

الوثيقة

يصدرها
مركز الوثائق التاريخية
بدولة البحرين

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the relations of Oman and Bahrain are concerned, the main interest lies in the role of the Qaramita (Carmathians).

When exactly they conquered Oman is not clear. Ibn Khaldun (*al-'Ibar* iv, 93) puts it as 317/929-30 (variant A.H. 315; *ibid*, 89), the year they carried off the Black Stone from Mecca; he also adds that they came at the invitation of a group of the B. Sama who were quarrelling amongst themselves. But this date is extremely misleading and if indeed it is correct then it refers to a reconquest of Suhar, more probably in A.H. 318 by A. Tahir. According to Masudi (*Tanbih*, 500) it was A. Said al-Jannabi who managed to gain possession of the great port after several campaigns. But if, on the other hand, his statement that A. Said al-Jannabi was killed in 300/913 is correct then his other statement is questionable for on his own evidence (*Muruji*, 233-4) the 'Abbasid Statthalter, Ahmad b. Hilal (al-Sami?) was in post in A.H. 304 whilst 'Arib (*Tabari Continuatus*, 68) shows him there in 305. In fact it is probably in that or the following year that the Qaramita obtained control of Suhar.

If we look at all the evidence in Masudi and Ibn Khaldun himself, along with the authors quoted by de Goeje (1886 and 1895) and add in what is new from the Omani sources it seems that A. Said al-Jannabi was increasingly successful in bringing over the northern Omani frontier tribesmen. The Qarmati movement also received considerable help from a Huddani chief, 'Abdullah b. Muhammad al-Huddani who was elected Imam by his followers and started propagating their *dawa*, hence his name in Omani history A. Said al-Qarmati. It was probably around A.H. 306 that central Oman also fell to the Qaramita: all we know is that this happened during the "Imamate" of another Huddani, 'Umar b. Muham-

mad b. Matraf, who as a result resigned his position (cf. *Sirat Muhammad b. Ruh*, 4/10th century quoted *Tuhfa* i, 265). But it could only have been a short conquest for the man who issued judgement on their property, after they had been driven out again, was A. 'I-Muthir al-Salt b. Khamis al-Kharusi. In view of the fact that A. 'I-Muthir was an elector of his kinsman al-Salt b. Malik al-Kharusi back in 237/851 and in view of the fact that A. Said al-Qarmati's activities are spoken of by A. l'-Hawari, who was one of the leading ulema at the end of the 3/9th century, it is hard to see how we can put the end of their occupation of the interior much beyond the first decade of the 4/10th century. On the coast their rule may well have lasted longer, or indeed there may have been a reconquest in A. Tahir's time, as per Ibn Khaldun. Be that as it may his date of 375/985-6 for the end of their

rule is a nonsense. It may be that the new dynasty, the Wujihids, who ruled on the coast were tributaries of the Qaramita and it may have been at their incentive that Yusuf b. Wujih attacked the Baridis in Basra in 331/943 (al-Suli ii, 79). He was also continuously clashing with the Rahili Imam, A. Qasim Said b. 'Abdullah (b. Muhammad b. Mahbub) whom the moderate Ibadis had elected c. 320/932 to try and bring back unity to the interior: he was killed in a tribal clash in 328/939-40. A. Qasim was succeeded by another moderate, Rashid b. Walid (al-Kindi?) from Samad Nizwa. This independence of interior Oman as well as the overthrow of the Wujihids was brought to an abrupt end by the Buyhid) conquest. The classical sources, as with all this history, are highly contradictory about the dates when this occurred as Vasmer (1927) shows. In fact the Omani sources (*Bayan al-Shar'* cf. *Tuhfa* i, 282-4) are quite specific about the date; Rashid b. Walid had to surrender his power to

thority of any kind. This development of marchland characteristics leads to some interesting new relationships with neighbouring Bahrain.

THE ALIENATION OF NORTHERN OMAN AND ITS DEVELOPMENT INTO A FRONTIER REGION.

The Omani Civil War.

Geographically there has always been a partial cleavage between northern and central Oman with the northern region economically orientated towards the Gulf and often concerned with the politics centering around control of the entrance to the Gulf. But the political division was brought on by the collapse of the First Imamate when a B. Sami leader, Musab. Musa, deposed the Kharusi-Yahmad Imam al-Salt b. Malik in 272/886. The events which led to civil war will not be explained in this paper. All that we need note is that in reality it was largely due to the centralisation of power and of the growing wealth engendered by overseas trade into the hands of the Azd alliance tribes of central Oman, dominated by the Yahmad confederation who controlled the Rustaq region and the central Batina; through the Imam they were also in a position to make key appointments throughout Oman, notably in Suhar and Julfar, the main centres of overseas trade. Increasingly the tribes living on the back side of the mountains, numerically dominated by the "Nizari" B. Sama groupings but with a major Yamani element in the Huddan (Awlad Shums Shanuah Azd), were "peripheralized", a process aided by the growing senility of the well-meaning, but ineffectual Imam al-Salt. Their act of deposing him completely

upset the old political balance developed over the course of the early Imamate so that tribal fighting became endemic and, the position of B. Sama and their Huddani allies in the Jawf became untenable. So they retreated north, and electing the leading Huddani 'alim Imam at Yanqul, raised their tribes in the SIRR recruiting also from the 'Abd al-Qays B. 'Amir of Tuwam and the Washihin (Malik b. Fahm) of the central Dhahira, and the B. al-Harith Malik b. Faham of the Batina. They then marched on, and took Suhar, but by this time the central Omani alliance had raised its army and a battle was fought on the outskirts of the city at Qa' (278/892) in which the "rebels" were completely smashed: the leading Sami 'alim and some 600 "Nizari" supporters were killed alongside their Huddani Imam and 85 of his "Yamani's". Thereupon, the two surviving Sami leaders fled to Tuwam from where they made their way to Bahrain to enlist the help of the Caliph Mu'tadid's governor, reporting the war as between Nizar and Yaman. Nothing loath to extirpate this nest of **Shurat** (the name by which the Ibadis are referred to in contemporary sources) and gain control of the burgeoning port of Suhar, the Caliph ordered his governor, Muhammad b. al-Nur/Bur/Thawr, to raise a major army which he supplemented with the Azd's old enemies (from Basran days) from as far afield as Syria. Landing at Julfar and recruiting locally favourable tribesmen as they marched down the inside of the mountains, they took Nizwa, killed the Imam in a battle at Samad in the Sharqiya and eventually defeated the main Omani army at Dama (now modern al/Sib) on the coast. They then gave themselves over to a reign of terror and destruction.

The Qaramita.

There then follows a most confusing period of history in which, in so far as

Thesis, 1969, Ch. III, and in ed. Juynboll 1983). So we find 'Uthman b. A. 'I-'Asis army campaigning in Fars was made up of contingents of Shanuah, Malik b. Fahm and 'Imran Azd, and B. Rasib and B. Najiya from Oman and from Bahrain 'Abd al-Qays and Azd Bahrain. Tawwaj became their main centre but the favourable conditions they found there incited the jealousy of other Arab tribes who had been ordered to settle in the new *misr* of Basra. This anti-Gulf feeling, notably by the Hijazi tribes was to become an enormously important factor in the development of the politics of Basra. It was not only the Azd Mazun who were despised but all the tribes who had been subjected by the Persians in pre-Islamic times. Had it not been for Hijazis bringing them Islam they would still be hirelings of the people they now rule, living repulsive life in the coastal plains, excluded from the best lands, scratching a living from the sea and the desert outboys, declared Muawaiya (Tabari i, 2911-2). The old merchant relationships of the **Arid al-Hind**, established in pre-Islamic times, was also subject of attack by the Hijazi ruling clans. So the merchants of Oman and Bahrain suffered from a law whereby they could only sell Gulf agricultural produce after the state had disposed of its own revenue in kind (later of Ibn Ibad). Such sentiment certainly played a role in explaining why, for example, the 'Abd al-Qays remained solid with the Azd when Mas'ud b. 'Amr of the Ma'n Malik b. Fahm (known as al-Qamr, the leader of the major influx of semi-bedu Azd who flocked into Basra from about A.H. 59 onwards), attempted his irresponsible putsch in A.H. 64. Similarly, it plays a role in explaining why Bahrain-Yamama and Oman were highly susceptible to socially revolutionary doctrines, Najdi Kharijism, Ibadism, Shi'ism and Qarmatism. In the early days such "here-

sies" tended to be associated with individual break away groups, such as the B. Najiya, followers of Khirrib, Rashid al-Naji in A.H. 38, or of opportunists like A. Talut in Yamama. But each was preparing the ground, in some measure, for more fundamental change so that whilst Najda b. 'Amir al-Hanafi's movement originally simply represented a B. Hanifa brand of Khariji ideology, justifying their split from the main Azariqa, his success in al-Yamama and his attempt to extend control over Bahrain and Oman (Baladhuri *Ansab* xi, 125-147) was based on certain general ideas of equality between Arabs and non-Arabs. So even though Najda's state only lasted five or so years Bahrain remained in Khariji hands for another thirty or so (cf. Ibn al-Athir v, 88-9 for details apparently not reported elsewhere). Similarly in Oman these early movements were to play a role in preparing the way for the implanting of Ibadism.

Nevertheless, the old order was changing. The 'Abd al-Qays-Azd alliance could not survive the strain of the Nazar-Yamam enmity which reached a climax in 'Abbasid times (Masudi, *Muruj* vi, 45-6) whilst in Bahrain Khariji based doctrines gave way to Shi'ii influence and Qarmatism (although the difference between the two was probably rather less than has been portrayed in Islamic terms). At the same time the power of the 'Abd al-Qays was weakening there and new tribes beginning to replace them. These shifts in the Bahrain picture coincided with a major crisis in the Omani Imamate which eventually ended in civil war and a permanent alienation of Northern Oman from Ibadism. From now on the population of Northern Oman remained Omani in their geographical, economic and tribal linkages, but the region becomes politically peripheral, indeed frequently antipathetic to central Omani au-

details about those 'Abdi groupings in closest geographical proximity to Oman drawn from el-'Awtabi who adds some interesting details to the classical accounts (e.g. Ibn Qutayba 93-4, Hamdani *Sifa*, 136; see also Caskel in E.1.2 'Abd al-Kalbi). The very generalized distribution of the genealogical grouping as a whole was the Lukaya (b. Afsa b. 'Abd al-Qays) in the main centres of Bahrayn, his "brother" Shann to the north up to the borderlands of Iraq, beyond whom were the Labu' (b. 'Abd al-Qays). The Omani relationship was thus largely with the Lukayz sub-groupings, notably the Nukra, Dil, 'Awaqa' Ayuq, 'Umur and Ammar (Anmar). This last grouping was the one naturally spreading into the Oman region. It subdivided primarily into the descendent of al-Harith b. Ammar, notably 'Amir b. al-Harith, and of 'Awf b. Ammar: this last gave rise to two further sub-groupings, the Jadhima and the 'Amr.

The B. 'Amr b. al-'Awf b. Ammar lived more-or-less in the Bahrayn region proper, and with their allies, the B. Harith and 'Awaqa, came to control the main settlements of al-Hasa, although Qatif seems to have been in the hands of the Nukra. Moving towards Oman were to be found the 'Amir b. al-Harith who lived on the frontiers of the two regions, although they also had a grouping living in Hajar, the capital of Bahrayn. These 'Amir b. al-Harith were fairly clearly a bedu grouping and thus found themselves overlapping with the main sand-dwelling bedu, the B. Sa'd who primarily ranged on both sides of the Dahna but extended also into Qatar, Yabrin and Baynuna (Bakri 12, 57; *Yaqut al-Buldan* art. Baynuna). The main settlements of this 'Abdi group were at two unidentified places (al-Shafar and al-Turwan — spelling?) but their general *dar lay* in the sands of

Hajar, Qatar and Baynuna. They also formed part of a confederation called the Kharajiya ('Awtabi text is very defective — he may mean they were Khawarij) which included at least one other Ammar tribe, the 'Amir b. Malik. 'Awtabi relates a curious story about this last clan according to which one Mu'awiya b. Yahya with a couple of hundred of his kinsmen (**bani 'amm**) left their tribal area (or a place called al-Diyar?) and first settled at Julfar. From there they took possession of Awal (Bahrain island) and divided it and its small **Majus** population between them (sic).

Living along the coast of what in modern times became known as Trucial Oman were the Jadima (b. 'Awf b. Ammar), but further inland on the desert borderlands of northern Oman, down at least as far as the SIRR, the 'Abd al-Qays groupings were more complex and dominated by the Dil. Two of their clans, the B. 'Amir (b. al-Dil) and the 'Awfa (b. 'Awf b. 'Amir b. al-Dil) were the main bedu of the Tuwan area (in early Islamic times at least) whilst to the south of them dominating the desert borderlands as far as the SIRR were B. al-Harith (Ammar) sections who formed the key element of an alliance called the Barajim, enemies of their B. Jadhima kinsmen. In addition to these bedu groupings were some settled 'Abd al-Qays living in the villages of Oman itself, but these need not concern us here. What we should note is that from pre-Islamic time at least until the end of the 3/9th century the 'Abd al-Qays were the dominant nomadic groups of northern and Trucial Oman.

Omani-Bahraini relationships overseas: Gulf sentiment in early Islamic times.

Homeland relationships were also to dominate the history of the tribes in the Islamic conquests (Wilkinson

allied with the 'Abd al-Qays who had settled round the major oases and were spreading eastwards towards Oman and northwards to Iraq, movement which brought them into conflict with the B. Sa'd of Tamim, then the real sand-dwelling bedu of Eastern Arabia. This movement northwards of Malik b. FAhm Azd, Quda'a and 'Abd al-Qays lies at the root of the mythology of the Tanukh migration and of some extraordinary legerdemain of Ibn al-Kalbi for rationalizing Arab tribal genealogy (notably the Azd-Quda'a conflation via Malik b. Fahm and Jadhima al-Abrash) and their association with settled civilizations bordering the desert area of Arabia. But it was neither the Abd al-Qays nor the Malik b. Fahm who were able to effect settlement with the major new disruptive tribal grouping entering the Tuwam gateway into Oman, the B. Najw or Najiya and other groups of reputed B. Sama (b. Lu'ayy) stock. In the personalized genealogical form of tribal history it was 'Imran who was successful in forming an alliance through marrying his son Asd to Hind bt. Sama b. Lu'ayy. From their marriage came 'Atik, that is the eponym of the dominant shaikhly clan from whom descend the Nabahina and from whom also stem the Muhallabites (according to accounts which try to find respectable beginnings for their family).

But the centre piece of the pre-Islamic Arab alliances of the region were the Shanu'ah groupings which migrated through central Arabia into Oman. Their movement was probably associated with shifts in the general picture of Arab power in Arabia during the fourth century and there is evidence of links with the Kinda, many important groups of which also settled in Oman. Passing from al-'Arud into Yamama these Shanuah clans seem to have gained a degree of ascendancy over the B. Hanifa but were resisted

by the 'Amir b. Sa'sa' groupings living there. Pushing ever forward they then started to move towards Bahrayn where they are recorded as raiding the people of the sealand (ahl al-'abab). Eventually they began to settle in Oman, possibly during the period of weak Persian rule before Kisra Anushiravan re-established authority there. But they also maintained some authority in the regions through which they had migrated for some time and we find the Ma'wali shaikh (Awlad Shums Shanu'ah) appointing one Baqil b. Sari (read Shari) b. Yahmad, that is a "brother" of the famous Kharus (b. Shari b. Yahmad) clan of Oman, as Sahib al-'Arud (Ibn Qutayba, 1960 end, 108, 'Awtabi Johnstone MS 212 v ff, Ibn Durayd *Ishtiqaq*, 508).

This Shanu'ah grouping seems eventually to have become the key grouping in the alliances of South-Eastern Arabia in the period leading up to Islam, a position that was recognised by their shaikh being appointed Julanda of the Arab tribes of Mazun in the settlement reached with the Persians after Kisra Anushiravan's reform. Similar arrangements were reached with the Arabs of Bahrayn and south west Arabia where their shaikhs were appointed Isbadhs (Ispabadhs) and Abna (Wilkinson 1973).

The 'Abd al-Qays.

The main alliance with Bahrayn came through the 'Abd al-Qays relationships with the Malik b. Fahm clans, a relationship which is symbolized by the story of how the 'Abdi leader was rewarded for his panegyric in praise of Malika b. Fahm by his appointment as *wazir* to the Azd leader and the right to settle.

In view of the importance of the old 'Abd al-Qays-Azd alliance it is perhaps of some interest to note a few

localised names such as al-Zafra, Liea, Mijann, Sabkhat Matti, as well as the new Baynuna take over. But the old geographical concept of the frontier still sticks whatever the change of nomenclature. Sabkhat Matti "according to the concurrent testimony of all the Sheikhs and best informed persons I have spoken to on the subject ... is the boundary line between Nejd i.e. the new Su'udi state and 'Oman, and has been so considered from time immemorial" (Miles 1877). And the Sabkhat Matt is precisely where the frontier between al-Bahrayn and 'Oman is shown on F. W. "ustenfeld's map of *Bahrein und Jemama nach Arabischen Geographern beschrieben*, written about the same time. Regional identity on the Omani side is most clearly marked. For them the Bahrayni/Su'udi tribes are **hal (ahl) al-gharab** and they do not subscribe to the moiety divisions emanating from the mountain core, that is the famous Hinawi and Ghafiri split. This Omani-ness is recognised from the other side also, so that a Qatari may well refer to Abu Dhabi as Oman. Within Oman itself, however, the name is used for the core of the region so that the inhabitants tend to identify the next area towards the Jabal al-Akhdar as 'Oman.

Yet the fact remains that there are some very interesting linkages between al-Bahrain (hereafter called Bahrain for the old regional concept and Bahrain for the present island state) and 'Oman (Oman) which go a long way to explaining the tribal situation in northern Oman (that is from the Sirr to Abu Dhabi) and the political history of that region. On the one hand this can be traced in the history of migration between the two areas and on the other in the alliances and, on occasion, religious influences, which have linked them.

EARLY RELATIONSHIPS.

Tribal Relationships.

Oman is like an island, surrounded by sea on three sides and by the sand sea of the "Empty Quarter" on the fourth. Access by land is confined to two narrow passages, one along the south coast of Arabia leading into S.E. Oman via the Ja'lan, the other along the Trucial Coast into Tuwam. Whilst the first recorded migrations of Arab Tribes from S.W. Arabia (Malik b. Fahm Azd) appear to have come by the former route it is the latter which has proved of greater importance. So the next two major waves of Azd 'Oman, the 'Imran (Asd and Hajr) and the Shanu'ah (Yahmad and Awlad Shums) both followed the passage through central Arabia (al-Arud) to al-Yamama and Bahrayn before eventually settling in Oman, as too did the B. Sama and those 'Abd al-Qays groups that came there; also probably the Kinda.

The 'Imran were the first migration to reach Oman this way and according to al-'Awtabi (the main Omani source for much of the following tribal discussion) Haj (a)r, the old "capital" of al-Yamama took its name from Hajr b. 'Imran. The 'Imran, whose settlement pattern stretched all along the migration route into the present Dhahira, and then into the Sharqiya, thus found themselves mixing with the Malik b. Fahm, still largely bedu, who in close association with Quda'a groups (notably the Rasib) were migrating along southern Arabia into a pool in the Ja'lan from where they spread along the inside of the mountain range in a reverse current towards Bahrain. In Bahrain these Malik b. Fahm — Quda'a groupings in turn found themselves becoming closely

Traditionally the frontier area between these two regions was al-Baynuna, so called because it "separated" them, according to al-'Awtabi an early 6/12th century Omani source, a statement echoed in Yaqut's geographical encyclopaedia. To-day Baynuna is only a small coastal strip in western Abu Dhabi, but this is clearly the case of a name surviving vestigially in some restricted part of its original area. Al-Bahrain itself is, of course, a splendid example of this process (Potts 1983) and the old use of the name is still traceable in the nineteenth century. Capt. Sadlier, the first European to cross Arabia (1819) calls the islands Bahren, but the mainland he calls "Bahran" in the nominative form (Sadlier 1972 reprint, p.52), whilst according to Lorimer the old name of the islands, Awal was still understood at the beginning of the present century. Northern Oman has similarly undergone such transformations and from the middle of the eighteenth century we find the disappearance of the old regional names, which go back to the earliest Islamic times and before, in which the main centre and its region are identified. Julfar (variants Jullafar, Jurfar, Jurrifar) thus originally included the whole Gulf coast of the Oman peninsula from perhaps the level of Dubai (al-Sabkha) to the Musandam Peninsula, although the actual port of that name was always

located by the creek (**khawr**) of modern Ras al-Khaima: Julfar disappears with the rise of the Jowasim (Qawasim) state. The names of the next two main inland regions also start to disappear about the same time. Tuwam (correctly Tu'am) then becomes al-Buraymi (Buraimi) and its immediately surrounding area al-Jaww: the old name however, still survives in the **laqab** (nickname) of Tayma for al-'Ayn (that is 'Ayn al-Zawahir, the old tribal grouping of the region — see below). Further inland still, Sirr dis-

appears and the main centre becomes known as 'Ibri. Both Buraimi and 'Ibri then become the names of the main oases and a new regional name given to the whole area linking them, al-Zahira (Dhahira) which contrasts to al-Batina, the cis-montane side of the range. This, it is perhaps worth noting, is a somewhat "bedu" terminology for contrasting the two sides of a geographical feature (cf. also al-Zahir, the bedu **laqab** for Abu Dhabi laying on the "back" of the **khawr** on which lies the inner settlement of al-Batin). Certainly the name al-Zahira is of relatively recent origin and only begins to appear in the late Omani sources, which, from about the beginning of the eighteenth century, sometimes begin to use the new nomenclature for the centres of Northern Oman. Even so traces of the old names still occur to-day in hybrid form so that some locals will divide the Dhahira into Zahirat al-Sirr and Zahirat al-Kaww. All these changes of toponyms are associated with the geographical perceptions of new dynasties and tribal groupings. As we shall see the whole region had been profoundly altered by migration during the period preceding those major changes of ruling families which occurred in the eighteenth century, when the present dynastic picture more-or-less begins to emerge. That is when in old al-Bahrain the B. Khalid go down to the Al Su'ud, whilst the 'Utub, as also later the Al Thani, begin to make their mark. In Oman the Ya'ariba dynasty also collapses in civil war to be replaced by the Al Bu Sa'id whilst in the northern marchlands the Al Bu Falah and the Qawasim begin to develop proto-states, as too on a lesser scale the Al Bu Khurayban of the Na'im (Nu'aym).

It is now too that Baynuna contracts from what was clearly in the old sources a much more extensive area, probably embracing the whole of Western Abu Dhabi so that more

ALBAHRAIN AND OMAN

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GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTS.

In the traditional geography of the classical Arabic sources the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula divides between al-Bahrain and 'Oman. This idea is ancient for al-Bahrain clearly corresponds, in some measure, with Dilmun whilst 'Oman similarly approximates to Magan. Such a division is fundamentally geographical in concept. 'Oman is the region whose economic life focuses on the 650 km long mountain chain which forms the dominant physical feature of south-east Arabia. Al-Bahrain corresponds to the region of the "two waters", those absorbed by the desert surface (al-Ahsa'), and those of the confined aquifers draining towards the Gulf from the scarplands (al-Yamama) surrounding the Najd (al-'Arud). Natural release points of this pressurized sub-surface flow give rise to the springs which supply all the main oases of Hasa from the confines of Kuwait (al-Kazima) to Qatar as well as on Bahrain island itself. Offshore on the sea-bed the pearl divers used to fill their water bags from these natural discharge points.

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Selections from the records of the Bombay Government No XXIV New Series IOR:V/23/217, pp 531-634

(Chart) of **part of the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf**

Surveyed by J.M. Guy and G.B. Brucks, 1822-25, and published by J. Horsburgh, 1826-29 IOR:X/3635/36/1

Chart of the Gulf of Persia

constructed from the trigonometrical surveys of G.B. Brucks, 1830. Published by J. Horsburgh, 1832 IOR:X/3635/35/2

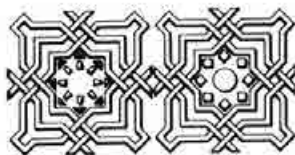
Trigonometrical plan of the island and harbour of Bahrein

Surveyed by Lts G.B. Brucks and W.E. Rogers, 1825. Published by J. Horsburgh, 1828 IOR:X/3635/37

'Journal of an excursion into Arabia'

Lt W.H. Wyburd, 1832 IOR:L/MAR/C/570 and reprinted in **Arabian Studies**, v, 1979

- 22 Heart-beguiling Araby, p37
- 23 *Navigation of the Gulf of Persia*, p 532
- 24 *Navigation of the Gulf of Persia*, p 566
- 25 Lt G.B. Kempthorne 'Notes made on a survey along the eastern shores of Persian Gulf in 1828' JRGs, v. 1835, 278-79
- 26 Low, i, pp 405-06
27. 27 April 1858 Low, ii, p 405
28. Tuson 'Lieutenant Wyburd's journal....', p 27
29. See Tuson A brief guide to sources for Middle East studies in the India Office Records for explanatory notes on these series.



FOOT NOTES

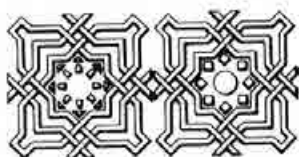
1. See, for example: Zahra Freeth and H.V.F. Winstone *Explorers of Arabia* (London, 1978), Robin Bidwell *Travellers in Arabia* (London, 1976), Peter Brent *Far Arabia: Explorers of the myth* (London, 1977); biographies include H.V.F. Winstone's *Captain Shakespear* (London, 1976) and *Gertrude Bell* (London, 1978), Mea Allen's *Palgrave of Arabia* (London, 1972); Sadlier's *Dairy of a journey across Arabia ...* and Pelly's *Report on a Journey to Riyadh*, originally published in Bombay in 1866, have both been reprinted. There are many more.
2. Edward W. Said *Orientalism* (London, 1978); Kathryn Tidrick *Heart-beguiling Araby* (Cambridge, 1981)
3. *Orientalism*, PP 39-40
4. For a very detailed history of the Bombay Marine and Indian Navy from 1600 to its abolition in 1863 see C.R. Low *History of the Indian Navy* (London, 1877) 2 vols.
5. J.G. Lorimer *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia* IOR:L/P &S/20 C 91, Vol 1, p.220
6. IOR: P Bombay Secret Proceedings Vol 49, Cons 14, 16 May 1821
7. During his career Dalrymple published over 900 plates of charts, plans and views. For details of his work and a list of the charts see A. Cook *East India Company nautical charts, 1769-1807* (unpublished IOR list available in IOR Reading Room) I am grateful to Geoff Armitage for help in identifying material on Bahrain in the IOR map collection.
8. The most conspicuous contrast was between the incumbency of Sir Charles Malcolm, 1828-1838 and Sir Robert Oliver, 1838-1849 (See below)
9. IOR Maps X 3627/2/122, 123v, 127l 129; *An account of the navigation between India and the Gulf of Persia at all seasons, with nautical instructions for that Gulf* (London, 1786) IOL:W 4199 (the printed memoir also includes the charts and plans)
10. *Directions for sailing to and from the East Indies, China, New Holand, Cape of Good Hope and the interjacent ports; compiled chiefly from original journals at the East India House, and from journals and observations made during twenty one years experience navigating in those seas* (London, 1809, i, p 246) IOL: W 3214
11. London, 1826 IOL: V 8627
12. IOR: P/411/88 Bombay Marine Consultations, 13 July 1825, Nos 15-17, Memoir from Brucks to Superintendent Bombay Marine.
13. IOR: P/411/85 Bombay Marine Consultations, 28 July 1824, p.847, Guy to SBM, 16 July 1824
14. Low, i, pp 407-08
15. See Bibliography for a list of the charts and memoirs which include reference to Bahrain.
16. 'Memoir relative to the hydrography of the Persian Gulf, and the knowledge that we possess of that sea' TBGS, xii, 1854-56
17. See C.P. Harris 'The Persian Gulf submarine telegraph of 1864' *Geographical Journal*, Vol 135 Pt 2. 1969
18. Lorimer, i, p 251
19. Speech to Royal Geographical Society quoted by Low, ii, p 86
20. IOR: P/387/14. Wyburd visited Bahrain in 1832 and forwarded an account of it to the Government of Bombay. See P Tuson 'Lieutenant Wyburd's journal of an excursion into Arabia' *Arabian Studies*, v.
21. *Navigation of the Gulf of Persia*, Bombay Selections, xxiv, p 532-33 IOR:V/23/217

lection (IOR: W,X,Y.) The memoirs, other than the published ones, appear in a number of different IOR series, some of which have not yet been fully investigated. The series of miscellaneous material in IOR:L/MAR/C (Marine Miscellaneous) includes a group of volumes of papers relating to the development of the overland route to India. Some of the marine memoirs — Wyburd's for example — are bound with these. The volumes are in the process of being listed and will no doubt eventually reveal similar writings.

The regular progress reports from the survey officers to the Government of Bombay are located in the IOR series Bombay Marine Proceedings. Other copies may be found in the records of the British Residency in the Persian Gulf at Bushire (IOR:R/15/1) and in the series

IOR:L/P/&S/5-6 (Political and Secret correspondence with India.)””””

The bibliography below lists a selection of charts and memoirs which include Bahrain. It is not exhaustive but is intended as an indication of the type and quantity of the material available. Similarly, the outline of the Bombay Marine's surveying operations given in this paper is intended only as a preliminary bibliographical survey of the records; the critical comments are a tentative introduction to their contents. The India Office Library and Records plans to publish an annotated bibliography of all the Bombay Marine surveys of the Arabian Peninsula. In the meantime this paper might direct researchers to a little-explored but rewarding source of early nineteenth century Gulf material.



Indian Navy between May 1827 and December 1830 only nine were still alive in 1858, by which date the oldest would have been forty-four.

The Gulf was a hard posting to endure. Yet the men who went there possessed a sympathy for the people and, in spite of the harshness of the environment (or perhaps because of the challenge it presented) for the land itself. In a letter to Commodore Jenkins commanding the Persian Gulf Squadron, Constable described his reception on the coast:

At the towns where we have taken observations, the Sheikhs have treated us with the utmost kindness, giving us a room in their house, with carpets and pillows to sleep on, and food has been cooked for us. Never had any objection been made to our surveying operations, but every facility afforded. A natural curiosity has brought a hundred people around the instruments, but they never cause the least annoyance; they are too well-behaved for that. ⁽²⁷⁾Wyburd, in his journal, says he was treated 'with every hospitality' in Bahrain, fed on dates, bread and buttermilk sent to him by the Shaikh, Khalifah b. Salman, and entertained by an itinerant poet lampooning the Imam of Muscat to the great delight of the Shaikh and his followers. ⁽²⁸⁾These accounts, and many

others like them in the memoirs accompanying the surveys, are as much a comment on the tact and approach of the surveyors themselves as on the hospitality of the local Arabs.

The extracts quoted in this paper give some indication of the quality of the material available in the records of the Bombay Marine and Indian Navy surveys. The accounts of the Gulf range from romantic fantasy to carefully collected statistics. All of them in their own way tell us something about the attitudes of the men who explored Arabia and about the people they met there.

The charts, maps and accompanying memoirs prepared by the surveyors were submitted initially to the Superintendent of Marine in Bombay. From Bombay they were forwarded to the Court of Directors in London for copying and often for publication. Many of the memoirs were subsequently published, the majority by the Bombay Geographical Society but some by the Royal Geographical Society in London. In addition the officers working on the surveys reported regularly to Bombay on their progress. Sources for the surveys are therefore various. The bulk of the charts and maps, together with some of the accompanying memoirs, are now located in the India Office Records Map Col-

AND AGAIN (II, P 69),
WHEN DISCUSSING THE
Red Sea survey:

It is a subject of wonderment that from the ranks of so small a Service — which had already supplied for the Persian Gulf survey, Captains Maughan, Guy and Brucks, and Lieutenants Haines, Kempthorne, Cogan, Ethersey, Whitelock and Lynch — the Superintendent was able to select a second staff of equally accomplished marine surveyors and draughtsmen

Many of them were competent linguists as well as able technicians. Wyburd's Arabic and Persian was even good enough for him to pass himself off as a local. Most important of all, perhaps, they needed the stamina and will power to endure the harshest of physical conditions:

No one but those who have actually been in the Persian Gulf can imagine the extreme barrenness and sterility of its coasts. Sunburnt and sandy regions lie on all sides; not even a blade of grass relieves the aching eyeballs from the intense glare of the sand; the hot season, which continues for five months, is intolerable; existence then is almost insupportable; the sun is so powerful during the day that

it is almost certainly fatal to expose oneself, in the least, to its influence. I have seen men die in the utmost agony and raving mad, from exposure to the sun, after a few hours' illness. When attacked with this brain fever few get over it, and if they do, their intellects are for ever impaired. Men and officers have alike a miserable life during that season — they merely exist; the extreme hardships and privations they undergo are almost beyond belief; there is no society except among brother officers; the face of a European female is never seen, and it is but seldom that a glimpse is obtained even of an Arab or Persian one, they are all so completely(25) iled and kept so close ...²⁵

During the 1820s survey, one stretch of the coast was surveyed along 'extensive sandflats, running sometimes nearly eight miles off shore, through which the officers and men had to wade middle deep'(26) Even under these conditions they were able to complete a distance of 79 miles in only two weeks. Nevertheless, the climate and sometimes less than adequate standards of accommodation on board the surveying vessels eventually took their toll. Of the fifty two officers who joined the

benefit from education would do: what I have done is to try and place the situation, numbers, and manners of the people I have visited, and who are little, if at all known, in as clear a point of view as my information and abilities would permit⁽²³⁾

Yet it is precisely this lack of pre-conceived ideas which makes Brucks' account so informative, although even he is not free from some of the racial prejudices of his contemporaries. He describes the population of Bahrain, which he estimates to be around sixty thousand, as divided into:

the Uttoobees of Bahrain, the Shaikh's family; the Abookara, Al Zayed, Al Salata, Al Mahande, Mootsallema, Kaiser, Genahat, and some mixed tribes, in all said to be eighteen or twenty thousand men capable of bearing arms; the remainder about forty or forty-five thousand, Bahrainees, are a mixed breed between Arab and Persian, mostly cultivators, merchants and fishermen, who appear to possess more of the indolence and cunning of the Persian than the frank and open boldness of the Arab. The Arabs look with much contempt upon this class.⁽²⁴⁾

Brucks' account of his back-

ground, however, should not be taken to imply that the Marine officers were all uneducated or untrained. Their education was simply more technical than that of their more privileged contemporaries. Brucks himself was not a trained surveyor but he was assisted on the Gulf survey by a group of assistants who Low describes as 'singularly able'. Of the other surveyors, Stiffe had entered the service after a classical and mathematical education and by the time of the 1857 survey had passed exams in seamanship, navigation, the theory and practice of steam engines and gunnery. He was a talented astronomer, artist and one of the most accomplished hydrographers in the history of the Marine service. Constable had also studied navigation and nautical astronomy before entering the service and had considerable artistic talent, no doubt inherited from his more famous father. Low (ii, p. 94) describes the collective talents of the service in almost lyrical terms:

It is not every service of the numerical strength of the Indian Navy, that, besides possessing a galaxy of surveying talent, could produce at one time, travellers of the distinction and scientific attainments of Wood and Wyburd, Whitelock and Wellsted, Ormsby and Bar-

lar accounts of official travellers in the Arabian Peninsula were left unread in the East India Company's and India Office archives where they are only now coming to light.

Tidrick's (and Edward Said's) thesis is that by the nineteenth century certain stereotyped views of the Arab had become current in Europe and the accounts of educated travellers to the Middle East were inevitably influenced by these images. They are images which are still only too familiar: the Bedouin, for example are independent, faithful and hospitable; their poverty is to be admired because it has been undertaken voluntarily; they possess a nobility and freedom which every English traveller recognises because these are qualities similar to those possessed by an English gentleman. The collective sympathy which developed in the minds of the English ruling classes for the 'Arab of the desert' was contributory, in Tidrick's words, to the creation 'of the notion that Englishmen possessed an intuitive understanding of Arabs which gave them a special right, even an obligation, to interfere in their affairs'.

It is the absence of some of these prejudices which makes many of the marine officers' accounts so much more unpredictable and frequently more

interesting and informative. The backgrounds of the Bombay Marine and Indian Navy officers were very different from those of the Blunts or Charles Doughty. The service itself was regarded very much as a 'cinderella' service in comparison to the Royal Navy. The pay of its officers and men was lower than that of the East India Company's army and it was consistently starved of financial resources. The officers themselves were generally more free from the prejudices of the Victorian ruling class and they tended to approach their tasks with rather more open minds than those of their contemporaries brought up on the Grand Tour and classical education. Moreover, their duties were clearly defined by the need of the British Government of India for hard information on the situation in Gulf. Brucks, for example, excuses the failings in his memoir and describes his aims as follows:

In regard to the population, religion, manners, customs, trade and resources, it cannot be expected that a person situated as I am, having been at sea since I was eleven years of age, should be able to write these, either in an historical manner, or with the attention to grammatical rules which a person having had proper time to

from three to five dollars on each boat, according to its size. The value of the whole produce of the season on the principal bank is estimated at forty lacs of dollars, or about eighty thousand pounds, of which it is computed the Hindoo merchants purchase and transmit two-thirds to India, while the remaining portion finds its way into Persia and Arabia. (Wellsted *City of the Caliphs*, i, pp 121-23)

In the vicinity of Bahrain fresh water is found beneath the salt; the inhabitants use that water, and ships and boats which visit the island are very generally filled up with it. Their mode of obtaining this is simple, and characteristic of the people. A diver descends with an empty skin, places its mouth over the spot whence the fresh water gushes, ties the string, when it is filled, and permits the skin to rise to the surface. At high tide these springs are covered with twelve feet water, and I have no doubt, if search were made for them, that springs of a similar nature would be found in other parts of the world.

(Wellsted p 128-29)

The contrasts apparent in the factual information provided by

the writings of men like Brucks, Constable, Stiffe and the more imaginative, often romantic, descriptions which Wellsted's narrative points towards, are discussed at length and in a wider context by Kathryn Tidrick (*Heart-beguiling Araby*). Tidrick compares the romanticism which pervades the writings of the most famous independent travellers to Arabia (Burton, Palgrave, Blunt, Doughty) with those of other travellers, among whom we might number many of the officials. 'For some of these travellers Arabia's aura of romance was merely a pleasant gloss on their experiences and no more. Others were more deeply engaged by the land and the people but did not allow themselves to succumb to the attraction they felt ... Still others were quite immune to the fascination exercised by the Arabs over more imaginative travellers'(22) Sadlier is cited as an example of the latter, 'a man entirely unimaginative and untainted by literature in any form'. She goes on to say that Sadlier's unromantic account of the Bedouin is probably one reason why his account of his difficult and impressive journey was not published in book form until 1866, although a much more likely reason is that the mission was political and official and therefore not regarded by the British government as being of general interest. Many simi-