Abdul-Latif bin Mahmud of al-Hidd, each representing a special school of law in Sunni Islam. The Shi^ca jurist Khalaf al-Ufur was also replaced in 1926, on account of irregular practices, by Sayyid Adnan al-Musawi of Jidd Hafz. Sayyid Adnan died suddenly in 1928, and no successor was appointed for several months. The government later appointed two: Shaikh Muhammad Ali al-Madani to deal with the villages, and Shaikh Abdullah bin Muhammad Saleh to deal with Manama. In 1935 Shaikh Abdullah was dismissed from office on charges of criminal misappropriation that were proved in court.

Charges of this kind against Shi^ca judges were very common; Shaikh Khalaf al-Ufur was dismissed three times for abusing his office, Shaikh Abdullah once, and in subsequent years others were dismissed for the same reason. These repeated charges against Shi^ca judges arose from the incompatibility of their dual roles. To the regime in power, they served as government officials with limited powers and fixed salaries; to their followers, they represented ultimate government, sovereigns whose authority was derived not from law and the office they occupied, but from the social power they commanded. To the ordinary Shi^ca, the jurists and judges represented worldly government. What the law considered "bribes and misappropriation," illicit exactions of tribute and property, the faithful followers considered religious tithes and taxes.

The government attempt in 1927 to place Shi^ca waqf property under the authority of a special board elected by the Shi^ca themselves clearly illustrates this incompatibility of roles. In view of the extensive property of the Shi^ca waqf, and in view of the repeated accusations of misappropriation against Shi^ca jurists and judges, it was thought advisable to place this property under government control. Fearing that

this ruling would alienate the property from their hands, the Shi^Ca almost unanimously objected to this ruling. The compromise that was to place waqf land under the authority of an elected board was objected to initially by some Shi^Ca on the grounds that it opposed religious law. They accepted the principle of election only in 1930, when they had learned through experience that the board managed the property impartially and with considerable efficiency. In 1927 the board was composed of ten members, and in 1932 of fifteen, who were rich Shi^Ca merchants. The revenues of the waqf increased from about U.S. \$60,000 in 1930 to \$178,280 in 1970.⁷ The elected board has been spending the waqf income on schools, on training scholarships, on building and maintaining mosques and "funeral houses," and on a variety of relief programs.

Because of its low incidence, the Sunni waqf was left under the personal authority of the jurists until 1952. It was obvious in 1952 that the income could no longer cover the costs of mosque maintenance and *mu'adhdhin* salaries. In 1952, a Sunni Waqf Department composed of seven members who were rich merchants was established with the aim of overseeing the expenditure of voluntary donations and the annual government subsidies. About 76 percent of the expenditure of the Shi^Ca Waqf Department, amounting to U.S. \$244,100 in 1970, was covered by the regular waqf income. By contrast, only about 35 percent of the total expenditure of the Sunni waqf, estimated to be U.S. \$120,840, was covered by the regular income. The deficits in both instances were covered by government funds.⁸

Whether Shi^Ca or Sunni, the religious courts became subsidiary functions of the central Bahrain Court, which represented the highest judicial authority in the country. Even personal family affairs could be referred to Bahrain Court, and from there to the specialized religious courts if deemed necessary. The bureaucratization of judicial services weakened the social position of the Shi^Ca jurists and altered the power base of their religious constituencies. Since the implementation of the reforms, no jurist has ever reached the towering stature of the early ones such as Shaikh Khalaf al-Ufur. The rise of contemporary Shi^Ca intelligentsia is partly responsible for this change; the other part of it lies in the changes that took place in the jurists' position as bureaucracy developed in Bahrain. This is the reason the Religious Bloc, composed of Shi^Ca jurists and mullas, moved in the National Assembly of 1973-75 to abolish the Bahrain civil courts and substitute religious courts only. In

reference to the Sunni jurists, the issue was altogether different; they have always practiced law as a subsidiary function of tribal government.

The State Police

Before the implementation of reforms, the organization of defense against external attack or internal strife was built into the feudal-tribal estate system. Each estate had its own military core organized around (but not composed of) closely related agnates--usually sons, brothers, or cousins, headed by the landlord, the ruling shaikh. The bulk of the fighters were recruited from the bani khdaire category, including Baluchis, slaves of African origin, and "stray" Arabs (*masalis*) who had no clear tribal affiliation. The abolishing of the estate system in the 1920s destroyed the military organization built into it. The *fidawis*, who were partisan military groups, could not possibly operate in an impartial capacity as state police. Instead, a municipal police force was established after the institution of Manama municipality in 1920. In 1922, when Muhammad al-Sharif took over the vice-presidency of the municipality, most of the police were recruited from the Persian community; this might have initiated the firing at police from the outskirts of Manama in 1922. The disturbances of 1923 and 1924 made it imperative that the new regime establish a police force that had no social links with any of the conflicting parties and could therefore be used as a reliable instrument of intervention executing the policy of the state. In 1924 a Levy Corps of one hundred Baluchis commanded by a British officer was recruited from Masqat.

In keeping with colonial policy, it was thought that the Baluchis were nonpartisan groups, a "minority culture" in the Gulf that was traditionally used by Arab *emirs* as personal guards and soldiers. In fact, many *fidawis* in Bahrain were of Baluchi origin. The Levy Corps was essentially recruited to reinforce Bahraini defense against possible aggression from mainland Arabia waged by the Dawasir after they had emigrated to Dammam. At this time the armed forces of Bahrain consisted of the Levy Corps, a few Persian police enlisted by the municipality, and about two hundred armed watchmen who patrolled the town at night.

The realities of Baluchi performance did not conform to expectations. In August 1926 a Baluchi policeman attacked his Indian senior in the police station, killed him, and accidentally wounded Major Daly in the ear. A month later the deputy ruler, Shaikh Hamad, narrowly escaped

assassination. In November the Shi^ca village of Sanabis was attacked by armed robbers; about a dozen villagers were killed, and one of the attackers was shot while carrying away plunder. Because of these repeated disturbances, the Baluchi Levy Corps was disbanded and sent back to Masqat. In their stead, a force of about fifty-four former Indian Army Punjabis headed by a British officer were recruited in India. The Punjabis did not speak Arabic and kept to themselves, and subsequently they were proved to be of little help in enforcing law and order, however disciplined they were. Before their four-year contract had expired, the regime, with the help of the advisor, began to enlist a local police force, a process that was partially completed by 1932.

In recruiting local police, the same policy of favoring "minority cultures" continued; in the thirties and forties preference was given to people of African origin. This policy of favoring outcast, minority groups had repercussions on Bahraini subjects, who deliberately refrained from seeking employment in the police force because of its association with socially undesirable groups. The advisor, who was also the head of the state police, repeatedly complained, as of 1938, about the lack of qualified Bahraini recruits. Only about 20 percent of the police force (total about a thousand) in the sixties were Bahraini subjects; the rest were Baluchis, Yemenis, Mascatis, Pakistanis, Yagais, Iraqis, and so on, in this order of frequency.⁹ By the seventies, after independence, this percentage began to change slightly in favor of Bahraini subjects. According to our household survey, most of the Bahrainis who are recruited into the police force come from the urban lower-income groups of Sunni Arab origin.

Unlike the police force, the Army of Defense that was founded in 1968 when Britain declared its intention to withdraw from Bahrain has been mostly recruited from Bahraini tribal groupings or those of immediate tribal origin. The officer corps in the army is virtually constituted of Al-Khalifa and of their immediate tribal allies in Bahrain, including Al-Mussallam of al-Hidd, Al-Ghatam of Zallaq, and Al-Na^cim Rifa. Styled after the Jordanian army, the few urban or "peasant" people employed in the military work in administrative, noncombat jobs.

Service and Civil Departments

The first departments or offices established in Bahrain were those that grew from the implementation of the reforms--namely, the land regis-

tration and palm-garden renting offices, the pearl diving offices, the courts, and the ruler's office. These offices were very modest and staffed with a handful of employees. In his book *Personal Column*, the advisor Charles Belgrave noted:

One morning I said to Daly, "Where are the government offices?" He took me to them. The Customs House, the Court and the Shaikh's office were in two ramshackle Arab houses near the pier. Most of the Customs clerks were Indians, working under Claude de Grenier, the Customs officer, who, along with a young police officer, seconded from the Indian Army, were the only two British officials in the Shaikh's service. The Shaikh's office was presided over by Haji Seggar Zayyani, a charming old Arab with a white beard, who knew everything about everybody in Bahrain, but nothing about files, typewriters or office management. [1960, p. 18]

In the twenties, literacy in English was very uncommon, and this forced the government to employ a large number of Indian clerks and assistants. Al-Hidaya School, founded in 1919, used Arabic as the principal means of instruction; the Arabian (American) Missionary School, founded at the turn of the nineteenth century, initially attracted Jews and Christians, who never sought government employment.¹⁰ It was only in the forties and fifties, at the time English-speaking oil companies became firmly established in the Gulf and Arabia, that the urban merchant class, Sunni or Shi^ca, began to send their children to the Missionary School.

Following the lead of al-Hidaya School, which catered to the urban Sunni population of Muharra^q, the Shi^ca of Manama built in 1929 al-Ja^cfariyah School to cater to their own children. Subsidized in later years by public funds, the two schools were directed by self-appointed committees composed of rich merchants. This sectarian division of education raised many objections among the ruling family, who saw in it a limitation of their authority. They correctly believed that educational autonomy reinforces the sectarian sovereignty of social groups and eventually undermines government authority in the country. In 1932-33 the government decided to open both schools to the public, irrespective of religious affiliation, al-Hidaya becoming the Muharra^q Primary School and al-Ja^cfariyah the Manama Primary School. Between 1934 and 1936 three additional public schools were opened in Suq al-Khamis, Budayya, and al-Hidd, to serve these towns and the surrounding neighborhoods. About the same time a Department of Education under the directorship of Shaikh Abdullah bin Isa was created to deal with public education. In 1927

seven Bahrain subjects, including Shaikh Abdulla's son, were sent to the American University of Beirut, which marked the beginning of a long history of training of Bahraini nationals at this university. With the opening of new schools for boys and girls and the spread of formal education, Indian civil employees were swiftly replaced by Bahrainis.¹¹

Were it not for the discovery and development of oil in Bahrain and the neighboring Gulf states, the modest bureaucracy set up in the twenties would have sunk into oblivion. While the oil revenues sustained a viable bureaucracy, the industry transformed the socioeconomic structure of Bahrain, including bureaucratic differentiation at various levels. "Bureaucratic differentiation" is here used to mean what Eisenstadt (1964) and Hopkins (1968) call "structural differentiation"--the process by which "an institution, previously charged with several overlapping functions, develops in such a way that these functions are taken over by other more specialized institutions" (Hopkins 1968, p. 63). In subsequent years in Bahrain, many new departments and offices--health, transportation, public works, electricity, water, and so on--were established. This is not the place to discuss the development of these offices and departments--two points are dealt with: the general direction of bureaucratic growth and differentiation, and the social bases of civil employment.

Bureaucratic Differentiation

Bureaucracy in Bahrain passed through three phases: (a) "transaction-oriented," which continued from the twenties until the mid-fifties; (b) "civil and development-oriented," born of the popular uprising of the mid-fifties; and (c) the "state-oriented" bureaucracy that emerged after Britain's declaration of its intent to withdraw from Bahrain in 1968 and the achievement of independence in 1971. The last episode is characteristic of excessive "bureaucratic proliferation" (Hunter 1969, p. 194), measured by an unprecedented increase in departments and personnel. These phases are not mutually exclusive; they intersect and overlap.

In the first phase, public education was partially introduced into several settlements; schools for boys, and less frequently schools for girls, were opened in Manama, Muharraq, al-Hidd, Budayya, Rifa, Sitra, and Suq al-Khamis. Other public services and works were concentrated in Manama and to a much lesser extent in Muharraq. Construction began on the Manama-Muharraq causeway in 1929 and was completed in 1942. The

swampy area of Quadibiyah was drained by gradually filling it with city refuse. The sea road on the northern side of Manama was enlarged several times through a series of land reclamations. A variety of government offices was constructed in Manama. Electric power was installed in Manama in 1928; twelve public telephone lines were installed in 1932; a government hospital was built in the early thirties; and a Public Health Office was opened in the early fifties. Of these, only electricity was extended to Muharraq in 1929, which had an interesting effect on summer movements. The ruler and some of the rich merchants who formerly spent summertime at the outskirts of Manama (al-Qudaibiyah), seeking cooler weather, abandoned this custom in favor of electric fans.

Aside from Al-Khalifa affairs, which were managed by a special family committee, everything else fell under the authority of the advisor and the ruler. The advisor, who served Bahrain with faithfulness and discretion, soon accumulated too many responsibilities. Initially employed to organize the revenues of the state, he gradually became head of the state police and a member of the Joint Court, he sat on the Higher Court and Lower Court and Municipal Councils, inspected public education, and supervised all public departments. While the advisor's willingness to embrace a variety of governmental and bureaucratic operations gave the administration coordination and unity of purpose, it deprived it of variety, innovation, and delegation of authority. The bureaucratic reforms laid down in the early twenties remained unchanged until the mid-fifties, in spite of the considerable socioeconomic transformations that had taken place in the country. Public services grew slightly in size; but the bureaucratic pattern remained essentially transactional, confined to enforcing formalized law and unreceptive to new social demands. It was after the popular uprising of the mid-fifties that Bahraini bureaucracy began to respond to the rising social issues.

The bureaucracy that emerged after the popular uprising of the mid-fifties was civil and developmental. It was "civil" in the sense that it regulated employment and working conditions and recognized, however mildly and temporarily, the rights of citizens to have representation and to form self-governing bodies. It was "developmental" in the sense that it led to the formation of new offices and departments concerned with social welfare, agriculture, water supply, public housing, and the like and to the extension of public services and facilities--electricity, water, schools, and roads--to villages and towns. Many of these innovations

were born of the lengthy negotiations between the leaders of the uprising and the government, interrupted by demonstrations, protests, strikes, and sometimes open encounters (see chap. 9 for details). This does not mean, however, that "all" the bureaucratic innovations that took place at this time were demanded by the leaders of the uprising, or that the demands of the uprising were "all" met. The popular uprising simply mobilized the people politically and exposed the weaknesses and deficiencies of the existing bureaucratic institutions, which together called for rethinking and reformulation--hence, the innovations.

On the "civil" side, a new Labor Department and a Government Pension Scheme were established in 1955, followed in 1956 by the Labor Advisory Committee, which drafted a "labor law" in 1957. This labor law remained in operation until 1975, when it was amended to suit the rising labor conditions of the day. The Labor Department was entrusted with the authority of arbitration and with placing the unemployed. In 1958, for example, the department found jobs for two-thirds of the total number of registered applicants--estimated to be 1,008 persons.¹² A new system of representation was introduced on the Health Committee and the Education Committee in 1956, and on the Electricity Board and the Traffic Advisory Board in 1958. Half the members on these committees and boards were appointed by the government, and the other half were elected by the people. But this scheme did not work, and the attempt to invite popular rerepresentation failed. Representation through popular elections has always been a problem in Bahraini politics (see chap. 10 for details). The attempt by the leaders of the uprising to introduce a parliament and self-governing labor unions also failed. The only self-governing body that emerged from the popular uprising of the mid-fifties was the Insurance and Compensatory Bureau, founded in 1956 to deal with vehicle owners in Bahrain.¹³

The "developmental" aspect of the bureaucracy that emerged in the middle and late fifties is illustrated by the institution of the Agriculture Department in 1955, the Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Rural Affairs in 1957, and the Water Supply Department in 1960. Although the Housing Department established in 1963 did not arise as an immediate response to the uprising, it nevertheless fits the general mood created by it.

The Department of Agriculture was concerned with the improvement and introduction of new cultivation techniques, new palm trees, poultry

farms, fruits, seeds, and the like. Many seeds, fruits, and types of poultry proved successful,¹⁴ but the type of economy that emerged after the exploitation of oil rendered these efforts productively inefficient. The experimental garden built near Budayya turned into a national park. The labor force was lured to the stable and profitable job market created by the oil industry and gradually abandoned the tedious and oppressive work in agriculture. A number of factors combined to lower the market value of agriculture, especially palm tree cultivation. Chief among these were the patterns of landowning and renting, the system of land tenure, the decreasing demand for dates as a staple, the changing dietary habits of Bahraini people, the high demand for skilled, semiskilled, or unskilled labor and services, the considerable growth of urban and suburban housing projects, and the increasing consumption of water. The increasing use of fresh water raised the underground saltwater table in some areas along the shore to a range of thirty to sixty centimeters below the surface, which made irrigation difficult and increased soil salinity.¹⁵ A number of springs once famous for the strong flow of fresh water dried up. The uncontrolled use of artesian wells, introduced in the late twenties, and the increasing consumption of water for household and personal use heavily taxed the underground freshwater supplies. The use of water increases with social mobility, the spread of modern ways of life, and the concern with cleanliness.

Little success has been achieved in Bahrain in developing natural resources other than oil and gas. Various attempts to develop agriculture and conserve water supplies have ended in failure. Counterbalancing those failures was a partial success in founding the departments of Social Welfare, Rural Affairs, and Housing, which aimed to redistribute public wealth and services. The actual redistribution process leaves much to be desired. The Department of Social Welfare was initially responsible for fire compensation and for laborers' houses, of which there were about two hundred in Manama and fewer in Muharraq. These houses were built with government funds, to be rented to local laborers whose incomes did not exceed two hundred rupees a month.¹⁶ Gradually the department was enlarged to include culture and arts and youth and family welfare. In 1975 it encompassed a wide range of activities: licensing plays, film censorship and grading, lottery licensing and supervision, the development of pottery and the plastic arts, the supervision of youth centers, cooperatives, cultural and sports clubs, the administration of financial

aid to the poor, and the management of the home for elderly women and handicapped children.

The Department of Rural Affairs was essentially an extension of the municipal principle to cover the fifty-six villages left outside the fourteen municipal areas of Bahrain. It was responsible for issuing ownership title deeds, building licenses, and drilling new artesian wells, as well as for providing health services, roads, water, and electricity. Many of the ownership title deeds were granted as gifts from the ruler to various people in the villages who proposed construction. In the years 1967 and 1968, 173 such titles were granted.¹⁷ In 1971 the Department of Rural Affairs was dissolved and all the villages it served were lumped in three municipal organizations.

In the mid-fifties, electricity, water, and municipal organization were extended to various parts of the country. In 1955 electricity and water were extended to Rifa, al-Hidd, Samahij, Galali, Jidd Hafs, Diraz, and Bani Jamra; in 1960, to Sanabis, Dumistan, Karzakkan, Malichiyah, Dar Chulaib, and Mahuz. In 1957 municipalities were established in Sitra and Jidd Hafs; in 1971 the municipal organization was generalized to include all of Bahrain.

The Housing Department assumed significance in the late sixties and seventies, when urban and suburban expansion grew out of all proportion (see chap. 7). The chief achievement of this department was the building in 1968 of Isa Town, which included several hundred concrete houses. There are six different types of houses in Isa Town accommodating people of different income categories and social and ethnic origins, all combined in a single settlement. The price of houses ranged from U.S. \$3,750 to \$35,000, payable by installment over a period of fifteen years, without interest. At the first anniversary of independent Bahrain the ruler granted a gift of U.S. \$5,000 to every owner, which meant that the lower income groups who lived in the less expensive accommodations had their houses free. Though certain initial requirements are publicly announced, the mechanism by which these "welfare" gifts are granted to the people is not always clear. There is consensus, however, that these grants follow a strict rule of political favoritism and loyalty. To know how these "welfare" gifts are granted is to understand "the politics of the regime," observed an interviewee.

The "state-oriented" bureaucracy refers to the creation of offices and departments that deal with "national" mobilization (consensus), the

formation of public opinion, centralization of authority, and the exercise of sovereignty. In this sense it began to emerge during the uprising of the mid-fifties and continued through the postindependence era. The uprising of the mid-fifties was sufficiently generalized to include the Sunni and the Shi^Ca, the poor and the rich, the urban and the "rural," united in one front demanding a standardized penal code, a parliament, and the freedom to organize self-governing bodies such as labor unions, associations, and societies. Many of these demands were not met, but they certainly drew the attention of the authorities to discrepancies between the emerging social forces and the status of bureaucracy existing at that time. To meet these rising issues, a Department of Information, a Labor Public Relations Office, and a Broadcasting Station were established in 1955, followed in 1956 by the introduction of the press law. These offices and departments constitute a part of a "state bureaucracy" because they are directly related to the notion of nation-building and unity, political mobilization, and the formation of public opinion--problems that concern states, not tribes.

Not only did the popular uprising of the mid-fifties produce official concern with political mobilization and the formation of public opinion, it also generated the need for administrative coordination and centralization of authority. In 1956 an Administrative Council was formed; it was composed of top civil servants, Al-Khalifa shaikhs, and the advisor (Sir Charles Belgrave), who was replaced after his retirement in 1957 by the secretary to the government, G. W. R. Smith. The council was given the authority to deliberate on grievances referred to it by other organizations or by members of the public. Although the council was boycotted by the opposition, who objected to its composition, it continued to operate in this capacity. After Bahrain achieved self-rule in 1971, this council and other official departments became the de facto government of Bahrain--departments became independent ministries. The ministries that were added to the existing departments were those of Defense and Foreign Affairs, which are associated with sovereignty.

The uprising of the mid-fifties alerted the government to the inefficiency of the existing security forces. A special force called the Riot Squad was formed in 1955, independent of the state police and the army of defense. The enlisted elements were recruited from the mainland tribal allies of Al-Khalifa. It is a small task force, about two hundred, that has the reputation of dealing ruthlessly with riots; its members

have no social links with any group living in Bahrain, which is said to "harden their hearts." The army of defense, about two thousand, came into being in 1968 after Great Britain declared its intention to withdraw from the Gulf. The budget for defense and public security grew from U.S. \$8.25 million in 1968 to \$33.25 million in 1975, of which \$14 million was allocated to the army. The total expenditure on defense and public security amounted to 2 percent of gross domestic product (Hazleton 1974, pp. 4-5).

This unprecedented growth in the budget for defense and public security is paralleled by a simultaneous growth in other departments. It is estimated today that there are about 14,000 civil and military employees on the government payroll in Bahrain, managing the affairs of about 220,000 citizens--one employee to every fifteen citizens, one of the highest ratios in the world.¹⁸ Two factors are responsible for this "bureaucratic proliferation," independence and foreign employment. A country of 240,000 run as an independent state will have to "proliferate" its bureaucracy to accommodate the requirements of independence, which necessarily increases the ratio of civil employment to population. Moreover, the unchecked policy of employment of foreign labor is gradually pushing the Bahraini to abandon his job, technical or otherwise, in favor of civil employment. In civil service he earns a better income and higher prestige, which will lead to further proliferation of bureaucracy.

The Social Bases of Civil Employment

A comparative analysis of the offices and departments created at various times in the history of the Bahraini bureaucracy reveals the following variations. All offices that pertain directly to the actual or threatened use of force--the maintenance of law and order, the making of national or international policy, or those invested with the authority of redistribution and welfare--have been controlled by the ruling family of Al-Khalifa. These include the state police, the army, special military forces, the ministries of Justice, Interior, Emigration, Municipal and Rural Affairs, and Foreign Affairs. This classification, which was operating in 1975, is not a fixed system; it changes with the socioeconomic conditions of society and the political value of the ministry or department concerned. The moment a department or ministry assumes a political meaning of some consequence, a meaning that pertains to the internal power balance, it is immediately transferred to the ruling family controlling

the regime. The transfer takes place at the top administrative level.

In Bahrain, Al-Khalifa top officers always recruit technocrats or specialists as assistants, sometimes "experts" of local or foreign origin. There is a tendency to employ British or Jordanian specialists in defense and public security and Indians, Egyptians, and other Arabs in other offices and departments. Those offices, departments, or ministries that call for specialized skills (development and industry, finance, health, electricity, etc.) have been allocated mainly to Bahraini technocrats distinguished in the field of their specialization. Chief among those technocrats in 1975 were the minister of health, Ali Fakhru, the minister of industry and development, Yusuf al-Shirawi, and the minister of finance, Ibrahim Abdul-Karim. This must not be taken to mean that no Al-Khalifa persons are employed in service departments that require specialized skills; many are, but always in relation to their profession, not their social origin.

In appointing or employing Bahrainis for high offices, a fair distribution between Shi^Ca and Sunni has been observed. It often happens that a Bahraini who takes the responsibility of high office tends to employ minor civil servants belonging to his religious sect. In the Department of Electricity minor civil servants are reputed to be mostly Arab Shi^Ca, in the Post Office Persian Shi^Ca, in Customs and Emigration Arab Sunni, for example. This phenomenon is not entirely a matter of favoring one's own group in employment; it is also a product of the way employment is sought. For lack of a formalized system of manpower registration, an employer in the private or the public sector finds it necessary to rely upon his own knowledge of the labor market in recruitment--knowledge that is fashioned by his social contacts and links confined mainly to groups within his sect. In the 106 "networks" I collected in Bahrain, it is noticeable that most informal interaction, and subsequently free flow of personal information, takes place within the same religious sect. The intensity, quality, and content of the interactional scene vary with sex, age, level of education, and social origin, but this variance rarely cuts across sects.

This pattern of employment can be detected somewhat by comparing the occupational careers of Al-Khalifa with other social categories in Bahrain (see table 4). This comparison is not made without reservations on methodology. While data on Al-Khalifa are comprehensive, covering every person whose occupation was known to my interviewees, data on

Table 4
Variation of Occupation by Social Category

Occupation	Al-Khalifa	Social Category						
		Tribal Origin	Urban Sunni	Urban Arab Shi'a	Urban Persian Shi'a	Rural Arab Shi'a	Rural Shi'a in Suburban Settlements	
Ministers	8.6%	?	?	?	?	?	?	
Heads of departments and sections	22.8	5.0	6.3	5.8	4.3	1.0	0	
Judges in court	7.2	0.2	?	?	?	?	?	
Army or police officers	25.7	6.3	0.2	0	0	0	0	
Doctors and engineers	4.3	0	1.3	1.8	1.4	0	0	
Merchants and free enterprisers	15.7	5.7	5.2	6.7	6.8	2.2	0	
Salariéd religious men	0	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.6	0	
Teachers	0	5.7	10.3	11.0	3.4	3.8	0	
Secretaries	2.8	10.6	27.2	21.0	18.4	3.8	1.6	
Salariéd and skilled laborers and servicemen	0	12.6	14.6	11.2	17.9	12.1	3.1	
Soldiers and policemen	0	15.7	6.6	1.7	0.9	1.9	4.7	
Drivers	0	3.2	5.9	5.3	6.3	11.5	7.7	
Tradesmen	0	10.8	5.0	14.0	6.3	6.4	1.6	
Retail traders and peddlers	0	2.5	4.2	8.5	11.6	3.8	1.6	
Salariéd and unskilled laborers and servicemen	12.8	19.0	10.9	9.5	20.3	44.9	64.1	
Unsalariéd and unskilled laborers and servicemen	0	1.7	1.5	3.2	1.9	7.6	14.1	
Cultivators	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	1.6	
Total of percentages	99.9	99.6	99.7	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0	
Number of cases ^a	70	158	541	400	207	314	64	
Percentage of number	4	9.0	30.8	22.8	11.8	17.9	3.6	

^a Foreign subjects and those occupations that are difficult to classify, which all together amount to 196 cases, are excluded from the table, which brings the total number of income earners in 1,249 households to 1,950.

other categories are drawn from a selected sample of fifteen communities covering 1,249 households. The discrepancy between Al-Khalifa and other social groups must therefore be attributed in part to methodological inconsistencies. This is especially true in relation to high government posts; all Al-Khalifa employees are included in table 4, which is not true for other social categories. Not only is there a discrepancy in data collection, but the contextual meaning of the same occupation is not standardized. Irrespective of their occupation, career, training, or level of specialization, all Al-Khalifa "salary earners" work for government, not for private businesses. The few minor civil servants who work as secretaries or "office boys" (see table 4) do so in association with highly placed Al-Khalifa officials.

In spite of these methodological inconsistencies and reservations, table 4 shows that about 65 percent of the employed among the ruling family occupy high posts in government--heads of departments, judges in courts, ministers, and army officers; the rest work as secretaries, clerks, merchants, or engineers. These observations are not derived from the comparison of Al-Khalifa with other social categories as much as from the comparison of Al-Khalifa members with each other. Given the methods I followed in collecting data on occupational careers in this particular context, intragroup comparisons rest on much stronger grounds than intergroup comparisons.

Al-Khalifa have been referred to as if they were a single, homogeneous category undistinguished from within; they are not. In respect to government or civil service, a rather clear line of demarcation can be drawn between four sets of kinship categories compressed between Isa bin Ali, the seventh ruler of Bahrain, and Isa bin Salman, the tenth and present ruler. Almost all minor civil servants and a few army officers are descendants of Al-Khalifa ancestors who preceded Isa bin Ali. Cabinet ministers, court judges, army officers, directors of independent departments, or ministries are chosen from the ranks of Isa bin Ali's descendants according to the following scheme. The ruler's brother Khalifa bin Salman is prime minister, and his son Hamad is heir apparent and minister of defense. His cousins of the first order, Muhammad bin Khalifa bin Hamad and Muhammad bin Mubarak bin Hamad, are ministers of interior and of foreign affairs respectively; his cousins of the second order, Abdul-Aziz bin Muhammad bin Abdullah and his brother Isa, are ministers of education and justice; his cousin of the third order

Abdullah bin Khalid bin Ali is minister of municipalities and rural affairs (see fig. 4). Obviously the exercise of power and authority in government reflects genealogical depth; the closer to the ruler, the more power and authority allocated to a "kinsman's" office, and vice versa. The place where confusion of authority may appear is between the prime minister (brother) and the heir apparent (son), who is also minister of defense. As heir apparent his influence may exceed that of the prime minister, but as a minister of defense his authority is subordinate to the prime minister's. Army officers and court judges are recruited from various other categories, but they are confined to the descendants of Isa bin Ali who are three, four, or five degrees removed from the present ruler.

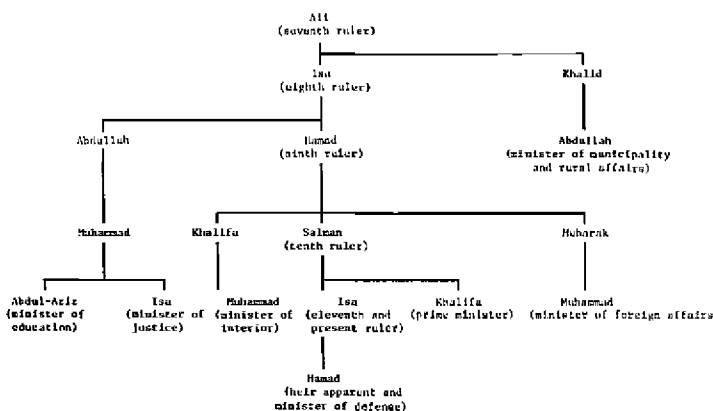


Fig. 4. Genealogical links between Al-Khalifa ministers in 1975

Variation of employment among other social categories, which is detailed in table 5, shows an obviously clear bias in favor of the urban Sunni of nontribal origin, and to a lesser extent the urban Shi^ca of Arab origin. About 40 percent of civil (government) employment is occupied by the urban Sunni and 26 percent by the urban Shi^ca, a total of 66 percent. Considering the percentage of people within the same social category who are employed in government or in government-controlled enterprises such as the oil refinery, the aluminum smelter, and the like, the bias shifts the other way around. A great part (73.4%) of the Sunni of tribal origin are employed in this capacity, followed by the urban Sunni, and last by rural Shi^ca of Arab origin (see table 6). Most of

Table 5
Variation of Social Category by Employer

Social Category	Pattern of Employer			
	Employed in Foreign Companies and Firms	Employed in Private Business	Runs Private Business Enterprises	Employed in Government-Controlled Institutions
Tribal origin	4.9%	3.5%	5.8%	13.9%
Urban Sunni	41.9	27.0	23.4	37.7
Urban Arab Shi ^c a	20.9	18.8	32.5	16.7
Urban Persian Shi ^c a	17.3	14.3	13.8	13.5
Rural Arab Shi ^c a	13.6	30.3	22.4	15.2
Rural Shi ^c a in suburban settlements	1.2	6.1	2.0	3.0
Total of percentages	99.8	100.0	99.9	100.0
Number of cases ^a	81	314	397	431
Percentage of number	4.9	19.0	24.0	26.1

^aForeign subjects and those patterns of employment that are difficult to classify, totaling 297 cases, are excluded from the table, which again brings the total to 1,950.

Table 6
Variation of Employer by Social Category

Employer	Social Category					
	Tribal Origin	Urban Sunni	Urban Arab Shi ^c a	Urban Persian Shi ^c a	Rural Arab Shi ^c a	Rural Shi ^c a in Suburban Settlements
Employed in foreign companies and firms	2.8%	6.2%	4.4%	7.1%	3.5%	1.6%
Employed in private business	7.7	15.5	15.1	22.6	30.5	30.6
Runs private business	16.1	16.9	33.2	27.6	28.6	22.9
Employed in government-controlled enterprises	41.9	29.5	18.5	29.1	20.9	20.9
Employed in government institutions	31.5	31.9	28.8	13.6	16.4	23.9
Total of percentages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9	99.9
Number of cases	143	549	389	199	311	62
Percentage of number	8.7	33.2	23.5	12.0	18.8	3.8

the rural Shi^ca (64.1%) who live in urban or suburban settlements are employed as salaried, unskilled laborers and servicemen--gardeners, messengers, sweepers, or office boys (see table 4).

With the exception of the Sunni of tribal origin, the pattern of employment in government institutions or in government-controlled economic enterprises need not indicate a discriminatory policy in employment. At the time Bahrain bureaucracy began to proliferate, in the mid-fifties and onward, the urban Sunni and Shi^ca had the advantages of higher achievement in formal education, easier access to government officials, and knowledge of job openings. According to our household survey, 30.7 percent of the professional class belong to the urban Sunni, 46.2 percent to the urban Shi^ca of Arab origin, and 23.1 percent to the Shi^ca of Persian origin. Likewise, 53.9 percent of those who have college degrees are urban Sunni, and 33.3 percent are urban Shi^ca. The same tendency continues throughout secondary and elementary education, but with some significant alterations in percentages (see table 7 for details).

Additionally, the urban Sunni or Shi^ca hold more liberal views on the education and employment of women than other social categories. The employed females who earn a steady income, mostly mothers, and unmarried daughters, belong to these two categories (see table 8). Employment among other female categories (wives, sisters, and married daughters) is almost negligible. Upon becoming wives, females tend to abandon work--an observation demonstrated by Socknat (1974, p. 188), who found that the highest percentage of employed women (10.6%) falls within the age category twenty to twenty-four. The rate of female employment in other age categories varies between 1 and 4 percent. Education and employment of women in Bahrain are parallel achievements; the higher the level of education, the higher the rate of employment. According to our household survey, the rate of employment among women who have college degrees is 82 percent, high school, 47 percent, intermediate, 21 percent, elementary, 7 percent; those with no formal education at all have the lowest rate of employment (1.48%). Education is indeed the passport to employment for women. The same tendency can be deduced from Socknat's analysis of manpower in Bahrain, which shows that the rate of female employment varies from 5 to 10 percent in occupations that require formal education to a fraction of a percent in those requiring none (Socknat 1974, pp. 12-28).

Since its inception in the early twenties, Bahrain bureaucracy had undergone considerable changes. Yet, however dramatic, they did not

Table 7
Formal Education and Social Category

Level of Education of Income Earners	Social Category							Total of Percentages	Number of Cases	Percentage of Number
	Tribal Origin	Urban Sunni	Urban Arab Shi'a	Urban Persian Shi'a	Rural Arab Shi'a	Rural in Suburban Settlements	Rural Shi'a			
Professional	0%	30.7%	46.2%	23.1%	0%	0%		100.0%	13	0.7%
College graduate	1.6	53.9	33.3	6.3	4.8	0		99.9	63	3.5
Some college	1.7	54.2	22.0	10.2	11.9	0		100.0	59	3.3
Secondary certificate	7.0	41.0	31.8	11.9	7.9	0.3		99.9	327	18.2
Some secondary	13.5	52.8	14.6	15.7	3.4	0		100.0	89	4.9
Intermediate certificate	0	25.0	36.1	2.8	36.1	0		100.0	36	2.0
Some intermediate	11.4	44.3	12.7	16.4	12.7	2.5		100.0	79	4.4
Elementary certificate	2.5	39.5	23.1	6.7	23.1	5.1		100.0	195	10.8
Some elementary	10.9	25.9	26.8	19.2	14.0	3.2		100.0	313	17.4
Illiterate	11.1	21.4	17.1	10.0	32.8	7.6		100.0	551	30.6
Others	5.3	28.0	18.7	6.7	32.0	9.3		100.0	75	4.2

Table 8
Kinship Position of Income Earners by Social Category

Level of Education of Income Earners	Social Category							Number of Cases ^a	Percentage of Number
	Tribal Origin	Urban Sunni	Urban Arab Shi'a	Urban Persian Shi'a	Rural Arab Shi'a	Rural Shi'a in Suburban Settlements	Total of Percentages		
Father	9.1%	30.6%	21.8%	11.1%	22.9%	4.4%	99.9%	908	50.6%
Married son	0	40.0	20.0	0	30.0	10.0	100.0	10	0.6
Unmarried son	8.7	30.5	24.4	13.6	18.4	4.4	100.0	550	30.6
Mother	4.5	56.8	27.3	6.8	4.5	0	99.9	88	4.9
Unmarried daughter	4.1	47.9	33.1	14.9	0	0	100.0	121	6.7
Brother	10.0	30.0	30.0	10.0	20.0	0	100.0	10	0.6
Others	4.8	27.2	14.6	11.6	34.9	6.8	99.9	108	6.0

^aForeigners and those difficult to classify were excluded.

generate parallel changes in the social bases of government and civil employment that pertain directly to the circulation of the political elite, power balance, and the struggle for power in the country. It is indeed amazing how stable the power balance remained in the face of tremendous bureaucratic and socioeconomic transformations. Here lies the peculiarity of Bahrain polity: a combination of civil society and a relatively advanced bureaucracy pieced together onto a "persisting" syndrome of tribal politics. The question centers around legitimacy of authority and the exercise of power vis-à-vis public delegation and representation --topics I will examine in chapters 9 and 10 after discussing the socioeconomic changes and the emergence of new social forces that followed the development of oil.

Of the many aspects of culture and society that have changed in Bahrain, I will focus on two--economic organization and the emergence of new institutions, groups, categories and classes--as they relate directly to the authority system. The first aspect is discussed in this chapter and the second in the following two chapters. The phrase "economic organization" is meant to emphasize the contractual relationships that emerged in the mode of production after the development of oil. It is dealt with under two headings: the effect of oil on the traditional economy--namely, pearl production and palm cultivation--and the inequalities it created between the social categories of Bahrain.

The Effect of Oil on the Traditional Economy

The first geological survey of the Arabian Gulf was carried out in 1912, a little before the outbreak of the First World War. Two years later the ruler of Bahrain was approached to make a pledge--as he did--to the British not to embark upon the exploitation of oil, or to grant oil concessions, without seeking their approval in advance. The commercial value of Bahraini oil deposits was uncertain, and this delayed production for about five years. The first concession was granted in 1928 to the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO), followed by the discovery of oil in 1932 and by the first shipment in 1933 (Sadik and Snively 1972, p. 8). In 1836 an oil refinery built off the shore of Sitra on the eastern side of the country began to operate with a capacity of about 200,000 barrels a day, two and one-half times the output of Bahrain's wells, then estimated to be about 80,000 barrels a day. The balance between the output of Bahrain wells and the refinery has been supplied, as of 1938, through a pipeline from the Dammam oil fields in Saudi Arabia.

products are exported to India, Pakistan, East Africa, and the Far East. In 1934 oil royalties amounted to U.S. \$16,750; in 1936, \$173,000, more than one-third of the country's total revenues.¹ In 1940 royalties almost doubled, constituting the main source of public revenue for the state. In 1954 they reached the value of U.S. \$6.25 million (Penrose 1972, p. 271), and \$20 million in 1967, about four times as much as customs revenues.² After the rise in oil prices in 1974, oil revenues increased to about U.S. \$225 million.

The development of oil in the thirties and forties entirely wiped out the pearl industry. Boasting about 2,000 boats before the development of oil, Bahrain averaged 500 afterward, which dropped to 192 in 1945,³ 12 in 1953, and none in the 1960s. The number of boats constructed in Bahrain dropped from 100 in 1928 to 8 in 1936, and to even fewer in the following years.⁴ Charles Belgrave wrote in 1954:

It is estimated that about half of the crews of the Bahrain boats were Omanis from the Trucial Coast. Bahrain Arabs now have so much well paid employment on land (in the oil market) that every year fewer of them go to the pearl banks, if they were in debt to *mukhadads* they prefer to pay their installments rather than diving. When the present generation of divers has passed away, and not many of them are young men, there will be few men from Bahrain to carry on the work.⁵

The development of cultured pearls in the twenties and the world financial recession in the thirties restricted demand for pearls and lowered their market value. The administration reforms of the 1920s shifted the focus of pearl production and trade from Bahrain to other centers in the Gulf. But even more important was the fact that pearl production, based as it was on the principle of loan payments, debts, interests, and instability of income, could not possibly compete with the steady and stable job opportunities of the oil industry. The exploitation of the oil fields in Bahrain alone did not engage all the labor force; parallel discoveries in the Gulf and Arabia also lured Bahraini labor. Oil was discovered in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1938, in Qatar in 1939, in Abu Dhabi in 1958, in Dubai in 1966, and in Oman in 1967.

Having acquired modern educational skills earlier than other people in the Gulf, the Bahrainis took advantage of the oil industry and began to seek employment outside Bahrain. In the *Administration Report* of 1949 it was noted that "Bahrain Arabs continued to emigrate in large numbers to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and elsewhere, where they earned high wages working in oil companies and construction. It was estimated that in the

neighborhood of 5,000 Bahrain men were engaged in work abroad, their places at home being filled by Arabs mostly from the Trucial Coast and Oman."⁶ Working abroad was profitable in more than one way. In 1951 "many Bahrain women applied for and obtained passes in order to visit relatives in Saudi Arabia, where many thousands of Bahrain Arabs were working. It was found, however, that the object of these visits was to smuggle goods into Saudi Arabia and for various other reasons." The same source added, "Complaints were made to His Highness and, as a result, orders were issued that no woman in future be allowed to go to Saudi Arabia unless accompanied by male relations."⁷ In 1952 it was reported that "the reason for the deplorable decline of this ancient [pearl] industry is lack of divers, not lack of capital."⁸

While pearl fishing was losing its economic supremacy in favor of oil, many of the pearl fishing tribes in Bahrain left it for the Arabian mainland, where better opportunities awaited them. Consequently, some of the tribal settlements on the eastern coast of Bahrain, such as Jau, Askar, and Dur, were drained of their population. Others such as Galali, al-Hidd, and Busaitin, were heavily reduced in number and importance. Many of those who did not emigrate to other parts in the Gulf moved out to settle in Manama or in other larger towns of Bahrain.

Like pearl production, palm cultivation began to decline after the exploitation of oil in the Gulf and Arabia; it did so for practically the same reason. The tedious, unpredictable, and fluctuating work in agriculture could not compete with the steady, stable job opportunities of the oil market. It is not entirely the tenure system of renting palm groves that led to the decline of palm cultivation--it declined even in those years when the exploitative system was not in operation. The economic order that emerged with the oil industry rendered palm cultivation in particular a luxury investment--"in particular" because vegetable cultivation, by contrast, flourished. Vegetable gardens increased from 150 in 1952 to 576 in 1959.⁹ The demand for dates decreased as a result of the changing dietary habits of the Bahraini population, and because of the collapse of the pearl fishing industry. A large part of the dates produced had been eaten by pearl divers at sea. By contrast, the demand for fresh fruits and vegetables increased considerably, thus raising their prices sometimes to soaring levels.

Although it began to decline in the thirties, palm cultivation dropped sharply in the sixties and seventies. It was still possible,

until then, to replace local agricultural labor by relatively inexpensive Omani labor. The increasing demand on skilled and unskilled labor after the sixties made it economically unfeasible to engage in palm cultivation for the yields hardly defrayed the labor costs. This intensive demand for labor was generated by the development of oil as well as by the industrial offensive launched by the Bahraini government.

Wary of its complete dependence on oil, the government began to diversify its economy in the mid-sixties and seventies. In 1966 it established the Bahrain Fishing Company, a joint enterprise between local and foreign interests with an initial capital of about U.S. \$625,000. The company processes shrimp, which it exports mainly to the Far East and to Europe. With Arab and foreign shares, in 1969 the government built an aluminum smelter with an initial cost of about U.S. \$75 million. Powered by the rich gas fields of Bahrain, the smelter began to operate in 1972 with a capacity of 90,000 tons per annum and employed about 500 skilled laborers. In 1975 the Dry Dock Project was launched; officials hoped to complete it in two or three years. The dry dock is a joint Arab enterprise which, once completed, will have to depend almost entirely, at least in its initial stages, on foreign labor, because of the labor shortage in Bahrain. By the sixties and early seventies, employment in Bahrain had reached almost full capacity; about 98 percent of the adult male population was employed. The late sixties and seventies also witnessed the construction of an international airport, a series of modern hotels, and a flour mill with a capacity of about a hundred tons a day. Bahrain soon became the communications and services center of the Gulf States, accommodating foreign-based companies, banks, airlines, investors, and private schools.

This growth in industry, commerce, and services generated parallel growth in urban and suburban construction. Al-Mahuz, al-Adliyah, al-Qufui, and many other housing projects began to emerge in the northern section of the country between Manama and Budayya--the area once famous for palm cultivation. The urban population of Bahrain increased from 45,600 in 1941--a little more than half the total--to 168,819 in 1977--about 78 percent of the total population.¹⁰ This increase is due partly to net fertility and partly to the expansion of urban society, either through in-migration or through the incorporation of "villages" and "hamlets" into the urban area. Some of the "villages" around Manama and Muharraq that were classified as "rural" in the 1941 census were added

to the "urban" category in the 1971 census. About 320 apartment houses, 1,446 houses, and 137 housing projects were constructed between 1968 and 1974.¹¹ Apartment houses and housing projects are rented mainly to expatriates; the percentage of Bahrainis living in such facilities is very low, about 3 percent.¹²

In 1975 the rent for a two- or three-bedroom unfurnished apartment ranged between U.S. \$500 and \$1,000 a month, far beyond the yield of palm trees. Increasing demand on housing considerably raised the price of land on the outskirts of Manama; the price of one square meter increased from U.S. \$2 in 1946 to U.S. \$100 in 1975. The same trend continued in other parts of Bahrain in varying degrees. Many of the palm gardens around Manama, Muharraq, and elsewhere in Bahrain were left untended for several years awaiting urban construction. This increase in land prices turned a large part of Bahrain plots into a market commodity; between 1934 and 1975, about 65 percent of the registered plots in Bahrain were sold and bought at least once.

Palm cultivation became a luxury enterprise because of the demand for skilled and unskilled salaried labor, the changing dietary habits of Bahrainis, the low demand for dates, the increasing salinity of water, the land tenure system based on renting palm groves, and the rising prices of land for construction. It lost its subsistence or market value; only the rich could tend palm gardens. It is now a sign of wealth to keep live animals, drink fresh milk, and raise one's own dates.

The economic order created by the oil industry transformed tenants into salaried labor, cultivators into wage earners, and the renters of land into entrepreneurs. According to our household survey, less than 2 percent of the labor force works in agriculture (see table 4). The total number of Bahrainis working in agriculture dropped from 6.7 percent of the total labor force in 1959 to 4.5 percent in 1965 and 2.9 percent in 1971. By contrast, foreign laborers working in agriculture increased from 0.7 percent in 1959 to 1.8 percent in 1965, then dropped to 1.3 percent in 1971.¹³ Many Bahrainis who still rent land do so as entrepreneurs; they rent cheaply and hire foreign labor at low wages to do the work. To keep their gardens green and fresh, wealthy landlords willingly rent them out at a very low price. The very rich hire salaried foreign laborers to tend the gardens, which they keep for relaxation and privacy. The produce of such gardens is never sold in the market; it is distributed as gifts to friends and kinsmen.

The effect of oil was felt in pearl production, palm cultivation, and also in local crafts and cottage industries. Boat construction, textiles, pottery, and mat and basked making, lost their market value. Boat construction and pottery are preserved through public subsidies as folk crafts belonging to Bahraini cultural heritage. Very few people work in these crafts today; there is in fact only one potter. Jewelry and embroidery retained their market value at noticeably higher rates. While crafts that are associated with status and prestige and have no utility value continued to be in high demand, those related to capital and subsistence were eliminated.

To adjust to the rise of this new economic order, Bahrain sought to intensify and diversify its public education. Between 1931 and 1974, investment in public education was multiplied several times. The number of students enrolled in schools increased from 500 boys and 100 girls in 1931 to 1,750 boys and 1,288 girls in 1946, 4,500 boys and 2,300 girls in 1953, and 7,500 boys and 3,386 girls in 1955.¹⁴ The number of students attending school increased from 25,738 boys and 15,997 girls in 1967 to 30,202 boys and 23,459 girls in 1974,¹⁵ about one-fourth the total population of Bahrain.

This impressive increase in the student population must not be automatically translated into efficiency coefficients in the social, cultural, industrial, or technological spheres. Public education in Bahrain suffers from a relatively high rate of repeaters and dropouts,¹⁶ incongruencies between curriculum and labor demand, and the lack of a general policy of job classification vis-à-vis educational training.¹⁷ Indeed, the industrial offensive that the Bahraini government carried out in the sixties and seventies was done irrespective of local manpower composition and supply. In view of local labor shortage, this industrial offensive accompanied by urban and suburban growth drew into Bahrain a large number of foreign laborers, mostly Indian and Pakistani. They are employed in construction (45.8%), community, social, and personal services (40.6%), wholesale and retail trade (37.0%), and mining and manufacturing (33.7%). The employment of foreign labor in other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, fishing, transport, storage, and communication ranges between 33 and 25 percent (Sacknat 1974, p. 5). These percentages are based on the population census of 1971; up-to-date statistics on foreign labor are not available. It is generally estimated, however, to be much more than the 37.1 percent mentioned for 1971, constituting 22,950 of a

total of 60,301 economically active people in Bahrain.¹⁸ An oral interview with the head of the Department of Labor in Bahrain left me with the impression that the non-Bahraini labor force for 1975 constituted at least 50 percent of the entire economically active population.

In view of the fact that Bahrain reached almost full employment by the sixties, the validity of the industrial offensive should be questioned. Who benefits from these projects if they depend--as they do--on foreign labor? That the potential for drawing the female population into the labor market in significant numbers is highly constrained by traditional customs and cultural beliefs makes the question all the more serious. These industrial projects will undoubtedly stimulate trade and increase custom revenues, but they will simultaneously tax heavily the public services in education, health, housing, water, and electricity. In addition, they will pressure native labor, skilled or unskilled, to give up employment in the production sector in favor of services and civil employment. According to our household survey, about 15 percent of the wage or salary earners (totaling 1,950) changed their profession--the tendency was for teachers, college graduates, and engineers to become civil servants, free enterprisers, and merchants; technicians became taxi drivers and salesmen; craftsmen and tradesmen became shopkeepers, peddlers, or messengers. The high frequency of foreign labor in blue-collar jobs has pushed the Bahrainis to the more profitable "services" sector of the economy.

Incoming foreign labor increased demand for services in the civil administration, which can be supplied only by local people, who know the ins and outs of Bahrain bureaucracy and society. Several Bahrainis today style themselves "labor dealers"; they travel between Manama and Bombay, hiring labor in India and subleasing it in Bahrain. A foreign laborer who is hired for U.S. \$75 a month in India may be subleased for U.S. \$125 in Bahrain to another dealer who, in turn, leases him for U.S. \$200. I learned in 1975 about a few laborers who were subleased from two to three times by different dealers, each making a little profit in the transaction. The labor draft of 1975 tried to put an end to this type of exploitation by forbidding the subleasing of foreign labor except under strict conditions. In no circumstances does the draft allow for the subleasing of laborers for a higher wage than the original agreed upon between dealer and laborer in the country of origin.

Discrepancies between Social Groups and Categories

I have thus far dealt with the rise of a new economic order and its effect on traditional modes of production without reference to the "variance" of change, the "discrepancies" and "discriminations" between social groups and categories. "Discrepancy" is linked to socioeconomic achievement, the voluntary interaction of groups with the general social and economic order of society; "discrimination" implies an official policy favoring particular groups or categories at the expense of others. In other words, discrepancy is a market phenomenon; discrimination is a formal policy of government.

Discriminatory policies in Bahrain center on the institutions of government whereby Al-Khalifa and their immediate allies have a monopoly of those offices that relate to security, defense, order, and law. However, these discriminatory policies are not automatically translated into socioeconomic corollaries. The Sunni of tribal origin who are most favored in government score low on educational or economic achievements. About 63.3 percent of the Sunni in this category are illiterates or have acquired only some elementary education. In this respect they are paralleled only by the rural Shi^Ca who live within suburban settlements. The two categories are lowest on the income scale (see figs. 5 and 6). Measured by socioeconomic coefficients, discrepancies in Bahrain are an outcome of the interaction between individuals and groups and the mercantile order of society--"mercantile" in the sense that there has been no official policy of social development or planning that would at least try to bridge the gap between groups, classes, or categories. In practice, "planning" is used to refer to the opening of new projects irrespective of demand, distribution, or impact on society.

The analysis of discrepancies is not easy to handle; initially it requires the division of society into comparable social categories. Based upon the social map and the comprehensive household survey, I find it convenient to divide Bahraini society into seven categories--the ruling family of Al-Khalifa, Sunni of tribal origin, urban Sunni, urban Arab Shi^Ca, urban Persian Shi^Ca, rural Arab Shi^Ca, and rural Shi^Ca living in suburban settlements. The word "rural" refers to those who live in socially distinct villages. These seven categories are cross-compared in relation to education, income, occupation, and education and employment of women, which together constitute a sufficient index of socioeconomic achievement. Discriminations and discrepancies between these

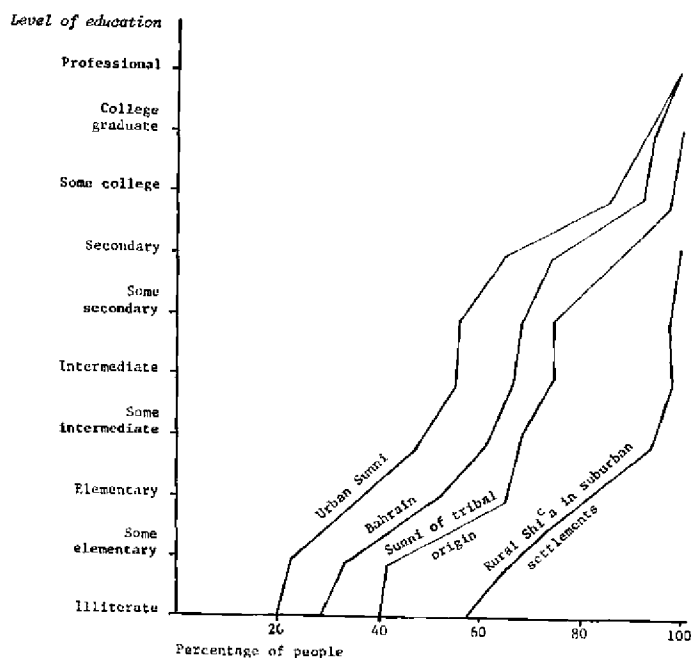


Fig. 5. Variation in formal education between social categories. The curve for the urban Arab Shi'a lies between that for Bahrain and that for the urban Sunni, and the curve for the rural Arab Shi'a lies between that for the Sunni of tribal origin and that for the rural Shi'a who live in suburban settlements.

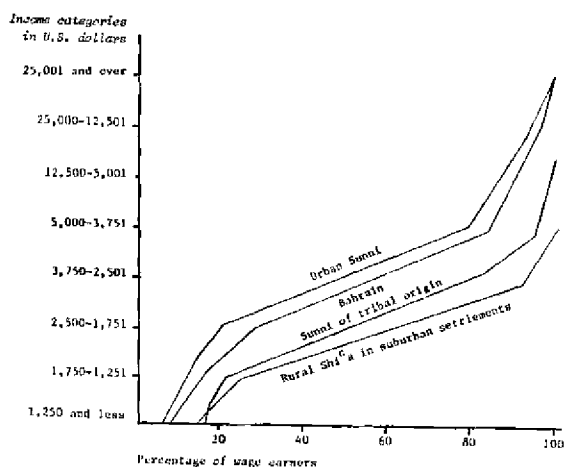


Fig. 6. Income variation between social categories. The curve for the urban Arab Shi'a corresponds to that of the urban Sunni, and the curve for the Persian Shi'a lies between the curve for Bahrain and that for Sunni of tribal origin.

categories must not be automatically translated into political issues defining the major outlines of conflict in society. They become political issues only if manipulated for this purpose. The socioeconomic discrepancies between men and women, for example, are clear and deep, but they have few, if any, political implications, and it will be a long time before they do.

The most striking feature of the occupational distribution in Bahrain is that about 70 percent of the income earners are salaried personnel; the rest, who are merchants, taxi drivers, free tradesmen, retail traders, and peddlers, earn their living independently. The salaried personnel include, in order of frequency, salaried and unskilled laborers and servicemen, secretaries and clerks, salaried and skilled laborers and servicemen, teachers, and managers (see table 9). This distribution marks a significant shift from the occupational careers that prevailed in the pre-oil economy based on "renting" in palm cultivation and "profit sharing" in pearl production. The transfer to salaried jobs gave the salaried personnel the collective bargaining power to continuously press for better working conditions, wages, salaries, insurances, pensions, or indemnities. Beginning with the late forties and early fifties, labor strikes, demonstrations and other forms of organized protests, became recurrent themes in Bahraini politics.

The social origin of salaried personnel varies by occupation, education, income, and employment of women. Table 4, which summarizes the variation between occupational careers and social origin, shows that the Sunni of tribal origin, including Al-Khalifa, have a complete monopoly on defense and security. The urban segment, Sunni or Shi^ca, Arab or Persian, concentrate in civil employment, professional careers (medical doctors and engineers), secretarial work, or skilled labor (see Appendix E). The Shi^ca who live in villages or within suburban settlements predominate in unskilled salaried jobs (see table 4).

The achievement of people on the occupational scale corresponds almost exactly with their achievement in formal education. A glance at figure 5 shows clearly that the urban groups rank high in upper educational levels; the other groups rank inversely in the lower levels. Practically all those who had professional training belong to the urban groups with higher percentages for the urban Sunni, the Arab Shi^ca, and, to a much lesser extent, the Persian Shi^ca. The others have the lowest

Table 9

Occupation and Income Distribution

	Annual Income of Wage Earners in U.S. Dollars											Number of Cases	Percentage of Number
	25,001 and Over	25,000-12,501	12,000-5,001	5,000-3,751	3,750-2,501	2,500-1,751	1,750-1,251	1,250 and less	No Data	Percentages	Total of		
Professions	15.8%	10.5%	42.1%	21.1%	10.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100.0%	19	1.0%	
Entrepreneurs and merchants	31.8	15.9	27.3	3.4	3.4	0	0	0	18.2	100.0	88	4.5	
Salaried managers	1.1	1.1	28.5	15.4	35.2	14.3	3.3	1.1	0	100.0	91	4.7	
Army and police officers	0	0	0	27.3	45.4	27.3	0	0	0	100.0	11	0.6	
Salaried religious men	12.5	0	0	0	0	0	50.0	37.5	0	100.0	8	0.4	
Teachers	0	0	4.4	3.7	62.5	27.2	0.7	1.5	0	100.0	136	6.9	
Secretaries and clerks	0	0.3	6.5	8.3	40.4	39.5	3.7	1.2	0	99.9	324	16.6	
Salaried and skilled laborers and servicemen	0	0	4.7	12.5	34.4	30.1	12.5	5.1	0.7	100.0	256	13.1	
Soldiers and policemen	0	0	0	1.2	10.5	67.4	15.1	5.8	0	100.0	86	4.4	
Taxi or bus drivers	0	2.3	13.7	10.7	22.1	38.9	9.2	2.3	0.8	100.0	131	6.7	
Tradesmen	0	0.7	7.2	7.2	25.0	30.3	12.5	15.8	1.3	100.0	152	7.8	
Retail traders and peddlers	0	0	8.5	4.7	22.6	23.6	18.9	20.8	0.9	100.0	106	5.4	
Salaried and unskilled laborers and servicemen	0.3	0	0	0.3	13.4	35.2	33.1	16.9	0.8	100.0	372	19.1	
Unskilled and unskilled laborers and servicemen	0	0	8.3	1.7	10.0	28.3	15.0	36.7	0	100.0	60	3.1	
Cultivators	0	0	0	0	0	50.0	0	50.0	0	100.0	2	0.1	
Unemployed	0	0	0	4.0	4.0	8.0	4.0	12.0	68.0	100.0	25	1.3	

records of educational achievement: they opposed formal education, particularly for girls.¹⁹

Educational and occupational achievements are translated into income indexes. Income variation, summarized in figure 6, shows that the high-income categories are dominated by the urban population and the lower categories by the others. If we compare these findings with world income variation, the urban Sunni curve comes close to income distribution in the United States, whereas the curve for the rural Shi^ca who live within suburban settlements comes close to that of India (Samuelson 1973, pp. 84-85). Ironically, the high-income families allow for the employment of unmarried sons and daughters at a much higher rate than the low-income families (see fig. 7). The tribal Sunni and the Shi^ca who live in suburban settlements, who score low on the income scale, have a very low frequency of employment of unmarried sons or daughters.

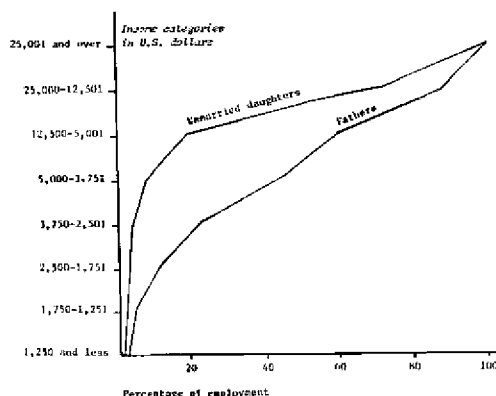


Fig. 7. Employment patterns for fathers and unmarried daughters. The curves of employment for mothers and for unmarried sons lie close to that for unmarried daughters.

The low frequency of employment of unmarried daughters and of mothers among the tribal groups shows that we must qualify the commonly cited argument that "bedouin" (tribal) women are allowed to mix more freely with men and that they do not "cultivate the extreme shyness of women of the settled communities" (Lienhardt 1972, p. 229). This argument is valid if we compare badu women living somewhat isolated in the desert with "community women" living in cities. If we compare "tribal women" who claim badu background with "community women" who have no such

claims, both living in the same setting, the latter seem to exercise more freedom of interaction with others. In Bahrain the urban Sunni, poor or rich, allow for the education and employment of women at a much higher rate than the tribal Sunni. At the intermediate level and, to a lesser extent, the secondary level of education, the urban Sunni hardly distinguish between boys and girls. Other groups, including the tribally organized Sunni, favor the education of boys right from the elementary level until college, with ratios varying between two to one in favor of boys in the early stages of education and twenty to one at the secondary level. The rural Shi^Ca who live in suburban settlements least encourage the education of girls. Whether encouraged by some or discouraged by others, employment of women must not be exaggerated; it constitutes only about 11 percent of the total number of wage earners, 4.9 percent for mothers and 6.7 percent for unmarried daughters. The rate of employment of unmarried daughters seems to be a bit higher than that of mothers in the higher income categories (see table 8).

Obviously, education, income, occupation, and attitudes toward the education and employment of women are aspects of the same configuration. A favorable performance in one almost automatically suggests corollary achievement in the other. Higher education generates higher income, and higher income generates higher educational expectations. Just as higher income and higher education generate more favorable attitudes toward women, more favorable attitudes toward women generate higher income and education. The interrelatedness between these indexes of socioeconomic achievement suggests that the problem of social development is not "where to start from" but whether to start from anywhere. The strategy of development is to modify any one aspect of this syndrome; once this happens, other aspects will change in a "chain effect" fashion (Barnett 1953, pp. 89-95).

The urban Sunni who score higher than other groups on any one of these socioeconomic coefficients also score higher on others; they are followed in order by the urban Arab Shi^Ca, the urban Persian Shi^Ca, the rural Shi^Ca who live in villages, the Sunni of tribal origin, and last, by the rural Shi^Ca who live in suburban settlements. Instead of gradually interacting openly and favorably with the stimuli of change, the Shi^Ca who are caught in the midst of suburban growth turned inward, enclosing themselves within their traditional communities. Too sudden an exposure to change seems to create a sort of "reaction formation" that

reinforces traditionalism. This is the reason the rural Shi'a who live in suburban settlements lag behind their brethren in villages.

The leading position of the urban population springs from their gradual and continuing exposure to a variety of modernizing institutions: bureaucracy, schools, the market, the mass media. But the Sunni of tribal origin who have been exposed to these institutions still score low on socioeconomic coefficients. Theirs is a different issue. Group pride and exclusiveness, the belief that their mode of life is superior and autonomous, militates against their acceptance of the new. In Bahrain and the Gulf, "tribal culture" is endogamous, exclusive, and nonassimilative. Not only does it repulse the outsider, it also prevents the departure of the insider. The networks I collected in Bahrain of people of various social origins, sexes, ages, and occupational and income backgrounds illustrate the point clearly. Compared with other groups, the tribally organized groups--men or women, old or young, rich or poor, educated or illiterate--have a fixed and highly patterned, routine mode of interaction with each other and with the outside world. Visitation among them follows a fixed weekly calendar, with almost no variation in time or persons. They adhere to customs, rituals, and personal habits much more strongly and with greater pride than does any other group living in Bahrain.

The only category of people who approach the tribally organized groups in their mode of interaction are the women of Bahrain, but for different reasons. The fixed and patterned mode of interaction among the tribally organized groups is based upon the principles of exclusiveness and nonassimilative tendencies; interaction among the women is based upon restricted freedom of movement and constrained contact with others. The educated, unmarried girls who are rich and live in urban or suburban settlements must be excepted from this generalization. Like men, they practice variety and variation in their interaction with the outside world.

Among the tribally organized groups, the rate of inmarriage within the same descent group is 76 percent at its lowest; marriage within the section of the tribe is comprehensively the rule. In the last five decades, only four Al-Khalifa women married outside the ruling family. Similar restrictions are placed upon Al-Khalifa men and to a lesser extent upon other tribally organized groups, who seem to allow for the out-marriage of men if it carries clear political implications, either to

create alliances or to reinforce those already established.²⁰

Achievement in education, income, occupation, and education and employment of women is associated with other behavioral characteristics--composition of household, type of dwelling, size of household, and size of family. These characteristics seem to vary significantly by income and education--more so than by social origin. In other words, people of high income or educational attainment share similar behavioral characteristics irrespective of their religious, ethnic, or social categories. The same generalization holds true for people of low income or educational attainment. The incidence of joint households is inversely related to the income of wage earners: the higher the income, the lower the number of families living in the household and vice versa (see table 10). Evidently, the joint household is a social phenomenon adopted by low-income groups to adjust to economic marginality through sharing expenditures. The presence of several income earners in the household, which is paradoxically more common among the high-income groups, is inversely related to joint household organization, which is more common among the low-income groups. No wonder the majority of the second, third, or fourth income earners in the household are unmarried sons or daughters (see table 8). Members of high-income groups tend to leave the household when they marry; those with low incomes remain in it--a phenomenon well demonstrated by the preference of low-income groups for the *hawsh* type of dwelling.

The use of the *hawsh* increases progressively as income decreases (see table 11). In this type of dwelling additional families are accommodated by simply building a new room within the outer wall encircling the courtyard. All the houses open onto the courtyard, where shared facilities such as kitchen, laundry, and water are situated; the back walls of the houses form blind walls to the street. It is also this type of construction that accommodates a larger number of people living in the household. As the number of people in the household increases, definite preference for the *hawsh* likewise increases (see table 12).

The size of the household must not be confused with the size of individual families within it; the first is a measure of economic status, the second a measure of fertility and reproduction. Measured by the average number of children in the family, fertility does not seem to vary significantly with social origin, income, or the family composition of the household. The range is between 5.0 and 4.4 for social categories, 5.1 and 4.5 for income categories, and 5.0 and 4.5 for different

Table 10

Income Variation and the Family Composition of Households

Annual Income of Wage Earners in U.S. Dollars	Number of Families in Household						
	Seven	Six	Five	Four	Three	Two	One
25,001 and over	0%	0%	0%	0%	1.0%	2.1%	3.2%
25,000-12,501	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.7
12,500-5,001	0	0	40.0	0	9.6	4.6	11.2
5,000-3,751	0	0	0	0	4.8	5.0	8.9
3,750-2,501	0	0	20.0	16.7	8.7	17.5	27.9
2,500-1,751	0	50.0	10.0	30.0	23.1	20.4	27.3
1,750-1,251	0	50.0	10.0	10.0	13.4	20.7	9.3
1,250 and less	0	0	10.0	10.0	14.4	12.5	7.7
No data	100.0	0	10.0	33.3	25.0	17.1	1.8
Total of percentages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0
Number of cases	1	2	10	30	104	286	822
Percentage of number	0.1	0.2	0.8	2.4	8.3	22.4	65.8

Table 11
Income Variation and Type of Dwelling

Annual Income of Wage Earners in U.S. Dollars	Type of Dwelling					Total of Percentages	Number of Cases	Percentage of Number
	Apartment House	Villa	Individual Houses	Hawth Houses	Others			
25,001 and over	9.1%	60.6%	12.1%	18.2%	0%	100.0%	33	2.6%
25,000-12,501	13.6	40.9	13.6	31.8	0	99.9	22	1.8
12,500-5,001	4.2	26.9	32.8	36.1	0	100.0	119	9.5
5,000-3,751	3.3	9.8	44.5	42.4	0	100.0	92	7.4
3,750-2,501	2.0	2.0	37.3	58.6	0	99.9	295	23.6
2,500-1,751	0.9	0.3	28.1	70.4	0.3	100.0	317	25.4
1,750-1,251	0.7	0.7	20.9	76.4	1.3	100.0	153	12.2
1,250 and less	0	0	17.9	82.1	0	100.0	117	9.4
No data	0	5	16.8	78.2	0	100.0	101	8.1

Table 12
Number of People Living in Household by Type of Dwelling

Number of People	Type of Dwelling					Total of Percentages	Number of Cases	Percentage of Number
	Apartment House	Villa	Individual Houses	Hawsh Houses	Others			
16 and over	0%	2.2%	9.9%	87.9%	0%	100.0%	91	7.3%
15-13	0	1.1	13.3	85.6	0	100.0	96	7.2
12-10	0.8	5.2	35.1	58.5	0.4	100.0	251	20.1
9-7	2.0	5.5	30.0	62.3	0.2	100.0	400	32.0
6-4	2.9	10.1	31.1	55.6	0.3	100.0	306	24.5
3-1	4.5	12.6	28.8	54.1	0	100.0	111	8.9

compositions of households.²¹ According to our survey, the only category having a lower fertility rate (average number of children is 2.8) is those who combine education higher than the secondary level with salaried income higher than U.S. \$5,000 a year. Obviously the criteria that are taken to be associated with fertility--occupation, income, religion, rural or urban location, and household composition, bear effects through generations. The educated and salaried category constitute, in Bahraini data, the second generation of the economically better off segment of society. Compared with others, they are the people who have acquired "modern" values and beliefs; they are reputed to marry for love, allow for free interaction of women with the outside world, spend leisure time at home with wives and children, and observe family rituals--birthday ceremonies, Mother's Day, or anniversaries. As one of my interviewees complainingly put it, they are "family men." In these families the wife is equally educated and is employed, or has been so.

A great part of these discrepancies in income, occupation, education, and employment of women, or in the behavioral characteristics associated with them, was created by the oil age. Here lies the contradictory nature of development. While the development of oil contributed to a tremendous growth and proliferation of the economy, it has simultaneously generated all kinds of inequalities. True, discrepancies and inequalities existed in the pre-oil economy and society, but at that time Bahrain had no state structure with the object--or ideal object--of redistributing public wealth and benefits and developing the human factor. Bahrain has a system of welfare and gift-granting mechanisms that provides the wretched and the needy with the basic essentials of life such as food, clothes, and shelter. It has a policy of subsidizing the staples such as rice, sugar, meat, and fish or providing housing and building plots for many Bahrainis. But welfare of this type is not developmental; it does not help build an infrastructure, a spectrum of skills, capable of adjusting itself to the social and technological requirements of society.

In the pre-oil economy and society, discrepancies and inequalities were individualistic, built upon an accepted mode of interaction irrespective of differentiation within groups, categories, classes, or communities. After the development of oil and the transformation of the social and economic order, differentiation between people began to acquire a collective tone. Not only did the indexes of social differentiation change, but its structure changed as well. New groups and associations

organized around collective interests have emerged with considerable force. The sharp inequalities in the distribution of income, combined with a very high number of salaried personnel, reinforced the tendency to resort to collective action and organized protests—a phenomenon unlikely to develop in the pre-oil society, where contractual agreements were dyadic in character and held for a short term of service. The steady, standardized, and continuous employment in the oil industry has produced a collective awareness of interests and grievances evidenced in many organized complaints, bargainings, and protests.

Since the state is the sole recipient of revenues,²² collective grievances, complaints, and protests have taken on definite political implications. The state controls the directions of development and industrial investment, including labor policy, prices, and wages, and it therefore is held responsible for whatever grievances accrue therefrom. While the tribally based state bears some structural similarities to socialistic states in the sense that it controls the economic resources of the country, it contradictorily follows a mercantile system of socioeconomic policies. For this reason organized rebellions and protests are directed against the state.

The magnitude of social development should be congruous with the magnitude of growth and socioeconomic transformation; otherwise protests, rebellions, and popular uprisings will continue to erupt in the face of even the strictest security and police measures. The following discussion on the parapolitical institutions in chapter 8, and on organized protests and rebellions in chapter 9 illustrate this point.

Because labor unions and formal political parties are banned in Bahrain,¹ political activities concentrate in religious centers, known as "funeral houses," and in cultural and sports clubs. Hence the word "parapolitical," which I use, following Easton (1965, p. 52) and Bailey (1968, p. 281), to refer to the kind of political activities that take place in professional or voluntary associations outside formally organized political parties. These associations serve political aims without themselves being political institutions. Two assumptions are made here: that clubs and funeral houses are platforms for political action; and that they would not have spread so widely if labor unions and political parties had been permitted to operate freely. Not only did funeral houses increase in number from a handful in Manama city to more than five hundred spread over various villages and cities, but their organization likewise changed drastically. In earlier days funeral houses were one-man prestige investments; today they are organized by collectivities that vary economically, socially, and politically. Like clubs and other forms of voluntary associations, funeral houses serve as political platforms, fronts, and gathering places that reflect a variety of socio-political trends and outlooks. They are the object of "prestige competition" and a reflection of local-level politics and national factionalism. The following discussion examines the origin, development, variation, and organization of funeral houses and clubs and the way they operate in Bahraini society. This discussion, which deals with "institutions," the frames of reference for action, is a necessary prelude to the next chapter on organized protests and rebellions, where political action is analyzed.

Funeral Houses and Factional Politics

A funeral house (*ma'tam*) may refer to the building where the Shi^ca ritual of ^c*Ashura*'--the commemoration of Husain's martyrdom--is held, or to the congregation that observes the ritual. The congregation may observe the ritual either in a salon or guest room temporarily designated as a funeral house, a very common practice among women, or in a specialized building pledged as *ma'tam*, which is common among men. There are some specialized buildings that accommodate women in separate rooms, forming part of the funeral house, but these are few in number. As specialized buildings, funeral houses number about 500; as groups, they number about 2,500--about 1,500 for women and 1,000 for men.²

Unlike the mosque (*masjid*), which is a place for worship, the funeral house is for missionary activities, proselyting, and disseminating Shi^ca teachings and traditions. According to the Shi^ca of Bahrain, the mosque is a sacred place for worship open only to believers; nonbelievers are admitted to the funeral house, but not to the mosque, lest they defile it. The Shi^ca approach the mosque with reverence so deep that they refrain from smoking or drinking coffee or tea in it, forbid menstruating women to enter, and tend to build it at the edge of villages nearby fresh-water springs as a tribute to its sanctity. The funeral house, which can be used for other purposes--wedding or death ceremonies or as a platform for political action--is often inside the community; in it smoking and drinking coffee or tea are permitted. If mosques are used as funeral houses, as they often were in past years, their use is restricted to the celebration of ^c*Ashura*'. If a funeral house is used for a marriage ceremony, no music, dancing, or other joyful activities are allowed. Marriage ceremonies today are often held in cultural and sports clubs, not in funeral houses, which are preserved essentially for the celebration of ^c*Ashura*' rituals.

Sociologically speaking, there are two aspects to a funeral house, its foundation and its operation, that are related but separable, phenomena--separable in the sense that they involve distinctly different solidarities. The initial founding of a *ma'tam* requires economic means, piety, and the commitment of continuous subsidies to cover its expenditure; its operation, which includes the formation of a congregation and the organization of a *ta^cziyah*, requires social power as well. The strength of a funeral house is measured by the intensity of its *ta^cziyah*--the processions and ceremonial flagellations it stages on the tenth

day of Muharram; the more elaborate the ta^cziyah, the more politically powerful the group that organizes it. I will first examine the foundation of the ma'tam and its spread in Bahrain, then discuss its operation and the various solidarities involved.

Oral tradition among the Shi^ca asserts that the repenters (*al-tawwabin*) were the first group to hold a ta^cziyah (ceremonial flagellations) in memory of the fortieth day of Husain's murder. They promised Husain support against his enemy Yazid, but when Husain arrived in Karbala they turned against him and caused his and his family's murder. Guilty of betrayal, they repented by ritualistically subjecting themselves to the same agonies and tortures that had befallen Imam Husain. Upon the rise of the Abbassid dynasty in Baghdad and the oppression of the Shi^ca, 'Ashura' celebrations and other related rituals and activities continued to be practiced in secret places known then as *ma'atim* (plural of *ma'tam*). It is believed that Ja^cfar al-Sadiq, the sixth 'imam and founder of Shi^ca jurisdiction, was the first to open a ma'tam for observing 'Ashura' rituals and propagating Shi^ca teachings. The ma'tam and the ta^cziyah have continued to distinguish, however peculiarly, the Shi^ca twelvers from the rest of other Islamic sects.³

Modified in form or content to suit the social environment and the political times, the ta^cziyah is intended to show symbolically the horrors that may accrue from the lack of justice in the world. The Shi^ca, who made justice one of the main pillars of Islam, believe that injustice will continue to prevail until the coming of the Expected Mahdi, the Hidden Imam whom they call in daily conversation *sahib al-zaman*, which literally means "the owner of time"--the timeless. The Shi^ca emphasis on justice and "ritualistic rebellion" reflects the history of their oppression in the Arab world. I do not intend to present a treatise on the rise and development of Shi^cism; I simply want to draw the reader's attention to the broader meaning of the ma'tam and the ta^cziyah and to the way the Shi^ca relate to other Islamic sects through these two institutions. To the Shi^ca, the ta^cziyah, which is a part of 'Ashura' celebrations, and the ma'tam, in which rituals and missionary works are held, symbolize the rejection of worldly power and the forms of government associated with it. Not only do these rituals and celebrations show the quality of relationships between the Shi^ca and other Islamic sects, they likewise reflect the directions of change and the various sociopolitical groupings operating within the Shi^ca.

Although the funeral houses of Bahrain are found in villages and cities alike, the oldest and the most distinguished of them concentrate in Manama in and around al-Makharqa quarter, between the marketplace and the residential areas of the Shi^Ca, Arab or Persian. The oldest funeral houses including BinZabar, Madan, Sallum, al-Mudayfi, al-Urayyid, BinRajab, al-Alawi or Al-Qassab, and al-Hajj Khalaf, were constructed in Manama at the turn of the nineteenth century or the early part of the twentieth. They were founded by urban Shi^Ca notables who distinguished themselves as sea merchants, pearl dealers, and to a much lesser extent as proprietors or craftsmen. Only two funeral houses, Sallum and Madan, were originally founded by members of the last groups--a proprietor and a mattress-maker. In recent years even these two funeral houses have been sustained by the rich Shi^Ca merchants.

Until the early fifties, only Manama had specialized buildings designed as funeral houses; this was a measure of wealth and affluence. Today, specialized houses of this order occur in Shi^Ca villages as well. Just as the old funeral houses of Manama were born out of the pearl boom, their current spread in villages stems from the oil boom. Since the early fifties, few villages in Bahrain have failed to build specialized funeral houses; the tendency is to have more than one in a village. It happens in some villages or quarters of cities and towns that the funeral houses, numerous as they are, compete against each other by amplifying the speeches of the mullas so loudly that the audience cannot possibly concentrate on any one speech. As one participant commented, "they speak against and not to each other."

Once established as a specialized building, a funeral house becomes a waqf property pledged for Imam Husain; it cannot be alienated or sold as a market commodity. It may be sustained by the founder, his progeny, the congregation, or, as in recent years, by the waqf department, or by any combination of these. Nevertheless, it happens at times that a founder pleads poverty and solicits donations, then, instead of supporting the funeral house, supplements his own income. Accusations and counteraccusations of this sort are very common among the Shi^Ca of Bahrain. Disagreement on accounts is frequently a cause for further division of a congregation into several independent "houses" or for changing the management of a particular "house." If the founder or his progeny fails to cover the expenses of a funeral house, including furniture, serving tea or coffee, maintenance, the costs of the ta^Cziyah, the honorarium paid to the khatib,

and the sacrificial rice (*ʿaish al-Husain*) served to the public on the tenth day of Muharram, new groups step in and take over management. The entrance of new groups or individuals always marks a point of change in positions, roles, trends, and processes. Before considering these "points of change," I will present three microstructures as illustrations.

BinZabar

The funeral house of BinZabar was founded toward the end of the nineteenth century by Ahmad bin Nasir, who was a pearl merchant and an urban Shi'a notable. Ahmad held 'Ashura' congregations in his house, attended mostly by relatives, friends, and neighbors. Upon Ahmad's death, his son-in-law, Muhammad BinZabar, who was a sea merchant, pledged his father-in-law's house as a specialized funeral house, a memorial to the original founder. Muhammad continued to cover the expenses of the funeral house until his death in the forties, and at that time his cousins, the children of Muhsin BinZabar, who were merchants, took over its management. They enlarged its area, built new walls, and added new furniture.

About the mid-sixties, Mahdi al-Tajir, a descendant of a merchant family in Manama, who is at present a private consultant to the ruler of Dubai, donated a large sum of money to renovate the entire structure, bringing it to the status it enjoys today.⁴ When al-Tajir made his donation in the form of *zakat*, the sweet-makers of Manama were operating BinZabar's funeral house. They are related to each other through a series of intermarriages but have no connection to al-Tajir either by birth or by marriage. The sweet-makers have always constituted the core of this house's congregation and been the main participants in its processions. When the original founders failed to sustain the house, they took over its management and approached al-Tajir for help, which he supplied. It is significant that the sweet-maker al-Hajj Salman bin Ghazwan was married to the daughter of Ahmad bin Nasir, the original founder of BinZabar's funeral house. Through him the sweet-makers came to operate this "house" with financial help from al-Tajir first, and then from the waqf department.

Madan

The funeral house of Madan was founded near the end of the nineteenth century by Bin-Madan, who was a mattress-maker. In its early stage it was simply a piece of open ground demarcated by palm reeds and mud walls. Bin-Madan was a man of undistinguished background and limited means, and

he could not cover all the expenses of the funeral house; a group of petty traders and craftsmen shared the expenses. After his death his progeny, lacking means and number, no longer supported or operated the funeral house. Instead, a certain al-Hajj Ibrahim bin Mansur, a grain merchant originally from Shakhura village, volunteered to assume financial responsibility. Ibrahim was a newcomer to the city; by donating to revive a weakened funeral house he established himself as a full-fledged member of the urban community. He constructed a specialized building for the "house" in 1915 and renovated it in 1928, pledging it as a waqf property. The children and grandchildren of Ibrahim Mansur continued to support Madan funeral house, but in conjunction with other merchants of Manama.

In view of their small number and rural origin, the Mansurs sought to strengthen the funeral house by inviting other merchants of comparable status to share the expenses. In the early sixties Muhammad al-Darazi, originally from the village of Diraz and a known proprietor and wholesale merchant of vegetables and fruits, generously donated to improve the building of Madan and supplied it with new furniture. Other merchants followed suit, each donating according to his capacity. Within a short time the management of this "house" passed to the waqf department, itself composed of a group of urban merchants.

Because it is not associated with a particular person or family, Madan attracts a wide range of "ceremonial processions" organized by a variety of solidarities. For essentially the same reason, it has become the richest of all in waqf property. Whoever donates to Madan feels he is enhancing the cause of the Shi^c rather than boosting the image of one person or family. In 1975 the expenditure of this "house" amounted to about U.S. \$5,000, and its income derived from waqf land and voluntary donations amounted to about U.S. \$10,000. Since the early fifties it is possible to detect a shift from private or family-based funeral houses to collective ones, the latter becoming increasingly stronger financially, socially, and politically. Once famous and strong, the family-based "houses" of Urayyid, Mudayfi, and BinRajab were unable in 1975 to attract congregations or organize "ceremonial processions." Processions that have no funeral houses of their own identify themselves with "houses" organized by associations, not families. To associate with privately run or family-run funeral houses is construed to mean economic dependence and political subservience, which is socially degrading. In past years "ceremonial

processions" associated with privately run or family-run funeral houses were carried out by minors, employees, and other dependents.

Al-Ajam

Al-Ajam funeral house was founded in 1892 by al-Hajj Abdul-Nabi al-Kazruni, a rich merchant who owned several sailboats and who was the representative of the Persian community in the council of Isa bin Ali (1869-1923). Al-Kazruni ran the Ajam funeral house single-handed; he collected donations, hired the khatib, organized the processions, and covered all the expenses. Upon his death in 1927, a rich pearl merchant, al-Hajj Abdul-Nabi Bushihri, originally from the port city of Bushire, took over the management of the "house." Bushihri was an intimate friend of al-Kazruni and one of the outstanding notables of the Persian community, but he did not have the same formal position as his predecessor. At the time he took over the management of the funeral house, Shaikh Hamad was ruling Bahrain through a newly established bureaucracy. Unlike his predecessor, al-Bushihri ran the Ajam "house" in collaboration with other Shi'a notables of the Persian community, who together formed a special board for this purpose. They were rich merchants who ruled by consensus and consultation; membership on the board was determined by the extent of donations, not by election or any other form of representation. Whoever donated extensively to the funeral house became ipso facto a member of the board.

After al-Bushihri's death in 1945, the management of the "house" fell entirely into the hands of the board, which was enlarged to include all the notables with good reputation and a sense of public service. To avoid confusion, the board appointed Hasan Baljik, one member, to be officially responsible for programs and budget. They called him the key carrier, in allusion to his carrying the key of the funeral house. The budget fluctuated from year to year, depending upon revenue and expenditure; the deficit had always been covered by the board, which received donations from other merchants and subsidies from the waqf department. In 1971 an administrative committee composed of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and seven members, all of whom were rich merchants, assumed managerial responsibility. The shift from diffuse authority in the board to specialized offices in the committee was made "to avoid chronic disagreements on accounts," and to dispel suspicion of one another's intentions.⁵ This shift is in agreement with the organizational changes that

have been taking place in the management of funeral houses across the country, as will be shown later.

These three cases have been presented to show that the rich merchants are the founders and managers of funeral houses. They donate to funeral houses for religious, economic, and social purposes. A rich Shi^Ca who fails to build or donate to funeral houses loses face and possibly links to his community. He relates to his community by strengthening the instrument of organization that brings unity and consciousness to it. The Shi^Ca of Bahrain are organized in individual communities united by ritual, not in lineages, guilds, fraternities, sororities, labor unions, or political parties. Becoming rich imposes upon the person community pressure to donate to its unity and consciousness. Many rich Shi^Ca informed me that the attitude of the "community" toward them changed favorably when they contributed to the funeral houses. The donation "makes the money I earn religiously and morally acceptable [*halal*]," "makes me feel emotionally comfortable with my wealth," "cheers up my family, followers, and employees," "wards off jealousies," "is a *zakat*." Such statements were repeatedly made by donors. Many of the rich employ poor Shi^Ca in their businesses, and the way to relate to them is through donations to the funeral house. Of course, it is not only the rich who donate; others do, each according to his capacity, but it is the donations of the rich that allow for the operation of a *ma'tam* with a measure of efficiency and social visibility. The funeral houses run by relatively low-income groups are contained in private houses and remain socially invisible. This pattern is widespread in villages and occurs to a much lesser extent in cities. The specialized, socially visible funeral houses concentrate in cities, and the nonspecialized, socially invisible in villages.

The difference between city and village lies in the internal organization and proliferation of the funeral houses and in the elaborateness of the "ceremonial processions." In the early fifties, family-based funeral houses in the city began to give way to those that were association-based--namely, the *waqf* department and self-appointed administrative committees. About the same time, family-organized, faction-oriented houses began to mushroom in villages either by splitting from those already established, or by being founded as entirely new "houses." In reference to the Shi^Ca of Bahrain, the term "family" must be qualified. Nowhere did Shi^Ca families cluster in descent groups, which reflected the tradition of their socioeconomic status and the kind of occupations they

held. The Shi^ca were the cultivators, the craftsmen, the peddlers, the petty traders; some of them were pearl merchants, dealers, or wholesale merchants. Very few Shi^ca families owned stable economic assets that permitted them to sustain sizable concentrations of kin. They grouped in kindreds related by an intricate system of inmarriages, mostly of the parallel or cross-cousin type of the first and second order on the mother's and the father's sides, combined with narrow genealogies of descent that hardly go beyond two or three generations. Like the urban Sunni, the Shi^ca of Bahrain have experienced a long history of migration and other forms of mobility--processes that militate against the concentration of descent groups. In brief, solidarities among the Shi^ca are maintained through varied patterns of inmarriages, reinforced by ritual centering on the funeral house.

Family-based funeral houses are run by agnates or collaterals related by descent, affines related by marriage, paternal or maternal cousins, or any combination of these. The sentiment of kinship is only the catalyst that brings an "association" of men together; their performance, in this case founding a funeral house, is motivated by the pressure to acquire new positions in society. The founding of religious houses acts as a social lubricant that marks the departure of persons or groups from one status to another. It is a ritual of transition and social mobility. This is the reason that those who acquire wealth or those who settle in a new neighborhood or city tend to be the most generous donors. As time elapses and the social position they have aspired to is achieved, their donations gradually dwindle. It is at this stage of mobility that they seek to collaborate with other associates to sustain the expenses of the funeral house, thus consolidating their newly achieved social position in a class form.

In villages where community life prevails, the founding of funeral houses follows interpersonal or factional conflicts. Consider the following examples.

Diraz Village

The village of Diraz has traditionally been known to contain two conspicuous families, Al-Shihab and Al-Ustur--the first known for its economic strength and the second for religious learning. Before 1954 the village had seven funeral houses, four of which were run by the Al-Shihab family, one by Al-Ustur, one by Marzuq, and one by Abu-Rwais.

Al-Shihab and Al-Usfur have always been in competition for status position, visibility, leadership, and anything that commands power and respect in society--competition that intensifies in crises and subsides in peace. During the popular uprising of the mid-fifties, Al-Shihab were in sympathy with the rebellion and Al-Usfur had no clear-cut stand on the issue. Lasting from 1953 to 1956, the uprising generated new cleavages or intensified existing ones in different Shi^Ca communities. Diraz was no exception. These cleavages were not precipitated by different stands or different attitudes toward the issue at hand so much as by the factional structure existing in the village before the uprising. Whereas Al-Shihab and Al-Usfur were in agreement on the quality, character, or "rightness" of the rebellion, they disagreed on their roles in the uprising. Al-Shihab maintained that political activities served the long-range interests of the Shi^Ca; the other faction argued to the contrary and remained inactive.

In crises, factions develop sharp polarities--so sharp that any disagreement, however petty, may erupt into an irreconcilable issue. This happened in Diraz. In 1954 a boy from Al-Usfur's faction flirted with a Shihab girl, a petty matter that soon developed into an open conflict between the two parties. After this incident a quarrel took place in front of the Wasati mosque where Al-Usfur held 'Ashura' rituals. The quarrel was stopped by the state police, but the funeral house, whose mulla was a Shihab, consequently split in two, one group headed by Al-Usfur and their associates, who moved to the Charbi mosque, the other by the Shihab mulla, who remained in the Wasati mosque.

In the sixties, the newly formed funeral house of Al-Usfur and its associates began to face internal friction, this time focusing on finance and expenditure. Led by a certain Zain al-Din, four contractors, who had recently achieved wealth and status, accused the manager of the ma'tam, who belonged to Al-Usfur, of having lavishly spent the greater part of their donations on his own family. They requested that he form a committee responsible for the management of the funeral house. When he refused to do so they split and founded a "house" of their own. Accusations and counteraccusations of this sort need not and often do not correspond to reality. The motive for such accusations and disagreements lies in the attempt of the emerging economic groups to translate acquired wealth into status, in part through investment in traditionally acknowledged prestige institutions--the funeral houses. Soon as the contractors,

who related to each other by intermarriages and business relationships, founded a new house and built a specialized building for this purpose, Al-Ustur abandoned the Gharbi mosque and likewise built their own specialized ma'tam.

The contractors built theirs on a plot owned by Zain al-Din, who refused in later years to pledge it as waqf property, in spite of the insistence of his associates. This meant that the plot and the funeral house remained private property and therefore were subject to inheritance by al-Din's progeny. It also happened during the parliamentary elections of the early seventies that al-Din strongly supported the candidate of the Religious Bloc against a "modernist" who was the brother of one of the original contributors to the ma'tam. Al-Din used the facility of the funeral house to attack in person the "modernist," accusing him of blasphemy and irreligiosity. After the "modernist" lost the election to the Religious Bloc (see chap. 10), the funeral house split in two; one group remained under the al-Din supervision, and the other constructed a building at the entrance of the village. The new "house," called the Partisans of Justice, has been financed by a rich contractor, Isa al-Ajami, but receives generous donations from the supporters of the "modernist." In 1975 the Partisans of Justice was able to put on the most elaborate procession in the village of Diraz, which must be taken less as a measure of the growing influence of the "modernist" than as the formation of new factions in the village; indeed, the "modernist" participation in the ritual was meager.

Salambad

Until 1968 the village of Salambad had only one funeral house, run by a petty trader and proprietor of the al-Kadhim family, the largest in the village. Other groups attended this funeral house and donated to its operation, each according to his means. The Kadhims, who number about eighteen nuclear families and constitute a bit more than one-third of the village, have no tradition of exclusiveness; they marry outsiders. Their relatively large number is a recent formation, lacking genealogical depth; most of them are parallel or cross-cousins of the first, second, or third order, living in adjacent households. Unlike Diraz, Salambad has no tradition of factionalism; it is a small community that has no claim to status or noble origin, religious or otherwise. Most of its inhabitants are semiskilled or skilled laborers, petty traders, taxi-drivers, truck

drivers, tradesmen, or craftsmen, with a few cultivators.

For lack of traditionally opposed factions in Salambad, the rise of new funeral houses has taken a different bent than in Diraz; it has followed interpersonal rather than interfactional conflicts. Indeed, the original funeral house of al-Kadhim split twice, once after a truck accident and the other after a marriage failure. In 1968 an unlicensed truck driver hit the house of Abdul-Husain, a prominent member of al-Kadhim's "house." In the court trials, al-Kadhim supported Abdul-Husain against the driver, who was a nephew of Hajj Makki, also a prominent contributor to the "house." Bitter about al-Kadhim's testimony, Hajj Makki, supported by Hajj Abbass, decided to split from al-Kadhim's "house" and establish a separate one. They ran the ma'tam jointly until the early seventies, when Hajj Makki refused Hajj Abbass's request to marry the former's divorced daughter. Hajj Makki's refusal was based on his daughter's wishes, but Hajj Abbass understood it as a personal insult because the girl eventually did marry a man of Hajj Abbass's age and status. Feeling that he had been socially insulted by a presumed friend, Hajj Abbass withdrew from Hajj Makki's ma'tam and established a new one under his direct control and supervision.

These cases, one from Diraz and the other from Salambad, summarize the structural conditions that may lead to the formation of new funeral houses. The factions may vary, the cases may differ, but the principle remains the same: the proliferation and spread of new "houses" in villages tends to follow personal or factional conflicts and is therefore an embodiment and manifestation of these conflicts. As prestige institutions, the funeral houses multiply as society grows economically richer--a phenomenon that has a direct bearing on personal and factional conflicts in society. Affluence accentuates conflicts--more so in communities where conflicts are not absorbed into macroorganizations that integrate people at a level higher than the immediate small communities to which they belong. In cities such as Manama, "houses" vary by class, locality, and ethnic origins and do not follow personal or factional conflicts. In other words, personal or factional conflicts in the city of Manama do not lead to the creation of new funeral houses. A dissident group simply dissociates itself from one "house" and joins another--a process that seems to strengthen association-based "houses" and weaken family-based ones. Funeral houses organized and administered by an association of people who share the same ethnic origin and class interests and charac-

teristics are more capable of absorbing interpersonal conflicts than are family-organized "houses." Family-organized "houses" are personalized, revolving around a person of considerable means and riches; any conflict within the funeral house therefore has to be directed against the person who makes up the totality of the funeral house—hence the split.

The Political Contents of Processions and Ceremonial Flagellations

I previously distinguished between the foundation of a "house" and its operation; the first refers to economic means, class mobility, religiousness, and factional or interpersonal conflicts; the second refers to the organization of the *ta^cziyah*, which refers to the processions and the ceremonial flagellations that characterize the tenth day of Muharram. The two processes, foundation and operation, need not be the same; they often involve distinctly different solidarities. A funeral house (Madan and Ajam, for example) may be founded and continuously subsidized by the rich, while its processions are organized by one or several inner cores that act independently of the founders or subsidizers. Participation in processions that include "ceremonial flagellations" fluctuates from year to year and is subject to controversy among the Shi^ca of Bahrain. Some approve these practices on the basis of precedent or "religious imitation"; others denounce them on the grounds that they are religiously indulgent. By contrast, participation in the foundation or management of a "house" and continuous donations to it tend to be more stable and constitute a socially recognized prestige investment that may pass from father to son. The disagreements mentioned earlier focus not on the principle of donating to or founding a funeral house, but on who should run it and in what capacity.

In spite of these differences, foundation and operation are complementary processes; the more numerous and elaborate the processions identified with a "house," the stronger and more influential its founders. A procession is identified with a "house" if it simply uses it as a base, a place to start from and return to. Just as funeral houses compete against each other to accommodate as many processions as possible, processions compete in spectacular scenes. To impress the spectators, who are mostly women, processions elaborate on a variety of themes taken from the Battle of Karbala. Flagellations, cries of grief, rebellious chants,⁶ war drums, mourning tunes, large paintings of the slain Martyr, riderless

horses or camels whose knights fell in the battle, empty carriages that once carried the womenfolk of Husain, widowed brides and orphaned children--all are incorporated in the multitude of processions marching in the open streets on the tenth day of 'Ashura'. The processions are innumerable and the scenes they depict do not lack ingenuity, artistic talent, or innovation; but to describe them in ethnographic detail, however interesting symbolically and culturally, would shift the discussion to a new focus of analysis. At this point we are concerned with the organization of these processions and the way they relate to the operation of funeral houses as loci of power.

The most elaborate processions take place in the city of Manama, in and around the Shi^Ca quarters, within an area delimited for this purpose in the fifties after repeated clashes between participants. Only recently have a few of the larger villages such as Diraz, Jidd Hafz, and Sanabis held ceremonial processions. That the most elaborate processions take place in Manama does not mean that participation is restricted to the inhabitants of this city. On the tenth day of Muharram various Shi^Ca groups from villages and cities pour into Manama to take part in the "big march"; each group, however, keeps to itself. The "big march" includes all the individual processions that perform in Manama on the tenth of Muharram. At first sight it appears that the processions march in harmony as a single moving picture, the parts well integrated into a unified theme. Sociologically speaking, this is not the case. The semblance of order is enforced by an officially appointed committee composed entirely of Shi^Ca notables. This committee arranges the procession so as to maintain security and to prevent clashes between participants within the designated area.

The "big march" is composed of independent processions, links that can hardly be connected into a chain. It contains two broad ethnic divisions, the Arab and the Persian Shi^Ca; each in turn contains several processions that vary considerably in the scenes and acts they display and in the social composition of the group. Each of the eleven processions I studied in some depth--three of Persian origin and eight of Arab origin--was composed of a "network" of men who knew each other as classmates, neighbors, fellow workers, fellow villagers, colleagues, in-laws, descent relatives, or political party members. Every participant in a procession knew his counterparts directly or indirectly and had little or no knowledge of those participants in other processions. Two processions were

organized by people sharing villages of origin in Iran--one group, originally from Jahrum near Shiraz, was called al-Jahramiyah procession (*mau'kib*); the other, from Bandar Abbass and its vicinity, and was called al-Minawiyah. The two processions shared the same neighborhood of al-Hura in Manama; a large percentage of the marchers were bakers, petty traders, tradesmen, or minor technicians. The third procession I studied among the Persian Shi^Ca was composed of the youth (*al-shabab*) of the old Persian community near al-Makharqa quarter. Some of the participants were children of the merchant class who donated generously to al-Ajam funeral house; some were students, technicians, or civil employees.

The three processions differed considerably in recruitment; the first two, based on shared community ties, had a more stable membership than the third one, based on class membership. About 22 percent of the first two processions (the total was eighteen and twenty-one respectively) were new recruits performing for the first time; 17 percent had performed for more than three years; and the rest, 61 percent, had performed two or three years. By contrast, the third procession had a larger percentage of new recruits: about 42 percent (the total was twenty-four) performed for the first time, 12 percent had performed for more than three years, and 46 percent for two or three years.

The eight other processions organized by the Arab Shi^Ca share many of the structural characteristics of those organized by the Persian Shi^Ca; the differences lie in the elementary social relationships that bring members of a procession together. Among the Arab Shi^Ca, processions vary by individual villages, community of origin (which refers to the Shi^Ca who came from the al-Hasa province in Saudi Arabia), quarters and neighborhoods in cities, sports clubs, political factions, or political parties. In general, recruitment in community-based processions, such as individual villages or neighborhoods and quarters of cities, tends to be more stable than processions organized by cultural and sports clubs or by political parties. About 33 percent (the total varied between thirty-four and sixty-two) of the participants in community based processions had performed for more than three years, about 20 percent were performing for the first time, and the rest (47%) had performed for two or three years. By contrast, recruitment into processions organized by political parties or cultural and sports clubs tends to be fluid. Of the sixteen persons who participated in the political-party procession, about 6 percent had

performed for more than three years, 18 percent for two or three years, and the rest (76%) were new recruits.

Whether the percentage of new or old recruits was high or low, the processions were always organized by a handful of men who had performed together for several years and who constituted the "inner core" of the procession. This inner core is a "close-knit network" (Bott 1957, pp. 59-60) of men who had known each other intimately over a long period.⁷ When asked about the intensity of relationship between them, many responded spontaneously: "we beat together," meaning that they perform ceremonial flagellations together. As an instrument that keeps the inner core of a procession together, establishing ritualistic brotherhood performance year after year, "beating together" seems to be stronger than friendship, colleagueship, neighborliness, or kinship ties. Once this inner core loses one or two members, because of death, migration, or social mobility, the procession either changes drastically or is dissolved. It is through this inner core that new participants are recruited.

Whereas relationships within the inner core tend to be constant and stable, they fluctuate and change from year to year between the inner core and the new recruits. To use Bott's terminology, the inner core is "close knit"; the procession as a body is "loose knit" by comparison. While members of the inner core know each other directly, closely, and intimately, they know other participants in the procession only indirectly through other members of the inner core (Bott 1957, pp. 57-60). Most new recruits join processions either to fulfill a vow pledged in times of personal crises such as sickness, migration, examinations, unemployment, marriage, divorce, or opening a new shop or business, or to display manhood and reinforce the identity or the sense of togetherness of cliques, peers, and the like. Once these pledges and wishes are fulfilled, new recruits withdraw from the procession without altering its style of expressing grief or mode of recruitment. These are entirely in the hands of the inner core, whose roles in the processions are specialized and whose commitments are lasting. The specialization of their roles leads to such lasting commitment. Within the procession, specialized roles occur in reference to a variety of performances: style of beating, the instruments used, the chants, the scene depicted, or the collection of donations to cover expenses.

The inner core of men who perform year after year often operates independently of the founders or subsidizers of the funeral houses. Only in

family-based "houses" may the inner cores of processions correspond to the management; otherwise the inner cores raise funds independently to cover the expenses of the procession, recruit and train new participants, and assume responsibility for the procession before the law. In recent years there has been a clear tendency among the processions to identify themselves with those funeral houses that are run and sustained by formal organizations, the waqf department, or self-appointed administrative committees. This shift in identity marks a point of transition for the funeral house as well as for the Shi^Ca at large.

It has been repeatedly observed that ceremonial processions have increasingly become more elaborate, violent, and comprehensive, involving a larger segment of the Shi^Ca than they ever did in earlier times. Many factors have contributed to magnify the ceremonial processions, including the ease of transportation between village and city, the gradual elimination of oppressive measures imposed upon Shi^Ca practices in Bahrain, the rise of state institutions, and the changing organization of the funeral houses. Of these, the changing organization of the funeral house is the most important factor. The shift from family-run "houses" to formalized management (waqf department or administrative committees) has liberated the processions from being controlled by the class of founders or donors. This has meant that any group can organize a procession independently of external supervision and still be able to seek identity with a funeral house. The al-Jahramiyah, the al-Mineawiyah, and the "Persian Youth" processions, however different, are incorporated into a single "house" that is run by the Arab Shi^Ca waqf department and that includes a wide variety of processions organized by migrants from Saudi Arabia, individual villages in Bahrain, quarters and neighborhoods of the city, peer groups, and underground political parties. It serves the interests of the founders and organizers of the funeral houses to accommodate as many processions as possible, because the strength of the "house" is measured by the number and size of the processions associated with it; the larger and the more numerous the processions, the stronger the "house."

In this context the word "strong" refers to two related processes: competition between the "houses" within the Shi^Ca and between the Shi^Ca as a whole and the system of government in which they happen to operate. Competition within the Shi^Ca focuses on class mobility, the cultivation of prestige symbols, and the struggle between the old and the new loci of power. Earlier I mentioned that founding, managing, subsidizing, or

donating generously to a funeral house marks a point of transition for the individual; it consolidates achieved social position into a class form. Given the tremendous socioeconomic transformations that have taken place in Bahrain, the symbols of such achievements have changed drastically. Prestige symbols have changed not only in value and variety, but also in social quality, thus altering the composition, structure, and level of consciousness of class collectivities. In reference to funeral houses, those that have continued to be run by individual men, families, or kindreds have lost their social base and became incapable of attracting processions of any consequence. A person or family who insists on running a specialized "house" single-handed without collaborating with potential donors of similar social stature is heavily attacked for using religious symbols that are "the property of God and man" to selfishly boost a private image in society. Good examples of this kind of "house" are those of Rajab, Mudayfi, Urayyid, and others, who in 1975 attracted neither congregations nor processions. The only procession that identified itself with Rajab was organized by Shi^ca Pakistani labor.

The preference of processions for identifying themselves with waqf-run "houses" or with those organized by self-appointed administrative committees signifies a new formulation of group consciousness. Since the development of oil and the subsequent socioeconomic transformations, social differentiation has taken on a new pattern--from individualized status to collectivized distinctions, accentuated with trends of traditionalism and modernity. Consider the following case.

Until 1964 there had been in the village of Sanabis--about three kilometers from Manama--a single "house" run by Ali Bu-Khamis, who received donations and covered the expenses himself. The Bu-Khamis family, better known in the village than other families, had a traditional claim to this "house." Sanabis itself has been the place where the Shi^ca of Bahrain observe the ritual of "the Return of the Head," and this gave the Bu-Khamis family a countrywide reputation. In 1953 a cultural and sports club was founded in the village that attracted teachers, students, and salaried labor, who collectively constituted the new emerging groups in society. Since its foundation the club has drawn new elements from the village and the surrounding area, thus weakening the power base of the Bu-Khamis and threatening their claim to prominence. Supported by religious sympathizers, in the early sixties the Bu-Khamis launched an attack on the club, accusing its members of irreligiosity and blasphemy.

The attack focused on the use of television, which "corrupts morality," and on the participation of women and girls in club activities, which "opposes custom and religious teachings."

In their turn, the club members carried on their activities in defiance of religious protests; this led intermittently to a few mild physical clashes between the two fronts. They denounced the religious practices of the Bu-Khamis and their sympathizers, accusing them of idolatry, a charge made in reference to the use of pictures and statues of Husain and other members of the holy family in the rituals as well as a variety of "instruments of torture" (swords, chains, knives, etc.) in the processions. To demonstrate their religiousness, the club members wrote to eminent Shi^Ca theologians in Najaf and Karbala consulting them on these issues. The replies were varied: some theologians denounced these practices, some supported them on the basis of precedent, and some argued that they are neither required nor forbidden by religious law. Led by Alawi al-Shraikhhat, an ambitious politician who was elected to the Bahrain parliament in 1973 representing the constituency of Sanabis and its vicinity, in 1964 the club members established their own independent "house," drawing to it the newly emerging elements in society.

These two funeral houses of Sanabis represent two types of solidarities, one based on traditional ties representing the continuity of the old loci of power, and the other on associational ties (the club) representing the new emerging forces. Except in some instances, as in Sanabis, where clubs organize themselves simultaneously in independent funeral houses, this division between the traditional and the emerging forces expresses itself more vividly in the opposition of funeral house and cultural and sports club. When clubs organize funeral houses, they always claim to employ "reformed" religious practices.

Varied as they are in form and content, in social composition and recruitment, these funeral houses taken together enhance the religio-political consciousness of the Shi^Ca as a distinct polity. The variation and proliferation of the "houses" in the past two decades or so reflect in part the socioeconomic changes that have befallen the Shi^Ca of Bahrain since the development of oil in the area. The Shi^Ca of Bahrain constitute about half the population but share less in government, which suggests that any form of collective action is necessarily directed toward political goals. Through the Ja^Cfari court of justice and the waqf department, the Shi^Ca do exercise independent authority over religious matters,

including religious endowments, marriage, divorce, inheritance, and other forms of family relationships, but they have no or little influence on decision-making concerning the exploitation of national resources, public investment, services, and distribution, or the structure and composition of state institutions. The Shi^ca use the funeral house as a platform to assert their grievances, mobilize their converts for action, and implicitly attack "mundane" (government) authority and rule. In the popular uprising of the mid-fifties discussed in the next chapter, a large body of Shi^ca opposition was mobilized through the funeral houses. The same generalization can be made about the cultural and sports clubs, which differ considerably from the funeral houses in recruitment, composition, and ideological commitment.

Voluntary Associations: The Cultural and Sports Clubs

Between 1918 and 1975, 141 clubs, societies, and associations were founded in Bahrain; 115 continue to operate, 19 have merged with larger clubs, 5 faded away spontaneously, and 2 were forced to close down for political reasons. Of those operating at present, 66 are officially registered as cultural and sports clubs, 12 as societies with social, educational, and professional aims, 8 as federations uniting several sports clubs, 10 as sports clubs for foreigners, 6 as sports clubs for private institutions,⁸ and 13 as specialized societies for fine arts such as music, theater, folklore, and the plastic arts.⁹ Until the 1950s only 8 clubs had been founded, 6 by Bahrainis--the Ahli, the Uruba, the Firdawsi, the Bahrain, the Islah, and the Nahda--and 2 by foreigners--Bahrain sports Club, founded by the British in 1918, and the Pakistani Club, founded by Pakistanis in 1947. Indian nationals living in Bahrain, who far outnumbered the Pakistanis, had no club of their own; they were associated with British imperial administration and were accordingly admitted to the Bahrain Sports Club. After the rise of bureaucracy in the twenties and the development of oil in the thirties, the number of Britishers living on the island increased considerably, prompting the establishment of the British Club in 1939 as an independent, exclusive activity.

Until the popular uprising of the mid-fifties, club activities in Bahrain were the privilege of the elite, the prominent and visible elements in society. The six clubs founded by Bahrainis differed in the

social, ethnic, and religious categories from which they recruited membership, but they were all alike in recruiting from the rich merchant class, the high civil employees, and some enlightened members of the ruling family--the categories that make up the upper stratum of Bahraini society. The Ahli Club recruited members from the rich Sunni merchants of Manama, the Uruba from the Shi^ca merchants and high civil employees, the Firdawsī from the Shi^ca merchants of Persian origin, the Bahrain from the urban Sunni of Muharraq, the Islah from the ruling family of Al-Khalifa and their allies in Muharraq, and the Nahda from the urban Sunni of al-Hidd town. Two of these clubs, the Bahrain of Muharraq and the Uruba of Manama, became the prototypes, the models on which many others were fashioned, especially after the popular uprising of the mid-fifties and the subsequent proliferation of club organizations. By contrast, the Islah and the Nahda clubs lost their membership and became, as of the mid-fifties, almost defunct. Why one club becomes a model and another closes down, reflects both structure and capacity to adapt to the socioeconomic and political transformations that have taken place in the country. I will first discuss the structure of these six clubs, their foundation and development, and the social forces that have variably acted upon them, bringing into the discussion other related associations, and then take up the proliferation of clubs and its political implications.

Club Organization before the Uprising of the Mid-fifties

The Ahli Club, one of the oldest in Bahrain, had the least exciting career politically. It managed to stay aloof from the major events that had befallen the country since the development of oil, and in this sense it can be said to be one of the most "professional" clubs in Bahrain, abiding by the terms of its constitution--sponsoring educational programs, promoting sports, and refraining from political activities. Officially registered in 1939, it replaced and succeeded the Islamic Congress, which was founded in 1927 by a handful of rich urban Sunni merchants who lived in the al-Fadil quarter and who had deep sympathy with the independence movements in Egypt. Fashioned after the various assemblies organized by the Muslim Brotherhood party in Egypt, the Congress provided its members with reading materials published by the Brotherhood and related movements. The Islamic Congress in Bahrain was not organizationally a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt; far from being so, it was essentially a local,

spontaneous reaction to the political events besetting the Arab world in general and Egypt in particular. This spontaneous but independent reaction to political events in the region was not new to Bahrain; the urban Sunni population of this country has an established tradition of empathy with a wide variety of Arab political problems. Itself an "elitist" gathering, the Congress was never able to mobilize any segment of the population to share its political ideologies and commitments, nor did it try to do so. It was simply a meeting place to which some rich but enlightened merchants retired after work, exchanging views and news, passing time, and learning about the political developments of the day.

In 1939 a few rich Shi^ca merchants from Manama, in collaboration with high civil Shi^ca employees, established the Uruba Club, which aimed "to unite the people and fight religious sectarianism accordingly with the principles of Arab nationalism."¹⁰ Feeling the challenge and the shift in ideological emphasis from Islamism to Arabism--which, incidentally, reflected a major change in the political ideologies of the Arab world in the thirties and forties--the young among the Sunni merchants of Manama, who were the children of the forerunners of the Islamic Congress, promptly established the Ahli Club, with a membership fluctuating between one hundred and two hundred. Unlike its predecessor, the Ahli focused on Arab nationalism more than on Islamic religion, which was the fashion of the day.

Although they shared location,¹¹ time of foundation, and class origin of membership, the Ahli and the Uruba followed different directions of development: the Ahli remained a professionalized club and the Uruba became the nexus of a variety of analogous clubs spread in various parts of the country. Before discussing these directions, it is necessary to indicate that the word "club" used in the collective sense does not in reality operate this way; only individuals within the club establish external links. The club is simply a social category, as associational gathering of people of the same kind--people who meet each other in business, work, worship, leisure, and neighborhoods. It is neither an "action-set" (Mayer 1966, p. 108) that a person mobilizes to achieve political goals nor a "network" (Mitchell 1969) that defines the character and limits of interaction and scope of influence of a particular person or group. "Action-sets" and "networks" are formed within the club to deal with current political issues or fateful crises, but the club as a whole rarely operates in this capacity.

The performance of a "club" in crises or in day-to-day activities depends on the way other people relate to it through its membership, or on the way its membership relates to society. The social origin of the membership alone does not determine the "structure of the boundary" between club and society. Although the Ahli and the Uruba both are dominated by the upper stratum of society, the first by the Sunni merchants and the second by a combination of Shi^Ca merchants and high-level civil employees, each has had a different influence on society and on the proliferation of club organization in the country. People relate to members of clubs in "multiplex" situations, which, in addition to class origin, includes sectarian affiliation, community of origin, career history, or political ideology. The urban Sunni merchants of Manama in the Ahli Club have a long tradition of complying with government policy and accepting the ideological structure of the state. By contrast the Shi^Ca merchants and high civil employees in the Uruba Club agree with government on policy but disagree on ideology. In this context the word "policy" refers to the body of rules and regulations, legal rights and obligations that the government uses to control society and the economy, and "ideology" refers to the legitimacy of government.

The theory is that if an institution, club or otherwise, accepts the policy of government and the ideological structure of the state, it does not take on additional functions other than those formally specified in its constitution. If, on the other hand, it rejects the policy and the ideology, it takes on additional political functions irrespective of its formal commitments. Accepting the policy of government and the ideology of the state, the Ahli has never meddled in politics since its foundation in the late thirties. It has always confined its activities to sports and cultural programs, sponsoring lectures on Arab history and poetry, social and economic problems, and organizing a variety of sports programs, plays, and singing or dancing parties.

In the seventies, the young generation of the thirties grew old, and the cultural and sports activities of the Ahli declined. Lacking a sports team, which is a social attraction in Bahrain, the club, once famous for soccer, was becoming a social gathering for the rich. At this time (1970s) they chose to annex the Tursana Club, which had an outstanding soccer team that had declined for lack of funds. The Ahli and the Tursana share the same religious and ethnic background but differ in economic means. Both recruit members from the urban Arab Sunni who live in

the al-Fadil quarter, but the first tends to recruit from the rich merchant category and the second from the lower middle or lower income categories--craftsmen, tradesmen, petty traders. The merger was meant to strengthen the Ahli in sports and the Tursana in economic means while still keeping them apart.

To accept the merger, the Ahli stipulated that the two clubs together be known by the name Ahli and that the Tursana who were granted the right to vote in club elections could be represented by only one seat on the executive committee. (The Yarmuk Club, which has the same social characteristics and the same financial difficulties as the Tursana, had refused to merge with the Ahli on these terms and had chosen to stay independent but face bankruptcy.) The merger of the Tursana with the Ahli changed the class composition of both clubs. The new Ahli is no longer confined to rich merchants who accept the policy of the state; it also includes the urban Sunni lower middle- and lower-income categories who are opposed to these policies and ideologies. If the theory presented above is correct, the once professionalized club will soon take on nonprofessional, political functions. This will happen as soon as the Tursana become full-fledged members of the Ahli and are well integrated into its government.

Established in 1946 by the rich Shi^ca Persian merchants, the Firdawsi cultural and sports club was analogous to the Ahli in form, if not in content. Its membership fluctuated between twenty and thirty, initially placing more emphasis on sports than on cultural activities. Later, when the original founders grew old and could no longer be active in sports, the club began to focus on cultural programs with few or no political implications. Unlike the Ahli, the Firdawsi's lack of political involvement is derived not so much from its acceptance of the policy and ideology of the state as from the minority status of the Shi^ca Persians. As a minority group claiming cultural affinity to Iran, the Persian merchants of Bahrain have always remained politically dormant, with no clear policy of supporting or opposing successive Al-Khalifa regimes. The only time they took a visible part in politics was in the early twenties, when they were lured by British authorities to man the recently established municipal order in Manama, which, in addition to other factors, prompted the Arab-Persian riots. The combined lack of sports and politics robbed the Firdawsi Club of the youth element and accordingly reduced it to a social gathering for the relatively old, rich merchants.

In 1975 serious efforts were made to merge the Taj and the Shu^ca^c clubs in the Firdawsi on the grounds that they shared the same ethnic (Persian) background, but to no avail. The Firdawsi insisted on retaining its authority after the merger and promised to provide the other two clubs with sports facilities without incorporating them into the club organization proper. Weakened by lack of funds, the other clubs, which recruit their membership from the lower-income categories, insisted on full membership if they were to join the Firdawsi. They claimed that their merger would bring the Firdawsi back to light, enhancing its cultural and sports programs. The merger of weakened clubs with larger and better established ones is essentially a political move, as I will explain later. Being apolitical, the Firdawsi may opt, as it has thus far, not to merge.

The Uruba, which was established at the same time as the Ahli, built on the same street by almost the same social category of people and with the same size of membership, became, unlike its counterpart, a model club to be imitated by many separate but similar associations. Many sports and cultural clubs founded in Shi^ca villages between the fifties and sixties have copied almost verbatim the constitution of the Uruba. They aim "to unite the word and the people," "reject factionalism and sectarianism," "enhance the spirit of cooperation and mutual help," and "raise the educational and cultural standards of the public."¹²

It is possible to argue that these clubs, including the Uruba, adopted nonfactional aims and mottoes because the individual communities they belonged to have for a long time suffered from schisms and factional conflicts. The Shi^ca of Bahrain spontaneously explain their misfortunes and miseries, past and present, by repeatedly alluding to lack of unity and internal conflicts within the sect. I heard hardly a sermon in the funeral houses of Bahrain that failed to attack "factional conflicts" (*al-tahazzub*) and to call for unity and internal solidarity. Overconcern with factionalism, schisms, cleavages, or petty conflicts may be a product of the Shi^ca history of oppression and economic competition for scarce resources.

The Uruba came to be a "model" club not simply because its aims and formal commitments fitted into the politicoreligious ideology and cultural history of the Shi^ca, but also because its membership related more organically to other analogous institutions in Shi^ca communities. True, many Uruba members were "the children of fortune," as Roderic Owen (1957,

p. 77) calls them, merchants or high civil employees who lived in Manama, but they all had "village community" roots. Whether they actually had "village" origin is not the issue; they and others believe they did. However far and distant, real or fictitious, "village" origin ties a man to a community that places upon him moral claims including donations to "village" welfare projects or to religious purposes, social charities, intercession with employers and government authorities, and a host of other personal or public services. These claims are not mandatory and tend to increase with the status of the person.

While having "village" roots places moral claims over the "then community member" it simultaneously features the "now club member" as a model of imitation, thus enhancing his acquired prestige and influence. Many Uruba members were schoolteachers before they went into civil employment or private business, and this helped them establish lasting nonkinship relationships with a large circle of young men drawn to public schools from different Shi^Ca village communities. Seven of the nine cultural and sports clubs I studied in depth in Shi^Ca villages were initially founded by students who worked in close collaboration with their former teachers in the Uruba Club. Classmate and teacher-student relationships were the most dominant types that brought in "action groups" together in the popular uprising of the mid-fifties. This association between teacher-student relationships and the founding of clubs in Shi^Ca villages contributed to qualify the image of the "club" as a symbol of modernity and progress. Many Uruba members do have their roots in the merchant class, but unlike the merchant category, they distinguish themselves by educational and scholastic achievements; many have had formal college training.

The difference between the Ahli and the Uruba is not only a matter of links and networks and their proliferation in various parts of the country; it is equally a product of the variation of the value of class as a modifier of behavior and organization. Among the Shi^Ca, social class distinctions are softened by several intervening variables such as a history of sectarian oppression, common politicoreligious ideology, and a well-organized "clergy" that continuously seeks to maintain a sectarian collective consciousness irrespective of internal differentiation. Among the urban Sunni, who lack such variables, class distinctions tend to be sharp and rigid. The Shi^Ca of Bahrain have generally taken a collective stand on decisive issues such as Bahrain reforms in the twenties and the

constitutional rebellion of the mid-fifties, regardless of class distinctions. The Sunni, by contrast, were divided on these issues along class lines, the urban rich merchant classes taking the side of the tribally controlled regime and the lower classes opposing it. Given the fluidity of class distinctions among the Shi^Ca, the upper stratum of society, like those in the Uruba Club, were taken to be the symbols of popular expectations; because of the rigidity of such distinctions among the Sunni, the same stratum, like those in the Ahli Club, could not operate in the same capacity. In fact the club that came to play the same role as the Uruba among the Sunni was the Bahrain Club of Muharraaq, whose social composition varied considerably from the Ahli.

The Bahrain Club of Muharraaq was established in 1936 especially by the urban Sunni who were recruited in "al-Shabiba" soccer team--"especially" because few Shi^Ca in this town were recruited into the club at different times of its history. In a decade or so, the Bahrain, whose membership fluctuated between one hundred and four hundred, came to represent a cross section of Muharraaq city, with marked emphasis on the emerging forces who relate to society through modern education, skills, techniques, occupations, and trades. They belong to various social and occupational categories: merchants, teachers, students, civil employees, technicians, secretaries, clerks, or salaried labor. The club never attracted religious men, fishermen, craftsmen, artisans, and the like, based in traditional occupations.

This orientation was not simply the product of a deliberate policy followed by the club; it was a reflection of the social change that has taken place in Muharraaq after the collapse of pearl production, the transfer of the seat of government to Sakhr and then to Rifa, and the concomitant shift of commercial and industrial activities to Manama. Since the early thirties there has been continuous migration from Muharraaq to Manama and Rifa. Most of the migrants have belonged either to the rich merchant class and their dependents or to the Al-Khalifa family and their tribal allies, which has left a clear imprint on the social structure of Muharraaq. Gradually the city acquired a strong urban, nontribal character with an obvious concentration of low-income groups. It was this segment, however, that in later years proved most receptive to the pan-Arab and pan-Islam movements that swept through the Middle East before, during, and after the Second World War. As a result, Muharraaq became the bastion of Arab nationalism, which, in the Bahraini context,

has always meant opposition to government and rejection of the ideological structure of the state. (Bujra 1971, pp. 168-69, makes the same observation about Huraïda town in Hadramut.)

By following a broad policy of recruitment, the Bahrain embodied the main political undercurrents of Muharraq, thus expressing the socio-demographic changes that have taken place in the city. This role of the Bahrain is demonstrated by the activities it has sponsored or tried to sponsor and by the course of action it took during the uprising of the mid-fifties. Unlike the Ahli and the Uruba, who focus their activities on "enlightening" but politically less controversial issues, the Bahrain has centered its activities on precisely such issues as they happen to come up. Between 1973 and 1975 the club sponsored lectures and panel discussions on labor law and organization, the status of foreign labor, women's liberation, national security laws, the civil rights of citizens, and many political platforms held by parliamentary candidates in 1973. In the mid-fifties, several Bahrain Club members took leading parts in the popular uprising, which prompted the merchants who were allies to the regime to withdraw from club activities.

Immediately after the uprising and the subsequent suppression of the club's activities, the Bahrain's stature as a focal point of political activism dwindled, to be revived, however, in the late sixties and early seventies. Many political events--Britain's announcement that it would withdraw from Bahrain in 1968, Bahrain's achievement of independence in 1971, the election for the Constitutional Assembly in 1972 and for the national parliament in 1973--these events collectively revived the Bahrain Club as a meeting place, a platform, and a lobby for political action. The elected president of the club in 1974 was voted to power in the parliamentary elections of 1973; it was through his office and efforts that other cultural and sports clubs began to merge with the Bahrain or with each other.¹³

The tendency for smaller clubs to merge with bigger ones or with each other is an outcome of the rise of broad political blocs after the institution of the national parliament in 1973. Clubs have always been an integral part of the political arena in Bahrain; new formulations in politics affect club organization. (See Wallerstein 1966 for comparable work on Africa.) The emergence of three countrywide political blocs in parliament--the People's Bloc, the Religious Bloc, and the Independent Middle--generated analogous formulations in club organizations. The dis-

solution of the parliament in 1975 and the subsequent disintegration of the broad political blocs slowed down the spontaneous emergence of larger and broader club organizations. The word "spontaneous" is used to distinguish between the merger of clubs resulting from new social and political formulations and that resulting from an official attempt to merge all clubs in eight sports federations. This attempt is a government measure to "professionalize" the clubs and thereby depoliticize them. By upgrading athletics programs through the newly instituted Department of Sports, the political content of club organizations will be checked.

Organized by different social categories, two other clubs, the Islah and the Nahda, have experienced different eventualities for different reasons. Founded in 1942 by a group of Al-Khalifa shaikhs who had training in civil and Islamic law in Egypt, the Islah was never able to grow beyond its original membership, which also included some merchants and civil employees allied to Al-Khalifa in Muharraaq. From the point of view of formal commitments that focused on religious matters, the Islah could have grown to be the counterpart of al-Bahrain, the first attracting the religiously oriented people, the second the "modernized" elements. The Islah Club did not do so, not because the Bahrain Club had no opposition in Muharraaq or because this city lacked religiously oriented people, but because it could not compete with the very institutions it tried to replace--tribe and government.

The ruling family of Al-Khalifa exercises collective control over the economic, social, and political behavior of its members, and in this way it comes to control government in Bahrain. Voluntary associations, clubs or otherwise, flourish at the time when primary groups based on kinship or strong community ties loosen their grip over individual members (see also Balandier 1955, p. 122; Banton 1957, p. 195), which in the case of Al-Khalifa has not yet taken place. Marriage, inheritance, alienation of property, even interpersonal interactions are collectively controlled. In a tribal setting these turn inward rather than outward, reinforcing the "exclusive," "nonassimilative" qualities of tribal groups. This is why the Islah Club, to be fitted into the sociocultural and political arenas the Al-Khalifa collectively control, sought religious orientations that did not obviously interfere with the dictates of tribe and government.

In this connection the Islah parallels the Literary Club established in 1919 by Shaikh Abdullah bin Isa, which focused on literary matters

that likewise lay outside the immediate concerns of tribe and government. Shaikh Abdullah wanted the club to be a moral link between the ruling regime and the Arab world (particularly Egypt)--a link that could meet the challenge of the new bureaucracy that limited tribal authority and checked Al-Khalifa power.¹⁴ (It was the grandsons of Shaikh Abdullah who established the Islah Club in Muharraq to meet the challenge of the newly rising forces embodied in the Bahrain Club.) Like the Literary Club, the Islah established moral links with Egypt, this time based on religious rather than literary grounds. When the religious movement in Egypt was crushed by Nasser's revolution, the Islah's position in Muharraq was weakened; the club was physically attacked by factions of the popular uprising who were in sympathy with the Egyptian revolution. After the mid-fifties, the club was never able to revive itself, despite the attempt of one of the original founders in 1970 to bring it back to life.

Modeled after the Bahrain Club, the Nahda was established in 1946 in al-Hidd but never had the chance to operate as forcefully as the Bahrain Club. At the time the club was founded by some "enlightened" merchants and civil employees, the town of al-Hidd was undergoing severe economic and demographic changes, brought about by the collapse of pearl production and the development of oil resources. Themselves of Qatari or Gulfian origin, many inhabitants left al-Hidd and settled elsewhere in the Gulf, seeking better job and economic opportunities. Others left for Muharraq or Manama to be closer to their work. The economic decline of the town and the continuous movement of people away from it rendered the Nahda Club's membership fluid and fluctuating, which made it difficult for the club to carry on lasting programs of action--cultural, sports, or otherwise. The club sponsored no activities of any consequence until 1966, when it was revived by a group of elementary and secondary school students and teachers who belonged to the nontribal urban Sunni population of the town and who sought affinity with the Bahrain Club in Muharraq. In the parliamentary election of 1973, members of the Nahda collaborated with some of their colleagues in the Bahrain and formed a united political platform that won them two seats in parliament.

The Proliferation of Club Organization

Irrespective of their differences in structure, social composition, and ideological or formal commitments, and in the course of their development, growth, or decline, the six clubs I have discussed laid down

the general outlines for club organizations in Bahrain. The unprecedented proliferation of cultural and sports clubs that began to take place after the popular uprising of the mid-fifties was styled after the six clubs established earlier. In 1959 the ordinance that governed the foundation and operation of clubs and societies was officially announced. Its announcement was intended to regulate and limit the spread of club organization in the country--this was deemed necessary in view of the roles members of the Uruba and the Bahrain clubs played in turning the sectarian conflict of 1953 into a popular uprising, threatening the government and its continuity. By defining the minimal requirements for founding and operating clubs and societies, the law instead contributed to their increase. As one person who took an active part in the uprising put it: "the law taught us how to establish clubs legally." Law does not only regulate action; it also defines the rules for counteraction.

The law of 1959 required that clubs be localized in specific villages or quarters of towns or cities, have designated meeting places and specified aims and commitments, refrain from interfering in politics, conduct their meetings according to a written constitution, and be represented by executive committees elected by general assemblies. It also required that members be above eighteen years old, and that they submit their names and addresses, along with the club's constitution, to the proper authorities for approval. No club was allowed to hold meetings or sponsor programs before it was officially licensed by the government, nor was it allowed to sponsor plays, theatrical shows, or musical performances unless they were approved in advance by government authorities.¹⁵

The law of 1959 did not specify the minimum size of membership, which made it possible for a handful of people, about ten, to establish a separate, independent club, thus leading to further proliferation and fragmentation of club organizations. Indeed, thirty-two cultural and sports clubs were established between 1956 and 1965 and thirty-six more between 1966 and 1975, in practically every village and every quarter of a city or town. This is in addition to the social and cultural clubs, professional societies, sports federations, foreign sports clubs, and other societies with specialized interest in welfare, arts, music, theater, or folklore, which together number about forty-nine clubs and societies, mostly established in the seventies. The intensity of joining clubs and societies has been so great that there is hardly a male of

eighteen or above who does not belong to some club or society, or who has not joined one at least once.

The proliferation and fragmentation of club organization has not been haphazard; it is an expression of government policy and the factional divisions of communities and ethnic groups. Government authorities refuse to license a club or society that extends membership beyond a specific locality, especially if the span of eligible membership is broad. The Muslim Youth Society, for example, which submitted an application for a license in 1968, wanting to recruit members from various Shi^ca villages in Bahrain, was denied permission until 1972, when it agreed to confine its membership to Diraz village, thus becoming the Muslim Society of al-Diraz. Professional and specialized societies such as the Medical Doctors' Association, the Engineers' Association, the foreign-based cultural or sports clubs, the private company associations, and the women's societies, which cut across individual locality and ethnic groups, so far have limited memberships ranging from sixteen to thirty-four.

The range of membership in all clubs and societies varies between eight at the lowest and two hundred at the highest; by far the greater part (92%) have between twenty and fifty members each. The few associations that enjoy a comparatively high membership tend to be the cultural and sports clubs in cities that recruit from various ethnic or religious groups.¹⁶ High or low, membership size is not a measure of strength or of political or social power; membership in all clubs and societies fluctuates with time, generation, and crises. Clubs and societies reach their highest peaks immediately after their founding; as time elapses, membership declines. Those recruiting from different generations tend to attract more members than those with age limits. Club membership increases in crises and decreases in peacetime.

These general observations about clubs and societies are further modified by factional and ethnic divisions. With the exception of the professional societies or specialized clubs, which are limited in size and relate to society in a segmental, specific way, clubs and societies in Bahrain are ethnically divided between Shi^ca and Sunni, Arab and Persian, Indian and Pakistani. Not only are they divided into broad ethnic categories, they are likewise split between communities and factions, and each club or society officially operates independently of the others. I am using "factions" here to refer to local political groupings within the same community, often based on kinship ties or neighborhoods. This

means that community- or faction-based clubs, which include the greater part of the "cultural and sports" clubs in Bahrain and which relate to people in a diffuse fashion and therefore have the capacity to take on political functions, especially in crises, are fragmented ethnically, locally, and factionally. Unlike professional and specialized clubs and societies, the community- or faction-based ones have the capacity to mobilize people for political action precisely because they relate to society diffusely rather than specifically. In the uprising of the mid-fifties and the parliamentary elections of the seventies, it was the "generalized clubs," the community- or faction-based "cultural or sports" clubs, that took on political functions; professional or specialized associations remained aloof from politics. This difference between the "specialized" and the "generalized" is to be expected in Bahrain, where political action is carried on through elementary social relationships.

The principle of fragmentation is extended to foreign labor and expatriates. Indian foreign labor is organized into clubs that vary by religion and place of origin--the Goa Youth Club includes those who come originally from Goa; similar groups include the Karnataka Club and the Muslim Society of Kiralla. Other ethnic or minority groups follow the same pattern, each with its own separate club or clubs. The British and the Americans are organized in "Western" based clubs, the Rotary and the Lions, which tend to recruit few rich Bahraini merchants and businessmen. The Americans are also organized in the American Women's Association and the American Men's Association, which obviously divide by sex. Clubs and societies organized by foreign labor or expatriates have taken no part in organized collective action and will thus be excluded from the discussion. Though some Indian or Pakistani laborers have staged a few protests against unfavorable and sometimes unbearable working conditions, such protests were passing incidents of anger and despair that have so far failed to develop into collective organized action of any consequence.

Because of their organizational fragmentation, the clubs and societies of Bahrain officially operate as if they were administratively independent units having no formal links with each other. In spite of this fragmentation, they share structural characteristics and a common "cultural"--or better to say "subcultural"--base that allows for unified political action in times of crisis and the weakening of state institutions. In general the clubs recruit from the new, emerging forces; students, salaried labor, teachers, and civil employees are "modernity ori-

ented," or opposed to government; many others are "tradition oriented" and in agreement with government policy and ideology. It simply means that opposition to the traditional loci of power represented in the tribally controlled government or in religiously oriented power groups is found in this sector of society recruited in clubs.

Voluntary associations in Bahrain, including clubs and societies, are nontribal phenomena spread among the Shi^ca and the Sunni who live in villages and cities. These constitute the greater part of the urban and "rural" population living in city or village neighborhoods and linked by an intricate web of intermarriages. Exposed to continuous processes of migration and mobility and lacking the economic base to cluster in large kinship groups, this sector of Bahraini society was readily receptive to club organizations. The few tribesmen who founded or joined clubs in Bahrain were the exception. The fourteen clubs I studied in depth, including the six discussed earlier, showed that those that were founded or joined by tribesmen had either transient and fluctuating membership or restricted and specialized aims, activities, and programs. They focus on sports (the Gold Club of Bahrain), religion (the Islah Club), or literary matters (the Adabi Club), and they rarely indulge in politics either directly or indirectly. If tribesmen join a club organized by others, their membership also tends to be short-lived.

By contrast, voluntary associations organized by the urban or the "rural" sector of society show comparatively more stability in membership, more generalized interests, and a noticeable dynamism in programs and activities. Paradoxically, the changing quality of programs is directly related to stability of membership. The pattern has been this: some students and a few teachers form a club for cultural and sports purposes; in a decade or so the students grow older, graduate, and find work mostly as teachers, skilled salaried labor, technicians, or minor civil servants but retain their membership in the club. They change club programs to suit their newly acquired concerns, interests, and political outlooks. Whenever a new executive cabinet comes to power, which happens every one to three years, programs again change to suit the particular interests of the elected committee.

In spite of this change of programs, the ideological commitment of the club and other voluntary associations remains essentially "modernistic." In some clubs, as in the case to be discussed later, traditional, religious elements may sometimes succeed in changing the "modernistic"

commitments of the association; but when they do, the club loses its social meaning and "becomes a funeral house."¹⁷ In general, the club "subculture" is "modernistic," as is shown in club emblems and names. The dominant themes in club emblems include a torch implanted in the middle of an open book surrounded by wheat stalks or palm trees, with a ball, a net, or a player floating around the edges. The book and the torch signify enlightenment, the wheat and the palms life and stability, and the ball, the net, and the player the bond that brings members together. The names of clubs indicate the same modernistic tendencies; for example, "movement," "renaissance," "unity," "light," "flames," "dawn," "Mars," "progress," "mission," "glory," "coalition," and "sun." There is a clear absence of religious motifs in club emblems and names.

At 6 o'clock every evening members visit the club to play sports, watch television, learn reading and writing, or to talk politics and discuss the issues of the day. There is a tradition in every club, called the "wall press," whereby members write editorials and post them on the wall for others to read. Many editorials carry political overtones. Here is a sample:

My father says I am still young and do not understand—understand what? I know he is poor. My government tells me I am dangerous to national security. Which nation? They think they are strong. They are strong today and I shall be strong tomorrow.

I am forty years old, married and have two children. I have always been a yes-man. The ruler had me for the first half of my age; the second half is mine. From now on, I shall be a no-man.

Indians [labor] are increasing day after day; they come here to work, earn money, and share with me this small island. They say India is large and vast, if so why do Indians come here? Why don't I share what I have with my countrymen who live in grief and misery?

The wall press abounds in such editorials that focus on government corruption, restriction of freedom, lack of justice, imperialism, exploitation of the poor, Arab nationalism, low wages, personal courage, manliness, love, and petty personal conflicts between parent and child, friends and neighbors.

The "modernistic" reformative tendencies of clubs and their political orientations have brought them into conflict with two loci of power, the religionists and government. The conflict between the modernists and the religionists is essentially ideological and tends to concentrate in Shi^ca communities where the influence of religion and religious specialists is vividly strong. Members of the Religious Bloc who served in the

parliament before it was dissolved in 1975 were Shi^Ca, elected to power by Shi^Ca votes. Because of this, the following discussion will necessarily focus on Shi^Ca communities. The "modernists" call themselves "progressivists"; their opponents call them the "left" or the "communists." The "religionists," on the other hand, call themselves "Islamists," and their opponents call them "reactionaries" and "traditionalists." These categorical labels are sharp and do not reflect the "syncretic" character of change in Bahrain; modernity and traditionalism are overlapping, intervening processes that come in different shapes and colors. In Bahrain these are *political categories* and must be understood as such.

The controversial issues that divide some of the Shi^Ca into "modernists" and "religionists" are many and varied; they range from the segregation of sexes in schools, work, and hospitals to watching television shows or inviting girls to take part in club activities, even voluntary welfare projects. The religionists accuse the modernists of moral corruption and lack of concern with religious ethics and law; the modernists accuse the religionists of having "petrified minds" unfit for the modern age. These accusations and counteraccusations are expressions of deeper cleavages in society, a struggle for power between two polarities, one seeking support by manipulating modern values and the other by manipulating religious norms. This is the way the Shi^Ca politicians of Bahrain relate to the recurrent themes of the "oil age" and the value disorientation accruing therefrom; they either accept the new and its modernistic tones or reject it on religious grounds. The "politicians" are singled out to stress two points: (a) the categorical choice of accepting or rejecting the new is a political one; (b) the bulk of the people do not have to make the choice, and they do not. These two points are well illustrated in the following case.

About the mid-fifties, a group of students and minor civil employees, mostly clerks, founded in Jidd Hafs the Ja^Cfari League, which aimed "to unite the people" and "wipe out illiteracy."¹⁸ Some of the founders studied English, typing, and arithmetic under Abdul-Kasul al-Tajir in Manama and Arabic grammar and Shi^Ca theology under Hasan Ali Said in Jidd Hafs. To eliminate illiteracy, the League opened a series of night classes in Jidd Hafs and the neighboring villages. As students with intermediate and secondary education began joining the League in the sixties, its aims and policies likewise began to change. Styling itself in-

formally after the Uruba Club, the League--now called the Jidd Hafs Club--pledged to "enlighten the people according to the principles of Arab nationalism." In the context of Jidd Hafs, as well as in other Shi^ca villages in Bahrain, the phrase meant installing a television set, inviting girls and women to take part in club activities, organizing shows and plays, or holding singing or dancing parties. The religious elements in the club and the village objected to these programs, urging the youth to spend their leisure hours reading books rather than wasting time on worldly pleasures.

By launching its "programs of enlightenment," the club undermined the authority of religious specialists. The club activities replaced Shi^ca customary and religious rituals that strengthened the religious authority and status of the mullas and the jurists. It is customary among the Shi^ca to invite a mulla or a jurist to lead in birth, death, marriage, or prayer ceremonies or in the informal religious gatherings called "readings" where excerpts from the Qur'an or the Battle of Karbala are rehearsed. These gatherings can be held anywhere, by anybody, at any time; they are forms of prestige investments practiced by the rich or whoever achieves status and wealth. For leading these rituals, ceremonies, and gatherings, the mulla or jurist is paid an honorarium. Some people seek the blessings of a religious specialist by inviting him to dinner and pay him an honorarium in return for the visit. At the end of every month some faithful workers offer their salaries to the jurist and say "bless it," meaning take a part of it as a blessing, which would make it *halal* (religiously permitted) money. Because of the rigid segregation of sexes, jurists act as proxies for girls, a service for which they are also paid an honorarium.

"Programs of enlightenment" carried out in clubs, which try to modify these customs, necessarily undermine religious authority. The "enlightened" neither hold customary or religious rituals nor invite religious specialists for blessing ceremonies. Except for funerals, the "clubbists" hold their ritualistic celebrations in the club without inviting religious specialists. By encouraging the mixing of men and women, the club cuts the authority of the jurists as middlemen between the sexes and, with it, the private knowledge they have of the laity that gives them the power to interfere in political decisions. If mobilization is carried out through elementary social relationships, knowledge of private affairs allows for considerable political control.

Until 1968 the division between the modernists and religionists in the club was a matter of personal commitments that did not create polarized group actions. In the late sixties, political activism in Bahrain began to come into the open after Britain declared its intent to withdraw from the island--a trend expressed in the activities of the Bahrain and the Nahda clubs mentioned earlier. The club of Jidd Hafs was no exception. In 1968, at the time "modernism" and "religionism" became political issues, a tough-minded modernist was elected secretary of the club by a very narrow majority; this raised the objections and protests of the religionists and their sympathizers. Their objections brought the intervention of local community leaders, some urban Shi^Ca notables, and government officials. A compromise was reached whereby a committee of four, two from each side, was appointed to manage the affairs of the club. The arrangement continued for two years, after which a general election was held. The same tough-minded modernist was elected president after two of the most active religionist members left to continue their religious studies at the Shi^Ca seminary of al-Najaf in Iraq. The newly elected club cabinet published a wall press called the *Sunrise* that developed later into a bulletin circulated secretly in many other area clubs. As a schoolteacher, the president had links through students to many other similar associations in the country; because of these links, the *Sunrise* enjoyed large circulation.

In 1972-73 two major events happened--the return of the religionists from al-Najaf and the decision of the Bahrain government to hold parliamentary elections. One of the religionists returned to Jidd Hafs and took a teaching job, drawing to him another cluster of students from the village and the neighboring settlements. Meanwhile the Religious Bloc, which included a handful of Najaf-trained men, decided to run for election (the details are discussed in chap. 10). From here on, events of the club moved very quickly. To control the club for political purposes, the religionists infiltrated it in huge numbers and consequently won the election of 1973 with seven out of nine seats on the executive committee.¹⁹ They changed the club constitution in favor of Islamism instead of Arab nationalism, published and distributed many pamphlets with heavy religious content, and abolished many of the "worldly" programs the modernists had established.

Their outright religious policy weakened the club, and they gradually lost enough votes to enable the modernists to bring their opponents'

hegemony to an end. In accordance with the constitution, the modernists prepared a protest signed by ninety-four members, a bit more than half of the membership, and submitted it to the Club Section of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, calling for the dissolution of the executive committee, which the ministry did.²⁰ In 1975 a committee of ten, five from each side, was appointed to supervise the activities of the club --an arrangement that brought the programs of both sides to a halt.

The club of Jidd Hafs and the funeral house of Sanabis show that these two institutions, whether based in traditional or in modernistic cultures, are platforms for the struggle of ideas and local power blocs. These institutions are "subjects" for political competition. Just as the modernists founded and operated funeral houses to marshal support for their power blocs, the religionists took hold of clubs to consolidate their power base. This struggle between the two power blocs in or between clubs, in or between funeral houses, was heightened in the late sixties and early seventies, after socioeconomic mobility and parliamentary elections. While socioeconomic mobility intensified competition for status symbols, thus altering the structure and composition of social class, parliamentary elections intensified competition for local or national power.

The socioeconomic transformations that turned Bahrain into a single metropolis likewise changed the "organizational span" and ideological commitments of people. Instead of remaining enclosed in individual small village communities or quarters of towns and cities, the people of Bahrain began to look, in varying degrees, for broader organizational schemes--macrostructures. The new emerging elements--students, teachers, salaried labor, technicians, civil employees--who establish external links with mates and colleagues regardless of community origin, now found clubs and join underground political parties. The traditional elements--the craftsmen, the tradesmen, the petty traders, the shopkeepers, the cultivators--who lack these external links, found, contribute to, and join funeral houses among the Shi^ca and localized religious circles among the Sunni.

The introduction of parliamentary elections in the early seventies and the prohibition of political parties and labor unions focused the struggle between power blocs in the club and the funeral house.

Irrespective of their value orientations and ideological commitments, the two institutions became a target for political control by the

three power blocs--the People's Bloc, the Religious Bloc, and the Independent Middle. Gradually the club and the funeral house began to merge informally following the three broad political formulations of which they are a part. It is an "informal" merger because it has been achieved through social relationships and personal networks rather than through a hierarchical ordering of units. Through networks and social relationships, underground political parties and various power blocs mobilize clubs and funeral houses for support and collective action--notwithstanding the fragmentary character of such clubs and funeral houses.

Before the institution of bureaucracy and the development of oil, Al-Khalifa regimes were challenged internally by other Al-Khalifa claimants or externally by war. Since then the challenge has drifted to the rising new forces--the Shi^Ca, the labor force, the students, and the underground political parties. The content of the challenge likewise changed from usurpation of power and property to legitimacy of authority, focusing on public representation, a standardized code of justice, and a host of economic complaints and grievances. I will first discuss the changing social bases of protests and rebellions, then deal in chapter 10 with the legitimacy of authority and the failure of the parliamentary experience. Throughout the discussion, I will emphasize social relationships and networks that operate politically in the absence of organized parties and labor unions. The concept of "network" refers to a group of people who act collectively to achieve a unified goal without having a formal organization; when they operate for the same purpose within a formal organization, they will be called the "inner circle." This distinction between "network" and "inner circle" will become clearer in the discussion.

The Changing Social Bases of Protests and Rebellions

The reforms of the twenties laid the foundation of a modern bureaucracy and also established the precedent for collective protests and rebellions. "Protest" is used here to refer to nonviolent actions, "rebellion" to violence. The bureaucratization process itself was born out of organized protests and rebellions; the Shi^Ca supported the reforms and the 194 Sunni tribesmen opposed them. Since the twenties, protests and rebellions

have become expected features of Bahraini polity, as if they were seasonally ongoing processes.

Aside from the protests and rebellions of the early twenties and the uprising of the mid-fifties, none of the instances of political unrest could be strictly considered an organized, collective protest or rebellion. The students' strike of 1928 in Muharraq, the pearl divers' riots of 1932, Shi^Ca protests to improve the court in 1934 and 1935, the demonstrations of 1938, the BAPCO labor strikes of 1942, 1948, and 1965, and the demonstrations of 1948 that followed the partition of Palestine--these, which people refer to as rebellions and sometimes revolutions, were abrupt, spontaneous, and sometimes sectarian and segmented reactions to particular incidents occurring inside or outside the country. Fading away as soon as they were formed, they failed to produce significant visible changes in the authority system.

The student strike of 1928 took place after a British official interfered in the affairs of a public school (al-Falaki, n.d., p. 61). The divers' riots were caused by the enforcement of a law reducing the loan payments to a maximum of two hundred rupees--an act intended to free divers from debt commitments to pilots and merchants. The riots were instigated by pearl merchants, who correctly saw in the law a limitation of their authority and profits. The Shi^Ca protests to improve the court system followed harsh sentences inflicted upon fellow Shi^Ca. The labor strike of 1965 was occasioned by a BAPCO decision to automate production, thus laying off a large number of employees. The participants in these strikes, riots, protests, and demonstrations had no plan to alter the form of government or change the structure of the state. The demonstrations of 1938 were an exception to this generalization. They constituted the prototype for the uprising of the mid-fifties: the networks and inner circles active in the uprising were formulated immediately after the demonstrations of 1938.

Until the mid-fifties, these instances of unrest had no "national" base cutting across ethnic and religious divisions. The urban Sunni showed sympathy toward pan-Arab causes and concern with national independence and sovereignty; the Shi^Ca were mindful of internal problems: court organization, standardized civil and penal codes, representation, work conditions, salaries, and wages. The protests and rebellions of the twenties, thirties, and forties, organized by the merchant nationalists to restrict the influence of colonial officials, were not free of

commercial interests. Engineered by British advisors, the reforms of the twenties and many other government decrees following them restricted profits on trade--hence the merchants' protests.

While socioeconomic transformations were taking place, new forces of protest appeared. The urban Sunni salaried labor began to unite informally with the Shi^Ca in one political front, opposing the regime in power. "Informally" because there was no large-scale formal organization that joined them in a single hierarchy. They acted in unity if mobilized by informal circles and networks often based in underground political parties. The uprising of the mid-fifties is a case in point.¹

Anatomy of the Popular Uprising of the Mid-fifties

During the commemoration of the murder of Husain in September 1953, a fight broke out between a Shi^Ca procession and some Sunni spectators gathered at the edge of al-Fadil quarter in Manama. Some Sunni, including members of the ruling family, used to come to al-Fadil quarter and observe the Shi^Ca ritual of 'Ashura' as a gesture of sympathy or curiosity, an interest in the exotic. Concerning the fight, official sources mention that "both sides accused each other of instigating the disturbance but an inquiry revealed no grounds for either accusation."² Unofficial sources, supported by two writers, al-Rumaihi and al-Bakir, mention that the fight was started by Du^Cayj bin Hamad, brother of the ruler; the first writer calls it "a childish act" (al-Rumaihi 1973, p. 363) and the second a "plot designed to cause clashes between the Sunni and the Shi^Ca" (al-Bakir 1965, p. 57). The position of al-Bakir has been widely accepted among the Shi^Ca and in some Sunni circles opposing the regime. Opinions on who started the fight and for what purpose reflect the political commitments of the person concerned. Those who oppose the regime agree with al-Bakir's interpretation; those who sympathize with it blame the fight on the Shi^Ca

Immediately after the incident, a Sunni crowd attacked a Shi^Ca village in Muharraq Island and injured several people. This was followed by a series of minor clashes in different parts of Bahrain, culminating in a sectarian encounter at the oil refinery. In June 1954 Shi^Ca workers, joined by their brethren from the neighboring villages, fought Sunni workers at the oil refinery; many people were injured, and one Sunni was killed. Police arrested suspects from both sides--many were tried and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Believing that their brethren

were harshly and unfairly treated in the trials, a Shi^c crowd gathered on 2 July in a mosque opposite the fort; after some fiery speeches, they attacked the fort to free the prisoners. The police opened fire and killed four Shi^c men. Protesting police action, the shops in Manama closed for a week.

After this incident the clashes began to move in a different direction, gradually developing into a national uprising threatening the entire structure of the state. To appreciate this turn of events, we must consider briefly the kind of political atmosphere that emerged in Bahrain in the thirties and the formation of religiously mixed inner circles recruited in pan-Arab political parties. These circles operated underground, using club organizations and sometimes the press as platforms for political action.

The Political Atmosphere at the
Outbreak of the Uprising

By the late thirties a small generation of young men with elementary, secondary, and college education emerged in Bahrain; some had training in Beirut, others in Egypt. In Beirut they were exposed to different nationalistic movements that focused on Arab nationalism and unity. Returning to Bahrain, they established and joined cultural and sports clubs channeling new literature on Arabism, nationalism, and independence movements into the country. They founded the Bahrain Club in Muharraaq, the Ahli and the Uruba clubs in Manama, and a secret club for Bahraini workers at the oil refinery.³ The Bahrain Club was headed by Abdul-Aziz Shamlan and the secret club by Abdul-Rahman al-Bakir, who later became two of the three main leaders of the uprising. In the 1930s this generation was young and had no leading role in the demonstrations of 1938; leadership fell into the hands of an older generation, "the merchant nationalists."

Initially protesting the high-handed manner in which the British advisor was running the affairs of the country, requesting that proper authority be exercised by the Al-Khalifa ruler himself, the demonstrations of 1938 took on new demands as the salaried labor joined in. They protested the high rate of employment of Indians in public administration and in government-controlled enterprises and the discrepancies in wages between Indian and Arab employees.⁴ The participation of the salaried labor brought in an entirely new social perspective, the collaboration of the Shi^c who never before had joined protests or demonstrations or-

ganized by the Sunni. The Shi^Ca had suffered various oppressions at the hands of "native" regimes before the implementation of the reforms and were accordingly suspicious of "the transfer of authority to native governments." To appease the Shi^Ca, the leaders of the demonstrations, "the merchant nationalists," agreed to request the institution of a legislative council and the improvement of employment conditions, salaries, and wages. Fearing the consequences of a joint Sunni-Shi^Ca coalition reinforced by labor grievances, the government acted swiftly and decisively; they arrested a large number of leading demonstrators and strikers and sentenced them to varying terms of imprisonment. The leaders of the movement were banished to Bombay.⁵

The government cut short the movement in its embryonic stage, but it did not kill the embryo. The junior members of the movement learned two lessons: that collective protests and rebellions, to be successful, must have an organized leadership linked to the rank and file continuously through a hierarchy of office; and that cooperation between the Sunni and the Shi^Ca is indispensable for the success of any reform movement in Bahrain.⁶

During the Second World War, the strong British military presence in Bahrain slowed political activism. Many participants in the demonstrations of 1938 were employed by British military authorities, worked in British enterprises, or profited from the increasing trade and transit operations. After the war, many Arab countries became independent, the Arab League was established, and the state of Israel was founded--events that helped create a strong pan-Arab movement in Bahrain, led by a core of nationalists affiliated with political parties based outside the country. In the late forties and early fifties this core, based in the Bahrain and the Uruba clubs, launched an ambitious program of "Arab enlightenment," as they called it. In Bahrain context, this "enlightenment" meant rejecting sectarian politics, opposing colonial rule and the tribally controlled regime, and championing the cause of the labor classes. The program was carried out through public lectures held in cultural and sports clubs and the weekly press. The press included the *Voice of Bahrain*, published between 1950 and 1952, the *Caravan*, between 1952 and 1955, the *Nation* in 1955-56, and the *Flame*, which published only one issue before it was closed in 1956. These weekly papers were published successively as the preceding ones were censored by government authorities and forced to close.

The editorial board of the *Voice of Bahrain* included Ibrahim Hasan Kamal, Mahmud al-Mardi, Hasan al-Jishi, Abdul-Aziz Shamlan, Ali al-Tajir, and Abdul-Rahman al-Bakir, all of whom played leading roles in the uprising. The weekly press dealt with a wide variety of topics focusing on the meanings of "Arab enlightenment." Following is a sample of the headlines and editorials:⁷

Sectarianism is our deadly disease
 The soul of Arabism
 Elementary principles for the understanding of Arab nationalism
 Fellow Arab, open your eyes
 The logic of imperialism
 Beware of political and religious fragmentation
 The fellow Arab is not the foreigner
 BAPCO releases our laborers
 Our rights; labor and laborers
 The assassination of liberty
 The Criminal Code is a sword drawn over the heads of the people
 The director of education buys land in Beirut
 The nation is forbidden to enter our public schools
 Our religiously learned men bury their heads in the sand

The Network in Action

Such was the position of the Arab nationalists recruited in clubs and in pan-Arab political parties when the sectarian riots of 1953-54 broke out between the Sunni and the Shi^ca. The inner circles among them, who were religiously mixed, took it as a challenge to their convictions and political commitments that these clashes occurred or continued. A network of five--Hasan al-Jishshi, Ali al-Tajir, Mahmud al-Mardi, Abdul-Aziz Shamlan, and Abdul-Rahman al-Bakir--who were on the editorial board of the *Voice of Bahrain* took the initiative and tried to stop the sectarian riots. The first two were Shi^ca from the Uruba Club and the last three were Sunni from the Bahrain Club. Tajir and Jishshi were school-teachers; Shamlan had worked for the Royal Air Force but was the chief clerk in the British Bank of the Middle East at the time the clashes broke out; Mardi was a professional journalist; Bakir was working as a contractor in Qatar but had worked earlier at the oil refinery and traded between Arabia and East Africa.

This network initially sought reconciliation through conventional means. They called upon the leading Shi^ca and Sunni notables to discuss the issue and plan to end the sectarian fights. Three meetings were held to this effect at the Bahrain Club, at the Ahli Club, and in Shamlan's house, but none produced the expected results. More meetings meant lower

attendance, and lower attendance meant the notables had less enthusiasm for facing the crisis. Jealous of each other's presence or absence, the notables, who were mostly merchants, spent a good part of every meeting on social formalities without dealing organizationally with the problem.

In their secret meetings, the network of five decided to bypass the notables and establish a committee of Sunni youth to approach Shi^Ca leaders for joint action toward reconciliation. The committee included Abdullah al-Zain, Yusuf al-Sa^Ci, Abdul-Rahman al-Ghaffar, Abdul-Aziz Shamlan, Ali al-Wazzan, and Abdul-Rahman al-Bakir, none of whom belonged to the "traditionally established families" among either the Sunni or the Shi^Ca. This was why in the first meeting, in the house of a Shi^Ca notable in Ras Rumman (al-Hajj Hasan Aradi), the Shi^Ca self-appointed representatives, some of whom were prominent merchants, complained about the absence of Sunni notables.

The attempt of "the network of five" to deal with the sectarian riots of 1953-54 through conventional instruments of mediation failed. The attempt of government to deal with the riots also failed. Reference is made here to the government appointment in the spring of 1954 of a committee of four leading notables, two Shi^Ca and two Sunni, with the instructions "to do what they could to ease the situation."⁸ After the sectarian fights at the oil refinery and the killing of four Shi^Ca demonstrators in Manama, the "network" changed its tactics, this time relying on its own political resources. Meanwhile its inner composition was slightly changed. Because of his political activism, al-Bakir was deported from Bahrain for two or three months. He published many underground pamphlets attacking "the advisor" in person, accusing him of deliberately instigating the sectarian conflicts. These pamphlets were signed by fictitious names, sometimes by the "Black Palm" or the "National Front," or by Isa bin Tarif, in allusion to the BinAli chief slain in 1846 in Qatar at the hands of Muhammad bin Khalifa. To replace al-Bakir and widen the span of its contacts, the network recruited Muhammad al-Shirawi, a journalist, and Ibrahim Fakhru, a merchant, to take part in their secret deliberations. Fakhru was a "milk brother" to al-Bakir, fed at the same breast; al-Shirawi was a fellow Arab nationalist, a friend, and a classmate to many in the network.

Between July and September 1954, the network held many secret meetings in private houses and in different mosques, trying to formulate an organizational base for their operations. Each member of the network

was asked to submit a list of persons ready to help mobilize the populace against further "mishandling of sectarian differences."⁹ They agreed on more than a hundred names but decided not to divulge them to the public for fear of government reprisals. The hundred names were meant to be the "links" between the "network," now an "inner circle," and the populace.

While the network members (now seven) were organizing themselves in a broader political front, the bus and taxi drivers declared a strike in September 1954 protesting the government decision to force subscription to third-party car insurance policies. The drivers objected not to the law itself, but to the high premiums imposed by a foreign-based insurance company. Carried out by the Sunni and the Shi^ca jointly, the strike brought the country's transport to a standstill and offered the opposition a golden opportunity to demonstrate the efficacy of the newly built organization still operating underground. Led by al-Bakir (who returned to Bahrain a few days before the strike) and al-Shamian, the opposition proposed to establish the Cooperative Compensation Bureau, governed by an administrative committee composed of leading merchants and drivers.¹⁰ The drivers supported the proposal, which promised to reduce premiums to almost one-third. To end the strike the government gave in, hoping that the proposed impractical formula would fail. To minimize the chances of failure, the opposition appointed al-Bakir director of the cooperative; this put government authorities on the defensive. In retaliation the government, some say under the advisor's insistence, threatened to withdraw al-Bakir's passport, granted earlier in 1948.

Shortly afterward, the inner circle instructed the hundred "links" to call a public meeting to be held at al-Khamis mosque. The purpose of the meeting was outwardly to protest the withdrawal of al-Bakir's passport; inwardly, however, it was meant to publicly announce the formation of a political organization. The choice of al-Khamis mosque was symbolic; it is the only one in Bahrain revered by Sunni and Shi^ca alike. The Sunni claim it was built by a famous Sunni caliph, and the Shi^ca believe it is the tomb of a renowned Shi^ca jurist. These decisions and deliberations were actually made by the "inner circle" in its secret meetings; they were presented to the public as "on the spot" decisions. In the al-Khamis meeting on 6 October, five decisions were announced to the public: "(a) the rejection of withdrawing al-Bakir's passport, (b) the plan to hold a general meeting a week later in Sanabis to form a united front, (c) the election of representatives to pursue the implementation of the front's

demands, (d) the formulation of an oath of loyalty to the united front to be invoked at the opening of every private or public meeting, and finally (e) the mobilization of the people to come together in a single solid line" (al-Bakir 1965, p. 74).

On 13 October, a public meeting was held in the village of Sanabis, attended by a large number of people of different social and religious backgrounds. At this meeting, 120 names were acclaimed to constitute the "general assembly," which in turn nominated eight representatives. The representatives were known as the High Executive Committee (HEC), acclaimed to power again at the Shi^Ca Mu'min mosque and at the Sunni al-Id mosque. The "general assembly" included the "links" agreed upon in several private meetings held before, and the HEC included three of the original "network" (al-Shamlan, Fakhru, and al-Bakir) and five additional members (Sayyid Ibrahim bin Musa, Ali bin Ibrahim, Muhsin al-Tajir, Abdullah Bu-Dhib, and Abd Ali Alaywat) carefully chosen to ensure fair sectarian distribution, half Sunni and half Shi^Ca. Parenthetically, the four Shi^Ca on the committee had met previously with the network at Al-Hajj Aradi's house in Ras-Rumman. Other members of the network, including Hasan al-Jishshi, Ali al-Tajir, Mahmud al-Mardi, and Muhammad al-Shirawi, were deliberately left temporarily aside to form a part of a "shadow committee" of eight parallel to the HEC. The idea was to have the "shadow committee" to replace the HEC in case its members were arrested and imprisoned.

Thus recruited and organized, the "general assembly" did not work as was initially intended. The strong elementary social relationships--milk brotherhood, classmate friendship, party or club affiliation--that brought unity to the network and its deliberations were absent from the "general assembly," itself composed of many and various spheres of influence linked lineally to individual members in the network and in the HEC. The HEC itself was weakened by the sectarian and political balance it was intended to achieve. While achieving balance in the HEC as an inner circle, the opposition lost the ideological unity of purpose they had enjoyed as a network. Three of the Sunni members on the committee were Arab nationalists from Muharraq, one was a merchant from al-Hidd; one of the Shi^Ca on the committee was a merchant, one a laborer at BAPCO, and one a religious jurist, and one was reputed to be an organizer of ^CAsbura' processions. The formation of the HEC along these lines gave it a broader political perspective but brought into it many contradictions and inconsistencies.

From here on the opposition combined Arab nationalists, represented *essentially* by the Sunni, and religionists, represented *entirely* by the Shi^ca.

Once the HEC was publicly announced, it demanded that the ruler institute an elected parliament, enact a civil and a criminal code, introduce an appeals court staffed with foreign judges trained in law, and permit the working classes to organize labor unions and trades. Two committee members, Bin-Musa and Bu-Dhib, plus a handful of leading notables in Bahrain, were requested to present these demands to the ruler; but, knowing the contents, he refused to receive them. Instead, he proclaimed to the public that certain reforms concerning the appointment of legal advisors and the enactment of a labor law and a criminal code would soon be implemented. A dual political organization developed--the opposition, which claimed authority through public support and delegation, and the ruler's office (government) which claimed authority on the basis of historical and traditional rights. Many events that took place in the following two years (1954-56) were shaped by this dualism in political organization.

The ruler's refusal to receive the HEC's "goodwill" mission put the latter on the defensive. Opinion within the committee was split. One faction wanted to retaliate by declaring an open general strike; the other, fearing mob action, wanted to proceed slowly and rationally. Led by al-Bakir, the second party argued that undisciplined, uncontrolled mob actions in past rebellions had only provoked repressive police measures; in consequence, the intended reforms in government were delayed and sometimes lost. The committee agreed to declare a peaceful strike for a week and in the meantime to hold public gatherings to mobilize the populace. Several things happened simultaneously--the one-week strike was conducted without disturbances, two public gatherings were held, and confidential contacts were established with high government officials and with the British Agency.

The two public gatherings were held on 16 October 1954, in Mu'min mosque, and on 9 November, in al-Id mosque. To draw as large an audience as possible, the two meetings were scheduled for 17 Safar, the fortieth day of mourning Inam Husain's murder, observed as a holiday by the Shi^ca, and on 12 Rabi Awwal, the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, observed as a holiday by the Sunni. In each gathering the audience was estimated at about ten thousand people drawn from different parts of Bahrain, with

women attending the second gathering in large numbers.¹¹

The speakers were many, varied, and religiously mixed. They included Sunni and Shi'a, merchant and teacher, clerk and shopkeeper, and journalist and judge, each focusing through poetry or verse on the right of people to universal suffrage, self-determination, independence, unity, justice, liberty, freedom, and a good life (*Caravan*, nos. 44 and 45). Mardi, Shamlan, and Bakir were the most prominent members of the network taking an active part in these public gatherings. They presented the demands to the public for approval, led the audience in a collective oath of loyalty to the United Front, and supervised the maintenance of order. The organization of 120 "links," called earlier the "general assembly," was responsible for keeping order and directing the audience to seats or standing room inside or outside the mosques.

While these efforts of mobilization were taking place, al-Bakir, purely on his own initiative and without prior consultation with the network or the committee, was carrying out contacts with British Agency officials to "learn about their position," as he put it (al-Bakir 1965, pp. 87-89). He was convinced that "it was difficult for the opposition to fight at two fronts simultaneously, the dictatorial government and British imperialism" (1965, p. 88). In his book on the uprising, he says, "it would be possible to intimidate the government, but to fight the British as well is to throw ourselves into an imbalanced battle" (al-Bakir 1965, p. 89). In his Personal Column, Charles Belgrave gives the impression that he, in turn, wanted the British authorities to intervene on behalf of the ruler and put an end to "the drama" in Bahrain; his efforts, however, did not bear fruit until the Suez Canal War of 1956.

Anxious to restore order, the ruler appointed a religiously mixed committee composed of leading merchants and civil employees with instructions to "investigate complaints and hear suggestions from the public about education and public health."¹² This committee recommended the formation of two boards, one for education and one for public health, to be implemented in fall 1955. The HEC construed the appointment of the ruler's committee to be a challenge to its legitimacy, which it thought it had earned through public delegation and popular support. It declared the ruler's committee illegal, urged the public to boycott its proceedings, and gathered thousands of signatures supporting the HEC and its demands. Reinforcing its legitimacy, the HEC announced the formation of a "labor federation" headed by Muhammad al-Shirawi, which opened head-

Quarters in the Shi^Ca quarters of Manama and invited the people to join. In the process of boycotting the proceedings of the ruler's committee and collecting signatures in support of the HEC, the zealots in the opposition intimidated many Bahrainis through direct threats of physical assault, burning of property, or accusations of treason. This intimidation was carried out through anonymous telephone calls, direct confrontation, or the distribution of printed notes and pamphlets. Once they worked, however precariously, these tactics were generalized to include everyone who cooperated with government, and specifically with Al-Khalifa, past and present. Many mullas held special meetings in various funeral houses calling for "a rightful revolution" against the "usurpation" of government by force and the "destruction of nests of traitors who aided the enemy."¹³ It was at this time that some Shi^Ca families left their villages and settled in Manama.

In the early part of 1955, the HEC's main concern was to be officially recognized by the government as the legitimate representative of the Bahraini people--a recognition implying the acknowledgment of the demands, including an elected parliament and labor unions. Meanwhile, al-Bakir learned through his private contacts that the British Agency was in favor of the demands minus the formation of an elected parliament and a labor union (al-Bakir 1965, p. 89), which softened the HEC position on these two issues. Until July the HEC had not undertaken any major step either to pressure for demands or to consolidate its power. It concentrated instead on basically two matters: seeking official recognition and establishing political ties with Arab nationalistic movements outside Bahrain, particularly with Nasser's Egypt.

The HEC asked two leading notables, Mansur al-Urayyid (a Shi^Ca) and Ahmad Fakhru (a Sunni), to mediate the conflict between the committee and the ruler. They did this, but to no avail. The ruler wanted to implement some of the proposed reforms without officially recognizing the committee. The committee, in turn, while open to compromise on the reforms, was insistent upon formal recognition. The members thought it was possible to reconcile the principle of public representation with that of tribal dominance, insisting that a parliament and a labor union were meant not to weaken, but rather to strengthen the ruler's government. On the other hand, the ruler, who was experienced in politics and the game of power, was willing to negotiate anything except the principle of public delegation.

In the meantime, the HEC sought to establish political links with Egypt after Nasser's airport stop in Bahrain on his way to the Far East in 1955. About twelve students, selected by the HEC, were sent to Egypt for academic training at the expense of the Egyptian government. This move was not simply academic aid, but also a political gesture that strengthened the committee's position in Bahrain. Recruiting students meant recruiting local political converts as well as demonstrating the influence the committee had in Egypt. About this time the Egyptian press in Cairo and the pro-Nasser press in Beirut began to cover the political crisis in Bahrain with obvious sympathy toward the opposition. This sympathy was demonstrated by Anwar al-Sadat's visit to Bahrain in December, where he was highly and enthusiastically welcomed by the opposition.

In this period of reconciliation, compromise, bargaining, contacts, and mediation, extending from November 1954 to July 1955, members of the HEC drifted apart in at least three directions: al-Bakir and a handful of his intimates leaned toward Egypt; Shamlan, carrying with him a few members of the committee, intensified contacts with the local authorities; the others began to seek political accommodation in one camp or the other inside and outside Bahrain. By summer 1955, al-Tajir and al-Mardi of the original "network" of five left the political scene altogether. In the seventies, the first became a convert to the Ansar religious movement founded by an influential Al-Khalifa shaikh; the second remained a journalist, as he always was. Leaning toward different loci of power inside and outside Bahrain, the committee as of July 1955 was not able to operate in unity except negatively, rejecting all proposals of compromise. Toward the end of the year, the agreements arrived at between the ruler and the committee in private negotiations were utterly rejected in public declarations and mass gatherings. These agreements included the appointment of specialized judges in courts, the introduction of a criminal code, and the formation of separate boards for education and health, with half the members elected by a popular vote.

The HEC opposed the criminal code on the grounds that it incriminated whoever took part in sedition or civil disturbances, and it opposed the boards for having included Al-Khalifa shaikhs and some of their allies as appointed members. The HEC made it difficult for candidates other than its own to run for election. On the day of election, only three of the committee's candidates were in the field, which prompted government authorities to cancel the proceedings altogether. In the meantime, the

ruler met several times with two members of the HEC (Abdul-Aziz Shamlan and Sayyid Ali Ibrahim) to explore the possibility of agreement on some controversial issues. His efforts did not bear fruit, for two reasons: first, al-Shamlan and Sayyid Ali, who were selected by the ruler himself, were not technically representing the committee; second, the committee as a whole began to lose control over supporters and sympathizers.

Two factors weakened the HEC's leadership: the branching of contacts in different directions and the negative policy of rejecting all offers of compromise. Indeed, the two factors were logically and organizationally related. The first--which had rendered the committee, since its inception, an organization without a centralized regulative system--simultaneously forced it (the second factor) to respond to the whims and moods of various incoherent factions within the broad spectrum of opposition. In an effort to keep "unity" within the opposition, the committee had to indulge in riots, strikes, and demonstrations that it neither planned nor wanted. Violence weakened the HEC's leadership and alerted the government authorities to gaps in the security structure. As of January 1956, against the strong objections of the HEC, the police force was reinforced by new recruits enlisted in Iraq.

In March 1956 the era of peaceful negotiations, contacts, bargaining, and objections or rejections came to an end. On 2 March the unwanted, unplanned attack on British Foreign Minister Selwyn Lloyd in Muharraq, while he was making a short stop in Bahrain on his way to the Far East turned the course of events in a different direction. Using sticks and stones, the attackers did not spare the ruler, who had accompanied Lloyd from the airport to Manama palace, where the two were to have dinner. Roderic Owen, an eyewitness to the incident, describes it:

On and on the cars crawled, one after another. Each one was like a new sitting bird offered to the crowd, to attack it became a ritual, part of a ritual dance. The Ruler's Rolls-Royce came by, its inside light turned on to show his Highness sitting upright, looking straight ahead of him. There was a slight lull, a kind of sigh from the crowd, then men surged forwards and attacked it too, leaping up, kicking and ducking away rapidly back into the crowd. More cars came by, some with windows already smashed, one containing secretaries travelling with Mr. Selwyn Lloyd which the crowd attacked but then let alone seeing that there were women in it. [Owen 1957, p. 229]

The police stopped the spontaneous mob action against the motorcade in two hours, but no arrests were made. The crowd had already been on the road leaving the field after a soccer match. On seeing the oncoming

motorcade, a group of spectators organized a small demonstration, shouting slogans against imperialism, the ruler, and the advisor. As the cars came closer, the small group became a crowd, and in a few minutes the mob took over. After this incident, which took place one or two days after General Glubb Pasha was dismissed from the Jordanian Army, the British Embassy, which thus far had taken a neutral stand on the issue, seemingly playing the role of a moderator, began to reconsider its policy in favor of the regime.

Just as the committee was recuperating from Lloyd's incident, trying to tighten its grip over its political organization, another spontaneous event erupted between the Shi^Ca stall-holders in the bazaar and the municipal police, forcing the committee to declare another general strike, for which they were not prepared.

On 11 March a Shi^Ca peddler occupied a place in the bazaar without official authorization and refused to leave when the inspector told him to. The inspector called the police, who arrested the peddler and drove him to the municipal building at the entrance of the marketplace. Soon a large crowd of sympathizers and fellow "villagers" gathered around the municipal building and besieged a group of policemen. Two parties of policemen were ordered to move out from the fort, at the other end of the city, and rescue their colleagues at the municipal building. One party reached the building, but the other was held by an angry crowd some distance away. To disperse the crowd, some policemen inside the building opened fire and killed five persons. Succumbing to pressure, particularly from the Shi^Ca representatives on the HEC, the committee immediately declared a general strike that lasted several days.

The committee had learned from previous experiences that strikes could be as much a liability as an asset. Many salaried laborers, technicians, craftsmen, tradesmen, and peddlers, who always constituted the backbone of organized protests and rebellions, had no savings and could not sustain a lengthy strike. Strikes were at times self-defeating. As soon as strikes were publicly declared, pressure within the opposition grew to end them for economic reasons; if they were terminated, it gave the impression that their organizers lacked popular support. More burdensome still was the problem of order and discipline during the strike. The HEC had no organized force to impose order, and consequently gangsters, looters, "revenge seekers," and "blackmailers" committed many crimes that, however petty, alienated the community from the committee.

During the strike private cars were attacked and damaged at night, streets were littered with nails to puncture tires, some roads were blocked, and a few Bahrainis were personally assaulted for not taking part in the strike or uprising. The government took advantage of these disturbances to impose a curfew, appointed a court of inquiry to investigate the shooting, and announced the formation of an administrative council to hear public complaints. The court of inquiry was composed of two judicial advisors, an Egyptian and a Britisher, one advising the Bahraini government and the other the British government.¹⁴ The HEC objected to the composition of the council, which consisted of Al-Khalifa shaikhs and three additional government officials, and called upon the public to boycott it--which the public did.

Meanwhile, popular pressure toward coming to terms mounted on both sides. The HEC continually received complaints about some committee members and was repeatedly requested to reconcile personal conflicts between the 120 links and the people, or among the people themselves. The committee found itself dealing with petty problems that would otherwise have been referred to government officials. On the other side of the coin, the continuation of the popular uprising was a challenge to the government and a threat to its entire authority. Especially after the incident with Lloyd, the international press began to cover Bahraini affairs, with particular reference to the uprising and its demands. Each party felt time was working against its interests and was ready for compromise.

In May the ruler met with al-Shamlan and Sayyid Ali to lay the foundation for further negotiations. An agreement was reached to have the ruler recognize the committee officially, provided it changes its name, have Secretary General al-Bakir step aside, and give other political factions the freedom to express their opinions without intimidation. The HEC changed its name to the Committee of National Union (CNU) with al-Shamlan as secretary general, al-Bakir left for Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria to marshal support for the movement, and a new political organization called the National Pact was formed. The National Pact was organized by a Shi^Ca Hasan al-Rajab, who was one of the 120 "links" agreed upon by the original network of five. He carried with him a few key people, but nothing to wreck the political organization of the CNU. Except for Muhsin al-Tajir, a Shi^Ca member who withdrew from the committee to follow a nonpolitical career, the committee retained its original membership.

As the committee was rejecting the criminal code, the reorganization

of Bahrain courts, the boards of education and health, and many other offers of compromise, it gradually assumed government functions--settling disputes and labor problems, deliberating on wages and prices, or keeping order. To fulfill these roles, the committee established "teams of first aid" that performed police duties as well, and it held court in private offices resolving conflicts between people. The committee members who dealt with these matters grew stronger at the expense of other members. Two loci of power emerged within the committee, one based on political party lines and the other on Shi^Ca ritualistic processions, the first operating mainly in clubs and the second in funeral houses. Consequently, power within the committee became concentrated in the hands of al-Shamlan and al-Bakir, who were based in pan-Arab political movements, and in the hands of Alaywat, who was based in the funeral houses of Manama. It must be remembered here that Alaywat was initially recruited into the HEC because he carried with him the political weight of the funeral houses and the ceremonial processions built into them.

When al-Shamlan, who had never broken off relations with Al-Khalifa, took over the leadership of the CNU, the committee and the government agreed to meet formally and discuss possibilities for compromise. (Remember that al-Shamlan's father was a leader of the demonstrations of 1938 who was banished to Bombay for demanding "the transfer of authority to the ruler of Bahrain.") The CNU was represented by al-Shamlan and Fakhru, who were Sunni, and by Alaywat and Sayyid Ali, who were Shi^Ca. The government was represented by the ruler, the advisor, and four members of the administrative council, of whom two were Al-Khalifa shaikhs and two were top government officials. The CNU was also reinforced at times by Muhammad al-Shirawi, who served on the Labor Law Advisory Committee as the representative of labor. (This committee was established in 1955 by the government to draft a labor law.) The main parties involved in the crisis were brought together--the opposition represented by pan-Arab political parties and the Shi^Ca, and the government represented by Al-Khalifa, the advisor, and some government officials standing for the merchant classes.

The formal meetings held weekly between May and June at the ruler's residence in Rifa town brought to light the contradictions between the Bahrain government and the demands of the opposition, and between the various factions within the opposition itself as represented in the CNU. Trying to bridge pan-Arab nationalistic movements and Shi^Ca

political local interests. the CNU could not act in unity in these formal meetings. Even if they were united at the top, however precariously, their social power base was diametrically opposed in ideology. In his letter to al-Bakir in Beirut, Shamlan summarized these contradictions: "there are deep gaps and discrepancies between us in the Committee and between the Committee and the popular base" (al-Bakir 1965, p. 138). The committee's willingness to negotiate earned it the enmity of the extremists and the militants, who wanted nothing less than to take over the government immediately or eventually through elected parliaments and labor unions--demands that the committee had given up at least in private, if not in public. In the meetings held at Rifa the government representatives wanted to discuss such issues as labor law, criminal or civil code, reorganization of Bahrain courts--issues that did not necessarily weaken Al-Khalifa authority or power. The committee representatives were demanding rights and privileges that would, if implemented, make them a de jure form of governance. They requested the right to establish "private armies" and issue notes and pamphlets to the public as they saw fit.¹⁵ Had these rights and privileges been granted, the committee would have become another government in Bahrain, given the fact that they already were settling disputes, reconciling conflicts, maintaining order, and deliberating on personal problems.

After two or three sessions the participants knew they were heading nowhere; yet they wanted to continue the negotiations, each for a different reason. The committee wanted to continue in the hope that some acceptable formula for reconciliation might emerge with time. They realized that strikes were double-edged and that violence and disturbance would swiftly be uprooted, this time by a much better equipped police force. Fearing mob action, reinforced by rumors that the militants were smuggling arms from the Iranian coast in fruit baskets and boxes, the committee preferred to continue negotiating lest its control wither away. The government representatives, on the other hand, wanted to carry on because they felt that negotiations were weakening the opposition by exposing the contradictions between the various loci of power inside the committee and between the committee and its popular base. More negotiations meant more contradictions, and more contradictions meant weaker opposition. It appeared as if the government, through continued negotiations, wanted to drive a wedge between the committee and its popular base, thus pushing the committee to fall victim to the militants. Militancy combined

with organizational deficiency always leads to political disaster.

In June, while all these contradictions were coming to light, the court of inquiry established in March to investigate the murder of five Shi^Ca men suddenly published its findings, which, though incriminating no one, caught everyone by surprise. Already under pressure not to continue the meetings, the CNU unilaterally broke off negotiations with the government and established a paramilitary organization, the "scouts"--uniformed men who received orders from the committee. By making this move, the committee declared itself, rightly or wrongly, a de facto government opposing the regime. While the committee learned that strikes might lead to riots and riots to repressive police measures, so did the government learn that police measures could lead to bloodshed and bloodshed to unity of opposition.

People of tribal origin offered to engage the scouts and break up the organization; the ruler rejected the offer. On the contrary, they were firmly told to make no move in this direction, lest they be subjected to severe court proceedings. The government tried neither to reconvene the meetings nor to break up the scouts. Between June and October there were a few petty threats and some personal intimidation by militants against government officials or any who cooperated with Al-Khalifa, but none of these had any significant political repercussions. Even the return of al-Bakir to Bahrain on 27 September and the resumption of his post as secretary general of the CNU did not entice the government to take action against him or the opposition. He was met by a huge crowd at the airport; many people expected government authorities to arrest him for his continual attacks through the press and the radio on the ruler of Bahrain while he was in Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon. The government took no action. Until October each party was standing still, making no move to end the conflict, as if awaiting spontaneous developments. The joint British, French, and Israeli attack on Egypt in October/November 1956 broke up this "war of silence."

After Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, on 29 October 1956 Israel attacked Egypt and occupied the Sinai. The British Royal Air Force shelled the Egyptian airfields the next day, after which British, French, and Israeli troops occupied the Canal Zone. By this time, through the works of the CNU and the HEC, pan-Arab nationalism, including Nasserism, had become an established political reality in Bahrain. The attack on Egypt was accordingly expected to create disturbances on the

island, which neither party wanted. Al-Bakir met with the advisor and agreed to have the committee organize peaceful strikes and mass meetings under police protection.

On 2 November the CNU organized a mass meeting in Manama, attended mostly by the urban Sunni. After some fiery speeches, the participants marched in a supposedly peaceful procession, escorted by a symbolic police force. Not unexpectedly, in those moments of emotional contagion, the procession drifted off the route it had planned to follow and soon developed into a riot the police force could not control. Knowing the repressive measures mob actions may stimulate, al-Bakir, supported by his immediate associates, tried to stop them, but to no avail. The mob set fire to the British firm of Gray McKenzie, smashed the windows of the government and the British commercial houses, looted and burned some houses owned by Europeans in Muharraq, and attempted to set alight a gas station in the middle of the bazaar. On the next day they destroyed the boats and machinery of the British firm, looted and burned *al-Khalij* newspaper, set fire to the Public Works Department building, and tried unsuccessfully to burn down the Catholic church. Several houses owned by Europeans in Manama were looted and some were burned, after being evacuated a day earlier.

Taking advantage of the Sunni-Shi^ca split on the issue, the police, reinforced by British troops, arrested Ibrahim Fakhru on 2 November and four other members, including Shamlan, al-Bakir, and Alaywat, three days later. Some of the 120 links were arrested later; many others escaped by sea to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, or Lebanon, each to his kin or political party affiliates. After the five members of the CNU were tried and imprisoned, the "links" who had escaped started to come back to Bahrain; some did so immediately, others after one or two years.

The trials were held at Budayya on 22 and 23 December; the tribunal was composed of Du^caij bin Hamad, Abdullah bin Isa, and Ali bin Ahmad, all Al-Khalifa shaikhs. Shamlan, al-Bakir, and Alaywat were sentenced to fourteen years of imprisonment on various charges, and Fakhru and bin Musa to ten years. A few weeks later the government asked the British authorities to have the first three serve their terms of imprisonment outside Bahrain; consequently they were exiled to Saint Helena Island. Work in Bahrain was paralyzed for several days after the riots and the arrests of the CNU members; normality was restored about four weeks

afterward. On his way to the trials, al-Bakir looked toward the spectators and murmured to himself, "only yesterday you were applauding us" (al-Bakir 1965, p. 274).

The imprisonment of the CNU members for political reasons and without proper court procedures raised strong objections in the British Parliament and the press. In 1961 the British government released Shamlan, al-Bakir, and Alawyat and later paid them an indemnity of 15,000 pounds sterling each. Al-Bakir returned to Beirut and resumed his earliest occupation, trading between Qatar and Lebanon; Shamlan returned to Syria and opened a shop for hunting equipment in Damascus; Alawyat retired to Iraq. Al-Bakir died in Beirut in 1967; Alawyat died in Iraq in 1969 a few days after he had secured permission to return to Bahrain. Shamlan returned to Bahrain, was elected vice-speaker of the Constitutional Assembly of 1972, and was appointed ambassador to Egypt in 1974. After independence in 1971, many of those who took part in the uprisings of 1954-56 were assigned high government posts.

Networks and Formal Political Organization

The uprising of the mid-fifties raises many theoretical questions, the most outstanding of which is how a network of five, who knew each other socially and informally, could build opposition against the government and challenge its authority for two years. Obviously, the lack of a formal political organization did not hinder collective political action, at least not negatively. "Negatively" because structural contradictions within the uprising and the opposition reduced the capacity of the HEC and the CNU to act positively--to bargain, compromise, or earn concessions. The policy of "all demands or nothing" that the leaders of the opposition followed was not so much a product of unconditional commitment to political principles or ideological beliefs as an outcome of inherent contradictions in the structure of the opposition itself. Neither the network of five nor the inner circles (the HEC, CNU) were able to translate "support," mobilized through the 120 links, into an effective and unified political organization.

Related unilaterally to members of the HEC and the CNU and to a wide variety of power groups in society, the 120 links operated only in conjunction with each other, not in coordination. They operated as if they were independent, sovereign units bound through a passing alliance. This lack of hierarchy, or formally graded authority, left several negative

impressions on the uprising. It forced the leaders to concern themselves more with unity within the opposition than with political gains and maneuvers against the established regime. Given the ideological and organizational contradictions within the opposition, unity was achieved through negative performances rejecting all advances of compromise, however feasible some might have been. It also forced the leadership to reluctantly align themselves with dissident tactics and moves that were not clearly in line with the movement and its cause. Any faction, irrespective of its quality or commitments, was able to draw the entire movement into negative actions, thus imposing upon the opposition the burden of dealing with issues for which they were not prepared. Repeatedly instructed not to cooperate with the government, people accordingly turned to the committees and the links for deliberation on public matters.

Given the lack of coordination between the committees, the links, and the "power bases," the more government functions the inner circles assumed the weaker they grew politically. They had no experience in government and in the exercise of force. For the ordinary citizen, the government, however corrupt or inefficient, is more appreciated in the long run than a laissez-faire policy. The very personal relationships the network used to grow big were responsible for its weakness and eventual decline. Had the network been able to translate these elementary relationships into a formal political organization whose parts operated in coordination with each other, the uprising of the mid-fifties would not have withered away as soon as the central links were eliminated. Had they been coordinated, they would have been able to bargain collectively and earn various concessions from the regime.¹⁶

Although large-scale political support can be mobilized through elementary social relationships, it is highly unlikely that such mobilization generates historic changes in society; it will do so if these relationships are transformed in the process into formal political organizations with unity of purpose and ideology. The question remains: Would it be possible within a short period of time to transform large-scale political support mobilized through elementary social relationships, networks, and links into a formal political organization of any consequence? The evidence from Bahrain clearly speaks against this proposition. The only visible landmark, or better to say footprint, the uprising of the mid-fifties left in Bahrain was the Cooperative Compensation Bureau, the same

institution that marked the turn of events from sectarian clashes into a national, popular uprising.

Though the uprising left no major landmarks, it generated several changes in government and in political attitudes. Severely criticized by the opposition for placing uneducated shaikhs in high government posts, the ruling family gave up the traditional motto of "our councils are our schools" and began to urge their children to acquire formal education inside and outside Bahrain. Many educated young men, who were considered to be politically undesirable "liberals," were slowly incorporated into the body of government and sometimes assigned top executive responsibilities. The regime at last realized that ruling in cooperation with some emerging forces with modernistic outlooks strengthens rather than weakens its powers and authorities. Additionally, a number of new departments and laws were established and enacted, including a Department of Labor and Social Affairs, Labor Law, Municipal Law, and Public Relations Department, and later on a Press Law.

On the other hand, the uprising put the regime on the alert, drew its attention to the weaknesses of government and security laws, and taught it how to maneuver against protests and rebellions. A "state of emergency" was imposed on Bahrain in 1956 that gave the ruler the right to arrest, detain, or interrogate anyone suspected of disturbing internal security. After the labor-student strikes that wrecked the country for three months in 1965, the same law was officially reenacted as the Law of Public Security, granting the government the authority to "issue any orders which it deems essential for public good, safety, and security."¹⁷ In 1975 the controversy over the Public Security Law led to the dissolution of the Bahrain parliament, two years after it was established.

The Bahraini experience shows that tribally based governments are willing to compromise on most issues pertaining to modernity and development save two: a standardized penal code and a system of representation. A standardized penal code opposes the very principles that bind a tribal group together--namely, exclusiveness based on kinship and the ability to "particularize" or make law with or without legislative bodies. For this reason religiously oriented movements in Bahrain, or elsewhere in the Gulf and Arabia, tend to be organized and encouraged by the tribal segment of society. Religious law (Islam) regulates interpersonal relationships universally without prescribing the forms of government or state that carry out these regulations. "Legitimacy" is derived from the application

of divine scriptures, not from popular vote, which gives government, any form of government, tribally based or otherwise, a de facto "legitimacy" without resort to public delegation or any other system of representation. Islam neither forbids nor requires the faithful to participate in decision-making through universal suffrage. The reason religious movements are organized and encouraged by the tribally based segment of society pertains directly to local power politics. Seeking participation in the political process, the emerging forces resort to the manipulation of "modern" culture: civil and political rights, a system of representation, labor unions, social securities, a standardized penal code, and the control of prices and wages. In opposing these demands, the tribally based segment controlling government resorts to the manipulation of historical rights and "traditional" values and norms reinforced by religious teachings and laws.

In their struggle for power, the two polarities resort to different ideologies and different organizational skills. To prevent the rise of large-scale formal political organizations, the government opposes the foundation of political parties, societies, labor unions, or clubs that cut across regional, ethnic, or religious groupings. This policy of "organizational fragmentation" has likewise been extended to the employment of foreign labor and to the parliamentary elections of 1972 and 1973. Foreign labor is recruited from various provinces and districts of India, Pakistan, or other places in the Far East; small as it is, Bahrain was cut into twenty different constitutencies for the parliamentary elections.

In reaction to this policy, or as a result of it, the opposition established cultural and sports clubs and founded funeral houses. However, clubs and "houses" are not political parties; they are small-scale local organizations that may act in unity if mobilized by networks based in underground political parties. Here lies the dilemma of power politics in Bahrain society. If mobilized by such networks and inner circles, clubs and funeral houses may wreck the regime: but the moment they act this way, uniting the Shi^ca traditionalists and the emerging new forces, the tribally controlled government claims "legitimacy" and strikes to break the alliance and prevent the rise of a formal political organization. Lacking formal organization, opposition is always weakened by its own inherent contradictions, this happened in 1938 and 1956, and in 1975 when the elected parliament was dissolved. If so, what constitutes legitimacy of authority in Bahrain?

Before the implementation of reforms in the twenties, the question of "legitimacy" was not raised. Until then, authority, power, force, coercion, dominance, and legitimacy were interchangeable phenomena, parts of an entire system of tribal councils and religious courts. Whoever had the physical power to dominate in society and control the available natural resources had the right to rule. With the introduction of the reforms, two new sources of "legitimacy" emerged: the entire body of laws, announcements, decisions, or decrees made and enacted by government; and a system of representation followed intermittently in municipal councils, education or health committees, or in a national parliament. The parliament was instituted in 1973 to grant the regime the "legitimacy" of governance derived from public delegation after the withdrawal of the colonial power and the achievement of self-rule in 1971. The parliament was dissolved in 1975, two years after it was founded.

Indeed, representation and the principle of public delegation through election have never worked since the twenties, either in municipal councils, in education or health committees, or in the national assembly. The cultural and sports clubs and the welfare and professional societies and associations are the only institutions where representation by popular vote is carried out with a measure of success. In other words, representation is followed only in voluntary associations that are not directly subject to government intervention. Government has always been represented, from the first municipal council instituted in Manama in 1919 to the national assembly of 1973, by appointed functionaries having the same rights and privileges as elected members. The chair has always been allocated to the appointed, not the elected membership; this has always
218 caused friction within the councils, committees, or national assemblies.

To end the friction, the ruler dissolves the very legal bodies he established earlier.

Two diametrically opposed political ideologies are involved here: a tribally controlled government deriving "legitimacy" from historical rights and a "peasant" (community-based), urban population seeking participation in government through public representation. The first believes and acts as if government is an earned right; the other seeks to modify government and subject it to a public vote. The institution, operation, and dissolution of the parliament is a case in point.

On 16 December 1971, four months after independence, the ruler of Bahrain proclaimed the law governing the formation of a national parliament. On 1 December 1972, a Constitutional Assembly composed of twenty-two elected and eight appointed members was formed.¹ After some deliberation, the assembly legislated the constitution of the State of Bahrain and the rules that governed the election of the parliament.² On 7 December 1973, a National Assembly composed of thirty members was elected; in the assembly, the government was represented by fourteen appointed ministers, none of whom won a popular vote--yet all were granted the same rights and privileges as the elected members. Some of the candidates who failed in the national election were assigned ministerial posts to maintain sectarian and political balance in government and parliament. In the parliament, three blocs emerged--the People's Bloc, the Religious Bloc, and the Independent Middle. Following is a brief discussion of their composition and performance.

The People's Bloc

The People's Bloc comprised the candidates who had an organized party base linked to political movements outside the country. It included communists, socialists, and Arab nationalists recruited in several pan-Arab movements, particularly in the United Front for the Liberation of the Gulf or Oman. However varied, they were united by two common denominators--the local issues they stood for and their social origins. All the People's Bloc candidates stood for the rights of labor to establish unions and trades, earn higher wages, and participate in decision-making. The greater part of their candidates took an active part in the labor-student strikes of 1965; some were arrested, detained, or imprisoned. Except for one, they belonged to less prominent urban families, Shi^Ca or Sunni, from Manama or Muharraq. Yet many achieved high levels of academic training

and were known to be self-made men. Of the eight candidates who were elected to parliament, three were lawyers--two trained in Moscow and one in Baghdad--one was a sociologist with a doctorate from Sweden, and the rest had at least some secondary education. At the time of the election the lawyers and the sociologist were unemployed; the others were a teacher, a clerk, and two salesmen. Five of the eight had taught sometime in their careers. Four were technically known to be Arab nationalists, two were communists, one was a socialist, and one was a ba^Cthist. Except for the Arab nationalists, who tend to be strong in Sunni urban circles, the power base of the bloc cut across sects. One Shi^Ca member of the bloc was voted to power mostly by an urban Sunni population, a phenomenon that did not often recur in Bahraini elections. The tendency was for the Shi^Ca or the Sunni to vote for their own candidates.

To provide a more vivid picture of the social background of the candidates recruited in this bloc and the way they maneuvered for support, I will present a brief account of the life and career of a parliamentarian fictitiously called Ahmad Sharida.

Ahmad Sharida

Ahmad was born in an old section of Muharraq to a fisherman who had two wives and eleven children, eight by his first wife and three by the second. In his late thirties Ahmad had already been married twice and had five children by his first wife, whom he had divorced. He had two brothers and eight sisters. One brother worked as a cashier in BAPCO and the other was a clerk in customs. One sister was married to her nephew, one was unemployed, one was a clerk, one was a nurse, two were students in school, and three were still young--the youngest was about one year old. Like many people of his social background, Ahmad had few relatives on his father's or his mother's side living in Bahrain. They were six families--his paternal uncle, who was a fisherman, his maternal uncle, who was a policeman, two married cousins, and his and his father's families. Neither his father nor his uncles had formal education; he was the first in the family to enter the elementary school in Muharraq and the secondary school in Manama.

While he was studying in Manama, he organized the neighborhood cultural and sports Peace Club and became its elected president. In the uprising of the mid-fifties, some members of the club volunteered to serve as "scouts" in the paramilitary organization founded in June 1956. When

he graduated from high school in 1956-57, he sought employment in BAPCO, where he taught geography, mathematics, and English to illiterate workers. This gave him his first opportunity to learn about labor problems, hopes, and grievances. Two years later he was sent by BAPCO to London to study business administration and prepare for a degree in this field. Disliking London's cold weather and feeling homesick, particularly for his mother, he returned to Bahrain before completing the requirements for graduation. In 1961 he resumed his previous job at BAPCO, this time teaching business and accounting courses. He was fired from his job in 1963 on the pretense that he had come back to work two weeks late after his vacation in Cairo; but the real reason, he believed, was his underground political activism, encouraging labor to unite and stand up for their rights.

Teaching in-service workers at the oil refinery, the largest employer of Bahraini labor, gave him a free platform to disseminate his own political convictions. In 1963 he took a job with British petroleum as assistant auditor and remained there until 1965, when he was imprisoned for his affiliation with the Arab nationalistic movement. His role in the labor-student strike of 1965 was invisible; yet he was imprisoned in accordance with the State of Emergency Law, granting the government the authority to arrest any person suspected of "disturbing public security." On leaving prison in 1967, he looked unsuccessfully for a job in Bahrain. After three months he found work in Qatar, where he stayed until 1968, then returned to Bahrain and worked as an accountant in the African Company. In 1969 he shifted to the Cooperative Compensation Bureau, which offered him a better position and salary. In the bureau, he was second in command and learned a great deal about car insurance. He was offered the directorship of a foreign-based car insurance company in 1970, accepted, and remained there until December 1973, when he was elected to the National Assembly.

Throughout his career, Ahmad came to know many people of varied social backgrounds in Manama, Muharraq, and elsewhere in Bahrain. His imprisonment in 1965 earned him the title of "freedom fighter" (*mujahid*), which is normally conferred upon those who enter prison for political reasons. In his neighborhood he helped organize two clubs, the Peace and the Crescent clubs, presiding over the first in the late fifties and over the second in the mid-sixties. The two clubs operated in the Station Quarter, the same neighborhood in which he was born, raised, and lived,

and which was made a separate constituency in the parliamentary elections of 1973. Constituencies were cut so small that it was possible for a candidate to win with a majority vote ranging between three hundred and one thousand. While his career at BAPCO and his imprisonment made him a public figure in Bahrain, his involvement in clubs in the Station Quarter made him known in person to all the residents of the constituency. To his constituency, composed mostly of low-income categories, he symbolized the self-made man who never denied his roots, the son of a fisherman who, though he studied in London and became director of an insurance company, remained faithful to his social origin and immediate community. The four rich merchants in his neighborhood did not support him.

During the election of the Constitutional Assembly, the People's Bloc withdrew and, protesting the State of Emergency Law, called upon supporters to boycott the election. They complained that the government had arrested and interrogated many of their candidates, including Ahmad, about a month before elections, on the pretense that they worked for unlawful, banned political parties. The boycott did not work; the votes cast ranged from 80 to 90 percent of the eligible voters.

Fearing the same failure in the forthcoming election to the National Assembly to be held in December 1973, the bloc decided to organize itself and run for election. It adopted a unified program supporting the right of labor to organize in unions, the right of women to suffrage, the suspension of the State of Emergency Law, and the release of all political prisoners. Individual candidates were given the freedom to adapt the details of their maneuvers to the political situation in their own constituencies. Ahmad already had a nucleus of party affiliates working for him, along with sympathizers who knew him as neighbors, friends, clients, or fellow club affiliates. His partner in the election was a salesman and Arab nationalist who had been imprisoned for opposing the established order and subsequently became a "freedom fighter." Together they visited practically every voter, individually asking for support in winning the election—which they received.

The power base of Ahmad, and this can be generalized to other members of the People's Bloc, lies neither in the tradition of family preeminence nor in his capacity to employ or find employment for other people. Like many in the bloc, he himself had difficulty finding a job or, for that matter, retaining it. His power base was entirely of his own making, achieved through party affiliation, the organization of cultural and

sports clubs, and participation in organized protests and rebellions that focus specifically on the right of labor to unionize. Like the bloc, he drew support mainly from students and salaried labor in the low-income categories.

Students were attracted to the bloc by the very party lines upon which it is built. Party affiliation provided the youth not only with an ideological base, but also with a sort of human intimacy unparalleled anywhere in family relationships or neighborhood associations. With labor, on the other hand, the issue was different; the support here was based entirely on political and economic interests. Of the three power blocs in Bahrain, the People's Bloc has continuously pressed for labor reforms. Of course, this does not mean that all students and all salaried labor lent support to the bloc and the various political parties of which it was composed. Salaried labor in Bahrain constituted about 70 percent of the work force; the bloc won about one-fifth of the total number of votes cast in the election. As of 1970, labor support for political parties based in pan-Arab, communistic, or socialistic movements began to decline. Two patterns of organized protest emerged, one carried by high-school students and often based in pan-Arab nationalistic movements, and the other by labor recruited in individual firms and companies scattered over the country.³ In no case did a strike develop into a broader movement of protest, culminating in a large-scale political organization that threatened the structure of government and the regime, as it did in 1954-56 and to a much lesser extent in 1965.

There were several internal and external reasons for the decline of labor support for pan-Arab political parties and the subsequent failure of individual strikes to develop into broader movements of protest. Externally, the outstanding reason was the shift of pan-Arab movements from concern with the "whole" Arab problems to concern with the local issues of individual states--a shift appearing more vividly after the split of the Ba^cth party between Syria and Iraq and the death of President Nasser of Egypt. With Nasser's death, the Arab masses who were inspired by him lost the sentimental bond that had brought them together--a bond manipulated by opposition in various Arab countries, including Bahrain, to challenge local governments and regimes. Besides, the "undeclared wars" between Syria and Iraq, the two regimes that supposedly belonged to the same Arab nationalist movement, weakened the ordinary citizen's belief in the re-

liability and capacity of large pan-Arab movements to really cope with problems of Arab unity.

While these factors were operating externally, many changes were occurring internally in Bahrain. These changes can be summarized as the unprecedented influx of foreign labor; the institution of specialized offices or committees to moderate labor-employer disagreements; and the appointment, sometimes to top government posts, of a large number of personnel who had recently been leaders of protests and rebellions. By the mid-seventies, foreign labor constituted half, if not more, of the total working force; this weakened native labor politically. Not only did this influx flood the market with cheap foreign workers uncommitted to local labor problems and demands, it also replaced local workers in the low-salaried jobs where work grievances and discontent tended to be concentrated. The influx of foreign labor gradually pushed the natives into the service and distribution sectors of the economy where the policy of free enterprise prevailed. The government has recently been losing its position as the sole employer of labor, which left a very curious impression on strikes and organized protests. Slowly, labor unrest began to focus on working conditions in private enterprises, with or without foreign capital, thus allowing government to be a moderator of conflict instead of being party to it. In 1974-75 the Office of Labor Relations in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs dealt with more than twenty strikes, none of which was directed against government. This phenomenon could not have happened through the sixties, when government was virtually the sole employer of labor.

The influx of foreign labor, the British withdrawal from Bahrain in 1968, and the achievement of self-rule in 1971 forced government to build an enlarged bureaucracy. In 1975 the number of employees in public administration and the security forces was estimated to be about fourteen thousand, about four thousand enlisted in the police force and the army and the rest in civil administration. In other words, about one-fourth of the Bahrain working force is employed in the management of the state and accordingly has an interest in maintaining the status quo.

Led by the prime minister, the government simultaneously and perhaps deliberately employed many of the "freedom fighters" of the past, which weakened the opposition ideologically and organizationally. The Speaker of the Cabinet in 1975 was one of the "network" of five who organized opposition in the uprising of the mid-fifties; another member of the same

network was appointed ambassador, and a score of others were assigned top executive positions. The cynics have it: "rebel until given a high government post." Rumor had it that two members of the People's Bloc shifted to a neutral position in the National Assembly upon becoming commercial agents for foreign manufacturing companies.

The Religious Bloc

Unlike the People's Bloc, whose composite parts, the underground political parties, have long been operating in Bahrain, the Religious Bloc did not have the chance to organize itself politically before the elections of 1972 and 1973. The bloc is a rural Shi^Ca phenomenon: the six candidates who won election did so in rural Shi^Ca constituencies. Of the six, two were jurists, one was a journalist, one was a mulla, and two were elementary school teachers. Five of the six had taught at various elementary schools in Shi^Ca villages, and in this capacity they knew many students and their parents. The jurists, the mulla, and the journalist were graduates of the Shi^Ca seminary at Najaf in Iraq; the teachers had secondary training in Bahrain.

Unlike the People's Bloc or the Independent Middle, the Religious Bloc was composed of candidates having little "support" themselves; they won the election through the influence of some high religious authorities who chose not to indulge directly in politics. In this respect, the role of the Shi^Ca high religious authorities coincided with that of the ruling family, who also refused to subject their authority to a popular vote. The Al-Khalifa candidate who won election representing Rifa constituency did so against the wishes of the ruling family; for this reason he came to be known as the "red shaikh" in reference to his supposed leftist tendencies. The issue went deeper than this. Like all other ruling families in the Gulf and Arabia, Al-Khalifa of Bahrain consider government a legitimate right that they earned historically by defending the island against external aggression--a "right" that must not be subjected to "the fluctuating, controversial moods of public opinion," as one Al-Khalifa shaikh put it. Members of the ruling family were not permitted to run for election because they were aloof from politics, above the National Assembly and the appeal to public opinion.

By the same token, the Shi^Ca high religious authorities, the custodians of religion and the carriers of "the true" faith, would not subject "religion," the words and laws of God, to a popular vote. In prin-

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ciple they are professionally trained to stand for the "rights" of people, all the people, and could not therefore subject this authority to political controversy and competition. In practice, however, religionism in Bahrain has become a political issue, much more so among the Shi^ca than the Sunni, which has forced Shi^ca religious authorities to interfere directly in politics (the elections) through second-rank jurists, mullas, or other religionists.

Aside from supporting some labor demands, the Religious Bloc generally adopted a defensive platform rejecting the sale of liquor in Bahrain, the coeducational policy followed in the Gulf Technical College, the participation of girls and women in public life, the treatment of female patients by male doctors in government hospitals, the licensing of youth clubs not conforming to Islamic customs and teachings, and a host of other issues pertaining to moral conduct, the practice of Islamic rituals, and the relationship between the sexes. The following case of Ali Qasim (a fictitious name) illustrates this bloc's organization and the way they marshaled support.

Ali Qasim

Ali was born in 1943 to an undistinguished fisherman in the village of Diraz, which composed, with Budayya, the constituency that elected him to the National Assembly in 1973. His father had several children, of whom two, Abdullah and Mahdi, started their careers as wage laborers working in cultivation and became well-to-do shopkeepers in Manama within two decades. In the late forties, Abdullah left cultivation to work as an apprentice in a Manama shop owned by a certain Marhun, and Mahdi took a job as janitor in the public elementary school at nearby Budayya, augmenting his income by trap fishing. In a few years, after learning the "secrets of trade," Abdullah opened a shop independent of his master. In the late fifties he opened another shop for his brother Mahdi; they thus became economically better off than a good part of the village.

In the meantime, Ali was enrolled in the elementary school at Budayya, where he acquired the reputation of being clever and bright, repeatedly ranking first in his class. With the support of his brothers he enrolled in the public secondary school at Manama and successfully completed its program. Upon his graduation in the late fifties he taught at the elementary school in Budayya and remained there until the early sixties. At the time he was teaching he enrolled in evening religious

classes held in Manama (al-Na^Cim Quarter) under the tutorship of an Iraqi jurist claiming descent from Imam Ali's House. Two years later, he left teaching to join a religious circle at the Hindi Mosque in Najaf and the College of Ja^Cfari (Shi^Ca) Law there. He spent four years studying at the college; when he returned to Bahrain he resumed teaching at the Khamis Intermediate Public School, only to return to Najaf after two years. In Najaf he met three other students from Bahrain, Abdullah al-Madani, Abbass al-Rayyis, and Abdul-Amir al Jamri, studying Shi^Ca law and history at the college. The four were almost the same age and had known each other well in Bahrain as students, classmates, or teachers in elementary schools. Qasim and al-Rayyis, who came from the same neighborhood in Diraz, were childhood friends.

Mainly as a reaction to the unprecedented increase in youth clubs in the sixties, there grew up in Shi^Ca villages a contravening force, the religionists, opposing the use of television and the participation of girls and women in club activities. The implications of these innovations were discussed in chapter 8; the point to be stressed here is that the religionists as a social category were not opposed to the idea of clubs for youth so much as to content that undermined the authority of religious specialists. The Shi^Ca adherence to "imitation" as a measure of religiousness could turn a custom, any custom, into a divinely sanctioned behavior; any change in custom would then weaken the position of the "imitated" religious specialist. Chapter 8 showed how the failure to observe the rules of segregation between sexes undermined the authority of the religious specialist politically and economically. Indeed, the use of the word "religionism" here is intended to imply the political and economic content of adherence to religious customs and practices. Just as some "religionists" do not strictly observe religious rituals, some religious specialists observe the rituals but oppose "religionism" as a political movement. In other words, "religionism" as a political movement does not imply religiousness, the observation of rituals and vice versa.

By the early seventies, two polarities prevailed in Shi^Ca villages: the "religionists," claiming strict adherence to customs, practices, rituals, and traditions, and the "modernists," standing for change, claiming it to be in agreement with religious laws and teachings. To avoid polemics, the disagreement focused on two issues, the use of television and the participation of girls and women in club activities. The religionists drew support from the traditionally established leadership in Shi^Ca

villages based essentially in family clusters and funeral houses. The "modernists" drew support from the newly emerging forces based essentially in club organizations.

As soon as the announcement to establish a parliament was publicly made, the religionists, led by a renowned jurist in the Shi^ca court, began to organize themselves for political action. Although religionism was by then a political issue, the religionists had no formal organization. The attempt to found an Islamic Society in the late sixties in order to contravene the clubs' influence failed because of government intervention; in 1972, a little before the national election, the society was granted a permit to operate in Diraz itself. This is the reason the power struggle between religionists and the modernists was nowhere as tense as in this constituency.

Unlike the People's Bloc, the religionists were not organized into a unified group. As soon as the local concentrations of power divided themselves into religionists and modernists in preparation for the elections, the religionists were automatically assimilated into a broader political front and the modernists were left to rely on their own local resources for support. Led by jurists and mullas, the religionists were already a broad phenomenon operating in various Shi^ca communities in Bahrain. By contrast, the "modernists," who were not recruited in underground political parties, had no links with a broad political organization and accordingly had to stand alone in the battle. Within a very short time, the religionists were able to formulate a united front challenging the modernists in various rural constituencies. Most of the modernists were self-made men with university degrees; to counterbalance these socially impressive credentials, the religionists adopted the candidacy of the four Bahrain students, including Ali Qasim, who were studying Shi^ca law and history at Najaf. One of the four was stepbrother to the renowned jurist who was said to have "worked day and night to organize the religionists into a single political front."

In Diraz constituency, the religionists—whose power base was the founders of the Islamic Society, the traditionally prominent family of al-Shihab—adopted the candidacy of Ali Qasim. Qasim was the first from Diraz in recent years to have studied Shi^ca law and history in Najaf, which appealed to the noncommitted, ordinary voter. In consultation with higher religious authorities, they wrote to Qasim in Najaf, inviting him to be their candidate. Committed academically and sentimentally to re-

ligious studies, he did not respond at first, preferring not to indulge in politics. Four days after the official registration of candidates had begun and Ali still had not shown up, his brother Mahdi flew to Iraq and brought him, his wife, and his children back to Bahrain. Ali won the election to the Constitutional Assembly and the National Assembly with an impressive majority vote that was not of his own making.

In Bahrain the religionists cast their votes for nine winning candidates. It was hoped that they would formulate a single bloc in parliament; instead, only six who had no strong power base joined the Religious Bloc. Once elected to power, the Religious Bloc found itself, ironically, in alliance with the People's Bloc, whose ideology they earlier opposed in the national elections. Before discussing in some detail this alliance, which I believe led to the dissolution of the parliament in 1975, it is necessary to deal briefly with the third bloc, known as the Independent Middle.

The Independent Middle

Of the thirty elected members in the National Assembly, about seventeen belonged to a broad category called the Independent Middle--"independent" in the sense of not being bound politically to any bloc in parliament, and "middle" in the sense of fluctuating ideologically between the "left" represented by the People's Bloc and the "right" represented by the Religious Bloc. In the election, some of the candidates of the Independent Middle adopted the platforms of either the Religious Bloc or the People's Bloc, but they shifted later while serving in parliament. In general, candidates of the Middle relied on their own political assets and resources in seeking support, which included a varying combination of wealth, education, family preeminence, government contacts, and the ability to employ or affect the employment of people. Those who were weak in one asset were strong in another. Only three of the seventeen were employees of the government or private business; the rest were employers. Six were wholesale merchants, three were contractors, two were agents of foreign manufacturing companies, one was a pharmacist, one was a real estate dealer, and one was a proprietor. Four had university training, six secondary, three some secondary, and three some elementary education or none. Not all members of the Independent Middle were "children of fortune," sons of rich and traditionally prominent families; some merchants and contractors were self-made men who sought association with

religious purposes and welfare projects. Two of them started from scratch and within three decades became top businessmen controlling large empires of diversified enterprises. At the time of election, one of the two was employing no less than 50 percent of the voting power of his constituency, the total being about five hundred votes.

Unlike the People's Bloc, the Independent Middle was varied in political commitments, ideologies, and the resources of power they mobilized for support. Three took an active part in the popular uprising of the mid-fifties, two were thought to belong to pan-Arab political parties but succumbed to family pressure during and after the election and stepped outside the People's Bloc; the rest had nothing politically in common other than not being committed to particular blocs or ideologies. The Independent Middle is so varied politically and socially that none of the four cases I studied in depth can be taken to be a "representative model."

Just as the candidates were varied, so were the resources from which they drew support. No candidate had the support of a homogeneous category of voters; they were voted into power by a wide spectrum of supporters who differed in age, education, social origin, family affiliation, and value orientation. This "support" was built upon a cluster of elementary social relationships extending in various directions: clubs, funeral houses, family groupings, neighborhoods, and business relationships. Because of its variation and political heterogeneity, the Independent Middle was never able to operate as a united bloc save when the national policy of free market and enterprise was in question. Otherwise, each followed his own or his constituency's vested interests irrespective of the others; for this reason they deepened their contracts with government and aligned themselves with its policy. No wonder they were sarcastically and conventionally known as the government bloc--though they did not always act so. It happened several times that members of the Independent Middle stood against government policy and voted down officially proposed legislation, most notable of which was the State of Emergency Law of 1974 that caused the dissolution of parliament in 1975.

The Dissolution of Parliament

This is not the place to examine in detail the performance of the Bahraini parliament between 1973, when it was instituted, and 1975, when it was dissolved--I will focus on the inherent contradiction between tribally controlled governments and the system of representation. After

the elections to the National Assembly and the emergence of three power blocs, a government composed of fourteen appointed ministers was formed. In keeping with Bahraini tradition, the ministers were given the same rights and privileges as the elected members in Parliament. This meant that the government, with the support of a bit less than one-third of the elected members could pass by majority vote in the assembly any legislation they wanted. In practice, however, the government did not resort to these tactics, preferring to pass new legislation through an "elected" majority.

The first year, 1973-74, was experimental; neither bloc knew exactly what authority it could exercise. It gradually appeared that the main task of parliament was to question government about already executed projects or legislated laws instead of sharing in decision-making when laws were drafted. A great part of every parliamentary session was devoted either to information exchange about projects and policies between parliament and cabinet, or to reading and commenting on petitions submitted to the government by various groups and factions in the country. Petitions covered a large number of subjects ranging from sewers in villages to employment of foreign labor, lack of schools, salaries and wages, and a host of other social and economic grievances.

In December 1974, without consulting the parliament, the ruler issued a new law granting government the right to arrest and imprison for three years, without interrogation or trial, any person suspected of disturbing national security. This law was issued after a handful of "political agitators" were arrested in the spring of 1974. Many voices in parliament, including the "red shaikh" and the People's Bloc, demanded that the law be submitted to the assembly for approval or modification before being implemented. Uncertain whether the parliament would pass the law, the government made no response to these demands. Government uncertainty was based on many formal protests and petitions submitted to the ruler before the elections to the Constitutional Assembly, requesting that the Public Security Law enacted in 1965 be suspended. They argued that such laws would limit the political freedom of candidates and voters—the very freedom the assembly was meant to guarantee. Many of the protesters and petitioners then were elected to the parliament; some were aligned with the People's Bloc and some with the Independent Middle.

In the next four or five months, each party and bloc was bargaining for its position, compromising on some demands in order to achieve

others. The issue of public security and state of emergency, the subject of many formal protests since 1956, was suddenly brought back to life, becoming the concern of a large part of Bahraini society. Many panels in clubs, editorials in the daily press, and person-to-person conversations centered on this law. The longer the issue persisted in public and the longer the debates continued, the weaker the government's position became. Many parliamentarians in the Independent Middle, who would not have cared either way succumbed to social pressure and pledged in public to vote against the law if it was submitted unmodified to the parliament.

Meanwhile, the People's Bloc moved to ally itself tactically with the Religious Bloc against the security law; in precedent the law has always been directed against the political parties of the People's Bloc. The People's Bloc supported the Religious Bloc on many religious and traditional issues that utterly opposed its own ideologies or political commitments. These issues included the treatment of female patients by male doctors, the elimination of dhurriyah waqf, and the printing of women's photographs on identity cards. With the support of the bloc and some members of the Independent Middle, the Religious Bloc defeated the last two pieces of legislation.⁴ Once these two ideologically opposed polarities united tactically, one covering the demands of the "modernists" and the other the demands of the "traditionists," they could easily paralyze the parliament and alter the power balance to the disadvantage of the ruling family.

To break the alliance, the government initially tried to win the Religious Bloc to its side, assuring it that the law was intended to deal with the "blasphemous left," the political parties operating underground. Seizing this opportunity, the Religious Bloc bargained to support the law in return for the government's forbidding the sale or use of liquor, eliminating public houses of prostitution, and of making blasphemy a civil crime. Anxious to develop a reputation as an island of cultural freedom in the Gulf and thus to attract foreign businesses, the government instantly brushed these requests aside. The government likewise ignored a suggestion by some of the Independent Middle to incorporate the security law into a general criminal code. By May 1975 it appeared that all attempts at compromise had failed. To avoid defeat, the government simply withdrew from the scheduled session, thus forcing parliament to adjourn the meeting. It was hoped that during summer vacation, when parliamentary meetings were suspended, the parties concerned would find a workable

solution to salvage the new democratic experiment in Bahrain. But in August 1975, in accordance with the constitution of the country, the ruler instead dissolved the parliament altogether.

In the midst of the crisis, a Bahraini man of letters commented: "Bahrain is like a dhow built for cottage trade that suddenly found itself sailing in high seas. Will it cross the ocean? It may and be wrecked. No, no . . . it is much safer for us [Bahrain] to fish in the shoals and reefs of the Gulf close to our neighbors and kin."

The affairs of Bahrain are reflections of the greater society, the Gulf and Arabia, to which the country belongs. It is difficult to believe that Bahrain, the little islands, could alone institute democracy while other states and principalities in the Gulf and Arabia continue to be ruled by tribally based governments.

11 Conclusion

Dissolving the parliament was meant to contain the growing influence of opposition and alter the power balance to the advantage of the ruling family. The authority system in Bahrain did not revert, in one dramatic stroke, to its tribal cultural base. Neither the tribal groups, the urban society, the peasantlike village communities, nor the authority system within which they had been interacting remain unchanged. Of course these broad divisions changed in different ways, each adjusting to the new conditions through its own preexisting social institutions. In spite of these differences, a new style of rule and a new mode of relating to each other politically have emerged. As they have changed from within, their interaction with each other and the "boundary" between them and the authority system have likewise changed. The rise of bureaucracy, the socioeconomic transformations, the emergence of salaried labor, the proliferation of funeral houses and clubs, and the spread of underground political parties all constitute new "political frontiers" affecting interaction between tribe, peasantry, and urban society.

The Changing Boundaries between Groups

The dynamism of this interaction can best be assessed if tribe, peasantry, and urban society, are treated as varied "forms of social organization" coexisting simultaneously within the same social and historical setting and examined in historical depth and perspective as continually adjusting to each other with the rise of new conditions. In this connection it is necessary to distinguish between "tribal society" and "tribally controlled actions and behaviors" and also between government, regimes, or "legitimacy" and the power groupings competing for their control. Tribal systems are not encapsulated as "evolutionary" social and moral orders; they change and acquire new characteristics with the changing

conditions of society. The "tribe" in tribal society is a whole system, self-sufficient and autonomous, that derives authority from within. As a whole system it was organized in Bahrain in separate "feudal" estates subsisting on palm cultivation, pearl fishing, and trade. Except for some modifications in contractual agreements to suit variation in production, tribal estates based on palm cultivation, pearl fishing, and trade were structurally alike. Every estate had its military organization, sources of revenue, and administrative staff operating independently in times of peace and working in conjunction, not coordination, with each other in times of war. These estates were ruled by "tribal governments"--not "tribally controlled governments"; laws, rights, and the administration of justice were not standardized. They varied with person, ruling chief, and circumstance. Coercion was the language of the law, and law was "particularized." The distinction between public and private rights was not made. In tribally controlled governments, "tribe" is a part society, one of the many sociopolitical groupings that compete for power within "state" structures.

In the tribal society of Bahrain, which continued until the implementation of reforms, the ethnoreligious individuality of urban society or peasant village communities was suppressed. These formed a part of the economic and administrative structures of tribal estates, with as little interaction between them as possible. The urban Sunni population merged into the tribal organization of the estates and had not clear distinctiveness of their own. In the practice of Islamic law, the urban and the tribal Sunni were served by one jurist, irrespective of possible variation between them. Not that these variations did not exist; they did, but they were not recognized. Only rarely, however, did the tribesmen subject their conflicts and disagreements to the Islamic court, even in family affairs such as marriage, divorce, or inheritance. These were dealt with by tribal councils. The urban and rural Shi^Ca population, on the other hand, retained their social distinctiveness by following a different Islamic law (Ja^Cfari) and observing a different set of rituals. These were practiced and observed in private and were not brought into the open until the implementation of reforms. The tribal governments of Bahrain recognized the deliberations only of the Sunni qadi, and they used coercion wherever convenient to enforce his decisions.

After the implementation of reforms and the abolishment of the estate system, the boundaries between tribe, peasantry, and urban society

changed. The autonomy and self-sufficiency of estates gave way to a centralized form of tribal control--a shift that marked the end of "tribal society" and the rise of "tribalism" as a form of social organization. Although the tribes violently resisted the enforcement of reforms, it was also the tribally organized segment of society that came to control the bureaucracy and the specialized offices the reforms had created. The tribes who opposed the reforms left Bahrain for neighboring principalities; Al-Khalifa, who adapted themselves to the new authority system, continued to be in power--this time ruling through universalized laws and specialized offices.

As a form of social organization, the "tribalism" that emerged or continued after the rise of bureaucracy took on the following qualities: (a) exclusiveness and nonassimilative character of the social group; (b) preeminence of kinship as an instrument of corporation and distribution of wealth, power, and benefits; (c) alliances based on putative descent or marriage extending beyond the boundaries of the state; (d) collective control of the behavior of fellow tribesmen without reference to formally and publicly recognized offices; and (e) claims to legitimacy of rule on the basis of historically earned rights without resort to public delegation. I am using "tribalism" because I know of no other word that better summarizes the combination of these qualities. Besides, there may be little value in confining such a useful word as "tribe" to an evolutionary context.

These qualities are closely interrelated and reinforce each other. As exclusiveness is carried out through collective control of actions and behaviors, collective control in turn is reinforced by the policy of redistribution. Except for legitimacy of rule, which applies to the ruling family only, other qualities are shared in varying degrees by different tribal groupings, each according to its collective social status. The higher the status, the more exclusive the group; the more exclusive, the more collective control over individual actions and behaviors. Collective social status is measured by the size of the group, its control of resources and territory, and its ability to control actions and behaviors of individual members.

It must not be understood from this that tribal groups, at least in Bahrain, own property collectively; only Al-Khalifa do, and then in small quantities. Compared with property owned individually, the property owned collectively by Al-Khalifa is meager; it amounts to a small fraction

of the real estate left unclaimed by individual members during the cadastral survey of the twenties. The addition of one-third of the oil royalties to this "collective purse" in the thirties substantially enhanced or, better to say, necessitated, the policy of collective control of redistribution. Instituted in the twenties to deliberate on alienation of property owned by members of the ruling family, Al-Khalifa Committee continued to supervise the distribution of allowances and benefits. Headed by the ruler himself, the committee deliberates today on a wide variety of affairs related to Al-Khalifa actions and behaviors--these include marriage, divorce, debts, property, inheritance, distribution of benefits, or posts in government and public administration. In this way the ruling family controls employment, outmarriage for girls and to a lesser extent for boys, political careers, or alienation of property by family members.

Exclusiveness and collective control of actions and behaviors direct relationships and interactions inward rather than outward, continually reinforcing the nonassimilative character of the group. Social visits and marriages are the most obvious examples of this "inwardness." Compared with urban people or the peasantlike villagers, the tribal affiliates focus visits and marriages inside the group.¹ External visits or marriages are limited, limited to specific people, and have political implications. Within the tribal segment, those lower in status visit those who are higher in status; outside it, tribal affiliates are visited; they rarely visit others. The pattern of visiting with outsiders is carried out at all levels of society with particular attention to class origin. The urban poor visit the "tribal" poor, and the rich visit the rich.

In marriage the same tendencies can be observed. The tribal segment of society marries within the same descent group at a much higher rate than others--the range is between 96.8 and 76 percent, counting the marriages of both boys and girls. Such endogamy among the Shi^ca villagers amounts to only 28.7 percent. The percentage of inmarriages within the tribally organized groups at all levels is highest among the ruling family and lowest among their allies. The tendency is for the men of the dominant group to marry girls from allies who have a subservient position. The poor men in dominant tribal groups tend to marry more endogamously than the influential rich. This is in direct contrast to urban people and peasantlike villagers, in whom the tendency is reversed; the rich tend to marry more endogamously than the poor. According to our household

survey, the rich were those whose annual incomes exceeded U.S. \$12,500 and the poor were those whose annual incomes fell below U.S. \$4,000. The urban Sunni who have formal education above the intermediate level and whose annual income ranges between U.S. \$5,000 and \$10,000 have the highest percentage of exogamy, amounting to 63.8 percent of all marriages. They also have the highest percentage of educated and employed women.

Comparing Al-Khalifa inmarriages with their outmarriages reveals several interesting phenomena. While the restricted outmarriage for girls has not changed either way; outmarriage for boys has declined from 14.6 percent in the twenties to 3.2 percent at present. With this increasing tendency for inmarriage, a clear tendency for monogamy has taken place; it increased from 64.9 percent in the twenties to 92.4 percent at present. The modern style of life that emerged in the sixties and seventies has undoubtedly contributed to changing the rates of monogamy and polygyny, but the same argument cannot be said to explain the decline of outmarriage for boys. That has to be sought in the changing authority system.

The rise of bureaucracy and the institution of specialized offices affected outmarriages for boys in two ways: they gave the ruling family a more reliable instrument of intervention than political alliances sustained by outmarriages, and they enhanced its capacity to effectively control the actions and behaviors of individual members. With the institution of Bahraini courts, the state police, and later on the army, outmarriages as instruments for creating or sustaining political alliances within Bahrain have become redundant. The marriages contracted with outsiders have now shifted from tribal groups living in Bahrain to others living on mainland Arabia. Whereas the institution of specialized offices rendered outmarriages politically insignificant within Bahrain, it made them more significant outside the country. As it became increasingly exclusive through collective control of actions and behaviors, the ruling family dissociated itself from its previous internal allies, this weakened its position locally. The alliances with outsiders were meant to strengthen the family's grip over internal affairs while retaining its local exclusiveness. Task forces such as the riot squads have been recruited exclusively from tribal allies on the mainland. It appears that outmarriages between tribally organized groupings have the same political meaning as treaties between independent nations; they change and shift from one group to another depending upon the rise of new political circumstances.

Exclusiveness cuts both ways. While enhancing the prestige of a group, it isolates it from its immediate social setting. Not only does this isolation change the "boundary" between a given solidarity and the social groupings to which it previously related, but it alters the boundaries between these groupings themselves. The word "grouping" is used to emphasize the dynamic character of solidarities relating to each other in terms of political and economic change. In other words, just as the bureaucratic reforms of the twenties led to the exclusiveness of the ruling family, they likewise accelerated the process of urbanization among other tribal groupings living in Bahrain, created newly emerging urban Sunni masses, and reinforced the peculiarities of religious sects.

The standardized, uniform laws imposed on Bahrain in the twenties eliminated tribal autonomy and curtailed the tribesmen's freedom of operation in pearl production. The "particularity" of tribal law was checked; formally speaking, only one central authority emerged--the state. Consequently the tribal councils, as instruments of collective control of actions and behaviors, were weakened and sometimes destroyed. After the reforms, and with the exception of Al-Khalifa, no "tribal chief" of any consequence remained in Bahrain. Those who did remain were gradually transformed into urban notables--part of the merchant class. During this early process of transformation, the enlarged urban Sunni merchant class organized many protests and demonstrations requesting the "transfer of authorities to native regimes"--which meant the reinstitution of "tribal" authority.

While bureaucracy enhanced the ruling family's collective control of actions and behaviors of its members, it simultaneously weakened the authority of other tribal groupings, gradually pushing them to merge with urban society. In other words, the conditions that enhanced the processes of "retribalization" among the ruling family correspondingly strengthened the processes of "detrribalization" among other tribally organized groups. Outmarriages for girls is an interestingly valid index of the decline of "tribal authority" and merger into urban society. The two tribal groups I studied in depth show that outmarriages for girls increases when tribal authority--the collective control of actions and behaviors--declines.² In a group I studied, outmarriages for girls increased from a handful of cases before the implementation of reforms to 54 percent of all marriages among the new generations. Upon discovering this, my interviewee responded spontaneously, "it is finished," meaning that the "tribe" as an

authority system is destroyed. But as a "symbol of interaction" it will remain for a long time to come.

The emergence of a centralized state authority abolished the estate system, the 'imara, and the fidawi military organization built into them. The members of the ruling family living off this system became unemployed, but they were sustained by regular allowances granted them by the state. By contrast, the Sunni population called *bani khdair* that was previously recruited into tribal administration was left aside, to emerge within a decade or so as the urban Sunni segment of society. The institution of specialized offices and the initial employment of Indian workers simply reinforced the distinctive character of this urban category.

While abolishing the sovereignty of tribal settlements and "feudal" estates, the reforms recognized the autonomy of religious authorities--this enhanced the distinctiveness of the Sunni urban population. The urban or rural Shi^Ca, including the wazirs and the kikhdas, were already a distinct category by virtue of their religious affiliation. Served by a single Sunni qadi before the reforms, the urban Sunni population had three afterward; they were the three Abdul-Latifs, representing the Maliki, the Shafi^Ci, and the Hanbali Islamic laws. The first law was followed by the Gulf tribal groups, the second by the Sunni of Persian origin, and the third by the Sunni Arabs of Najdi origin. The ethno-religious distinctiveness of the urban Sunni population was suppressed in "tribal society."

These new formulations of the boundaries between tribe, urban society, and peasant village were based in Bahrain administration and government after the reforms of the 1920s. They emerged as a result of external intervention in the formal authority structure, not as a result of internal socioeconomic transformations. It would be theoretically interesting to know what social forms these new formulations would have taken had it not been for the development of oil in the thirties. It appears that the reforms destroyed "tribal authority" and instead strengthened ethnoreligious distinctiveness as exemplified by the social composition of Bahraini religious courts and the first municipal election in Manama, carried out in 1920 on the basis of ethnoreligious representation: Sunni Arabs, Shi^Ca Arabs, Sunni Persians, Shi^Ca Persians, Jews, and Indians.

The development of oil created new boundaries between groups. Unlike the reforms of the twenties, which changed the formal authority structure, the socioeconomic transformations born out of the oil age

changed the social bases of political power. The emerging political formulations focused internally on labor problems, religionism and modernistic tendencies, and externally on Arab nationalism and unity. With the change of issues, the political groupings relating to them changed. Instead of being based in traditional cleavages encompassing whole social, ethnic, or religious categories, the new formulations became *issue-oriented*, drawing upon various factions from different social categories, united by common political goals. Historically speaking, this phenomenon emerged during the popular uprising of the fifties and continued in modified form through the national election of 1973.

This does not mean that traditional cleavages have been entirely modified and the relationships between them altered; they have not. Yet within these cleavages two "new," not "modern," political forces based in voluntary clubs and religious centers emerged, the first manipulating modernistic ideologies and the second religious dogma. The modernists recruit from students, teachers, salaried labor, skilled labor, civil employees, or other occupations rooted in modern technology; the religionists recruit from craftsmen, tradesmen, shopkeepers, petty traders, or other occupations rooted in the traditional economy. Among the urban Sunni population, the modernists lean toward Arab nationalistic movements; among the Shi^ca they tend toward international "leftist" ideologies. This difference in the social base must not be exaggerated. Just as Arab nationalism in recent years has taken on leftist ideology, the ideological left has adopted "national" causes. In the parliament of 1973-75, they were combined in one bloc speaking the same language.

The religionists in turn are divided between the Sunni and the Shi^ca. The Sunni religious elements, organized in informal "reading circles" (*qira'at*), are in agreement with the policy of government and the ideological structure of the state. In Bahrain--and this can be generalized to the Gulf and Arabia--"tribalism" as a form of social organization and religionism as a political force reinforce each other. The religionists' strongest support is found among the tribally organized segment of society. The Shi^ca religionists, on the other hand, organized in funeral houses, reject the policy of government and the entire structure of the state; because of this, they are potential allies of the "leftists" whose ideology they oppose. Political alliance between them takes place in crises, as happened in 1954-56 and in 1975 in parliament.

When these two ideologically opposed polarities unite, they grow

strong and threaten the regime. Yet the inherent contradictions between them in ideology and mode of organization, and the way they are mobilized for action through informal social networks based in friendship, colleagueship, or student-teacher relationships, make it difficult for them to sustain an organized and disciplined opposition for a longer time. The longer they stand in unity, the weaker they grow politically--a phenomenon that allows the regime to take advantage of these contradictions and reassert its supremacy.

The rise of new political boundaries based on labor problems and demands and on Arab nationalism and unity created a contravening force focusing on the policy of free market and economy, sovereignty of the island, and lack of a program of economic planning and social development. This contravening force found support in the tribally organized segment of society, the urban population of immediate "tribal" (symbol) background, and in the growing class of merchants and free enterprisers that cuts across ethnic, social, and religious groups. The word "symbol" is intended to show that many who claim to be "tribal" are no longer tribally organized by the criteria mentioned earlier. Their marriage patterns, visitations, and collective control of resources, behaviors, or actions fit urban practices more than tribal customs. They were "tribally organized" in the immediate past, two or three generations ago, but they have lost their "exclusiveness" to the ever growing urban society. However, the "tribalism" they have lost is still important as a symbol of interaction affecting employment and political alignment. They are recruited into the army and special security forces on account of their tribal background, working as allies of the ruling family. The growing urban society seems to have prompted the tribally organized and those of immediate tribal origin to emerge as a distinct broad segment (*qabili*) socially opposed to the rest of society (*khdairi*). At no time in the history of Bahrain were these tribally based groups treated in this collective fashion, as they are today.

The socioeconomic transformations that emerged after the development of oil changed the boundaries between tribe, peasantry, and urban society as well as between various solidarities within each of these broad social divisions. Instituted in 1973, the parliament did not simply mobilize people politically through general elections but also led to the formation of broad political blocs articulating varied local interests at higher levels. The banning of political parties and labor unions, meant to

prevent the rise of broad countrywide political formulations, became, through the institution of the parliament, a self-defeating policy. Chapter 8 shows how voluntary clubs and funeral houses began to merge after the rise of broad political blocs in parliament. This is a clear instance of change in structures and laws generating corollary changes in political processes. After the institution of the parliament, four political formulations appeared: (a) the tribally based groupings headed by the ruling family, (b) the Shi^Ca religionists led by formal religious authorities, (c) the underground political parties based in Arab nationalist movements outside the island, and (d) the merchant-entrepreneurial class united informally by interests, not by lasting political commitments. The first two formulations, bound by religion and the exclusiveness of social groups, cut across "class" distinctions; the last two, bound by class, cut across ethnic and religious distinctions. While political parties recruit from the less privileged, the merchant class recruits from the more privileged.

These formulations are not static phenomena; they change while interacting with each other over rising political issues. In recent years the Shi^Ca religionists have united with party affiliates in one political front opposing the tribally controlled regime. They unite while remaining ideologically opposed. The religionists oppose the party affiliates on two grounds, their "modernistic" tendencies and their seeking wider political formulas based in Arab nationalism and unity. The religionists see in "modernism" an attempt to undermine their authority locally, and in Arab nationalism they see a threat to the status of the Shi^Ca minority in the Gulf and Arabia--the majority being Sunni. But in recruiting from the less privileged, the religionists, like the party affiliates, support the right of labor to better salaries, wages, and working conditions. Their opposition to "modernistic" tendencies and Arab nationalism and unity indirectly reinforces the position of the ruling family. The Shi^Ca religionists oppose the regime because of its traditional, sectarian principles and oppose the regime's opponents because of their "modernistic" claims.

The merchant entrepreneurial class desires a free market economy with minimal control and planning. Its interests are best served by continuous stability; because of this, it lends unilateral support to the regime, whatever regime, in power. "Unilateral" because there is no formal organization that brings members of this class together, and they are not

recruited by political parties--nor do they seek to be. They "have ideas, not political commitments," as one interviewee put it. Their ideas sway between the extreme left and the extreme right, which is best described by the phrase "Independent Middle." With the increase in oil production and prices and the influx of foreign labor and companies, the local merchant-entrepreneurial class has been steadily increasing. Many skilled technicians and professional people are abandoning their careers in favor of more profitable work in commerce, trade, transactional activities, or civil employment. The sheer numerical growth of this class, which has no political "commitments," has a direct bearing on the power balance in the country. It is creating an expanding sociopolitical force favoring stability and the status quo; this restricts the capacity of the opposition for political maneuvers.

The status quo refers to the controversial issues of the tribally controlled regimes as opposed to public representation, the right of labor to unionize, and Bahraini sovereignty as opposed to Arab nationalism and unity. On these issues members of the merchant-entrepreneurial class implicitly side with the ruling family; wanting stability, they always explicitly play the role of "go-betweens" or "mediators" whenever irreconcilable conflicts arise between the government and the opposition, however composed. The merchant-entrepreneurial class recognizes in principle the economic value of a larger market, but it fears the "leftist" tendencies of Arab nationalism. In the context of the Gulf, supporting the "left" means supporting the right of labor to unionize, the right of women to education, freedom of choice and employment, the institution of self-governing bodies and public representation, standardization of law, the elimination of state allowances to members of the ruling families, assimilation of Arab foreign labor, and merger between the Gulf states as a prelude to Arab unity.

Adapted to the political setting in Bahrain and the Gulf, the "platform" the Arab nationalists stand for is categorically opposed to the ideological structure of tribally controlled governments. In this sense Arab nationalism constitutes local opposition to the governing regimes. Examined carefully, their "political platforms" are seen to oppose the qualities of "tribalism" mentioned earlier. Public representation and standardization of law eventually destroy the exclusiveness and nonassimilative character of the tribal group and the collective control of actions and behaviors. The elimination of state allowances limits the (tribal)

group's capacity for redistribution and subsequently weakens its corporate actions and deliberations. The rights of women to education, freedom of choice, and employment undermine the authority of the religiously oriented people who form directly, as with the Sunni, or indirectly, as with the Shi'a, the main concentrations of power supporting the tribally controlled regimes. Championing the "rights of women" mixed with the right of labor to unionize, earns the nationalist a broader base of support, cutting across ethnoreligious divisions as well as sex. By the same token, the merger of the small, independent states of the Gulf and the assimilation of Arab foreign labor create new formulations that will eventually work against "tribal" control of government and monopoly of power.

The External Context

Of the four formulations mentioned earlier, two political groupings relate to power blocs outside Bahrain--the ruling family and the political parties. The first maintains these external links through traditional alliances based on putative shared descent³ or marriage, continuously reinforced by "exchange of gifts," called the "custom" (*ʿada*); the second maintains them through organized parties operating underground in the Gulf and Arabia. Tribal alliances are meant to strengthen the autonomy of groups; they are not intended to cause the merger of groups or "states." By contrast, the ideology of political parties based in pan-Arab movements is to merge these states into a larger structure. If carried out, this merger will weaken the position of the present ruling families.

The power of the ruling families is adapted to small states and could not possibly operate in the same capacity in larger political settings. The "metrocommunity" structure of these states and the intimate knowledge the ruling families have of people and of their histories, occupational careers, and political outlooks are manipulated to prevent the spread of discontent and dissatisfaction. The highly placed Al-Khalifa shaikhs with whom I worked knew practically every family in Bahrain, with its history, size, and socioeconomic status. Through this knowledge of people and families, a variety of favors, gifts, and government posts are redistributed in order to marshal support and consolidate the authority of the regime. "Bureaucratic proliferation" after independence was partly due to the use of civil employment as a means of appeasement and of seeking support. This intimate knowledge, strengthened by favors and gifts, creates an atmosphere of reconciliation unattainable in a larger setting.

On the basis of this knowledge of people, the ruling families in the Gulf and Arabia develop built-in "points of mediation" that reach a variety of political forces, new or old, modern or traditional. In Bahrain, for example, one of the ruler's brothers has the reputation of "talking" to the "modernists" and the "freedom fighters," the ruler's eldest son "talks" to the youth recruited in cultural and sports clubs, and a number of close relatives, mostly brothers and cousins, mediate between the ruler and many religious circles. These "points of mediation" link varied loci of power to the regime, continuously widening its popular base--the "support." The regime seeks consensus through this orchestrallike division of roles, and weakens opposition by banning political parties and labor unions, which results in the proliferation and fragmentation of clubs and funeral houses. The parliament of 1975 helped organize opposition in three broad, countrywide blocs, thus altering the power balance to the disadvantage of the ruling family--hence its dissolution.

The policy of merger and assimilation of foreign labor does not threaten the Bahraini regime only; it leaves all the ruling families in the Gulf and Arabia off balance. Not only does it bring into the political scene traditionally opposed tribal groupings; it also creates new political formulations working against these families. Accustomed to dealing with rising issues through intimate relations, the ruling families find it difficult to adjust to an enlarged polity without destroying their own exclusiveness. None of the ruling families in the Gulf today has a historic claim to all the states composing it; never was there a large-scale political setting centrally controlled by a single government. A large-scale political entity requires the institution of a military organization and a civil bureaucracy of comparable magnitude--a phenomenon that will lead to the professionalization of both. To professionalize the military and the bureaucracy necessitates "national" as opposed to "tribal" recruitment, thus altering tribal authority and the exclusive character of the group.

Evidently, as long as the tribally controlled regimes remain in power, merger and the assimilation of foreign labor are unlikely. Such regimes, I believe, will continue to seek alliances with each other and with the outside world to reinforce their authority, each in its own small, independent state.

The political decision to remain small and independent has economic repercussions, for it means that long-range, job-generating development

projects will have to await the rise of new political outlooks. These projects create a continuously stable labor force and therefore increase the intensity of labor consciousness and labor's capacity for collective bargaining. Combined with nationalistic ideologies and party organizations, this consciousness presents a serious challenge to existing regimes. From the point of view of the ruling families, investment in small-scale projects--in construction, housing, public services, and welfare--is the least challenging to their authority and power. Nevertheless, it is challenging. Put differently, it is a self-defeating policy for the tribally controlled regimes to use the oil capital locally in long-range investment projects. Here lies the dilemma. If oil capital is invested in long-range development, it will eventually create new political formulations altering the authority-power system to the disadvantage of the ruling families. If the capital is not so invested, the "oil rush" may have the same outcome as the "gold rush"; the civilization built upon it will sink into oblivion once the "black gold" has vanished. In which direction Bahrain and the Gulf will move is not entirely a local or regional issue. The future of oil, and with it the authority system, is tied economically and politically to the larger industrial world as well.

Appendix A: The Anatomy of Human Settlements

This appendix covers the range of human settlements in Bahrain, with emphasis on their historical growth and decline and their ethnic, religious, and social origins. This is not the place to discuss every settlement (for data on individual settlements see Taqi 1970, pp. 67-104) with its growth and decline and the various historical and economic forces and processes of urbanization and urbanism that have acted upon it; I will simply provide a general social anatomy of these settlements.

According to the national census of 1971, there were eight cities and towns and fifty-three village settlements in Bahrain. The criteria by which the national census (1971, pp. 161-62) differentiates between urban and rural, city, town, or village, are not clear. Sitra, a small island composed of seven small villages and hamlets, is classified in the census as a town. Jidd Hafs is also classified as a town, whereas in reality it is a large "village" that the development of oil turned into a dormitory community. Awali, which is essentially a working camp of 948 persons of Western origin, is lumped in the same category with Manama, which numbers 88,785 persons and has a clear cosmopolitan character. Rural, urban, city, town, and village are not clear-cut social categories when applied to Bahraini society today--these are historical traditions and must be understood in this context. For lack of better words, however, I will use these terms to refer to particular villages, towns, or cities or to particular categories of people living in them.

Based upon historical traditions, combined with present-day ethnic and religious composition and social origins, the human settlements in Bahrain are divided into five types: cosmopolitan cities, tribal cities or towns, dormitory communities with pearl diving traditions, dormitory communities with palm cultivation traditions, and suburban communities.

This typology is meant to summarize variation in social structure and response to change and modernity.

The cosmopolitan type is represented by Manama city, which houses about half the population. It has grown in recent years to become a microcosm of Bahraini society, embodying the heterogeneous, cosmopolitan qualities of the country. Outside Manama, settlements tend to be less heterogeneous and more differentiated ethnically, religiously, socially, and economically. Even Isa Town, constructed about nine years ago to accomodate different social classes and religious sects, still is more homogeneous and less differentiated than Manama. True, there live in Isa Town the poor and the rich, the Sunni and the Shi^ca, but all are Bahrainis bound by the same cultural tradition. In addition to these, there live in Manama the Persian and the Indian, the Pakistani and the Baluchi, the Omani and the Yemeni, the Britisher and the American. Many a Britisher or American who lives in Awali, about twenty kilometers from Manama, carries on steady interaction with the capital city culturally, socially, and economically.

Aside from the Persians who strike traditional roots in Bahrain and who cluster in two separate quarters of Manama (al-Hura and al-Ajam), and the Americans and the British who live in Awali, none of the other ethnic groups concentrate in specific quarters or neighborhoods. The Omani, the Baluchi, the Indian, and the Pakistani live in scattered apartment houses, old hawshes (one- or two-floor houses with open-air courtyards in the middle surrounded by series of multipurpose rooms with the back walls turned to the streets), adobes, shanties built of wood or the few *barastis* (huts made of palm reeds) left on the outskirts of the city; each according to his means and status. Those who earn more than U.S. \$400 a month live in respectable houses. The jobs they hold tend to be shifting and transitory, subject to the fluctuations of the market and the moods of the employer.

Since the twenties, Manama has become the cultural, educational, administrative, and commercial center of Bahrain. In it one finds modern bookstores, restaurants, hotels, movie theaters, a large number of elementary and secondary schools, the Teachers' Training Collage, almost all the ministerial and government offices, big firms and international companies, the port, the banks, supermarkets, specialized traditional markets, even houses of prostitution. Providing a wide variety of services and facilities, the city grew to engulf several neighboring "villages" or hamlets: Ras-Rumman, al-Hura, al-Khidr, and part of al-Qudaibiyah from the north;

al-Saqiyah, al-Ghrayfa, al-Adiyah, al-Mahuz, al-Jufair, Umm al-Hasam from the east; al-Quful, al-Zinj, al-Na^cim, and al-Salihyah from the south. From the west the city has been expanding into the sea through several stages of land reclamation. In the 1920s the seashore of Manama reached inland as far as Bab al-Bahrain Street on Al-Khalifa Road. The old and the new sections of the city could roughly be detected--at least until 1975 when this research was conducted--by plotting the spread of the old-style, spacious hawshes built of brick and stone with wind towers at the top. The area that contains these hawshes marks the old sections of the city; the area that spreads beyond them marks the new sections. In 1886 William Palgrave described these houses:

Mixed with these meaner adobes, or separate from them, and forming distinct quarters of the town, are large houses of brick and stone, constructed in what, to save circumlocution, I shall call the Persian style of architecture; they are often alike, elegant and spacious, with ogival arches, balconies, terraces, porticoes, and latticed windows; here dwell the nobler and wealthier inhabitants, merchants, proprietors, and men of government. [Palgrave 1866, p. 209]

The name of a quarter or neighborhood may indicate roughly the date of its construction. Old quarters or neighborhoods are named to suggest an urban craft or a public utility or may carry the name of a prominent urban family. Makharqa (the piercers) is where craftsmen used to pierce natural pearls to form necklaces; al-Hammam (bath) is where public baths were situated; al-Husaini (derived from Imam Husain) is where a cluster of houses and property had been religiously endowed to Husain; Fariq al-Fadil or Kanu is where prominent merchants belonging to these families have lived. By contrast, the names of the new sections connote physical properties or agricultural activities. Umm al-Hasam (the mother of pebbles), for example, connotes an abundance of sea pebbles in this locality. 'Umm means mother in Arabic but is used figuratively to connote abundance. Al-Saqiyah means a palm grove irrigated with oxen; Gharaifah, one irrigated by carrying water in pails. Ras-Rumman (cape of pomegranate) is the place that was once famous for pomegranate trees; al-Quful (the return) was the name of a cistern filled by the surplus water of several springs from which the poor inhabitants of Manama used to procure water--today it is a rich suburban settlement.

The tribal city or town is best represented today by Rifa al-Gharbi, where the ruler of Bahrain lives, and by its sister town Rifa al-Sharqi; on pure historical grounds it is possible to include in this category the

city of Muharraq as well. The two Rifas are sister towns situated about fifteen kilometers to the south of Manama on a low, narrow plateau overlooking the central depression of the island. These towns have been the traditional strongholds of Al-Khalifa and their allies of the Utub tribes since the invasion of Bahrain in 1783. Close to the Qatari coast, which remained under Al-Khalifa domination until the second half of the nineteenth century, the two Rifas offered other obvious advantages. The best freshwater springs in the country, Hanaini and Umm Ghuwifa, are in Rifa al-Sharqi and in al-Gharbi. The two towns are close to the narrow but important pastureland of Bahrain, where Al-Khalifa and their allies kept their horses and camels, far from the malaria-infested areas in the palm groves. Compared with other settlements in the country, they are reputed to have relatively dry, clean, fresh air. The residence of the Al-Khalifa ruler and of his father before him in Rifa attracted to these towns a large number of other family members, their allies of tribal origin, and a few of the rich merchants of Manama. Rifa today is the seat of power, controlling government and the military.

Muharraq is the second largest city in Bahrain, housing a population of 37,732 (national census 1971, p. 161). It is much less socially heterogeneous than Manama. Only a fraction of Shi^ca Arabs live there, in the two adjacent streets of Fariq al-Hayayich (the weavers) and al-Sagha (the goldsmiths); the rest of the population are largely Sunni Arabs of nontribal origin. Until the 1930s Muharraq had been the citadel of "tribalism" and the center of political power in Bahrain; that was the time when the Al-Khalifa ruler, his entourage, a large part of his family and their allies were living there. The fifteen quarters of Muharraq then were named after Arab tribes or segments of tribes.

Several factors combined to eliminate the strong tribal presence in Muharraq and reduce its importance politically, economically, and demographically. These were the decline of the pearl industry in the mid-thirties, the shift of the ruler's residence to Manama, Skhair, and then Rifa, the construction of the oil refinery on the eastern shore of the island, the gradual growth of Manama to become the commercial, industrial, and administrative center, and the construction of public housing projects in Isa Town. While the population of Manama grew from 25,000 in 1908 (Lorimer 1970a, p. 1160) to 88,785 in 1971 (the national census of 1971), the population of Muharraq, by contrast, grew from 20,000 (Lorimer 1970a, p. 1270) to only 37,732. This slow rate of growth is caused not simply by

a demographic differential, but by the shifting sociopolitical and economic bases of the city.

Gradual migration of people and their resettlement elsewhere, plus the lack of public or private investments in the city, has drastically altered Muharraq's social composition. Not only does it lack foreign ethnic groups, it has become the only city with a large urban Sunni population belonging to the lower and lower-middle salaried income categories. In a household survey carried out in two streets cutting across Muharraq from north to south, more than 80 percent of this city's sample were found to work in salaried skilled labor and services, security forces, or in salaried unskilled labor and services. (For exact careers included in these occupational categories, see Appendix E.) With this social and ethnic composition, Muharraq has been a bastion for pan-Arab, pan-Islamic movements; organized protests and rebellions against national or international policies have always found respectable following in this city.

It is my impression that should the Al-Khalifa ruler and his allies abandon Rifa, the two sister towns would soon turn into another Muharraq, with a nontribal Sunni population belonging to the lower or lower middle income categories, and would likely develop the same political tendencies as Muharraq. In the absence of a "tribal" ruler, many of his retinue and allies will be absorbed, as happened in Muharraq, into the mass of the Sunni urban population. The processes of assimilation into urban society will increase or decrease proportionally with the strength or weakness of tribal authority. "Tribe" or "tribal" in the context of Bahrain is a form of social organization that changes with the changing socioeconomic conditions of society.

Dormitory communities with either pearl diving or palm cultivation traditions are those settlements whose inhabitants now earn their livelihood by working outside their village of residence. In the household survey carried out in six such communities, only 8.8 to 26.4 percent of the wage earners were found to work where they resided. The highest percentage (26.4) of noncommuters was found in Budayya, where a number of workers were employed as unskilled laborers on the neighboring public demonstration farm or as fishermen in the nearby sea. The lowest percentage (8.8) was found in Shaharakkan, the remotest Shi'a village in the household survey, far from the capital city of Manama and from the two major industrial projects of BAPCO and ALBA, the aluminum smelter. The

point is that even in Shaharakkan 91.2 percent of the total work force commutes.

The dormitory communities with pearl diving tradition include several settlements along the coastline. They include al-Hidd, Galali, Busaitin, Halat al-Na^Cim, and Halat al-Suluta on Muharraq Island; Budayya, Zallaq, Jau, and Askar on Manama Island (see map 1). Originally these were "tribal" domains, Sunni Arabs affiliated to larger groups on the mainland. The "tribal" in Bahrain almost always means Sunni Arabs who have alliances or share kinship relations with other groups living on the mainland, either in the Gulf region or farther in the interior of Arabia or Iraq. The introduction of Bahrain reforms in the twenties, the decline of pearl production in the thirties, and the development of oil in the thirties and forties together changed the entire social structure of these settlements.

Groups originally from the heart of Arabia, the Dawasir of Budayya and Zallaq, for example, emigrated en mass in 1923 to al-Dammam on the eastern coast of Saudi Arabia, after continual disagreements with British and local authorities on the implementation of Bahrain reforms. Only a small fraction of them returned the next year to live in Budayya. The Al-Na^Cim and many other tribal groupings of Bani Yas origin emigrated from Bahrain and settled in other Gulf principalities when better opportunities opened for them there. As a result, settlements like Halat al-Na^Cim have virtually become ghost towns. Once the chief pearl diving center in Bahrain, boasting a little fewer than two hundred pearl boats and a population of about eight thousand (British Admiralty 1915, p. 324), al-Hidd was deserted by a larger number of its inhabitants after the decline of the pearl industry. They belonged mostly to the Sadah or Bani Yas tribes who settled in Qatar or other principalities of the Gulf. With no cultivation or crafts, the town gradually sank into a dormitory community with 5,269 residents with the same occupational pattern and ethnoreligious composition as Muharraq.

Except for al-Hidd, which houses the Sunni Arabs of tribal, urban, or Hawala origin, the dormitory communities with pearl diving traditions are associated with the remnants of specific tribal groups who until recently were engaged in pearl production. Galali was associated with Al-Manna^Ci and Al-Jawdar tribal groups; Budayya with Al-Dawasir; Zallaq with Al-Dawasir, Al-BuRmai^Ch, and Al-Ghatam; al-Hidd with Al-Mussallam and Al-Sabah; Askar with Al-Bu^CAynain; Jau with Al-BuRmai^Ch. Aside from the military who tend to recruit their soldiers and officers from this segment

of the population, the occupational pattern in these dormitory communities is not substantially different from that of Muharraq, mentioned earlier.

The dormitory communities with palm cultivation include a whole series of Shi^ca villages scattered over the islands of Bahrain (see map 1). This does not mean that all the Shi^ca of Bahrain were cultivators; rather, all cultivators were Shi^ca. Among the Shi^ca were the cultivator, the craftsman, the tradesman, the fisherman, the pearl merchant, the petty merchant, the wholesale merchant, the theologian, and the jurist. Families whose names indicate a craft or a trade, such as weaver, smith, tailor, carpenter, tinner, are almost always Shi^ca by religion.

The communities with palm cultivation tradition can be roughly divided into two broad categories, with or without specialized crafts. The first includes Sitra, famous for matting made of palm leaves or branches, Diraz and Bani-Jamra for textiles, Ali for pottery and lime, Busaibi and Sanabis for embroidery, Jidd Hafs for drugs made of palm tree flowers, pollen, and buds. These communities are larger in area and population and have a higher rate of private landholders than other Shi^ca villages that subsisted on palm cultivation only. The combination of craftwork and private landholding has earned them social prominence throughout history; many political leaders, men of letters, theologians, and jurists, who have attained fame and reputation in Bahrain and in the Shi^ca world at large came from these settlements.

With the opening of new economic opportunities, communities with palm cultivation tradition, like those with pearl diving tradition, gave up their old occupations in favor of new jobs. Less than 1 percent of the work force in our household survey of Bahrain seems to be still employed in palm or any kind of cultivation. About 85 percent of the working population in these settlements is employed in salaried unskilled labor and services, and to a much lesser extent in salaried or unsalaried skilled labor and services. Employment in the oil market gradually diminished the quality of palm cultivation, put an end to pearl diving, created a rather strong labor movement, and turned the peasant villages once based on subsistence economy into dormitory communities economically dependent upon larger national and regional markets.

The suburban community is best represented in Isa Town and in many housing projects constructed east and south of Manama, including al-Quful, Mahuz, Salmaniyah, Adliyah, and Umm al-Hasam. Isa Town, with about 7,501 residents was constructed by government funds to provide housing for a

wide variety of income groups. There are six different types of houses, ranging from a two room house to a villa of five rooms with a spacious garden; the prices vary between U.S. \$4,000 and \$32,000. To be officially granted a house, a candidate had to be of Bahrain origin for two or more generations and pay for it either in toto or by interest-free installments over fifteen years. At the first anniversary of Bahraini independence in 1971, the ruler Shaikh Isa bin Salman issued a decree bestowing a gift of about U.S. \$5,000 on every person who owned a house in Isa Town; accordingly, many residents became owners of their houses.

The housing projects around Manama share with Isa Town two suburban characteristics--the lack of neighborhoods bound by lasting reciprocal social relationships and the high rate of commuters, which amounts to about 93 percent in Isa Town and about 98 percent in the housing project of al-Quful. Aside from these, the two subtypes of settlements are considerably different socially. While Isa Town houses the poor and the rich, the Sunni and the Shi^ca, the housing projects around Manama are mixed religiously, but not economically. They accomodate the affluent segment of society, mostly rich merchants, entrepreneurs, or high civil employees. Yet, within these rich housing projects, nucleated "village" settlements with cultivation tradition continue almost undisturbed, retaining their social and, to a much lesser extent, physical characteristics.

Appendix B: Methodological Notes

This book uses two major sources of data: historical records and official documents, and field research methods, including in-depth interviews and general surveys. After a year of fieldwork (1974-75) in Bahrain, I spent about three months in London reading the historical records on Bahrain, which are kept in the India Library Office, Orbit House, 97 Blackfair Road. These records were classified under three major headings: Administration Reports submitted between 1875 and 1926; L/P&S/10 subject files that cover political and secret letters submitted by various British colonial officers who had served in the Gulf since the eighteenth century; and R/15 records of the Residency at Bushire. The Administration Annual Reports between 1926 and 1974 were checked in Bahrain, where they are available in the Cabinet Office. Data on land tenure, palm cultivation contracts, marriage and divorce records, construction licenses, clubs, and voluntary associations were checked in their proper offices or departments. Most of these data were coded and cross-tabulated through the computer at the American University of Beirut.

I started my field research on Bahrain by drawing a social map of the country and then constructing a typology of human settlements (see Appendix A). On the basis of this typology, derived from historical tradition and variation in social organization and ethnic composition, I (with the help of several assistants) carried out a comprehensive household survey in a sample of fifteen localities scattered over the country (see map 1). The survey was meant to measure the socioeconomic variations and the discrepancies between social and ethnic groups that resulted from the development of oil. Within each locality, the residents of whole quarters, streets, or villages were interviewed according to the questionnaire in Appendix C. The number of households interviewed in 57 each locality varied between 49 and 169, the total being 1,249 households.

In Manama, the cosmopolitan city, four quarters were selected for survey: Fariq al-Makharqa, representing the old Shi^Ca quarter, Fariq al-Awadiyah, representing the old Hawala quarter, Fariq al-Fadil, representing the old Sunni Arab quarter, and al-Hura, representing the new religiously and ethnically mixed neighborhood reputed to have a heavy concentration of labor.

In Muharraq, the survey was carried out in a long street cutting across the city from north to south, passing through rich and poor quarters alike; this was in addition to Fariq al-Hayayich, an old community of Shi^Ca Arabs. Additionally, Galali in Muharraq Island and Budayya in Manama Island were selected to represent the dormitory communities with pearl diving tradition. Kharijiyah in Sitra Island, al-Daih in Jidd Hafs, Shaharakkan in the south, Ali in the center, and Mahuz, which has recently been overwhelmed by the suburban growth around Manama, were selected to represent the dormitory communities with palm cultivation tradition. Likewise, samples drawn from Isa Town, constructed by public funds, and from al-Quful, the housing project around Manama, were selected to represent the suburban settlement. The questionnaire data were then coded and cross-tabulated with the use of the computer at the American University of Beirut. Many of the findings of this general survey are discussed in detail in chapter 7, on oil and socioeconomic transformation.

Appendix C: Household Survey in Bahrain

1. Name of community
2. Type of house
3. Number and type of rooms
4. Specialized rooms
5. Ownership pattern
6. Nationality
7. Social affiliation
8. Number of people living in the house
9. Number of families living in the household
10. If one nuclear family, then specify
11. If two nuclear families, then specify
12. If three nuclear families, then specify
13. If four or more nuclear families, then specify
14. Number of dependents in the household, excluding children and wives
15. Relationship between dependents and wage earner (or oldest wage earner)
16. Number of wage earners in the household
17. Gross family income in the household
18. Kinship position of first wage earner (beginning with the oldest in marriage)
19. Date of birth of first wage earner
20. Level of education of first wage earner
21. Occupation of first wage earner
22. Previous occupation of first wage earner
23. Place of work of first wage earner
24. Name of employer of first wage earner
25. Income of first wage earner
26. Sources of income of first wage earner

27. Total number of children in first wage earner's family
28. Number of children who are wage earners
29. Number of children who are below fourteen years of age and do not work
30. Number of children who are above fourteen years of age and do not work
31. Number and sex of dependent children above fourteen years
32. Educational status of dependent daughters (or sisters)
33. Educational status of dependent sons (or brothers)
34. Number of wives the husband has at present
35. Relation of first wife to husband
36. Relation of second wife to husband
37. Date of birth of first wife
38. Date of birth of second wife
39. Date of marriage of first wife
40. Date of marriage of second wife
41. Marital status of first wife before marriage
42. Marital status of second wife before marriage
43. Amount of dower paid for first wife
44. Amount of dower paid for second wife
45. Amount of the dower paid immediately for first wife
46. Amount of the dower paid immediately for second wife
47. Level of education of first wife
48. Level of education of second wife
49. Place of residence of first wife
50. Place of residence of second wife
51. Kinship relation of wife to divorced husband
52. Gap in years between wife's first divorce and remarriage
53. Number of wives husband has divorced
54. Kinship relation of husband to first divorced wife
55. Gap in years between husband's first divorce and remarriage
56. Kinship relation of husband to second divorced wife
57. Gap in years between husband's second divorce and remarriage
58. Occupation husband desires for a son
59. Occupation husband desires for a daughter
60. Occupation wife desires for a son
61. Occupation wife desires for a daughter
62. Occupation husband expects son to actually have

- 63. Occupation husband expects daughter to actually have
- 64. Occupation wife expects son to actually have
- 65. Occupation wife expects daughter to actually have
- 66. Place of residence of dependents

Items 18-66 repeated for second wage earner or for second family of a joint household even though it has no wage earner

Items 18-66 repeated for third wage earner or for third family of a joint household even though it has no wage earner

Items 18-66 repeated for fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh wage earner or family of a joint household

in Bahraini Villages

**Name of Successive Wazirs in Chronological
Order up to the Implementation of Reforms**

Hajj Husain Al-Mruh, Hajj Ali bin Hajj

Al-Abbass, Hajj Ali bin Yahya al-Wazir

Yusuf bin Ya^Cqub

al-Hajj Ahmad al-Jawkam

Hajj Ali bin Fadi

Abdullah Shamlan

Hajj Mahfudh bin Hujair, followed by his
son Abdul-Aziz

Hajj Yusuf bin Rustum

Hajj Ibrahim bin Tamir

Yusuf Muhammad Ali

Hajj Muhammad al-Farsani, Hajj Hasan Abu-
Hasan

Mansur bin Ayyad

Hajj Muhammad bin Abdul-Rida

Hajj Ahmad bin Himadi, Hajj Ahmad bin Radi

Abdul-Aziz Abdul-Rasul al-Saibi^Ci

Hajj Ali bin Qbal

Muhammad bin Ali

Hajj Ali bin Abbass

Sayyid Hashim, Sayyid Husain

Ali bin Ahmad

Ahmad al-Mi^Craj

Yahya bin Fatar

Qasim bin Khamis

Name of Village	Name of Successive Wazirs in Chronological Order up to the Implementation of Reforms
Salambad	Abu Abbud, followed by his son Abdullah
Samahij	Ahmad al-Mulla
Sanad	Muhammad bin Id, followed by his son Id bin Muhammad
Sar	Ahmad al-Umrn
Shaharakkan	Hasan bin Khamis
Sitra	Hajj Hasan bin Marzuq, Hajj Ahmad bin Radi, Ali bin Hasan, Hajj Hasan bin Marzuq
Tubli	Hajj Ali bin Muftah, Hajj Musa bin Ali, Sayyid Bishr, Sayyid Muhammad, Hajj Ali bin Aman

Appendix E: Occupational Categories

1. Professions: medical doctors, engineers, lawyers, pharmacists
2. Entrepreneurs and merchants: wholesale merchants, contractors, proprietors, agents of foreign manufacturing companies, industrialists
3. Salaried managers: heads of departments, superintendents, directors of large offices
4. Salaried and skilled laborers and servicemen: technicians, electricians, auto mechanics, salesmen, nurses
5. Tradesmen: sailors, bakers, carpenters, fishermen, painters, barbers, tailors, cooks, butchers, etc.
6. Salaried and unskilled laborers and servicemen: gardeners, sweepers, porters, diggers, messengers
7. Unsalariated and unskilled laborers and servicemen: wage laborers, car washers, beggars, concierges

Notes

Chapter 1

1. Bahrain is a small island, or technically a series of islands, with about 240,000 persons inhabiting the northern half of the country in eight cities or towns and fifty-three village settlements. A village settlement may include more than one nuclear village or hamlet. The central and southern parts of the island lack freshwater springs, which has historically discouraged human settlement there (see map 1). The most visible features of the central part are the numerous "tumuli"--ancient burials--that link Bahrain to the Babylonian tradition (Bibby 1970). The southern part, once famous for wild game, is used for grazing.

2. There are all kinds of esoteric theories about the historical origin of the Shi'a: Harrison (1924, p. 29) says they are "semi-Persian," Hay (1959, p. 91) identifies them as "Arabs without pedigree"; James Belgrave believes they are descendants of the Arabs who fled Iraq after they were captured by Nebuchadnezzar (1973, p. 10); Charles Belgrave claims they are the descendants of the Jewish population who lived in the Gulf before the rise of Islam (1972, p. 148). There is no historical evidence to support any of these contentions. The Shi'a are so varied physically and have such a wide range of linguistic peculiarities that they could not possibly be as *historically* homogeneous as they think they are. More likely they are the original Bahraini "pot" into which the human relics of invasions and conquests have melted.

Chapter 2

1. In his handwritten manuscript on Bahrain, Muhammad al-Tajir (n.d.) mentions that the Portuguese introduced new techniques in pearl diving and in agriculture. Unless we analyze the Portuguese records on this era, we cannot tell whether they actually did.

2. This was Lancaster's expedition to the eastern waters. For details see *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster. Knt., to the East Indies* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1877).

3. In 1763 the French forced the British to leave Bandar Abbass and retire to Basra, but after two years the British returned to the Gulf and established themselves at Bushire.

4. After the suppression of "piracy" around 1820, the "Pirate Coast" was called the "Trucial States," and after independence it became the United Arab Emirates. The low, sandy coast stretches 241 kilometers from Qatar in the north to Ras Musandam in the south.

5. This does not mean that all the pirates who operated in the Gulf waters and the Indian Oceans were Arabs. Toward the end of the seventeenth century, European pirates established a base in Madagascar and attacked commercial ships in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Gulf. It was because of their menace that the British East India Company appealed to the British government for naval help and founded the Indian navy.

6. For other sources on the history of Al-Khalifa see al-Rihani (1929, pp. 179-248), al-Nabahani (1923), and Lorimer (1970b, pp. 842-947).

7. This is not the place to give a detailed diplomatic history of Bahrain--several works have already done so. See, for example, Zayyani (1973), Wilson (1928), Kelly (1964), Hawley (1970), or al-Baharna (1973).

8. See India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1043, p. 54.

9. These were essentially the terms of the treaties of 1880 and 1892. See India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1043, p. 55.

10. This is the agreement of 1904-5, officially recognized by the ruler of Bahrain in 1909. See India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1043, p. 58.

Chapter 3

1. See India Library Office, R/15/2/9/9.

2. Umm al-Siyur is a historic spring near Diraz. According to oral tradition, it had a strong flow of water that irrigated all the coastline from Diraz to Ras-Rumman in Manama. The Shi^ca believe it was destroyed by Abdul-Malik bin Marwan (one of the Omayyad Caliphs) when he invaded Bahrain in the eighth century. No Shi^ca in Bahrain today uses the name Marwan.

3. For more details on palm cultivation, see Vidal (1954), who

describes date culture in al-Hasa province of Saudi Arabia, which is very similar to that in Bahrain.

4. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/70, pp. 3-16.
5. India Library Office, R/15/2 and L/P&S/10.
6. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/51, p. 61 and R/15/2/8/1.
7. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1912, p. 101.
8. Parsons 1951, pp. 61-65 (the social system).
9. For a detailed and well documented account of these, see Saif al-Shamlan (1975); al-Urayyid and al-Madani (n.d.); and Abdullah al-Shamlan (n.d.).
10. For the year 1875-76, see India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1875-76. For the year 1900-1909, see India Library Office, L/P&S/10/457.
11. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1875-76, 1895-96. For the year 1915-16, see R/15/2/10/36. For the year 1925-26, see R/15/2/10/38.
12. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1900-2, p. 112.
13. India Library Office, R/15/298; R/15/2/8/5; R/15/2/9/13.
14. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/1, p. 17.
15. Pilots were equipped with maps showing both the location of the diving area and its depth, obtained either from the British navy or from local sources. Rashid bin Ali Al-Fadl, for example, was an Arab pilot known for drafting maps for diving.
16. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/13, p. 15.
17. India Library Office, R/15/2/8/5, p. 1.
18. In 1921, for example, the *salifa* judge was Rashid bin Muhammad, who was a well-known boat owner.
19. India Library Office, R/15/2/D/9.

Chapter 4

1. According to a hadith related to Prophet Muhammad and known as the Ghadir hadith, the right to the caliphate was restricted to Ali and his House after him. Husain was to the Shi^ca the third 'imam.
2. Historical sources estimate the number of Husain's troops at about two thousand, and those of the Omayyad caliph at about thirty-five hundred.

3. The use of chains, swords, drums, or music in these processions is believed to have been introduced by the Persian Shi^Ca around the mid-1930s.

4. Such texts include al-Abd (A.H. 1382), al-Uzaimi (n.d.), al-Sumaisim (n.d.), and others.

5. The Abbassids belonged to the Hashimite, not the Alawite house, the House of Ali, the first 'imam. The Abbassids' color was black.

Chapter 5

1. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1875-1900.

2. India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1043, p. 55.

3. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/70, pp. 9-13.

4. India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1043, p. 55. See also *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1905, p. 79.

5. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1911, p. 97.

6. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1907, p. 100; 1908, p. 92; 1911, p. 100.

7. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1906, p. 67. See also R/15/2/K/17.

8. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1910, p. 83.

9. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1917; 1918, p. 54; 1919, p. 61; 1920, p. 65. See also R/15/2/1/59, p. 62 and L/P&S/10/1043, p. 59.

10. Complaints about the inadequacies of port facilities and management dates back to 1885-86. See *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1885-86, p. 6. Negotiations to improve it are included in *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1905, p. 78; 1912, p. 101; 1913, p. 117.

11. India Library Office, R/15/2/V/28, pp. 68-70.

12. The Iranian press launched a propaganda campaign against Shi^Ca oppressions in Bahrain toward the end of the First World War and demanded that injustices be corrected.

13. H. R. P. Dickson is the Author of *The Arabs of the Desert* (1949) and of *Kuwait and Her Neighbors* (1956).

14. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/1. See correspondence no. 27/3/1927.

15. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1919, p. 61.
16. This is taken from a letter written by Dickson on 1 May 1920 to the British political resident at Bushire. See India Library Office, R/15/2/1/70.
17. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1919, p. 65; 1920, pp. 69-70.
18. India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1039, p. 298.
19. The disbanding of this group, including Hafez Wahba, was done according to the agreement of 1919, which gave the British the right to deport foreign subjects from Bahrain. See L/P&S/10/1039, dated 1919.
20. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/70, p. 7.
21. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1921, p. 62.
22. A summary of this report is included in India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1039, pp. 361-88.
23. India Library Office, L/P&S/10/1039, pp. 46, 75, 118-19.
24. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/11, p. 21.
25. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/11, p. 35.
26. India Library Office, R/15/2/5/5, p. 20.
27. More details about the theft of the watch can be found in India Library Office, R/15/2/1/59, pp. 2-6.
28. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1923, pp. 67-70.
29. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1923, p. 68.
30. India Library Office, R/15/2/11, p. 69.
31. For a complete chronology of these events, see India Library Office, R/15/2/9/11; R/15/2/1/70; R/15/2/9/1; R/15/2/1/59; L/P&S/10/1039.
32. The petitioners included Isa bin Ali Al-Khalifa, Abdullah bin Ibrahim BuFlassa, Jabr bin Muhammad Al-Musallam, Shahin bin Saqr Al-Jalahima, Abdul-Wahab al-Zayyani, Muhammad bin Fadl Al-Na^Cim, Muhammad bin Rashid Al-Manafi^Ca, Ahmad bin Abdullah Al-Dawsari, Muhammad bin Rashid Al-BuAli, and Ahmad bin Jassim Al-BuJawdar. See R/15/2/1/61.
33. The Shi^Ca petition included the signatures of 328 dignitaries. See R/15/2/1/11.
34. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/70, p. 42.
35. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/61.

36. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/60.
37. India Library Office, R/15/2/1/60, pp. 99-145.
38. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1924, p. 58.
39. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1929, p. 49.
40. For more details see *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, pp. 80-83.
41. See Department of Rural Affairs 1958-69, Government Decrees no. 2, 1971, and no. 16, 1973.
42. For more details see India Library Office, R/15/2/31/13.
43. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1923, p. 67.
44. For further discussion on "alliance" versus "descent" see David M. Schneider (1965, pp. 25-85).
45. India Library Office, R/15/2/91, pp. 65-75.
46. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/11, pp. 18-20.
47. India Library Office, R/15/2/10/45A, p. 7.
48. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/11. See correspondence for 1930.
49. India Library Office, R/15/2/10/45A; R/15/2/9/1; see also *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1924.
50. India Library Office, *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1921, 1922, and 1923.

Chapter 6

1. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/11, pp. 75-77.
2. India Library Office, R/15/2/9/1; see correspondence for 1930.
3. After an interview with Shaikh Isa bin Muhammad, the minister of justice, in 1975.
4. Rashid bin Muhammad and Muhammad bin Abdullah were the first Al-Khalifa judges who presided over this council.
5. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1926-37, pp. 18-21.
6. After an interview with the minister of justice.
7. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1945-56. See also the report of 1970, p. 103.
8. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1970, pp. 103-4.
9. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, pp. 53-55. See also the report of 1963, p. 77; 1964, p. 88; 1965, p. 73; and 1966, p. 85.

10. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1926, p. 34.
11. See al-Hamar (1968) for details.
12. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1958, p. 27.
13. For details see the *Bahrain Administration Reports* of 1955, 1956, and 1957.
14. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1958, p. 3.
15. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1960, p. 2; 1967, p. 12.
16. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1958, p. 114.
17. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1967, p. 127; 1968, p. 128.
18. After an interview with the head of the Department of Personnel and Civil Employment.

Chapter 7

1. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1926-37, p. 8.
2. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1962, p. 3.
3. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1945-46, pp. 12-14.
4. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1926-37, p. 15.
5. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1951, p. 5.
6. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1949, p. 5.
7. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1951, p. 40.
8. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1952, p. 4.
9. *Bahrain Administration Report* of 1959, p. 2.
10. *National Census* of 1950, p. 2; *National Census* of 1971, p. 163.
11. These figures are obtained from the municipal records on construction. According to municipal law, all new construction must be licensed by the municipality.
12. These figures and percentages are obtained from our household survey.
13. The total for 1965 was 51,251; for 1971 it was 57,052; and for 1959 it was 45,505. See the fourth population census of Bahrain, *Statistical Bureau* 1969, p. 31. See also *National Census* 1971, pp. 13-35.
14. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, pp. 85-88.
15. Ministry of Education, *Department of Statistics*, report of 1973-74, p. 7.
16. Male repeaters in the academic year 1971-72 were estimated to be 23.5 percent of the total enrollment of the primary schools, 16.1 percent of the intermediate, and 8.8 percent of the secondary. Female repeaters for the same year were estimated to be 20.4 percent of the primary

6.0 percent of the intermediate, and 4.1 percent of the secondary (Socknat 1974, p. 205).

17. See Socknat (1974) for details.

18. *National Census* of 1971, p. 14.

19. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1945-46, pp. 34-45.

20. Comprehensive data were collected on the variation of marriage patterns in Bahrain. This is not the proper place to discuss this subject in detail; detailed analysis will be left for later work.

21. The average number of children per family among the Sunni of tribal origin is 4.6; among the urban Sunni, 4.4; the urban Shi^Ca, 5.2; the Persian Shi^Ca, 4.7; the rural Shi^Ca, 5.0; the rural Shi^Ca who live within suburban settlements, 4.9. Those who earn a yearly income of less than U.S. \$1,250 have an average number of children per family of 4.5; between U.S. \$1,750 and 1,251, an average of 4.5; between U.S. \$2,500 and 1,751, an average of 5.0; between U.S. \$3,750 and 2,501, an average of 5.1; the rest have an average that ranges between 5.0 and 4.9. Joint households composed of five families have an average number of children per family of 4.5; four families, an average of 4.8; three families, an average of 4.9; two families, an average of 4.0; one family, an average of 5.0.

22. This is the case in all other oil-producing countries of the Gulf and Arabia (Penrose 1972, pp. 271-85).

Chapter 8

1. Although they are banned, political parties operate underground. There is hardly a political party in the Arab world that does not have representation in Bahrain. These parties include the communists, the socialists, the Ba^Cthists, the Nasserites, and other pan-Arab or pan-Islamic movements.

2. After an interview with Shaikh Salman al-Madani, who is a jurist in the Shi^Ca court.

3. They are called twelvers after the twelve 'Imams they recognize.

4. Mahdi al-Tajir is an Arab billionaire living in London.

5. After an interview with Abdul-Rida al-Daylami, a renowned member of the Administration Committee.

6. Here is a sample of these rebellious chants:

Revolt against injustice assures one of a place in paradise
Oh wretched and oppressed, revolt the way the Martyr did

Woe be to you the people of tyranny and oppression on the day
of judgment and resurrection
Husain's rebellion is of the level of glory
His rebellion was to correct injustice and wipe out ignorance

7. For a comprehensive discussion of networks, see J. Clyde Mitchell (1969, pp. 1-51).
8. Private institutions refers to firms and companies such as Charter's Bank, City Bank, and Gray McKenzie.
9. See Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Youth Section, Statistics of 1975.
10. See the first two articles of the constitution of the Uruba Club, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Clubs Section.
11. They are opposite each other on Zubara Street in Manama.
12. These are recurrent themes in almost all cultural and sports clubs in Shi^ca villages. See Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Clubs Section.
13. Salah al-Din Club merged in the Bahrain, the Wahada and the Matrikh merged in the Qadisiyah, the Khaliij and the Hilal merged in the Federation for Youth. This is only a sample from Muharraq.
14. For this reason he recruited Hafez Wahba, a renowned man of letters of Egyptian origin, into the club and in 1920 entertained Amine al-Rihani on his visit to the Gulf and Arabia. Other members of the club were Ahmad Fakhru, who was treasurer, and Abdullah Zayid, who was secretary.
15. See Government of Bahrain, *The Bahrain Licensing of Societies and Clubs Ordinance*, Notice no. 5/1959 and Notice no. 7/1960.
16. I know of only two clubs, the Eagles Club and the Alumni Club.
17. After an interview with mulla Isa bin Ali.
18. See Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Clubs Section.
19. This was also the time the "modernists" began to establish funeral houses for youth.
20. According to the constitution of the club: if more than half the members agree by writing to call for the dissolution of the executive committee and then for reelection, it can do so with the approval of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Chapter 9

1. Sketchy accounts of the uprising can be found in Beling (1959) and Qubain (1955).

2. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, p. 4.
3. For more details on the BAPCO club see al-Bakir (1965, p. 38).
4. The Indian clerk was paid almost twice what the Arab received.
5. The leaders of the 1938 demonstrations included Sa^cd Shamlan, who was the father of Abdul-Aziz Shamlan, Ali Ibn Khalifa al-Fadil, and Ahmad Shirawi.
6. After an interview with Abdul-Aziz Shamlan, Bahrain ambassador to Egypt.
7. See the *Voice of Bahrain*, no. 2, pp. 11 and 22; no. 4, p. 13. the *Caravan*, no. 5, p. 1; no. 6, pp. 1 and 3; no. 19, p. 1; no. 21, p. 1; no. 26, p. 1; no. 44, p. 1. The *Nation*, no. 4, p. 1; no. 7, pp. 1 and 2; no. 8, p. 1; no. 9, pp. 1 and 2.
8. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, p. 4.
9. After an interview with Ibrahim Fakhru.
10. Some leading merchants such as Mansur Urayyid, Khalil Mu'ayyid, and Qasim Fakhru supported al-Bakir and Shamlan's move. Fakhru helped draft the constitution of the Bureau.
11. See the *Caravan*, nos. 44 and 45, pp. 1 and 2.
12. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, p. 4.
13. Taken from Sayyid Jabir's speech in Mu'min mosque as reported to the author.
14. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, p. 3.
15. *Bahrain Administration Review Report* of 1956, p. 7.
16. This opinion is shared with two living members of the original network who took an active part in the HEC and CNU.
17. Quoted from Nakhleh (1976, p. 136), which he based on Public Security Order no. 1 (1965).

Chapter 10

1. For more details on candidates and coalitions of the Constitutional Assembly, see Nakhleh (1976, chaps. 6 and 7).
2. See the official *Gazette Supplement*, no. 1049 (1973), and the *Election of the National Assembly* (1973).
3. For more details on strikes launched by individual firms and companies see Nakhleh (1976, pp. 80-82).
4. *Al-Adwa* weekly paper, nos. 474 and 477.

Chapter 11

1. The data on visits were obtained from the 106 networks I collected in Bahrain. Data on marriages were obtained from a comprehensive survey of Al-Khalifa marriages since the middle of the nineteenth century, and also from the household survey and the marriage court records.

2. Their names remain confidential upon the insistence of the interviewee.

3. Al-Su^Cud of Saudi Arabia, Al-Sabah of Kuwait, and Al-Khalifa of Bahrain are believed to belong to the Anaiza tribe.

Transliterations of Arabic Words Used in Text, Showing Full Diacritical Markings

Simplified Transliteration as Used in Text	Transliteration with Full Diacritics	Simplified Transliteration as Used in Text	Transliteration with Full Diacritics
^c ada	^c āda	dalū	dalū
^c aish	^c aīsh	dawb	dawb
'akhbar	'akhbār	dayyin	dayyīn
'akhwal	'akhwāl	dhurriyah	dhurriyah
^c allama	^c allāma	diwan	dīwān
^c amil	^c amīl	dulab	dūlāb
'ard	'arḍ	emir	amīr
^c ashura'	^c āshūrā'		
'asyad	'asyād (singular sayyid)		
^c azil	^c azīl	farra'	farrā'
badu	badū	fasil	fasīl
bahrani	bahrānī	fidawi(s)	fidāwī
bahraini	bahrāinī	fitam	fitām
bani-khdair	banī-khdair	ghasa	ghāṣa
barasti(s)	barastī	ghaws	ghaws
barih	bārīḥ	habambu	ḥabambu
barr	barr	hadar	ḥadar
barriyah	barriyah	hadiṭh	ḥadīth
batin	bāṭin	hajj	ḥajj
bishr	bishr	halal	ḥalāl
daliyah	dāliyah	halaqat	ḥalaqāt
dallai	dallāl	hallal	ḥallāl

Simplified Transliteration as Used in Text	Transliteration with Full Diacritics	Transliteration with Full Diacritics
haq	ḥaq	ma'ātim (singu- lar ma'tam)
hawala	ḥawwala	madyan
hawsh(es)	ḥawsh	majālis (singu- lar majlis)
hilālī	ḥilālī	majlis (pl. majālis)
hudur	ḥudūr	mawālīd (sing. mawlid)
ḥidq	ḥidq	mawkib
'ihya'	'ihyā'	mawlid (pl. mawālīd)
'ijtihād	'ijtihād	mawzān
ḥikra	ḥikra	mashākil
'imam	'imām	masjid
'mama	'imāma	ma'tam (pl. ma'ātim)
'imara	'imāra	maṭ'am
'isnad	'isnād	mawālīd (sing. mawlid)
ja ^c di	ja ^c dī	mawkib
jalha	jalḥa	mawlid (pl. mawālīd)
jazwa	jazwa	mawzān
jilf	jilf	mu'adhdhin
jubar	jubār	mubashūr
khalāl	khalāl	muhājirūn
khamas	khamas	mujāhid
khanjiyah	khanjiyah	mujtahid
kharjiyah	kharjiyah	mukhtār
hasib	ḥasīb	muilā
khatīb(s)	khatīb	muqaddam
khdaīrī	khdaīrī	muqāṭa ^c āt
khibt	khibt	muwālī
khilas	khilās	naghīl
khinaizi	khinaizī	nakhīl
kikhda(s)	kikhda	nūkhada
lil	līl	

Simplified Transliteration as Used in	Simplified Transliteration as Used in Text	Transliteration with Full Diacritics
qabili	shahada	shahāda
qada'	shaikh(s)	shaikh (pl. shuyūkh
qadi	shar ^c	shar ^c
qadil	sharī ^c a	sharī ^c a
qanun	shuyukh	shuyūkh (sing. shaikh)
qidhf	si ^c f	si ^c f
qidu	silfa	silfa
qillat	sira	sīra
qit ^c a	sirma	ṣirma
qira'at	sukhra	sukhra
qiyas	suq	sūq
rafd	suyub	suyūb
radif		
rahmaniyah	tabbab	tabbāb
rajjal	taharim	tahārīm
rakba	tahazzub	tahazzub
rassamin	tali ^c	ṭālī ^c
raziz	tamr	tamr
rqabiyah	taqlid	taqlīd
rutab	tarsha	ṭarsha
	tawawish	ṭawāwīsh
sadaqa	tawwabin	tawwābīn
safar	ta ^c ziyah	ta ^c ziyah
safar	tijara	tijāra
sahib	tisqam	tisqām
salat		
salifa	'umm	'umm
salm	^c urf	^c urf
sangal	^c urfi	^c urfi
satr	'usul	'uṣūl
sawm		
sayyid(s)	wafiyyat	wafiyyāt
shabab	waqf	waqf

Simplified Transliteration as Used in Text	Transliteration with Full Diacritics
warathat	warathat
wazir(s)	wazīr
yad	yad
zahir	ẓāhir
zakat	zakāt
zaman	zamān
zira ^c a	zirā ^c a

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