

STUDY GUIDE

HISTORY OF SAUDI ARABIA

Code: 5686

Units: 1–9



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD**

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CONTENTS

Structure of the Course	vii
Guideline to Study Material.....	vii
Introduction to the Course	xi
Course Outline	xiv
Unit 1 Emergence of the Term ‘Middle East’	1
Unit 2 Fall and Decline of Ottoman Empire	11
Unit 3 Rise of Ibn-e-Saud and Birth of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	19
Unit 4 foreign Policy under Abdul Aziz.....	31
Unit 5 The Oil Exploration.....	43
Unit 6 King Saud (1953-54) and King Faisal (1964-75).....	51
Unit 7 King Khalid (1975-82) and the Kingdom	63
Unit 8 The Era of King Fahd (1982-2005).....	69
Unit 9 King Abdullah and the Kingdom	77

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

This is a three credit hours course consisting of nine units. A unit is a study of 12-16 hours of coursework for two weeks. The course work of one unit will include study of compulsory reading material and suggested books. You should make a time table for studies to complete the work within the allocated time.

For this course, tutorial meetings are arranged in the Study Centers established by the University to provide opportunity to the students for mutual discussion/ interaction with one another and also to the concerned tutor. Instead of formal lectures, the tutorial meetings are meant to solve student's problems individually in their studies.

Every course has a study package including compulsory reading material posted by the mailing section of the University. For the books suggested at the end of each unit, you can visit a nearby library/study centre or the Central library at the main campus in AIOU.

GUIDELINE TO STUDY MATERIAL

Before attending a tutorial you are required to prepare yourself in the following manner to get a maximum benefit of it. You are required to follow the following steps.

STEP 1

Go through the;

1. Course Outline
2. Course Introduction
3. Course Objectives
4. Structure of the Course
5. Assessment
6. Recommended Books
7. Suggested Readings

STEP 2

Read the whole unit and make notes of those points which you could not fully understand or wish to discuss with your course tutor.

STEP 3

Go through the self-assessment questions at the end of each unit. If you find any difficulty in comprehension or locating relevant material, then discuss it with your tutor.

STEP 4

Read thoroughly, the books sent to you by the Department of History, AIOU. In case of any explanation needed regarding the comprehension of the text, consult your tutor.

STEP 5

First read the entire assignments you are required to do for this course. Highlight all the points which you find difficult to tackle, and then discuss in detail with your tutor. This exercise will save you from lot of trouble and ensure good results in the form of good marks.

ASSESSMENT

For each course you will be assessed as follow;

- 2 Assignments (continuous assessment).
- Final Examination (three-hours written examination will take place at the end of the semester)
- Participation in the Workshop
- Group discussion in the Tutorial
- Presentation

The condition to qualify each component is given below;

1. A minimum of 40% in each assignment.
2. A minimum of 40% of the final written examination.
3. An aggregate of 40% of both the components i.e., assignments and final examination is required to pass the course.
4. The assignment is compulsory for the appearance in final examination.

The grade will be determined as following;

D	40%	-49%
C	50%	-59%
B	60%	-69%
A	70%	-79%
A+	80%	& above

ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignments are written exercises that are required to be completed at your own home or place of work after having studied different parts of the suggested reading material within the scheduled period of study. (See the assignments scheduled).
- For this course you will receive 02 assignments in the mailing package. You are advised to complete your assignments within the provided schedule.
- This is a compulsory course work and its successful completion will make you eligible to take final examination at the end of the semester.
- To complete your work successfully, you are provided with tutorial support as mentioned above.

- You will send your solved assignment to the tutor, whose name is notified to you for assessment and necessary guidance. Your tutor will return your assignments after marking and providing academic guidance and supervision.
- To qualify each assignment, you need to obtain a minimum of 40% marks.

Note; the students are informed about the names of tutors and study centres in the beginning of the semester. If you do not receive such information, please contact your Regional Office and concerned department.

WORKSHOP

- The workshop of post-graduate course will be held at the end of each semester at the following Regional Campuses;
 1. Islamabad
 2. Lahore
 3. Peshawar
 4. Karachi
 5. Gujranwala
 6. Multan

It is compulsory to attend the workshop. A student is not declared pass until he/she has attended the workshop satisfactorily and actively.

- The duration of the workshop for 3 credit course is three days.

REVISION BEFORE THE FINAL EXAMINATION

It is very important that you revise as systematically as you have been studying. You may find the following suggestions helpful.

- Go through the course unit one by one, using your study notes to remind you of the key topics, concepts or theories. If you have not already made notes, do so now.
- Note the key terms associated with each topic.
- Go through your assignments and check your weak points in each case.
- Test yourself on each of the main topics, writing down the main points or revising them verbally.
- Make sure to attend the last tutorial and discuss all the points that you find difficult to comprehend.
- Try to get together with a small group of fellow-students. Each person revises his topics intensively and, then in a group session summarizes them for the other members, who should raise queries and questions. This approach will make your studies interesting and provide you an opportunity to revise thoroughly.

- The paper in the final exam will be on the pattern of questions given at the end of each unit. Still you should go through previous papers. This can be of particular help in actually understanding questions and deciding how to frame an answer.
- Before your final exams, make sure
 - You get your roll-number slip,
 - You know where the examination centre is,
 - You know the date and time of the examination.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Saudi Arabia possesses an important position in the Modern Arab World and likewise for the Muslim World being one of the richest countries in the World. Its importance lies in the historical context as well. With the transfer of the capital from Medina to the outskirts of the Arabian Peninsula the region gradually lost its political importance and only the pilgrims had a relation to it. It restores its prominence with the rise of the family of Saud who made their appearance in the wake of Wahhabi Movement launched by Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab. The modern state of Saudi Arabia came into being in 1926 with the struggle of one of descendants of Saudi Family King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud. He carved out the kingdom amidst the opposition of the British diplomacy who had made promises with Sharif of Makkah for assigning him a considerable share out of the peninsular territories. Actually King Abdul Aziz laid down the key features of internal and external policies of the state which remained intact to the date. The only exception was his son King Faisal who took his own decisions regarding the state policy to deal with the super powers, which ultimately lead to his tragic assassination. Other Kings up to the date, all are sons of Abdul Aziz, ran the state with existing policies. Saudi Arabia developed good relations with Pakistan and mutual relations remained ever friendly. Following units cover different aspects of Saudi Arabia ranging from its origin to the place and importance in the international politics with special discussion upon the policies of different Kings.

The first unit narrates the formation of Middle East; meant for Arab World, Saudi Arabia is a part of this region. Therefore, this region needs special attention to understand the importance of Saudi Arabia. With the geography of whole Middle East, geography of Saudi Arabia has been mentioned with details. A narration of episodic history of Middle East has been given to understand the development of the Arab World. Besides this Economic and religious importance of the regions is also given. Socio-cultural aspects are discussed briefly to make the picture complete.

The second one deals with the deterioration of Ottoman hold upon the peninsula. It was the turning point for emergence of centrifugal powers in the deserts which ultimately lead to the emergence of Saudi Arabia. Together with Ottoman episode causes and effects of World War I are also discussed with their relation to the developments in Middle East.

Unit three has many things to be discussed in it because it covers the story of the emergence of Saudi Arabia and its consolidation under King Abdul Aziz. It starts with the account of Wahhabi movement which laid the ideological basis for the state. The Wahhabi identity still exists as a determining factor for the policies of the state. There is complete account of early conquests by the Saudis which comprises the first phase of the state history. Muhammad Ibn Saud started invasion which culminated in the time of Saud the Great with the conquest of most of the peninsula. However with the demise of Saud the Great in the battlefield, the course reversed and the Saudis had to lose even their capital and took asylum in Kuwait. In the state of hopelessness Abdul Aziz gathered courage and with military tactics succeeded to capture Riyadh. Slowly and steadily Abdul Aziz restored Saudis' territories and by 1926 he managed to establish the existing state of

Saudi Arabia. He also established political, social and religious order in order to carve out a legacy for the coming generations. For this he established Ikwan; a military force with ideological convictions who in the later times became important in the wake of conquests. He also had to deal with the religious class; Ulema, who were very powerful in decision making. In short he was the actual founder of Saudi Arabia.

The Fourth unit is a continuation of the previous unit. It discusses the foreign policy of King Abdul Aziz separately. When Abdul Aziz stepped out of Nejd he had to deal with Super Powers as the territories outside the Nejd had alliances with one or the other power. By tackling diplomacy Abdul Aziz became the supreme power of the peninsula. He also had to deal with the matters of World War II. Yalta Conference was an important development in this regard. Apart from this Pan movements of Islamism and Arabism were also important with respect to the ideology and Saudi Arabia could not ignore it being an ideological state. Moreover, role of the US and Western powers regarding all development pre and post War era has also been discussed.

Unit five discusses an important episode of Middle Eastern politics that is oil exploration. Oil exploration did not restrict its impacts to the Middle East but it became a matter of World Economy in which major multinational companies of the World were involved which covered most of the World trade. The US and other powers role in Saudi Arabia and rest of the Middle East should be seen in this backdrop of economy and energy resources. In this regard role of Philbi is also an important episode of Saudi Arabia relationship with Western powers and it is this man by which King Abdul Aziz conducted most of his foreign diplomacy and learnt to deal with the great powers.

The sixth unit covers the next two phases of Saudi Arabian history. The third phase is transitory one in which King Abdul Aziz handed over powers to his son King Saud. King Saud appointed his brother Faisal as Premier of the state. He himself did not take interest in the government for which he had to hand over the power to King Faisal which constitutes the fourth phase of Saudi history and beginning of a new era. King Faisal not only consolidated the state but also introduced a number of reforms in order to strengthen the monarchical system along with the modernization of the state. King Faisal is famous for his foreign policy in which he voiced for the cause of Muslims in Palestine and designed to unite Muslims in order to challenge the plots of Western Powers. He had special relations with the government of Pakistan in this regard and 2nd Islamic Summit at Lahore was an important event to foster this cause. It is this stance which caused his assassination, it is said.

Unit seven is a narration of the government of next King Khalid. The era was a continuity of previous policies and no considerable developments took place in this era. Relations with Pakistan continued to be good and amiable.

Unit eight discusses the era of King Fahd. It has two major developments which changed the world politics to a larger extent. First was the Gulf War and second was the 9/11.

Like other countries of the World Saudi Arabia also emerged as staunch ally of the US in both events i.e. the Gulf War and the 9/11.

The last unit covers the story after King Fahd to the date in which King Abdullah has been enthroned as the King. Continuity of the policies remained intact and no considerable change took place in the foreign or internal policies. The unit also serves as an epilogue in which relation between Saudi Arabia and Muslim World has been discussed. Likewise Saudi impacts upon internal issues of Pakistan also have been discussed.

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1 Emergence of the term ‘Middle East’

- 1.1 Geography of Middle East
Geography of Saudi Arabia
- 1.2 Political and Economic History
Political Episodes
Islamic Age: Predominant History
The Ottomans: Constantinople replaced Damascus and Baghdad
Economic Importance
- 1.3 Religious and Socio-cultural History
Religion in the Middle East
Sociocultural Aspects

Unit 2 Fall and Decline of Ottoman Empire

- 2.1 Events and Impact of World War-I
Causes
Events
Impact upon the Middle East

Unit 3 Rise of Ibn-e-Saud and Birth of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- 3.1 Wahhabi Movement
- 3.2 From Muhammad Ibn Saud to Saud the Great
- 3.3 King Abdul Aziz
Saudis in Exile
Abdul Aziz on way to Power
- 3.4 World War-II and its Socio-economic and Political Impacts
- 3.5 Religious and Cultural Importance of Saudi Arabia
- 3.6 King Abdul Aziz: *State and Society*
Foundation of Ikwan
Status of Ulema in the State and the Society
Abdul Aziz’s Attitude towards State’s Nature

Unit 4: Foreign Policy under Abdul Aziz

- 4.1 Stepping outside Nejd: Start of the Foreign Policy of Abdul Aziz
- 4.2 Abdul Aziz: Supreme Power of the Peninsula
- 4.3 Yalta Conference 1945
- 4.4 Impact of Pan-Islamism and Arabism
Islamic Revivalism
Pan-Islamism: The Nature and Scope
Pan-Arabism: Mutually Exclusiveness with Pan-Islamism
- 4.5 Role of US and other Western Powers

- Unit 5: The Oil Exploration**
- 5.1 The exploration
Oil Companies in Saudi Arabia
 - 5.2 The Role of Philbi
 - 5.3 American Involvement
- Unit 6: Kind Saud (1953–54) and King Faisal (1964–75)**
- 6.1 Kingdom under King Saud
The Governmental Policies
Premiership of Faisal
Foreign Policy under King Saud
Abdication of Saud and Enthronement of Faisal
 - 6.2 King Faisal and the Consolidation
Ten Point Reform Programme
Monarchy is the Best System
Modernization of the State under Faisal
 - 6.3 King Faisal’s Foreign Policy
Faisal and the Arab Cause
 - 6.4 King Faisal and Pakistan
 - 6.5 Assassination
- Unit 7: King Khalid (1975–82) and the Kingdom**
- 7.1 Continuity of the Policies
Domestic Affairs
International Policy
 - 7.2 King Khalid and Pakistan
- Unit 8: The Era of King Fahd (1982–2005)**
- 8.1 King Fahd and Gulf War
The War
Role of King Fahd: His Foreign Policy
 - 8.2 King Fahd and Pakistan
 - 8.3 The Western Influence
 - 8.4 9/11 and King Fahd
- Unit 9: King Abdullah and the Kingdom**
- 9.1 War on Terror and King Abdullah
 - 9.2 King Abdullah and Pakistan
 - 9.3 Saudi Arabia and the Muslim World
 - 9.4 Pakistan’s Internal Issues and Saudi Arabia

Unit-1

**EMERGENCE OF
THE TERM 'MIDDLE EAST'**

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Reviewer:
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1. Introduction

Middle East has been very important region of the World both in the past and in the present age. In the past it gave birth to the world earliest civilizations and many nations date themselves back to those civilizations. Moreover it has been the home for Semitic religions. Judaism, Christianity and Islam emerged and flourished here. Geographical features give the region its political and cultural characteristics. Religion has been a matter of concern for all other aspects since centuries therefore it involves every development of the region.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will be able to:

- Know about the term “Middle East”; its origin and scope, from ancient to the modern times.
- Focus down the geographical features of Saudi Arabia with respect to Middle East.
- Have a brief account of Middle Eastern history right from the birth of Islam
- Understand political, religious and cultural aspects of Middle Eastern life to know its importance regarding these aspects.

3. Outline

Emergence of the term ‘Middle East’

1.2 Geography of Middle East

Geography of Saudi Arabia

1.3 Political and Economic History

Political Episodes

Islamic Age: Predominant History

The Ottomans: Constantinople replaced Damascus and Baghdad

Economic Importance

1.4 Religious and Socio-cultural History

Religion in the Middle East

Sociocultural Aspects

1.1 Geography of the Middle East

The term “Middle East” was coined during the period of colonization of the Arab World. However, the area had linguistic unity since the time of the early Muslim Caliphate. By the time of the third Caliph Uthman (645-55AD), western borders of the Caliphate were extended to most of the area of North Africa while eastwards, Muslims touched the borders of India after annexing the whole of Persia. This constitutes precisely what today is called “Middle East”.¹ Despite the fact that the Modern day Iran has linguistic differences and geographically it has separate settlement due to a barrier of encircling mountain ranges and abrupt separation from the Tigris lowland, it is included in the Middle East for the closeness of its population to the western neighbours.² Language played an important role in transforming African parts into the ‘Arab’ World. In the words of George Antonius:³

It is (word *Arab*) no longer used solely to denote a member of the nomad tribes who peopled the Arabian Peninsula. It gradually came to mean a citizen of that expensive Arab World- not only inhabitant of it, but that great majority whose racial descent, even when it was not of pure Arab lineage, had become submerged in the tide of arabization; whose manners and traditions had been shaped in an Arab mould; and, most decisive of all, whose mother tongue is Arabic. The terms applies to Christians as well as to Moslems, and to the off-shoots of each of those creeds, the criterion being not islamization but the degree of arabization.

Prior to the colonial settlement India was also included in the “Middle East according to one opinion. As whole area remained under the yoke of the Ottomans; Turkey is also included in the division by some analysts. However due to the adoption of modern setup in state as well as in society Turkey is often excluded from the traditional setup of the Middle East. The term ‘Near East’ has also been used for the area.

The Middle East shares lands of two continents i.e. it is spread over southwest Asia and northeast Africa. It is located between Black Sea in the north and Arabian Sea in the south while from Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Mountains of Iran in the east. It is approximately 2000 miles north-south and 1000 miles east-west.

Broadly speaking the Middle East can be divided into six main zones keeping in view the location of mountain ranges, river courses and deserts’ boundaries. The first zone comprises of the basin of the River Nile which runs through Sahara desert running across the Sudan and Egypt to the Mediterranean. The second zone is in the south of the above

¹ By the known sources we come to know that in the remotest past Middle East first acquired a political unity under Archimedean King Cyrus the Great of Persia in 539 B. C. See W. B. Fisher, *The Middle East: A Physical, Social and Regional Geography*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1971), 145

² Fisher, 3

³ George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961), 18

mentioned area in which navigation is difficult. The third zone is the east of the Nile valley starting from the Mediterranean coastal line to the Eastern desert, mountains and river valleys north to Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. The fourth zone is comprised of the Arabian Peninsula. Its coastal line is more suitable for settlement; however, the discovery of oil has also made the inner part of the peninsula, mostly comprised of desert, highly populated. The fifth zone is the Eastern part of the Middle East which is the land of Euphrates and Tigris. It covers the area of Syria, Iraq and Iran. It had been the centre of great civilization right from the primitive times and was called Mesopotamia. It is further bordered by Zagros Mountains of Iran in the East which thus constitutes the sixth zone. Countries on the East coast of the Mediterranean are also called Levant, literally, the land of sunrise with relevance to the Mediterranean World. Generally it includes Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.⁴

1.1.1 Geography of the Saudi Arabia

As the focus of study is the history of Saudi Arabia it is useful to know about the detailed geography of the country. It will further expand the details of Middle East's geographical features as well. It is better to take in to account the whole Arabian Peninsula with all its strongholds. Generally, the Peninsula is divided into two regions; Interior and Coastal Arabia. Interior Arabia is further divided into three parts. First, central in position, is called Nejd. Nejd is comprised of the principle cities of the government of Saudi Arabia. It is a plateau (literally 'Nejd' means plateau) which is four to five thousand feet above the sea level. The area of Nejd is virtually equal to the area of Pakistan. North to the Nejd is the desert area which is divided between Iraq and Syria. The part of it inside Saudi Arabia is called the desert of an-Nafud. South to the Nejd is the biggest patch of the desert called ar-Rab'u-al-Khali (the Empty Quarter). It lines Yemen in the South, and Hadharmot and Oman in the South East. East to this desert is another part of Saudi Arabia which is extended to small strongholds on the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Coastal Arabia touches ten parts and as much governments on its borders due to its extraordinary length. In the north is Syria which lines the Alexandrian Gulf on its Northern border. Next on the coastal line is Palestine which is actually a part of Syria in geological terms though it constitutes a separate political unit. It is on the shore of White Sea which is on its western border. Down along the coastal line is Sinai Peninsula which is surrounded by White Sea, Red Sea and Gulf Suez on three sides. Stretching from Syria to Yemen along the side of Red Sea is the area of Hijaz (means Buffer state between Sea and Nejd). It is almost hilly areas containing sacred cities of Makkah and Medina. South to Hijaz is called 'Asir' which is north to Yemen and lines Red Sea on its western border. It is comprised of steep hills hence called Asir meaning difficult. Most of the southern area of the Peninsula is covered by the country of Yemen which lies on the shores of

⁴ People of Italian or French extraction born in the Levant were sometimes referred to as *Levantine*s. The name Levant States was used to refer to the French mandate over Syria and Lebanon after World War I (1914-1918); today the term is still occasionally applied to those two countries.

Indian Ocean. The remaining southern part which is east to Yemen is called Hadharmot. On the Western coast of the Persian Gulf are various small regions which have secured the status of states. Starting from Hadharmot, there are Amman, Bahrain, UAE, Qatar and Kuwait respectively upward. These states are lined by the desert area of Saudi Arabia; the outermost point of which is ad-Dammam which is lying on the coast of Persian Gulf. To the East of Persian Gulf is lying Iran (Persia) while North of Arabian state constitutes the country of Iraq which is a part of the Peninsula.⁵

1.2 Political and Economic History

1.2.1 Political Episodes

Parts of the region of Middle East had been centres for great civilizations both in historic and pre-historic periods. The land of Nile on the side of Africa and of Tigris and Euphrates on Asian side had been much fertile for the attraction of imperialistic schemes. However, parts with vast deserts on both sides (Africa and Asia) not only restricted the imperialistic advances but also the cultural currents from the outer world. Parts of the Arabian Peninsula retained its suzerainty; political and cultural, throughout the ages. Independent small monarchies on the fringes and tribal control in the centre had been a feature of the Peninsula. Greeks, Romans and Parthians established vast empires but they only swayed the upper portion of the Peninsula which included Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Iran while inner Arabia remained out of any infiltration. Apart from the desert land scarcity of other resources was the core reason of indifference of Imperialists towards the region. Yemen and countries upon Persian Gulf could draw the attention and these were the areas which supplied the desert of inner Arabia with nomads but maritime age was still in its infancy to fulfil such operations. Moreover, parts of Africa facing the lower fertile part of the Peninsula i.e. Yemen were also predominated by deserts and engulfed the human currents from the outer World. Whoever tried to penetrate into the inner Arabia received nothing but wandering death of its troops. For instance Augustus of Rome ordered his governor of Egypt to invade the desert who assembled his troops and ordered them to put on their heavy armour (24 B. C.). All were become the prey of the desert and nomads passed there found their corpses half covered by sand, still grasping their swords in their fleshless fists.⁶

1.2.1.1 Islamic Age: Predominant History

Arab World with the Peninsula as its centre came to prominence during the Islamic Caliphate which started in the seventh century AD. For a short span Hijaz and Syria remained the centre then Baghdad emerged as seat of administration, art and learning under Abbasid for almost five centuries. A parallel Caliphate in Egypt (Fatmid) established Cairo as another centre of learning and politics. Under independent monarchies of Muslim warlords (Sultans) different cities of Middle East gained

⁵ A detailed geography (physical as well as human) of the states of Arabian Peninsula is given by Shah Muin-ud-Din Ahmed Nadvi in his *Arab kimojudaHukumatein* [Present Governments of the Arab], (British India, Mu'arafAzamGarh, 1934)

⁶ Jacques Benoist-Mechin, *Arabian Destiny*, (London: Elek Books, 1957), 4

importance equal to the capitals of the Caliphate. Rabat, Tripoli, Qirwan, Jerusalem, Aleppo and Mosul became the main centres of power and learning in the Islamic World. In the words of Fisher:⁷

The Arab conquest of the Middle East between A. D. 630 and 640 brought an active, virile, but rough and uncultured desert community into contact with the rich and highly evolved civilizations of Rome and Iran...The rapidity with which these semi nomads were absorbed into existing life in the Middle East, and the extraordinary cultural development that resulted from the fusion of the two groups, must be considered one of the outstanding events in the development of human society.

Caliphate was a major reason for predominant position of the Arab World specially the Peninsula. Despite the shifting of the centre from Hijaz Abbasids never lost sight of the Peninsula as they were originally Quresh of Makkah. With the fall of Abbasid Caliphate and rise of the Ottomans the interests were shifted towards the Levant and the Peninsula went into background.

1.2.1.2 The Ottomans: Constantinople replaced Baghdad and Damascus

After the crusaders and the Mongol savaged the Muslim World and unlike crusaders they faced little resistance thanks to which they succeeded in putting the principle Caliphate to an end. It was only the early death of Genghis and Halagu which broke the tide of their assaults and Tatars received crushing defeat from meagre Mamluks of Egypt at Ain-ul-Jalut in 1260. Moreover, a fraction of Tatars also embraced a ceremonial Islam which if not end their atrocities belittled the animosity. Despite all these no preceding ethnic group could gather sufficient power to weld the regions of Middle East. Dwindling Seljuks in Anatolia were also searching able administrators in order to safeguard their ailing rule. These administrators were early Ottomans. Ghazi Othman concentrated power in the Bursa and declared independence as the Seljuks failed to dictate them anymore. Annexation of neighbouring Asia Minor and the fall of Constantinople by the Ottomans are very interesting episodes of history but their contact with Arab lands was a later development. Hijaz conceded to the suzerainty of the Ottomans after Sleim I captured Egypt and dismantled the remnants of the Abbasids (Mutawakal) under the tutelage of Memluks. However, inner Arabia remained in isolation and under tribal control throughout the Empire's life. Once the Ottomans launched an adventure to penetrate into the desert but the result was not different from the centuries old endeavour of Romans.⁸

Though the Ottomans conquered the principle provinces of Middle East Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia up to Morocco; there focus remained the invasion of Europe which started

⁷ Fishre, 151

⁸ In 1550 Suliman the Magnificent wished to be done with the Bedouins, of whose quarrelsome spirit his generals constantly complained. Sultan ordered the Pasha of Damascus to assemble the army. But it was always the same story. No one survived by the heat of the desert. Benoist-Mechin, 46

with the fall of Constantinople. Therefore, the times of the Ottomans proved The Sleep of Ages for Arabs.⁹

1.2.2 Economic Importance

Egypt and Mesopotamia had been the seat of the earliest known civilizations due to the Nile and Euphrates-Tigris basin. Areas bordering the principle deserts were also very fertile. Red Sea and the Mediterranean have been the major assets of the Middle East's economic life throughout the ages. 'The survival of the fittest' is a unique pattern of economic life in the deserts of the Middle East. Weaker groups when failed to stem the powerful contestants were forced to be drifted into the desert where their living style became conformed to the desert environment. The weakness thus transformed into strength and course of centuries created a number of tribes in the vastness of the deserts. Main human currents in the Arabian Peninsula mainly came from Yemen which was a fertile land on the border. Similarly from the North population was pushed from Syria and Mesopotamia. In African deserts these flow were made from Mediterranean coast and the Nile valley into Sahara.

1.3 Religious and Socio-cultural History

Due to the centre of Semitic religions (characterized by revealed guidance) the Middle East ever had a religion oriented society. The ebb and flow of different religions let these societies involve old beliefs of foreign currents in their daily life. This led some theorists to emphasize secular tendency of these societies.¹⁰ However, the society has been greatly moved by religion throughout the ages.

1.3.2 Religion in the Middle East

Like other regions of the World ancient civilizations in the region of the Middle East had mythical versions of religion. Under mythical religion the people of this region could not develop any universal outlook. With the dawn of revealed religion sense of universalism was introduced in this region. Judaism was the first to make an entry under the Prophets who later became magnificent kings (Solomon and David) of their age (prehistoric) according to the Gospel. Judaism was religious cum ethnic identity of the children of Israel (Jacob). They were repeatedly attacked and tortured even were threatened to extermination. Therefore, despite giving a plan for universalism they could not create any empire denoting their identity. It was not until the acknowledgement of Christianity as the state religion by the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great that revealed religion became an integral part of human civilization over major part of the population of the then World. Specially most of the Middle East had big Christian communities. No other

⁹ Anthony Nutting, *The Arabs: A Narrative History from Mohammad to the Present*, (London: Hollis & Carter, 1964), 213

¹⁰ In the words of Fisher, "...in the Middle East older beliefs and practices had not entirely died out, and their influence remains to color the observances of the newer religion – often to a surprising degree. The Greed Orthodox Church has recognized as saints and martyrs a number of what would seem to be local deities of an older, pagan pantheon... Fisher, 117

religion could offset the influence of Christianity. Zoroastrianism prospered under magnificent Persian Empire but could not cross the limits of proper Persia. Only Islam emerged as the real rival of Christianity in the Middle East. Within a short time not only proselytizing was completed but the lingua franca was also converted to the language of Quran i.e. Arabic.

1.3.3 Socio-Cultural Aspects

Socio-Cultural features of any area are determined by the physical characteristics primarily. However, being the origin of principle religions the Middle Eastern cultural was greatly shaped by the administrative settlements of religion oriented governments. By the adoption of single language the region attained cultural unity to a large extent. However, in desert areas, tribal and Bedouin setup prevails everywhere whether it is Africa or the Peninsula. The consolidated rule of the Caliph Omer gave the region administrative unity regarding lands and trade regulations. With the dawn of imperialism and modernism many things have been changed but the fabric of the society ha been moved a little. As far as the recent history is concerned there arose three groups in the society of Middle East (which is common in other Muslim World as well). First rejects the modernity; that is Radical Islam. Second tends to reconciliation; that is Reformed Islam. Third is contended with its traditional society and modern state; that is dualism and can be framed as traditional Islam. All spheres of life fall in these three broad categories. For example women are kept inside homes; they are allowed to work only in the female environment and with hijab according to the traditional setup while they are totally free to move in the society in reformed version of Islam. The following quotation will give a glimpse of the nature of the Middle Eastern society.

In relationship driven cultures there is usually an emphasis on maintaining face, i.e. upholding the family/tribal honour. As a result there are usually very complex rules of engagement and communication styles. For example in the Middle East, saying "no" or blatantly disagreeing with people is not usually done in order to save people's face. We therefore see a lot of "beating about the bush" as people try to phrase sentiments in a way that does not make someone lose face. A simple example would be that instead of "no" you may get "I will try", "Let's do our best" or "God willing".¹¹

¹¹ *Neil Payne, London, 2005*

Recommended Books

George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961

Shah Muin-ud-Din Ahmed Nadvi, *Arab kimojuda Hukumatein* [Present Governments of the Arab], British India, Mu'arafAzamGarh, 1934

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 Describe the territories of Middle East with respect to its origin.
- Q.2 In what respect geography of Saudi Arabia differ with rest of Middle East?
- Q.3 Which change occurred to the status of Arab Peninsula under Ottomans?
- Q.4 Describe the Economic importance of Middle East.
- Q.5 Elaborate the importance of religion in Middle East.

Unit-2

**FALL AND DECLINE
OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

Writer:
M. Raza Taimoor
Reviewer:
Prof. Dr. Aslam Syed

1. Introduction

With the establishment of the Ottoman Empire Arab Peninsula went into background regarding political importance. Consequently with the decline of the Ottomans distant area began to restore their suzerainty. Different chieftains of the desert started fighting each other in order to snatch more and more share from the falling territories of the Empire. Therefore detail of the Ottoman becomes essential.

Fall of the Ottoman Empire was the result of World War I which cast long term effects upon Middle East. The Allies turned all Middle Eastern strongholds against the Ottomans and the desert chieftains rendered their full support to the Allies.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will able to:

- Have an introduction of the Ottoman Empire.
- Know the importance of Holy places in the court of the Ottomans.
- Know about the struggle of the Arabs to liberate themselves from the Ottomans.
- Understand the international diplomacy in the World War with respect to Middle East.

3. Outline

- 2.1 Fall and Decline of Ottoman Empire
- 2.2 Events and Impact of World War-I
 - Causes
 - Events
 - Impact upon the Middle East

2.1 Fall and Decline of Ottoman Empire

Ottoman Empire was the only Muslim traditional Sultanate which dealt with modernism as a rival force. Also it was the Ottomans who shattered the myth of Constantinople thought to be invincible (1453). It was a deep scar on the face of Christian Europe for which they ever longed to inflict defeat upon the Muslims. It can be said that it was concerted effort of the European Powers to kneel down the Ottomans who were prone to subdue the whole Christendom. In 1683 the Ottomans put siege to Vienna and their retreat became the turning point of the Empire's fate. The Empire began to shrink and the process continued till it had to shed all its territories including the Middle East. Now the European powers rallied around her in order to dismantle this last symbol of the Muslim unity as well as to share her territories as booty. The world wars were nothing but to take possession of the wealth of the East, the greater part of which was come under the Muslims.

Among the Muslims the status of the Ottoman Caliph was also precarious one. Caliph became the part of Sultans' title in lieu of the only supreme position in the Muslim World. Actually it voided the theorists' support. When Selim I (1470-1520) received relic of the caliphate from the Abbasids of Egypt¹ they could not declare themselves Caliph at once but assumed the title of *Khadim-i-HarmainSharifain*(servants of two sacred houses i.e. Makkah and Medina). The reason was the Quresh descent of the Caliph which the Ottomans did not fulfil. According to the then agreed upon tradition of the Sunni Islam, being from the clan of the Prophet PBUH (Quresh) was mandatory for a caliph. In order to legitimize this decree the Ottomans kept the family of the renowned Sharif of Makkah who claimed to be the descendants of the Prophet PBUH, as the custodians of the province of Hijaz which contains the two sacred cities of Islam.²

Another discord regarding the position of the Ottomans in Muslim world was Sunni-Shiite dichotomy. A severe defeat was inflicted upon them by Tamerlane – acclaimed Shiite – when the latter defeated BayezidYaldarum at Ankara (1402). In later times Selim I defeated Shiite Sultan Ismail Safvi of Persia in the Battle of Chaldiran near Euphrates (1514). Thus skirmishes continued and sow the seeds of hatred between the two rivals throughout the ages. The Wahhabi issue in the nineteenth century posed another challenge for the Ottomans as the formers considered them derailed from the original teachings of Islam and so was their judgement for Sharif of Makkah. Therefore Wahhabis of Nejd considered it desirable to knockdown the both 'evils' and purify the sacred lands of their yoke. For all this conflict of different sects no one persuaded to arrest the decline of the Ottomans by the European powers but on the contrary the forces in the Middle East supported their rivals for the complete destruction of the Ottomans.

¹ After the fall of Baghdad (1256) some descendents of the dynasty reached Cairo where Mamluks welcomed them and Abbasids were restored in Egypt. After the defeat of Mamluks by Selim I, Abbasid Caliph Mutwakil surrendered his right in the favor of Salim (1517).

² Sharif Dynasty hold this position from the last days of the Abbasids (1201), recognized by Ayybids and Mamluks they were remained in this position in Ottomans period as well.

2.2 Events and Impact of World War–I

2.2.1 Causes

With the technological advancement of military hardware European Powers unleashed their expansionism. This resulted into two World Wars which inflicted heavy cost upon the globe. Almost the whole Muslim world lost its supremacy and became subjugated to one or the other European power. The War began in reaction to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife by the Serbs. However, the event was insufficient to involve the World to be engaged into a war. It was all about the sharing of territories among those who could hold them with military force. With the outbreak of the War Germany allied with Austria-Hungary against Serbia which had alliance with Russia. Afterwards the Ottomans came to the side of Germany and which were called the Central Powers and Great Britain and France joined Russia and were called the Allies. This was due to different alliances which had been built in the pre-war period.

2.2.2 Events

In July 1914 Austria attacked Serbia, in retaliation Russia attacked Austria on the Eastern Front. On the Western front Germany attacked Belgium and France. After the Battle of Marne (Sep 1914), the Western Front was settled in the central France and remained there for the rest of War. Turkey formerly declared its neutrality but later joined the War under the direction of Envar Pasha who had cordial relations with the German Command. As a result of Young Turks Revolution in 1908 the de facto power did not remain with the Sultan. Apart from the ties with Germany Envar saw the restoration of lost territories by Turkey in Balkan Wars. Therefore the Ottomans attacked Russia on the Eastern Front. The British made advances from Egypt and the Persian Gulf against the Ottomans. Though the Ottomans won victories against the British in Dardanelles and Gallipoli; they bore heavy losses in Mesopotamia which the British successfully captured to make the oil supplies intact. It was from southern side that the British advances could not be checked and they went on to capture different territories of the Arab World. In the year 1917 two major events occurred. Russia exited the War due to Bolshevik Revolution which put the rule of Czar to an end. At the same time The United States entered the War not letting the international situation go without her hand. The then President of the United States, Wilson remarked it in the following words:

It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars – Civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things...meant to our heart – for democracy, for the right...to have a voice in [one's] own government, for the rights and liberties of all nations, for a universal domination of right by...a concert of free people.³ It is important to note that by 'free people' he did not point out to all the people of World but a specific modern race which would govern the World in the name of right. How a

³ Jack Watson, *Success in European History: 1815-1941* (London: John Murray, 1981), 291

power could remain aloof from the stage from where the status of nations would be determined.

The war continued for four years with heavy losses of all kinds on both sides. Around eight and half million people lost their lives in the War (perhaps equal the total war casualties of the human history). However, the fortune sided with the Allies and the Central Powers after losing some battles were forced to sign the armistice in the late months of 1918. As a result of this armistice Austro-Hungary and Ottomans Empires were completely disintegrated while Germany and Russia lost most of its territories.

2.2.3 Impacts upon the Middle East

It is already mentioned that the Middle East emerged in the wake of Post-World War settlement; therefore, the War had great impacts upon the creation of different strongholds in the Arab World. Many small strongholds on the shores of the Persian and Oman Gulf began to take shape in this period. Especially Saudi government made her appearance from no territory and became a major contestant among those who claimed to have a share from the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, despite the promises of the British with Sharif of Makkah, Hijaz had to be annexed by Saudis and family of Sharif had to continue its existence in promised war booty of Iraq and Transjordan where two sons of Hussain Sharif took hold of the government. These developments will be discussed at length in the next chapters. The following may help in understanding the change which the War brought to the Middle East.

But in important respects the Arab view of the peace settlement (which is supported by many western historians) is a caricature of what actually happened. In a revisionist work, Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh have made a convincing argument that many forces, both local and foreign, were at work at the time the settlement was agreed. In their words, 'even at the weakest point in their modern history, during the First World War and its immediate wake, Middle Eastern actors were not hapless victims of predatory imperial powers, but active participants in the restructuring of their region.' They argue, for example, that Iraq and Trans-Jordan were not simply British inventions, but owed their existence to a compromise between Hashemite imperial greed and well-intended British efforts to meet local needs and allay the fears and suspicions of their allies.⁴

⁴ David R. Woodward, 2011

Recommended Books

G. Lenezowski, *Middle East in World Affairs*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Latest Edition.

George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961

Jack Watson, *Success in European History: 1815-1941*, London: John Murray, 1981

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 What was the status of Ottoman Caliphate in lieu of jurists' theory?
- Q.2 Describe the impacts of World War I upon Middle East.

Unit-3

**RISE OF IBN-E-SAUD AND BIRTH
OF KINGDOM OF SAUDIA ARABIA**

Writer:

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Reviewer:

Prof. Dr. Aslam Syed

1. Introduction

The emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia seems to be a miracle as it made its appearance on the map of the World in extremely adverse circumstances. More than one time Saudis reached on the verge of extinction and there was no hope of restoration to the government. But every time the conviction overcame adversaries. For the critical times of Saudis Philby said, “The dynasty of Sa’ud had, for all practical purposes, been in eclipse since 1885. The eclipse was now total, and none could predict its duration. All that mattered now was to find a refuge for that period: perhaps for ever if the sun were to shine no more.”¹ A narration of what happened with the Saudis in order to erect their kingdom is part of this unit.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will be able to:

- Know the ideological basis of Saudi Arabia.
- Know the early conquests and retreats of the family of Saud.
- Have an account of Abdul Aziz valour for restoring Saudi glory in adversaries.
- Understand the World War II impacts and diplomacy of Saudi King.
- Understand the Abdul Aziz’s program to build a new state and society.
- Grasp the idea of Ikwan developed by Abdul Aziz amid resistance of Ulema

3. Outline

- 3.1 Wahhabi Movement
- 3.2 From Muhammad Ibn Saud to Saud the Great
- 3.3 King Abdul Aziz
 - Saudis in Exile
 - Abdul Aziz on way to Power
- 3.4 World War-II and its Socio-economics and Political Impacts
- 3.5 Religious and Cultural Importance of Saudi Arabia
- 3.6 King Abdul Aziz: *State and Society*
 - Foundation of Ikwan
 - Status of Ulema in the State and the Society
 - Abdul Aziz’s Attitude towards State’s Nature

¹ H. STJ. B. Philby, *Arabian Jubilee*, (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1954), 5

3.1 Wahhabi Movement

Islam emerged as a direct menace to the worship of deities and the system devised on the basis of those deities. The city of Makkah being the origin of Islam, made the confront more profound as most of the citizens were idol worshipers. Idolatry never entered in the practice of the Muslims for the reason that Islam's first opponents were idolaters. However, some figures detected the practice in the guise of saint adoration which became widespread in the Muslim world with the spread of mysticism. Revivalists or revisionists (whatever the term addresses to the practice) criticized this practice from time to time. One of those was Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab (who is sometimes called mere Abdul Wahhab which is a fallacy)² who was born in Nejd in 1696. Moved by the original version of Islam Muhammad detested the new practices in Islam and preached for a return to the original message. He was rejected by all but Muhammad ibn Saud, chief of Darriya, who established his state in 1744 and is regarded as the first Saudi State. Ibn Abdul Wahhab sought guidance from the Prophet PBUH and thought of creating a state which would implement his reformist model. For this he saw in Ibn Saud extraordinary soldierly qualities. This union gave to the former a sword and to the latter a doctrine to expand his territory.

3.2 From Muhammad Ibn Saud to Saud the Great

Ibn Saud started his mission and first pursued the tribes of Nejd and united them for further adventures. By his death in 1765 Ibn Saud had made major incursions into the desert and paved the way for his successor. The expansion continued under his successors Abdul Aziz (1765-1803) and Saud II who is renowned as Saud the Great. Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab died in 1792. Saud the Great who was grandson of Muhammad ibn Saud by his father and of Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab by his mother, acquired the title of Emir of Nejd and Imam of Wahhabis, thus political and religious chief of the movement at the same time. It was Saud the Great who annexed Holy cities of Makkah and Medina and smashed the tombs of saints thereby 'purified' the sacred land from the practices stifling the true belief under a mass of idle interpretation.³ By 1808 Saud succeeded to capture the whole Peninsula. Now he was in such a position that big powers were forced to give attention. Among those the Ottomans were the direct threat. They, with the British help tried to dissuade Saud to take any offensive measures in the Levant which included Syria, Transjordan and below that Mesopotamia. In Iraq Saudis also smashed the tomb of Imam Hussien at Karbala. The attention of the Ottomans and the British were in wake of the expanding danger of Napoleon in Europe who wanted to reach the British colonies especially of India. Napoleon and the British sent emissaries to Saud to win him to their side; however, Saud accepted the alliance of Napoleon and assembled the army to march upon the Ottomans' holds.

² Benoist-Mechin, 48

³ ibid

In a very short period he seized Mesopotamia, Aleppo and Damascus. However with the retreat of Napoleon the advances of Saudis were checked. The Ottomans were now free to deal with Saudis. The Ottoman Sultan Mahmood II directed Governor of Egypt to subdue the Saudis. Governor of Egypt Muhammad Ali opened many fronts to defeat Saud but the Saudis stemmed the tide and remained invincible for the Turks. However, an accident changed the whole situation when Saud the Great was killed under the wall of Taif accidentally (1814). Saudis then began to receive defeat after defeat at the hands of Ottoman Pashas until they had to surrender even their original seat of Darriya.

After Saud, one of his uncles named Abdullah⁴ became the leader but he was not that competent to control the situation and it was he who surrendered Darriya to Turks. After Abdullah, one of his grandsons Feisal gathered some power to restore Wahhabis' territories but of no avail. Now the remnants had to take refuge in Kuwait under the leadership of Abdur-Rehman who was a grandson of above mentioned Feisal and father of Abdul Aziz (later known as Ibn Saud) who restored the Saudis' Kingdom. Almost for one century the Saudis remained in slumber until Abdul Aziz emerged as victorious and a new era was dawned on Saudi Kingdom which is called the Second Saudi State.

3.3 King Abdul Aziz

3.3.1 Saudis in Exile

In order to crush the Saudis completely the Ottomans deployed Muhammad Ibn Rashid of Shammar tribe at Hail (neighbouring town of Nejd). He attacked Riyadh and killed principle elders of Saudis thereby completely banished would be revival of the Saudis. Only Abdur Rehman father of Abdul Aziz was spared due to his neutrality regarding the power politics. However, despite his neutrality he could not see the extinction of his tribe. Therefore, he tried to evacuate Riyadh from Ibn Rashid but had to flee from his town and took shelter in the desert of Rabu' al Khali (the Empty Quarter).

After becoming the master of the Central Arabia Ibn Rashid threw off the yoke of the Ottomans and declared his suzerainty. Turks realized their mistake for crushing the Saudis completely as there were no rival for Rashid in the Central Arabia. To compensate this mistake they reached Abdur Rehman wandering in the desert and asked him to prepare themselves for regaining the authority in Nejd. However, Abdur Rehman refused and vowed to do that without any imperial aid. Lingered in the desert seeking for tribes who could rally to Wahhabi's cause he was invited by Emir of Kuwait to live in his palace. Abdur Rehman readily accepted the invitation and entered his asylum. Here young Abdul Aziz came across the many faceted cousin of the Emir, Mubarak who was not in good book of the Emir. Mubarak took Abdul Aziz and managed for his education in order to prepare the latter for politics. Later on Mubarak killed Emir Muhammad and captured the seat of Kuwait. Muhammad was a trusted ally of the Ottomans therefore they prepared Ibn Rashid to attack Mubarak. At this moment Abdul Aziz showed his

⁴ Abdullah was sent to Constantinople as a prisoner where the Sultan ordered to chain him and he was decapitated in open public. His corps was put to hounds. Ibid, 53

valour and bravery which defeated Ibn Rashid at the hands of Mubarak. Mubarak remained a close friend of Abdul Aziz throughout the life.

3.3.2 Abdul Aziz on the Way to Power

The company of Mubarak taught Abdul Aziz much about the politics and he became ready to take his own initiative. He gave up settled life at Kuwait and adopted desert life in order to prepare himself and his companions for gorilla warfare. They used to live without food many days and kept walking or riding the whole day without food. He employed all tough practices which would made them invincible in the condition of draught. Latterly Abdul Aziz recalled those days with nostalgia as it were the real effort of the life.⁵ After having much exercised one day he fell upon the palace of Riyadh in the darkness of night and by the day light he succeeded to take control of the palace after killing Rashid's governor at Riyadh. The people of Riyadh welcomed their old masters and there was no resistance against Abdul Aziz in the year 1902.

The rise of Abdul Aziz was caused anxiety to the Ottomans as he resolved to throw off the yoke of Turkish imperialism and had a conviction to unite Arabia. Therefore, the Ottomans gave full support to Ibn Rashid for crushing Abdul Aziz. United forces of Ibn Rashid and Ottomans attacked Abdul Aziz. First suffered from severe wounds Abdul Aziz gathered his courage and arranged his troops; finally gained a victory over superior artillery of Turks (1904). This victory raised the moral of Saudis and they were ready to deal with any force inside Arabia to take hold of the Peninsula and to realize the dream of Arab unity under their flags. Remaining story of the conquests of Abdul Aziz will be covered in the next section under the narrative of his foreign policy as his following conquests led him to deal with the big powers to whom he had to deal with diplomacy and political tactics.

3.4 World War-II and its Socio-economic and Political Impacts

The booty of World War I could not satisfy the World powers and they jumped into another one instead of strengthening the League of Nations. The League was set up to legitimize the hold of those lands which came as war booty and distributed among the victorious powers. Similarly another organization United Nations was set up at the conclusion of WW II in order to continue the legacy of war which 'the big three' established during the war. Like WWI the WWII left hazardous effects upon the economic, social and political life the World.

The Second World War was one of the major transformative events of the 20th century, with 39 million deaths in Europe alone. Large amounts of physical capital were destroyed as well through six years of constant ground battles and bombing. Many individuals were forced to abandon or give up their property without compensation and to move on to new lands. Periods of hunger become more common even in relatively prosperous Western Europe. Families were separated for long periods of time especially from their fathers.

⁵ Philby, 53

Many including young children would personally witness the horrors of War as battles and bombing took place in the very areas where they lived. Horrendous crimes against humanity were committed. Due to WWII, political and economic systems in many countries would be permanently altered.⁶

The prominent factor which became the prompter to various effects of the war was mass casualties both of soldiers and civilians. Different analyses tried to number the figures which amount to millions. It created psychological problems for the population. Particularly in Europe the war created hunger and in parts of the Third World which became the field of war famine spread which killed populations. In Europe casualties disturbed the gender ratio and women had to work for the subsistence of their families. It made the women more and more independent and family began to deteriorate which helped the rapid spread of liberalism in Europe. On the other side it speeded up the economic growth of different countries of Europe as now women flock also took active part in building the economy of the country. Therefore, the world witnessed a rapid economic growth after the war due to which developing countries also gained economic progress.

Actually, the problem was solved by the creation of nation states in Europe which rest upon the ethnic communality. For this, forced migration of population was being taken all over the Europe and people opted to move to the side where they could find their ethnic identity.⁷ Within an ethnic group it is easy to manage resources and power politics. For example whichever party came to power the population would be acquiesced as the party would consist of their fellow brethren. However, this is true for the Continental Europe only as the United states and Soviet Union still usurped the independence of millions people who were coerced to join these super powers. Though big powers persuade the world to deprive Germany and Japan from their holdings they consider their annexation of different states lawful. This was the game of capitalism which found it better to fix a centre for the whole world. First, two centres were compromised until the fall of Soviet Union while later on the world is given the verdict of New World Order in order to captivate the resources of third world countries by pacifying the ‘intellectual’ nations of Continental Europe.

⁶ Iris Kesternich, “The Effects of World War II on Economic and Health Outcomes across Europe”, Feb 6, 2013, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/working_papers/2012/RAND_WR917.pdf, 1

⁷ “Long-term migration patterns could have been altered, but that would seem to largely depend on whether the war was to be associated with future conflicts, civil strife (as often occurs in persistent civil wars), and unpleasant political and social environments. But with a few exceptions (Hungary, East-Germany until the fall of the Berlin wall), WWII, especially for continental Western European countries, was transformative partly in the sense that it helped settle long disputed geographic boundaries, re-united ethnic groups within a single geographic entity, and led to a period of significant economic growth that lasted for decades.”, *ibid*, 3

3.5 Religious and Cultural Importance of Saudi Arabia

Arab Peninsula had been ever important due to having the sacred places of Islam in its folds. However, the sacred places are not situated in central Arabia and due to the easy approach to sea these places possess different geography than that of the inner Arabia. Therefore, when the importance of Arabia comes under discussion it refers to the Central Arabia having vast deserts as the key features. With the rise of Saudis the central Arabia started to gain importance first time in history. The religious identity of Saudi Arabia is characterized by Wahhabi doctrines which are exclusive in nature and not at par with other Muslim countries. However, impressed by the simplicity of their religious approach small sections in other Muslim societies can be seen as counterparts of Saudi people.

Another prominent religious aspect of Saudi Arab is the enforcement of the Islamic Law called *shariah*. In criminal cases verdicts are implemented on strict bases for which law and order situation is ideal all over the country and has no match in the world. Separation of sexes in public life is also strictly enforced and has become a prominent feature of society. Women are directed to remain in houses and in case of outside activity they have to wear very modest dressing along with veil. Moreover, adultery and rape are punished with stoning to death in case of married offenders. Due to this very reason sex crime rate is almost negligible in Saudi Arabia. Prayer is mandatory for shopkeepers and open business holders. Nobody can run his business during the prayers hours. This implementation of shariah creates fascination among traditional circles of other Muslim world and they wish their governments would follow the line in implementing shariah in their respective countries. The practice of shariah enhances the religious importance of Saudi Arabia among the outside Muslim World.

Another feature of religious importance of Saudi Arabia is the establishment of the religious institutions which impart religious education to the students coming from all over the Muslim World. A considerable part of oil wealth is spent on the publication of religious literature. Translation of Quran in every language of the world is a stupendous work of Saudi government which distributes hundred thousand copies of Quran to the coming pilgrimages free of cost every year. Big revenue is also reserved for the publication of the literature containing the Wahhabi doctrine in order to propagate it to other countries. In this regard books are translated from Arabic to other languages for which centres are created in different countries for this task.

Apart from publishing the literature the government has also set up study centres in other Muslim countries in order to propagate Wahhabi view through missionary system. Funds are also allocated to these centres in order to construct mosques and more centres. These centres are supplied with abundant literature consisting of print and electronic media. Due to these activities Saudis are gaining ground in other countries and Wahhabi views are disseminating with success. It can be said that Saudi government has a strong sense of its popularity as a centre of the Muslim World and is spending huge amounts to spread its effects through doctrinal literature and missions.

Saudi universities of religious learning are serving as seats of great centres for consolidating Sunni Islam. Students from all over the world leave these universities to spread Arabic language to non-Arabic Muslim world which adds much to the unity of Muslim *Ummah*. A common Alma maïtre is helpful to dim the angularities of these sects thereby discouraging the sectarianism among the Muslims.

As far as the cultural importance is concerned, those cultural values of Saudi Arabia cast effects which are imbued in its religious practices. If we take the case of Pakistan, our society received much impacts from the religious culture of Saudi Arabia. The population seek to know the verdicts (*fatawas*) of Saudi Ulema on different daily life matters. Particularly, the law and order situation due to the implementation of shariah is hailed by the Muslims and they long for the same setup in their countries as well. However, the peculiar Bedouin culture has no say in other countries as that culture is specific to the geographical conditions.

3.6 King Abdul Aziz: *State and Society*

It is not wrong to say that if Ibn Abdul Wahhab gave the Saudis a doctrine due to which they earned a distinct identity in the world Ibn Saud gave them the same thing in administrative and political spheres of life. It was he who first time came across the big powers and learnt the political tactics in the international perspective. The achievement of Ibn Saud was to control and regulate the role of Ulema in the state and the society. Due to the strict discipline of Wahhabi outlook the Ulema did not allow any new idea regarding the state or the society. This was a real hurdle for Ibn Saud to tackle with the outer world as it was impossible if new steps were not taken. For this Abdul Aziz had to go a long way to seek a solution to this problem. It was as difficult as his restoration to the throne of Riyadh after a long exile. He established Ikwan to fulfil his dreams.

3.6.1 Foundation of Ikwan

The establishment of an army which would remain loyal to him in the most adverse circumstances was the foundation stone of Abdul Aziz's political system. Bedouins of desert could not be trusted as an invincible force as they had a tendency to change sides in the hours of stress. Ever wandering in the desert, they did not like permanent settlement hence the task of an armed force could not be realized, what was needed was to abandon the wandering of Bedouins flock and make them settled around water sources. Abdul Aziz presented his program before the doctors of law (ulema) who rejected it on the basis that his plan had no reference in the sources of law. Abdul Aziz was helpless to convince them. His father Abdur Rehman had a strong say in the circles of ulema. He realized the urgency of Aziz's plan and pressed the ulema to accept his proposal with a persuading wisdom. Finally he succeeded to convince the ulema who finally showed their allegiance despite having complaints against Abdul Aziz for not being strict in the Wahhabi practices.

But this could not be enforced all over the country. To persuade Bedouins to come to a settled life was another challenging task. Bedouins were free from worries of settled life

and they did not want to be settled anywhere. This liberty enabled them not to bow before any foreign power and it made them true lords of the desert. Abdul Aziz sent men to Bedouins tribes and invited them to be a part of Saudis' program. This plea was given a deaf ear by the Bedouins and most of them outrightly rejected this plan. However, Abdul Aziz did not lose heart and continued struggling for his dreams. Eventually his preachers managed to gather some thirty men who were ready to abandon the Bedouin way of life. Abdul Aziz himself held a meeting with them and took their presence as an omen though they were very small in number. Abdul Aziz hoped to have more people in the future and continued the persuasion. The settlement was made in Artawiya, situated half way between Nejd and Hasa. Ibn Saud raised their moral by these words, "You are the pioneer of a great reform. The fate of Arabia is in your hands. That is why no setback, no obstacle must be allowed to discourage you. Are you surprised that so great a task can depend upon so a small number of men? It is not number that is important. They will come in due course. What counts is the intensity and purity of your faith. Those who mock you, those who did not wish to answer my appeal, will one day repent."⁸ These volunteers were named Ikwan and became an integral part of the society of Saudi Arab. This was a sect in bloom which made a defence with their faith in their doctrines.

Abdul Aziz recruited all those who come to him as army of Wahhabis. He often spent nights with them to encourage them. The process of settling Bedouins continued and in five years Abdul Aziz had fifty thousand men under his command whose allegiance to Ibn Saud was not of a paid army but brethren in faith. They swore oath to fight for the faith. Like Artawiya there appeared garrisons in Dilam, Thadiq and Shaqra which were established in these five years. This was an amazing achievement on the part of Abdul Aziz who now had secured his position as a king better than ever. He could take his opinions regarding the state of Saudi Arabia with a guaranty to enforce them as he showed the clergy the integrity of his reform program. However, Ulema still had veto power to refute any of his plans.

3.6.2 Status of Ulema in the State and the Society

The state of Saudi Arabia has purely religious, being the embodiment of the views of Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab. Ulema of Wahhabi doctrines were called 'elders' and used to monitor the whole process of religious education and implementation of Islamic law through the state. They had a system of hierarchy in which they had an effective command over the daily life of the masses so that they could make shariah an integral part of the Saudi society. On the other hand they were able to snatch the real power and were a state inside the state. No ruler can go beyond their decisions. Their power was everywhere and nowhere. Abdul Aziz was exasperated when he felt himself helpless in rallying ulema to his reform of settling Bedouins. However, when he succeeded to establish the Ikwan he was in a position to pose a threat to the authority of Ulema. Ulema were well aware of this and remained in search of tactics by which they could overpower the monarch. Abdul Aziz did not want to let the ulema fulfil their desires and thought of another victory by which he would be a king all in all. This was the conquest of holy

⁸ Benoist-Mechin, 122

cities of Makkah and Medina by which he would be the master of Arabia from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. It was this point from where foreign policy of Abdul Aziz started.

3.6.3 Abdul Aziz's Attitude towards the State's Nature

Abdul Aziz had great experiences regarding politics and warfare. Therefore, he could not follow a narrow policy for state's treatment of the citizens. Though he was Imam of Wahhabi and was responsible for implementing shariah in a strict way he used to evade strict policy for the sake of state's nourishment surrounded by many enemies both Muslims and Non-Muslims. More than one time his government came across dangerous circumstances but he managed to safeguard Saudis with a combination of valour and compromise. Minorities lived in peace under his patronage and the people who did not develop a mood of following the shariah were not treated with strictness.⁹ It was another reason for which Ulema were not too happy with the King. Abdul Aziz was also keen to develop relations with the big powers. The presence of Philby at his palace was a testimony of his friendship with the British.

⁹ Nadvi described the atmosphere of the city of Anaiza where people also smoke which is prohibited according to the Saudi Law, 154. Ulema often pointed out this liberty of Anaiza's population and held responsible the King for this negligence.

Recommended Books

H. STJ. B. Philby, *Arabian Jubilee*, (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1954)

John S.Habib, *Ibn Saud's Warriors of Islam: The Ikhwan of Nejd and their Role in the Creation of the Saudi Kingdom 1910-30*. Leiden: E. J. Brill

MuhammadAlmana, *Arabia Unified: A Portrait of Ibn Saud*. London: Hutchinson Benham

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 What do you know about Wahhabi Movement?
- Q.2 Describe the impacts of World War II upon Saudi Arabia.
- Q.3 How King Abdul Aziz set trends in building the state and the society of Saudi Arabia?
- Q.4 What is the importance of Ikwan in offsetting the absolute writ of Ulema?

Unit-4

**FOREIGN POLICY UNDER
ABDUL AZIZ**

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1. Introduction

The way in which Abdul Aziz restored the supremacy of Saudis over Nejd could not restrict him to the boundaries of Nejd. His vision was wide and he was pursuing new horizons for the house of Saud and Wahhabi ideology. Though the British policy was clearly inclined towards Hussein of Makkah, Abdul Aziz made his way with steadiness and great patience to conquer the whole peninsula. With the start of World War II he had to face new and challenging problems of international diplomacy and pressure. However, he managed to escape all hurdles and succeeded to justify his capture of Hijaz and other territories of the Sherif. He successfully dealt with great powers at international summits and Saudi Arabia emerged as a settled fact among the World Nations.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the student will be able to:

- Know the expansionist policy of Saudi King.
- Assess the wisdom of King Abdul Aziz in discharging the negotiations.
- Learn about the concepts of Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism.
- Explain the relations of Super Powers with Saudi Arabia

3. Outline

- 4.1 Stepping outside Nejd: Start of the Foreign Policy of Abdul Aziz
- 4.2 Abdul Aziz: Supreme Power of the Peninsula
- 4.3 Yalta Conference 1945
- 4.4 Impact of Pan-Islamism and Arabism
Islamic Revivalism
Pan-Islamism: The Nature and Scope
Pan-Arabism: Mutually Exclusiveness with Pan-Islamism
- 4.5 Role of US and other Western Powers

4.1 Stepping outside Nejd: Start of the Foreign Policy of Abdul Aziz

During the World War I the Big Powers adopted a dual policy. They had secret agreements among themselves in order to distribute the War booty which were in form of fertile lands of the East. On the other hands they made promises with their colonies to get their cooperation in the War. However, they had resolved not to fulfil these promises and were of the view that after the victory no one could press them to abide by their words. Similar game was played with Arabia.

The British appointed their agents at different principalities of the Arabian Peninsula. Kuwait, Hijaz, Nejd and Hasa were all under their influence. All leaders were promised to have great advantages after the war. Most important of these were Abdul Aziz and Hussein of Makkah. The British agents Philby and Lawrence were appointed for this purpose. Both were sent with great promises for rulers of Nejd and Makkah. However, Lawrence (later known as Lawrence of Arabia) was more effective than Philby and the British government also had inclinations towards Hussein. He was given the promise of being the king of an Arabian Federation. His sons were nominated for the kingship of Trans Jordan and Iraq. The nomination came to effect and Feisal became king of Iraq while Abdullah became king of Jordan. On the other hand Philby was there just to pamper the King. According to the pact of Uqair Ibn Saud was bound to remain on the British side and not to attack any of her allies. In perspective of that pact Ibn Saud did not take any action when he heard all about the intentions of the British and saw activities of Lawrence. He even did not react when Hussein attacked one of Wahhabi towns. Ibn Saud faced the anger of Ulema but did not break his words.

Ibn Saud was caught between his words and pressure of Ulema who demanded an attack on Hussein. He was still hopeful about the British promises which Philby had conveyed to him. In order to pacify the Ulema, Ibn Saud planned to divert their attention. He attacked Hail, seat of his old rival Rashid and annexed the place with little resistance. Now he had extended his territories. But after some time Hussein again attacked Kurma (Wahhabi town). This time the rage of Saudis had no bounds and Ibn Saud had to march against Hussein. He inflicted a smashing defeat upon the son of Hussein. But again moved by his pact with the British he did not advance towards Makkah and succeeded to cool down the anger of Saudis. But this was the last compromise as the British could not give him any assurance for his supremacy in the Peninsula.

4.2 Abdul Aziz: Supreme Power of the Peninsula

Due to aggressive sentiments of Saudis Abdul Aziz was called by the British and admonished. The insulting attitude of the British raged Abdul Aziz and he left Cairo (British Foreign Office) by saying good bye to their friendship. On returning home he started preparing to attack Hussein. Meanwhile the situation changed on the international horizon. Turkish Caliphate was disbanded by the Turkish parliament in 1924. On this occasion Hussein declared himself the Caliph of the whole Muslim world. This raised

indignation among the Muslims and Hussein lost his repute. Moreover, the British were no more interested in Hussein's supremacy of the Arab World as they had created a buffer in the form of Trans Jordan and Iraq in order to seize the land of Palestine.

In this situation Abdul Aziz assembled his Iqwan and marched towards Makkah. With little resistance he captured Taif and entered Makkah. Hussein's forces were pushed towards Jeddah. Hussein was still waiting for the British assistance but the British had withdrawn his support. Raged by anger he even insulted Lawrence, who was sincere to him by slapping him. T. E. Lawrence was deeply disappointed by the British attitude and returned his medals to the government. He wrote a letter to King George V in which he showed his indignation. He died a disheartened death.¹

When Abdul Aziz started march towards Median and Jeddah the British agent came to Ibn Saud and warned him not to exceed the limits of the Peninsula otherwise he had to face the full war machinery of the British. It is important to note that the British did not demand the restoration of Makkah to Hashemite. They even did not demand Ibn Saud to halt at the point where he was. Instead the British gave him the clearance to have Medina and Jeddah. Ibn Saud after consulting with his men agreed with the British and let them deal with Palestine without any threat from the desert.²

4.3 Yalta Conference 1945

It is also known as Crimea Conference with code name of Argonaut Conference held from 4 to 11 Feb, 1945 in Livadia Palace, Yalta, Crimea. Yalta was the second of three wartime conferences among the Big Three. The first was Tehran Conference held in 1943 and third was Potsdam Conference held the same year in the month of July. The aim of conference was to settle the post war management of countries. This was presided by the representatives of big three powers i.e. USA, USSR and Great Britain. They had different objectives regarding the interest of their country. Roosevelt of America wanted to drag Russia into the Pacific to win war against Japan. Stalin of Russia wanted to have more and more control of the Eastern Europe and in this regard Poland was the pivot. Churchill wanted to hold elections all over the Europe after the war as it suited the interests of Britain because she was losing power over the World. Actually it was the dawn of Aligned Era in which two powers emerged as the sole arbiter of the World and other countries put their weight in one of the block. In order to set up their hegemony they even went back from their promises.

¹ He recorded his sentiments in his memoirs about Hussein's fall at length. About the British policy he wrote these words, "Anyone who pushed through success a rebellion of the weak against the masters must come out of it so sustained in estimation that afterward nothing in the world would make him feel clean." T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, (London: 1935), 682

² It should be noted that the British became conscious to this because of a past episode in which Iqwan raided the frontiers of Syria and Trans Jordan and usurped some areas. Though the British troops crushed Iqwan after intervention, they could not tolerate another episode in the future.

Though the Middle East had not a direct concern with the deliberations of the Conference, the region could not be ignored due to its oil reservoirs. Moreover, the case of Palestine in the perspective of would be Jewish state of Israel, was central to the Arab cause and it was necessary to win the over the confidence of major Arab powers. Therefore, immediately after the Conference President Roosevelt invited Ibn Saud to have a talk on the problem of Palestine and they met aboard the USS Quincy in the Great Bitter Lake of the Suez Canal. President Roosevelt gave his assurances to Ibn Saud to safeguard the Arab interests. He gave two undertakings to Ibn Saud; first, America would do nothing to support Jews against Arabs in Palestine and second, Arab people will not be harmed. No agreement was reached in that meeting and Ibn Saud departed. However, Roosevelt did not abandon his effort and these verbal assurances were confirmed in a letter to Ibn Saud the text of which is given below:

I have received the communication which Your Majesty sent me under date of March 10, 1945, in which you refer to the question of Palestine and to the continuing interest of the Arabs in current developments affecting that country. I am gratified that Your Majesty took this occasion to bring your views on this question to my attention and I have given the most careful attention to the statements which you make in your letter. I am also mindful of the memorable conversation which we had not so long ago and in the course of which I had an opportunity to obtain so vivid an impression of Your Majesty's sentiments on this question. Your Majesty will recall that on previous occasions I communicated to you the attitude of the American Government toward Palestine and made clear our desire that no decision be taken with respect to the basic situation in that country without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews. Your Majesty will also doubtless recall that during our recent conversation I assured you that I would take no action, in my capacity as Chief of the Executive Branch of this Government, which might prove hostile to the Arab people. It gives me pleasure to renew to Your Majesty the assurances which you have previously received regarding the attitude of my Government and my own, as Chief Executive, with regard to the question of Palestine and to inform you that the policy of this Government in this respect is unchanged. I desire also at this time to send you my best wishes for Your Majesty's continued good health and for the welfare of your people.³

However after the dispatch of this letter the government in America changed and Harry S. Truman came to power who did not honour the words of his predecessor and gave no weight age to Saudi Arabia in carving out the map of the Middle East and Israel was established in May 14, 1948.

³ FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT April 5, 1945

4.4 Impact of Pan-Islamism and Arabism

4.4.1 Islamic Revivalism

Pan-Islamism and Arabism emerged in the wake of Islamic Revivalism. Therefore, it is better to have a brief look upon the nature of the Islamic revivalism. Islamic revivalism made its appearance with the loss of Muslim political hold upon the World. The European colonized the Muslim lands which started from eighteenth century up to the first half of twentieth century. It provoked an upheaval for the Muslim societies in the world. The European social and political ideas proved more appealing than the Muslim traditional conduct. Obviously, European civilization had a vivid effect on the lives of the conquered people. Those who visited Europe and themselves witnessed European societies were convinced that they were far better. They stressed the need of adopting the same measures which helped Europe to upgrade their society. The ideas such as democracy, fair play, justice and discipline fascinated the educated bourgeoisie of Muslim countries. They endeavored to introduce them in their native lands. But the *Ulema* expressed their apprehensions about the secular character of European civilization. The local population, who believed in the precedence of religion, used to see an alien civilization with hatred for both its merits and demerits. Traditional *Ulema* with all their energies started dissuading people from adopting European lifestyle and acquiring school and college education, considering their secular character a threat to their faith. They even discredited the technological progress of Europe.

Despite their immense influence upon the common man, *Ulema* could not give any better alternative to the political and the academic system of Europe. The only field in which they could satisfy the masses was to tell the details of the Islamic creed. They successfully stemmed the tide of Christian missionaries who failed to proselytize any considerable number from Muslim population.⁴ Consequently, it is a general trend even today that the ordinary Muslim looks for guidance from *Ulema* where matter of belief are concerned; while in the case of worldly affairs they gradually leaned to European civilization.

This practice, of reducing the religion to the boundaries of dogma only, would give Islam a status which Christianity experienced in Europe; that is the religion is a private matter of any individual and has nothing to do with national interests. A rich legacy of Islamic literature left by thousands of celebrated scholars of medieval ages could not let *Ulema* keep quite on the issue, so they made their influence more profound by this way or that. But this practice of avoiding European education and remaining outside of modern

⁴ The fact was described by Jansen in his *Militant Islam*. Quoting from an historian he writes, “the 350-year-long tussle between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia was summed up thus by the foremost historian of Christian missions: ‘Except through strong political and social pressure, Islam has never yielded many converts to Christianity. Yet in Java in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries converts from Islam to Protestant Christianity, though only a few thousands were more numerous than those made in all the rest of the world during the period.G. H. Jansen, *Militant Islam*, (London: Pan Books, 1979), 54

institutions would also prove fatal for the Muslims in future. To tackle this problem, there emerged a group of intellectuals in every region of Muslim world, considering the challenges of European civilization. They presented different versions of Islam addressing the modern problems of the world, while retaining the comprehensive status of Islam. These personalities are labelled as proponents of contemporary revivalism. They include Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Hasan-al Banna and Syed Qutub in the Arab World while in the Sub-Continent Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is renowned in this regard.

4.4.2 Pan-Islamism: The Nature and Scope

Influenced by the currents of revivalism the pioneers thought of the unity of Muslim World inevitable for obtaining the fruits of the revivalism. In this wake the concept of Pan-Islamism came to the surface. However, its proponents belonged to the Arab World, therefore, other spheres of the Muslim World did not respond to the cause in any promising tone. Moreover, the international politics under the European Powers rendered it a difficult task to create a single Muslim political unit or any confederation. Those who tried to accomplish this dream were side-lined by the US power politics. Bhutto of Pakistan, Feisal of Arabia and Kaddafi of Libya were prominent examples of this 'trial'. For this and other reasons the Pan-Islamism was echoed only in regional efforts of the revivalism in different Muslim countries. Even OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries) could not contribute anything substantial.

Actually Panism was widespread in the World and it was not specific to Muslims only. There was pan-Americanism, pan-Africanism and pan-Europeanism. Among these only Pan-Islamism had a religious call otherwise Panism had always been characterized by some lingual, ethnic, racial or cultural affinities. Due to religious tag the matter acquires vast canvas which involves sectarian tussles and interpretative dissensions; therefore, Pan-Islamism could not get practical recognition as compared to other Pan movements. Pan-Islamism can be regarded more as a reaction than a creed as envisaged in the following excerpt:

The end of the nineteenth century witnessed a Pan-Islamic movement which had its roots partly in the need of Turkish Empire, partly in the revival of faith by the *Wahabis*, partly in the example of the West, but which at all events represent an impulse to resist and repulse the attacks of the European Powers.⁵

Though the zeal had an emotional appeal, it patched a well thought out plan and the knowledge of grand realities. Many movements mushroomed in different countries to address the problem of Muslim community all over the World but they had no practical approach. One of such societies (Pan-Islamic Society) was set up by Sultan of Turkey, The Khedive of Egypt, the Amir of Afghanistan, the Sultan of Morocco and some other in London, in 1886 but according to the words of Arminius Vambery, "The society has

⁵ Hans Kohn, *A History of Nationalism in the Middle East*, (Harcourt Brace, 1929), 38

not the necessary means, nor is London the place from which a sufficient influence can be exercised upon the Islamic World.”⁶

4.4.3 Pan-Arabism: Mutually Exclusiveness with Pan-Islamism

Under the spell of nationalism pan movement of the Arab world and Africa gained wide recognition. However, after arousing a storm in the heart of youth it went down like a tide which inevitably has to decline. The reason which the analysts consider obvious was the inadequacy of the cause to make its supporters tied up. Shaukat Ali described this failure of Pan-Arabism as under:

The above mentioned two streams of Arab Nationalism – one represented in the charismatic personality of Nasser and the other outlined in the philosophical and ideological framework of the Bath Party, failed in their objectives and Arab nationalism turned out to be nothing more than a mirage. We have seen earlier that at the height of its popularity, Pan-Arabism shook the entire region with its “immortal mission.” In front of Nasser’s colossal public image, other Arab rulers looked small and ineffectual. The wave of Arabism overwhelmed the youth everywhere. It was very difficult for any Arab ruler to disavow this political gospel, no matter how suspicious he was of its objectives, and legitimacy. But today, Arab nationalism looks like a remote echo of its past thunder; and even the staunch protagonists of it are convinced that the state that came into existence after World War I and World War II needs to be recognized as an established reality.

FuadAjami, an intellectual of the Arab World summarises the failure of nationalism as under:

Now the power of the intellectuals is waning, with a definite backlash in the Arab world against the written word and intellectuals. The beneficiaries are either men of affairs schooled in hard knocks of politics – a Hafiz Assad rather than Michel Aflaq – or development oriented elites. In contrast to the literary intellectuals who dominated the early stage of Arab nationalism, the new elite is a more sober, less grandiose group – less likely to emphasize the abstraction of Arab unity, more sensitive to the realities of the ground or more committed to specific tasks. A nationalism that fails to create a political order cannot withstand the dissolution of its creed, and the intellectuals were temperamentally unfit to create such a concrete order. It is one thing to polemicize about the one nation and its metaphysical base, but quite another to erect it on the ground.⁷

This failure of nationalism, despite the heat of emotions, led the analysts to conclude that no nationalism could address the sentiments of Muslims without a touch of Islam. Shaukat Ali analyses the phenomenon in the following words:

At the philosophical and ideological level, the intellectuals who had been committed to Arab unity also found that unless some formula was found to show that pan-Arabism and

⁶Shaukat Ali, *Islam and the Challenges of Modernity: An Agenda for the Twenty First Century* (Islamabad: NIHCR, 2004), 172

⁷FuadAjami, “The End of Pan-Arabism”, *Foreign Affairs*, 57 (Winter, 1978-78): 368

Islam could be reconciled, their thoughts would remain hollow. Among these intellectuals one could count ideologues like Michel Aflaq and Bitar, or scholars like Sati al-Husri who felt that without reference to Islam, response from the public in favour of Arab nationalism would be limited. Aflaq though a Christian had full awareness of the fact that Arab nationalism unless it rested on the firm rock on Islamic ideological framework, would not captivate the imagination of the Arab masses.⁸

4.5 Role of US and other Western Powers

The modern world is characterized by capitalist parameters. The two great wars involved other motives to a lesser extent. The wars were fought on the issue of sharing the world's wealth by the big powers. The World powers after the Second World War declared themselves the centres of the World. There is generally held perception that post war world was divided between capitalism and communism which were antagonistic concepts. Actually both had capitalist orientation and we can call them liberal capitalism and communist capitalism.⁹The objective was to control the world from a single centre. This tussle divided the world into two blocks; Russian and American. The era in which these two powers operated upon the world is called the Cold War Era. The tussle ended with the fall of Soviet Union in 1992 and America emerged as the sole world power with a program to control the world called the New World Order.

The New World Order aims at eliminating any idea or thought which along with negating the American interests does not concede to the capitalist theory. The capitalism operates through banking system which introduces interest as the primary motive of human struggle. This banking system was introduced by the Jews who being smallest ethnic and religious group has gained the tool to direct the world super power through its capitalist stance. America has to safeguard the interests of Jews to meet the challenges of world economy.

In this backdrop America and Western powers have two aspects of controlling the Middle East. First, they have to support Israel for the sake of their capital theory; this demands to control the anger of the Arab World which would harm Israel. This was accomplished by the regulation of capital in Arab states through oil trade and its long term agreements. Despite having largest oil reserves and tremendous revenues earned by these reserves the Arab world could not stop the oil exploitation by America and the Western Powers. The present wave of 'revolution' in the Arab World does not aim at the annulment of Western involvement in their domestic affairs but on the contrary they are strengthening the very system of capitalism which would give the in stronger clutches of the Western imperialism.

⁸ Shaukat Ali, 165

⁹ Both regulate the capital through different media. Liberal capitalism controls the capital through multinational companies, while in communism it is the state which owns the capital.

Recommended Books

Badeau, John. *The American Approach to the Arab World*. New York: Harper & Row
Muhammad Khalil, *The Arab States and the Arab League: A Documentary Record*. Vol. 1, Beirut: Khayats
Shaukat Ali, *Islam and the Challenges of Modernity: An Agenda for the Twenty First Century*, Islamabad: NIHCR, 2004

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 Describe the main features of King Abdul Aziz's foreign policy.
- Q.2 How King Abdul Aziz made way through World diplomacy in the World War II.
- Q.3 Analyse Pan-Islamism and Pan-Arabism in the light of Arab unity.
- Q.4 Relate the Western Powers policy with the phenomenon of Islamic revivalism in the Arab World.

Unit-5

THE OIL EXPLORATION

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1. Introduction

Re-emergence of the Arab World coincided with the exploration of oil in the region which made it important in the World economy; hence in the world politics. It is in this wake that Philbi settled at Saudi Arabia in order to pursue the British interests despite the fact that another British agent resided with Sherif of Makkah to help him sustain his power over holy places. Amid this diplomacy America had his own ends which American companies were pursuing. All this made the region focus of the big powers.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will be able to:

- Know the history of oil exploration in Middle East.
- Understand the role of oil companies in Saudi Arabia.
- Understand the British plans in Saudi Arabia through Philbi.
- Relate the international politics to the oil.

3. Outline

- 5.1 The exploration
Oil Companies in Saudi Arabia
- 5.2 The Role of Philbi
- 5.3 American Involvement

5.1 The exploration

Petroleum would seem to have been formed by the decomposition of various types of marine life – chiefly plankton, but also algae and lowly animal organisms. As the remains of these organisms collected on the floor of seas and estuaries, they were gradually covered by deposits of thick, fine sediments that excluded air and light. Under such conditions, the normal process of decay did not operate; instead, particle decomposition, produced by certain bacteria that exist in anaerobic conditions, seem to have transformed the original organic material into globules of petroleum. It is also possible that chemical reactions involving mineral salts contained in the surrounding water and silt played some further part in the process of decomposition.¹

Whatever the geological or other explanation of the oil deposits in the earth is there, it should be noted that the formation of universe and that of the earth has a precise sequence of happening which unfolded before man to utilize it for his ease or leisure. However the exact purpose of utilizing these assets remained a matter of controversy in the modern world where the traditional circles do not concede to the consumerism. The oil exploration has increased the consumerism many folds. As far as the Middle East concerned oil exploration made its way in Iran in 1908. The point is called Masjid-i-Suleiman field. In 1928 Haft Kel field was developed and the remaining fields came into production during or after the Second World War down to the present times.² The exploration in Saudi Arabia started in much later times. Main centres and their importance are described by Fisher as under:

In 1954 it was realized that four producing centres hitherto regarded as separate structures formed one single oil-pool of enormous dimensions. The first ‘strike’ of oil was in 1948 at Ain Dar, and six months later a second at Haradh. Following discoveries in 1951 and after at Uthmaniya and Shedgum it became clear that this pool, or field, now known as ‘Ghawar’, extended for 200 km from north to south, and 25-35 km from east to west. The one Ghawar structure, with oil reserves equal to the entire total of those in the U.S.A., is the greatest single produces in the world,³ and has various sections: from north to south, Fazran, Ain Dar, Shedgum, Uthmaniya, Hawiyah and Haradh. Further to the north are Abqaiq and Dammam, while a new area developed in 1968 is Khurais.⁴

¹ Fisher, 225

² Ibid, 231

³ Professor Ramon Knaurhase author of a major study of the Saudi economic development made the following correct observation, “Today Saudi Arabia is a world power. She owns the largest oil reserves in the world and is the largest oil exporter. The travels of Sheikh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, the Minister of Petroleum and Minerals, are reported in the world’s newspapers, radio and television networks; his statements are analyzed for clues to the kingdom’s policies and their effects on the world economy, and the world’s leaders take Saudi Arabian reactions into account in their policy making.” (*The Saudi Economy*, Praeger, 1975)

⁴ A feature of Saudi Arabia oilfields is the occurrence of extensive artesian water supply in porous rock strata above the oil-bearing layers. Special precautions are taken to conserve this water in order to make it available for use both in the oil settlements and for irrigation. Ibid, 234

5.1.1 Oil Companies in Saudi Arabia

With the exploration of oil in different parts of the Middle East oil companies rushed to the region for search of fuel. Among them American oil companies were on the forefront. In Saudi Arabia oil companies started their work in 1933 and succeeded to find oil in 1938 near Dammam. First concession was granted to Standard Oil of California (SoCal). The concession was assigned by this firm to its subsidiary California-Arabian Standard Oil Co. (CASOC). In 1936 another American company Texas Oil Company (Texaco) joined the concession as the former had failed to achieve any success. In 1944 CASOC was renamed as Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco). In 1948 other investors joined Aramco and Texaco. These were Standard Oil of New Jersey (Esso) and Socony Vacuum. In wake of a threat by the Saudi King to nationalize these companies Aramco had to cut short its shares and it transferred its headquarter from New York to Dhahran in 1950. Demand for cutting down its share continued to exist and finally Aramco had to give full control to the Saudi government in 1980. In 1988 it was also renamed as Saudi Arabian Oil Company (or Saudi Aramco) by a royal decree. It is the world largest company with a market value of \$781 billion in 2005.

5.2 The Role of Philby (1885-1960)

Harry St John Bridger Philby, also known as Jack Philby with acquired name of Sheikh Abdullah – after embracing his Islam in 1930- was a British intelligence officer. He was once under Indian Civil Service appointed at Lahore in 1908. A much learned person⁵ who knew many of oriental languages including Urdu, Persian and Arabic, Philby played a vital role in fulfilling the British plans in India and Middle East.

As the oil was the prime interest in Arabia Philby could not be restrained from indulging himself in this interest game. It is noteworthy that Philby played key role in establishing oil companies in Saudi Arabia. It was he who dislodge Iraq Petroleum Company (ICP) to get concession from the government in 1932 thus entrusting the task to SoCal who remained sole master of Saudi oil for rest of the history until it was fully nationalized by the government.

Philby also employed his son Kim Philby in his secret missions. His son was an alleged spy of Soviet Union who gets information of the British plans from his father. Philby also undermined the British plans on other fronts. In Spanish Civil war he remained active in supplying oil from Arabia to Spain. On Palestine issue he was alleged to harm the British

⁵ In his travels he also took great interest in birdlife and he gave a scientific name to the Arabian Woodpecker (*Desertipicus* (now *Dendrocopos*) *dorae*), as well as a subspecies (no longer valid) of an owl (*Otus scops* *amelae*). Most of his birds were named after women whom he admired. He contributed numerous specimens to the British Museum. He also contributed to the draft of a book on the birds of Arabia by George Latimer Bates. However, it was never published, but was made use of in a work on the same subject by Richard Meinertzhagen. Philby is remembered in ornithology by the name of Philby's Partridge (*Alectoris philbyi*). “St John Philby”, *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, Feb 16, 2013. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_John_Philby

cause. For all this and other activities he was arrested by the British during his stay in Bombay and was deported to London where he was imprisoned for some time. Regarding Palestine problem he wrote the following judgement:

My view was admittedly based on expediency rather than on the legal and moral merits of the Arab case against the admission of Jews into Palestine. I was always held, and still hold, that the Jews, in whose favour the Balfour Declaration and the mandate were drafted, have no shadows of legal or moral right to go to Palestine. Time and again I have urged that the legal aspect of the matter should be submitted to the court of International Justice for a ruling. And it is pertinent to point out that, when this proposal was urged by the Arab representatives before the United Nations Assembly in 1948 on three separate occasions, the voting was either a tie or so close as to show the discomfort of many fair-minded members of the Assembly at being associated with the highly questionable proceeding without the guidance of the only body in the world competent to pronounce on the basic issue involved...Rightly or wrongly – and that dilemma has quite deliberately never been tackled by the self-proclaimed enemies of injustice and aggression – many of the great nations of the world, with Britain and America in the lead, have for years past made up their minds that the Jews shall be permitted to set up a State of their own, covering a large part of Palestine as possible.⁶

5.3 American Involvement

Arabian oil is of prime interest for the United States as no other country need as much fuel as the US plans consume. America is the biggest importer of oil from the Middle East. As it is the part of capitalist theory it is not a matter of import-export of oil and revenue it is also the influence and strategies which transfer. With the start of oil drilling in Saudi Arabia American got employment hundreds of thousands in numbers in Saudi Arabia. Apart from a demographic change it also brought the change in way of life of the Saudis who had not much imbued in Bedouins' version of religion. The process triggered the use of American technological appliances of daily life in Arab people and they started become more and more westernized in terms of luxurious life style. A long period of American entrepreneurship in the country develop mutual feelings in both nations and Saudi Arabia showed little tendency for any of anti-American sentiments. That was why despite having strong stance over the issue of Palestine and with the awareness of American unilateral position towards the Jews; Saudis never severed their relations with America.

⁶ Philby also gives the comments of Dr Weizmann who quotes the report of the British Labour Party National Executive Committee in these words, “there is surely neither hope nor meaning in a Jewish National Home unless we are prepared to let the Jews, if they wish, enter this tiny land in such numbers as to become a majority....Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews come in. let them be handsomely compensated for their land, and their settlement elsewhere be carefully organized and generously financed.” Philby, 209-10

On the other hand Saudis travelled to America for educational and business purposes which strongly helped in creating smooth feelings towards America. The people who educated from American universities absorbed modern ideas which prepared the Saudis not to permit radicalism in their country. Though they did not change their customs and traditions they are not antagonistic towards modern ideas and with the passage of time things are making their way into the state and the society.⁷ Modern education of Saudis also paved way for the establishment of educational institutions inside the country. Though majority of these institutions disseminate technological education, it resulted in the ultimate evolution of general education institutions which help in spread of modern ideas. Modern ideas led to the technological and industrial world in the West but the process was inverted in the East where people welcome modern technological thinking it value neutral. But the change of life style which was the inevitable outcome of the technology gradually repealed the traditional outlook. Now things are moving the way Europe has achieved.

⁷ In Olympic 2012 first time women have an entry from Saudi Arabia; a practice unprecedented in the past.

Recommended Books

Ahmed Assah, *Miracle of the Desert Kingdom*. London: Johnson Publications

Elizabeth Monroe, *Phillby of Arabia*. London: Faber and Faber

G. Lenezowski, *Middle East in World Affairs*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 Narrate the story of oil exploration in Saudi Arabia.
- Q.2 What you assess about the British diplomacy keeping in view the role of Philbi?
- Q.3 Analyse the American involvement in controlling oil trade.

Unit-6

**KING SAUD (1953-64) AND
KING FAISAL (1964-75)**

Writer:
M. Raza Taimoor
Reviewer:
Prof. Dr. Aslam Syed

1. Introduction

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia entered a new phase after King Abdul Aziz. His two sons King Saud and King Faisal became responsible for running the state; former as the King and later as the premier. It was success of the Saudi royal council that King Saud was persuaded to step down from the throne in favour of his able brother Faisal. It was former wisdom that he conceded to the proposal and transfer of power remained peaceful. King Faisal laid down new bases for internal and external policies. He not only consolidated the Kingdom but also filled the theoretical details for the form of government i.e. kingship in Saudi Arabia. His assassination was a result of his bold stance regarding the Arab and Muslim cause in the World.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will be able to:

- Compare the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under Abdul Aziz and afterwards.
- Understand the fall of King Saud and rise of his brother as King.
- Assess the consolidation of the Kingdom under King Faisal.
- Analyse the foreign policy of King Faisal in world scenario.
- Learn about the special relation of King Faisal with Pakistan.

3. Outline

- 6.1 Kingdom under King Saud
 - The Governmental Policies
 - Premiership of Faisal
 - Foreign Policy under King Saud
 - Abdication of Saud and Enthronement of Faisal
- 6.2 King Faisal and the Consolidation
 - Ten Point Reform Programme
 - Monarchy is the Best System
 - Modernization of the State under Faisal
- 6.3 King Faisal's Foreign Policy
 - Faisal and the Arab Cause
- 6.4 King Faisal and Pakistan
- 6.5 Assassination

6.1 Kingdom under King Saud

Born on Jan 15, 1902 at the time when his father Abdul Aziz was conducting a gorilla action to take Riyadh, Saud lacked the administrative qualities of his father. However, he was properly trained in warfare. He led the expedition against Ibn Rashid to take Hail. Before coming to the throne he participated in eight wars. These were Grab, Yabet, Truba, Alkuras, Hail, Alhijaz, Almahmal and the Brethren. During the ailing period of Abdul Aziz, Saud with his brother Faisal was the caretaker of the government. He was made crown prince in 1933 and was declared king of Saudi Arabia on the death of King Abdul Aziz November 9, 1953. His father took oath from his brother specially Faisal to remain loyal to his decision and not to take the power from Saud. Faisal always respected this oath and never engaged in any plot against his brother to snatch the power.

6.1.1 The Governmental Policies

Often remained in Leisure the King gave little attention to the administrative affairs. He had entrusted different ministries to his various sons.¹ Among his sons Fahd was defence minister; Khalid was in charge of National Guards;² command of Royal Guard was given to Musaid and special Guard was under Saad. Governorship of various important provinces like Makkah and Riyadh were also under the hold of his sons. These distribution of important portfolios among his sons created apprehensions among King's brother about the succession as it seemed that the King was not sincere in entrusting the throne to crown prince Faisal; his brother.

By the time of King Fahd Islamic revivalism was in full swing especially in Egypt under Ikwam-ul-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood). Pan Arabism and Pan Islamism were gaining prominence. In this situation it was hard to control the sentiments of Saudis. Apart from religious sentiments it also aired the discomfort of workers belonging to other countries. Important among these was the protest of Aramco workers.³ Public also protested against conducting a lease agreement according to which Dhahran airbase was to be given to the United States for her forces. However, the King gave little importance to these developments and continued to spend a lavish life which brought the country to the verge of bankruptcy.

6.1.2 Premiership of Faisal

With deteriorating condition of the country serious members of royal family were alarmed and took the decision to correct the situation. A delegation of princes met the King and asked him to hand over the administrative power to crown prince Faisal. Saud accepted the proposal and appointed Faisal as Prime Minister of the state. Faisal – with the help of a Pakistani financier Anwar Ali⁴ – introduced number of fiscal reforms which

¹ Till his death he had 115 children.

² He was only seventeen years old then.

³ They went on strike twice first in 1953 and second time in 1956

⁴ Anwar Ali was appointed as the governor of SAMA in 1957 and remained in the position till the death of King Faisal in 1974.

checked the deteriorating condition and put the country's economy on rout within two years. He reorganized SAMA (Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency) with competent administrators. However, Faisal soon became victim of jealousy and received criticism from the King. He resigned from the position and let the matters worsened once again.

6.1.3 Foreign Policy under King Saud

Unlike non-aligned policies of his father Saud got engaged in controversies of the world politics. He opened different fronts in one time resultantly unable to tackle with all those fronts. First he made alliance with Egypt and Syria to oppose France and Britain who had an intention to develop a defence system in Iraq. At the same time he accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine according to which Soviet Union was to be pushed out from the Middle East. This move was opposed by Egypt thereby worsening the mutual relations with Saudi Arabia. In siding with Egypt on the issue of Suez Saudi Arab cut short the oil supply through Suez. Similarly on Buraimi Oasis issue with Britain she stopped supplying oil to Britain. These steps cut the revenue earned by oil export.

Within the Arab World Nasser gained wide range popularity and was in a position to challenge other stakeholders of the region. He floated the idea of an Arab confederation under the spell of pan movements and succeeded to establish a confederation with Syria named as United Arab Republic which lasted from 1958 to 1961. Nasser upheld the Soviet cause and demanded for annulment of monarchies in the Arab World thereby vowed to create a true modern Arab World. This move really threatened the future of those Arab countries which had monarchical setup; the biggest of them was Saudi Arabia. King Saud gave hands with other Kings of Arab, notably Hussein of Jordan to dismantle this wave of nationalism. For this endeavour King Saud was alleged of breaking the United Arab Republic and also the assassination of President Nasser.

6.1.4 Abdication of Saud and Enthronement of Faisal

Confronting by grim situation Saud once again appointed Faisal as Prime minister but royal family was not contended with this move and demanded the abdication of Saud in Faisal's favour. On the other hand Faisal was not ready to depose Saud in order to keep his words that he would not challenge his brother's authority. Royal family adopted then the constitutional way and pressed against Ulema to renounce the authority of Saud and to issue a fatawa to abdicate Saud. In this way Saud was deposed from the position on October 29, 1964 and left the country. Faisal took oath on the same day and succeeded to the throne.⁵ Residing in different European countries Saud finally settled in Greece where he died on Jan 24, 1969. He was buried in Riyadh.

⁵ In an emotional speech shortly after he came to power in 1964, Faisal said: "I beg of you, brothers, to look upon me as both brother and servant. 'Majesty' is reserved to God alone and 'the throne' is the throne of the Heavens and Earth."

6.2 King Faisal and the Consolidation of Saudi Arabia

Third son of Abdul Aziz, Faisal was born in 1906 in Riyadh. He also participated in battles and won a decisive victory in Hejaz. He remained the governor of Hejaz as well. After the establishment of Saudi state in 1932, he was appointed as Foreign Minister of the State. Holding this portfolio he visited many countries important of which were Russia and America. He had the honour to represent his country at the first session of the United Nations in 1945. He gained popularity and support in the era of his prime minister ship under Saud. He launched many programmes which were new in nature to the Saudi state and the society.

Abdul Aziz established the Saudi state while consolidation came with Faisal. Commenting on Faisal's accession to power a scholar of Arab studies observed, "It is abundantly clear that Faisal's elevation to the throne was the culmination of a long career in which he made his imprint on the country and not merely the product of coincidental events. Had he not possessed a combination of suitable qualities and experiences, challenge of development would not have been met by wise leadership."⁶

6.2.1 Ten Point Reform Programme

As mentioned earlier he had started his reform before his enthronement, he issued a ten-point program for the assimilation of the state and the society of Saudi Arabia into a single entity. The main provisions of this programme are as under:

1. The system of government should be a reflection of the developments achieved by the community, the government is anxious to develop the Saudi community educationally, culturally, and socially, so that it might reach the level that would be truly represented in the form of a unified system of government calculated to achieve the ideals of great eternal goals set in the sublime Sharia. The government believes that the time has now come for the promulgation of a Basic Law for the government, drawn from the Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet and the acts of the Orthodox Caliphs, that will set forth explicitly the fundamental principles of government and provide for the basic rights of the citizens, including the right of freely express his opinion within the limits of Islamic belief and public policy.
2. The government will draw up legislation that will regulate the system of local government in the provinces; this will stream line the administrative system and achieve political and social progress.
3. The judiciary will enjoy immunity and respect. For this purpose, a Ministry of Justice will be established to supervise the administrative affairs of the Judiciary and a State Prosecutor to defend citizen's rights and interests.
4. Inasmuch as the texts of the Qur'an and Traditions are fixed and worldly affairs are changing, it is necessary to consider public policy in the light of these changes and in accordance with the Sharia. To accomplish this, Judicial Council

⁶ Majid Khadduri, *Arab Contemporaries* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 97

consisting of twenty members chosen from among the outstanding jurists and Ulema shall be established.

5. The government will continue to work in earnest to spread the call of Islam, strengthen it, and protect it by word and by deed.
6. The government has, therefore, resolved to reform the Committees for Public Morality in accordance with the Sharia and Islam's lofty goals.
7. The government feels that one of its most important duties it to raise the peoples social level. It will therefore continue to provide free medical treatment and education at all levels. Social security regulations, promulgated recently, shall provide support for the aged, the disabled, orphans, and women who are without means of support. Soon all the needy will have enough to live in dignity.
8. Soon the state will have a complete body of laws that will promote economic, commercial, and social developments in accordance with Sharia and the best interests of the nation.
9. Since financial revival and economic developments are the government's prime concern, the government shall launch an extensive road building and water resources development programme designed to generate industrial activity and to achieve agricultural self-sufficiency. Also an industrial and an agricultural bank will soon be established as well as the General Petroleum and Mineral Agency (PETRO-MIN). These agencies, together with other government and private agencies, will develop the country's resources and exploit its minerals and other wealth.
10. Slavery, in all of its forms, is absolutely abolished;⁷ and violators will be severely dealt with.⁸

Political views of the King can be accessed from his interview given to Salim Habaqi, correspondent of *al Haya* (Beirut). About the nature of the political regime Faisal said, "The important thing about a regime is not what it is called but it acts. There are corrupt republican regimes and sound monarchies and vice versa. The only true criterion of a regime, whether it be monarchical or republican, is the degree of reciprocity between ruler and ruled and the extent to which it symbolizes prosperity, progress and healthy initiative. If a regime is unsound, it will generate hatred and antipathy among the people whatever the circumstances. The quality of a regime should be judged by its deeds and the integrity of its rulers, not by its name. The best thing any ruler can do is to make a better life for his people and a better future of his country. He should be useful member of the human race, a faithful servant of his nation and a wise guide in time of trouble."⁹

6.2.2 Monarchy is the Best System

King Faisal was ardent advocate of monarchy as it is imbued in the culture and traditions of the Arabs. According to him the Arab countries which adopted other systems had abandoned their origins and embraced wrong path; hence these were alien to Arab culture

⁷ It was the year of 1962 and Faisal had the credit to issue the decree.

⁸ De Gaury, *Power Play: Oil in the Middle East* (New York: Random House, 1973), appendix I

⁹ Ibid, 136

and Islamic History. Faisal trusted only in the council of advisor and law of Sharia. According to him Islamic law has been legislated by Allah, therefore, no need to legislation through election or any such system is left now. The state business will be run by consultation with those who are expert of the legislated law i.e. Shriah. Consequently there is no majority or minority and royal or non-royal issues as all are subservient to Allah.¹⁰This stern believe in monarchy was indebted to the fear of military coup as it had become the fashion in the region. King Faisal also took administrative measures to check the possibility of any coup.¹¹

This put the king of Saudi Arabia not in an absolute position but he is under constant check of many circles. He has to follow Sharia to which the Ulema are interpreter. He has to consider the custom and traditions of the Arab for which royal family is there to remind him if he goes astray. He has to consult the council of ministers to administer the country in a better way. In case of administrative or economic failure royal family is responsible to take the notice and to pursue the King to come on the right track. All it has been witnessed in the case of King Saud who first had to act along the demands of princes and finally he had to evacuate the office according to the fatawa of Ulema given by the consent of the royal family. To sum up the political system of Saudi Arabia following excerpt is helpful:

Since Western educated technocrats (both royal and non-royal) must be consulted within and without the Council, the king's ability to make arbitrary decisions is to some extent limited. He cannot, for instance, ignore the advice of such influential ministers as the internationally known Sheikh Zaki Yamani, HishamNazer, and Ghazi Algosaiabi. The fact remains that although the kingdom may appear to be an absolute autocracy, it is actually governed with the consent of a number of groups. Thus the Saudi political system may be best described as a consensual political system. The traditional political equilibrium of the system is being increasingly challenged by these developments: massive new wealth, sprawling urban centres, fast developing middle class, expanding civilian and military bureaucracy, and foreign educated, younger generation of princes.¹²

6.2.3 Modernization of the State under Faisal

Faisal issued true policies in modernizing the state. The foremost of these was the declination of authority of the Ulema. As modernism is not compatible with traditional Islamic interpretation this would be an expected development. Faisal always monitored the appointment of the Ulema on high positions and it was taken into account that no radical person should have occupied any of key position. Faisal also deposed those who issued verdicts against his modern policies. Sheikh IbnBaz was one of these influential figures who out rightly rejected modernism and considered as exalted figure in traditional circles all over the Muslim World. Such policies as television broadcast, women

¹⁰ Ibid, appendix II

¹¹ It is reported that a coup was planned in 1969 for which hundreds of military officers were arrested.

¹² Lateef, 21

education etc. was severely criticized by the Ulema but the King gave a deaf ear to these protests. A political analyst enlists following goals of the state for political modernization:¹³

1. To perpetuate a monarchical system of government controlled by the House of Saud and the King's three major roles: the head of the state, the chief Imam, the chief tribal sheikh.
2. To permit limited and gradual process of opening the regime to popular participation from outside through a shura (consultative council).
3. To hold fast to the Qur'an and the Sharia as the basis of any legal framework.
4. To reject all foreign ideologies (for example, Zionism, Communism, Socialism) as they are incompatible with Islam and irrelevant to Saudi needs.
5. To maintain a hierarchical system where the king is the top decision making.

6.3 King Faisal's Foreign Policy

Faisal had a keen sense of developing a foreign policy which won applause from the Muslim world. Although he believed in modernism he had the courage to criticize and to sever relations with the big powers. One of his favourite proverbs was: "Allah gave men two ears and one tongue, so we could listen twice as much we talk." So he always kept watching before launching any policy. It can be inferred that his love for modernism was a mean to consolidation as he was not opposed to revolution, but which type of revolution, he said once, "Revolution can come from thrones as well as conspirator's cellars. We need everything in this country, but stability is the first priority."¹⁴ Five features of the Kingdom's foreign policy which took shape especially in the reign of Faisal, according to Saudi Minister of Industry and Electricity Dr Ghazi Algosaiibi, throw light on over all orientation of Saudi Arabia:

First, and perhaps foremost, is the kingdom's strong Islamic orientation. Saudi Arabia contains the two holiest Muslim cities (Mecca and Medina). The state itself was based on a religious reformist movement and the religious law plays an important role in Saudi political system. The Islamic orientation manifests itself in a variety of ways, the most important of which is the drive for Islamic solidarity (Islamic Bank etc.).

Second, there is an equally strong Arab orientation. The very name of the state emphasizes this fact. The Arabian Peninsula was the cradle of the Arab nation and the birth place of Arab civilization. Present day Saudi Arabia regards itself the heir to a proud heritage of Arab culture. The Arab orientation is clearly reflected in the kingdom unfailing support of Arab causes.

¹³ Emile A. Nakhleh, *The United States and Saudi Arabia: A Policy Analysis* (Washington, D. C: American Enterprise Institute, 1975), 43

¹⁴ Quoted by *The National Observer*, 5 April 1975, p. 4

Three, a prominent feature of Saudi foreign policy is its uncompromising stand against Communism. Except for a short period in the late twenties when Soviet Union maintained a legation in Jeddah Saudi Arabia did not establish diplomatic relations with any communist country. The atheist and revolutionary aspects of Communism are particularly repugnant to the Saudis; they regard Islam and Communism as opposing ideologies.

Four, another strong characteristic is a realistic appreciation of the realities of international politics. Saudi leaders have played a decorous and discrete role in international politics; they have strongly disapproved of adventurism and brinkmanship in foreign relations. Saudi foreign policy has been a voice of moderation and reason in Intra-Arab conflicts.

Five, a very special relationship with the United States is another significant characteristic of Saudi foreign policy. Saudi-American ties are broadly based and cover many areas of common interest, including that of national security and self-defence. Both countries regard this special relationship as vital to their national interests and world peace.¹⁵

6.3.1 Faisal and the Arab Cause

King Faisal was ardent supporter of Arab unity and gave full ballistic and logistic support to Egypt in Arab-Israel Wars of 1967 and 1973. He even cut the supplies of oil to the Western powers in 1973 thus became a popular figure in the Muslim World. Thinking outside the Arab his plan for unity of whole Muslim world allegedly brought his assassination as it was anti-Western in scope. He also suggested to heads of Muslim states to frame a Muslim World League. He openly criticized America for Israel support in these words:

We are deeply concerned that if the United states does not change its policy in the Middle East and continues to side with Zionism, then, I am afraid, such course of action will affect our relations with our American friends because it will place us in an untenable position in the Arab world and vis-à-vis the countries which Zionism seeks to destroy.¹⁶

6.4 King Faisal and Pakistan

A major country of the Islamic world Pakistan could not be evaded by the person like King Faisal. Although Pakistan's relation with Saudi Arabia remained friendly throughout the history, King Faisal's international importance and valour for Muslim world found special place in Pakistan. He was a good friend of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then prime minister of Pakistan. Bhutto was also zealous about the unity of Muslim World and admired the concept of a Muslim World League floated by King Faisal. Two wars of Pakistan with Bharat were fought in the reign of King Faisal in which Saudi

¹⁵ Lateef, 35-6

¹⁶ Quoted by *The New York Times*, 26 March 1975, p. 10

Arabia gave full financial support to Pakistan. King Faisal also openly criticized Bharat for holding Kashmir by force. King Faisal participation of Islamic Summit in 1974 held at Lahore aroused suspicion in Western circles as Bhutto was also very receptive in the Arab cause. Assassination of Faisal and judicial execution of Bhutto are allegedly taken as the part of the same conspiracy designed by the US secret mission.

Pakistan named many of its landscapes after the name of King Faisal. The monumental mosque in Islamabad was built with the financial aid of King Faisal and is known as Faisal Mosque; a piece of architecture known for its beauty and scenic environment all over the World. Pakistanis also named one of their cities after the name of the King. The city was loyalpur which is now called Faisalabad.

6.5 Assassination

On 25 March 1975, King Faisal was shot point-blank and killed by his half-brother's son, Faisal bin Musaib, who had just come back from the United States.¹⁷ A bodyguard hit Prince Faisal with a sheathed sword. King Faisal was quickly taken to the hospital. He was still alive as doctors massaged his heart and gave him a blood transfusion. They were unsuccessful and King Faisal died shortly afterward. Both before and after the assassination the prince was reported to be calm. Following the killing, Riyadh had three days of mourning and all government activities were at a standstill.

¹⁷ One theory for the murder was avenging the death of Prince Khalid bin Musa'id, the brother of Prince Faisal. King Faisal instituted modern and secular reforms that led to the installation of television, which provoked violent protest, one which was led by Prince Khalid, who during the course of an attack on a television station was shot dead by a policeman.

Recommended Books

Fouad Al-Farsy, *Modernity and Tradition in the Saudi Equation*. London: Kegan Paul International

R. Bayly Winder, *Saudi Arabia in the Nineteenth Century*. London: MacMillan

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 What were the reasons for dethronement of King Saud?
- Q.2 Analyse the Ten Point Reform Program of King Faisal.
- Q.3 What were the steps taken by King Faisal to modernize Saudi Arabia?
- Q.4 Describe the Agenda of King Faisal for Saudi Arabia's foreign policy.
- Q.5 Analyse King Faisal relations with Pakistan.

Unit-7

**KING KHALID (1975-82)
AND THE KINGDOM**

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1. Introduction

Born in 1913 at Riyadh King Khalid was fifth son of Abdul Aziz ibn Saud. He also remained active in expeditions and important responsibilities of the state with his brothers. He took part in battles, appointed as governor of Hejaz. He was the representative at Taif Conference which was held to settle the matters with Yemen in 1934 in which the treaty of Taif was signed. He became interior minister of the state in 1934. He became deputy prime minister with Faisal in 1962 and always remained on the side of Faisal in the conflict between Saud and Faisal. He was chosen as Crown Prince in 1965 when his older full brother Prince Muhammad retired in his favour. He became king on the assassination of King Khalid on 25 March 1975. King Khalid also became the de facto prime minister of Saudi Arabia.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will be able to:

- Know the domestic affairs of Saudi Arabia under King Khalid.
- Know the foreign policy under King Khalid.
-

3. Outline

- 7.1 Continuity of the Policies
 - Domestic Affairs
 - International Policy
- 7.2 King Khalid and Pakistan

7.1 Continuity of the Policies

King Khalid was true successor of King Faisal as his political counselling was indebted to Faisal. Moreover, he was not more active than Faisal to adopt a different course of politics therefore, policies initiated by Faisal remained intact throughout his reign. It should be noted that in his reign princes who were head of different ministries became more influential than the king but due to the king nature of Khalid their influence happened to reinforce the king's power and they never tried to endanger him.

7.1.1 Domestic Affairs

King Faisal left Saudi Arabia economically and administratively very strong. Therefore, King Khalid did not need to embark on any challenge and all he had to do was the development and progress in already started projects and schemes. Strict financial policies of King Faisal the country had tremendous revenue for such development. King Khalid focussed domestic affairs as a foremost priority and pushed the modernization of country forward as King Khalid was thought to be more modern than his predecessors. He launched third Development Plan with a planned budget of \$250 billion in May 1980. The main fields the King gave much attention were agriculture and education. New towns were established for the purpose of agriculture in which Jubail and Yanbu are prominent. Number of school was increased and there was a considerable difference in number of educational institutions in the reign than the forerunning reigns. King Khalid also reorganized the administrative system and introduced some new portfolios for the effective running of the system.

7.1.2 International Policy

Many important things regarding the world politics occurred during the reign of King Khalid. Iranian Revolution and Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan were the developments which changed the orientation of the world politics. However, King Khalid had a nature not to involve himself in such kind of politics. Though the foreign policy had some touches upon the question of Communist hold of the region but it was the part of on-going Cold War skirmishes. In this wake the King purchased some arsenal from the United States. Apart from this the King showed no interest in the final War of Soviet Union against the Liberal Capitalism.

In Iraq-Iran War Saudi Arabia was alleged to help Iraq in view of her sectarian differences with Iran. Although, King Khalid sent congratulation to Khomeini on the latter successful change but the very sectarian differences did not let the relations to be settled among the rival countries.

King Khalid tried to settle the disputes among countries of the Peninsula and inaugurated Gulf Co-operation Council in 1981. This was a remarkable move to establish peace within the Peninsula on the part of the Saudi government.

7.2 King Khalid and Pakistan

As continuous policy Saudi Arabia remained in friendly terms with Pakistan and helped the latter on every occasion. With the change of regime in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia developed relations with new military regime and Zia-ul-Haq proved to be the best friend of Saudis in its eleven years tenure. An incident further strengthened the ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and good sentiments for Pakistan were there in Saudi Arabia. The incident was of seizure of the Great Mosque of Makkah by some Saudis dissidents. Saudi forces were unable to tackle the situation and were joined by Pakistani commandos who with their extra military skill evacuated the Mosque from the insurgents thereby arresting most of them.

End of Era

King Khalid died on 13 June, 1982 due to ailment of heart. On the same day he buried in Riyadh. Prominent leaders of the Muslim world participated in the funeral. He was succeeded by the crown prince Fahd bin Abdul Aziz. He governed over a smooth period of events.

Recommended Books

R. Bayly Winder, *Saudi Arabia in the Nineteenth Century*. London: MacMillon

Self-Assessment Questions

Q.1 Write a note on “The state of Saudi Arabia under King Khalid”.

Unit-8

**THE ERA OF KING FAHD
(1982-2005)**

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1. Introduction

Born in 1921, Fahd bin Abdul Aziz was eighth son of his father Abdul Aziz. He was with Faisal to sign the charter of the UN in 1945 in San Francisco. He made his first state visit in 1953 when he participated in the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on behalf of the Saudi government. He represented Saudi Arabia in the League of Arab States in 1959. He was entrusted with important portfolio of interior ministry in 1962. He also remained deputy prime minister in the reign of Faisal and Khalid. He was declared as crown prince on the death of King Faisal in 1975. Two elder brothers of Fahd, Nasser and Saad were candidates of crown prince but keeping in view of Fahd's abilities and experiences he was preferred over other. He became the King of Saudi Arabia on the death of King Khalid and adopted the title of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques (*Khadim-i-Hirmain Sharifain*) replacing "His Majesty".

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the student will be able to:

- Relate the phenomenon of Gulf War to the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia.
- Explain the policy of Saudi Arabia in the War on Terror.

3. Outline

- 8.1 King Fahd and Gulf War
 - The War
 - Role of King Fahd: His Foreign Policy
- 8.2 King Fahd and Pakistan
- 8.3 The Western Influence
- 8.4 9/11 and King Fahd

8.1 King Fahd and Gulf War

King Fahd continued the policy of his predecessor and posed no diplomacy or some challenge to be reckoned with for the western powers particularly. He was more pro-American than his forerunners. Therefore, it was out of scope and possibility that King Fahd had any double game with the US interests in the Middle East. Israel's offensive in the heart of Arab World is a clear testimony of Arab Kings being faithful to the New World Order. Gulf War is a story of this faithfulness.

8.1.1 The War

It has been the policy of Imperial World that Arabs should not be united at any cost as it would endanger the existence of Israel. Therefore, the big hands always are prone to raise some issues in the Middle East. In Iran-Iraq War America gave arsenal support to Iraq in order to suppress Iran which is anti-American in her policies. After the War, Iraq faced financial deficit and was designing policies to pull out the country from the deficit. Saudi Arabia was also supporting Iraq against Iran due to sectarian differences. Iraq also hoped to have financial aid from Saudis but she could not get anything. Moreover, Iraq was in the Soviet bloc which was on the verge of extinction then, therefore, Iraq was alone against the allies. The only option for Iraq was to deal with Kuwait to whom the former had certain disputes over oil fields and access to the Persian Gulf. Iraq had been pressing his demands against Kuwait and finally she assembled the troops to invade Kuwait. In August 1990 Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait and in little time captured it and installed an Iraqi led government in it.

Although some Arab countries remained on the side of Iraq it was the game of America and her Allies. For justification America passed resolutions from Security Council against Iraq and in mid of January 1991 attacked Iraq with coalition forces. In negotiation process Iraq put forward the deal to link the liberation of Kuwait with the evacuation of Israel from Arabs' held areas of Lebanon and Palestine. Interesting was the reaction of Yasser Arafat on this deal of Iraq that he negate to own this link and wanted to solve the Palestinian problem in isolation; a hope never to be fulfilled ever. All proposals were set aside and Iraq had to face another loss regarding his fiscal problems plus the sanctions of the UN which were directly affected the citizens of the country. Kuwait and her oil fields destruction was another loss for the region. As a reaction Iraq emptied Kuwait's oil wells into the Gulf which created environmental problems in the oceans.

8.1.2 Role of King Fahd: His Foreign Policy

Successors of Faisal were not in any position to challenge the super powers. Their foreign policy was restricted to goodwill for the affected countries most of which are Muslims. Like every ruler King Fahd also had a foreign policy comprising of salient features which would not distinguish it from others as all share those salient features of any foreign policy. Moreover, King Fahd was also fond of leisure in life and had nothing to do with a stance towards world's affairs. The era of King Fahd also saw the fall of Communist Power and there remained only one centre in the world i.e. Washington. Now with end of Soviet threat allies like Saudi Arabia became more disabled against imperial plots of

America and there is complete submission before her will. Fahd once said, "After Allah, we can count on the United States." Despite having strong feelings for Palestine Fahd could not say any word about the 'link' of Saddam Hussein he made in the Gulf War as a condition to evacuate Kuwait.

8.2 King Fahd and Pakistan

Friendly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia continued to exist in the reign of King Fahd. In the War against the Soviet Union Saudi Arabia lent immense support to Jihad and Pakistan as war was fuelled mainly through Pakistani borders. Apart from the War King Fahd gave tremendous financial support to Pakistan unprecedented in the past. That was why Pakistan declared a seven days mourning on his death in 2005.

8.3 The Western Influence

King Fahd was under full control of the Western Powers as he was staunch supporter of modernism and loved to live in luxuries of modern life. He lent full support to the American troops in the Gulf War and allowed them to stay in the country for which he received severe criticism from the masses. America has long term planning for the Middle East in order to secure its oil interests. Not contented with the drama of the Gulf war she again embarked on an adventure in 2003 with a pretention to save world from mass destruction weapons of Iraq. Though the inspectors of the UN declared Iraq as clear from such weapons President Bush insisted on the lie of allies and waged war on Iraq despite having already a front in Afghanistan in which America was losing lives and wealth of the country. It is among wonders of democracy that the person who waged two wars without giving strong reasons got elected for the second term in 2004. Including the American people no friend of President Bush ever dared to ask explanation of the Iraq War for which now it has been proved that there were no mass destruction weapons.

8.4 9/11 and King Fahd

Incident of 9/11 is of concern for Saudi Arabia. The fact is that most of the persons physically involved in the attack were Saudis. Not only are those but hundreds of Saudis at war with American imperialism on the platform of al-Qaida with the support of Taliban of Afghanistan. Saudi government remained under pressure for all this however; it was the Pakistan government and people who really bore the cost of this incident. 9/11 was not an isolated episode but had a back ground of almost two decades. It was anti-Soviet war of Afghan Jihad which prepared the stage for 9/11. America and Saudi Arabia flooded Afghanistan with weapons and Muslims from all over the world to participate in Jihad. Among these people from Saudi Arabia were on prominent position and Bin Laden was actually leading the movement in Afghanistan.

Saudi Arab also has a tradition to fund seminaries all over the world in order to spread the Wahhabi thoughts. Students from these seminaries became the stuff of Afghan Jihad

and these students laid the foundation of Taliban (literally means students) in Afghanistan. King Fahd was great supporter of Taliban and apart from Pakistan and America, Saudi Arabia was the third to recognize Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Such a huge fund was disbursed by King Fahd to Taliban that on former's death Taliban also showed grief and wished to participate in the funeral.

After 9/11 it was obvious that Saudi Arabia could not be on the side of Taliban being the staunch ally of America, however, funds' transmission to Taliban could not be checked from Saudi Arabia as it is the matter of the society and not the state. The society of Saudi Arabia and other Muslims settled in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states constantly funding Taliban and seminaries providing man power to Taliban. Only bin Laden's wealth had been a great source of funding for Taliban and al-Qaida. Saudi King also could not stop funding to seminaries in Pakistan and other countries as it is in the hands of Ulema who constitute a major pillar of the state and have full control over the religious sentiments not only on the society of Saudi Arabia but other Muslim countries as well.

Suggestions were and are under notice to change the regime in Saudi Arabia or to arouse some revolution like other Arab countries in order to stop this funding of Jihad in Afghanistan. However, it could be never materialized due to the faithfulness of Saudi kings. No ruler can serve America better than house of Saud. To prevent funding America is taking other steps which will pressurize the society not to fund the militants. As far as King Fahd was concerned he showed great resentment and condemnation for militants and advised the state to strike with an iron fist at militants. In a speech to an Islamic conference on 30 August 2003, King Fahd condemned terrorism and exhorted Muslim clerics to emphasize peace, security, cooperation, justice, and tolerance in their sermons.

End of the Era

King Fahd was admitted to the King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh on 27 May 2005 for unspecified medical tests. An official (who insisted on anonymity) told the Associated Press unofficially that the king had died at 7:30 EDT on 1 August 2005. A member of the cabinet publicly announced his death on Saudi TV the same morning, and said that he died of pneumonia and a high fever. King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz ascended to the throne after him.

Recommended Books

Harry B. Ellis, *Challenge in the Middle East*. New York: Ronald Press

G. Lenezowski, *Middle East in World Affairs*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press

John Badeau, *The American Approach to the Arab World*. New York: Harper & Row

Self-Assessment Questions

Q.1 Narrate the story of Gulf War with reference to King Fahd's foreign policy.

Q.2 Analyse the role of Saudi Arabia in the world's politics after 9/11.

Unit-9

**KING ABDULLAH
AND THE KINGDOM**

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1. Introduction

Born in 1924, Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz became crown prince on the coronation of King Fahd in 1982. He is the tenth son of Abdul Aziz. He was appointed as mayor of Makkah in 1961. In 1962, he was appointed commander of the Saudi Arabian National Guard and held the position till he became the King. After the stroke received by King Fahd in 1995 the real powers were exercised by Abdullah. He named Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, his brother, as crown prince but he died in 2011. After him Nayef bin Abdul Aziz became the crown prince but he also died in 2012. His third heir-apparent is Salman bin Abdul Aziz who became crown prince on 18 June 2012.

2. Objectives

After reading the unit, the students will be able to:

- Assess the role of Saudi Arabia in War on Terror.
- Know the relations of Saudi Arabia with Muslim World.
- Explain the nature of relationship between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

3. Outline

- 9.1 War on Terror and King Abdullah
- 9.2 King Abdullah and Pakistan
- 9.3 Saudi Arabia and the Muslim World
- 9.4 Pakistan's Internal Issues and Saudi Arabia

9.0 Nature of King Abdullah's policies towards the state

King Abdullah continued the modernization of Saudi Arabia on further footings. It has to be done in the face of two developments. One is to stop the militants being funded or liked by the Saudi society. The best tool to create hatred for militancy is education. Second aspect of reforms was due to the recent Arab uprising which toppled the rule of two rulers in Egypt and Libya. King Abdullah took many steps to appease the youth the prominent of which is the air of jobs to unemployed population. King Abdullah is also working for the women rights and started process to give women opportunities to participate in the public life. On 11 January 2013, King Abdullah appointed thirty women to the Consultative Assembly or *Shura* Council as well as modified the related law to realize that the female members of the assembly would be consisted of no less than 20 per cent of 150 members

9.1 War on Terror and King Abdullah

King Abdullah is no different in dealing with the 'terrorism'.¹ He launched a wide range educational program in order to dissuade the society from fundamentalist religious thoughts. He even encouraged women education and opened separate universities for women; a development hitherto unknown in Saudi Arabia. He also dismissed those religious officials who show any adherence or sympathy for militant outlook and ordered to post only those persons to issue a fatawa who are approved by the government.

King Abdullah also exhibits good feelings for al religions of the World and urges to start an inter-faith dialogue between scholars of different religions. In this regard in 2011 an agreement for the establishment of the King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Vienna was signed between the governments of Austria, Spain and Saudi Arabia. Also he is the first Saudi monarch to visit the Pope, Benedict XVI.

Regarding his sentiments towards the world's militant movements he wrote a letter to the American president George W. Bush which shows his outlook upon the matter:

God Almighty, in His wisdom, tests the faithful by allowing such calamities to happen. But He, in His mercy, also provides us with the will and determination, generated by faith, to enable us to transform such tragedies into great achievements, and crises that seem debilitating are transformed into opportunities for the advancement of humanity. I only hope that, with your cooperation and leadership, a new world will emerge out of the rubble of the World Trade Center: a world that is blessed by the virtues of freedom, peace, prosperity and harmony.²

¹ It should be noted that no agreed upon definition of terrorism could be attained yet and the UN forum is also helpless in reaching a definition of terrorism.

² September 11, 2003

9.2 King Abdullah and Pakistan

Friendly relations continued to exist and due to being the allies of America both countries are at equal strategic and economic level for the United States. As has been mentioned earlier that Saudi Arabia is equally a source of strength for al-Qaida and Taliban but she received almost zero effects of the War on Terror. On the other hand Pakistan is bearing tremendous loss of material and manpower in this war. No country in the world is standing with Pakistan in this loss and a constant pressure from the US to bear more loss as the militants became out of reach from super power latest machinery. Failure of the US in Afghanistan is credited to Pakistan things are happening as punishment to the latter. Saudi Arabia, as mentioned earlier, has lost the courage to talk on an equal footing with the US. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have need to build strong strategic relations in order to safeguard their interests.

9.3 Saudi Arabia and the Muslim World

Being the custodian of Holy cities of Islam, Saudi Arabia is the pivotal of the Islamic World. With respect to religious aspect (though in Islam religion covers whole life system and is not confined to place of worship) Saudi government always earns appreciation as it gives much attention to the facility of pilgrimage. Moreover, Saudi government did a lot of work to spread the literature of Islam. It includes translation of Qur'an into languages of world. Apart from this other books on Islam are distributed free of cost all over the world. The Saudi government also lend lot of financial help to poor countries and to those areas which are affected by epidemic or earthquakes and floods. In hours of need Saudi Arabia also supplied free oil to Muslim countries.

As far as the international politics is concerned Saudi Arabia has confined its focus on Arab cause only. All Arab countries have oil reservoirs therefore those are economically rich; they do not need any financial aid. The only matter which Arabs have to focus is Palestinian problem. They are united against Israel. There were many efforts to establish a United Arab Republic but due to internal dissensions it could not be materialized. With the passage of time the anti-Zionist feelings have also become ceremonial and there is no courage to negate America in order to pressurize Israel. In the history of Saudi Arabia only King Faisal was outspoken against America. Islamic Summits and other meetings could also not combine the Muslims on common causes.

For Muslim countries outside the Arab world the era of King Faisal bore some hope for the unity of the Muslims world. Most of the time the relation of Saudi Arabia to any Muslim country is restricted to formal ambassadorial level in which only good wishes are exchanged. The American hold on foreign relations of Saudi Arabia has confined her to the call of America only and Saudis can do nothing out of the scope of American interests. For this Saudi Arabia faces a lot of criticism from Muslim countries especially religious circles of the Muslim world. In view of the fact the Saudi Arabia being the

custodian of Makkah can play matchless role in uniting Muslims and solving their problems as no other country has the potential of such task.

9.4 Pakistan's Internal Issues and Saudi Arabia

Holding a strategic importance in the region; no surrounding power can neglect Pakistan. Being the source of man power and expertise for Saudi Arabia the involvement of the latter in the internal matters of Pakistan is natural. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have large scale economic ties due to which Pakistanis also see towards Saudi Arabia for help and assistance and even as a pressure group for those who are in power in Pakistan. However, a clear involvement of Saudi government in the internal issue of Pakistan came to be known in recent development in Pakistan. General Pervez Musharraf built legal barriers to stop the two ex-prime ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif from participating in Election 2008. However, on the pressure of America the then president made arrangement to let Benazir Bhutto to participate in the elections. For this infamous NRO (National Reconciliation Order) was issued which absolved the cases of those who were in charged before the year 2000. Cases for ineligibility of Sharif brothers were petitioned after 2000 therefore they were still ineligible for the elections. Nawaz Sharif was in exile in Jeddah and had very good relations with the King. Actually it was the Saudi King who saved Nawaz Sharif from execution by the Musharraf takeover. On the deal of military regime with Pakistan People's Party under American pressure King Abdullah played his own card to support Nawaz Sharif. King Abdullah pressed against the military regime to allow Nawaz Sharif to participate in the political process. In this way Sharif Brothers were able to come back in the politics of Pakistan after a decade.

This is the only open show of Saudi King to be indulged in Pakistan's politics. Because, in the past a more crucial time came in the politics of Pakistan but Saudi government made no concern. The execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto by the military regime of Zia-ul-Haq was a clear testimony of this fact. The Saudi government readily established its relations with the military government and did not list any protest against this decision which was allegedly a judicial murder according to the critics of Zia.

Whatever the interests or indifferences are there, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan will continue to affect each other due to economic, social and educational ties between the two countries.

Recommended Books

Harry B. Ellis, *Challenge in the Middle East*. New York: Ronald Press

John Badeau, *The American Approach to the Arab World*. New York: Harper & Row

Self-Assessment Questions

- Q.1 Analyse the foreign policy of King Abdullah over the issue of War on Terror.
- Q.2 Give an account of Pakistan's relationship with Saudi Arabia in the reign of King Abdullah.
- Q.3 Explain the sentiments of Saudis regarding the Muslim World.