

INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH BAHRAIN, 1913-36

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Date: 30th July 2007

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "India's Relations with Bahrain, 1913-1936" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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*Dedicated
to My
Late Grandfather*

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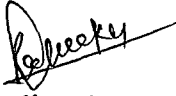
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PREFACE

This study titled "India's Relations with Bahrain, 1913-36", proposes to deal with the political, economic and socio-cultural relations between India and Bahrain. During the first half of the 20th century, both regions were under same foreign colonial domination. Apart from these the growth of nationalistic feeling in the Indian subcontinent had its ripples on the people of Bahrain. This study also tries to analyse the broad spectrum of political, economic and socio-cultural relationship between India and Bahrain covering the period "between" 1913-36. Besides it will also try to explore the historical background which formed the basis this mutual relationship. This research can help us to understand the different dimension of India's relations with Bahrain during the first half of the 20th century and also examine the factors in which Indian merchants as well as workers migrated in a small number to Bahrain.

As far as Research Methodology is concerned, this study is historical in nature and largely based on archival materials. The archival records are used from the National Archives of India, New Delhi. For the Primary sources primarily the files of Political and Foreign Department are used which has been procured in National Archives of India, New Delhi. For the secondary sources Nehru Museum Memorial library provided some valuable books which helped me to add some important events in this study. In Secondary sources various books, articles, periodicals, published reports, newspapers, and commercial database are also used.

The main thrust of this study is to provide the two-sided relations between India and Bahrain during the interwar period and the fact is that both regions

had been colonised by the British and the administration of Bahrain was carried out from Bombay through a Political agent which had been accountable to Viceroy of India.

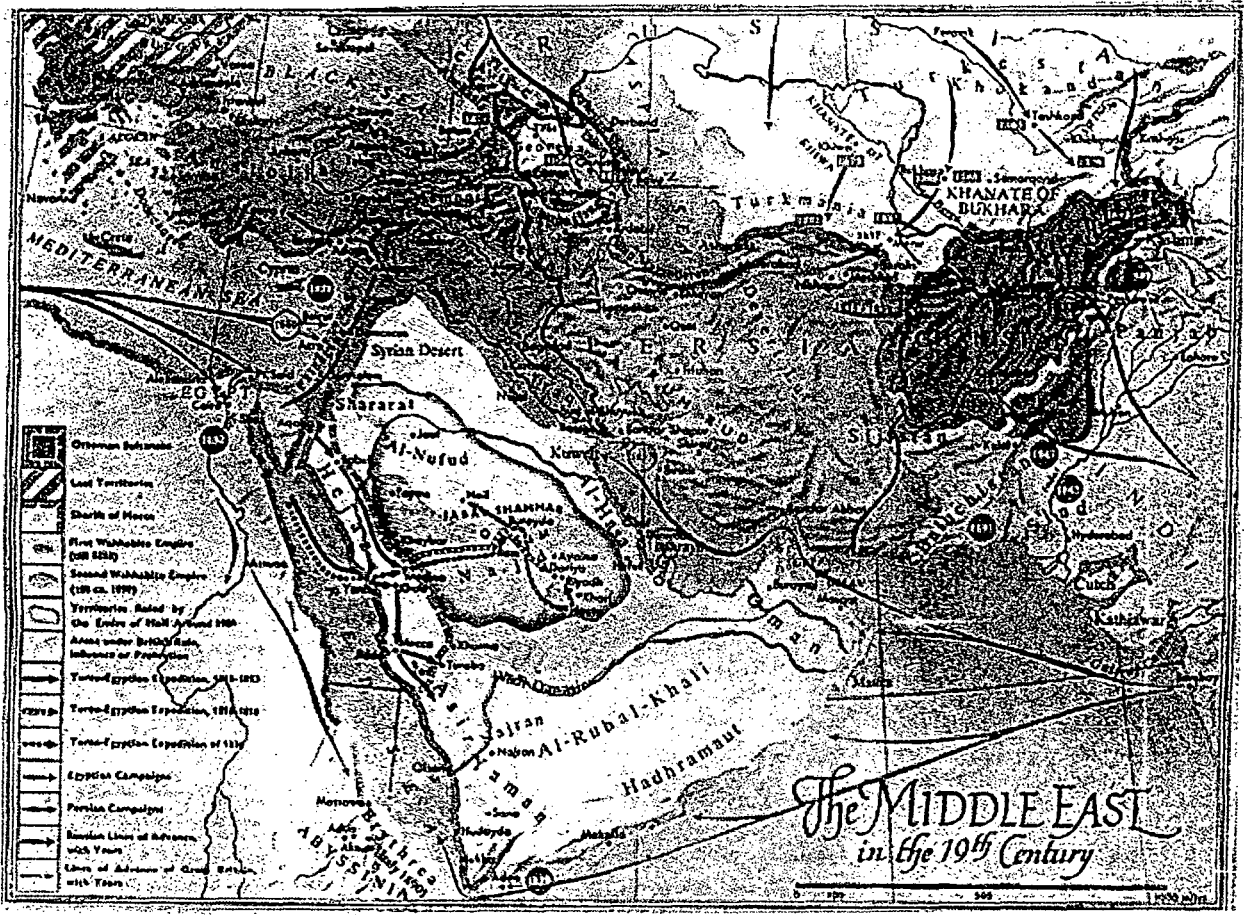
Chapter I presents the historical background of the emergence of Bahrain as well as the factors which formed the basis of the relations between India and Bahrain from 3000BC. It also talks about the migration of Indians to Bahrain in brief. **Chapter II** singles out the two most important factors that played a vital role in the political and diplomatic relationship between the two regions: the relationship with Britain and the British commercial interest in maintaining the Persian Gulf region as colony of Britain. **Chapter III** explores the mutual economic relations between India and Bahrain and also provides some trade related data that formed the basis of economic relationship. It also examines the commercial relationship between India and Bahrain compared to other countries in the region. **Chapter IV** deals with the socio-cultural relationship and India's contribution to Bahraini society. It also finds out that Indian national movement had been responsible for the anti-British movement in Bahrain as well as Indian role in early modernisation process in Bahrain. **Chapter V** summarizes the study besides providing some comparative account of India's relations with other Gulf countries.

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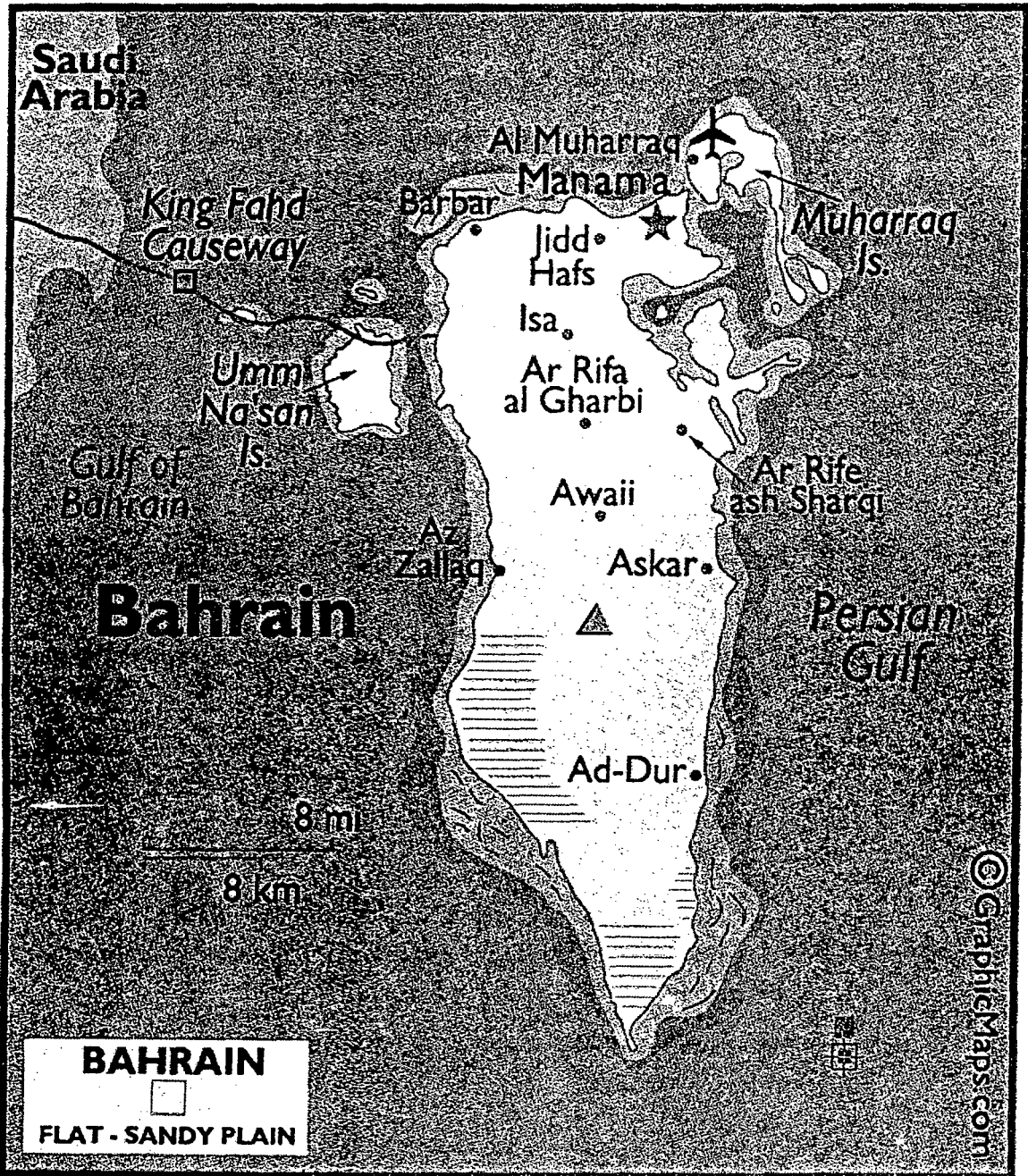
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- Land territories
- Sharif of Mecca
- First Wahabite Empire (1811-1818)
- Second Wahabite Empire (1818-1841)
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- Egyptian Campaigns
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- Russian Lines of Advance, 1855-1856
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The MIDDLE EAST
in the 19th Century



<http://worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/lgcolor/bhcolor.htm>

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Introduction

This chapter discusses the historical background which formed the basis of relations between India and Bahrain. During the early 20th century, Bahrain became part of the British India and thus strong multi-faceted relations were developed between the two countries. This chapter also highlights the features and the history of the emergence of Bahrain. During the 18th century, the Gulf because of its strategic importance became inextricably linked with the political and commercial rivalries between the European countries. There was a series of agreements between Britain and Bahrain which placed Bahrain under protectorship of Britain in the 1st half of the 20th century. The dominant role played by the British Indian authorities in Bahrain paved the way for Indian migration to Bahrain in order to seek employment and establish business. The Indian migration to Gulf in general and Bahrain in particular is also discussed in brief.

Historical Background

Bahrain's early history goes back to the roots of human civilization. The main Island is thought to have broken away from the Arabian mainland sometime around 6000BC. It has certainly been inhabited since Prehistoric times. The Islands of Bahrain, positioned in the middle south of the Persian Gulf, have attracted the attention of many invaders throughout history. Bahrain is an Arabic word meaning "Two Seas", which refers to the fact that the Islands contain two sources of water, sweet water springs and salty water in the surrounding seas, or to the south and north waters of the Persian Gulf, separating it from the Arabian coast and Iran respectively (Jenner 1984: 7-8; Elmadani 2003: 109).

Indus Valley and Dilmun Civilizations

The Bahrain archipelago first emerged into world history sometime around 3000BC as the seat of the Dilmun trading empire. Dilmun, a Bronze Age culture that lasted some 2000 years, benefited from the archipelago's strategic position along the trade routes linking Mesopotamia with the Indus Valley Civilization. Archeological evidences shows that there were trade relations between Indus valley civilization and Dilmun. Therefore, the association of India and Bahrain is old one. It stretches back to the 3rd millennium B.C. when Indus Valley Civilization and Dilmun Civilization of Bahrain had experienced very healthy trade relationship (Caspers 1987: 34-38). Prof. Romila Thapar in her study that is based on archaeological, historical and linguistic evidence analysed about the identification of Indus valley. According to her Dilmun, Meluha and Makan can be a part of Western India¹ (Thapar 1975: 1-42).

¹ Prof. Romila Thapar has made a study of using archaeological, historical and linguistic evidence and analyses from the Indian perspective for possible identification of Dilmun, Meluha and Makan. According to which she suggested the Indus Civilisation as a possible identification of Dilmun.(P-1). According to her by using above evidence the result seems to confirm the identification of Meluha with Gujerat and Makan with Sind and Baluclustan. Furthermore Dilmun it seems was also a part of western India. In one text, Dilmun is referred to as the 'land of the crossing'. It is repeatedly described as 'the pure land', 'the clean land, the bright land', in short, the paradise land. Its bitter and brackish water is changed to sweet on the pleading of its titulary goddess with the sun-god. The role of water and cleanliness is stressed in the life of its people. It is the home of the water-god (Thapar 1975: 17-18).

Archaeological evidence indicates the presence of a few Harappan settlements of the mature phase, although there are predominance of late Harappan sites all over Kathiawar. The chronological sequence from archaeology would suit the late Akkadian period but it does seem problematical to locate Harappan settlements as early as the date of Ur-Nanshe. It is possible however that more extensive excavation along the southern coast of Kathiawar may reveal pre-Harappan and early Harappan settlements. Recent archaeological exploration and excavation in the adjoining area of Kutch have revealed a large number of Harappan sites and some evidence of what appear to be pre-Harappan settlements. It has been suggested that the evidence for early Harappan sites may have been washed away by a flood which seems to have devastated Kathiawar and Kutch in c. 1500 B.C. or somewhat earlier. This might in turn account for the falling off of trade in this period. It is worth noting however those references to Dilmun in the Akkadian period suggest essentially an area of raw materials with not much in the way of indigenous organized trade. It is only in the Old Babylonian period that Dilmun emerges as a major trading area with the economic underpinnings required for large scale commerce. The chronology of the Old Babylonian

However, Scholars like E.C.L. During Casper and Govindankutti rejected the possible identification of Indus Valley. According to them, recent views have tended to support the identification of Dilmun with Bahrain (Caspers & Govindankutti 1978: 113-145).

It is possible that along with trade relations some socio-cultural exchanges occurred. According to Casper, the discovery of stamped cornelian beads from the burial area near Sar-Buri on the west coast of Bahrain Island, not far from Hamala Town on the west coast of Bahrain supports that there appears to have been a dominance of Harappan motifs in the Arabian Gulf, which

period (c. 1900 to c. 1600 B.C.) conforms to the approximate period of the mature Harappan settlements and those of the late Harappans in Sursiitra. (Thapar 1975: 19-21).

If Bahrain was Dilmun it would have been close enough for trade and probably firmly under the control of the Mesopotamian merchants. It would hardly have had a different weight standard from the Mesopotamian cities. The Harappan weight standard occurring at Bahrain could suggest that Bahrain was an intermediary point in the overall trade. That the Indian weight standard was used as far west as Bahrain would not have been so unlikely as there was undeniably a strong Indian influence in the Persian gulf, attested too by the style of the seals. (Even in more recent times, the Indian monetary units for example, annas, paise and rupees were in use on the Arabian coast as far as Kuwait until 1961) (Thapar 1975: 35-36).

If Bahrain was Dilmun, there would be little point in shipping the copper first to Bahrain and then to Mesopotamia. Since it was mined in Makan and Dilmun, it could as have gone directly to the Mesopotamian cities. Transportation from Dilmun only makes sense if the Dilmun merchants were the entrepreneurs collecting the merchandise and for this Sursiitra would have been a better base than Bahrain. Dilmun and Makan are both mentioned as places trading directly with Ur:

The temple of Enzak at Failaka could perhaps have been built by a group of merchants or families originally from Sursiitra but settled for some generations in Bahrain as traders who by then may have been worshipping their own god but not through the medium of their own language. It is relevant perhaps to distinguish between the bulk trade in copper, timber and stone and the trade in luxury articles the two categories of commodities possibly being under the control of different groups of merchants. If Bahrain were Dilmun one could expect more detailed accounts of Dilmun in the sources of the Assyrian period. There would also be likelihood not only of conquest but of firm political control over the area. The intermittent references to the rulers of Dilmun, even if tribute bearing, suggests an area outside direct Assyrian control (Thapar 1975: 35-37).

For further details see: Romila Thapar (1975), "A Possible Identification of Meluha, Dilmun and Makan", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 18(1): 1-42.

may have lasted for a considerable length of time. Harappan material found in Bahrain highlights Indus Valley-Arabian Gulf connection (Caspers 1987: 31-37).



Figure 1.1. Copper-Bronze goat from the Jefferson tumulus, Hamala North, north-west Bahrain. In Elizabeth C. L. During Casper 1987: 39.

This form of cultural interaction between the Gulf and the Harappan Civilization can be further confirmed by the presence of a horned animal made of copper or bronze, just 2 cms. in height (plate 1.1), which was lying in the northern section of the main burial chamber of the Jefferson tumulus in Bahrain. This tiny animal, probably a goat, stands on a low base and has a loop-attachment soldered to one side about midway along its body suggesting that it was originally used as an ornament, perhaps a pin or a brooch or was possibly sewn onto a garment. It is now well proposed that this tiny masterpiece is a Harappan Import (Caspers 1987: 38).

The Harappan animal portrayals those of tiny copper-bronze animal figurines in particular, make the point clear that there were established link between

the Harappan civilization and Dilmun civilization. It leaves little doubt that the tiny copper-bronze goat from the Jefferson tumulus belongs to the category of miniature bronze animals from the Indus Valley and the loop-attachment could easily have been soldered on at a later stage, for instance on Bahrain itself. Besides, the loop-attachment device may well have been known to and employed by the Harappan artists, although it happens to be absent in the few existing examples (Caspers 1987: 45).

This occurrence of a Harappan miniature bronze animal on Bahrain is the first of its kind and the pottery and copper goblets have been possible imports from areas across the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. It can be said that the dead man buried in the Jefferson tumulus must have been a Harappan residing in the Gulf, perhaps a merchant, a man from Meluha who had set up a business on Bahrain (Caspers 1987: 45).

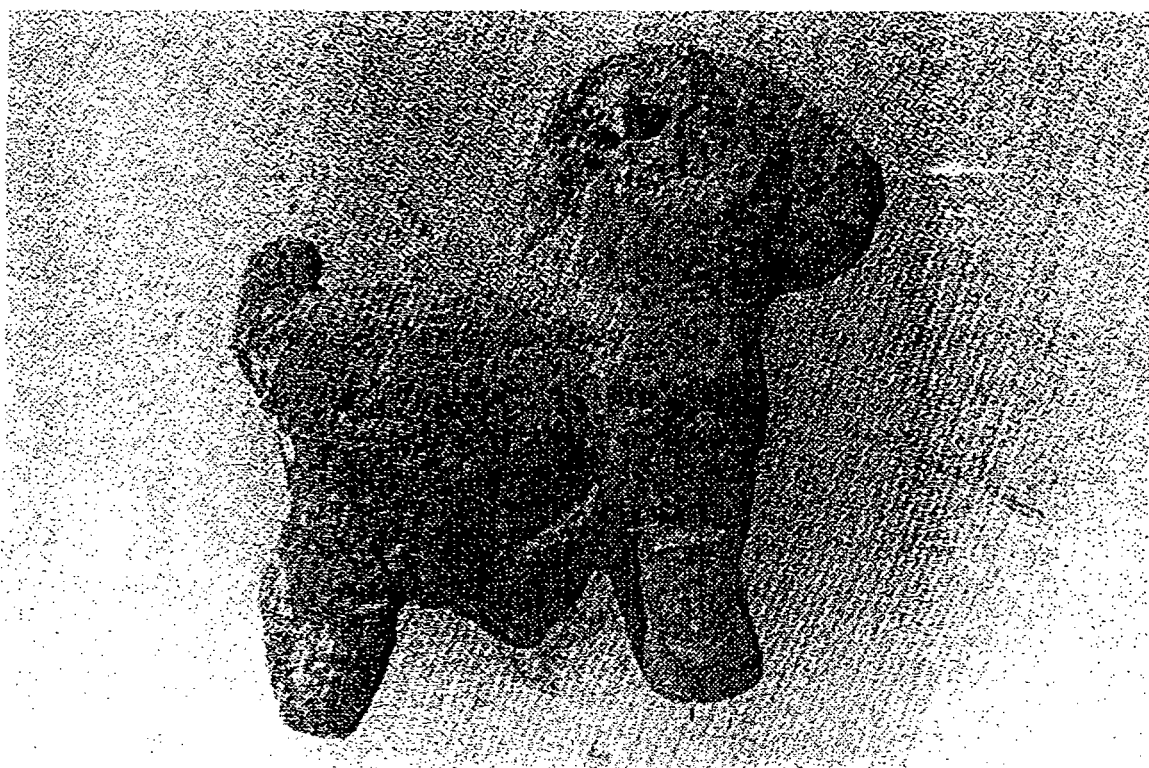


Figure 1.2. Bronze goat-like animal from Moenjo-daro. Approximate height 2 cms. In Elizabeth C. L. During Casper 1987: 39.

As the archaeological evidences suggest that, there was resemblance between a number of methods used in certain activities such as fishing, boat construction, measuring and weighing in both civilizations. The Harappan system of weights appears to have been used in Bahrain. Harappan seals have been found in Bahrain (Ratnagar 2003: 104).

Bahrain is mentioned as a holy Island in the mythology of Sumerian Civilizations, one of the world's earliest civilizations, which flourished in what is today southern Iraq. Dilmun is also referred as a land of purity:

“The holy cities – present them to him,
the land of Dilmun is holy.

Holy Sumer - present it to him,
the land of Dilmun is holy.

The land of Dilmun is holy, the land of Dilmun is pure,
the land of Dilmun is clean, the land of Dilmun is holy” (Jenner 1984: 5):

Historical records also referred to Bahrain as the "Life of Eternity", "Paradise", etc. Bahrain was also called the "Pearl of the Persian Gulf". Dilmun enjoyed considerable power and influence, and it controlled a large part of the western Gulf shore (what is now eastern Saudi Arabia). At various times in its history, Dilmun probably extended as far north as Kuwait and as far inland as the oasis of Al-Hasa in modern Saudi Arabia (Jenner 1984: 5).

Journey from Dilmun to Tylos

Little is known of the circumstances of Dilmun's decline. Dilmun eventually declined and was absorbed by the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. The Greeks arrived, in the form of Nearchus, a general in the army of Alexander the Great, around 300BC, giving the islands the name "Tylos". Bahrain remained a Hellenistic culture for some 600 years. The six hundred years from about 300B.C. to 300A.D. seem to have been relatively prosperous ones in the

history of Bahrain. Writing in the first century A.D., Pliny mentioned that Tylos was famous for its pearls. During these years, Bahrain was strongly influenced by various Persian civilizations and ultimately, the Islands were formally annexed by the Sassanian Persians in the 4th century A.D. thus Bahrain became part of the Persian Empire (Wilson 1928: 82-98).

Bahrain's Tryst with Christianity

Interestingly, it was during the 3rd or 4th centuries A.D. that many inhabitants of Bahrain appear to have adopted the new Christian faith. It is a fact that the *Nestorian* sect of Christianity was well-established in Bahrain and on the Arabian side of the Gulf by the early 5th century. Church records show that Bahrain was the seat of two of the five Nestorian bishoprics existing on the Arabian side of the Gulf at the time of the arrival of Islam. It is uncertain when the two bishoprics were dissolved though they are known to have survived until 835 A.D. (Wilson 1928: 91-98).

Arrival of Islam

In the 7th century many of the Island's inhabitants accepted the personal invitation of the prophet Mohammed to convert to Islam. The people of Bahrain are very proud of the fact that they were one of the first territories outside mainland of Arabia to accept Islam and to do so peacefully. About the year 640 A.D. the Prophet Mohammed sent a letter to the ruler of Bahrain inviting him to adopt Islam. For whatever reasons, he did so fairly soon thereafter and for another two centuries, Christians and Muslims lived peacefully together with Pagan Arabs, Jews, Zoroastrians, as well as the Christian in Bahrain. Even today Bahrain has a tiny community of indigenous Christians (Jenner 1984: 12).

Bahrain was a part of both the Umayyad (ruled from Damascus from 661 to 750 A.D.) and Abbasid empires (ruled from Baghdad) from the 9th to 11th centuries. It was a devout Shia Muslim community. The period of deeper cultural and commercial relations between the Arabs and Indians began after the rise of Islam and its eastward expansion. This period of Abbasid Empire had been identified as the golden period of the Indo-Arab relations. Apart from intensive trade and commerce, the process of exchange in this period was reciprocal and covered the dissemination of the maximum amount of knowledge in the science and the arts, religion and philosophy and social and cultural ideas (Ahmad 1967: 82-83; Cooper 1967; Jha 1987: 212; Kumar 1965; Kelly 1968). It benefited Bahrain's trade during these years, and it is said to have been well-governed and prosperous. It once again became an important port on the trade routes, between Iraq and India after 600 B.C., the decline of Dilmun. The famous 14th century Arab traveler, Ibn Batuta visited Bahrain in about 1332 and left a highly vivid account of the Pearl-divers in Bahrain (Jenner 1984: 14). Until the first quarter of 16th century, Bahrain comprised the bigger region of Ahsa, Qatif (both are now the eastern province of Saudi Arabia) as well as Awal (now Bahrain Islands) (Zahlan 1979).

Persian Gulf and European Rivalries

Advent of Portuguese and Rivalry between European Countries

After a series of Islamic rulers, Bahrain was conquered by the Portuguese in the early 16th century. The Portuguese, who were aware of the great profit in the West Asia as middle man in trade between Europe and Asia, discovered a direct route to India and the East in 1498 when Vasco da Gama reached India

via the Cape of Good Hope. It opened a new chapter of history in the region. The Gulf because of its enormous strategic importance on the rich route to India became vulnerable to foreign infiltration. For the next four centuries, the Gulf region became inextricably linked with the political and commercial rivalries of European countries for example, Portugal, Holland, France, and then England (Mikhin 1988: 14-15).

The Persian Gulf area became evident of European rivalries between these countries. In 1509 and in 1513, Alfonso Albuquerque, the Portuguese viceroy of India sent Ambassadors (Ruy Gomez and Miguel Ferreira respectively) to Persia in order to establish relations with the ruler of Persia. After taking control of Muscat and Hormuz, in 1521 Bahrain became another possession of Portuguese. Portugal commanded the spice and silk route to India. The Portuguese used the Bahrain Island as a pearling port and military garrison. However, the Portuguese control of Bahrain lasted until in 1602, when the Portuguese Governor executed a trader, who was the brother of one of the Bahrain Island's wealthiest traders. The trader, Rukn el-Din, organised an uprising that soon drove the Europeans out from Bahrain. Ultimately, the Safavid ruler of Persia, Shah Abbas, invaded and took control of Bahrain in 1602. The Island then became the part of the Persian Empire until the end of the 17th century. The entire 17th century was dominated by the intense rivalry between the European companies. In the early period of 17th century, the Portuguese suffered several blows by their rivals. They were also expelled from Hormuz Island, the main citadel of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf. In the 1640s the Portuguese were finally driven out of the Persian Gulf area (Wilson 1928: 122-128; Jha 1987: 209-41).

The struggle between the Dutch and the English in the region was due to the desire of each side to have the right to collect custom duties in Bandar Abbas. In the late 17th and 18th centuries the English positions were strengthened at the expense of the Dutch. At the turn of the 18th century the main rivals in the struggle for colonial domination of Persian Gulf were England and France. However the French were defeated by British thus became the master of the fate of Persian Gulf (Mikhin 1988: 13-16).

The Al-Khalifa and British

When Nadir Shah came to power in Persia in 1736, he extended his rule and captured Bahrain in 1753. By the middle of the 18th century, Bahrain was in the hands of Persian Empire. In 1782, the Island of Bahrain was conquered by the ancestors of the present ruling family, the Al-Khalifa thereby removed from Persian tutelage. The Al-Khalifa was the members of the Utubi clan of the Anizah confederation of central Arabia. The Al-Saud family also belongs to this clan. In 1716, the Al-Khalifa had originally settled in Kuwait together with the Al-sabah, another branch of Utubi clan. They were active in peeling trade. From 1776 onwards the Al-Khalifa moved to Zubarah on the west coast of Qatar and established themselves there. With time, they developed Zubarah and it became an important pearling and trade centre (Jenner 1984: 19).

The Persian regarded the rise of Zubarah as a threat leading hostilities between the two. The Persian attempt to capture of Zubarah failed and the Al-Khalifa was successful in drove the Persian out from Bahrain finally in 1783 the Al-Khalifa captured Bahrain from the Persian. The Al-Khalifa settled permanently in Bahrain and Ahmad bin Khalifa became the first ruler of the Al-Khalifa family that continues even today except a brief period of Omani

occupation (1799-1809). For almost two centuries, Persia refused to acknowledge the rule of Al-khalifa and continued the Persian claim over Bahrain. It was not until 1970 that Shah of Iran finally renounced the Persian claim over Bahrain. (Zahlan 1979: 28-29).

In order to secure Bahrain from returning to Persian control, the Emirate entered into a treaty relationship with the Britain and became a British protectorate. In 1820 Bahrain signed the first of many treaties with Britain, who offered Bahrain naval protection from Ottoman Empire in exchange for unrestrained British access to the Gulf. This arrangement kept the British out of Bahrain's internal affairs until a series of internecine battles prompted the British to install their own choice for Emir in 1869. Bahrain officially became a British protectorate in May 1871, Oman in 1892, Kuwait in 1914 and Qatar in 1916. These Treaties were to offer British protection in return for control over their foreign affairs. Earlier in 1820 there was a General treaty of Peace between the Britain and the rulers of Persian Gulf. The Al-Khalifa of Bahrain was also a signatory in this treaty. After that there was a series of treaty between Bahrain and the British. On the eve of the First World War British managed to conclude several more agreements. There was an Anglo-Turkish convention in 29 July, 1913 under which the Ottoman Empire renounced its claims over the Bahrain, Qatar and the principalities of Trucial Oman (Zahlan 1989).

Although Oil was discovered in the Persian Gulf in 1902, large-scale drilling and processing didn't happen until the 1930s, right about the time the world Pearl market was collapsing. Oil money brought improved education and health care to Bahrain. It also brought the British closer to Bahrain interfering in its internal affairs. In 1921, Sheikh Isa the ruler of Bahrain was forced to

relinquish control over Bahrain to his son, Sheikh Hamad. Almost immediately, Bahrain embarked upon a policy of modernization. This was further aided by the appointment of Charles Belgrave as an adviser to the Sheikh of Bahrain in 1926. Together, these two established much of Bahrain's infrastructure with roads, schools and hospitals. Their job was made easier with the discovery and exploitation of oil. The receding influence of Britain and the new developments in the Persian Gulf, Britain was forced to shift their focus from Persian side to Arabian Gulf with much concentration on Bahrain. And finally, in 1935 the main British naval base in the Persian Gulf region was moved from Bushire to Bahrain, and the office of senior British official in the Persian Gulf, the Political Resident shifted from Bushire to Manama in Bahrain in 1946 (Bulloch 1994).

Indian Community in Gulf

The commercial relations and cultural contacts between India and the Gulf go back to the days of Indus Valley Civilization. Trade relations were further boosted by great silk route trade between China and the West in which Indian played a role of intermediaries (Jain 2005: 1-2). As a result of these contact a considerable number of Indians migrated in the Gulf in pre-Islamic era. Indians migrated there in order to either to establish business, seek employment or just to escape instability at home. At this time, the Indian group that migrated to Arabia and settled down in Bahrain, Oman and Basrah were the Zuth, the Bayasira and the Siabja. Thus, at the time of the advent of Islam, there were many Indians settled in Gulf and were involved in various activities (Elmadani 2003: 110).

The period between 7th and 10th centuries have been regarded as the golden age of Indo-Arab trade relations. The Arab conquest of Sindh reinvigorated the relationship since the Baghdad Caliphate developed economic and cultural relationship with India (Gopal 2001: 390). A considerable number of Indians as merchants, artisans, and scholars must have migrated in this region. They enjoyed much respect and influence that the port of Basrah (Obulla) was called the marches of India. According to a Vizier of Caliphs of Baghdad, Indians served as Viziers to the Caliphs of Baghdad for a couple of centuries during the Abbasid period and after the establishment of Umayyad government there, they were migrated to Damascus (Jain 2005: 3-4). According to medieval Arab sources, the Indian merchants both Hindu and Muslim played a dominant role in maritime trade and finance across the Indian Ocean. There was also a considerable amount of exchange of Arab and Indian scholars and religious figures between the two regions. As according to Maqbool Ahmad,

“The establishment of Muslim kingdom in the south and the introduction of the Arab educational system and the Sharia brought in its train to a large number of Arab theologians, jurists and men of learning to India throughout the later medieval period. Some Indian Muslim scholars also visited the Arab countries and acquired eminent positions in their respective fields of knowledge there” (Jain 2005: 4).

In the 15th and 16th century, the presence of Indians was in the port town of Mocha and Aden. Vasco da Gama also noted the presence of Indians in the interior of Arabian Peninsula. According to Calvin Junior, evidences suggest that Indian settlement in Oman existed no later than 15th century (Junior 1981: 39). An Indian merchant in Oman ‘Narottam’ played an important role in campaign against the campaign against the Portuguese. The grateful Omanis acknowledged the support of Indian community and they were accorded by

several privileges. They were also allowed to build a temple in Oman (Gopal 2001: 395). In Iran, a small number of Indians had settled in Yezd, Sgiraz, Isfahan, Tehran, and Mashad and Ormuz. Following the establishment of Bandar Abbas in the late 17th century, Indians were settled in this new city. Towards the end of the 18th century, Indians mainly Gujrati banians were replaced by a new group of merchants known as Shikarpuris who hailed from Sindh (Jain 2005: 4).

In the late 18th and 19th century there were three distinct Indian trading communities in Muscat. For example, Sindhis, Kutchi Bhatias and Khojas or Luwatiyas (Jain 2003: 4-6). The Indian community also existed in Iran, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirate and was mainly engaged in Pearl industry (Jain 2005: 5). In the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, there was presence of a number of Indian communities across the Gulf region. As far as Kuwait is concerned, the rulers of Kuwait did not encourage the participation of Indian merchants in the Pearl industry. Indian expatriate began to migrate in Kuwait in 1930s when oil was discovered there and Indian laborers were recruited to work in the Kuwait Oil Company (Jain 2004: 440).

The British rule in India and the Persian Gulf and the fact that Indians enjoyed privileges as British subject helped to settle the Indians in the region. Although the presence of Indians in the Persian Gulf region can be traced back to its antiquity, the migration of Indian labour to the Gulf countries started not before to the early 20th century. When oil was discovered in the region, Indian labour began to migrate. The Indian manpower presence in the region dates back to the early exploration days when a few Indians had been employed by the D'Arcy exploration company in 1902 (Jain 2005: 5). In Bahrain, during the pre-oil days the Indian expatriates were not allowed to

take part in commercial activities other than to providing loans in the pearl industry and trade. During the inter-war period, a large number of Indians were employed in various oil companies as well as in the various departments. During the early modernization period, when developments programmes began in the Bahrain, Indians filled the most of the vacancies of skilled and semi-skilled in nature (Elmadani 2003: 118-119).

In summing up, the above discussions suggest that India and Bahrain experienced commercial relationship during 3rd millennia BC when human civilization was taking root. Both the countries became closer during the 9th and 10th century AD when the North West Frontier Province of Indian subcontinent was occupied by the Arab invaders. The invasion of Arabs on Indian subcontinent paved the way for the greater commercial relations between the two regions. However, India and Bahrain got politically and economically linked when British rule was established in India and Bahrain during the early 20th century. The establishment of political relations between the two countries paved the way for the migration of Indians in Bahrain in order to seek employment and establish business there. During the early 1930s after the discovery of oil in Bahrain, Indians were imported and recruited to work in the emerging oil industry and they also filled the vacancies both skilled and non skilled that was created as a result of the various development programmes that were initiated in relation to the early modernization process in Bahrain.

CHAPTER II

India and Bahrain: Political and Diplomatic Relations

India and Bahrain: Political and Diplomatic Relations

This chapter highlights the political and diplomatic relations between India and Bahrain covering the period between 1913 and 1936. During the first half of the 20th century, India and Bahrain both had come under the British rule that led to political and administrative linkages between the two. Bahrain had been administered by a political agent accountable to the viceroy of India in Bombay. Besides highlighting these linkages, the chapter also discusses the impact of India's freedom struggle for freedom on Bahraini society and political psyche.

Political and Diplomatic Scenario of the Gulf in the early 20th Century

The two events after the Ottoman defeat in Qatar were significant to the development of political scenario of the Gulf region. The first of these was in May 1913 when the resurgent Wahabis, under the leadership of Ibn Saud, reconquered the Hasa province of Eastern Arabia from the Ottomans which brought the Wahabis into the forefront of Gulf politics and ended the domination of the peninsula by the Ottoman Turks. The second was the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29th July 1913 whereby the Ottoman Empire renounced all rights to the area and by the effect of this British took over the *de facto* reign of the region (Zahlan 1979: 55). When the Sheikh of Bahrain corresponded directly with the Vali¹ of Basrah in 1913, the Government of India informed to Sheikh that his action was not according to the treaty relation and the Sheikh was warned not to repeat the mistake again. The Sheikh of Bahrain was asked to address to the Political Agent at Bahrain

¹ The Ottoman administrative districts were a Vilayat (Province) and it was governed by a Vali.

whatever he may wish to communicate to the Turkish authorities in future. In this matter the Government of India decided that not to move this matter at present and to take up the question after the convention has been signed. The Government of India also declared that "we have a freer hand in the case of Bahrain once the convention is signed" (Government of India 1913: Foreign Department, Secret E, August- 409-411).

Bahrain is the only Island nation in West Asia. The country actually is an archipelago of 33 islands, of which Bahrain is the largest. The history of Bahrain's ruling Al Khalifa family goes back more than two centuries. Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, who conquered Bahrain in late eighteenth century, was the first member of the Al Khalifa dynasty, which has ruled ever since. In the second half of nineteenth century, Bahrain signed the Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship with Britain, guaranteeing British intervention in the case of external aggression. British influence in Bahrain was formalized in 1861. Factional disputes within Bahrain and claims to the Island by the Wahhabis, Iran and the Ottomans induced Britain to arrange a convention with Bahrain by which Britain recognized the independence of the Al-Khalifa state and guaranteed it against external aggression. (Mikhin 1988; Jenner 1984; Zahlan 1979: 26-34; Kumar 1965: 24-51; Yapp 1980: 79).

With the emergence of the Portuguese, Arabia's merchants were deprived of their influence in the Indian Ocean and of their share of Indian and Oriental goods. Their rulers in Hormuz, Muscat, and Bahrain were suppressed and forced to pay annual tributes to the Portuguese. Their mercantile activities in the Gulf and Indian Ocean became subjected to trade licenses and taxes. In Goa, the Indians of Arab origin known as 'Navayats' were excluded from office and deprived of their control over the import and re-export of Arabian

and Persian horses which were needed in the cavalry since the medieval times. The Gulf's dependency on India became, therefore, strong in almost every field. During the first half of the twentieth century, however, the British presence in the Gulf in general and Bahrain in particular, far outweighed that of the other powers and political entity (Zahlan 1979: 26-34).

Until the second half of the nineteenth century political responsibility had been first with the East India Company and then the Government of Bombay and after that date, the political control of Gulf had been exercised primarily by the Government of India. However, both the regions, India and the Gulf, getting politically and administratively linked under the British from the late nineteenth century up to the mid twentieth century. Indo-Gulf relations entered a new era until India's independence in 1947, all decisions regarding the fate of the Gulf region and its political and economic affairs have been taken in India and implemented by the British authorities appointed in India (Elmadani 2003: 111).

Political and Diplomatic Initiatives

The British Position

During the later part of the 19th century, British policy in the Gulf had to compete with the growing rivalry of other powers like Russia, French and German. The opposition of British presence in the Gulf was removed with the Anglo-French entente in 1904 and the Anglo-Russian convention in 1907. With the defeat of Germany and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War, the Gulf emerged in 1919 as an uncontested British lake. The discovery of Oil in Gulf further increased the interest of British and they had also planned to develop an air route from England to India that would pass

through the Gulf. With time, two new countries gained importance in the Gulf politics: Saudi Arabia and Iran. Both states gradually disturbed the *status quo* of the British position (Mikhin 1988: 21-25).

The British position changed after these new developments in Gulf. Once the Turkish presence had removed by the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Britain could pursue a more powerful policy in Gulf. By 1916 treaty², Qatar was placed firmly within the British orbit. The British Government was more concerned with the Wahabi movement in Arab Peninsula. With the captured Hasa by Saudi forces in May 1913, The Wahabi movement was brought into direct contact with the Gulf and its British representative there in for the first time in the 20th century. In 1915, Ibn Saud officially committed itself in a treaty relation with Britain to abstain from interfering in the affairs of the states on the Arab side of Gulf³. And after the First World War, all the other states on the Arab shores of the Gulf attained a similar status (Mikhin 1988: 24-27; Zahlan 1979: 67-68).

With these new developments, the Gulf region could no longer remain the primary concern of India alone; its importance was recognized by Britain and its empire as a whole. The situation in the Gulf thus brought about certain changes in the exercise of British power. The residency at Bushire had been established in 1763. At first the responsibility of the residency of Bushire had been with the East India Company and then the Government of Bombay since 1763 until 1873. After that date, political control of the Gulf had been

² On 3 November, 1916, there was a treaty between Abdallah bin Qasim and Percy Cox, the Political Resident of Gulf. According to this Abdallah bin Qasim was recognized as the independent ruler of Qatar.

³ In 1915, Ibn Saud agreed to desist himself from all aggression or interference with the territories of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman coast, who were under the protection of the British government, and who had the treaty relations with the said Government.

exercised by the government of India. In 1878, the political Resident also became Consul-General in the Persian Gulf. Thus the position of Political Resident had dual responsibilities: to the Government of India for the political residency and to the foreign office in London for the Consulate-General. Political agents were also appointed in the countries in the Gulf and were placed under the supervision of Political Resident. In Bahrain, there was an assistant from 1900 and the office of political agent in Bahrain was created for the first time in 1904 (Busch 1971: 133-153).

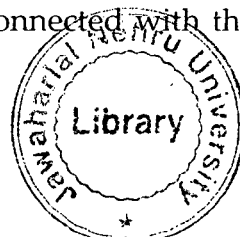
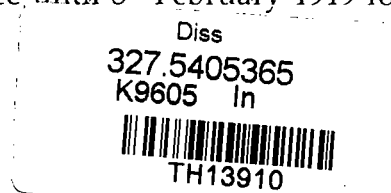
The Headquarter of Political Residency at Bushire also underwent change. After the rise to power of Reza khan in Persia in 1921, British privilege in that country began to recede. Reza khan denounced the Anglo-Persian agreement of 1919 that had placed Persian finance and army under British control. The Reza khan government made it clear that it would not accept any foreign domination. The Arab side of Gulf started to assume greater importance in British strategy. In 1936, it was decided to move the political residency away from Bushire to Bahrain. However, this was finally accomplished in 1947 (Zahlan 1979: 67).

Until 1921, the Political Resident was responsible to the Government of India. After that date, as a result of the increased involvement in the West Asia, the control of policy was transferred from India to London. The Middle East Department in the Colonial Office was established to exercise the power from London. In 1933, the Indian Office assumed the functions earlier performed by the Colonial Office regarding Gulf. The role of Government of India became confined to administrative and local matters and all the officers in the Gulf continued to be recruited from India (Zahlan 1979: 67-68).

The Political Resident had the largest responsibility. He was considered the uncrowned king of the Gulf. After the Political Resident, the Political Agents had the largest responsibility. Among the three Political Agents in Gulf: Muscat, Kuwait and Bahrain, the Political Agent in Bahrain had the largest responsibility. His areas of jurisdiction were beyond the Bahrain affairs. For example, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Kalba etc. After 1928, Qatar was also included in his area of responsibility. For the affairs of Trucial States, there was a Residency Agent stationed at Sharjah and was placed under the Political Agent (Zahlan 1979: 68; Jenner 1984).

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In the first half of the twentieth century Bahrain was a British protectorate controlled by the Government of India with a political agent accountable to the Viceroy. In the year 1914 ruler of Bahrain agreed not to award any grant of oil concessions to any person or group without prior consultation with the British Indian Government. According to the Article 11-13 of the Part II of the "the Bahrain Order in Council, 1913" application of law of British India and of the United Kingdom was accepted unconditionally by the Government of Bahrain (The Bahrain Order in Council, 1913: Government of India, Foreign Department, 1913, General-Secret. - July, Nos. 16-41: 31-50). In the exercise of the powers conferred on him by articles 70 and 11(3) of the Bahrain order in council 1913, the political resident in the Persian Gulf is pleased to declare that the Indian Court Fees Act 1923 shall be applicable to the Bahrain island with effect from the 1st January 1925 (Indian Court Fees Act 1923: No XVIII of 1923). This regulation may be cited as "the Indian Court Fees" regulation. The proposed king's regulation was apparently intended to come into force simultaneously with the order in council, although it received the approval of the viceroy in council. But the Bahrain Order in Council, 1913 did not come into force until 3rd February 1919 for reasons connected with the First World



War. It was then proposed that the political resident in the Gulf shall issue a king's regulation in the terms of the enclosure a letter under Article 70 of the Bahrain Order in Council 1913⁴ (Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political, Secret G- Jul. – 16-41).

⁴ **Bahrain Order in Council, 1913**

Parts	Subject	Articles
I.	Preliminary and General	1-10
II.	Application of law of British India and of the United Kingdom.	11-13
III.	Criminal Matters	14-34
IV.	Civil Matters	35-43
V.	Bahrain Subjects and Tribunals	44-50
VI.	Registration	51-59
VII.	Miscellaneous	60-69
	Schedule	

SCHEDULE

Indian Acts Applied.

The Indian Penal code (Act XLV of 1860).

The Indian Succession Act, 1864 (Act VI of 1864).

The Indian Divorce Act, (Act IV of 1869), except so much as relates to divorce and nullity of marriage.

The Bombay Civil Courts Act, 1869 (Act XIV of 1869), except sections 6, 15, 23, 32, 33, 34, 38, to 43 (both inclusive), the last clause of section 19, and the last two clauses of section 22.

The Indian Evidence Act, 1872 (Act I of 1872).

The Indian Contract Act, 1872 (Act IX of 1872).

The Indian Oaths Act, 1873 (Act X of 1873).

The Indian Majority Act (Act IX of 1873).

The Indian Pilgrim Ships Act (Act XIV of 1895).

The Indian Post Office Act, 1898 (Act VI of 1898).

The code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (Act V of 1908).

The beginning of British interest in Bahrain, having its' root in the early nineteenth century, was a direct consequence of the resolution of the Indian Government to put an end to the large-scale piracies committed by certain maritime tribes of the Arabian coast on seaborne commerce between India and the Gulf. In November 1819 an expedition was dispatched from Bombay under the command of Major-General Sir William Grant Keir to attack the ports of the piratical tribes on the inner coast of the Gulf. It was mainly Ras-al-Khaima on the Pirate Coast, the stronghold of the Qawasim, the most notorious and formidable of the freebooters, to destroy their shipping, and to exact from them an undertaking to refrain from piratical activities in the future. Bahrain was suspected of being a frequent resort of the Qawasim. The Governor-General of India, the Marquis Hastings, was not prepared to sanction any military operation against Bahrain. with the end of piracy there was a General Treaty of Peace signed in 1820 and although Bahrain was not involved in Piracy it also became a signatory of "the General Treaty of Peace" in 1820 (Kelly 1957: 55-56; Hawley 1970: 117).

The Indian Limitation Act, 1903 (Act IX of 1908).

In the construction of the Order the following words and expressions have the meaning hereby assigned to them, unless there be something in the subject or context repugnant thereto, that to say:-

"Bahrain" includes all places and waters within the limits of the order.

"Bahrain subject" means a subject of the Sheikh of Bahrain.

"British Subject" includes a British protected person.

"Foreigner" means a person not a British or Bahrain subject.

"Political Agent" means His Majesty's Agent at Bahrain appointed by the Governor-General of India in council, including a person acting temporarily with the approval of the Governor-General of India in council for such Political Agent.

"Political Resident" means His Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, including a person acting temporarily with the approval of the Governor-General of India in council for such Political Resident.

Politico-Economic Determinants

In order to maintain the peace in the Gulf and protect trade as expressed in the official orders to the Senior Naval Officer there were basically three concerns which could be categorized as the main driving forces behind British interference and consequently establishing politico-diplomatic relation between India and Bahrain. These concerns were: Conquest, Communication and Commerce i.e. the rival ambitions of Persia, and of Ibn Saud, to fill the vacuum caused by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the newly perceived potential for the development of the trade as well as air route to India via the Gulf and of oil (Mikhin 1988: 27).

Conquest and Communication

Throughout the 17th century, the activities of East India Company in the Gulf had been primarily commercial. The events of the 18th century in West Asia had changed the whole scene. The East India Company established a military and political supremacy in the Persian Gulf. The military and political domination gave formal expression of supremacy by the 1820 General Treaty of Peace for suppressing the piracy and slave traffic in the Gulf. By the signatures of this treaty concluded with the tribal Sheikhs and with the Sheikh of Bahrain, Britain assumed responsibility that it didn't formerly relinquish until 1971. The one hundred and fifty years of British supremacy in the Gulf was regarded as heyday of British imperialism (Savory 1980: 39). As Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India put it, in his address to the Trucial chiefs on November 21, 1903 that,

There are persons who ask why Great Britain continues to exercise these powers. The history of your states and of your families and the present condition of the Gulf are the answer.

We were here before any other power in modern times had shown its face in these waters. The great empire of India, which it is our duty to defend, lies almost at your gates. We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbours. We have not seized your territory. We have not destroyed your independence, but preserve it. It was our commerce as well as your security that was threatened and called for protection. The peace of these waters must still be maintained, and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme (Wilson 1928: 192).

It was Curzon, who visited Bahrain in 1903 and approved the appointment of Captain Prideaux of the Indian Political Service as the first full British Political Agent in Bahrain. Captain Prideaux was Political Resident, based in Bushire but responsible to the Government of India for British interests in the whole of the Gulf, and the subordinate position of Political Agent in Bahrain was held by Major Daly (Hawley 1970: 139-140). Daly's passion for good government was reinforced by the concern of his superiors that in Bahrain as elsewhere in the Gulf, internal administration and stability should be adequate to permit the development of communication and commerce i.e. trade and oil exploration.⁵ On the other hand, British were also responsible under the treaties to protect the Emirate from external threat. Hence, they should not provide either Ibn Saud or the Persian government with any pretext to assert jurisdiction or claims in the region and its populace. This was particularly in 1922, with the imminent submission to the League of Nations of the Persian claim. And it was this that led the British authorities to overcome their normal reluctance to become involved in the internal affairs of Bahrain (League of Nations 1919-22). As Sir Charles Belgrave himself put it in his autobiography *Personal Column*:

⁵ Major Daly was a peppery and short tempered Irishman who had been transferred at the end of the 1914-18 War from the Indian army to the British civil administration in Iraq under the League of Nations mandate.

Shaikh Isa bin Ali had, very unwillingly, been persuaded by the British to retire from active control of affairs after ruling the country for 55 years and his son Shaikh Hamad, who had been heir apparent since 1893, had assumed control in 1923 (Hawley 1970: 143-162).

Trade and Commerce

Bahrain was potentially famous for plentiful natural water supply and the production of dates which were not easily or even possibly grown elsewhere. Indian merchants established import businesses in rice, tea, sugar and shoes. In addition to this there were subsidized Arab smugglers in gold and pearls who managed the trade in Hashish and Opium, and transshipping from Kabul to Bombay, then from Bombay to the Gulf and elsewhere in West Asia (Weiner 1982: 16-17).

Britain's domination in the Gulf was from the very beginning based on the principle of "economy of force to achieve her objectives." These objectives were to be attained by the political administration whose employees underwent a special selection and were the most capable of the best officials for this work. Bahrain officially became a British protectorate in May 1871. British diplomacy faced new tasks: how to keep the Gulf which had become important to Britain from the economic point of view within its sphere of influence? In 1911-1912, on the eve of the First World War, Britain managed to conclude several more arrangement advantageous to it. On 29th July 1913, an Anglo-Turkish Convention was signed, under which Turkey renounced its claims to the Trucial Oman principalities, Qatar and Bahrain till 18th April 1934 when British parliament approved the new status of Bahrain under which the Sheikh was proclaimed an independent ruler associated by a special treaty of alliance with Great Britain (Mikhin 1988: 27).

The discovery of deposits and the commercial extraction of Oil in the region changed the economy of these countries. From the mid 1920s onwards there have been major developments in the field of Oil trade. In the year 1924 Major Frank Holmes⁶ signed agreements to sink artesian wells on main island of Bahrain in search of sweet water. The Sweet water was discovered in 1925, and Eastern and General Syndicate offered Oil concession ostensibly as a reward to the British. In the year 1928 Red Line Agreement⁷ signed and Gulf Oil Corporation, as a shareholder in the Iraq Petroleum Company, obliged to offload Arabian oil interests except for Kuwait and Kuwait-Nejd Neutral Zone. Subsequently the Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL) acquired Bahrain option and after long negotiations Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO), a subsidiary of SOCAL, set up and registered in Canada in 1929 (Mikhin 1988: 43-48). With the development of BAPCO in the 1930s and the establishment of refineries, Indians arrived as clerks and technicians, and there was large number of merchants coming from the Indian province of Sindh and from Gujarat to work in those industries. Further in the year 1931 Oil discovered in large quantities at Jabal Dukhan and in 1934 Shaikh Hamad signed Mining Lease of Bahrain Oil Concession, replacing 1925 option obtained by Holmes (Bulloch 1984: 71-82).

Following the discovery of oil at Masjid-i-Sulaimani in southwest Persia in 1908, there was increasing attention during the inter-war years that focused

⁶ Major Frank Holmes was an engineer from New Zealand, who foresaw the great Petroleum potential of Arabia, registered the Eastern and General Syndicate Company in London in 1920 that would buy Oil concession from Arabia and then sell them to the larger companies. In 1925, he obtained the exclusive concessionary rights to the entire territory of the Bahrain Islands. In 1927, he relinquished his concessionary rights on the Bahrain Island to the US-owned Gulf Oil Corporation. In 1928, the Gulf Oil Corporation transferred its right to the Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL).

⁷ The Red Line Agreement was signed in 1928, which deprived American Companies of the right to take part in concessions in Trucial Oman. Through this agreement the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) had the oil rights in Bahrain.

on the Arabian shore of the Gulf. Britain had concluded over the years 1820-1916, a series of treaties with local rulers who in exchange for British protection had agreed to surrender their external sovereignty, in addition to an understanding that they would not enter into any agreement or correspondence except through the British government, and that they would not permit the residence of any foreign agent without British consent. The rulers also agreed not to grant any oil concession without British approval. Britain's negotiating stance during subsequent discussions for the preliminary oil concessions reflected its primary concern with excluding foreign and particularly American interest from the area rather than with the securing of commercial or financial gains from the development of oil resources. Despite this concern to retain the Gulf as an exclusive British preserve, it was two American oil companies, the Gulf Oil Corporation of Pennsylvania and the Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL), which took the lead in obtaining oil concessions in Bahrain (Mikhin 1988: 43-48).

Secondly, it was the Pearl trade that had brought another positive dimension to the Politico-Diplomatic relations between India and Bahrain. The Maharajahs of India had an unending appetite for these very high quality pearls, making Bombay a world market place for trading. With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, demand for pearls escalated, for it was seen as an easy, safe and transportable way to invest money. The worldwide depression of the 1920's took its toll on Bahrain's pearl exports as demand fell substantially. Further the Japanese cultured pearl, although certainly a far inferior product had further captured a sector of the market (Elmadani 2003: 112-113).

The Institution of Resident

Charles Belgrave had arrived in Bahrain in 1926 to act as an adviser to Sheikh Hamad who wanted to encourage change, his British approach to organization combined with oil revenues allowed Bahrain to modernize at an accelerated rate. The political administration in the Persian Gulf was an effective instrument with which the British imperialists successfully conducted their colonial policy there. The political administration was headed by the Political Resident whose headquarters was situated in Manama (Bahrain). He was simultaneously a diplomat, political advisor and military leader and on the whole was more like a colonial Governor than an ordinary ambassador. The Resident exercised supervision over the Political Agents in Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Dubai and Abu Dhabi and over the consulate general in Muscat (Bulloch 1984).

The Political Resident had the largest responsibility. He was considered the uncrowned king of the Gulf. After the Political Resident, the Political Agents had the largest responsibility. Among the three Political Agents in Gulf: Muscat, Kuwait and Bahrain, the Political Agent in Bahrain had the largest responsibility. His areas of jurisdiction were beyond the Bahrain affairs. For example, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Kalba etc. After 1928, Qatar was also included in his area of responsibility. For the affairs of Trucial States, there was a Residency Agent stationed at Sharjah and was placed under the Political Agent (Zahlan 1979: 67).

Above the political Agents, there was a Senior Naval Officer in-charge of the Persian Gulf. He was the instrument of power by which Britain controlled the Gulf. He co-ordinated policy with the India office and the Government of India. Through these officers Britain exercised the absolute political as well as

commercial interest in the Persian Gulf. Political Resident, T. C. W. Fowle wrote to Charles Metcalfe, Government of India in 1938 that,

We pay no subsidies to any Sheikhs, we raise no tribal levies, and we don't maintain a single soldier or Policemen and commitments are in fact limited to one Political Resident, three Political Agents, and their office staffs (Zahlan 1979: 68).

The British political administrative relations with the Sheikhs were legally based on treaties and agreements imposed on them by force of arms in the 19th and early 20th century. Despite the fact that in accordance with them Britain was granted the right to control only the foreign policy and defense related matters, the British Indian political administration also regulated matters of home policy and economy. An analysis of the treaties and agreements shows that the Sheikh had surrendered their rights to Britain in the following fields:

1. The establishment of diplomatic of consular relations with foreign powers.
2. The negotiation or the conclusion or treaties of agreements with foreign states.
3. The grant on mineral of oil concessions to foreign governments.

For its part British promised the Sheikhs to:

1. Protect them against foreign aggression.
2. Safeguard their individual independence.
3. Look after their international political and economic interest.
4. Protect their nationals abroad.
5. Conduct foreign policy on their behalf.

British political administration constantly interfered in the internal affairs of the Bahrain, controlling their administrative bodies. Sir Charles Belgrave was the adviser for thirty years (1926-1956) and was the virtual ruler of Bahrain (Mikhin 1988).

On 28th December 1920, Khan Sahib Syed Siddiq Hassan was appointed as Indian assistant to the political agent, Bahrain (Government of India 1921: Foreign and Political Department, Establishment - May - 603-604- Part B). Major C. K. Daly appointed as political agent, Bahrain to the government of India with effect from the 21st Jan. (Government of India 1921: Foreign and Political Department, Establishment - May - 192-224- Part B). On 23rd Aug. 1921, the Government of India took the power away from Sheikh Abdullah al Dosari and gave it to the rightful heir Sheikh Hamad. Abdullah al Dosari misused and abused the power and was also the principal protagonist in the affair of the murder of the Nejd woman at Bahrain (Government of India 1921: Foreign and Political Department, External- Sept.-486, Part B).

British political administration constantly interfered in the internal affairs of Bahrain, controlling their administrative bodies. Sir Charles Belgrave was the adviser for thirty years (1926-1956) and was the virtual ruler of Bahrain. The job was indeed as an adviser to the Bahrain Government, not as a British official or an assistant to the Political Agent but the terms of service were to be based on those of the Indian Political Service. It endowed with for renewal provided the parties agree and the Government of India approves.

It took some years to straighten out to Belgrave's precise status were only finally set at rest in a letter from the Political Resident to the Political Agent in May 1928, in reply to a request from the latter for approval for the Shaikh's desire to pay Mrs Belgrave's passage to India, where her husband was to go to

recruit new policemen and the Shaikh was reported to consider that it would be unseemly to leave her behind. The Political Resident in his reply was quite clear that,

Mr Belgrave is a Bahrain Government servant and any action the Shaikh takes is his own business as an independent ruler. Our only concern is to see that he is not forced and this is not the case (Government of India 1928: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 59- N).

By the time the date for renewal came round, the Political Agent evidently felt that the Advisor was too inclined to assert his independence of Britain and his sole loyalty to Bahrain and it is reported that he raised some difficulties about obtaining the approval of the Government of India. However, on 5th May 1929 the Political Agent reported to the Political Resident that,

I have received a letter from Shaikh Hamad that he is extending C D Belgrave's appointment for a further four years because I have found him doing his best in all matters that are of service to my Government (Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 315- N).

Sheikh Hamad, the heir apparent of Sheikh of Bahrain Sheikh Isa and his grandson came to India sight-seeing in November 1921. On 15th December 1920 the Political Resident of Persian Gulf, Bushire wrote to the Foreign Secretary, Foreign and Political Department, Shimla that

Sheikh of Bahrain has written to Political Agent, Bahrain, asking him to inform me that his eldest son Sheikh Hamad wishes to go to India for recreation and to see something of civilization and progress in order to gain useful knowledge and experience. Sheikh of Bahrain also asks that arrangements may be made to make tour interesting with help of government officials. As Sheikh of Hamad is recognized as heir of Sheikh of Bahrain such a tour would be useful to him as he never seen anything of the world and is very ignorant. Would Government of India have any objection to such a tour? Sheikh of Bahrain has asked whether Indian assistant can accompany Sheikh Hamad but in

absence of political agent he cannot be spared and Sheikh of Bahrain has been informed in this sense. But it would be good thing if reliable Indian speaking Arabic and English accompanied Hamad and I propose to depute Bashir Ahmad one of the clerks of Bahrain for this duty if government of India see no objection. His traveling expenses will be paid by Sheikh Hamad (Government of India 1921: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. - 48-55- Part B).

Sheikh Hamad left on 8th January 1921 and was accompanied by three sons and 16 followers and Bashir Ahmad, clerk of political agency. Indian assistant temporarily in charge of agency have given passports and letter of introduction and open letter regarding small number of arms carried by Sheikh and party for self protection and show. Sheikh Hamad proposed to visit Bombay for 7 days; Delhi, Calcutta for 3 days each; Aligarh, Agra, Lucknow, Lahore, Amritsar for one day each; Madras for 2 days and Karachi in return journey. In addition he also visited following native states - Hyderabad, Bhopal and Bahawalpore. He spent two months in India (Government of India 1921: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. - 48-55- Part B).

In a letter dated the 23rd May 1925 the Government of India granted exemption from custom duty in respect of their personal baggage, when arriving in India by sea, to the Sheikh of Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. The Sheikh of Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar allowed the customs privilege then enjoyed by Indian princess entitled the styled "His Highness", exemption from duty of baggage when arriving in India (Government of India 1925: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 166- N).

The question of an Indian Assistant at Bahrain had been before the Government of India for a long time. The post of Indian Assistant fell vacant in November 1921 on the transfer of K.B. Siddiq Hussain to Foreign Service as

a tutor to the son of Sultan of Muscat and had remained vacant since. The political resident in the Persian Gulf held the view that a British officer as assistant to the political agent at Bahrain was necessary and he urged the appointment of such an officer to relieve the political agent. After some consideration the Government of India agreed as a temporary arrangement for 6 months to the appointment of a military probationer for the political department of Government of India with effect from 14th June 1924. The officer selected for this appointment was Captain D.R. Smith who held the post till the 10th October 1924 after no successor had been appointed owing to the difficulty of finding a suitable junior political officer with the necessary qualifications. The Political Resident had recommended the revival of the appointment of an Indian assistant for the Bahrain agency which had been in abeyance since November 1921. The post of Indian assistant to the political agent was permanently sanctioned by secretary of state in 1915 and as it is only a question of revival of the appointment. It can be done by this department without any reference to the finance department (Government of India 1927: Foreign and Political Department, Establishment- 415- E).

Colonel L. B. H. Haworth, the political resident in the Persian Gulf visited to Bahrain in 1927 and he found that the political agent smothered in judicial work and consequently unable to give sufficient attention to the duties. He suggested to the Government of India that in Bahrain it is essential that the political agent should have some freedom of movement at the present juncture. The political resident suggested to the government of India that the immediate re-appointing of an Indian Assistant to the Bahrain agency and as K. B. Sadiq Hassan, the previous incumbent will in April in free from his present deputation with the son of the sultan of Muscat, and he suggested to K. B. Sadiq Hassan name for the post. K. B. Sadiq Hassan granted a combined

leave for four months further leave of medical ground, the Government of India, political and foreign department appointed Khan sahib Mirza Ali to officiate as Indian assistant, Bahrain, with effect from 1st of May 1927. Khan Bahadur Siddiq Hassan on return from leave resumed charge of his duties on the forenoon of the 21st May 1928. Khan Sahib Mirza Ali, officiating Indian Assistant, political agency, Bahrain, reverts to his substantive post of second interpreter, Bushire Residency, from the forenoon of the 21st May 1928 (Government of India 1927: Foreign and Political Department, Establishment-415- E).

Significance and Implications

British rule of the Eastern region was run from Bombay and it was for this reason that the currency of Bahrain at the time was the rupee.⁸ In order to support Shaikh Hamad in his newly assumed task of "bringing the Government of Bahrain up to the plane of modern civilization", the Government of India and their representatives in the Gulf advised him to allow them to engage on his behalf two or three experienced British officials. Initially they took on a chief of customs, De Grenier, to modernize the customs, the sole source of revenue to the State, which hitherto had been farmed out to Hindu contractors with predictably unsatisfactory results. Apart from increasing the state revenue, the British had an additional interest in this, as they believed with some justification that a large part of the Gulf arms trade illicitly passed through Bahrain. Secondly, they wished to recruit a Chief of Police. And thirdly, it was Daly's original idea to recruit a financial adviser who would if possible also relieve the Political Agent of some of his court work in discharging the jurisdiction which Britain had asserted over all non-Bahraini subjects. No suitable member of the British establishment in

⁸ It was not until 1965 that the Dinar was established as the national currency of Bahrain.

India could be found. Thus, it was that on 10th August 1925 the following advertisement appeared in the Personal Column of *The Times*:

Young Gentleman aged 22/28. Public School and/or University education, required for service in an Eastern State. Good salary and prospects to suitable man, who must be physically fit; highest references; proficiency in languages an advantage (Bulloch 1984).

Labour Movement

The development of the early oil industry in the gulf during this period provided the stimulus for three new patterns of labour movement into and within the region:

1. the recruitment of professional, technical and managerial persons from Britain and the USA.
2. the inflow of skilled/semi-skilled artisans and clerical workers primarily but not exclusively from the Indian sub-continent and
3. the modification of pre-existing patterns of intra-Gulf seasonal labour circulation associated with traditional activities notably pearl-diving of the pre-oil economy (Seccombe, I. J & R. I. Lawless 1986: 549).

On 17th September 1925 the following telegram was sent from the Secretary of State for India in London to the Viceroy:

Shaikh Hamad of Bahrain asked the Political Agent, Daly, to seek for British Officer as Financial Adviser similar to Bertram Thomas at Muscat⁹. Prideaux (Political Resident then on leave in London) seeks Government of India sanction for engagement of Charles Dalrymple Belgrave, whom he considered in every way suitable. He was administrative officer age 31. Arabic, Swahili, French. Served in Egypt in civil as well as military service, passed exams in Indian Penal Code, evidence act, criminal procedure and local laws, salary over 800 Rupees a month

⁹ Bertram Thomas was Financial Advisor to the Sultan of Muscat.

(Government of India 1925: Foreign and Political Department,
File No. 166- N).

Sundri Singh, a graduate nurse who had been working in Bahrain for the last three years (since 1914) who went with Mrs. Van Peursen of the reformed church of American Mission to work in their hospital in Bahrain. The authorities in India had not been able to get any word from Sundri Singh and felt anxious about her. Dr. Edith M. Brown, Principal, women's Christian Medical College, Ludhiana wrote to the chief secretary, the govt. of Punjab and asked to have enquiries to the welfare of the graduate nurse Sundri Singh and also Hansraj who had been also in Bahrain but his parents had not receiving any letter and money which he was to send them each month. On 20th August 1917 Lieut-colonel A.P. Trevor, Deputy Political Resident, Persian Gulf replied to the govt. of India regarding the information of the nurse Sundri Singh in Bahrain. It was replied that the nurse Sundri Singh is entirely well and her only complaint is that she has not heard from any of her friends in India since long time. She will be very glad to hear from her friends in India and she will continue to write and trust that this time her letter will arrive at their destination. A copy of letter dated 24th July 1917 received from the Reverend D. Dykstra of the American Mission, Bahrain regarding the nurse Sundri Singh (Government of India 1917: Foreign and Political Department, War- Dec. - 107-109- Part B).

Police Reforms

The Government of Bahrain asked permission from the Government of India to send the Rais-i-Police (chief of Police, Bahrain) Haji Salman, for practical training in India. It was desired to give him experience in court work and the prosecution of cases. The Bahrain government didn't wish to send him to Iraq as their courts are founded on an entirely different judicial system.

Government of India sanctioned the deputation of Haji Salman to Karachi for training with effect from 1st November 1929 for six months or such time as may be necessary to give him practical training (Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 315- N).

The government of Bahrain stated that the experiment of training members of the Bahrain police force with an Indian infantry unit at Karachi in 1933 has proved extremely successful from their point of view. The Bahrain Government now requested that arrangements may be made for them to send four or if possible six more non-commissioned officers and other ranks from the Bahrain police force for similar training with the 10th Baluch regiment at Karachi. In 1936, The government of India sanctioned the attachment of four of six members of the Bahrain police force for a period of nine months to the 10th Battalion, 10th Baluch regiment, stationed at Karachi, for a course of military training (Government of India 1936: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 426- N; Government of India 1936: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 430- N).

Apolitical Relation

Government of India appointed Abdul Qayum as tutor to Sheikh Mubarak, son of Sheikh of Hamad, Bahrain, for a period of three years on a salary of Rs.350/- per mensem/month plus free quarters, second class passage from Ajmer to Bahrain and back, traveling allowance under the fundamental rules and leave. Abdul Qayum was then engaged in a job of Tehsildar of the Ajmer Provincial service and at present on deputation as revenue Nazim on Tonk state. His then deputation expired in November 26, 1929. Political agent, Bahrain, Captain C.C. Prior wrote to the political Resident at Bushire that Abdul Qayum comes from a very respectable Ajmere family. And he was also

an active, capable and trustworthy young man, keen on games and with plenty of character. Political agent was strongly opposed to an Egyptian or Syrian tutor as there was a great danger that such a person would prove a danger to the state, and Sheikh was also not anxious to get such man (Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 343-N).

Postal Administration

Bahrain was under the Indian postal administration. An Indian post office was opened in Bahrain on 1st august 1884. It was located in the house of the Residency Agent at Manama, the commercial capital of the Island (Government of India 1913: Foreign Department, External - Part B). Before this from 1875 to 1884, the Native Agent of the British India Steam Navigation Company in Bahrain had received a small allowance from the Postal Department for discharging some of the functions of a Post Office. Munshis were deputed from the Bushire residency, who watched British interests in Bahrain from November 1891 to March 1892. Before Munshis, Native Agents watched the British interests in Bahrain from 1829 to 1891 (Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 729- N; Lorimer 1915: Part 1, 915-920).

Road to Independence: Influence of Indian Freedom Struggle

Following the fervour of Indian freedom struggle in 1920-1923 Bahrain saw popular actions against British Protectorship and British interference in the internal affairs of the Emirate. Sheikh Isa Al-Khalifa received a delegation of insurgents and agreed to some of their demands, in particular to the setting up of a consultative assembly and to the organization of a local police force. After his decision the British political resident considered it necessary to

interfere in the emirate's internal affairs. At the entrance to the port of Manama there appeared two warships- Triad and Crocus- and as they got ready to shell the city Isa ben Ali Al- Khalifa was persuaded to abdicate in favour of his son, Sheikh Ahmad ben Isa al-Khalifa (Mikhin 1988). During this period India and Bahrain were passing through the critical phase of their struggle of against foreign dominance. India's support for the Arabs came in the form of reiteration of Indo-Arab solidarity. The Indian national congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi began to take increasing note of nationalist movements in the neighbouring regions and to relate them to India's own struggle in the common fight against colonialism and imperialism. The Bahraini leaders on the other hand also saw that their own emancipation and independence was very much dependent on the success of India's struggle for freedom (Jha 1987: 213; Elmadani 2003: 116-117).

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, when a world crisis broke out, there developed in Bahrain a situation that was extremely unfavorable to the British Indian authorities. Popular unrest was caused by the grim economic situation and foreign domination. In such conditions, in 1932 a more experienced leader became the ruler. He was Hamad ben Isa Al-Khalifa, brother of the former ruler Ahmed ben Isa Al-Khalifa. By carrying out some minor economic reforms the new ruler managed to stabilize the internal situation in the country (Bulloch 1984).

An extract from the "Muslim World" dated 8th September 1925, claimed that the British repression in Bahrain had been escalated. It disclosed that,

The regrettable excesses committed by the British representatives at Bahrain. For past two years, open attempts are being made to establish British suzerainty there, Sheikh Isa Bin Ali, the ruler of Bahrain, has been deposed by the British and his son Sheikh Hamad installed on the throne. The

territories that under Treaty obligations ought not to have been separated from the role of the native reigning family are being administered by the British. The people of Bahrain are greatly dissatisfied with the aggressive policy of British. Some of the patriots have been expelled from the country; some have been incarcerated, while the population is under strict police and military surveillance. British repression at Bahrain has compelled the people to turn their attention towards Persia, to which Bahrain actually belonged. Almost all the Sheikhs of Bahrain are unanimous that the salvation of Bahrain lies in accepting the tutelage of Persia (Government of India 1926: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 222- N).

In 1923 a campaign was started in the Persian press to renew the claim of the Persian Government to sovereignty over Bahrain. A newspaper "Al Balagh" of Beyrout had been denied entry in Bahrain, because it was considered anti-British in tone and its entry in Bahrain was considered objectionable (Government of India 1927: Foreign and Political Department, Near-East Branch, File No. 617- N).

In 1936 when the question of the status of Bahrain islands in the Persian Gulf arose that whether or not the Bahrain islands in the Persian Gulf officially constitute a part of the British empire when the gazetteers describe them as being a British Protectorate administered by a political Resident appointed by the Government of India. The Secretary of State for India described the status of Bahrain as follows:

Islands are not a British possession nor are they a British Protectorate. The Sheikh of Bahrain is an independent ruler in special treaty relations with His Majesty's Government conduct his foreign relations and guarantee him protection, and the state is regarded as being covered by the words "territories under his Majesty's protection" (Government of India 1936: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 693- N).

Conclusion

The British began contacts with the Al-Khalifa of Bahrain as early as 1820, when a 'General Treaty' was signed between Bahrain and East India Company. Other peace and friendship treaties were signed with British India in 1861, 1880 and 1892. These treaty agreements strengthened the British role in Bahrain and secured Al-Khalifa rule there. At the same time these treaties allowed greater British involvement in the internal affairs of Bahrain. The British control of Sea-traffic in the Indian Ocean and the partial dependence of industry upon eastern market and raw material made it necessary for Britain to tighten its grip on political affairs in Bahrain.

In the 1920s, there was a shift in British policy in Bahrain. They were directly involved in introduction in reforms than mere recommending it. The British intended to introduce reforms through the civil courts, municipalities, custom departments, post-offices, schools and other modernizing institutions. The administrative and bureaucratic reforms were opposed by some conservative groups, because these reforms limited the power of tribal groups and the urban merchant class. Despite the fact that these reforms were opposed by some conservative groups, these were fully in operation by 1930. By introducing these reforms, the British tried to eliminate tribal power in Bahrain. The new specialized public services, which focused on the legal system, the state police, and the various services and civil departments later became specialized ministry after independence in 1971 (Sick and Potter(eds) 1997: 168-69).

Hence, it can be seen through the above discussion that there were positive as well as negative influences to all these relations between India and Bahrain

under the protégé of the British Government. During the first half of the twentieth century, Bahrain became politically, economically, and administratively linked to India with the British dominance over both the countries. Its fate and entire affairs were decided by the British Indian authorities. The crux of this relation was to get political security and international recognition on the part of Bahrain. For, it was the period when after the Ottoman defeat everybody was eyeing to it for communication and commerce. In the due course of time, India's relations with Bahrain inspired it for its own independence. The Indian national movement had a deep impact in Bahrain. The merchants and leaders who were settled in or deported to India watched the political development in India and tried to incorporate the experience of India in their own struggle in Bahrain. As Abdullah Elmadani remarked that, "What probably made the Gulf merchants and reformers keenly observe India's experience was the fact that their efforts were directed against the same colonial power and the fact that Indians supported their cause"(Elmadani 2003: 116).

CHAPTER III

Economic Relations between India and Bahrain

Economic Relations between India and Bahrain

This chapter explores the nature of economic relations between India and Bahrain covering the period between 1913 and 1936. It examines in detail the trends in Indo-Bahrain trade and commerce and the import and export structures between India and Bahrain. Besides, it also computes in detail about the composition and exchange of commodities between India and West Asia in general and Bahrain in particular. The data have been compiled from various sources available in the National Archives of India.

Economic Scenario in India and Bahrain

Towards the end of the 18th century, there were four distinctly separate trading areas in Asia. These were the countries around the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, the subcontinent of India, the south East Asian islands and the far eastern countries. Coastal trade was more important for certain regions than the others. The commerce between West Asia and the Western coast of India can be cited as an obvious example. The lucrative trade between Gujarat, Malabar, and the West Asia lured the European companies in the direction of the red sea and the Persian Gulf. As compared to the Red Sea, the companies had a much greater measure of success in the Persian Gulf. Western India, Surat, Malabar and the Persian Gulf constituted a single unit of operation in the organization of the European companies, For the traders of Gujarat the West Asian trade generated a larger volume of loanable capital than was possible elsewhere in India (Chaudhury 1983: 813-60; Ray 1994: 1-69; Roy 2000: 32-36, 224-226).

In the beginning of 1913 the population of Bahrain Islands is estimated about

1, 10,000. Since ancient times India and Bahrain have been enjoying economic relations and the trade of Bahrain Island was to a great extent in the hands of Indian merchants who had been settled in Bahrain for a century. Thus by far the greater portion of the trade was with India. The customs department was carried on for the ruler of Bahrain by an Indian firm. There were only one British and one German firm established in Bahrain (Government of India Foreign and Political Department 1913-14). The outbreak of First World War severely affected the trade between the two regions. The dislocation of the steamship service, the closing of shat-el-Arab, disturbances in Nejd and the closing of the main sources of sugar supply had serious effects on Indo-Bahrain trade. The import of rice and pearl fell over by 50%. But in due course of time there was considerable growth in trade in general and the rice and pearl trade in particular (Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Aug. – 409-411; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret G. – July – 16-41; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Jan. – 72-78; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, External- Oct. – 7-8, Part B).

Table 3.1

Major Export from India to Bahrain, 1913-14 to 1932-33, (Value in £)

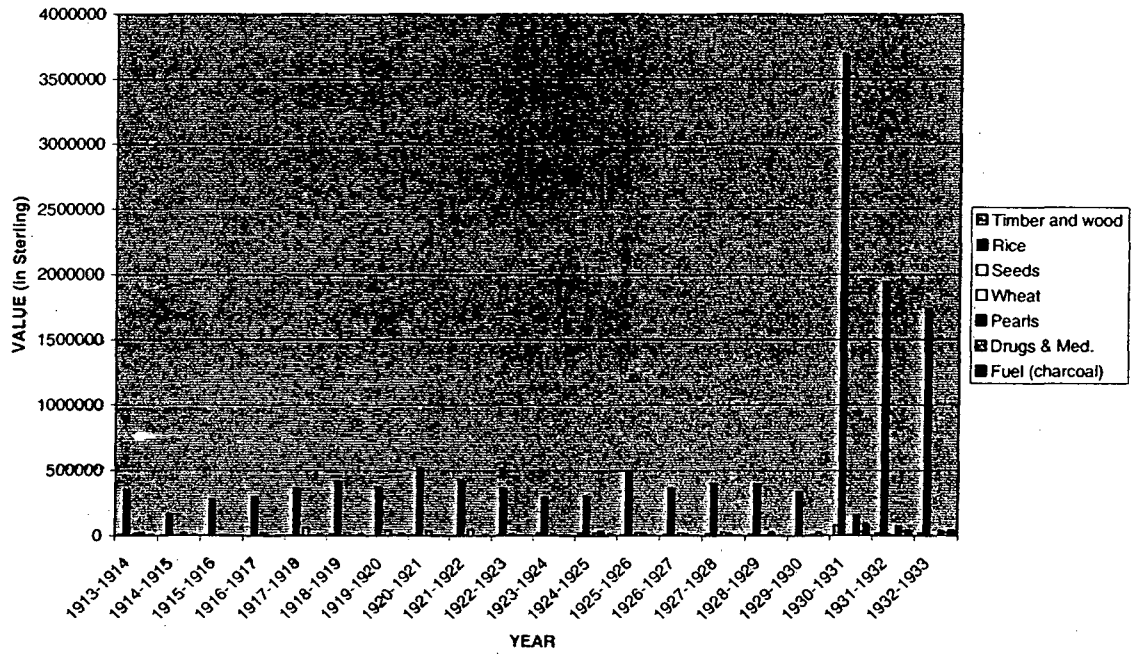
Commodity & Year	Timber and wood	Rice	Seeds	Wheat	Pearls	Drugs & Med.	Fuel (charcoal)
1913-1914	11171	346519	3387	15423	26133	1309	9122
1914-1915	7381	163131	2146	4402	23700	350	8338
1915-1916	3045	276013	1388	5322	5800	551	3499
1916-1917	1028	297488	2106	19265	1166	281	4071
1917-1918	1308	360776	5664	59771	1300	948	12729

1918-1919	12044	416253	3146	24669	5131	916	9819
1919-1920		370212	3229	44698	1200	1781	11950
1920-1921	5867	519311	840	33698	1613	3658	4784
1921-1922	4761	424271	3967	50176		987	12389
1922-1923	4740	364095	700	12502		2307	4496
1923-1924	19240	292512	335	13007		3847	2863
1924-1925	21341	305067	2005	21952	33164	2712	10762
1925-1926	7744	482351	1312	22016	23674	1973	8627
1926-1927	10661	364068	1474	21741	15370	2838	5135
1927-1928	14250	401714	967	25020	14170	2832	3797
1928-1929	11541	396295	1607	8678	26515	3097	6668
1929-1930		335447	800	3831	11693	29150	8258
1930-1931	79840	3688670	4230	6690	161960	34490	88640
1931-1932	18460	1942550	13330	1520	73500	31330	42560
1932-1933	19680	1733510	5600	240	34200	26200	40460

Source: Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Aug. – 409-411; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret G. – July – 16-41; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Jan. – 72-78; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, External- Oct. – 7-8, Part B; Government of India 1917: Foreign and Political Department, War- Dec. – 107-109- Part B; Government of India 1918: Foreign and Political, External. - Feb. – 24-28- Part A; Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. – 3-8- Part A; Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Government of India 1928: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 88- N; Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 59- N; Government of India 1930: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 230- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 134- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 212- N; Government of India 1932: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 343- N; Government of India 1933: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 241- N.

Chart- 3.1

Major Export Commodities from India to Bahrain, 1913-33



Source: As in table 3.1

Table 3.2

Major Imports from Bahrain to India, 1913-14 to 1932-33

Commodity & Year	Fruits (Dates)	Pearls	Specie	Hardware	Cotton goods
1913-1914	5265	1451243	103331		367
1914-1915	6855	72007	234582	143	1100
1915-1916	6330	183160	99272	196	720
1916-1917	5267	364400	124646	410	
1917-1918	8100	317992	5166		
1918-1919	7149	701333	2604		
1919-1920	10697	293900	4130	365	
1920-1921	358				
1921-1922	5944	63393			
1922-1923	23821	334993	83667	10	208
1923-1924	16326	433507	26320	91	26

1924-1925	12562	219570	415135	148	
1925-1926	14139	187800	258084	75	
1926-1927	34046	164822	285889	153	
1927-1928	13363	150919	193126	260	
1928-1929	13569	134392	163646	488	
1929-1930	14465	134415	155897	315	
1930-1931	60150	616360	2023770	3390	
1931-1932		698700	537200	13260	
1932-1933	18090	522560	66550	5990	

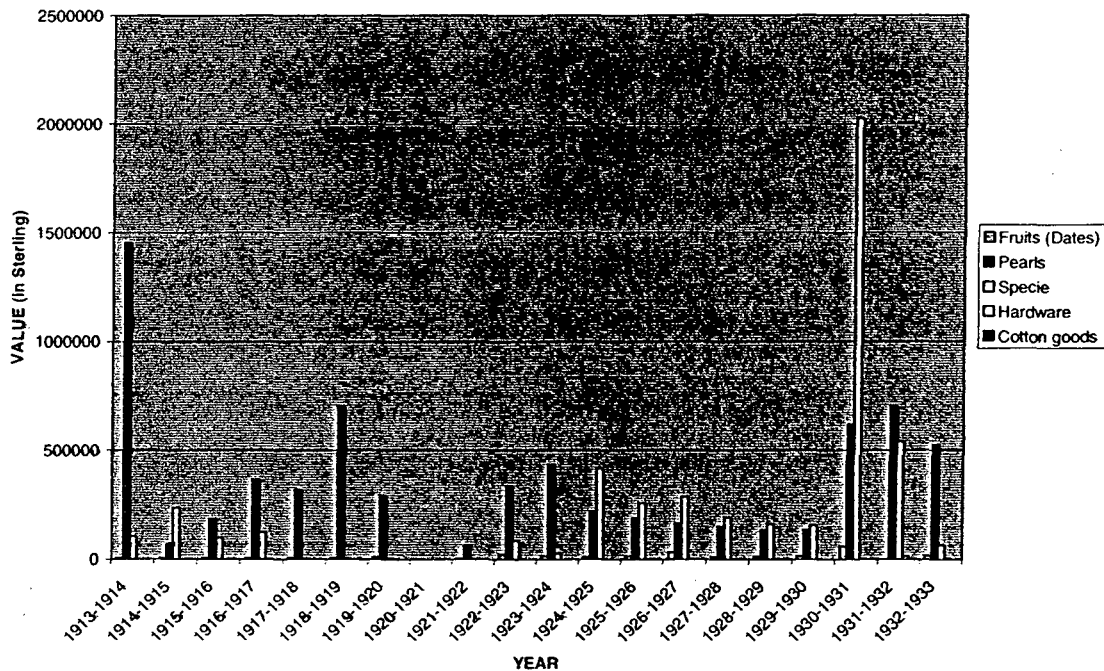
Source: Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Aug. – 409-411; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret G. – July – 16-41; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Jan. – 72-78; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, External- Oct. – 7-8, Part B; Government of India 1917: Foreign and Political Department, War- Dec. – 107-109- Part B; Government of India 1918: Foreign and Political, External. - Feb. – 24-28- Part A; Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. – 3-8- Part A; Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Government of India 1928: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 88- N; Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 59- N; Government of India 1930: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 230- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 134- N; Government of India 1932: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 343- N; Government of India 1933: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 241- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 212- N; Government of India 1934: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 199- N.

Rice Trade

The whole region of Gulf was entirely dependent on India for its basic food items. The staple article of food on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf was rice, and there was not much produce except for small quantities of rice grown in Oman and Hasa. In Bahrain there was particularly large demand in the hot weather as the pearl divers were living largely on rice. Every year in pre-War days several large ships loaded entirely with rice used to come from India,

Chart- 3.2

Major Imports from Bahrain to India



Source: As in table 3.2

usually from Calcutta. The Government of India recognized the fact of the dependence of the Arab side on India by greatly increasing the allotments of rice originally sanctioned for the Persian Gulf. There was serious shortage of rice in Bahrain in 1919 and Deputy Political Resident in the Persian Gulf requested to allow shipment of 6000 bags of rice to Bahrain, 1000 for Sheikh and 5000 for towns (Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. - 3-8- Part A; Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External- Dec. - 249-354- Part B).

But in the year 1920 the Government of India adopted the policy of tender system to sell by auction licenses for export of rice from Karachi. It caused much resentment in the minds of natives and there was growing anti-British feeling in Bahrain on one hand due to the poisonous influences of the Indian Khilafat agitation and the close intercourse which existed between Bahrain

and India and the refusal of India to allow sufficient food supplies (namely rice) to be exported to Bahrain on the other. This policy of Government of India was looked upon a deliberate endeavour to starve the Arabs. The rice famine that existed and the ruination of many merchants had created a deep and bitter hatred against the Government of India. The Small merchants were prohibited from doing business as tenders were not given for less than 50 tons; powerful firms in Karachi outbid Bahrain merchants and hence local merchants had to face ruin or at best were forced to sell on commission for those who had outbid them and taken the bread out of their mouth. There was nothing to prevent Karachi merchants buying up Bahrain's whole supply and selling at whatever price it chose to the people in Bahrain. The consumers were made to pay more for his already expensive price. And as the Arabs of eastern Arabia lived almost entirely on rice imported from India, one might say that the profit accruing to government from the tender system would be paid for by Arabs entirely. The people of Bahrain considered that the new tender system was unfair and was causing only hardship. A leading merchant, Abdur Rahman al Zaiyani, expressed his resent in the following words:

If the Indian Government wants extra revenue why does it not put an export tax of say rupees four on every bag of rice that leaves India? We Arabs are willing to pay much tax as it will be evenly distributed and will hit rich and poor alike. The present tender system tax favours the rich and opposes the poor whether he be a small merchant who wants to buy his 100 bags of only the eventual consumer (Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External- Dec. – 249-354-Part B).

On 10th July 1920, the Political Agent wrote to the deputy Political Resident, Bushire regarding the rice position that

The commercial position of the Gulf is peculiar. The countries bordering on it and the states for inland which draw upon it are not self-supporting in essential foodstuffs. Their wealth consists almost exclusively in dates, pearls and wool. Against these products they import rice, which has become the staple of diet for the Persian Gulf. All the rice for this immense area of imported through the Gulf ports and from India. On the maintenance of this rice supply depends not only the commerce of the Gulf of which over 80 percent is in British hands, the political attitude of the states concerned towards the British Empire and the very existence of the inhabitants themselves. It is therefore not a question from the general standpoint of concession rates or of the consumer in the Gulf profiting at the expense of both the consumer and trader in India. It is a question vital to our whole position and policy in the Gulf which is generally recognized as a British sphere and which at the present moment owing to the results of the war and of our policy in the Middle East holds a more important place in the scheme of things than it ever did before. Therefore it must be regarded of the first importance in the consideration of the whole system (Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External- Dec. – 249-354- Part B).

But as explained in the Government of India letter, the rice position in India showed heavy depletion of the stocks of rice in the country which however had been a little more than the current year's crop in India. A great shortage of rice and consequently very high prices were ruling elsewhere in the world. It was therefore necessary to control export from India in order to secure adequate stocks and to keep down the level of prices in the interests of the Indian consumer. Export of rice from India except in certain fixed quantities for Persian Gulf ports and some other countries possibly dependent entirely on India seems to have been completely prohibited. Consequently, the Political Agent, Muscat, R. Wingate suggested to the Government of India that,

the restraints on trade in the Gulf should be removed as far as possible because the present system has stopped the normal flow of internal trade in the Gulf. It is also intensely unpopular amongst merchants both Arab and British. And it also discriminates against the Arab Merchant (Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External- Dec. – 249-354- Part B).

Pearl Industry

The pearl trade dominated the whole commercial situation between the two nations. In the pre-oil days, one of the principal sources of livelihood in the Gulf was pearl diving. A large segment of population in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar was involved in this activity. As can be seen from data presented in table 3.1 and 3.2 that, the second most important item of trade was Pearl. For centuries the Persian Gulf had been famous for its pearls, and the chief market of the Gulf was Bahrain. During the period of our study important continental, Indian and Arab merchants, who used to send their agents, had settled in Bahrain. There was a small merchant class consisting of Hawala Arabs, They were Arabs originally from the Arabian mainland that had migrated to the Persian side and had now settled in Bahrain, as well as Persians and a few Indians. The pearling industry employed around 20000 men and some 900 boats (Jenner 1985: 27-31). Over 500 pearling ships were registered in Bahrain and about 15000 men from Bahrain work each year as divers apart from large numbers of foreigners from Oman, Persia and Arab coast (Report of the trade and commerce of the Bahrain Islands for the year 1921-22 and 1922-23. Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X).

Table 3.3

The Pearling Industry in Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait

Countries	Total Population	Labour Force Engaged in Pearling	Percent of Population in Pearling
Bahrain	99,075	17,633	18
Qatar	27,000	12,890	48
Kuwait	37,000	9,200	25

Source: Lorimer (1915: Vol. I: 2256-2259).

Pearling industry was the pivotal point of the economic and social structure of Bahrain. Pearling was the main bringer of foreign exchange. Unlike the ruler of Qatar, the rulers of Bahrain did not control and levied tax from the peeling industry. There were no rules for the pearling. The relaxed measures attracted many Bahrainis to this business, thereby increasing the overall volume of business. Bahrain at the end of the 1920s was still dependent to a great extent on the pearl trade which generated a comfortable prosperity. Government revenue was derived almost entirely from the 5% customs dues. The first state budget amounted to £75000 (Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X).

Pearl Diving Season

The season was divided into three phases. It was generally from the middle of May until the middle of October. If the weather was calm and the sea not too cold the two short seasons would be longer. The divisions were as follows:-

1. Khancheehabout 20-25 days.
2. Ghausthe main season, 4 months and 10 days.
3. Raddahabout 20-25 days.

Every year the Sheikh issued a proclamation announcing the dates of the beginning and the end of the Ghaus. No orders were issued regarding Khancheeh and Raddah. The divers would go out whenever they wished (Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818-X; Jenner 1985: 27-31).

Pearl Diving Methods

The diving methods were simple and the divers didn't use any mechanical equipment. The pearl banks were free to everybody. The pearling crew including about sixty men consisted of divers, pullers, a couple of Ship boys, a cook, the captain and his mate. Every diver was provided with a clip, like a clothes peg, which he fastens on to his noose, also hard leather finger guards which enabled him to dislodge the shells from the rocks without damaging his hands. Round his neck he carried a string bag in which he put his shells. The divers wore nothing but a loin cloth. The shells were opened every morning and the empty shells thrown back into the sea. The divers had a theory that by throwing the shells into the sea they would provide food for the next year's oysters. It was difficult for men to steal pearls because they wore practically no clothes. The divers were stripped except a loin-cloth or a very short pair of shorts made of dark material, any colour would attract dangerous fish (Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Jenner 1985: 27-31).¹

Pearl Financing

Divers did not receive any wages. They were supposed to share in the profits of the boat's catch. They also received loans. There were various loan advancing systems were practiced in Bahrain of which the most important was *salafiyah* under which there were two methods, Mudayanah and Amil.

1. Mudayanah: The Nakhuda, captain of the boat was financed by the merchants who lent money at interest, for paying advances to the divers, equipping the boat and purchasing provisions for the season. The rate of interest was laid down 20 percent for the period of the off season and 10 percent during the Ghaus. But the Nakhudas are not bound to sell his pearls to the merchant who financed him.
2. Amil: The Nakhuda borrowed from a merchant but instead of charging interest the merchant had a right to purchase the pearls at a figure which may be 20 percent less than the market value (Government of India: 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Jenner 1985: 27-31).

In the pearling industry it was the big merchants and capitalists who made biggest profits. The biggest men in the pearl industry in Bahrain were the merchants who financed the boats. Every merchant tried to sell his pearls locally during the season, but a few merchants went out for higher prices and many used to travel Bombay because Bombay was the largest market for the pearls. Most of the important buying and selling was done on shore. The biggest buyers were Mohamed Ali Zainal and his partner Bienenfield, and couple of Indian and Persian merchants. Most of the Pearls were exported via Bombay to world market especially Europe. The pearls were polished and

graded in Bombay and then taken to Paris and London for sale to English and American buyers. If bigger buyer came from Europe local prices would be higher and Bahrain would get more profit. The Gulf merchants also visited regularly to India to market their pearls. They took loans for the expansion of the Pearl-diving operations. At that time, Bombay was the main centre for the marketing of the Pearls for the merchants of the Persian Gulf. In India, Gulf pearls were bought, pierced, polished and manufactured into jewelry and re-exported to Europe or sold to Indian Maharajas. The Indian role in the Gulf pearling industry was restricted only to purchasing and providing loans to Bahraini traders. There was no actual involvement of the Indians in pearl-diving operations because Bahraini Government did not grant permission to foreigners to compete with the local divers. However there were a number of occasions in which Indian merchants got permission from local chiefs to practice Pearl-diving (Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Jenner 1985: 27-31).

Medical Provision

Diving was an unhealthy profession and the divers as a whole were not long lived. The boats were overcrowded and sometimes they remained out at sea for two months at a time. The divers lived on a ration of dates, rice and fish. Most divers suffered from ear trouble. Rupture of the eardrum was most common and men were not considered proficient until this had occurred. Euphysema of the lungs was common and was often followed by bronchitis. Very often diving caused dilation of the heart with valvular disease. During the season, the Government's hospital boat, a large well equipped boom remained out at the banks and the Indian sub-Assistant surgeon dealt with cases of illness among the divers ((Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X).

Beside Pearl-diving, the bulk of populations were engaged in agriculture, fishing and crew. The date cultivation was the key element in the Island's subsistence. As many as 23 different types of dates had been cultivated. The date palm was at the centre of Bahrain's rural economy. The date was cultivated in the whole of the northern part of Bahrain. Local handicrafts such as weaving, pottery, and basket-making supplemented the rural economy. The villages close to sea engaged in some fishing (Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Jenner 1984: 27-31).

Import and Export between India and Bahrain

Table 3.4

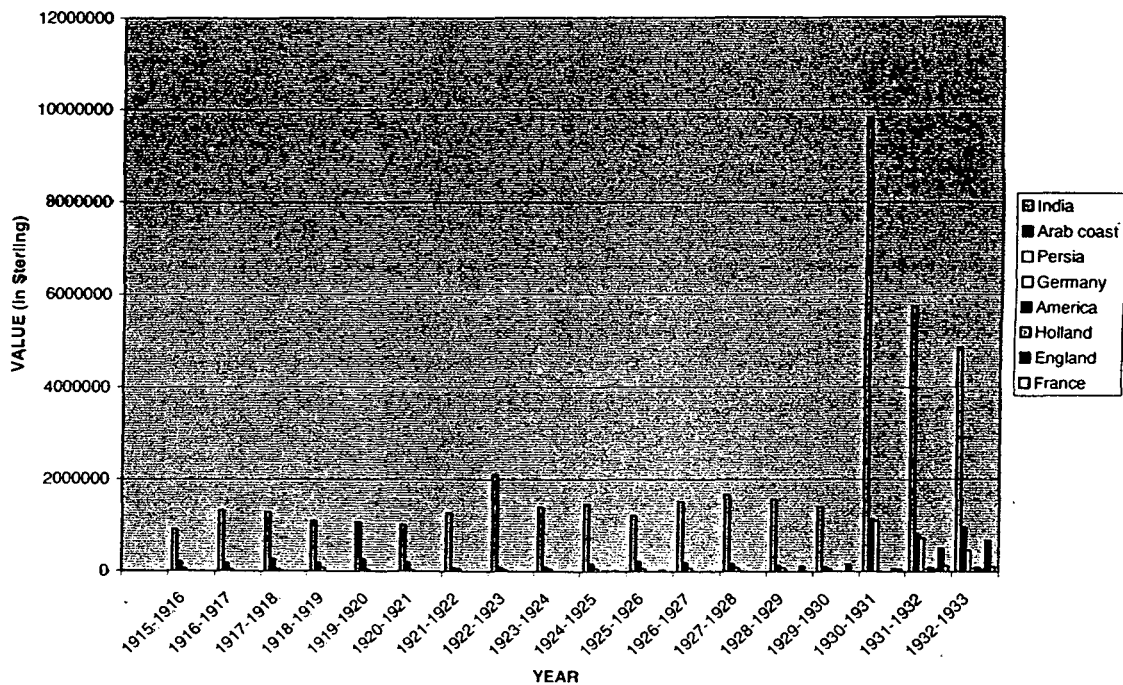
Total value of Exports to Bahrain from various countries(Values in £)

COUNTRIES & YEAR	India	Arab coast	Persia	Germany	America	Holland	England	France
1915-1916	905378	196420	49214					
1916-1917	1314796	174592	35314					
1917-1918	1290770	262072	48580					
1918-1919	1089567	181822	73123					
1919-1920	1066412	257887	41744					
1920-1921	1006366	189698	23194					
1921-1922	1256535	75302	58174					
1922-1923	2097506	76942	39796					
1923-1924	1383595	98143	50504					
1924-1925	1463295	162236	61485	386	27295		11079	
1925-1926	1210223	209784	61636				27723	
1926-1927	1510550	190768	71424	5510		1450	7980	
1927-1928	1658227	162674	77619	6080				
1928-1929	1568143	137043	80447				121818	
1929-1930	1399173	96602	59292				153250	
1930-1931 in Rs.	9816710	1137140	1100470				57734	55230
1931-1932 in Rs.	5741970	811190	720040	61490	92630	49650	490820	123210
1932-1933 in Rs.	4849460	955400	460200	75680	93340	53450	673980	107580

Source: (Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret E. – Jan. – 72-78; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, External- Oct. – 7-8, Part B; Government of India 1917: Foreign and Political Department, War- Dec. – 107-109- Part B; Government of India 1918: Foreign and Political, External. - Feb. – 24-28- Part A; Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. – 3-8- Part A; Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Government of India 1928: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 88- N; Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 59- N; Government of India 1930: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 230- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 134- N; Government of India 1932: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 343- N; Government of India 1933: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 241- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 212- N).

Chart- 3.4

Total Value of Export to Bahrain from Various Countries



Source: As in table 3.4

The above table 3.4 and chart 3.4 shows that from the very beginning of the 20th century India was the dominant trading partner and the major import was carried from India to Bahrain islands. There was comparatively very low

business in the first and second decades of the 20th century but in the third decade it had very huge turn over and virtually reached the maximum limit in 1930-1931. It was due to First World War that trade was affected in the initial years but after that it was not only consolidated but also achieved more than five times profit in terms of money. The sudden leap in 1930s was due to the growing trend of Indian market and rigorous marketing policy adopted by the Government of India which was facing tough competition from other European as well as West Asian states. Arab Coast was the second largest importer and then came Persia and Germany.

Table 3.5
Total value of Import from Various countries, Value in £

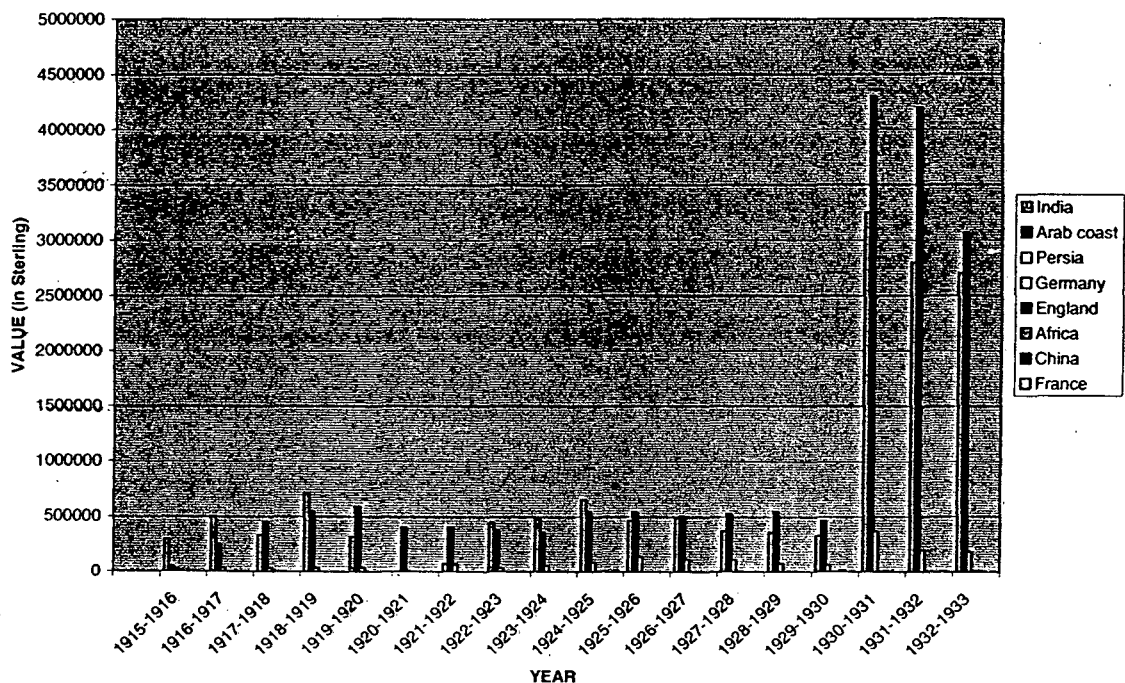
COUNTRIES & YEAR	India	Arab coast	Persia	Germany	England	Africa	China	France
1915-1916	293621	48321	22294					
1916-1917	498679	239746	31688					
1917-1918	333556	455631	27941					
1918-1919	709098	551720	29651					
1919-1920	312437	592203	36512					
1920-1921	683	400417	5732					
1921-1922	71840	405083	67548					
1922-1923	444441	374075	34031		433			
1923-1924	479392	351726	55816					
1924-1925	653383	552551	89531	3048	1194			
1925-1926	467658	540435	134454		389			
1926-1927	492876	504824	112229	296	1468			
1927-1928	369520	529907	109615	470				
1928-1929	355896	548697	73893		2344	2645	73	
1929-1930	327042	461725	62588		3086	15859	54	
1930-1931 in Rs.	3248850	4301890	365820					
1931-1932 in Rs.	2798280	4193650	198990	3680	2720		700	500
1932-1933 in Rs.	2701050	3060410	182120	11100	7800	5340	180	1000

Source: (Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, Secret

E. – Jan. – 72-78; Government of India 1913: Foreign and Political Department, External- Oct. – 7-8, Part B; Government of India 1917: Foreign and Political Department, War- Dec. – 107-109- Part B; Government of India 1918: Foreign and Political, External. - Feb. – 24-28- Part A; Government of India 1920: Foreign and Political Department, External - Jun. – 3-8- Part A; Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X; Government of India 1928: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 88- N; Government of India 1929: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 59- N; Government of India 1930: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 230- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 134- N; Government of India 1931: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 212- N; Government of India 1932: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 343- N; Government of India 1933: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 241- N).

Chart- 3.5

Total value of Import to Various countries from Bahrain



Source: As in table 3.5

Akin to import as presented in table 3.4 in the sphere of export India was one of the principal destinations for Bahrain. In comparison to the War years export to India was affected very badly in the post War years. There was growing resentment towards British considerably caused by the Khilafat

agitation and the local anti-British feeling due to the Government of India's restrictions on the export of foodstuffs to Bahrain.¹ But in the following years onward there was upward growth in the export to India. It was however dominated by Arab Coast which pushed India to the second largest exporting destination (Government of India: Foreign and Political Department, Reports on the Trade of the Bahrain Islands, 1913-1933).

Oil Industry

The Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) was formed just after the discovery of oil in Masjid-i-Sulaimani in Persia in 1908. In Bahrain, the oil was discovered in Jabal Dukhan in 1932 and soon the BAPCO first struck oil in the same year. The production of oil in Bahrain led the increase in the employment opportunities earlier than the other oil-producers in the Gulf countries. There was inflow of Persians in Bahrain cause concerned to the British Indian Government. By December 1935 BAPCO was employing more than 200 Persians and Iraqi workers compared to only 61 Indians. BAPCO's employment policy was essentially controlled by the Political Agent of Bahrain and reflects their desire to keep down the number of Iranians. The British were clearly promoting the employment of Indians over Persians whom they regarded as an instrument of the Persian demand for sovereignty over the islands (Mikhin 1988; Seccombe and Lawless 1986).

BAPCO had begun to import Indians as early as 1935. With the onset of its

¹ The political resident reported Indian authorities that as a nation, we are getting more and more unpopular in Bahrain and our food policy is opening wound, which it will take years for us to heal. The Bahraini people feel that India cares very little for the interest of Bahrain. And they desire that Bahrain and Arab ports generally in the Persian Gulf should look to Iraq as their protector. People feel that the Government of India treats Bahrain as a stranger and the way it is treated it might be an enemy country. The cost of everyday articles of living is becoming alarming. Living here is more expensive than in London or Paris. And India's food restrictions are undoubtedly responsible for the serious state of affairs.

refinery construction program in 1936 BAPCO came under increasing pressure from the British authorities in Bahrain, as well as from the government of India itself, to formalize its recruitment of Indian manpower. In July the company sent M.H. Bush to India with instruction to open a Bombay recruiting office. However, it was not until November 1936 that the government of Bombay would grant permission for BAPCO to recruit labour. In July 1936, they opened a recruitment office in Bahrain. Both the British authorities and the government of Bahrain were particularly concerned that an influx of Persians would disturb the delicate Sunni/Shia population balance and moreover that it would enhance Tehran's claim to sovereignty over Bahrain (Seccombe and Lawless 1986: 14).

The development of oil sector had an immediate impact on major developments in Bahrain. There was also immediate effect on social and economic structure within the Island. There was widespread shift from the declining pearl trade and the agriculture sector into the stable employment at BAPCO. The 1930s, there were a period of pioneering development in Bahrain. The new oil town of Awali was founded. In 1932, the first public telephone was connected and by 1937 there were 45 telephone subscribers. By 1935, there were five steamship lines calling at Bahrain and work had begun on the British naval base in Juffair. During the 1936-37 the old bazaar of Manama was rebuilt and a causeway to Muharraq was constructed. Earlier there was no causeway between the two towns which had population of about 25000 and 20000 respectively. Earlier, Passengers from the steamers were transferred to smaller boats and sometime the donkeys in order to reach through the shallow waters (Jeffer 1984: 30-33).

The Government of Bahrain Administration Report for 1937 reviewed the

changes that had taken place since 1926. According to the report:

"The new economic structure rendered marginal in any cases the position of the tribal Arabs who had accompanied the Al-Khalifa from the mainland of Arabia in 1782. With the development in Manama, Awali and the refinery at the Sitra the importance of Muharaq: "the citadel of tribalism", entered a period of decline. On the contrast the development of Manamah is striking. Ten years ago there were few parts of the bazaar which could be reached in a car, and even the most important shops were situated in narrow lines. Now most of the principal bazaars are accessible to cars and the wider streets. The style of building has also changed and there was airy showrooms, high building with windows in which their goods can be displayed" (Jeffer 1984: 33).

The report also said:

"Changes are taking place all over the Gulf, but of the Arab states, Bahrain is changing most rapidly. The most conspicuous visible changes in comparing Bahrain today and ten years ago are in the capital. Where a person returning to the country would notice the wider streets, better buildings, and decrease in straw huts, more shops selling European goods, motor traffic, European dress worn by natives, knowledge of English language, and greater interest in world affairs" (Jeffer 1984: 33-34).

Money and Tariff

English Sovereigns and Indian currency both paper and silver were the principal currency of the Bahrain Island. It was British sterling which had dominated in Bahrain till 1930 and the Indian rupee was introduced and came into circulation in Bahrain in 1932 until 1965 when Bahrain introduced Dinar as its own currency in 1965. The exact value of rupee was:

16 Annas = 1 Rupee

15 Rupee = 1 Sterling (Government of India: Foreign and Political Department, Reports on the Trade of the Bahrain Islands, 1913-1933).

In view of the fact that the Rupee was the unit of currency employed at all places on the Southern littoral of the Gulf and that conversion into sterling frequently led to discrepancies owing to fluctuations of exchange and possible errors of calculations. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf authorized the Political Agent, Bahrain, to submit the figures for his report for 1931-32 and subsequent years in rupees, and for the sake of uniformity, instruct the Political agents at Kuwait and Muscat to do likewise (Government of India 1932: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 343-N).

Weights and Measures

There were no proper standard weights and those used by shop-keepers were frequently under standard.

1 Ratl or Kiya	= 1.54 Lbs.
1 Ruba	= 4.11 Lbs.
14 Rubas = 1 Man	= 57.6 Lbs.
10 Mans. = 1 Rifaah	= 576 Lbs.

In the pearl trade the unit of weight was based on the Indian measure called Chao, but the Bahrain Chao = 4 Indian Chaos.

100 Dukra = 1 Chao.

330 Chaos = 1 Muskal = 149 grains Troy.

66 Habbe = 1 Muskal (Government of India: Foreign and Political Department, Reports on the Trade of the Bahrain Islands, 1913-1933).

Toll and Tariff

The Tariff was fixed at 5% *ad valorem* on all imports and export duty was fixed at 10%. But the tax on goods landed at Bahrain in transit to the main land was

reduced to 2% at which figure earlier stood and export duty of Rs. 10 per bundle of hides and Rs. 2 per basket of dates was charged. The Customs work was carried on by a European Director of Customs under the orders of the Ruler of Bahrain. Earlier this responsibility was delivered by an Indian firm, a member of which acted as the director (Government of India 1922-23: Foreign and Political Department, File No. 818- X).

Conclusion

Taking the above description into consideration it is obvious that India and Bahrain observed a strong economic relation during the 1913-1936. Bahrain was entirely dependent on to India for its daily household as well as commercial requirements of food items and trade articles. Rice was the staple food item Bahrain populace were looking from India and India on the other hand providing large profitable market to its pearl industry. Although there were moments which created distrust between India and Bahrain due to political misunderstanding of the situation but wishfully the Government of India rectified its faulty policy and regained the lost trust. Consequently in the 1930s we see there was great leap in the trade transaction between two countries.

As far as Pearl trade was concerned, it suffered a great setback at the outset of the 1930s. The discovery of oil was a timely event for Bahrain. The pearl trade had suffered a major slump from which there was no lasting recovery. There was economic depression at world wide and it was coincided with the introduction of the Japanese cultured pearl. Together these factors increased the crisis for the pearl-fishing. The country faced serious financial crisis. Without oil it was likely that Bahrain would have become bankrupt and the

bureaucracy would have withered away which was established in 1920s.

Prior to the discovery oil, Bahrain economic activities dependent on agriculture, pearling and trade. Bahrain's pearls were reputed to be the best in the region (Azhar 1999: 241). The economic activities show that before the production of oil in Bahrain, there was no sign of modern technology, consequently the Bahrainis had not experienced with any luxuries. Imports were restricted to merely the necessities for pearling fleet, wood to built boat, ropes for diving and foodstuffs to supplement the home-grown diet. The pace for day to day life was slow. Until the latter period of 1930s, there were no telephones, telegraphs, or wireless communication in Bahrain. Communications with the outside world was entirely dependent on the local vessels of the towns and villages. The development of oil sector had an immediate impact on major developments in Bahrain. The 1930s, there were a period of pioneering development in Bahrain.

CHAPTER IV

Socio-Cultural Relations between India and Bahrain

Socio-Cultural Relations between India and Bahrain

This chapter discusses the historical dimension in the socio-cultural relations between India and Bahrain. although the socio-cultural relations between the two nations can be traced back to the ancient period, the Indian migration did not take place in the considerable numbers until the first half of the 20th century and as far as the migration of Indian labour is concerned, the introduction of reforms and the discovery of oil in the 1920s and 1930s played a vital role in this process. Since this emigration was generally temporary in nature, it restricted the institutional development within the Indian community. During this period the Indians played very important role in the early modernization process in Bahrain. The ongoing Indian freedom struggle had a deep impact in Bahrain and counted a major factor in anti-British feeling among the Bahraini people.

During the first half of twentieth century, with the British rule in India as well as in Bahrain, the later became politically, economically and administratively linked to India. As a result, the Bahrainis dependence on India increased significantly in every sector. This led to greater demographic movements and socio-cultural communication between the two regions. All of which had remarkable impact on all aspect of life between the two countries (Elmadani 2003: 123).

India and Bahrain up to the First World War

In ancient times, there was a trade linkage between the Indus Valley Civilization and Dilmun Civilization, respectively known as India and Bahrain that led to the beginning of Socio-Cultural relations between the two

regions. Indians had settled there as early as the beginning of the 17th century. Bahrain also became the home of important Indian merchant community since the beginning of the 18th century. Contrary to some Gulf countries, Bahraini Government's attitude towards foreigners had been liberal served as the mitigating factor to the beginning of the Indian migration in Bahrain (Jain 2003a: 437).

The Indians settled in Bahrain had been primarily engaged in Pearl industry. As far as the Indian role in Bahrain in the era of pearl industry is concerned, their role was confined to purchasing, providing loans to Bahraini traders and export the pearls fished out by Bahraini divers. There was no actual involvement of Indians in Pearl-diving operations. The fact that the rulers of Bahrain granted permission to Indians to take part in any business activities other than the Pearl industry. On contrast, in Kuwait, the ruler of Kuwait were hesitant to give any Indian role in business resulted only modest Indian presence in Kuwait (Elmadani 2003: 112-122). However in Qatar, a number of Indians and Persians came to participate in the Pearl industry. Since Qatar had no treaty relations with British until 1916, Indians could not claim the special privilege that they enjoyed in Bahrain consequently they did not compete with the natives. By the early 20th century, Qatar had only one Indian resident (Zahlan: 1979: 22).

Due to the British hegemony over Bahrain, the position of Indians was strengthened and their activities spread out to businesses other than those related to the Pearling industry. The factors which led to the this new situation was the protection and privileges which Indian merchants enjoyed under the British rule in Bahrain and due to this fact they were considered the British subjects (Zahlan 1979). The agreement which were signed between the

British Indian authorities and the ruler of Bahrain had articles asserting protection and privileges. Prior to this, Indian merchants faced insecurity which restricted their existence in large numbers in the region. On many occasions, their businesses and commercial vessels were victims of domestic instabilities in Bahrain and other Gulf countries (Elmadani 2003: 121).

During this period Indian merchants stayed in Bahrain on a temporarily basis. Though some merchants did stay throughout the year, their residence was not permanent. Since the Migration pattern was rotational. Particular individuals had to return to India after a period of time that is the reason that, they were not accompanied by their families (Franklin 1985: 193).

All the Indian merchants generally lived in Manama. The Pearl market, the Port, Customs and all the warehouses were located there. They used to live above their business premises and were residentially segmented from other groups in population, for example, Arab and Persian, who lived in the various quarters surrounding the market. Despite many hardships for Indians, such as the temporary residence, harsh living conditions, unhealthy climate, business was good in the 1920s. According to an estimate, the Indian population in Bahrain numbered about 500 in 1914. There was a sizable population of Hindus and Muslims. The Hindu traders were mostly from Gujarat and a number of Muslim traders and merchants from Punjab (Franklin 1985: 193).

During the pre-oil days, one of the principal sources of livelihood in Bahrain was Pearl fishing and trade. A large segment of the population in Bahrain was involved in this activity. In those days, Indian merchants came to the region to conduct deals with their local counterparts. They were known in the Gulf

by the name *Banyan*. Some of these Indians were stationed permanently there for this purpose (Elmadani 2003: 112). The term "Banyan" refers only to Vaisya traders in Indian usage, but it is used by Bahrainis and other Gulf Arabs to refer to all Hindu merchants. The Indians who provided services maintained shops in Muharraq but resided in Manama. By this time Muharraq had become a sizable town, but its population was largely tribal. In Manama, the Indians had also built a temple on the land acquired by ruler (Franklin 1985: 192-193).

India and Bahrain after First World War

After the First World War when administrative reforms in various government departments were carried out in Bahrain, further Indian immigration took place in Bahrain. In the early 1920s, there were demands for administrative and legal reforms and the improvement in some traditions and laws related to the pearling industry and labour conditions in Bahrain. The authorities of British East India Company began to introduce a series of administrative reforms during 1920s. There had been a series of reforms in the land tenure system, the Pearl-fishing trade, in Justice and in urban administration. There had been foundations of a civil bureaucracy. In 1923, the first organized department i.e Custom Department was established (Jenner 1984: 31-32).

The reforms, which introduced in the pre-oil period for example, in Municipality, in the communication, health and agricultural sectors, the British largely dependent on the Indians to fill most of the skilled, semi-skilled and white-collar positions. The staffs of British Political agency in Bahrain were Indians. The accountants and clerks at the custom department

were Indians. Most of the physicians and nurses at hospitals and clinics were Indians. The first director of Public works was an Indian, a retired officer from Indian civil service. The very first directors or organizers of custom, post and passport departments in Bahrain were Indians. Indians were the heads of the first medical clinic in 1925. The very first doctors, nurses, midwives, banks and customs, senior clerks and agricultural advisors were also Indians. (Jain 2003a: 438-439).

The Composition of Indian Migration

Before the establishment of political agency and several British firms, there was spontaneous migration to Bahrain. When the political agency and British commercial firms came into existence, there was formal recruitment of Indians to work in Bahrain. The migration of Indians accelerated with the administrative reforms in 1920s and further expedited by the development of oil-industry in Bahrain in 1930s (Seccombe and Lawless 1986).

The mechanics who were hired generally were Sikhs and the skilled workers were more often Goans. The British also employed Indians as cooks and servants and they likely to be Muslims or Goans. The political advisor, C. D. Belgrave, recruited a number of ex-Indians army to serve as a police force in 1920s. The police force was mostly Punjabis. The Sikhs who worked as a police force were so unpopular that most were repatriated by 1932. The garrison at the political agency was also an Indian (Franklin 1985: 194).

Bahrain has been home to an important Indian merchant colony since the beginning of the 18th century. Indian viceroy, Lord Curzon visited Bahrain in 1903 (Mikhin 1988: 30). On 2, November 1903, a group of 10 British Indian

merchants which included Sindhi and Gujrati had written to a petition addressed to the viceroy of India, Lord Curzon claiming that they came to Persian Gulf about two hundred years ago. Seth Naomal Hotchand was a Karachi based merchant of 19th century settled in Bahrain. According to Naomal,

His ancestors Seth Bhoojmal, whose family originated from the region of Sehwan in central sind, settled in Kharrakbandar around 1720 and founded a powerful firm which had a gumashta (agent) in Masquat , who in turn had agents at Bushire, Shiraz and Bahrain (Jain 2003b: 437-438).

According to an estimate, the Indian population in Bahrain numbered about 500 in 1914. There was a sizable population of Hindus and Muslims. The Hindu traders were mostly from Gujarat and a number of Muslim traders and merchants from Punjab. The Indian migration to Bahrain was generally from the western and south part of India. For example most of the Indians were from Gujarat, Bombay, Madras, Karnataka, Goa and Malabar regions (Franklin 1985: 193).

Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO)

The migration of Indians accelerated with the administrative reforms in 1920s and further expedited by the development of oil-industry in Bahrain in 1930s. In accordance with the development of oil-industry in Bahrain, the number of Indians increased gradually. For example, statistical records show that their number doubled in Bahrain between 1936 and 1937. Along with the development of oil-industry, a number of wealthy Indian commercial houses emerged taking the lead in meeting of the growing demands for modern consumer merchandise from Europe in Bahrain. In a confidential report, in the 1930s, Indians constituted six out of thirteen names among the richest in Bahrain (Elmadani 2003: 112-114). In the 1930s, there was emergence of new

Indian communities in Bahrain who attracted towards the economic prosperity of Bahrain. They came legally or illegally to work as shopkeepers, cooks, tailors, barbers, drivers, and domestic servants, or to provide other services generally avoided by the natives (Seccombe 1983).

Most of the Indian migration after the oil era constituted clerks, and professional usually with high status. The secretary of C. D. Belgrave was an Indian as was the judge during the 1930s. Even the clerical staffs at BAPCO and almost all the employees at Gray-Mackenzie, African and Eastern, the steamship lines and the Imperial Bank of Iran and the Middle East were Indians. The imperial Bank of Iran and the Middle East later became the British Bank of the Middle East (Seccombe and Lawless 1986).

The discovery of oil (1932) in Bahrain led to increase in employment opportunities earlier than the other oil-producers in the Gulf countries. There was inflow of Persians in Bahrain cause concerned to the British Indian Government. The Company's local management had no established links with India chose to recruit Persians for semi-skilled manual operations. In December 1933, Lt.-Col. P.G. Loch, the political agent in Bahrain wrote to the company to remind them of their obligation to confine their employment as far as practicable to British subjects or subjects of the Sheikh of Bahrain (Bulloch 1984: 72-73).

BAPCO had begun to import Indians as early as 1935. By December 1935 BAPCO was employing more than 200 Persians and Iraqi workers compared to only 60 Indians. The Political Resident (Lt.-Col. T.C. Fowle) wrote to the political Agent in December 1935 asking him to restrain the company's recruitment of Non-British subjects. Both the British authorities and the government of Bahrain were particularly concerned that an influx of Persians

would disturb the delicate Sunni/Shia population balance and moreover that it would enhance Tehran's claim to sovereignty over Bahrain (Seccombe and Lawless 1986: 559).

With the onset of its refinery construction program in 1936 BAPCO came under increasing pressure from the British authorities in Bahrain, as well as from the government of India itself, to formalize its recruitment of Indian manpower. In July the company sent M.H. Bush to India with instruction to open a Bombay recruiting office. However, it was not until November 1936 that the government of Bombay would grant permission for BAPCO to recruit labour. Over the next two years the Bombay office engaged 463 British Indians for service in Bahrain (Seccombe and Lawless 1986: 566). In July 1936, they opened a recruitment office in Bahrain (Government of India 1936: Foreign and Political Department, File No-693-N).

In October 1937, C.D. Belgrave, the British advisor of the sheikh of Bahrain observed that

“in view of the increasing number of Persians who are entering Bahrain illegally and being immediately given employment by BAPCO, the Bahrain government wishes to request the Bahrain Petroleum Company not to employ locally any persons who cannot produce a certificate from the Bahrain government to the effect that they are Bahraini subjects or permanently resident in Bahrain” (Seccombe and Lawless 1986: 561).

Despite protest from C. D. Belgrave, the advisor to the Government of Bahrain, the company continued to engage Persian labour. From the company's point of view the latter offered a number of advantages: they came to Bahrain at their own expense and having no formal contracts with the company, could be hired and fired almost at will. In contrast recruitment of Indians, bound as it was by the provisions of the 1922 Indian emigration act, was a lengthy process. The terms and conditions which could be offered to

Indians were controlled by formal Foreign Service agreements which were authorised by the protector of Emigrants (Bombay), a government of India official (Seccombe and Lawless 1986: 562).

Despite these measures, the number Persian employed increased from 429 (March 1937) to 555 (September 1937). Smith, the BAPCO representative replied to Belgrave: We are endeavouring in every way to cut down the proportion of that nationality but have found that we are unable to obtain sufficient Bahrainis to handle our requirements. The British were clearly promoting the employment of Indians over Persians whom they regarded as an instrument of the Persian demand for sovereignty over the islands. The Political Agent also had more personal motives for promoting the employment of Indians (Weiner 1982: 7).

Weightman's survey had revealed that Indian nationals (other than those paid from Government of India funds) were earning some Rs. 133 lakhs per annum and that from Bahrain alone Indian merchants earned some Rs. 10-12 lakhs annually. The number of Indian nationals registered in Bahrain had grown from 450 in 1930 to 1550 in 1938-39 (Weiner 1982: 8).

According to Seccombe, the vast majority of workers in BAPCO were Bahraini, but as a result of strike in the late 1930s, BAPCO began to employ Indian and Iranian workers extensively. Company officials reasoned that since these workers were not directly concerned with the country's political life they would be more loyal and docile than Bahraini workers (Seccombe 1983: 7-8).

According to Seccombe, 145 BAPCO were seeking to create a segmented labour market and to play off indigenous against immigrant labour, to undermine the power of the nascent Bahraini workers movement. The employment of Indians appears to have been a compromise between the desire for a mobile supply of skilled and semi-skilled labour and the restrictions against the Persians, who could be regarded as the nearest and cheapest supply. Persians could be brought over on local dhows at their own expense and examined for their suitability for employment by BAPCO's local agents before their hiring or rejecting them, whilst Indians had to be given a formal contract in Bombay and guarantees paid. BAPCO did not find the Indians to be a docile labour force. Furthermore, whilst there were no formal worker organizations, it was the Indians who formed a Representative Committee to air grievances and make complaints, whose efforts were partly responsible for obtaining the substantial wage increase in early 1947 (Seccombe 1983: 9-12).

India's Impact on Socio-Cultural Life and Early Modernisation

Process in Bahrain

India's impact on socio-cultural life of Bahrain has been observed since the old days. However, with both the countries being linked under same colonial rule, there were greater and more varied interactions between the two nations. In this context, as according to Almadani, a Bahraini scholar,

"Tens of words of Indian origin became widely used in everyday conversations in the Gulf's coastal towns. These were the words related to jobs held by the Indians, products imported from India, items introduced by the Indians, financial methods associated with the use of the Indian rupee, and tools and methods used in the pearl-diving. Apart from these, the Indian socio-cultural influence include the entrance of many traditional

Indian dishes into the Gulf cuisine, the adoption of Indian artistic designs in the formation of gold and silver, the use of a number of musical instruments similar to those used by the Indian musicians, the rhythmic pattern of music, the interior decoration of houses and rooms and designs of women's costume were also affected by the Indian culture" (Elmadani 2003: 120).

The Bahraini merchants who were settled in India or those who stayed there for the short duration, their activities were not confined only to marketing pearls or capturing business opportunities there. They also took interest in India's Social and Cultural life, observing political developments in the Indian Subcontinent. They also established contact with Indian leaders. Some of the wealthiest among them constructed Mosques, Schools and clubs in India to serve Muslim Indians as well as the Arab community. For example, the Bahraini merchant, Muhammed Zainal Alireza built a number of schools in Bombay and Bahrain including Alfalah School in Bombay in 1931 for teaching Arabic language, Islamic studies, and other subjects. Bahrainis merchants came into contact with the British officials and Indian elites, they learnt new language: Hindi and English, a new ways of business and life, all of which had a significant impact on the Socio-Cultural development in India and Bahrain. These multi-faceted relations also constituted a consciousness movement in Bahrain (Elmadani 2003).

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, India acted as a channel through which the latest news of political and cultural developments flowed into the Gulf. In those days, the countries in the Gulf had no direct contacts with outside developments occurring in nearby countries. They had no contact with outside World due to as a result of the British policy of isolating the region from the other side of the World developments. The Gulf merchants and reformers who stationed at that time in India, they responded

by capturing news of these developments from magazines published in Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon. British authorities in Bahrain considered the freedom of press to harmful for British rule and oppressed the freedom of press by not allowing them entry in Bahrain to those who considered objectionable. One such newspaper "Al Balagh" published from Beyrout was denied entry in Bahrain because it was considered anti-British in tone (Government of India 1927: Foreign & Political Department, Near-East Branch, 617-N).

Influenced by India's cultural life and its varied phenomena, the merchants undertook the transfer of some of these phenomena to Bahrain. The emergence of Iqbal Awal Club in 1913 and the Literary Club in 1923 in Bahrain was basically due to the effort and support of these reformist merchants (Elmadani 2003: 117).

India had a vital role in the very beginnings of the press and publishing activity in Bahrain. For example, Bahrain's first newspaper, *Albahrain*, in 1939 became possible by Indian assistant. Abdullah Alzayed, a Pearl merchant, reformer and poet, who had lived in exile in Bombay for two years, he brought the printing press from Bombay. He was also the publisher and editor of *Albahrain* (Elmadani 2003: 117). Prior to the First World War, Bahrain sent material requiring publication to printing presses in India, Cairo and Basra. The printing and publishing of some of the very first Bahraini books took place in Bombay. Even the first map defining the locations of pearl fisheries was also printed in Bombay in 1914. However a printing press was set up in Manama with an Indian assistant in 1913. Soon after the World War the first pamphlets began to appear in Bahrain (Government of India 1927: Foreign and Political Department, 566-N).

Furthermore, India was the only favourable destination of Bahraini people for learning English and obtaining advanced education. Many Bahraini families including the Royal Families of Bahrain chose Indian schools such as Aligarh College, for their sons. As a result, many of those, who led the Socio-Cultural movement in Bahrain in the early twentieth century indebted their knowledge, experience and prominence to India. The most remembered poet and reformer of Bahrain; Ibrahim Alurayed, who was born in Bombay, played an important role in the cultural movement in Bahrain owed their experience to India (Elmadani 2003: 117-118).

The impact of the Indian national movement on Bahraini reform movements was significant. The Bahraini merchants who settled in India were in touch with their kith and kin at home, supplying them with the news of political developments in Indian subcontinent. In letters, they exchanged their views regarding these developments and the ways to incorporate the experience of other nations into their own struggle for reform and freedom. And according to Abdulla Elmadani, a Bahraini scholar, *"what probably made the Gulf merchants and reformers keenly observe India's experience was the fact that their efforts were directed against the same colonial power, and the fact that the Indians supported their cause"* (Elmadani 2003: 116). In 1928, the Indian National Congress passed a resolution and extended its sympathy with all Arabs in their struggle for freedom. (Jha 1988: 84).

Indian played a vigorous role in the early modernisation process in Bahrain during 1920s and 1930s. However, it was this intense role which caused much grievance among the Bahrainis and that led to strikes and disturbances in Bahrain in the later period of 1930s (Jenner 1984: 30). The Bahrainis were

enraged and disgruntled by the import of Indians to occupy governmental positions and other jobs in the Bahrain Oil Company (BAPCO). They were also against the protection and privileges extended to Indians and the better wages and conditions they enjoyed. Because some of the Indians were involved in running the colonial administration, they were regarded as British agents whose assignments were to reinforce the British presence in the region. According to Elmadani, a Bahraini scholar, "despite the tense relations between the Bahrainis and Indians, there are no records showing that they developed at any time into violence as the struggle was of a social and economic nature and did not stem from racial hostility. Probably what contributed to the avoidance of violent clashes was the fact that the Indians, in general, confined themselves to earning money rather than getting involved in the politics and domestic affairs of the Gulf countries" (Elmadani 2003: 119).

Bahrain Sports Club

The Bahrain Sports Club is the oldest expatriate organization founded by Indian community in Bahrain in 1915. It is also the largest of all the Indian associations in Bahrain. The BSC was formed by four Muslim Businessmen, two Christian clerks and a Parsi physician of Indian community. The BSC grew steadily over the years, and the membership stood at about 60 in 1936 (Franklin 1985: 488-89).

Though the founders were mainly Muslims and Goan Christians, over the years the club had become predominantly Hindu and Keralities. About 80 percent of club members were said to be white-collar workers, including professionals, managers, accountants, and some clericals. About 10 percent of the memberships were technicians but these were mostly engineers and other

highly trained workers. The other 10 percent of the membership was composed of merchants (Franklin 1985).

Though the BSC was the largest and foremost association in the Indian community, it was not an association for all Indians without undercutting its occupation. During the initial period of its formation, the BSC was very concerned with its image and with the status and behaviour of its members. Applications for membership were evaluated for prestige, occupation, and influence. Because of these selection procedures, though the membership was extremely varied in categorical terms, it was fairly homogenous in terms of social class i.e. educated, affluent, modern, and concentrated in high status occupations. They also enjoyed the good terms with ruler of Bahrain and high status in society (Franklin 1985: 488-95).

Institutional Development within the Indian Community

According to Robert L. Franklin, "the institutional development within the Indian community was minimal. Since the merchants were not accompanied by their families and the absence of families was probably a limiting factor in social activities. Most of the Indian groups lacked the numbers and common occupational interests that might have required organizations to be formed (Franklin 1985: 197). There were also exceptions to this generalization for example in 1935, Sikhs organized for worship in a building adjacent to a Hindu temple.

In 1915, the Bahrain Sports Club was formed by some Indians, the first association in the Indian community. There were about 50 members in Bahrain Sports Club by 1936. Many of the new members were Hindu and

Christian. The religious sentiment which was so evident in India during 1930s was imported to Bahrain. Consequently, the Bahrain Sports Club was split along religious lines in 1937 and a Bahrain Cricket Club came into existence. The Bahrain Cricket Club became mostly Muslim and Punjabi while the Bahrain Sports Club became largely Hindu and Christian. The patterns of participation in various organizations indicate that the vast majority of Indians were excluded. The fact that there were little interactions between Bahrainis and Indians indicated that they were a segmented society. The Indian community was neither a community in the sociological sense nor a formally organized group. All India group formation was limited (Franklin 1985: 198).

The British presence was responsible to Indianized the Bahraini society to some aspect. When the ruler of Bahrain died in 1932, the viceroy acknowledged his son as the new ruler by delivering a "Kharita" a custom commonly used for Indian princes- despite the fact that Bahrain was an independent state with treaty relations to the Indian Government. In Bahrain, a "Darbar", the elaborate ceremony of Indian princely authority, was held to mark the occasion of Kharita. Accordingly, the British strengthened its rule in Bahrain; there were changes in the status of Indians in Bahrain. In the old days, Indian merchants formed personal relationships with the rulers and with other groups in Bahrain. These relationships were sometimes based on functional work. For example, the Bhatias functioned as the Sheikh's bankers, the Soni, the other Indian community, made their Jewelry and ornaments (Franklin 1985: 199).

Despite alliances and economic relationships, Indians were socially separated from most Bahrainis. They were marginal and outside in the area of

competitions and dominations. Though the functional relationships between Indians and the ruling family gradually passed, the personnel relationships with rulers and cooperative relationships with other merchants were maintained. In 1900, the first Assistant Political Agent came in Bahrain. Soon after the arrival of the Assistant Political Agent, the Indian merchants mostly Hindus brought him their grievances over trade relations. The rest of the Indian population was employed by the British, either in administration or in British-owned firms. They had no relationships of alliances with the ruling family or other Bahrainis. As thus when the British authority was formally established, the protection of Indians and their property become secure, the Indian community grew, they became less linked to or dependent upon the society in which they lived (Franklin 1985: 200).

Indian community also became less marginal in the Bahraini society. As argued by Robert Lee Franaklin, "there were two inter-related processes were involved in this direction i.e. changes in the Bahraini society and changes in the status of Indians. The emergence of new status distinctions followed the emergence of new economic and political institutions. British protection and concessions to Indians as well as greater freedom of expression to Indians reshaped the public sphere of Bahraini society". For example, the Indian festivals, Holi and Diwali were declared public holidays and were openly celebrated in Bahrain (Franklin 1985: 200).

As the Indian population increased and families started to migrate, the residential patterns also changed. Indians now rented or owned houses in and around Suq, the same areas in which Bahrainis lived (Jenner 1985: 32).

In the new broadened economic and social arenas, Indians were no longer marginal or entirely separated. In fact, they were socially superior to most

Bahrainis. The new structures incorporated all migrants in Bahrain but did so hierarchically. The British were ahead in this hierarchically followed by Indians and Bahrainis (Franklin 1985: 201).

Conclusion

Taking the above discussion into consideration, it is evident that throughout the 19th century and until the post-oil discovery years, there was varies interactions between Indian subcontinent and Gulf in general and Bahrain in particular.

The old-age commercial connection between the two regions led to the Indian migration to Bahrain in search of profitable business activities there. However, the Indians were denied permission to take part in business activities other than the financing and trade the pearl-industry. Before the introduction of oil in Bahrain, the pearl-industry was the major occupation for the Bahrainis. Other than pearl-industry, a number of populations were also engaged in agriculture, date cultivation, fishing and the construction of the boats etc.

With the establishment of British rule in Bahrain, the interaction between the two countries proliferated. Indian migration further expedited in the 1930s with the discovery of oil. The reforms which introduced in the pre-oil period and those of the development of the oil industry years, Indians filled the most of the positions. There were increasing employment opportunities in Bahrain leading spurt of Indians in Bahrain. The British authorities also promoted the employment of Indians over Persians whom they considered as threat to the Bahrain's sovereignty. Through the mushroomed interactions and exchange

between the two nations, Bahrain also got benefited from the Indians experience. The Bahraini merchants who stationed at that time in India, they got influenced with Indian socio-cultural life. The fact that, the formation of many clubs and organizations were the major events in the life of Bahraini people. They also learnt new languages, a new way of life and dressing.

As far as Indian community in Bahrain is concerned, they constituted a fragmented society. The Indian community was neither a organized group nor a community. The fact that, despite the alliances and commercial connections, Indians were socially separated from most of the Bahrainis. There were little interactions between Indians and Bahraini. However the new economic and social development in the 1930s, there was a shift in this relation. Indians were no longer marginal or separated in the Bahraini society.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

Conclusion

Archaeological evidences uncovered so far suggest that India and Persian Gulf regions have been in contact with each other since the days of Harappan Civilization. At that time, Dilmun, present day Bahrain, covered most of the Eastern Arabia and it was not only a great religious and cultural centre, but also an important trading centre. And then, as today, its strategic location was one of its greatest assets. Geographically the region was well placed for trade with India. It laid between the great civilization of Sumer to the north and the Indus Valley to the east, covering the ancient centre of Magan (Oman today) to the South. Indus valley and the Dilmun civilization of Bahrain had very healthy trade relationship and it is also possible that with trade some socio-cultural interactions and demographic movements occurred. The form of cultural interactions between the two regions is confirmed by the presence of some embellished pottery and seashells in Bahrain. There was also resemblance between a number of methods used in certain activities such as fishing, measuring and weighing in both civilizations.

The relationship has persisted throughout the historical period. The rise of Islam in the 7th century AD and the Arab conquest of the North West Frontier Region of India added a new dimension to these relationships since the 8th century. Furthermore, both the regions got politically and administratively connected under the British rule from the late 19th century up to the mid-20th century. With the end of Piracy in Gulf, a "General Treaty of Peace" was signed in 1820 between Britain and Trucial states. Bahrain also became a signatory of the "General Treaty of Peace". Bahrain thus came under some form of British control. British initially conducted their affairs through the East India Company whose headquarters had been in Bombay. Thereafter, a

series of treaties had been signed between India and Bahrain. Britain and Bahrain signed another treaty called "Treaty of Peace and Friendship" in 1861. Through this treaty British recognized Bahrain as an independent state and promised to protect against the claims from Persia and Turkey. Further British consolidated their position in Bahrain and two fresh treaties were signed with Sheikh Isa Al-Khalifa in 1880 and 1892. As per these treaties, the ruler of Bahrain bound themselves not to enter in any relationship with a foreign Government other than British. Until India's independence in 1947, all the decisions regarding the political and economic affairs of Bahrain used to be taken in India. The dominance of Britain over both the regions paved the way for greater commercial exchanges, demographic movements, and socio-cultural communications between the two countries.

Earlier the British did not get involved in Bahrain's internal affairs but there were some changes in the region during the first quarter of the 20th century. The British policy in the Gulf had to compete with the growing rivalry of other powers like Russia, French and German. With the Anglo-French entente in 1904 and the Anglo-Russian convention in 1907 the opposition of British presence was removed in the region. With the defeat of Germany and the collapse of Ottoman Empire after the First World War, the British remained superior power in the Gulf. The British position changed after these new developments and it also brought about certain changes in the exercise of British power in the Gulf. On 29th July 1913, a convention was signed between Britain and Ottoman Empire under which Turkey renounced its claim over Bahrain and thus later on Bahrain became a British protectorate.

There were two major external forces have had a powerful impact on the Bahraini political fabric. The first had been the Iranian claim to sovereignty over Bahrain, which had been made at different intervals since the Al-Khalifa

overran the Persian garrison in 1783. With the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty in the early 20th century, the claim was revived and made with increasing intensity. Iran laid its claim to Bahrain by declaring that in the 17th and 18th centuries the Bahrain Island was part of Persia under the rule of Safawids. The presence of large Shia population in Bahrain served to strengthen the Iranian position. However, through the intensive British diplomatic activity, the Shah of Iran finally renounced the claim. The other external force was Britain, which for a long period exercised colonial influence in Bahrain. Initially, the British relationship with Bahrain was confined largely to the control of foreign affairs but later on, British officials became directly involved in the internal affairs. In 1915, Sheikh Isa, the ruler of Bahrain since 1869, gave up jurisdiction over foreigners in favour of the British Political agent of Bahrain.

During the first half of the 20th century Bahrain was a British protectorate controlled by the Government of India with a political agent accountable to the Viceroy of India. Under these circumstances, the Indians who resided permanently or temporarily in Bahrain were considered British subjects and they also enjoyed special privileges in Bahrain. During the period of early modernization process in Bahrain, when the various development programmes began to be introduced, Indians filled most of the vacancies of skilled and semi-skilled workers. The reforms which were introduced in the post-oil discovery years for example; in municipality, communication, health and agricultural sectors the Indians were imported to fill the needed skills.

With the early discovery of oil in the Gulf and production and development in oil industry, Bahrain began to enjoy a period of prosperity. The government utilized the large proportion of the income from oil to creating

new departments and to laying foundations for the modern state. Bahrain's indigenous labour supply has been insufficient to meet the demands of these new investments. With the expansion of its social services in 1920s, the establishment of Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) and the foundation of refineries, Indians arrived as clerks and technicians and filled most of the skilled and semi-skilled positions.

The early discovery of oil (1932) in Bahrain created a rush in employment opportunities earlier than the other oil-producers in the Gulf countries. As countries with great wealth, low populations, and labour shortages, the Gulf governments decided to encourage immigration. Early skilled employment at BAPCO had been largely dominated by the Persians in Bahrain. The increasing immigration of Persians had begun to cause concern to the Bahraini sovereignty. The British Indian authorities desired to keep down the number of Iranians. In 1937 in view of the increasing number of Persians the Bahrain Government asked the Bahrain Petroleum Company not to employ Persians and requested instead to recruit Indians.

The policy of Government to recruit Indians led to the migration of Indians in considerable numbers. As a result, the number of Indian nationals registered in Bahrain had grown from 450 in 1930 to 1550 in 1938. The fact that Bahrain had many foreign residents, the Indian community had been the largest foreign community which grew over the years as a result of the long trading association between India and Bahrain.

The Indians played a varied role in the early modernization process in Bahrain as well as in the Gulf. With British supremacy in the Gulf States, the position of the Indian merchants in the region was reinforced. The number of

Indian merchants increased and their activities expanded to businesses than those of related to the peeling industry. Earlier Indians were not allowed to involve in the business activities other than financing the pearl industry and trade. In this new development the Indians were also recruited in the administration which was responsible for running the colonial administration in Bahrain. The Indians were considered the British subjects and enjoyed protection and privileges. As a result the Indians were regarded as British agent by the local people. The Bahrainis were enraged by the import of Indians to occupy most of vacancies in governmental positions and also vacancies in the Bahrain Oil Company. The Indians also enjoyed the protection and privileges and better wages than natives. The protection and privileges and better wages enjoyed by Indians caused many grievances among the natives that led to strike in the 1930s and 1940s. However despite of these feeling of hatred against the Indians there was no major instance of violence between the Bahrainis and Indians.

Prior to the discovery of oil, Bahrain's economic activities depended on agriculture, pearling and trade. Bahraini pearls were reputed to be the best in the region. Throughout the 19th century and until the post-oil discovery years India was main market for pearls. The whole region of Gulf was dependent on India for its basic food items. India and Bahrain observed a strong economic relation during the first half of the 20th century. India was the biggest exporting country to Bahrain. For example, Indian goods constituted 72.47% of the total imports of Bahrain in 1929-30. The trade of Bahrain Island was to a great extent in hands of Indian merchants who had been settled in Bahrain. India constituted as major country for Bahrain's import and export thus major portion of Bahraini trade with India. Bahrain was utterly dependent on India for its daily household and commercial requirements of

food items. The major Indian imports from Bahrain constituted dates, pearls and specie during the period covering between 1913 and 1936. The whole commercial activities had been done in sterling till 1932 when Indian rupee was introduced as currency in circulation in Bahrain. Indian rupee remained in circulation until 1965 when Bahrain introduced Dinar as its own currency. The unit of weight in the pearl trade was based on the Indian weight and measures. The existence of common means of payment, the Indian rupee facilitated the conduct of business between the two countries. After 1947, Indian trade and economic relations with Bahrain has been encouraging. India's export to Bahrain during 1985 placed at about \$400.166 million and during 1996 it stood at \$74.5 billion as compared to Bahrain's \$18.7 billion. Even before the introduction of reforms and liberalization in the 1990s in the Indian economy, indo-Bahrain partnership in the form of joint ventures started. In the 1981, India and Bahrain signed an economic and co-operation agreement envisaging joint undertaking of Projects. India had set-up three joint ventures in Bahrain during the 1980s.

India was the only favourable destination to the people of the Gulf for obtaining advanced education. Many Gulf families including the royal family of Bahrain chose India for their education. The generation who obtained education in India and those who led the socio-cultural renaissance in the Gulf in the early 20th century owed their knowledge and experience to India. The Indian struggle for freedom had a ripple on the people of Bahrain. The merchant class who used to travel Indian very frequently observed the ongoing Indian movement for independence against British. They also applied the methods learnt in India. India's struggle for democracy was mentioned as one of the influencing factors responsible to the anti-British movement in Bahrain. As far as India was concerned, Indian leaders

supported the cause of Gulf people and even the Indian National Congress: the platform for the anti-British movement in India passed a resolution in support of the Arabs for the struggle for their independence.

The oldest Indian merchant communities in the Gulf were Luwatis and they were settled in Muscat. The Luwatis were the members of an Indian Muslim sect from near Bombay. Outside Muscat the largest of these communities were in Bahrain. Although the presence of Indian traders in the Persian Gulf region can be traced back from ancient period, the migration of Indian labour to the Gulf countries started only after the beginning of the oil industry during the 1930s. During the 1960s Bahrain was host to about 6000 Indian workforce. In 1971, there were about 6,657 Indians in Bahrain and they constituted 17.6% of total foreign population and 3.1% of total population of Bahrain. During the 1970s there was massive inflow of oil revenues that led to the various development programmes which required huge labour force in Bahrain. The demand of massive workforce and the shortage of labour force both skilled and non-skilled in Bahrain further paved the way for the Indian migration in the large numbers to Bahrain.

The process of Bahrainisation have been going on since the late 1970s in education, training and in the employment of native people. There was tremendous pressure from the emergence of strong middle class in Bahrain which wants its due share in the national affairs. In spite of these efforts from the Bahraini government there has been an increase in Indian workforce in Bahrain over the years. Currently, there are about 250,000 Indians in Bahrain that constitutes the largest expatriate community. The Indian workers constitute about 30% of the total workforce of Bahrain. Indians in Bahrain have contributed substantially in its economic and industrial development.

There are about 45 Indian socio-cultural associations in Bahrain. Indians socio-cultural associations like, the Bahrain Sports Club, the Indian Association, the Indian Fine Arts Society, the Indian Ladies Associations, and the Chinmaya Family, besides serving the socio-cultural needs of the community have also been active in varied social work in Bahrain. The Bahraini government is also very appreciative of the contribution of the Indian community.

The above discussion suggests that the relations between India and Bahrain during the first half of the twentieth century were diverse, comprehensive and significant. These long intimate and multi-faceted historical relations between the two nations must, therefore constitute the background on which present and future cooperation is premeditated. The inheritance of past must be employed in determining the certain future course of action from both sides.

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