

Good the relationship between the bedouin and rulers research paper example

[History](#), [Middle East](#)



Introduction

Going by the history of Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain, there is evidence that the rulers, either the colonizers or the local leaders leaned on one side in terms of policies and leadership that they imposed on the Bedouin and the urban merchants. As it will be discussed below, the rulers in Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait, put in place policies that eventually improved the comfort of the Bedouin such that they changed most of their nomadic activities to adopt dwelling in places that they received the support by the powers in place. The urban merchants did not benefit from this benefits, they missed the privileges. To some large extent, this was due to their economic activity which in a way seemed to offer competition to the leadership that sought to maximize on the actively growing economy. All this points have been discussed into broader detail in the discussion below.

Discussion

When a government in place or any other system is in power in any context, they make leadership decisions based on advised facts. To understand why the government may have offered more privileges to the Bedouin, it is critical to understand a little bit about their way of life.

The Bedouin in Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait

Bedouin, the nomads, were in most events exposed to events of trade and war. Their history is decorated with their acts of taking strangers into their system and offering such tribes full identity and protection. This therefore indicates that they were good at intermingling with other tribes which in

other cases were also engaged in conflicts. Traditionally, the Bedouin were strictly nomadic camel herders who would always follow the sporadic and scattered rainfall as they sought grazing fields for their animals. They mainly survived from the products of the animals such as skins, milk, meat and hair. These animals facilitated their nomadic life by offering transport. In essence therefore, it is critical to note that the Bedouin were peaceful, and had to move for long distances to satisfy their animal needs.

The Bedouins lived near their wells with each tribe having its own territory. Their forms of medicine were mainly the traditional cures that they would access for their illnesses. However, many diseases and illnesses were associated with spiritual aspects. Their education mainly was in the deserts in which the parents would teach their young ones on how to cater for the camels in the desert. In the understanding of the social aspects and the lifestyles of the Bedouin, the powers in place were in a position to influence the Bedouin and convince them to occupy urban centers where they would benefit from admirable benefits. Some of these privileges were being exposed to an environment in which they could be trained and educated on reading of the Quran.

Factors that Undermined the Bedouin from Being Strict to Religion

The Bedouin in these three countries were almost all Muslim, if not all. At this point, it is of critical importance to identify that the leadership in place was mainly Muslim. For the Bedouin, their most regarded Islamic festival was Eid al-Adha which is a feast in which they would sacrifice either a sheep or a camel from their herd in commemoration of Abraham's willingness to

sacrifice his son. Many of these nomads however were exposed to harsh conditions mainly in the desert which held them back from being strict in the following of the laid down commandments, rules and regulations under the Islam faith.

For example, many Bedouins were unable to fast in the holy month of Ramadan. This meant that, Eid Al-Fitr to them would not be celebrated with much zeal as it is a three-day celebration that mainly followed the break coming at the end of Ramadan.

Some of these the other rules and Islamic duties that they were unable to follow included washing rituals bearing in mind that there was insufficient water. With this hardships, the Qatar and Bahrain rulers who had optimal respect and demanded that Islam had to be followed identified the need to provide suitable conditions for the Bedouin. For this to be successful however, they had to minimize their nomadic activities so as they would live a more settled lives in which they would be offered less harsh living conditions in urban centers. This are some of the privileges that the urban merchants rarely got. As it will be argued below, some Bedouins actually quit nomadic life to enjoy better living conditions in which they would follow Islam with more ease and respecting every rule put across without the limitations of any possible external environment.

Having analyzed the case with the Bedouins, it is now the appropriate step to consider the case with the urban merchants. This has been discussed below to provide for comparison.

Economic and Social Changes and the Position of the Urban Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar

In the 1980s, both Kuwait and Qatar started benefiting from the promises of oil. Their economy was growing first and the social classes were changing as well as the political aspect. In the same accord, the role of the merchants was being scrutinized and from the look of things, it was not all fair and square to them.

In essence the, the Qatar and Kuwait's pre-oil economy was so dependent on the merchants, the trade sector was very weak while the grouping of the merchants was concomitant. The merchants in particular received somehow mean treatment which in a great seemed to discourage their endeavors. For instance in 1934, few merchant from Qatar and the few that remained were exposed to hard times. Even the al-Mani and Darwish who were prominent trading families suffered. In the same year, the political body was reported to state that Salih al-Mani was reported as to being at the end of his financial resources and that his wife's brother had actually taken her back to stay at Zubair. It progressed to indicate that the family was at that moment hawking the motor launch. This is an indication that, during such interwar periods in Qatar, the merchants were not spared. To be more specific, the ruling family actually showed no attempts to offer security to the merchants as it is evident in this example in which a prominent merchant is being ridiculed by a political body. It is funny however that the same prominent merchants, Salih al-Mani and Abdalla Darwish were the appointed negotiators later in 1952 to negotiate on the signing of Gulf agreements.

Considering that these families were smugglers, it is an indication that they

were engaging in an activity that can actually be regarded to as a social vice. May be this is one of the main difference between these kind of smugglers and a community like Bedouin. While the Bedouin were peaceful and accommodated most communities through their hardships, the merchants in this era were committed to capitalizing on every event to enable them to be economically superior. This would have been one matter that the rulers might have considered as they offered better privileging opportunities for the Bedouin to provide them with better and improved living environments. However during this era, the political parties that existed were divided across the major and prominent merchants that were in place. Political parties and leaders were reliant on them as they had massive influence on the current systems. An example is the situation of 1985 in which Shaikh Ali would never do business without Abdalla Darwish. The desperate economic condition that the ruler Ali was operating on made him so reliant on this merchant.

The Benefit of Oil in Relationship to Improving the Quality of Life for the Nomads

While the merchants had used tricky means and processes to get their hands on national wealth, the nomads ended up benefiting as their class was boosted and they were brought forward in the definition of the national identity. Oil came up with a radical and immediate effect on Kuwait and Qatar. It came along with social factors as indicated above. The slaves and the unemployed pearl divers were in no time converted into a volatile and significant concentration of workers after which they developed to be an identified working class. Qatar workforce came from majorly two sectors; the

Qatar slaves and the free Qatar pearl divers and nomads. At this point, it should be clear that the Bedouins were the typical nomads. These benefits came from the oil company policies that had sprouted. In this case, it is important to identify that the social lives of the Bedouins have changed. If this is not a privilege from the ruling body, then what is?

These individuals through these jobs were given an arena in which they would have a different class. There was an improved interaction between the rich and the poor. With this kind of coming together and interactions, they were exposed to more and absolutely new kinds of information. It is these kinds of information that may be advised and opened their eyes that they would now understand the rights that they deserved from not only the oil companies that employed them, but also to the nation into which they would be termed as the nationals. This is what brought the merchants, the ruler, the shaikhs and the Qatar workers either free or slave to form working coalitions against the oil company to which Abdalla Darwish was involved in. Once again, the rulers are in support of the nomads against a common urban merchant who had owned even slaves.

The Weakening Role of Merchants in Matters of the State

Initially, the trading families had many roles. They were involved in social, national and economic decision making processes in both Kuwait and Bahrain. In essence, before the invention and the prioritization of oil, they were the key players in distribution of wealth in the nations. However, in the 1960s when the nations have identified means through which they can provide adequate resources, we witness both Kuwait and Qatar changing the

relationship between the trading families and the Shaikh. At this case, the rulers have become more independent, they desire and actually implement administrative functions to their own family. The merchants are however requested and pushed to only concentrate on economic aspects which continually makes them wealthier.

This however gradually changes with time when the rulers continually come with interventions that seem to attempt to direct wealth towards the benefit of the nation. Nationality and commercial laws are brought up which eventually minimize the powers of the merchants. The nation is put in the forefront to benefit from oil exports. Though the merchants may have become wealthy at this point, one thing is clear, their political influence is completely reduced.

Conclusion

In conclusion therefore, towards the earlier times before oil investment began and the duration at which its production and distribution had begun, the merchants endured a lot of privileges from the rulers. They actually had the political capability to influence decisions. However, the rulers gather revenues that are adequate for them to stop relying heavily on such merchants who at some events even engage in smuggling. Towards the end, the benefits of oil production and distribution are concentrated to the state. For the Bedouins, they may have started lowly but towards the end start benefiting from privileges from the government that eventually boost their social class and political involvement. This is witnessed for instance when there is notable decrement in their pastoral nomadic life as they adopt

settlement in urban areas where in most cases they offer labor to the oil companies.

Work Cited

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