

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah
Most Gracious, Most Merciful



The National Anthem

Swearing by God who erected the sky
Swearing by God who spread the light
Qatar will always be free
Made sublime by the souls of the sincere
Proceed in the manner of forebears
And advance on the Prophet's guidance
In my heart,
Qatar is an epic of glory and dignity
Qatar is the land of men of bygone years
Who protect us in times of distress,
Doves they can be in times of peace,
Warriors they are in times of sacrifice.

Jassim Bin Mohammed Bin Thani

The Day of Solidarity,

Loyalty and Honor

2008



His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani
Heir Apparent of the State of Qatar



His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani
Emir of the State of Qatar



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First Day: 16 December 2008



• Master of Ceremonies:
Engineer Ibrahim Alsada

Inaugural Session
(5:30 – 6:45 p. m.)

- Registration and Reception:
(5:30 – 6:00 p.m.)

- Recital of the Koran
(6:00 – 6:05 p.m.)

- Participant’s Speeches
(6:05 -6:15 p.m.)
- Dr Abdul Rahman Alfraih,
Memebr of the Saudi Shura Council

- Yaqoub Yousif Alibrahim,
Kuwaiti Historian

- Keynote Speech:
(6:15 – 6:30 p.m.)
- Sheikh Hassan bin Mohamed Al
Thani,
Vice-Chairman of the Trustees Council
of Qatar Museums Authority

- Break
(6:30 – 6:45 p.m.)

First Session 16 December 2008
(6:45 – 9:00 p.m.)

- **Chairman:**
**Dr Abdul Rahman Alfraih, Member
of the Saudi Shura Council**

- Dr. Zekeriya Kursun
(Marmara University, Turkey)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed bin
Thani’s Relationship with the Ottoman
State”
(Break 7:45 – 8:00 p.m.)

- Dr. Suhail Saban
(King Saoud University, SaudiArabia)
“Titles and Ranks Bestowed on Sheikh
Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani by
the Ottoman State”

- Dr. J.E. Peterson
Britain and State Formation in the Gulf
: The Case of Qatar and Shaykh Jasim
b. Muhammad

Second Day 17 December 2008

Second Session
(9:00 – 11:30 a.m)
Chairman:
Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed Al Thani

- Dr. Jamal Hajar: (Alexandria
University, Egypt)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani, His Father’s Partner”

- Dr. Ahmed Zakariya Alshalaq (Ain
Shams University, Egypt)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani’s Relationship with Foreign
Powers”

- Dr Aftab Kamal Pasha (Jawaharlal
Nehru University, India)
“Attempts of The Founder of Modern
Qatar Sheikh Jassim b. Mohammed
Al Thani to Establish Good Relation
With India”

- Dr. Sayar Aljameel: (Toronto
University)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani and His Relationship with
Surrounding Powers’

- Dr. Sinan Marouf Oghlu: (Qatar
University – Qatar)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani’s Position on the Balkan Wars”:
Break
(11:30 – 12:00 am)

Third Session
17 December 2008
(12:00- 2:00 p.m.)
Chairman:
**Dr. Rabea Sabah Al Kuwari (Qatar
University)**

- Dr. Penelope Tuson
“Sheikh Jassim b. Mohammed Al-
Thani in British Documents.”

- Dr. Mohamed Abdulhameed Harb:
(Bahrain University, Bahrain)
“The Manuscript *The Ottoman Rule in
Qatar in the Light of the Salmanat of the
Ottoman State*”

- Dr. Mohamed bin Mousa Alqarini:
(College of Teachers, Alahsaa, Saudi
Arabia)
“Qatar During Sheikh Jassim bin
Mohamed bin Thani’s Reign in the
Light of the Ottoman Salnamat”

- Dr.Abdul Lateef Nasser Alhmaidan:
King Saoud University, Saudi Arabia)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani in Academic Studies”

- Dr. Mohammed Alahmari: (Cultural
District, Qatar)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani’s Culture as Demonstrated in His
Poetry and Writings”

Fourth Session
17 December 2008-11-21
(6:00 – 9:00 p.m.)
Chairman:
Professor Khalid bin Ghanim Alali

- Yaqoub Yousif Alibrahim
“Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani’s
Relationship with Sheilkh Yousif
Alibrahim”

- Dr. Ibraheem Mohammed Shahdad:
(Qatar University, Qatar)
“Grand Jassim and His Policies for
Gaining Qatar’s Independence”

- Dr. Abdul Qadir Alqahtani: (Qatar
University)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin
Thani’s Position on Ottoman – British
Rivalry”

- Dr. Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani:
(Documents Department, Emiri
Diwan)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed’s
Relationship with Najd’s Rulers”

- Dr. Khalid bin Ali Alwazan and
Professor Abdullah bin Bassam
Altimimi (two researchers from Saudi
Arabia)
“Sheikh Jassim bin Thani’s Religious
Values Through His Relationship with
Najd’s Scholars”

Conclusion



About the Historical Seminar

As part of the State of Qatar's celebrations on the occasion of the National Day on 18 December 2008, and in commemoration of Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani, founder of the modern State of Qatar, the Organizing Committee of the Qatari National Day has decided not to miss the opportunity without throwing ample light on this important period in the history of modern Qatar with a view to enable future generations to be aware of their past free from distortion or unfairness.

Therefore, the Organizing Committee has decided to hold a historical seminar on 16 and 17 December 2008 at Sheraton Doha to throw light on the reign of the founder, Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani. An elite group of historians and academics from Qatar and abroad and researchers interested in the region's history are to take part in the seminar through research papers, working papers and documents addressing the main landmarks of the founder Sheikh's reign and his religious, political and cultural characteristics as well as his political positions towards the powers surrounding him and revealing his wisdom, foresight and eagerness to set a fully-sovereign state.

Organizing Committee

THE DAY OF SOLIDARITY, LOYALTY AND HONOR



OPENING SPEECH



**Speech by
Sheikh Dr. Hassan bin Mohammed bin Ali Al Thani**

Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani (1824-1913,)

The Founder of the State of Qatar

Your Excellencies, Esteemed Guests,

Peace Be Upon You and God's Mercy and Blessings

I would like to welcome you on the occasion of the National Day. The day on which Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani succeeded his father as ruler of Qatar in 1878 has been chosen as the National Day. He and his men were able to turn Qatar Peninsula into a strong united entity that enjoys its high status among the countries of the region. He spent fifty years defending Qatar's borders, concerned with its unity, protecting its people's interests and dignity. He led them battles of challenges through tense critical events and numerous troubles that surrounded Qatar and the region. He managed to lead Qatar to safety with dignity as an unassailable country.

He advanced the country and opened gates before it. Its trade prospered and raised its flag high. He built mosques and schools, recruited scholars, published books in fiqh and ordered their distribution.

His position rose among people. As Sulaiman al-Dakheel has stated "he was highly respected by Arabs, esteemed by chiefs and princes, influential and a determined reformer. He materialized any issue he addressed with God's support." All his deeds were for the sake of God. Hence he was designated "the Sheikh of Princes" due to his status and age. Esteemed audience,

It is a great honor for us to recall through your valuable research aspects of the character of the founder, Sheikh Jassim. Between the middle of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century his presence was effective and influential in the history of Qatar and that of the whole region. The renowned historian Amin al-Rihani described him as "the Sheikh of Princes" in terms of age and status. Al Alousi's statement was true: "A noble Arab dignitary who was very pious and knowledgeable on the matters of Islam and made generous contributions to Moslems."

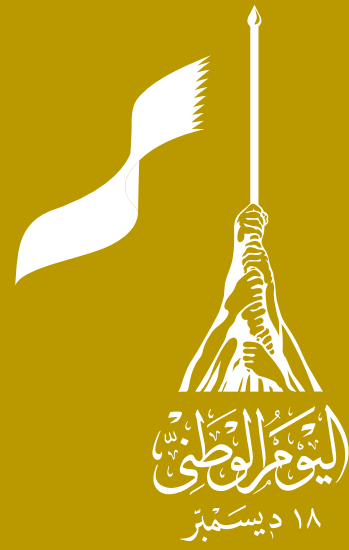
We recall him and his countrymen, who loved him, accepted his leadership and pledged to obey him. He gave them loyalty and security and led Qatar and its citizens to the Twentieth Century with dignity and pride.

Esteemed audience,

I wish success for you and your respected seminar and that your research will come out with fruitful results on this important figure on this important day, Qatar's National Day. I also hope you will carry on your scholarly work to enrich this important period in Qatar's history.



Once again you are warmly welcomed.



Speech by Dr. Abdul-Rahman Alfraih

Esteemed Audience,

Peace Be Upon You and God's Mercy and Blessings

Each year the people of Qatar recall the memories of national struggle and genuine uprisings for the sake of construction and development as well as laying the foundations of an emerging state. Foundation has an anniversary, construction has a march and knowledge has accomplishments. Numerous years ago on these days the new State of Qatar emerged as a new entity by its founder and builder of its advancement Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani

When I was invited to take part in the activities of this historical seminar, which is part of the celebrations on the occasion of the State of Qatar's National Day, I made up my mind to deliver a working paper dealing with the Founding Leader, Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani: his upbringing, lineage and his family's march, with emphasis on his political, administrative and military efforts as well as his intellectual and scholarly activities, and present a review of Qatar's past and related scholarly contributions in historical, literary, social and geographical domains.

I set about preparing this paper and completed it in the light of the modern scholarly approach in historical and cultural studies as my contribution to this seminar. When I arrived in Doha, the city of knowledge and culture and the venue of the seminar, I was told that the organizers have honored me with delivering a speech on behalf of the participants in the inauguration session as well as chairing the first session. It was a pleasant surprise for me raising the concerns of cultural work to stand before specialists from academia, scholarly institutions and research centers from various countries to take part in this blessed seminar.

I recalled the memories of several years ago when I came to Doha and met with dear colleagues who shared research concerns at the Fifth Scholarly Gathering of the GCC Association of History and Archaeology under the patronage of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Heritage in the State of Qatar. The recollection of the commemoration by Qataris today of the foundation of their state so as to remain live in each Qatari citizen's memory is because stances have leaders and construction has a march inherited in the history of the country's establishment.

Qatar's present has impetus and the future has aspirations. If this is integrated into the glorious past in one melting pot, it becomes evident why people are attached to the





national day and insistence to celebrate it and determination to reflect on it each year. Every nation recalls its achievements on the national day, assesses its march, defines the positive and negative aspects of its present and plan with determination to promote positive aspects and remedy negative aspects as well as formulate the plans and programs needed for its future so that success may have well-established bases of science and knowledge and progress may be made according to clear visions and plans that adopt priorities.

Every country has its national day with its importance for people. Countries and people take pride in it and seek to implant awareness of it through media campaigns, orientation bulletins and guidelines on this day, its significance and the accomplishments of countries and peoples. Seminars such as your seminar are the highest expression of interest in the national day.

The national day means promotion of the patriotic spirit in citizens, especially young people. The national day reminds people to safeguard the homeland, strengthens effective and reactive feelings. It is a valuable opportunity for re-evaluation and rectification, because identification of positive and negative aspects ensures addressing each of them. Positive aspects need development and negative aspects require correction. With determination, clear vision, target identification and perseverance it becomes possible to enter the knowledge-based economy.

Positive relationships with the homeland means contributing and wise utilization of riches and the realization that contributing to the homeland is an open enterprise in which all should be involved, each from his own position, and that patriotism is feeling and values providing each human community with a space in which its members move and express their characteristics through, promote their national and human prospects and activate their aspirations in life. Communities always need their memories and historical glory. The homeland does not mean superficial celebrations. It means real devotion, contribution, sacrifice, self responsibility, honest performance of duties, fairness, integrity, advancement and nobleness. It means looking for every supreme value. It is what every citizen has pride in being a member of it. It has been said only loyalty to the homeland and sacrifice for it and safeguarding it equals the greatness of the homeland.

Genuine patriotism opens up the way to a living social experiment in which variations exist, variables interact. And knowledge emerges as a major factor in nations' glory, if positive interaction among the representatives of the education sector, the private sector and civil society and following a clear course for sustainable development which responds to the

current generations' needs without jeopardizing the future generations' ability to satisfy their needs with the ideal linkage between the present and the future. Sustainable development is the citizens' ability to develop wealth, intellectual modes and social organizations with quantitative, qualitative and political dimensions turning growth into a means of social solidarity, development of economic options that strike justice between present and future generations and safeguard the choices of growth for all those in the homeland.

The homeland is the geographical area which provides equal citizenship to all the countrymen. It is sovereignty that is concerned with the dignity of all those who tread on its soil. It is the institutions that seek to provide means of decent living for all groups. It is the institutions with powers, visions, material ability and tools of knowledge, research centers that work out plans and programs for the future and examine variables in a fast-moving world. The national day is a high platform through which the glory of the past is recalled, reflection on the current living reality and looking forward to the prosperous future. In each homeland great figures remain in the memory of history, because after their departure they leave durable evidences that tell their great deeds, experiences and efforts whose benefits survive them. The founder of the State of Qatar and builder of its advancement Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani was of this caliber.

The Sheikh's political and military bravery as described by those who wrote about him emerged despite the superior powers around him. Thanks to his boldness and good governance, the people supported him. This support turned into a pattern adopted by Qatari generations. His reign was characterized by stability, justice and prosperity. The country underwent comprehensive progress and prosperity in all aspects of life. This was clearly manifested in pearl fishing and trading. Qatar became a major pearl exporter and dealer. Means of maritime transport have also developed. Sheikh Jassim also acquired experience and became competent in running the country's affairs since his youth. He succeeded in directing the country's politics wisely. Under his leadership, Qatar emerged as a firm country whose tribes he united. He drew its future and proved his dexterity in dealing the largest world powers vying for dominance of the Gulf and its countries in his time.

The 18th of December 1878 was a turning point in Qatar's history when Sheikh Jassim took power. It was the date of the creation of the State of Qatar as a result of his assiduous efforts to win recognition of Qatar by the two major powers. Qatar is celebrating this date today while implementing an economic policy that depends on planning and competence. It realizes that

أبحاث الندوة التاريخية المصاحبة لاحتفالات اليوم الوطني لدولة قطر



the system of wealth is knowledge-based, a universal system which has changed a lot of the landmarks of culture and politics and generated new ideas influencing the individual, media, values and social relationships.

The founder of Qatar succeeded in building the state through his thought, cognizance, bravery, charity endowments, knowledge, generosity and chivalry. Qatar's riches were known since old history. Qatar was known for pearl fishing in the sea. Yehya bin Masawaih, who died in 234 H (875), said in his book entitled Jewels and Their Characteristics that the pearl fishery was called Alqatari extending from Kadhima (in Kuwait) to the sea and consisting of four regions. The Qatari region was the largest. Alberoni said in his book that the pearl fishery in Qatar was very precious combining plentiful benefits with limited harms. The pearls were called "Qatari" not after qatr almatar (rain drops) or qatr alma (water drops) but after the country of Qatar.

The country was populated since old times. There are remains near its coast demonstrating its urbanization. Its position between deserts with good pastures and the sea coast as well as its good land encouraged its urbanization. Old books refer to old sites. They also refer to alqitriyat, famous types of clothes, and alqatariyat, camels living in Qatar. There was a market for camels in Qatar in old times. Alqatariyat were camels to which the famous ancient Arab poet Jarir referred in one of his poems.

God bless you, esteemed brothers, in your historical seminar on the reign of the founder, Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani. Felicitations to the government and people of Qatar on their scholarly aspirations and national event.

Peace Be Upon You and God's Mercy and Blessings.



**Speech by Mr. Yaqoub Yousif Alibrahim,
Researcher in Contemporary Gulf History**

Peace Be Upon You and God’s Mercy and Blessings.

Warm welcome to you

A few years ago I waited for such occasion about which I often thought. When an ample opportunity struck, I seized it supported with documents in my possession. I proposed the idea to H.H. the Emir of Qatar when I was honored with his audience on 30 March 2002. H.H. the Emir was enthusiastic about the proposal and gave it his approval and blessing. Then I waited and contemplated for a long time until I almost lost hope.

However, I decided to pursue my proposal. I reminded His Highness on every available opportunity retaining the hope that the conditions will be favorable. I met H.E. Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Saoud bin Fahada as well as H.E. Dr. Sheikh Hassan bin Mohammed bin Ali. Here I ask him to give evidence in this audience. Philosophers say that patience is bitter though it is not harmful. In my humble opinion, half this statement is true but the second half is controversial and has been contested by philosophers.

After several years of patience suddenly Dr. Hassan contacted me to announce the inception of the project. Many thanks to H.H. the Emir, patron of Qatar’s modern development, as well as to Sheikh Abdulrahman and Sheikh Hassan for their efforts.

Esteemed audience,

The present occasion of Qatar’s National Day is a token of allegiance to the founder of Qatar and expression of salutation to his noble spirit as well as his charitable deeds and assiduous efforts and struggle to establish independence.

I stand in respect of the great founder, but I leave to his contemporaries speaking about his characteristics and merits, which only ungrateful and obstinate persons may deny. In his book on the history of Alahsaa, the first Najdi journalist Sulaiman bin Salih Aldakhil, says: “He (Sheikh Jassim) is the prince of this land. He is Friday Orator, Qadhi, Mufti and Ruler. He enchanted his audience and was generous in his gifts. He is major supporter of Arabism and Islam.”





The outstanding Iraqi scholar Mahmoud Shukri Alalous says the following about Sheikh Jassim: “He is a noble Arab, a pious man, and well-knowledgeable about Islam. He has made numerous charitable deeds for Muslims. He is a major pearl trader and widely respected by tribes. I have a lot of correspondence with him recorded in my book Badaai Alinshaa.”

I would like to state the following about him: “He was the Sheikh of Princes, combining military prowess and literary talents, trade and generosity, politics and literature. He created an ample record of deeds. Attracting numerous supporters, his history became an icon of the Gulf.” When Mohammed Rahim Saqr, the British Resident’s representative, provoked him saying: “Do you dream of becoming a second Arabi (the leader of the Egyptian uprising),” Sheikh Jassim replied: “You have two Arabis before you.” That was in November 1888 in connection with the famous Baniyan incident.

In his times Qatar became the destination for scholars from Najd, Oman and Iraq. It was visited by major Nabataean poets then. He was, indeed, a poet with a collection of poems, fond of knowledge and a book lover. He published the following books: Aliman (Faith) by Ibn Taimia in India in 1311 H., “Almaktoub allatif ila almuhadith alsharif” in 1322 H., and “Altawdhih an tawhid alkhilaf fi jawab ahl aliraq” in Egypt in 1913 H.. He also bought a whole ship load of books from India and distributed them in Gulf countries, Najd, Iraq and Syria. Doesn’t a person with all such merits deserve commemoration? Isn’t Qatar entitled to take pride in recalling his deeds and list this occasion in its annual calendar so that it is repeated. It is also necessary to create an institution bearing his name and dedicate to his memory with a view to accommodating and protecting his heritage. There is no construction without a foundation and he is the founder. There is no school without teacher and he is the patron teacher. All the glowing development in Qatar, genuine intentions to highlight its ideas and intellectual and cultural maturity to seek to build the Qatari citizen, invest in his future and respond to all the above unless we recall the past with all its positive and negative aspects. For all this we appeal for setting up the Jassim Institution so as to become the hub for learned people just as Qatar was in Sheikh Jassim’s days. If Jassim the man is absent now, the institution bearing his name should not be absent.

Dear Audience,

You, who are concerned with sound documentation, may have realized, like myself, the amount of ignorance about this gallant figure due to maximum confusion and defamation surrounding him. It is time for you to take part in raising people’s awareness and knowledge about him with a view to setting things right. Follow God’s words not to belittle people. The objective of this gathering is to enrich people’s knowledge, which is undoubtedly a noble task. You are called upon to do justice to him so as to learn new and useful things about him as well as all that is far from flattery. As a Druzi scholar has said, “You live as long as life fits you.”





THE DAY OF SOLIDARITY, LOYALTY AND HONOR

JASSIM BIN MOHAMMED BIN THANI

BIOGRAPHIES OF
RESEARCHERS AND
SUMMARIES OF THEIR STUDIES



Researcher Yaqoub Yousif Alibrahim

Researcher in contemporary Gulf history

- Has published research articles in numerous Gulf newspapers.
- Has published a number of works about Gulf history
- Assisted numerous researchers in Gulf as well as foreign postgraduate students.

 Intellectual Works:

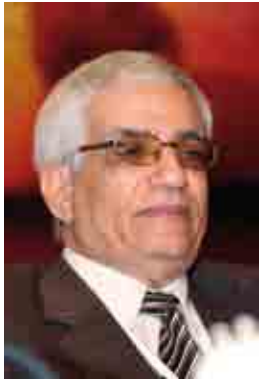
- *From Sail to Seas*, (Kuwait, 2003)
- *Kuwaiti-French Relations Since 1778*, Al Qabas Booj, Kuwait
- Supervised reprinting the book entitled *Nail almaaribbBisharh daleel altalib. Kuwait*

Research Topic: The Relationship between Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed Al’Thani and Sheikh Yousif Al Ibrahim

Summary of the Research:

 This research paper does not represent a stage of nostalgia for the past but rather throws light along the path of knowledge through the history presented with a view to demonstrating facts. It is a dossier which discusses a special and distinctive relationship between Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani, the founder of the State of Qatar and builder of its entity, and Sheikh Yousif bin Abdulla Al Ibrahim, a prominent Gulf dignitary at the end of the 19th century and start of the 20th century.

 It is also a study of important aspects for the purpose of disclosing sensitive issues in the light of personal correspondence and documentation, which constitute an unprecedented testimony starting with historical and kinship relations, tribal blood relationship between the two families and common affiliation throughout a long period. The paper also discusses the similarity in personal relations with the region’s Arab and foreign princes and rulers as well as mutual cooperation and trading.



Professor Dr. Ahmed Zakariya Alshalq

Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at the College of Arts, Ain Shams University, Egypt. He is a researcher and thinker. He taught at Arab universities in Egypt, Qatar, UAE and Sudan. He chaired a number of research centers specialized in history and heritage. His intellectual contributions ranged from authorship and co-authorship. He published and delivered specialized academic studies in scores of periodicals and international conferences. They include “*Arabs and the Ottoman State*” and “*Modernity and Imperialism*”. He was awarded the State Prize for Scientific Excellence in Social Sciences in the Arab Republic of Egypt, in 2006.

Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani’s Relationship with Foreign Powers

Summary of the Research:

This research paper discusses Ottoman and British pressures to dominate Qatar and its ruler, Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani, during the period 1871-1913, which witnessed competition by the two major powers to control the Arabian Gulf and its

Emirates: Britain by virtue of its trade and imperial interests and its agreements, which restricted the region, and the Ottoman State, by virtue of its historical and religious ties as the State of the Islamic Caliphate. In this paper, the roots of competition, Sheikh Jassim’s position, and start of his challenge of British pressures following his father’s signing of the 1868 Agreement with the British authorities in the Gulf and the Ottoman State’s ambition to dominate the region since 1871 are addressed.

The British position, especially consolidation of the British presence in the Gulf in the light of the conflict with the Ottoman State and Sheikh Jassim’s position on their conflict as well as his successful diplomacy aiming at striking a balance in his relationship with the two powers, which helped preserve his Emirate’s independence.



Dr. Sayar Aljameel

Dr. Sayar Al Jameed is Iraqi national who graduated from Mosul University. He was awarded the Ph.D degree by Saint Andrews University, Scotland, (Middle East Modern History). He was lecturer and professor at universities in Algeria, Tunisia, Iraq, Jordan and UAE. He took part in scores of international conferences and seminars. He won the 1991 Shoman Award and the 1995 Creativity Necklace for Outstanding Scholars. His major publications include the following: *Ottomans and Arabs' Modern Formation, Arab Transformations: Issues of Awareness, Contradictions Analysis and the Future Rhetoric, New Globalization and the Middle East Vital Space and Arabs and Abdel Nasser.*

Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed's Character and His Relations with the Surrounding Forces

Summary of the Research:

Historical documents discovered up to the present make available rich source materials on the historical formation of the State of Qatar by its real founder, Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani, who was a contemporary of the Victorian age and ruled during periods in both the 19th century and 20th century. He witnessed intense competition in the historical formation operation along the Gulf coasts and sheikhdoms. This research paper addresses, through a vision and an approach, three major themes, namely the following:

- First: A founding leader's historical necessity
- Second: Qatar's historical formation and relations with other sides and powers
- Third: Historical outcome and conclusions through the interesting science of history.



Prof. Dr. Jamal Mahmoud Hajar

Egyptian national. Ph.D holder in history, British-Saudi relations, Keele University, England. He was Dean of the College of Arts, Alexandria University. He is a Member of several specialized learned associations. His interests include the modern and contemporary history of the Gulf and Arabia and the Gulf relations with Great Powers, and issues in folklore and oral history. He taught at Egyptian and Arab universities. He has authored 52 published research papers and 21 published books.

Research Topic: Sheikh Qassim bin Mohammed bin Thani, His Father's Partner (1851-1871)

Summary of the Research:

The mid-nineteenth century witnessed the start of growth of a new political entity in Qatar Peninsula. The process was completed in the early 1870s assuming the name of “Sheikdom of Qatar”, to which Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed bin Thani effectively contributed together with his father during the period 1851-1871. Like his father he suffered from the adverse consequences of tribal conflicts, regional differences and international pressures. He developed a clear conviction of the need to set up a new political entity in Qatar Peninsula on the basis of his realization that the geopolitical nature of the peninsula does not make it an isolated island in which Britain only is interested, but rather an extension of heartland of the Arabian peninsula with all the active forces in it.



Professor Dr. Zekeriya Kursun

Dr. Kurşun holds Ph. D. degree from Marmara University of İstanbul. He is the head of History Department at the same University now. He is specialized on the Middle East Political History. He published various works, including *Turkish-Arab Relations at the Crossroad* (İstanbul 1992), *Otoman Sovereignty in Najd and Hassa* (Ankara 1998), *The Ottomans in Qatar* (İstanbul 2002), *The Ottomans and the House of Saud* (Beirut 2005) He contributed a number of articles to various journals and collective works. He is a member of Assosiation of Turkish History and member of Assosiation of General Staff Turkish Military History and the President of Assosiation of Researchers of the Middle Eastern and African Studies in Türkiye.

Research Topic: The Ottoman State and Qatar: Jassim bin Thani’s Relationship with Abdul Hameed II

Summary of the Research:

Since the first half of the 16th century, when the Ottomans occupied Baghdad then Basra and Alahsa as the mightiest of Islamic powers, they were regarded with great attention by the Muslim leaders and peoples threatened

by Portugal and thus they settled along the Gulf of Basra coasts then Alahsa and Bahrain without any resistance.

Within such context, the first conflict took place between Qataris and the Ottomans. Then followed the fundamental development in the Ottoman-Qatari relationship after 1871, according to Ottoman documents. However, it is impossible to comprehend such relationship through documents only, because this relationship was much different from that defined by documents, especially the Ottoman State’s relationship with local princes, particularly Qatar’s princes. Abdul Hameed II and Sheikh Jassim bin Thani were the most understanding of such position, despite the attempts to sow dissension between them. However, the two leaders did not fall into this trap.



Dr.J.E.Peterson

Dr. J.E. Peterson is a historian and political analyst specializing in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf. He has taught at various universities in the United States and has been associated with a number of leading research institutes in the United States and abroad. Until 1999, he served in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Security and Defence in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. He is the author or editor of a dozen books, the most recent of which are *Defense and Regional Security in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf, 1973-2004: An Annotated Bibliography* (Gulf Research Center, 2006); *Historical Muscat: An Illustrated Guide and Gazetteer* (Brill, 2007); and *Oman’s Insurgencies: The Sultanate’s Struggle for Supremacy* (Saqi, 2007). He has also published some 40 scholarly articles in such journals and annuals as: *American Historical Review, American-Arab Affairs, Arabian Studies, Asian Affairs, Encyclopædia Britannica, Hoover Institution Yearbook on International Communist Affairs, Middle East Journal, Middle East Policy, Orbis, RUSI/Brassey’s Defence Yearbook, Survival*, and *Washington Quarterly*, as well as over 20 contributions to edited works. He is presently working on a book on Oman since 1970 and modern history of Arabia.

Research Topic: Britain and Formation of Gulf States: the Case of Qatar and Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed
Summary of the Research:

The British Administration of India was responsible for Britain’s long interest in and domination of the Gulf, reaching its climax in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Because of the British Government’s interests in India, it assumed a growing political role in the Arab coastal areas of the Gulf as reflected in the establishment of the maritime crucial system between the coastal entities and expansion of placing protection on them.

The impact of the system was profound on the peoples and rulers along the Arabian coast. The purely tribal system was transformed into formation of preventive states and a strong relationship was established between the region and Britain.

It should be stated that the course of history was dictated not only by Britain but also by powerful local personalities that contributed to transforming the entities into states. This research paper is concerned with one of them, namely Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed, who ruled Qatar between 1876 and 1913



Dr. Kamal Pasha

Professor Pasha is specialized in history and international affairs analyst. He has previously taught at the Center of West Asian Studies, Aligaarh Muslim University, and has been a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, Cairo University. He has served as Chairperson and Director of Gulf Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University. The focus of his research, teaching and writing has been on West Asia and North Africa. His books include the following: *India, Iraq and the Gulf, Iraq: Sanctions and Wars, Egypt in a Changing World and India* and *the GCC States since1970*.

Research Topic: Attempts by Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed, Modern Qatar’s Founder, to Establish Good Relations with India

Summary of the Research:

Throughout its history, the Gulf region has had continuous maritime relations with India and the two sides benefited from such relations leading to exchange of goods, ideas and cultures. With the advent of Islam, Arab merchants and sophists developed these relations, which grew with Indians who embraced Islam.

Qatar’s early relationship with Britain in the mid-eighteenth century and the welcoming by the far-sighted Sheikh Jassim **(1878-1913)** of the Ottomans at first impacted the relationship with India. He treated Indians very cautiously, because they were British subjects under Britain’s protection. Gradually, members of the Indian community left Qatar by the 1880s. While there was no Indian community in Qatar, Indians’ conditions prospered all over the Gulf region. Sheikh Jassim’s troubled relations with Indians demonstrated his determination to consolidate Al Thanis’ power over Qatar in the phase of challenges in the Gulf region.



Dr.Suhail Saban

Turkish academic (Associate Professor) at the Department of History, College of Arts, King Saud University, Riyadh. Before that he had worked as an information researcher at the National King Fahd Library, taught Islamic culture and the Turkish language at Imam Mohamed bin Saud University and translated numerous Ottoman documents on the history of Arabia and the Arabian Gulf, His publications include *Guide to Ottoman and Turkish Research and Studies in the Arabic Library* and *the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Historical Ottoman Terms*.

Research Topic: Titles and Ranks Bestowed on Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed bin Thani by the Ottoman State
Summary of the Research:

The Ottoman Archives are abundant with hundreds of important documents on Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed bin Thani and his reign in Qatar. The research paper addresses the relations between Sheikh Jassim and the Ottoman State and details the titles and ranks bestowed on him by the Ottoman State most of which were the following:

- 1– *Qaimaqam* bestowed on Sheikh Jassim in 1288 AH/1871
- 2– *Riasatalbab*, a high rank bestowed on some dignitaries in the region.

There is no doubt that bestowing such high ranks on Sheikh Jassim demonstrates the importance attached to Qatar by the Ottoman State during that period. It also indicates Sheikh Jassim’s status. Indeed, Mohamed Hafiz Pasha, the Governor of Basra, was ousted because of his action against Sheikh Jassim in Qatar leading to the events of 1310 A.H./1893, in which numerous Ottoman soldiers were killed.



Dr. Penelope Tuson

Penelope Tuson was formerly Curator of Middle East Archives (India Office Collections) in the British Library and afterwards worked with the British Library's Consultancy Services, providing research and documentation services to academic and Government clients. She subsequently joined the International Dispute Resolution Practice of LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP, in Washington DC. She now has her own Historical Research Consultancy, specialising in collection development for libraries, archives and private individuals, and international boundary research.

Penelope Tuson's publications include The Records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Persian Gulf (London, 1979) and documentary collections on Gulf history published with Archive Editions, including Records of Qatar, 1820-1960 (1991). For the British Library she has edited microfiche collections of archives including The Gulf States: International Relations and Economic Development, 1914-1948 (Leiden: IDC Publishers). She has also published The Queen's Daughters: an Anthology of Victorian Feminist Writings on India (1995) and Playing the Game: Western Women in Arabia, 1892-1939 (2003).

Research Topic: Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad bin Thani in British Archives

Summary of the Research:

The Archives of the British Empire in India, known as the India Office Records, are currently within the Asia and Africa Records in the British Library, are the source of the most important information outside the Gulf on the history of the Gulf region during Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani's life and his reign, which spanned more than three decades witnessing the foundation of the modern State of Qatar. His reign came to an end on the even of World War I, when the political and economic rivalry transformed the region to the realm of international diplomacy. These archives recorded the political, economic and social development of the Gulf region from the perspective of the British imperialist policy, as well as the detailed local level through materials such as manuscripts, printed reports, maps, photographs, sketches and others to be disclosed by the research paper.



Dr. Mohamed bin Mousa Alqarini

He was born in Alahsa. Associate Professor at the Social Studies Department, Teachers College and Head of the Social Studies Department. He has conducted academic research in history. His major works include: *Ottoman Administration at Alahsa Palace, 1288-1331 A.H.* and *The Coasts of Najd/Albasa in Ottoman Archives.*

Research Topic: Qatar During Sheikh Jassim bin Thani's Reign in the Light of the Ottoman Salnamat (Annals)

Summary of the Research:

The Ottoman Salnamat (Annals or Yearbooks) published by the Ottoman State is the most important source of Ottoman studies. Due to its local and regional influence as well as its strategic, political and economic importance at the local, regional and international levels, Qatar was present in Salmanat, particularly during Sheikh Jassim bin Thani's period, during which local, regional and international events constituted an important historic turning-point at various political, economic and strategic levels. The discussion will cover the texts in the Salnamat as well as archives and libraries of the Turkish Republic on the following:

- 1) Highlighting Sheikh Jassim's role as a significant source of power in the region
- 2) Highlighting Qatar's strategic, economic and political importance
- 3) Aspects of the relationship between Sheikh Jassim and the Ottoman State.



Professor Dr. Ibrahim Shahdad

Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at Qatar University. He was awarded the Ph.D degree by Ain Shams University in 1988. He worked as Director of the Qatar University Documents and Humanities Center. He is the author of numerous books and studies including: *The Internal Conflict in Oman during the 20th Century 1913–1975*, *British Development Policy in the Gulf Region*, *The Succession Issue in Qatar* and *Britain’s Position on Arab League Activities in the Gulf Emirates*.

Research Topic: Grand Jassim and His Policies for Gaining Qatar’s Independence

Summary of the Research:

This research paper throws light on some personal qualities of Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed as reported in foreign and Arab sources to identify his potentials as well as his status in Qatar and abroad leading to the conclusion that his policies were not a casual outcome but rather they sprang from the thinking of a man with political acumen and a strong will.

The paper reviews Sheikh Jassim’s policies to impose the independent Qatari character on his Emirate. In the meantime, he imposed it at the Gulf, regional and international levels through policies most important of which were creating a unified internal front which consolidated the concept of national unity and fed the spirit of independence among Qataris towards other forces in the region.



Dr. Sinan Marouf Oglu

Turkish national. He was awarded the Ph.D degree in History by Istanbul University. He is currently Associate Professor, History Program, University of Qatar, College of Arts and Sciences. His publications include the following: *Iraq’s Political and Social Conditions during the Ottoman Period*, *Najd and Hijaz in Ottoman Documents*, and *the Role of Endowments in Financing Educational Institutions in Egypt in the Ottoman Period*.

Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim Al Thani’s Position on the Balkan Wars

Summary of the Research:

The internal and international political, military and economic changes which accompanied Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909), declaration of the second constitution (1908) and overtaking power by the Committee of Union and Progress in the Ottoman State led to a political and military situation resulting in the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). There were special consequences for the Arabian Gulf region, including Qatar. This research paper discusses Sheikh Jassim bin Thani’s position on the Balkan Wars declared against the Ottoman State constituting an ample opportunity to get rid of the Ottoman rule while the Qatar Peninsula was witnessing considerable pressures by the British.



**Dr. Abdulqadir bin Hmoud
Alqahtani**

Qatari national. He was awarded the PhD degree in History by Ain Shams University on Yemeni-British relations. He is Associate Professor at Qatar University College of Arts and Sciences. His major publications include the following: *Studies in the Arabian Gulf Modern and Contemporary History, Qatari-Omani Relations, 1871-1915, and Qatar's Political and Social Evolution.*

**Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim bin
Mohammed bin Thani's position on
The Ottoman and British Presence in the
Arabian Gulf (1820-1913)**

Summary of the Research:

Although the Ottomans were among the first who arrived in the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf since the 16th century, the British followed them about a century later. They were more fortunate than the Ottomans and were able to sign several agreements with the region's chiefs. This research paper discusses the following topics:

- Qatar's relationship with Britain between 1820 and 1868.
- Qatar's relationship with the Ottoman State 1871-1913.
- Sheikh Jassim's relationship with the Indian community.
- Qatar's relations with the Gulf emirates, Saudi Arabia and the British and Ottoman positions.
- Tension in Qatari-Ottoman relations (1875-1893) and the British position.
- The Anglo-Ottoman Agreement in 1913 and its impact on Qatar, and other topics.



**Professor Dr. Abdul Aziz Abdul
Ghani Ibrahim**

Researcher and specialist in heritage and folklore. He taught at the World Africa University, The Two Niles University in Khartoum as well as other universities in Saudi Arabia and UAE. He also worked at research centers where he worked as Secretary of the History Department, Arab Research and Studies Institute (ALECSO) in Cairo, and Head of the History Department, Research Center, Mohamed bin Saud Islamic University. He authored and translated more than twenty books in the history of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula including *Britin and the Oman Coast Sheikhdoms* and is currently working on a book entitled *Qatar in a Century (1871-1981).*

**Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim bin
Mohammed bin Thani's Relationship with
Najd's Rulers**

Summary of the Research:

Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani's relationship with Najd's rulers started during his early youth. When Imam Faisal bin Turki arrived in 1851 to collect Bahrain's *khiraj* (land-tax), a relative of Sheikh Jassim was killed by one of the Imam's cavalrymen, so Sheikh Jassim struck him dow. It is believed it was in connection with this incident that Sheikh Jassim was first mentioned in Qatar's history. The relationship continued at more than one level to reiterate the leader's special characteristics. In this paper, the Saudi-Qatari relations during Sheikh Jassim's period are discussed. He is admired not only for his chivalrous spirit, willpower and commitment to right and its pursuit no matter how arduous this was, but also his piousness and support for any action that can lead to the Islamic nation's unity.



Professor Dr. Khalid bin Ali Alwazan

Professor at the College of Dentistry, King Sauod University, and member of its scientific council. He is interested in the Najdi history. His publications include: *Second Najdi Renaissance*, with others, *Branches of the Wabba Tamimi Tribe* (by the historian and genealogist Sheikh Ibrahim bin Salih bin Issa), *Jabor bin Jabor's Register in Genealogy – a Critical Study Through Ten Manuscripts*.

Mr. Abdulla bin Bassam Albbaseemi



Researcher from Saudi Arabia. He is interested in the Najdi history and historical documents related to the region. His publications include the following: *Scholars and Writers in Ashaqir in the 13th and 14th Century*, *Ashaqir's historical Walls and The Second Najdi Revival*.

Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim bin Thani's Religious Values Through His Relationship with Najdi Scholars

Summary of the Research:

The researcher in history is certain about the clarity of the religious values of Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani, the founder of the modern State of Qatar, his concern with raising Islam's status, enthusiasm for the Islamic faith, communication with scholars, and assistance of students of knowledge. This was demonstrated by his constant contacts with Najdi scholars as attested by a number of historical events and evidence including the following:

- His Najdi origin and his ancestors' departure from *Ashaiqir*.
- Adoption of the *salafi* convocation to Islam and the *Hanbali* sect and urging to adhere to them.
- Publication, at his own expense, and distribution of books which defend the *salafi* convocation to Islam through Najdi scholars to students.
- His confidence in Najdi scholars through sending his monetary donations to them for distribution to those in need of them.
- His endowments in various locations in Najd and the Najdi scholars' commendation for him.



Dr. Mohammed Hamid Alahmari

Researcher in history. He was awarded the PhD degree (London). He works as consultant at the Cultural District in Doha, Qatar. He participated in numerous Arab and international seminars. His numerous historical and literary publications include: *British-Libyan Relations, 1939-1952*, *Features of the Future*, *Days between Chicago and Paris*, and *This Lane was River*.

Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim's Culture and Education As Demonstrated in His Poetry and Writings

Summary of the Research

Sheikh Jassim has left a number of texts indicating the quality of his culture and education. The most important of such texts are the poems in his collection of poems and his correspondence and letters dispatched to numerous personalities and governments as well as his testaments providing important materials for the researcher showing his ideas and interests.

His texts indicate his extensive knowledge of religion, general culture and attitude towards the culture of his age. These observations can be classified into several domains including the following: the language he used, which was an intermediary language between standard Arabic and colloquial Arabic and needs to be studied to disclose its religious and literary sources, the religious terms used in his texts, moral positions reflected in the texts of wisdom, and finally, the poetic and rhetorical images, which reflect the general historical aspect and personal aspect of his life.



Dr. Yousef Alabdullah

Coordinator of the Historical Seminar - Qatari National. He was awarded the Master's degree by McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and the Ph.D in Modern and Contemporary History by Ain Shams University. He assumed a number of posts related to history. He currently teaches at Qatar University and has been a member of specialized academic committees. His publications include Qatari-British Relations 1914-1945, The History of Education in the Arabian Gulf 1913-1971, Qatar's Political Evolution and the Modern and contemporary Political History of the Arabian Gulf States.

Research Topic: Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani
Founder of Modern Qatar

Summary of the Research:

This paper addresses aspects of Sheikh Jassim not dealt adequately by other researchers, namely his essential role in the establishment of the emerging Principality of Qatar and safeguarding its independence as a result of the conflict between Britain and the Ottoman State. The paper reviews his early years, upbringing, ambitions, relations with Saudi rulers and his conflict with Al Khalifa of Bahrain and Al Nahyam of Abu Dhabi as

well as his status among his contemporaries. In addition, the paper discusses his work as a major pearl merchant and politician, his major battles and relationship with the Ottoman State, which commissioned him to administer the country. However, the disputes with the Ottomans were exacerbated and they turned into open animosity at a time when he was resisting pressure by the British, who imposed acceptance of Indian merchants in Qatar, while the Ottomans did not support him. Indeed, they took advantage of his troubles to attempt to tighten their control over Qatar, leading to Alwajba Battle in 1893 in which the Ottomans were defeated and their attempts to control Qatar came to an end. The paper then discusses Sheikh Jassim's relations with Britain, whose ships attacked Alzubara port in Qatar, and development of these relations after Sheikh Jassim proposed to base them on the model of Britain's relations with Omani sheikhs in return for pledging to maintain peace along Qatar's coasts, cooperation with Britain. Eventually, the 1916 treaty was concluded in 1916, a few months after Sheikh Jassim's death. The paper also addresses Sheikh Jassim's relations with his business rivals, the Indian merchants, who were Sikhs and Hindus. He closed down their shops and deported them because of their interference in the pearl trade, wide economic influence, as well as their practice of usury and refusal to pay

taxes and costs of the special force formed to protect them and their offenses to the Qatari society and Sheikh Jassim, through their practices and religious rituals. His policy was based on his determination to preserve Qatar's independence and security as well as prevention of the Indian merchants' competition with Qataris in the pearl trade. However, British pressure led to his agreement to compensate the Indian merchants and allow them to return to Qatar. Sheikh Jassim's relations with Al Saoud were good. He provided protection to Prince Abdulrahman Alfaisal and his son Prince Abdulazis in 1892. However, the Saudi troops' sudden invasion of Alahsaa in 1913 almost led to a crisis had he not passed away a few weeks later. Sheikh Jassim was a strict Wahabi and he kept sending money and gifts to Ibn Saoud annually. He also mediated to release hundreds of revolting rivals inside the House of Saud in 1909-1910. Relations with Bahrain were often tense and a series of land and sea battles in which Sheikh Jassim excelled as a patriotic, daring and intelligent leader, who demonstrated Qataris' determination to reject any influence on them. However, collaboration between Sheikh Mohammed Al Khalifa and Sheikh Zayed bin Khaifa led to the destruction of Doha and Wakra in 1867, but the Bahrainis were defeated by Qatari tribes in June 1868. Britain intervened and forced Al Khalifa to attack

Qatar with support by Abu Dhabi in breach of the treaty. Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa was ousted and the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi was forced to pay a sum of money. Fighting was resumed and the Qatari leader led his country against all attacks. In 1891 he rejected the British Resident's proposal that Bahrainis be allowed to settle in Alzubara in return for 10,000 rupees. Relations between Qatar and Bahrain improved thanks to Sheikh Jassim's political dexterity and concern to act on equal footing with Bahrain. Qatar's relations with Abu Dhabi witnessed several violent disputes for many years. For instance, Sheikh Zayed sent a force in May 1888 which invaded Albidaa at night, but it was opposed by a force of Qatari horsemen including Sheikh Ali bin Sheikh Jassim, who was martyred in the fighting. Sheikh Jassim's troops attacked Abu Dhabi after careful preparations and defeated it at Alkhor Battle in 1889. The conflict then took a diplomatic form. Sheikh Jassim was well aware of the international rivalry over the Gulf. He protected his principality against threats, used diplomacy sometimes and force on other occasions together with sophistication and shrewdness to safeguard the interests of Qataris, who trusted his leadership and supported him in his battles. He was, indeed modern Qatar's genuine founder and custodian of its independence.

يَوْمَ الشَّكَاثِفِ وَالْوَلَاءِ وَالْعِزَّةِ
جَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مَجْدَهُ بِمَا

رفعت عنها الضيم

Britain and State Formation in
the Gulf:
The Case of Qatar and Shaykh
Jasim b. Muhammad



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was prompted by the introduction of air routes to the region in the 1920s and 1930s. Principally, these were the Imperial Airways route from London to India and the Basra-Aden Royal Air Force (RAF) route. The short range of both civil and military aircraft required the establishment of a chain of airfields for regular use and a supplementary network of emergency landing areas. The security of these airfields and landing strips required that the local rulers exercised effective control of their hinterlands. Imposing conditions for rulers’ control over tribes and populations under their control on land was a significant step up from the earlier concern over rulers’ control over maritime activities.⁴

This in turn was superseded by British efforts to acquire oil concessions for British companies in the littoral states. Concomitantly with the air route requirements, the search for oil required an extension of rulers’ functions from authority over people to territorial integrity and the need to exercise full control of everything within the boundaries of their emerging states.

British concern did not disappear with the independence of India in 1947. For one thing, British oil companies were active participants in many of the producing concessions. This

4. J.E. Peterson, *Defending Arabia* (London: Croom Helm; New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986).

also meant that other British firms capitalized on commercial opportunities in the newly developing Gulf economies. British actions to protect their clients took the form of efforts to prevent the penetration of radical ideologies in the Gulf during the 1950s and 1960s. Even after Kuwait became independent in 1961, Britain felt it necessary later that year to make a show of political will to engage revolutionary Iraq in military action if Baghdad should move on Kuwait.

Finally, the British decision to withdraw from the Gulf, made in 1968 and carried out in 1971, prompted British and international concern over the stability and survival of the small Arab states without the protection of the British umbrella. Needless to say, these states have survived very well, albeit with a broader American umbrella backed by Britain and other actors.

The effect of these activities and their gradual evolution on the peoples and rulers along the Arab littoral was profound. It was the genesis of a transformation from an almost purely tribal system to prevenient states. Those prominent leadership figures along the Arab littoral that the British encountered were confirmed in their authority and their writ gradually evolved into the status of rulers of small states. Thus the Arab littoral was brought into British India’s informal empire and an abiding relationship between the

region and Britain created.

It is especially important to note that the course of this history was determined not only by British policy but also in substantial part by certain strong local personalities. They not only inaugurated the relationship with the British but put their stamp on the transformation of their territories into statehood. This paper is concerned with one of these personalities and his formative role in the development of his state.

The Origins of Modern Qatar

Qatar’s modern political history is only two and a half centuries old.⁵ The genesis of the present Qatari state may be said to date to the

5. This brief historical survey relies on background found in J.G., Lorimer, comp., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, ‘Omân, and Central Arabia* (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, Vol. 1: 1915; Vol. 2: 1908), “History of Qatar,” in Vol. 1, Historical, Part 1, Chapter 4, pp. 787-835; Briton Cooper Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 133-153; Rosemarie Said Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar* (London: Croom Helm; New York: Barnes & Noble, 1979); Mahmūd Hasan al-Sirāf, *Tatawvur Qatar al-siyāsī wa-al-ijtimā’i fi `ahd al-shaykh Qāsim ibn Muhammad Al Thānī* (n.p., 1980); Yousof Ibrahim Al-Abdulla, *A Study of Qatari-British Relations, 1914-1945* (Doha: Orient Publishing and Translation, n.d.); Jill Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Frederick F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); and Habibur Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar: The Turbulent Years, 1627-1916* (London: Kegan Paul, 2005).

immigration of ‘Utub tribes and particularly the Al Khalifah and the al-Jalahimah clans to Zubarah on the western coast of the Qatar Peninsula in 1766. These groups quickly obtained primacy amongst Qatar’s inhabitants but the al-Jalahimah soon fell out with the Al Khalifah and were defeated in war. The attention of the Al Khalifah was directed not so much at the Qatar Peninsula but across the Gulf to Persia. Accordingly, they defeated the Persians in Bahrain in 1783 and moved their headquarters there from Zubarah. However, the continued Al Khalifah claims to Zubarah impacted Bahraini-Qatari relations until the late 20th century.⁶

The rise to preeminence of the present Al Thani ruling family is even more recent. Part of the tribe of Al Bin ‘Ali, they began to exert themselves in the 1860s under Shaykh Muhammad b. Thani and then, under his son, Shaykh Jasim b. Muhammad, they achieved full control of Doha and subsequently extended that over the entire Qatar Peninsula. An initial step towards recognition of the Al Thani as leaders of an “independent” Qatar was the 1868 agreement that Shaykh Muhammad signed with the British Government of India, promising to refrain from warfare by sea and to accept British mediation in his disputes with the Al Khalifah of Bahrain.⁷

6. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 787-788.

7. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 801.

The Ottoman Presence in Eastern Arabia and Qatar

The position of the Al Thani in the second half of the 19th century was generally precarious, however. In large part, this was due to the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into Eastern Arabia. The Ottoman presence was not short-lived and its impact on regional politics was significant. While British power in the region is well-recognized, the significance of the Ottoman presence has been underestimated, in large part because of internal deficiencies:

“From Iraq to Qatar, however, the key power was the Ottomans. ... They became for a time the recognized authority in that area after a campaign to occupy eastern Arabia in 1871. Britain was concerned with maritime affairs, and if the Ottomans had governed the mainland effectively, Britain would not have become entangled in the territories that were to become the states of Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. The Ottoman administration proved weak, however, and the British were drawn, often unwillingly and even unwittingly, into mainland politics.”⁸

It has been suggested that since the British predominance vis-à-vis local rulers was so loosely based that the Ottomans could have

8. Anscombe, Ottoman Gulf, p. 1.



In 1871, the Ottomans occupied al-Qatif and al-Hasa (now in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province). Although Shaykh Jasim b. Muhammad, acting on behalf of his father Muhammad, was persuaded to raise the Ottoman flag, he soon raised the tribes in opposition to the Ottomans but failed to prevent a short-lived military occupation of Doha in early 1872. He was also forced to accept the assumption of the role of *qadi* (judge) by the Ottoman resident representative and to pay tribute to Istanbul. The original strategy of accepting Ottoman influence as a counter to British restrictions on maritime warfare was soon transformed into a desire to obtain British assistance in order to counter the Ottoman occupation. This was less than successful and, in 1876, Jasim was obliged to accept the Ottoman office of *Qa'im-Maqam* (deputy governor) of Qatar.¹⁰

9. Anscombe, Ottoman Gulf, p. 4.

11. Said Zahlan, *Creation of Qatar*, p. 51.

While Jasim was unable to expel the Ottomans from Doha, his maneuvers clearly kept them off guard. Playing the British card paid dividends, not least in receiving

13. Anscombe, *Ottoman Gulf*, pp. 85–90; Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 824–825; and Said Zahlan, *Creation of Qatar*, pp. 51–52. British reporting on the affair is contained in Penelope Tuson, ed., *Records of Qatar: Primary Documents, 1820–1960* (London: Archive Editions, 1991), Vol. 3 (1879–1896), pp. 355–378.

Nevertheless, it was not until 1913 that the Ottomans finally renounced their ambitions in Qatar. Their departure was occasioned in the first place by the Saudi capture of al-Hasa in May 1913 and made formal by the negotiation of the Anglo-Turkish Convention in July 1913. It was perhaps fitting that Shaykh Jasim's long reign in Doha ended with his death between the two events.¹⁶

14. Anscombe, *Ottoman Gulf*, pp. 144-145.

ibid., pp. 345-369.

17. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 832-833.

18. Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 832-833.

dependency of Bahrain, which exercised its authority through a shaykh of the Al Bu ‘Aynayn.¹⁹ But this assessment changed a few decades later. In 1867, the Al Khalifah attacked Doha and al-Wakrah for dissidence but the British intervened and recognized the authority of Shaykh Muhammad b. Thani Al Thani, who was regarded as the most important individual in the Qatar peninsula.²⁰

The continued Al Khalifah claims to Zubarah, however, led to hostilities between the Al Khalifah and Shaykh Jasim. Jasim’s case and strength prevailed and any practical Al Khalifah claim vanished early in his period of leadership. “Although [Jasim] bin Muhammad might not have regarded Zubarah as part of his territory in 1871, the consequent clashes over that place resulted in the recognition of the sovereignty of the Al-Thani.”²¹ Al Khalifah claims to Zubarah never went away until the late 20th century but the ability of the Al Khalifah to enforce them did not exist. Nevertheless, the opportunity for friction persisted. A fracas over Zubarah in 1888 between the Al Khalifah on one hand and Shaykh Jasim, in league with the Ottomans, on the other, led to an implicit

19. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 793.

20. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 800-801.

The reason for British intervention was not to support Shaykh Muhammad but simply because the Al Khalifah had used a naval force to attack Qatar in contravention of the maritime peace treaty.

21. Said Zahlan, Creation of Qatar, pp. 46-48.

British recognition of Jasim’s authority there and a rebuke to the Al Khalifah for interfering in the affairs of Qatar.²² Similarly, Shaykh Jasim’s 1895 attempt to take the fight from Zubarah to the Al Khalifah in Bahrain was stymied by British action.²³

But another, more serious, reason for British interest in Qatari affairs during this period was the arrival of the Ottomans on the regional scene. Istanbul’s advances, and its claims to Qatar and Abu Dhabi in particular, threatened the British position in Bahrain and Oman, as well as the Gulf generally.²⁴ While Britain’s strength in the Gulf was on the seas, it needed to retain predominance over the littoral *shaykhs* and these were being threatened by the Ottoman Empire through its landward advances down the Gulf.

British Relations with Shaykh Jasim (1880s and 1890s)

British sparring with the Ottomans over

22. Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 3, pp. 563-569; Said Zahlan, Creation of Qatar, p. 50.

23. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 827; Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 3, pp. 579-701.

24. British interdepartmental correspondence in London and India on the Ottoman position in the Gulf and its impact on British policy during the 1870s is reproduced in Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 3, pp. 1-184 and 257-351. On the impact of Bahrain on British-Qatari relations, see Briton Cooper Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 133-153.

Qatar and other areas continued unabated into the 1880s, encouraged in part by Shaykh Jasim’s repeated efforts to play them off against each other. But a new British concern appeared about this time, the treatment of Indian merchants in Qatar. British accusations of Jasim’s failure to provide adequate protection to Indian subjects started in the 1870s. When they grew more serious at the beginning of the 1880s, a British expedition against Qatar was contemplated and only Jasim’s agreement abide by the 1868 agreement with his father as well as his maritime obligations forestalled action. However, a British squadron was sent to Doha in 1882 after Jasim had expelled Indian traders and forced him to make an apology and provide compensation. Another incident in 1887 resulted in British instructions to the Ruler of Bahrain to withhold pearling money owed to Shaykh Jasim. On each occasion, Jasim sought assistance from the Ottomans to avoid British action.²⁵ This ploy was less than wholly successful, however, since Jasim’s relations with the Ottomans also produced Ottoman action against him, as shown above.

A third point of British-Qatari friction was

25. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 808-813. Correspondence regarding the renewal of the 1868 agreement is in Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 3, pp. 185-212, while Jasim’s treatment of Indian traders is summarized in the extract from Saldanha’s Precs of Katar Affairs, 1873-1904 (Calcutta, 1904), reprinted in Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 3, pp. 213-219.

Khawr al-‘Udayd. This strip of territory lying between the base of the Qatar Peninsula and Abu Dhabi territory to the east had long been a bone of contention between Qatar and Abu Dhabi and their contention drew in both Britain and Istanbul. When elements of the Bani Yas left Abu Dhabi to settle in Khawr al-‘Udayd in 1869 and after, Shaykh Jasim sought to redirect their allegiance to himself. Such a move naturally was opposed by Shaykh Zayid b. Khalifah, the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, who received British backing. From 1876, the issue Khawr al-‘Udayd provoked a number of Qatari-Abu Dhabi hostilities. After a quiescent period between 1881 and 1885, the feud erupted again. Jasim’s subsequent assertion of Ottoman support for his establishment of a base at al-‘Udayd brought swift British reaction dissuading him from taking action and forcing the Ottomans to backtrack. But raids and counter-raids between Qatar and Abu Dhabi continued into the 1890s. Jasim’s attempts to enlist the support of the Ottomans and Ibn Rashid of Najd came to naught. The Ottoman garrison in Doha was even ordered to remain within the confines of the town and plans to post a *mudir* in al-‘Udayd were abandoned.²⁶

26. British correspondence in Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 3, pp. 387-559; Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 818-824; Said Zahlan, Creation of Qatar, p. 52.

Shaykh Jasim b. Muhammad and the Formation of Qatar

Above the volatile mix of actors and motives surrounding Qatar in the second half of the nineteenth century rose the strong personality of Shaykh Jasim b. Muhammad Al Thani and his drive to create a new state free of the constraints of both regional and imperial powers. The appearance of the Ottomans in the immediate region had given him a tool to use against British encroachment and the rivalry with Abu Dhabi. At the same time, how ever, Jasim was able to make use of British support – or at least – neutral intervention to divest himself of Al Khalifah overlordship.

The culmination of his machinations between British and Ottoman forces came in the 1890s. With the shadows of the 1893 confrontation with the Ottomans on the horizon, Jasim pleaded with Britain to intervene and the Political Resident made his way to Qatar. Before the Resident could remonstrate with the Vali of Basrah, also in Qatar, though, the latter was dismissed. Nevertheless, the British had adopted a mediatory position between Jasim and Istanbul.²⁷

27. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 824. The Ottoman-British difference of opinion over Qatar was not confined to Qatar, however. When the Ottoman ambassador in London handed the British Ministry

From then on, Britain increasingly took Jasim’s side in his fractured relations with the Ottomans. Later in 1893, a minor confrontation took place between the imperial powers over the presence of a British ship in Doha harbor. In 1897, an Ottoman proposal to establish a sanitary post in Qatar was defeated by British objection. In 1899, Jasim through his brother Ahmad expressed his willingness to enter into a protected treaty with Britain as had the other *shaykhs* of the Trucial Coast; this was likely to have been simply another ploy to play the Government of India off against Istanbul. Similarly, approaches made in 1899, 1900, and 1902 were thought to have been prompted by Qatari desire to establish itself in Khawr al-Udayd.²⁸ Little by little, the weakness and ineptitude of Istanbul as a partner and the growing British position in the Gulf drew Jasim into a British orbit. Already by 1882, Jasim had implicitly recognized his dependence on Britain when he reaffirmed his adherence to the 1868 agreement his father

of Foreign Affairs a note contending that Qatar was a subsidiary of Ottoman Najd, the Minister was ordered to object. Ibid.
28. Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 827-829. These overtures were made by Jasim’s brother Ahmad, who had been placed in charge of Doha while his brother remained in the countryside away from Ottoman control. Ahmad’s role in these contacts led the British to believe that Ahmad was the de facto ruler, an impression that was abruptly terminated with Ahmad’s murder in 1905. Ibid.; Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 4, pp. 151-186.

had signed. While the various overtures by Jasim and his brother Ahmad to Britain in the 1890s indicating their willingness to accept a protected status may have been political ploys, they also indicated a growing need for more formal, if more subordinate, relations with Britain. For its part, Britain considered providing Qatar with such an agreement at the time of the visit of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, to the Gulf in 1903 but the idea was not acted on.²⁹

Jasim’s last card in staving off subordination to Britain was the emergence of the Third Saudi State in the first few years of the 20th century. Shaykh Jasim, already converted to Wahhabism, sent gifts to the Saudi leader Amir ‘Abd al-‘Aziz b. ‘Abd al-Rahman despite warnings that an alliance with the new rulers of Najd would antagonize Abu Dhabi and raise British ire.³⁰ The Saudi reconquest of al-Hasa from the Ottomans in 1813 simultaneously ended the Ottoman threat to Eastern Arabia and turned the revived Saudi Najd into a new regional power. Two months later, the Anglo-Turkish Convention formally mandated an end to the Ottoman presence in the Arabian Peninsula. Nevertheless, a small Ottoman garrison remained in Qatar until well into the First

World War I. In 1915, following the fall of Basra and other Mesopotamian holdings of Istanbul, a British vessel put into Doha and prompted the remaining Ottoman soldiers to prudently disappear.³¹ The final legal-practical barrier to formalizing the British role in Qatar was removed.

The disappearance of the Ottomans at one stroke freed the Al Thani of the need to share sovereignty of Qatar and removed one of the last significant checks to British influence in Qatar. Jasim’s final card in staving off the British was the Al Sa‘ud. The latter was a resurgent force under ‘Abd al-‘Aziz and had played a historical role in Eastern Arabia. But Saudi expansionist eyes on the Gulf littoral were firmly resisted by the British. Jasim was thus backed into a political corner and left with no viable alternative to the British.

Shaykh Jasim b. Muhammad died in July 1913, before the political relationship with Britain was formalized.³² His successor was his son ‘Abdullah, who had taken over many of his father’s duties, including the stewardship of Doha, since 1905. It was left to ‘Abdullah to sign the exclusive treaty with Britain in 1916. By its terms, Shaykh ‘Abdullah agreed that “I will not have relations nor correspond

31. Lt. Col. Sir P.Z. Cox, Political Resident, to the Foreign and Political Secretary of the Government of India, telegram 17327 of 28 August 1915; reproduced in Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 4, pp. 450-451.
32. Reporting on Shaykh Jasim’s death is contained in Tuson, Records of Qatar, Vol. 4, pp. 333-341.

with, nor receive the agent of, any other Power without the consent of the High British Government; neither will I, without such consent, cede to any other Power or its subjects, land either on lease, sale, transfer, gift, or in any other way whatsoever.”³³ In many ways this was simply the formality to a process that Jasim had set in motion already.

Assessment

In many ways, Shaykh Jasim’s relationship with the British could be characterized as adversarial more than anything else as a result of British constraints on his naval activities, British limitations on his efforts to expand his influence geographically, and British mediation in disputes with other tribes and rulers. Jasim’s strength in keeping Britain at arms length was his association with other imperial and regional powers. While these were successful in preventing Qatar from slipping into the British “informal empire” as long as he lived, they were not without costs.

33. Other provision bound Shaykh ‘Abdullah to reaffirming the 1868 agreement, cooperate in the eradication of slave trading and piracy, and to not grant any pearl fishing concessions or cable landing rights. British goods were to be subject to the same customs duties as goods imported by Qataris, British subjects were to be allowed to reside in Qatar and engage in commerce there. The shaykh also agreed to the residence of a British agent and the establishment of a British post office and telegraph installation. The text of the agreement is contained in Aitchison, Collection of Treaties, Vol. 11, pp. 258-261.

In particular, the often-tense and mercurial alliance with the Ottomans restricted his activities and never provided the material or diplomatic support necessary for him to carry out his schemes.

In the short term, the success of Jasim and the Qataris in standing up to the Ottomans during the 1893 incidents greatly enhanced the standing of Jasim as a military leader, politician, and admired leader of the Qatari people. He had stood up to the Ottomans who found themselves unable to even reprimand him, let alone remove him. In the longer term, however, the 1893 hostilities solved nothing and Qatar was not able to rid itself of the Ottoman presence until well after Shaykh Jasim’s death. In order to escape Ottoman control, Jasim was forced to live outside Doha and thus was cut off from the affairs of Qatar’s largest settlement. His deputization of his brother Ahmad as his agent in Doha led to Ahmad’s use of Ottoman backing in assuming a semi-independent and threatening position vis-à-vis Jasim, a tense situation that lasted until Ahmad’s murder in 1905.³⁴

Only with the final Ottoman departure from Qatar in 1915 was Britain able to bring Qatar under the wing of its Residency system through the 1916 treaty of protection. While

34. Anscombe, Ottoman Gulf, pp. 146-148; Lorimer, Gazetteer, Vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 825-826.

incorporation into the protected-states system of the Arab littoral of the Gulf imposed some limitations of action, it did not constitute a practical handicap to the emergence of the state and government of Qatar. More importantly, it seemed to be an essential step in the “legitimization” of Qatar under the Al Thani as a political entity and then a state. Without this pivotal development and the strong personality of Shaykh Jasim, it is arguable that Qatar may not have emerged as an independent entity.

Shaykh Jasim’s actions and role were absolutely pivotal in the emergence of the state of Qatar. He was an accomplished statesman and manipulator of the tribal environment. In this connection, he continued and deepened a process begun by his father Muhammad and he left the foundations of an orderly system of succession – in contrast to the example of some neighboring states. Given the paucity of his resources, he showed himself to be an innate master of the art of balancing between opposing external interests in Qatar. In the end, he managed to “co-exist” with the British, to accept the limitations they imposed but also maintain his freedom of movement and extend his influence.

While the 1916 agreement compromised the sovereignty of the Al Thani, it imposed little in the way of new limitations on their rule in

practice. The agreement served principally to govern Qatar’s relations with other European powers and vis-à-vis regional threats. The protection it afforded cost Shaykh Jasim little in terms of his control over his people. As one scholar has put it, “He had obviously done much for Qatar besides giving it a more independent status; he had also contributed to the beginning of its development as a state, instituting several social and economic measures to unify Qatar” and ordering the construction of roads and schools.³⁵

Shaykh Jasim is perhaps best assessed in company with a select group of pivotal rulers of the era, particularly Shaykh Mubarak al-Sabah of Kuwait (r. 1896-1915) and Shaykh (r. 1855-1909), as well as perhaps Amir (later King) ‘Abd al-‘Aziz of Najd (r. 1902-1953). This was the formative period in the modern history of all three states. Like Zayid and Mubarak, Jasim protected his country from Ottoman aspirations and the hostile ambitions of neighbors. Like Mubarak, he practiced a long-term policy of balancing off Britain against the Ottomans but with even more success. Like Mubarak and Zayid, Jasim’s policies resulted in a relationship with Britain that secured autonomy if not independence. Like Zayid, Jasim forged the first steps of a national consciousness out of a tribal milieu.

35. Said Zahlan, Creation of Qatar, p. 54.



THE DAY OF SOLIDARITY, LOYALTY AND HONOR

“Attempts of the founder of
Modern Qatar Sheikh Jaasim Ibn
Mohammad al Thani to establish
good relations with India”



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JASSIM BIN MOHAMMED BIN THANI



The Ottomans:

growing Atlantic trade with the Americas would continue as Europeans not only became enriched by the New World treasure but found the Ottoman Empire increasingly irrelevant to their growing commercial interests in the Orient via routes around the Horn of Africa.” [1] Not only European control and hegemony over the Eastern Mediterranean was restored but the with the rise of the Europeans, the Arab-Islamic lake as the Indian Ocean was known, came to be dominated first by the Portuguese, then by the Dutch, French and soon the British became undisputed masters over the area. The secret was due the fact that the Europeans possessed large number of sophisticated ships with powerful guns than the Ottomans. This also led to the shift in focus from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. Clearly this marked a new era in which powerful guns, cannons and ships proved to be decisive and a real strategic shift. Ottoman advantage with cavalry was not much of an asset compared to ships owned by small states like Portugal or Venice. The Ottomans saw rapid drying of capital with the highly lucrative maritime trade carried by the Europeans with India and the East in general. In 1580 Emir Mehmet ibn Emir Es Su’udi wrote: “The Europeans have discovered the secret of Oceanic travel. They are Lords of the new world and of the gates to India.... The people of Islam are without the latest information in the science of geography and

Poona] as also by launching direct attack on Tipu's territories demonstrated their hostility towards Mysore [near Bangalore]. Because of his attempts to work for an alliance with the French, Ottoman Sultan, Shah of Persia, King of Afghanistan, the Sultan of Oman and other Gulf rulers, Tipu was seen as dangerous to British imperial and commercial interests. The British saw the search for allies' abroad and pursuit of an active diplomacy coupled with the possession of a strong military by Tipu as a threat to their interests. Tipu appears to have had a clear perception of the political, economic and military advantages of closer relations with the Gulf rulers. Even though, Europe and North America had become the center for global trade, the Gulf region still remained a significant center of political, economic and significant military activity in the 18th century and no wonder Tipu paid special attention to building ties with this crucial area. In order to understand Tipu's diplomacy in the Gulf region one should note the imperial struggle throughout the 18th century which gave ample scope for the Gulf tribal elite's to initiate strong local resistance to contain European imperialism and economic hegemony, after it had been regarded initially as a mere annoyance which will wither away as time passes. Oman which was first taken over by the Portuguese in early 16th century took the lead in expelling the Portuguese influence not only in the Gulf but from much of East

weakened opposition to European encroachment compelling groups to take help from foreigners – Persians in 1737-42 and English in 1791-8. In this sectarian strife in Oman, the English increased their influence and with the consolidation of its control over India, it began to extend its influence over the Gulf, West Asia, East Africa and the entire Indian Ocean area. Also the Qasimis [UAE] entered upon an unceasing struggle with the Omanis. Around this time the Wahhabi movement came out on the scene and opposed Oman. These threats also propelled the Omani Sultan to seek help from the Persians, Ottomans and later the French and the British. In view of the French preoccupation with their revolution and the ensuing chaos, the British succeeded in signing a treaty with Oman, which was the first foothold for the British colonial administration in the Gulf region which enabled them to gain control more effectively of trade throughout the Straits of Hormuz and the Gulf region. Thus, the British between 1688 and 1798 gained control of key trading areas in the Gulf and West Asian region and East Indies. The subsequent treaties with the subjugated Gulf tribal leaders completed the domination of key strategic areas so very essential to retain their dominant influence in the region. These were the links in their grand imperial design. Interestingly, the British began the establishment of their control in all over the Gulf region by weakening the

Arab commercial and economic capacities and by subjecting them ultimately to the colonial administration of which they made India their base. In this scheme, Tipu Sultan, was seen as a major stumbling block who could have undermined their imperial strategy. In order to achieve her goals, Britain resorted to various tactics and excuses with which to hide her true aims of which three were crucial (i) piracy, (ii) slave trade; and (iii) arms trade. Even though British domination of the region started in 17th century but the real era of 'Pax Britannica' in the Gulf region started with the fall of Tipu Sultan, though strictly speaking after the signing of the 1798 treaty with the Sultan of Oman. British ascendancy in the Gulf was thus total which was not only military ascendancy but also mainly economic, organizational, institutional and their control of India played a decisive role in their success in the entire Gulf region. From the above brief survey of some of the momentous developments in the Gulf region focusing on European rivalry, especially British attempts to bring it under its control, it is abundantly clear that the room to maneuver for Tipu Sultan internationally was extremely limited given the British naval supremacy and superior technology which enabled them to have the global reach and paramountcy of the British. [10]

Tipu and the Gulf Region:

The British challenge to Tipu was formidable; it prompted him to respond with equally forcible, bold and prompt measures to tackle it. Most remarkable was his attempt to seek friendship with the Sultan of Oman, Ottoman Sultan, France, Persia, Afghanistan, and other Gulf rulers, who were also equally at the sometime under intense pressure and vulnerable to British power. Despite his forced involvement in British inspired wars and the huge burden of war reparations, whenever his economic and political position improved, Tipu Sultan, sent embassies abroad as he strongly believed in close cooperation with Oman and other parts of the Gulf in order to contain the formidable threat posed by the British to his regime. Towards this end, he began to offer numerous concessions in order to induce them to support him. To the Ruler of Oman, Tipu sent a diplomatic mission headed by Mir Abdul Rahman and Mir Iyatnullah. [11] They were accompanied by Mirza Karim Beg Tabrizi the Persian envoy to Mysore. Like on previous such missions, Tipu Sultan sent valuable gifts to the Ruler of Muscat. This included jewels, elephants, khillats, sandalwood, ivory, pepper and cardamoms. It must be mentioned that Tipu's father Haider Ali had also maintained close ties with the Ruler of Muscat and also had an establish-

ment at Muscat but this special arrangement lapsed as was customary with his death in 1782. Tipu's intense diplomatic activity with Oman which had essentially political, economic and military consideration only showed his desire to keep up contacts with influential and powerful rulers but also to continuously seek allies in his ceaseless quest for partners to withstand the British challenge. Thus, the guiding principles of Tipu's diplomacy were to neutralize his enemies and maintain the integrity of his Kingdom and to contain British imperialism as also their expansionism. It is significant to note, that the French also maintained close ties with the Ruler of Oman but Tipu's and the Oman's respective relations with the French appear to have been complementary but also independent. [12] Nevertheless, the three cornered friendship involving France, Oman and Mysore aroused the suspicions of the British, who became actively interested in asserting their influence at Muscat. Britain took keen interest in Oman largely in response to Tipu's and French initiatives there and to a belated appreciation of Oman's commercial strength. The British also thought Muscat would serve for refuge and supply and due to its geographically strategic location [and proximity to the Indian Ocean which had become the field for naval supremacy] could prevent harassment of British trade and communications and that the "French would maintain a free intercourse by Muscat Dingenys

with Tipu” at Mangalore. In order to watch French- Tipu activities in Oman, the British used the company’s Indian broker in Muscat Narottam Ram Chander Raoji widely known as Josey to act as informer on payment. Not only the British were concerned over preferential treatment of Tipu Sultan and the French by the Omani Ruler but they also sought to curb their influence in Oman. Oman’s acquisition of a lease for Bandar Abbas at the very time of the French mission to Shiraz could not have been a mere coincidence. It is significant to note that the British Resident at Basra Samuel Manesty- [a Jew] sent highly exaggerated reports to the British of the supposedly limitless French influence in Muscat which was aimed at undermining British presence in India. In other words, he implied Muscat as having become a heaven for French conspiracies. Josey added to Manesty’s negative picture by reporting that a large number of Tipu’s vessels arrived there annually and that some would sail with Indian products to French possessions in the Indian Ocean and African area particularly Mauritius. French commitment to Omani friendship was more a matter of the influence of its dynamic, alert and skillful representative than of a consistent government policy. Also, the French had little leverage with Oman other than the mutually disadvantageous withdrawal of trade and sometimes the ability to recover Omani vessels and cargo seized by the French corsairs. In

Britain, France and the Gulf:

rulers as well. But they were simply furious over Tipu's contacts with the French whom Wellesley called "enemies of my country" and "inveterate enemies of the company". [15] It was in the midst of mounting turmoil in the Gulf region, as also increasing challenge from the British to Tipu that Napoleon sent a letter from Cairo to the Ruler of Oman in January 1799 informing him of the French presence in Egypt and asking that an enclosure be sent to Tipu. To the great relief of Tipu, Napoleon's letter expressed the desire to help Tipu against the British and asked him to send a close confidant to Cairo. The British who learnt about Napoleon's assurances to Tipu Sultan considered this a severe provocation which if allowed to materialize would result in a big and perhaps unmanageable disaster with far reaching consequences. Even though, Napoleon's letter boosted the morale of Tipu Sultan, but he was also aware of British attempts to deny French help reaching him. The British were obviously, determined to defeat the French in Egypt because of its grave implications on their position in India and the entire Gulf and Indian Ocean region. [16] No wonder the British Governor Duncan wrote a letter to the Omani Sultan in May 1799 soon after they defeated Tipu in which he announced the capture of Tipu's capital Srirangapatna [about 80 miles from present day Bangalore in Karnataka] and his death "thus completing his own ruin, having allied with the French." [17] In fact,

The Pull of Trade and Commerce in the Gulf:

Indian rulers. Learning from the British and other Europeans, Tipu Sultan attached great importance to foreign trade and commerce as he viewed it to be the basis of state power and prosperity. Towards this end, he decided to establish factories in the Gulf region in which the state was the monopoly-trading agent. Realizing the immense significance of Oman and the Gulf region which still remained the hub of global economic activity linking the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, Tipu Sultan maintained factories at Basra, Bahrain, Muscat, Hormuz, Jeddah and other places. He had also advanced plans to set up factories at Aden, Bushier, Bandar Abbas, Lingeh and other important places in the Gulf area. One of the objectives of his Embassy to the Sublime Porte was to seek exclusive trading rights in the ports of Basra, Oman and offer similar facilities at Mangalore. Undoubtedly, all of Tipu's diplomatic missions had a commercial objective. Since products from Mysore like spices, sandal wood, ivory, silk, rice, timber and cloth were in great demand, he decided to appoint Commercial Attaches and Consul-Generals abroad. [19] Two factories were also set up in Kutch in 1789 – at Mundhi and Mundra – as they imported goods from Oman and stored to be sent home and vice versa. Tipu also maintained a large staff at Muscat to look after Mysore's extensive trade interests there and in the entire Gulf region. In the first two years of Tipu's rule, he had a

Although the British had succeeded in frustrating Tipu's attempt to get recognition from the Mughul Emperor in Delhi despite their influential presence and machinations at the Ottoman court, Tipu did succeed in gaining recognition for his independent

status as a King. Even though the British were quite concerned for a variety of reasons at the recognition of Tipu, but their rapidly growing influence in India and in the vast Indian Ocean region gave them comfort and confidence about ultimately their ability to encircle and crush Tipu. It must be mentioned that the British were apprehensive of Tipu's growing contacts with the Muslim rulers both in India and abroad. His extensive links with Afghanistan, Persia, Oman, Ottoman Empire and other smaller states, his strategy aimed at intensifying political and economic cooperation particularly setting up of factories, state to state trade ignoring the Europeans, establishing military cooperation all were considered too dangerous and revolutionary ideas which if implemented could undermine their position in the area and ultimately dash their hopes of establishing an empire where the Sun would never sets. Moreover the Nizam of Hyderabad was equally disturbed at Tipu's recognition by Turkey which was a coup de grace. Since the Ottoman Sultan still enjoyed great prestige as the most dominant Muslim power relegating the Mughul Emperor to the background, the Nizam felt out maneuvered as he could no longer claim to be legally superior because "the Sultan of Mysore had a better title to his Kingdom than the Viceroy of the Deccan to his Viceroyalty" No wonder the Nizam wanted the British to wipe out Tipu for which he provided all assistance. Many of

Tipu's enemies were also concerned at Tipu's not inconsiderable achievements at Constantinople and other places which brought name and fame from abroad and ended his isolation throwing his enemies in confusion. The British correctly analyzed Tipu's comfortable and secure position at home which propelled him to seek outside recognition and success; hence they did everything to pull him down from within using his enemies and their manipulative skills. [24]

Ottoman Diplomacy:

Tipu's ambassadors to Turkey had stayed in Oman for about three months, from early April to late June 1786 and a journal was kept of their dealings there. The secretary credited with having written the Persian journal was Khwaja Abdul Qadir. Keeping in view the crucial role-played by the Gulf region from all dimensions, which would enable Tipu Sultan to better understand the prevailing conditions there because of its direct bearing on his Kingdom. The delegation carried large quantities of goods produced in Mysore with them to be sold at various ports of call so that wider publicity was given to the products and hence exports boosted. Tipu Sultan encouraged Omani and Arab and Armenian merchants to come and settle in Mysore and gave them special privileges as they were seen as successful businessmen. [25] Even though

no treaty resulted between Mysore and Oman but an extensive report on Muscat trade and opportunities was sent back to Mysore by Tipu's Ambassadors to Turkey. One of the crucial reasons why Mysore was prosperous was due to the state monopoly of trade. Tipu Sultan naturally placed severe restrictions on European trading companies especially the English. The British in order to circumvent Tipu's restrictions, used to send other merchants disguised as Muscat traders to make cheaper purchases from Mysore. Through his alert and vigilant intelligence Tipu Sultan learnt about British cheating and he promptly instructed that only genuine merchants who had valid passports or authorized certificate from his officials in Muscat could engage in trade at Mysore. Tipu urged foreign rulers especially the Ruler of Oman, to send him skilled people and technicians who would assist his government in the setting up of modern industries. This was possible due to his wide knowledge of the advanced countries in the West, extensive foreign trading contacts and familiarity with foreign goods. Thousands of foreign skilled workers were brought in and among them Turks, Arabs, (especially Omanis) Persians, Afghans were also present. They not only brought their technical skills but by their interaction with locals a new vision of modern world was projected. According to one writer, "No other sovereign in Indian history had given such an impetus to

industrial production with foreign collaboration". [26] Thus, he undertook the role of an international trader, manufacturer, banker and moneychanger. In most of these areas, Tipu was close to Mohammed Ali, the founder of modern Egypt. Tipu's tremendous interest in international trade and other foreign economic matters in the midst of battles, challenges from the British and other threats, reveals his far sightedness and realization that promotion of commerce and industry was the true strength of his Kingdom. According to one writer, "If Tipu Sultan had been allowed to rule Mysore peacefully for a few more decades, there is little doubt that he would have brought about an economic revolution of the first magnitude. The seeds which he sowed did however bear fruit after his death and the state of Mysore, long before the era of planning, was in the vanguard of industrial progress and public welfare in India." It was due to Tipu's efforts that Mysore now called Karnataka has become India's leading silk producing state. Silk industry was developed in Mysore by obtaining silk worms from Muscat and by encouraging the plantation of mulberry trees. It was also due to Tipu's efforts that huge quantities of sandalwood were sold in the Omani markets. Tipu Sultan gave all the incentives to grow sandalwood and saw to it that the wood and oil were exported to foreign countries especially to Oman where there was large demand. Mysore owes an immense debt

them like Muscat, Aden, Persia, Afghanistan. These were undoubtedly bold and courageous initiatives, basically in response to the massive challenge from the British, taken by a shrewd and ambitious ruler who had a clear global vision. Undoubtedly, Tipu’s shrewd diplomatic initiatives in the Gulf region especially his ties with Oman were bold, imaginative and he was largely successful. Unfortunately, his skillful diplomacy pushed the British redouble their efforts to neutralize Tipu’s diplomatic initiatives, friendships and achievements. The British due to this worldwide contacts and modern means of transport and communication net works were able to reach out to places where Tipu Sultan intended to send his envoys, much faster and take effective and tangible steps to neutralize in advance his initiatives. Since the other Europeans including the French, had already been elbowed out by the English effectively from the Gulf region, it was far easier for them to frustrate Tipu’s energetic diplomatic moves. The room to maneuver for Tipu Sultan was extremely limited as the British concentrated all their power, skills and resources to bring about his downfall. It must be mentioned that Tipu Sultan was ready for a compromise or reconciliation with the British but all his overtures were spurned by them and he was repeatedly rebuffed because they considered him an adversary and his ideas too dangerous and hence they decided to eliminate him. [28]

Qatar, Sheikh Jaasim and the Gulf:

Thus, the discovery of direct sea route from Europe to Calicut in Kerala, South India by Portuguese Navigator Vasco da Gamma in 1498 and the subsequent European colonialism disrupted the close interaction India had with the Gulf region. By 1799 the British had consolidated their control all over India. From Bombay with the aid of Indian soldiers and administrative staff, the British first went to Oman and from there compelled Gulf tribal leaders in present UAE to sign truce agreements and gradually controlled bulk of the Gulf region. The Ottoman Governor in Baghdad Midhat Pasha drew attention to the following point in his letter dated May 1870 addressed to the Sultan: “The fact that, after settling in India, the British went across to occupy Aden and coveted Muscat and Bahrain was a consequence of the interruption that had taken place in the Ottoman State’s maritime connections”. [29] The British quickly placed strict restrictions on the Gulf tribal leaders as far as dealings with other outside powers were concerned. Large segments of the Gulf Arab population who thrived on lucrative trade with India and beyond were now virtually dependent on the British dominated trade and maritime links. Apart from the earlier destruction and havoc wrought by the Portuguese, Dutch, and the French, the British also systematically went about destroying

Arab ships, ports and many Arab merchants were indiscriminately killed who traded with India on the pretext of combating piracy, arms smuggling and containing slave trade. With bulk of the maritime traded taken over by the British and other Europeans, the Gulf Arabs reverted to pearl fishing and the British navy transported for the Arabs the principal items and the day to day requirements mostly from India. Many Indian merchants with British protection especially the banya trading families from Rajasthan and Gujarat settled throughout in the Gulf region from Basra to Muscat including the ports of Qatar at al Bida and Zubara. People in the Gulf region now saw such Indians as collaborators with British imperialism. Also, the British deported undesirable people (reformers and dissident ruling family members) from the Gulf to India and other British colonies.

The Struggle between Qatar and Bahrain:

The initial history of Qatar is closely linked with Bahrain at least from the mid-18th century, but gradually tribal leaders in Qatar asserted their authority. The 1835 maritime truce had worked well until 1867 when Qatar was attacked by Bahraini forces allied with Abu Dhabi. In retaliation Qatari’s attacked Bahrain in 1868 in which over 1000 people were killed and more than 600 ships were destroyed. Bahrain ruler Mohammed bin

Khalifah in 1860 attempted to control Qatar and with a fleet had descended upon the Arabian Peninsula mainland, indiscriminately plundering Arab and British subjects in the process. The British Resident Pelly chastised Sheikh Mohammed and installed Ali bin Khalifah, the Bahrain’s chief’s brother in power. Qatar under Mohammed al Thani had agreed to observe the peace of the seas in 1868, as it was party to the dispute which led to the overthrow of Mohammed bin Khalifah. The British by agreeing to conclude a treaty in 1868 with Mohammed al Thani (1850-78) acknowledged his rule by this act. Interestingly, al Thani also accepted limited Ottoman sovereignty. However, the Ottoman presence in Qatar was seen as having “had a purely symbolic character”. [30] But Sheikh Jaasim who now conducted much of the state affairs due to old age of his father saw the presence of the Ottoman military troops as evidence of Qatar’s dependence on the Ottomans and he was loath to see them in operation outside his “authority and initiative”. What is significant to note is that the presence of Ottoman troops largely prevented foreign powers especially the British from intervening in Qatari affairs. [30] Earlier Al Saud presence in parts of Qatar had provided some security. Thus, Qatar was sought by Bahrain, Britain, Ottomans, and Al Saud. In these conflicting pulls and pressure the small economy of trade in Qatar – mostly pearls, textiles, dates and other items was han-

dled by outsiders with Indians prominently present. Sheikh Jaasim had to deal with Ibn Saud of the al Saud; al Khalifah’s of Bahrain; the Ibn Rashids in Hail; the Ottomans; the British; Persians; the French and of course the Indians. Taking advantage of his relationship with the Ottomans, Jaasim tried to extend his authority over the Indians.

Qatar and the Ottomans: Sheikh Jaasim (1878-1913) a very shrewd but tactful leader of al Thanis initially welcomed the Ottomans. Jaasim was appointed honorary qaim makam of Qatar by the Ottoman Governor in Baghdad Midhat Pasha with an administrative council especially considering that Qatar had no revenue of her own. Jaasim had no need of a salary from the Ottomans as he was involved like his father in the pearl trade and was one of the wealthiest persons in the entire Gulf region. Also, Jaasim levied considerable taxes on the pearl fishing in addition to certain other taxes. It seems these taxes were not sent to Baghdad and the Ottoman Governor was not “particularly insistent on this matter”. [31] Also, the absence of a harbor administration and the involvement of Sheikh Jaasim and his brother Sheikh Ahmad in the import of arms had transformed the Qatar coastline into an important center for arms. Obviously, Sheikh Jaasim and his family made huge profits from this lucrative arms trade. [32] Nevertheless,

the Ottomans allocated a portion of dates from Basra annually to Sheikh Jaasim. In 1875 the Ottomans as a symbolic gesture appointed a postman for Qatar with a salary of 400 kurushes. As mentioned earlier, Shiekh Jaasim like his father, he was also a successful merchant in pearls and dates besides being a religious leader. Thus he came to exercise political, economic and religious power.

Sheikh Jaasim and the Issue of Indians: He extended his authority inside Qatar step by step focusing first on Indians and later elbowed out the Ottomans. According to ZH Kour: “Qasim had trouble with the British on account of the Indians living in Qatar. The Indians came to the Gulf attracted by the pearl trade; and as British subjects, they had special privileges which they tended to abuse. In 1883, Jaasim expelled them, but under British threat he accepted them back and even paid them compensation. Then during the disturbances of 1885, the British’s evacuated their Indian subjects from the peninsula which, for the following 50 years, had the distinction of being the only shaykhdom in the Gulf without an Indian community”. [33]. According to RS Zahlan, “Qasim’s relationship with the British authorities had always been strained. One of the most important sources for the trouble was Qasim’s treatment of Indian residents in Qatar All Indians living in the Gulf

enjoyed special privileges as British subjects. They were wont to abuse these privileges, and were consequently resented by the local inhabitants. They had settled in the region primarily to take part in the pearl trade, and many of them were much wealthier than the local people, thus enjoying the upper hand in the complicated system of debts around which the trade revolved. Since Qasim was not bound by formal treaty relations to Britain and since the latter could not impose its authority on him during the period of Ottoman occupation, it was precisely during this period that his mistreatment of Indians reached its height. Qasim himself was a pearl trader of major importance, the Indians thus regarding him a business competitor, and he seized the opportunity to impose his own regulations on them almost immediately after he was named Qaim Maqam. In 1883, he expelled them and closed their shops in Doha. But the British could not allow these events to go unpunished. Despite Ottoman remonstrations which finally came to nothing, the Political Resident went to Doha and threatened Qasim with British guns if the ruler refused to formally apologize to the British Government for the insult to British subjects and pay compensation to the traders; he also had to allow them to return. Realizing he had no other choice, Qasim complied; this made him even more bitter with the Indians. When Qasim left Doha for a while, the ensuing lawlessness damaged much

of the trade of the resident Indians, to say nothing of their personal safety. Once again, Qasim was forced to pay compensation, and because a number of Bahrainis in Doha had also suffered considerable losses, causing the ruler of Bahrain to complain to the Political Resident, the latter ordered that goods worth 10,000 rupees belonging to Qasim in Bahrain be impounded as partial compensation. Once again, there were strong Ottoman protests to the British Government that came to nothing, and Qasim found himself with no choice but to pay even more compensation yet again. During the disturbances, an emissary sent by the Resident to Doha arranged for the evacuation of the Indians from that place; they were not to return, and Qatar consequently became the only Gulf Shaykhdom until the recent past without an Indian community”. [34] According to Jill Crystal, “Qasim’s concern with the Indians grew from their competition in pearl and date trade. His eventual ouster of the Indian community allowed him, and his family, to become locally important merchants. Because the Indians were British protected subjects, Qasim had to proceed carefully. In 1870’s and 1880’s, he took every opportunity, formal and informal, to harass the Indians. He raised their taxes. He encouraged his tribal supporters to attack Indian ships and shops. He closed their businesses. He did everything but obtain Ottoman support, although this too he tried. The British supported the

Indians to a point, in some cases demanding compensation. However, by the 1880’s the Indians had had enough and, with British aid left. The incidents had, for Qasim, served to test the limits of aid and coercion from both the Ottomans and Britain. Qasim eventually got what he wanted but in the process learned the Ottomans would support him only so far; the British tolerate only so much.” [35]

Qatar, Britain and the Indians: When Sheikh Jaasim persecuted the Indian trading community residing in Qatar, the British punished him for his behavior and the Ottomans merely protested against the measure as a violation of the Sultan’s sovereignty. The British explained that Jaasim’s intransigence had compelled them to punish him and challenged Ottoman State’s claim over Qatar. Shiekh Jaasim was uneasy about witnessing the passive approach of the Ottomans and its listlessness since it did nothing but simply file protests against Britain and did not take measures beyond diplomatic means. As a matter of fact, Sheikh Jaasim, in much of his correspondence, had expressed his uneasiness but was forced to comply with the Ottoman policy. The Ottomans refrained from restricting Jaasim’s traditional power and merely tried to prevent him from signing accords with other powers which might engender political problems. Sheikh Jaasim clearly an ambi-

tious tribal leader who wielded tremendous power in Qatar really aimed at extension of his influence beyond Qatar. That is why, while he made approaches and signed accords with Ibn Rashid with whom he intended to collaborate in trade and with the Saud family with whom he sympathized since he was of the same religious denomination, he did not refrain from expressing his hostility on an occasional basis towards Sheikh Zayed in Abu Dhabi and at al Khalifahs in Bahrain. Even the Sheikh of Kuwait acted as a middleman from time to time in certain disputes between Jaasim and the Ottomans. He even tried to intervene in Kuwait militarily but had to back-off due to Ottoman and British opposition. Equally the Ottomans from the very outset were determined not to allow Sheikh Jaasim to freely engage in ventures outside Qatar.[36] Sheikh Jaasim’s concern with the Indians grew from their competition in the pearl and dates trade. He moved very cautiously against Indian merchants as they were British protected subjects. Initially he raised taxes and then gradually nationalized their trade including ships. The British supported the Indians initially and in some cases sought compensation on two occasions. By 1880’s the Indians became thoroughly frustrated and left Qatar with the help of the British and this exit allowed Sheikh Jaasim and his family to become significant merchants. For the next more than fifty years Qatar had no Indian

trading community whereas Indians flourished especially in Bahrain and Dubai and throughout the Gulf region. Of course, the Persian take over of Lingeh port and abolition of Arab Governorship there also pushed many merchant families to Dubai and Bahrain. Under Sheikh Jaasim, Qatar according to one study had about only 817 pearling ships boats with about 12,890 sailors. Although the incident involving the Indians showed the skills of Sheikh Jaasim as a shrewd ruler who kept the Ottomans and as well as the British at bay but Qatar in the long run suffered economically as other Gulf ports prospered. More importantly, he came to understand the limits of Ottoman’s power and also constraints on British power. Sheikh Jaasim was perhaps willing to refrain from taking steps involving Indians, had they partly shared the profits with al Thanis and not relied heavily on British support. The greedy and avaricious [mostly] Banya merchants invited the wrath upon themselves who provoked him and behaved and showed arrogance with British support and threats. No wonder the al Thanis found a trading niche from which the family not only expanded its trade but crucially helped them consolidate their rule. [37]

The British feared the negative fall-out from the expulsion of Indians in Qatar as this could be repeated by other Gulf tribal leaders. Since their control of Gulf region was crucial for

their overall security and expansion of British Empire, hence their response was prompt and fairly strong. Al Thanis under Sheikh Jaasim had done something no one dared in the entire Gulf region could even contemplate. Sheikh Jaasim’s turbulent relations with Indians only showed his clear vision and single minded determination to consolidate al Thani control over Qatar in the face of multiple challenges emanating in the Gulf region.

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**Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad Al
Thani in British Documents:
The British Library's Asia and
Africa Collections**



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In September 1911 Emily Overend Lorimer, the wife of the British Political Agent in Bahrain, wrote from Bahrain to her mother and father describing a visit made by her husband, David Lockhart Robertson Lorimer, to Qatar. Lock, as she called him, met with the Ruler, Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad Al Thani at Lusail (al-Wusail). Shaikh Jasim made him very welcome and gave him two sheep and some hens. Shaikh Jasim also wanted to give the Political Agent some calves and goats but Lorimer was unable to accept them because he had gone to Qatar in the small Agency launch.

Mrs Lorimer’s letter was not a comment on affairs of state or diplomacy but she did also add that the visit had been successful. David Lorimer’s visit to Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad, and other regular visits by British officials, were an important part of British diplomatic activity in the international struggle for supremacy in the Gulf in the years before World War I. David Lorimer reported on his visit directly to his superior officer in the Gulf, the British Resident, Sir Percy Cox. Their joint assessments of the local situation were then forwarded to London where they were preserved, together with British government policy documents, on detailed and extensive India Office Political and Secret Department, ‘subject’ files. For discussions of Anglo-Qatari relations, the proposed treaty

negotiations and mutual measures to be taken against increasing Ottoman influence it would be necessary to turn to these official British government archives for the period. Private letters do not often report affairs of state but they may sometimes reveal more intimate and personal reflections of life in the region.

Emily Lorimer was a memsahib who, on marrying her husband in 1910, gave up an academic career at Oxford university, to, as she put it, ‘play the game well...and keep up the dignity of the Empire’. She travelled with David Lorimer first to Bahrain, then to Mesopotamia during the First World War, and later to southern Persia and the North-West Frontier of India. Emily Lorimer was no ‘ordinary’ memsahib. During the First World War she edited the Basra Times and later, as an accomplished linguist, she worked with her husband on studies of Persian dialects and she published language studies, translations and travel writing of her own. She did not, in other words, conform to the stereotype of the colonial wife, imprisoned by her prejudices and unobservant of the society in which she lived. She was, on the contrary, continually excited by and interested in the places to which she travelled. The Lorimers chose to travel and study in Persia and India for many years after their retirement.

Emily Lorimer’s personal papers, consisting of over one hundred folders of letters sent to her

family in England and Ireland, photographs, press cuttings and literary papers, are now in the British Library’s Asia and Africa collections. My purpose in mentioning them here is to illustrate the immense scope and range of the materials available in the British Library and also to emphasise the continually surprising possibilities in some of the lesser-known sources.

David Lorimer’s personal papers are also available in the British Library and at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Lorimer was only stationed in Bahrain for one year between April 1911 and November 1912 but for that short period he reported regularly to the British Government on affairs in Qatar, often using information supplied by the network of local agents employed by British officials in the Gulf at the time. During the First World War he occupied various political and intelligence posts in Mesopotamia and similarly reported on the wider regional effects of the Anglo-Ottoman military conflict and its political implications for the Hasa coast and Qatar Peninsula.

David Lorimer’s more famous brother was John Gordon Lorimer, author of the Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia, published for the confidential use of the British Government of India between the years 1908 and 1915 and still unsurpassed in its range and detailed descriptions of the

region. The Gazetteer is an enormous work running into several volumes and over 5000 pages of densely-packed information. It is well-known and has been reprinted several times as well as being translated into Arabic. However, I make no excuses for mentioning it again, in relation to Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad and in the context of British sources for these most formative years of Qatar's history.

The Gazetteer was commissioned by the Viceroy of India, Lord George Curzon, who in the winter of 1903 toured the Gulf in a deliberate demonstration of British maritime power. Lorimer, then an official of the British Indian Political Service, accompanied the Viceroy on the tour and his primary task was to record the events for posterity. In his description of the viceregal tour, published as an appendix to the Gazetteer, Lorimer concluded that the cruise, which had been undertaken for the purpose of 'testifying to the paramount political and commercial ascendancy exercised in the Persian Gulf waters' was indeed 'an effectual demonstration of British power and influence'. At Muscat, Sharjah, Kuwait and Bahrain the Viceroy held receptions for local rulers and shaikhs, at which he made speeches emphasising the power and glory of the British Empire. Curzon had originally planned to use the landing at Bahrain to discuss the question of an Anglo-Qatari Protectorate Treaty

with Shaikh Jasim or Shaikh Ahmad bin Muhammad but the British Foreign Office had gone cold on the issue and, in the event, neither Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad nor his brother, Shaikh Ahmad came to call on him.

The Viceregal tour was regarded by the British as a resounding success. However, both Curzon and his British and British Indian Government colleagues realised that increased involvement in the Gulf, particularly in the years of growing international tension and competition before the First World War, could only be based on a better knowledge of the region. Lorimer's primary task, therefore, was to collect information for a 'convenient and portable' handbook on the region, to provide an encyclopaedia of knowledge about the places with which the British were likely to be concerned. This project was viewed as an essential prerequisite to the strengthening of British influence.

Although certainly not 'portable' and certainly not completed with urgency, the Gazetteer was eventually to provide the most convenient and extraordinary political and historical resource. Lorimer, assisted by a dedicated team of researchers, led by J.A.Saldanha, from the Political Department of the British Government in India, finally completed the Gazetteer after ten years of field trips, surveys, interviews and painstaking research among Government archives. The work was arranged in two parts,

a geographical and statistical volume which was printed in 1908 and an 'historical' volume which was completed, in two parts, seven years later in 1915. A separately bound portfolio included genealogical charts of the ruling families in the area.

The geographical part of the Gazetteer consists of a two-thousand page alphabetical survey of the entire region. Lorimer and his assistants collected a mass of detailed information during their numerous field trips. Maps and other geographical and topographical material were prepared by the Indian Army Survey Department from the reports of earlier explorations into previously uncharted territory. Most importantly, the detailed information on the various districts, towns, villages and boundaries, which was revised and checked by local officials on the ground, make this book the definitive historical reference work on the region's geography. Other material of equal substance includes descriptive and statistical information on tribes, their customs, their political and social organisation, as well as their economic activities on land and sea. On Qatar under the rule of Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad in the early years of the twentieth century, Lorimer was able to provide information on the population and economy of major towns, villages and settlements, including Doha, Zubara, Udayd, Wakrah, Fuwairat, Lusail. He also provided a genealogical table of

the ruling Al Thani family, an account of the pearl fisheries and a chart of the pearl banks.

The detail and descriptive imagery of the information drawn on by Lorimer is illustrated vividly by an account of a visit to Qatar in November 1905 by the then Political Agent, Bahrain, Captain F.B.Prideaux. Like David Lorimer six years later, Prideaux, accompanied by the Agency clerk and an interpreter as well as two additional officials who were assigned to collect information for the Gazetteer, went to visit Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad at al-Wusail. Shaikh Jasim, who was, however, staying at the Bu Hasa oasis a few miles away, sent camels and donkeys to transport Prideaux and his companions there. Prideaux described the oasis in his report to the Political Resident:

Not a tree, however, did we see until at about five miles from the coast we surmounted a low ridge and came upon the most refreshing and unexpected sight - a garden enclosed by a neat and low mud wall, 100 yards by 200 yards in area, and bordered by a line of tamarisk trees on all sides. Within were 3 masonry Persian wells of the largest size, worked by donkeys, and irrigating large plots of lucerne grass as well as a number of pomegranate trees and some three hundred date palms.

At Bu Hasa Prideaux had several meetings with Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad, whom he described as 'a patriarch of the ancient time' and who impressed him on account of his

knowledge and interest in politics.

Making use of material gathered from officers such as Prideaux, Lorimer’s ‘geographical’ Gazetteer presents the socio-economic background in which Qatari territorial sovereignty evolved under Shaikh Jasim. The ‘historical’ part of the Gazetteer, which took another ten years to complete, covers the centuries from the end of the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 to the beginning of the twentieth century. In addition to an overview of the Gulf region as a whole, there are eleven individual histories of each political entity or local area. In relation to Qatar, Lorimer and Saldanha provide what seems to be the first reference to Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad in British documents, with a description of the events of the Bahrain-Qatar war of 1867-68 during which, according to Saldanha:

The Bahrain Chief...swearing to keep peace with the Katar people, invited one Jasim bin Mahomed to enter into a new agreement for the conduct of affairs on the coast. Jasim accordingly went to Bahrein, but no sooner did he arrive, than he was seized and cast into prison.

The consequences of this event and the hostilities which lasted until the 1868 peace agreement and treaty brokered by the British Resident, Sir Lewis Pelly, are recorded in great detail in the British archives, with narrative reports, maps, sketches and watercolours of

naval manoeuvres. Pelly himself, Resident in the Gulf from 1862 to 1873, was not only a politician but also a traveller, whose famous account of a journey to Riyadh in 1865, provides a description of inland Arabia during the same period. Pelly’s official reports are a vital source for the history of Qatar during the early years of Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad’s life. In addition, like the Lorimers, Pelly also left behind a collection of personal letters and papers, now similarly available in the British Library.

The examples of the Lorimer family and Sir Lewis Pelly illustrate the wide range of possibilities for research on the history of Qatar in British archives. Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad’s long life and rule encompassed the most important decades in the creation of the modern Qatar state, ending in July 1913, on the eve of the First World War when political and economic rivalry had brought the region into the forefront of international diplomacy. During the same half century the administration of the British Empire in India underwent enormous changes both within the Sub-Continent and in relation to those territories on its borders with which it had previously developed, or now began to develop, political or diplomatic relations.

The archives of the British Empire in India, known as the “India Office Records”, now located in the Asia and Africa Collections of the

British Library, are the most important source of information, outside the Gulf, for the history of Qatar and the Gulf region, not only during this period but also in the years after the death of Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad, through the First World War and right up to the end of the Second World War. British interests in the Gulf, first established by the East India Company in the early 1600s, were, from the mid-nineteenth century, directed and reported on by a complicated network of political agencies and residencies, co-ordinated in London by the India Office Political Departments and in India by the British administrations in Bombay and Delhi or Calcutta. A British Residency was established at Bushehr on the Persian coast in 1763 and Political Agencies were subsequently opened at Muscat, in 1867, and at Bahrain and Kuwait in the early 1900s. A British Political Agent was not actually appointed to Doha until 1949, after the end of the British Empire in India. However, as illustrated by the examples above, during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, the Political Resident visited Qatar regularly and reported on proceedings there to the Governments of Bombay and India. After the permanent appointment of a Political Agent in Bahrain in 1904, the Bahrain Agency became the most direct source of information on Qatar.

These archives record developments in the

Gulf from the perspective of British imperial policy but often at a very detailed local level. They include a wide variety of materials, such as manuscript and printed correspondence and reports, maps, photographs and sketches; their content ranges from political and constitutional developments, regional conflicts and foreign interventions, to social and economic progress, population trends, education, medicine and health. They are complemented by a large a growing collection of personal papers, now also in the Asia and Africa Collections of the British Library, of officials, civilian and military, and private individuals, whose lives were to a greater or lesser extent, bound up with the administration of Empire. David and Emily Lorimer, John Gordon Lorimer, Sir Lewis Pelly, Lord George Nathaniel Curzon and his wife Lady Mary Curzon, and many others, recorded their experiences of the Gulf and Arabia.

My purpose in this paper has not been, and could not be, to give an in-depth account of Qatari history during the life-time of Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad Al Thani. Many colleagues here today are far more familiar not only with the history but also with many of the documentary sources. The British archives relating to Qatar during this period comprise hundreds of thousands of relevant items. I can only attempt to give an impression of the wealth and scope of information available in

them. I would like, in conclusion, to make a plea for the further investigation and collection of source material and for the wider dissemination and understanding of the information to be found in them. The imperial British perspective of the Gulf has been succinctly summarised by the title of a recent study of British Agencies in the region, The Arabian Frontier of the British Raj. These are, by definition, the archives of the British Empire in India and of its relations with the regions surrounding it. Their viewpoint and perspective is centred on London and India, while the Gulf is positioned on the periphery. However, as I have tried to show, not all the documents relate to imperial policy-making. The simple thirst for information, fuelled not only by the underlying quest for power but also by a genuine enthusiasm for the acquisition of knowledge, means that the British sources are unrivalled for the study of this region. British documents need to be read from a local perspective so that the centre and periphery are reversed. But most of all, they need to be continually investigated and researched, layer by layer. Many of them are already fragile. Now is the time to copy and collect, to digitise and catalogue the many extraordinary items which never cease to amaze the inquisitive historian.

Appendix: British Library, Asia and Africa Collections

Select List of archival materials and documentary publications relating to Qatar during the life of Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad Al Thani, c 1860-1913

I India Office Records

Political and Secret Department Records, 1756–1950 (IOR:L/P&S)
L/P&S/4-8 Correspondence with India, 1756-1912 includes:
- the Turkish expedition to Nejd, 1872; Turkish troops in Doha (L/P&S/5/269)
- Turkish involvement in Qatar affairs, 1873 (L/P&S/5/274)
- ‘Udaid affairs, 1876-1879 (L/P&S/7/11-14)
- the destruction of Zubarah, 1878 (L/P&S/7/21)
- the Turkish defeat, 1893 (L/P&S/7/70-71)
L/P&S/10 Political and Secret Subject Files, 1902-1931 includes:
-Turkish posts at ‘Udaid, Wakra and Zubarah, 1902-1905 (L/P&S/10/4)
-Anglo-Qatari treaty negotiations, 1913-1916 (L/P&S/10/386)

Records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Gulf, 1763-1951 (IOR:R/15)
R/15/1 Political Residency Bushire, 1763-1951
R/15/2 Political Agency Bahrain, 1899-1951 includes:
- Death of Shaikh Ahmad bin Muhammad, 1905 (R/15/2/26)
- Death of Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad, 1913 (R/15/2/26)
Proceedings of the Governments of India (IOR:P)

II Private Papers

Emily Overend Lorimer papers, MSS Eur F177
David Lorimer papers, MSS Eur D1168
Lewis Pelly Papers, MSS Eur F126
Lord George Nathaniel Curzon papers, MSS Eur F111&112

III Published Document Collections and Catalogues

Tuson, Penelope, The Records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Persian Gulf, London, 1979
Tuson, Penelope (ed.) Records of Qatar: primary documents, 1902-1960, 8 volumes, Archive Editions, 1991

