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Ibn Sa'ud and Britain: Early changing relationship and pre-state formation 1902-1914

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Abstract

The period under study, 1902-1914, has received little attention in Arab and British historiography. The study of the British-Sa'udi relationship has tended only to enter western historiography when the relationship was performing well and linked, directly, to economic, diplomatic and military scenarios. Such periods include the 1930s, after the creation of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia, and the 1940s with regard to economic and political issues based on oil exploitation. Publication of books on Sa'udi Arabia boomed in the 1970s as a result of the increasingly important role of the country in international affairs.

To the knowledge of the author, the present work is the first Ph.D. thesis that focuses entirely on the period from 1902 (the re-capture of Riyadh) to 1914 (the first formal British- Sa'udi negotiation). The study focuses on two regions: Najd and Al-Hasa. Overall, it explores the multiple factors influencing pre-state formation in Sa'udi Arabia. In particular, this thesis investigates the British–Sa'udi relationship with a focus on understanding British and international point of views, as well as the internal developments in the Arabian Peninsula under Ibn Sa'ud. This work studies the transformation of the 'no interference' British policy (first established in the appendix of the 1840 London Convention for the Pacification of the Levant) from 1902 to the point direct communications with Ibn Sa'ud were established in 1914 and before the Anglo-Najdi (Darin) Treaty in 1915.

A major contribution to this research is the plurality of primary sources. These materials include correspondence between the various parties involved, and encompass – amongst other material - reports, public records, private papers, newspapers, and photographs. The author has consulted both English and Arabic literature. Special attention has been given to British primary sources as well as to Arabic translations of British documents.

Finally, this thesis takes a refreshing approach to pre-state formation in Sa'udi Arabia. This approach is not focused on religious or nationalistic studies but rather a transnational perspective. It does so in order to discuss relationships that arose and were created between people and institutions. In practical terms this meant that the research took place within a specified spatial and chronological context. Moreover, and with regard to contents, the thesis identifies key players/protagonists and assesses the connections and

relationships that emerged between them. In so doing it sought to identify the themes that emerged from the study of primary sources instead of starting with a general system (such as globalisation or nationalism) and thereafter exploring their manifestations.

This approach informed the in depth analysis of the period from 1902 to 1914 which is critical to this study. In so doing it further explores the internal and external factors that shaped the development of the British-Sa'udi relationship. This relationship was initiated by Ibn Sa'ud, went through a series of turbulations, refusals and frustrations that did not alter Ibn Sa'ud's commitment to gain British support. From these early stages, after gaining control over local and regional conflicts, Ibn Sa'ud emerged as a political leader with strategic plans to engage the British in the future of his country. The annexation of Al-Qassim and Al-Hasa, were game changers since they have transformed the central Arabia problem into a Gulf situation where the British had to take action and engage in direct communications with Ibn Sa'ud. The change in British attitude has traditionally been understood within the geopolitical dynamics of WWI and the deteriorating British-Ottoman relationship. This thesis recognises that the changing British - Ottoman, Ottoman -Arab relationships and the challenges of WW1, are crucial in understanding the developments during the end of this early period; however, it shifts the focus from the study of large scale imperial dynamics to local/regional changes taking place in central Arabia and discusses their impact. The years leading to WW1 might have eased the change in British position most crucially after the Ottoman Empire seceded completely following the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 (which caused several national and ethnic confrontations leading to the outbreak of WWI). Nevertheless, this thesis posits that within this international context, local events have had a significant impact in forging a direct Arab-British relationship in the early period of pre-state formation in central Arabia from 1902 to 1914: by expanding to Hasa, Ibn Sa'ud brought the previously isolated central Arabia to the centre of long term British Imperial interests in the Gulf. The decisive factor should therefore be found in Ibn Sa'ud's strategic expansion from 1902-1914 that positioned him (deliberately) in a complex, polycentric world where he could claim new boundaries for his territories, negotiate relationships and force a change in the British attitude to his advantage.

Content

A List of the Main British Officials

Brodrick, William (1856–1942)	Secretary of State for India	1903 - 1905
Cox, Sir Percy Zachariah (1864–1937)	Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf Consul-General for the Persian provinces of Fars, Lurestan, and Khuzestan	1904 – 1919
Crow, F. E.	The British Consul in Basra	1904 – 1906
Curzon, George Nathaniel, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (1859–1925)	Viceroy of India	1899 - 1905
Grey, Edward Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933)	The Foreign secretary under Campbell-Bannerman	1905 – 1916
Hamilton, Lord George Francis (1845–1927)	Secretary of State for India	1895 - 1903
Knox, Captain Stuart George	The British Political Agent in Kuwait	1904 - 1909
Leachman, Gerard Evelyn (1880–1920)	British Army and Intelligence Officer and Traveller	1909 - 1920
Lorimer, John Gordon	Political Resident in Turkish Arabia (based in Baghdad) and Consul-General from 1911	1909 – 1914
Morley, John, Viscount Morley of Blackburn (1838–1923)	Secretary of State for India	1905 – 1910
O'Conor, Sir Nicholas Roderick (1843–1908)	The British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople	1898 – 1908
Prideaux , Captain Francis B.	British Political Agent in Bahrain	1904
Shakespear, William Henry Irvine (1878–1915)	British Political Agent in Kuwait	1909 - 1914
Townley, Walter B.	British Deputy in Constantinople	1905
Trevor, Captain Arthur P.	First assistant to the British political resident in the Gulf (Bushehr)	1905

A List of the Main Arab Leaders

Abd-al-'Aziz Ibnn Sa'ud (1888-1953)	The Emir of Najd from 1902 to1914 and the founder of modern day Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia and the central figure of this thesis.	1902-1953
Mubarak Al-Sabah (1893-1915)	Ruler of Kuwait.	1897-1915
Abd-al-'Aziz Ibn Rasheed (1870-1906)	Amair of Hail (Jabal Shammar).	1897-1906

A List of Important Battles during the Period 1902-1914

Recapture of Riyadh	1902
Al Dilam battle	1903
Fadah Elsir battle	1903
Albukeiry – Al-Qassim	1904
Al Shanana – Al-Qassim	1904
Rowda Muhana – Al-Qassim	1906
Recapture of Al-Hasa	1913

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Abbreviations

CO	Colonial Office
FO	Foreign Office
IO	India Office
IOR	India Office Records
WO	War Office
GoI	Government of India
SSI	Secretary of State for India
CAB	Cabinet
L/P&S/	India Office: Letters, Political and Secret
MEC	Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford
R/15	Residency Records

Transliteration Note

The modified version of the Library of Congress Arabic transliteration system shown in Tables 1 and 2 below has been used by the author.

Table 1: Transliteration note: consonants

Arabic letters	Romanization	Arabic letters	Romanization
ا	ā	ض	ḍ
ب	B	ط	ṭ
ت	T	ظ	ẓ
ث	Th	ع	ʿ
ج	J	غ	Gh
ح	ḥ	ف	F
خ	Kh	ق	Q
د	D	ك	K
ذ	Dh	ل	L
ر	R	م	M
ز	Z	ن	N
س	S	ه‌ة	H
ش	Sh	و	W
ص	ṣ	ي	Y

Table 2: Vowels

Long		Short	
ا	ā	◌َ	a
ي	ī	◌ِ	i
و	ū	◌ُ	U

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Introduction

1. Historical Background

In accordance with George Linabury, "the year 1902 provides a convenient starting point for it was then that the Sa'udi power reasserted itself in the Arabian Peninsula, this time under the leadership of Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdul Rahman Ibn Faisal Al Sa'ud, popularly known as Ibn Sa'ud".[1] This chapter explains the context of these events and analyses the connections that existed between the British Empire and the Arabian Peninsula before Ibn Sa'ud became the national leader.[2] The idea that Britain was an Empire, which pursued its interests all over the world and had strategic objectives in the Middle East and in particular in the Arabian Peninsula is emphasised in this chapter.[3] The chapter also provides a historical context of the political situation in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf including a discussion of the previous relationships between Britain and both Sa'udi states (first Sa'udi state: 1747 – 1818; second Sa'udi state (1823 – 1891). The final part of the chapter is dedicated to explaining the early life of Ibn Sa'ud and his first steps towards establishing his kingdom.

1.1. The British Empire

The British Empire stands for all colonies and dependent territories that belong to the United Kingdom. Interestingly, the British Empire is considered to be the largest global empire that existed for more than a century. During the 15th and 16th centuries, countries such as Spain and Portugal dominated in the acquisition of new colonies and gaining wealth from their dependent territories.[4] This tendency was explained by the Age of Discovery and the active overseas presence of Spain and Portugal. England, the Netherlands and France joined the European colonial expansion in the late 16th century. However, a row of conflicts broke out between England, France and the Netherlands while dividing their spheres of influence. In 1783, Britain lost its oldest colonies in

[1] G. Linabury, *British – Sa'udi Arab Relations, 1902-1927: A Revisionist Interpretation*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1973), p. 2.
[2] W. Eddy, 'King Ibn Sa'ud: "Our Faith and Your Iron"', *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 17, Issue 3, (1963), pp. 257-263.
[3] Abdol Yaccob, 'British policy on Arabia before the First World War: an internal argument', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Vol. 38, Issue 1, (2008), pp. 319-326.
[4] J. Kendall, 'The New A-Z of Empire: A Concise Handbook of British Imperial History', *Reference Reviews*, Vol. 26, Issue 4, (2012), pp. 61-62.

North America because of the War of Independence.[5] In these conditions, England turned its attention to Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

The period from 1815 to 1914 is widely known as Britain's imperial century. During this era, the total population of the British Empire increased by 400 million people, and is explained by the conquering of numerous territories.[6] Besides formal control, the British Empire had a number of other types of control over its vast territories. These included the vast 'sub-empire' of India, protectorates like Sudan, 'occupations' like Cyprus', 'informal colonies' like Argentina and 'spheres of interference' like the Persian Gulf.[7] Geographical growth and access to resources and raw materials were not the only priorities of the British Empire. The empire continuously invested in infrastructure, communication and technology in the territories which it acquired. For example, the British Empire had connected all its territories and remote colonies by mail services and telegraph cables by 1902.[8] The empire was also connected with an expanding rail network[9]. Additionally, and already since the end of the 19th century, a press system supplied the decision making bodies in London with news and opinions (as demonstrated by The British News Papers Archive is used in this research). Such technological innovation allowed better communication and information exchange, but it presented many challenges, nonetheless because of the vast geographical spread of the centers of communication (see Fig. 2 and map 3 in the appendix). These infrastructures were note perfect and not always efficient; they often complicated than facilitated communication. Time was of essence but often lost and news arrived late. For example, in such an occasion Knox apoligises for not sending a message by Mubarak in time - he wrote his apology in March 1908 explaining that Mubarak had made the request to translate and send the said message 'close December' the year before.[10] Nevertheless, the role of such communications is part of the research focus of this thesis and it is discussed in a more focused manner at the end of each chapter.

With regard to the British Empire's presence in the Arabian Sea, it should be noted that Britain's expansion in this region was primarily the result of two factors. First, the

[5] A. Porter, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1999), p. 25.
[6] T. Lloyd, *Empire: A History of the British Empire*, (A&C Black, London, 2006), p. 145.
[7] J. Darwin, *The Empire Project*, (Cambridge University Press 2009), p. 1.
[8] Lloyd, *Empire: A History of the British Empire*, p. 145.
[9] J. Darwin, *The Empire Project*, (Cambridge University Press 2009), p. 4
[10] Sir Percy Cox archive, St. Antony College, no GB 165-0341-2/20. A letter by Knox dated 11th March 1908.

British Empire's strategic presence in the Arabian Sea was driven by the competition with France and Russia. Secondly, the development of steam navigation opened new opportunities for transportation.

The British Empire demonstrated a very moderate interest with respect to the Arabian Peninsula in the middle of the 19th century. The political stability of Arabia was ensured by the Ottoman Empire and pro-Turkish policies were a reasonable instrument of political defence.[11] The overall volume of trade between the British Empire and Arabia was not large enough at the beginning of the 19th century to make the British wish to gain more control over it. As explained by Hoskins,[12] there were at least two factors that attracted Britain's attention to Arabia in the 1830s. The first, was the desire of the Empire to set up regular communication between India and England in the world east of Suez due to the former's strategic importance with regard to trade and raw materials. Before 1914, India was responsible for more than half of the traffic passing the Suez Canal making its protection imperative for British imperial policy in the region.[13] India was a 'sub-empire' run by Calcutta and Simla in the summer (see map 1b in the list of maps) with her own zone of influence that extended from Tibet to Afgansistan, Iran and the Arabian Gulf. [14] And, occasionally, India's positions did diverge from those of the empire (as dicussed in detail in section 3.1: the dispute between the British Government of India and the Foreigh Office towards Ibn Sa'ud. The second was the intention of Mohamed Ali Pasha,[15] the Viceroy of Egypt, to obtain full independence from the Ottoman Empire and execute control over Arabia.[16] Regardless of the fact that the central territories of Arabia were of minor economic significance, Mohamed Ali Pasha could build a strong state integrating all resources and potential of these regions. The spread of Mohamed Ali Pasha's power in the Arabian Peninsula could lead to his conquest of other territories, including Yemen, Muscat, Al-Qatif and Sohar.[17] These states and cities were of great importance to the British Empire as they

[11] J. Stuart Olson and R. Shadle, *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, Greenwood Publishing Group, New York, (1996), p. 93.
[12] Hoskins, 'Background of the British Position in Arabia', pp. 137-147.
[13] S. Morewood 'The Rise and Fall of British Domination of the Suez Canal, 1869-1956', in S.C.Smith ed. *Reassessing Suez Fifty Years On* (Ashgate, 2008), p. 14
[14] Darwin ' The empire Project' pp 9-10.
[15] Muhammed Ali Pasha (1769-1849); the Ottoman ruler of Egypt from 1805 to 1848.
[16] B. Kashmeeri, 'Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation-Builder', *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*, Vol. 75, Issue 1, (1973), pp. 2-288.
[17] W. Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Post-War Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, London, (1984), p. 175.

served as ports and strategic points in England's trade with India. Britain feared especially the expansion of Russia who could take control over the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles resulting to Russian fleet accessing the Mediterranean, something that would have unsettled the maritime balance in the region.[18] The second half of the 19th century was characterised by growing British interest in the Arabian Peninsula;[19] a consequence of the threats stemming from Mohamed Ali Pasha's invasion (and British efforts to make him withdraw from Turkey and Syria) that presented a severe obstacle to effective communication routes between England and India.[20]

Mohamed Ali Pasha's military activities in the Arabian Peninsula did not meet any British or Indian resistance until 1837.[21] Indeed, the British Empire remained neutral with respect to Arabia because the British Foreign Office doubted that the Egyptian military campaigns in Yemen and other regions in the west and south would succeed. The situation changed in 1837 when there was a dramatic turn in the relationships between the British Empire and Egypt. Mohamed Ali Pasha attempted to undermine the British communication plans and hampered the building of the communication route connecting England and India. Afterwards, the British coffee trade stopped in several ports because of the military actions and strategic decisions of Mohamed Ali Pasha.[22] After occupying ports such as Mocha, Egyptian generals established new trade relations and redirected coffee to American buyers. Such aggressive and decisive actions were not approved of by the British Empire and it decided to increase its involvement in the region together with the Indian armed forces. In 1838, the Indian government sent a naval expedition to the Arabian Gulf.[23] The troubles in the Eastern Mediterranean were causing concerns to the British Empire. Additionally, the competition between European powers for strategic advantages in the Easter Mediterranean and the Levant were threatening the territories of the Ottoman Empire. To pause these conflicts, the governments of Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia gave a formal commitment in a secret appendix to the London Convention in 1840 not to seek changes in the territories

[18] Rogan, *The Arabs: A History*, pp. 99-100
[19] Kashmeeri, 'Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation-Builder', *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*, Vol. 75, Issue 1, (1973), pp. 2-288.
[20] Hoskins, 'Background of the British Position in Arabia', pp. 137-147.
[21] J. Olson and R. Shadle, *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, Greenwood Publishing Group, New York, (1996), p. 98.
[22] Hoskins, 'Background of the British Position in Arabia'. 137-147.
[23] J. Fiscus, 'Gun running in Arabia: the introduction of modern arms to the Peninsula, 1880-1914', *Dissertations and Theses*, Vol. 1624, (1987), pp. 2-253.

and commercial relations with the Ottoman Empire.[24] This protocol protected the Ottoman Empire from other imperial interferences for the following four decades. After 1840, the British favoured from the development of the events an overall situation in the Arabian Peninsula.[25] Muscat returned under the British rule and the volume of trade between the British Empire and its dependent territories was restored. Egyptian troops were also withdrawn from Yemen and Hijaz.[26] Nonetheless, it would be wrong to affirm that the army of Mohamed Ali Pasha was completely defeated. The Holy Cities were still guarded by the groups of Egyptian irregulars.[27]

The dawn of the 20th century also witnessed the demise of the Ottoman Empire. Unable to suppress uprisings and control the outskirts of their territory, the Ottomans focused almost entirely on their core area of modern day Turkey. This left the Balkans and the entire Arab peninsula open for the taking. Kuwait was one of the first nations that fell under British influence, but more as a distant partner than an actual possession.[28] At the same time, other European countries tried to exert influence over the newly liberated region. The Austrians annexed Bosnia; and the Germans moved in and started offering infrastructural projects. This situation persisted until 1912 with the European powers slowly moving in on former Ottoman possessions. Thereafter, the European parts of the Ottoman Empire seceded completely following the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, which caused several national and ethnic confrontations leading to the outbreak of World War I. This was a turning point in the political and social developments of the Middle East, and resulted in Britain and France exercising much more control over the area.[29] In summary, it can be stated that the presence of the Ottoman Empire in the Arabian Peninsula was weakened after the 1840s, and Arabia can be considered to have been part of the British colonial system in the second half of the 19th century.[30] This period was marked by the growing volume of trade between the Arabian Peninsula and the British Empire as well as by the establishment of new

[24] London Convention for the Pacification of the Levant, 15-17 September reproduced in J. C. Hurewitz, *the Middle East and North Africa in World Politics, vol. 1*. New Heaven CT: Yale University Press (1975): pp171-175, as cited in E. Rogan *The Arabs: A History*, Penguin Books (2012), p 101.
[25] W. Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Post-War Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, London, (1984), p. 175.
[26] F. Zedan, 'Political development of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia', *University Microfilms International*, (1981), pp. 2-152.
[27] Olson & Shadle, *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire*, Greenwood Publishing Group. p. 98.
[28] U. Kristian. *The logistics and politics of the British campaigns in the Middle East, 1914-1922*. Palgrave Macmillan, (2010), p.24.; *Levine, The British Empire.*
[29] Stockwell, *The British Empire*, (2007).
[30] Hoskins, 'Background of the British Position in Arabia', pp. 137-147.

communication routes. Long before Ibn Sa'ud's regime and leadership in this region, the British had attempted to pursue their strategic interests only in the coast of the Arabian Peninsula.[31] Nevertheless, as indicated in maps 1a and 1b in the appendix, much of central Arabia remained outside the areas of British imperial interests since it offered no commercial appeal; British interest was focused on the coast in areas protecting the main trade routes with the regions where most of British investment took place; 'The bridgeheads the British established, sometimes extending no more than a mile from the beach, might be hemmed in by locals, determined to stop capturing their trade with the peoples and markets inland…' and overall the Empire 'had no interest in deserts'.[32]

1.2. The Arabian Peninsula and Gulf

The modern day Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia was only formed in 1932.[33] Therefore, it is relevant to use such terms as 'the Arabian Peninsula' and 'the Gulf' to refer to the historical development of the region before that time. The Arabian Peninsula is located in Western Asia, is the largest peninsula in the world, and covers a total area of more than 3.2 million square kilometres. Such contemporary countries as Sa'udi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates are situated in the Arabian Peninsula. Furthermore, southern parts of Jordan and Iraq also refer to the peninsula. The Arabian Peninsula is surrounded by the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf.[34]

The Arabian Peninsula was historically divided into four major parts, namely Najd, the Hejaz, Eastern Arabia (including Al-Hasa region) and Southern Arabia (Map 2 in the list of maps). Najd and the Hejaz are almost fully included in the contemporary territory of Sa'udi Arabia.[35] The Arabian Peninsula has always played a significant geopolitical role because of its strategic location, rich oil reserves and its being a connection between the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. Deserts cover the major part of the Arabian Peninsula.[36] Before the emergence of Islam, the Arabian

[31] S. Aldamer, 'Sa'udi British relations, 1939-1953', (*Durham Theses*, 2001), pp. 2-381.
[32] J. Darwin, *Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain*, Penguin Books (2012), p.8.
[33] R. Coase, 'The Institutional Structure of Production', *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 82, Issue 4, (1992), pp. 713-719.
[34] R. Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs*, (Routledge, New York, 2001), p. 94.
[35] D. Potts, *The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity*,(Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1990), p. 35.
[36] A. Vassiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (New York University Press, New York, 2000), p. 74.

Peninsula was populated by nomadic tribes, which were scattered all over the territory. However, there were several urban settlements, which were involved in trade. Mecca and Medina are mentioned among the first urban settlements in the Arabian Peninsula. Muhammad, the Islamic prophet, was born in Mecca in 570.[37] The prophet received his first revelation in 610 and started preaching the word of Allah soon after that. In 622, Muhammad moved from Mecca to Medina. The beginning of the 7th century was marked by the tendency of uniting separate tribes that resided in the Arabian Peninsula. Regardless of the fact that Muhammad died in 632, his faithful followers spread the Muslim rule all over Arabia and outside the Arabian Peninsula.[38] Given that the Islamic empire was growing and expanding rapidly, it almost lost its Arabic origin and roots. The centre of Islam was gradually moved from Mecca and Medina to other cities, namely Damascus and Baghdad and Istanbul.[39] This historical and religious shift had influenced the population of the Arabian Peninsula as well as their perceptions of own decreasing role in the spread of Islam. Since the 10th century Mecca and Medina had been ruled by the Sharif of Mecca; however, this ruler was subordinate to more influential religious leaders from Istanbul, Cairo or Baghdad. Being the cradle of Islam, the Arabian Peninsula had lost the dominant and leading status in the popularisation and spread of this religion.[40]

The period from 750 to 1258 is known as the Golden Age of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. Specifically, Sharifs gained control and leadership over Mecca in 967. The culture and literature of the Arabian Peninsula achieved rapid development and maturity in this era. For example, such masterpieces as "Thousand Nights and a Night" appeared in Arabic. At the same time, Arabia faced numerous attacks from the Crusades between 1107 and 1291.[41] European armies attacked the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina. Finally, in 1258, Mongols captured Baghdad, which marked the decline of the Abbasid caliphate and led to the end of the Arab Islamic Empire.

The 16th century was associated for the Arabian Peninsula with the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Specifically, the Ottoman Empire gained control over the Arabian

[37] M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*,(Knopf, New York, 1930), p. 64.
[38] A. Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*,(Faber, London, 1992), p. 105.
[39] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, Ungar, New York, (1964), p. 321.
[40] D. Potts, *The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity*,(Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1990), p. 35.
[41] A. Vassiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (New York University Press, New York, 2000), p. 74.

Gulf coast and the Red Sea coast and established its rule over these territories.[42] Al-Hasa and the Hejaz started belonging to the Ottoman Empire. It is important to explain that the Ottomans were driven by the intention to gain a strategic advantage over the Portuguese. As noted earlier in this chapter, Portugal dominated in Asia in the 16th century and expanded its colonial influence to the region. Obtaining control over the Hejaz, the Ottomans could hamper the Portuguese penetration into the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. It is arguable whether the Arabian Peninsula would have been of great strategic value for the Ottoman Empire if the Portuguese had not planned to enter the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.[43] In any case, the Ottoman Empire expanded its presence and influence in the Arabian Peninsula. However, the degree of this control had been different for more than four centuries of the Ottoman rule in Arabia.[44]

In the 17th century, the competition among major global powers manifested itself in the form of firms and companies which were had the name "India Company" in their titles and included the British East India Company established in the year 1600, the Dutch East India Company established in the year 1602 and the French East India Company established in the year 1664. Through its cooperation with the Persian Shah Abbas Alkabeer (1587-1629), the British East India Company was able to successfully force the Portuguese out of Hormouz Island (1622) following over a century of Portuguese dominance of the Island. Following this, the British East India Company was involved in a fierce competition with the Dutch East India Company, which evidently led to the success of the British East India Company and in turn increased their dominance within this region. The British East India Company was then able to set up an official centre within the Bushehr port in the year 1736; the head of which was titled resident - Muqeem in Arabic - and known as the British Political Resident in the year 1862.[45]

The First Sa'udi State was established in the Arabian Peninsula in 1744. Muhammad bin Sa'ud, the founder of the Sa'udi royal family, formed a strategic alliance with

[42] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, Ungar, New York, (1964), p. 321.
[43] L. Pelly, 'A Visit to the Wahhabi Capital, Central Arabia', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 35, Issue 1, (1865), pp. 169-191.
[44] Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, p. 105.
[45] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.2.

Muhammad Ibn Abdal-Wahhab.[46] As a result of this alliance, the joint Sa'udi and Wahhabi forces fought to capture Najd. Finally, in 1773, full control was gained over Riyadh. More than 20 years after this, the House of Al Sa'ud conquered Al-Hasa.[47] The Sa'udi expansion continued until the end of the 18th century and created a strong ideological and historical basis for the rule of Al Sa'ud in the Arabian Peninsula expanding its borders to the Arabian Gulf in the East, the Red Sea in the West including the two Holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the outskirts of Damascus and the banks of the Euphrates River in the northern direction and from the southern side reaching the coasts of the Arabian Sea.

Muhammad bin Sa'ud was succeeded by his son Abdal-Aziz Ibn Sa'ud after his death. However, the end of the 18th century was also marked by Ottoman attacks and attempts to reconquer Riyadh and Al-Hasa. Soon after this, in 1803, Medina recognised the authority and rule of the House of Al Sa'ud. Regardless of the fact that the first Sa'udi State rapidly expanded, it was almost destroyed by the Ottoman Empire by 1818.[48] This expansion of the Sa'udi Arabian state represented a threat to both British and Ottoman interests within this area, which resulted in a shared interest between the two powers to bring the first Sa'udi state down. Specifically, Mohamed Ali Pasha, the Viceroy of Egypt, gained control over the territory of the Arabian Peninsula at the beginning of the 19th century.[49] Mohamed Ali Pasha had an ambition of gaining independence from the Ottoman Empire and undertook a series of decisive actions to achieve this aim. In accordance with Wynbrandt, "on September 11, 1818, following a seven-month siege that capped a seven-year Egyptian campaign, the Sa'udi imam, Abdallah Ibn Sa'ud, surrendered to Muhammad Ali's son, Ibrahim Pasha. The Sa'udi state was ended. Ibrahim looted Diriya,[50] and on the orders of Muhammad Ali, the town was obliterated. Yet almost immediately the foundation of the second Sa'udi state began to form within its ruins".[51]

[46] G. Heck, ''Arabia without Spices': An Alternate Hypothesis', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 123, Issue 3, (2003), pp. 547-576.
[47] J. Kostiner, *The Making of Sa'udi Arabia 1916-1936*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, (1993), p. 23.
[48] H. Roberts, 'Recent Books on International Relations', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 31, Issue 1, (1953), pp. 675-678.
[49] A. Bligh, *From Prince to King: Royal Succession in the House of Sa'ud in the 20th Century*, New York University Press, New York, (1984), p. 28.
[50] Diriyah: the capital city of the First Sa'udi Sate.
[51] J. Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, Infobase Publishing, New York, (2010), p. 142.

The second Sa'udi State, established in 1824, was located predominantly in Najd. It was much smaller than the first Sa'udi State. The period from 1818 to 1891 is known as the 'roots' of Modern Arabia. This period began with the direct involvement of the British who formed a strategic alliance with the Egyptian army to prevent the spread of the Sa'udi-Wahhabi military forces.[52] The British Foreign Office approved of the decision of Mohamed Ali Pasha to send his son Ibrahim Pasha to defeat the Sa'udi-Wahhabi state. The Wahhabi movement was originally classified as 'predatory' and threatening by the British Empire because it challenged the development of the British foreign relations with India. The British Empire was also concerned about the decreasing stability in the region and wished to suppress the Sa'udi expansion in the Arabian Peninsula.[53] In turn, the Egyptian army and forces were perceived as partners. The British Foreign Office was well aware of the fact that Mohamed Ali Pasha and Ibrahim Pasha were interested in minimising the Sa'udi influence. It followed that the most suitable decision was to unite the military forces and pursue common goals in the region. The Wahhabi movement was criticised for piracy in the Arabian Gulf.[54] As a matter of fact, the British initiated the formation of this strategic alliance. Captain Sadleir landed in the Arabian Peninsula near Qatif and started searching for Ibrahim Pasha.[55] This meeting was necessary to conclude formal agreements and partnership between the British Empire and the Viceroy of Egypt. However, Captain Sadleir managed to find Ibrahim Pasha only 3 months later not far from Medina. An interesting fact is that Captain Sadleir was the first European who had crossed the entire Arabian Peninsula.[56] Even though the British and Egyptian parties met, Ibrahim Pasha refused and did not support the British initiative to form a strategic alliance. There are several versions that explain why Ibrahim Pasha refused to cooperate with the British Empire.[57] The most popular version is that the Egyptian forces were powerful and effective enough to defeat the Sa'udi-Wahhabi forces. Secondly, neither Mohamed Ali Pasha nor Ibrahim Pasha was convinced about the long-term plans and goals of the British

[52] Vassiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 74.
[53] Vassiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 74.
[54] W. Langer, 'Some Recent Books on International Relations', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 12, Issue 1, (1934), pp. 689-692.
[55] G. de Gaury, 'The End of Arabian Isolation', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 25, Issue 1, (1946), pp. 82-89.
[56] Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, p. 105.
[57] A. Munro, *An Arabian Affair: Politics and Diplomacy behind the Gulf War*, Brassey's, London and Washington, (1996), p. 45.

Empire. Since there had been conflicts between the British Empire and Mohamed Ali Pasha[58] before, the Viceroy of Egypt decided not to trust the British.[59]

Afterwards, the British Empire sent its ships to the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf to control the Wahhabi movement and suppress piracy. It was an independent attempt because no assistance from the Egyptian army was provided after the unsuccessful negotiation.[60] Obviously, the British army had a strategic and tactical advantage over their enemy and all acts of piracy were suppressed after the defeat of the Al-Qawasim,[61] the main allies of the first Sa'udi state who used piracy to cause trouble to Britain. An agreement known as the General Treaty of Peace was signed between the British Empire and the coastal emirates of Bahrain as well as the Trucial sheikhdoms in 1820. This was followed by other agreements such as the Maritime Truce and Perpetual Truce. These agreements were however only regulatory procedures as the Arabian Emirates in the Gulf were independent, but due to their military weakness in comparison to that of Britain they were unable to establish true independence.[62] As a result of these treaties and maritime truce agreements, the gulf region enjoyed a relatively peaceful period toward the end of the 19th century. This was a direct consequence of the British ability to limit piracy, slavery and arms trading in the region.[63] This victory provided the British army with a direct access to the Wahhabis and several battles took place during 1820-1821. This time, the British were less successful in their military invasion and several encounters were necessary to fight the Wahhabi movement in the Arabian Peninsula.[64] These findings indicate that the direct interaction between the British Empire and the Sa'udi-Wahhabi state started from

[58] Mohamed Ali Pasha was eventually forced to abandon his conquests outside the Egyptian borders in accordance with the Convention of London in 1840 between the Ottoman Empire and the powers of the United Kingdom, Austria, Russia and Prussia. It was signed on 15 July 1840 and mainly aimed at restricting the ambitions of Muhammed Ali Pasha in the region.
[59] J. Kostiner, *The Making of Sa'udi Arabia 1916-1936*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, (1993), p. 23.
[60] Bligh, *From Prince to King: Royal Succession in the House of Sa'ud in the 20th Century*, New York University Press, New York, (1984), p. 28.
[61] Al-Qawasim, An Arab tribe named after their great father "Qasim" or possibly after "The Area of Bani Qasim", where they settled. The tribe belongs to the "Bani Ghafer" tribe. It has been reported that they originate from the area of Najd, while others claim that migrated from the area of "Sammeraa" in Iraq and settled on the cost of Oman at the end of the 17th century. They settled in the city of Jelfar, which was later named by its current name of "Ra'as Al-khayma" – Al-Harbi, [The relationship between the Najd Sultanate and its dependent territories with Britain 1915 - 1927], p.13.
[62] Al-Ghannam[The Regional and International Political Environment], p.33
[63] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.1.
[64] J. Calabrese, 'The United States, Great Britain, and the Middle East: How special the relationship?', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 12, Issue 3, (2001), pp. 57-84.

military attacks and opposition.[65] They also indicate that Britain's dominance in the Gulf region was mostly a result of its military superiority more than through agreements and treaties of protection with the Gulf Sheikhs.

During most of the 19th century, the coasts of the Arabian Peninsula (coasts of Arabic Gulf and Red Sea) were predominantly under the sole control of Britain; initially under the control of the East India Company until 1857 when it became a responsibility of the British government. British dominance in the Arabian Gulf region peaked in the 1870s, as they were the sole dominant power in Basra and Baghdad and also exercised complete control over the Gulf region on both of its Arabian and Persian sides in terms of economic interests and ship movement.[66] Following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the British Empire was able to reduce the French influence on the Suez Canal. In 1875, Britain bought stocks in the Suez Canal Company belonging to Khedive Ismail, ruler of Egypt. This allowed the British Empire to secure its transportation routes to India, the importance of which was stated by Lord Curzon,[67] Viceroy of India,"If it were not for India, Lord Beaconsfield (Benjamin Disraeli) would not have bought Suez Canal Company stocks and if it were not for the Suez, we would not be in Egypt now".[68] For the majority of the 19th century, an objective of Britain was to maintain the presence of the Ottoman Empire for fear of losing the two routes to India; the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf as well as for not allowing the appearance of a new major country in the region that could potentially endanger these routes.[69] The Congress of Berlin held in June 1878 had the main aim of settling the differences between the major countries especially Britain and Russia regarding the San Stefano agreement of 1878 between Russia and the Ottoman Empire which deprived Russia of many of its unique privileges in relation to the Bosporus and Dardanelles. Russia realized its inability to expand towards the west at the expense of the Ottoman Empire in order to reach the warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea and Arabian Gulf. Prior to the Berlin congress, Britain sensed the danger of Russia towards the Ottoman Empire, especially with regard to the routes to India following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire against Russia, and was able

[65] Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, p. 105.
[66] Al-Ghannam, *The Regional and International Political Environment (in Arabic*), p.21, 24.
[67] Curzon, George Nathaniel, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (1859–1925), politician, traveller, and viceroy of India; David Gilmour, 'Curzon, George Nathaniel, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (1859–1925)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2011 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32680, accessed 1 Feb 2017]
[68] Al-Ghannam, *The Regional and International Political Environment*, p.24.
[69] Al-Ghannam, *The Regional and International Political Environment*, p.25.

to convince the Ottoman Porte to sign a secret agreement on 26th May 1878 in which the Ottoman Empire allowed the British to occupy Cyprus in return for British protection of the Ottoman Empire. Britain was ultimately able to limit the Russian influence through the Berlin Treaty, and took control of Egypt in 1882, while France took control of Tunisia in 1881. This marked the start of the end for the Ottoman Empire.[70] Over 90% of ships entering Arabian coasts, in the late 19th century, flew flags of the British Empire. In the period from 1895 to 1897, the number of British ships which entered the Gulf was 2039 out of a total of 2161; accounting for 94% of the total ships crossing the region. Although the Gulf routes were considered to be international, they were – in practicality - regarded to be a "British Lake".[71]

The second half of the 19th century was also marked by growing competition between the two influential ruling dynasties in the Arabian Peninsula, namely the House of Al Sa'ud and the House of Al Rasheed. The Al Rasheed dynasty closely cooperated with the Ottoman Empire, which led to conflicting and contrasting interests between the House of Al Sa'ud and Al Rasheed.[72] As a result of this competitive pressure, the House of Al Sa'ud was sent into exile in Kuwait.[73]

Summarising the situation in the Arabian Peninsula up to this point, it is seen that the Arabian Peninsula and the Asian region of the Ottoman Empire were at the centre of competition among the major world powers. Russia wanted to reach the warm waters and the Arabic Gulf either through economic influence or through political penetration of Persia in order to establish bases for its commercial and military fleets. As for France, it reinforced its limited presence in the Gulf, especially in Oman alongside its interests in Syria. Germany increased its influence on the Ottoman Empire with the aim of controlling its economy by opening the markets of the Ottoman Empire to German products, ensuring that they had access to cheap raw materials, in addition to enjoying exemptions from custom tariffs. They were ultimately considering how to reach India via the Gulf route. As for Britain, it ensured that it dominated the Arabic Gulf and

[70] Al-Ghannam, *The Regional and International Political Environment* , p.31-32.
[71] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.2; Al-Harbi, *[The relationship between the Najd Sultanate and its dependent territories with Britain 1915 - 1927]*, p.11.
[72] D. Hogarth, 'The Arab world today', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, (1926), pp. 406-414.
[73] Other factors contributing to the downfall of the second Sa'udi state at the hand of the Prince of Ha'il, Mohamed Ibn Rasheed, in 1891 included the disputes and battles among the Al Sa'ud brothers (Abdulla Ibn Faisal and Sa'ud Ibn Faisal). Prior to this downfall, Imam Abdulla Ibn Faisal had called on the Ottoman Empire for support. The Ottoman Empire took this opportunity to occupy the Al-Al-Hasa region.

maintained the presence of the Ottoman Empire throughout the majority of the 19th century.[74] Kuwait, in particular, was at the heart of the competition among the major powers due to its location at the top of the Arabic Gulf, which made it the gateway to the Gulf from the Iraq side. This made Kuwait a major target for the construction of railway stations for railway lines arriving from Baghdad or from the Eastern Mediterranean coast. In 1903, Lord Curzon, the viceroy of India, made a high profile visit to Kuwait as a way to show British power to the Sheikhs of the region and also to send a direct message to all major powers that had interests in the Gulf.[75]

It can be summarised that the Arabian Peninsula has an interesting and complex history, which is characterised by a shifting and changing balance of power. This balance of power was also referred to as 'delicate'.[76] Being the cradle of Islam, Arabia almost immediately lost the status of the dominant Islamic state and was ruled by different nations and powers. Before the 20th century, there had been several attempts to establish a strong Sa'udi State; however, these attempts were challenged by the Ottoman Empire, the British Empire and the main competitor of the Al Sa'ud dynasty, the House of Al Rasheed.[77] The strategic alliance with the Wahhabi movement did not end up in long-term positive outcomes because the Wahhabi forces were defeated by the British Empire.[78] Nevertheless, these forces, connections and competing alliances shape the background of the world Ibn Sa'ud found himself in the start of the 20th century. The next section looks at the early life and experiences that had a formative impact on the leader in an attempt to understand his character, expectations and strategic actions that are significant in the first twelve years of pre-state formation in Arabia.

1.3. The early life of Ibn Sa'ud

Historical sources differ in determining the exact date of Ibn Sa'ud's birth. It has been reported that he was born in the city of Riyadh on the 2nd December 1880.[79] Ibn Sa'ud began his education at the age of seven by learning the Quran and related

[74] J. Lawrance, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire*, (London, 1997) p.345.
[75] Al-Ghannam, *The Regional and International Political Environment*, p.44.
[76] J. Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (Infobase Publishing, New York, 2010), p. 142.
[77] Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, Knopf, New York, (1930), p. 64.
[78] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, Ungar, New York, (1964), p. 321.
[79] S. Al Mukhtar, *[History of Sa'udi Arabia in the Past and Present]*, Part 2, (Dar Al Hayah Library, Beirut, 1st Edition, 1957), p.14; K. Al Zurkli, *[The Arabian Peninsula in the Era of King Abdul-Aziz]*, (Dar Alilm Al Malayeen, Beriut, 5th Edition,1992), Dependent on the story by Prince Abdullah Bin Abdurrahman Al Faisal, p.56.

religious studies.[80] His father, Imam Abdul Rahman Al-Faisal, appointed religious Sheikhs to teach him the Quran along with the principles of faith, doctrine and monotheism. Ibn Sa'ud was committed to attending his father's Council, where he learned a lot about the Arab people, their history and genealogy.[81] While Ibn Sa'ud was a young boy he witnessed his grandfather's loss of power and authority in Najd at the hands of Prince Mohammed Ibn Abdullah Ibn Rasheed the Prince of Ha'il.[82] This influenced his future desire to give power back to his family. From a young age Ibn Sa'ud was involved in political work and activities; his first political task was at the age of thirteen, when he participated in the delegation that negotiated the handover of authority in Riyadh to Prince Mohammed Ibn Rasheed.[83] Also at the age of thirteen, Ibn Sa'ud participated in tribal reconciliations.[84]

Arabia was under the suzerainty of the Ottomans and was governed by a series of tribal rulers. Specifically, the Sharif of Mecca whose throne was in the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina. The Sharifate stopped existing in 1918 after the complete defeat of the Ottoman Empire.[85] Hussein bin Ali, who served as the Sharif of Mecca beginning of 1908, announced himself a Caliph in 1923 immediately after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.[86] Prior to 1905, the position of the Sharif of Mecca was occupied by Aoun Al-Rafiq Pasha. AbdulAziz who is widely known as Ibn Sa'ud and he returned the control and leadership of Riyadh to the Al Sa'ud royal dynasty. The year of 1902 can be viewed as the beginning of several conquests and military campaigns, which led

[80] Ibn Sa'ud: The last names as a nickname for King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al-Sa'ud (1876-1953). Abdulaziz is sixteenth leader of Al-Sa'ud state. He was born in Riyadh, but he was forced with his father to flee to Kuwait in 1891 when that rival Al-Rasheed family captured Riyadh. In 1902 Abdulaziz launched a daring infiltration of Riyadh and succeeded to capturing Al-Musmak Palace (Government Palace) and killing the governor. After this date Pevely Abdulaziz was gradually extended his control over Southern Najd. Perpetually constrained by lack of funds and the paramount British influence in most of the surrounding territory, Abdulaziz was forced to wait for favourable opportunities to extend his Kingdom to the frontiers of his forebears. Ottoman setbacks in Europe allowed him to capture Al-Al-Hasa in the east in 1913. Ibn Sa'ud vanquished bin Rasheed in northern Najd and take over their capital at Hail in 1921. He continued to recapture Al-Hijaz during 1925-1927. Abdulaziz adopted the title of king of Sa'udi Arabia, marking the end of the expansions phase of Sa'udi Arabia. J. Peterson, *Historical Dictionary of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.p 1-2.

[81] Al Mukhtar, *[History of Sa'udi Arabia in the Past and Present],* Part 2, p.14.

[82] Al Zurkli, *[The Arabian Peninsula in the Era of King Abdul-Aziz]*, Part 1, p.59.

[83] Al Mukhtar, *[History of Sa'udi Arabia in the Past and Present],* Part 2, p.384.

[84] S. Al Dareeb, *King Abdul-Aziz and the Setting of Judicial Organization Foundations in the Kingdom*, (Dar Al Matbooat Al Haditha Printing, Jeddah, 1st Edition), p. 10; Al Mukhtar, *[History of Sa'udi Arabia in the Past and Present]*, Part 2, p.384; Al Zurkli, *[The Arabian Peninsula in the Era of King Abdul-Aziz]*, Part 1, p.62-63. Al Zurkli, *[The Arabian Peninsula in the Era of King Abdul-Aziz]*, Part 1, p.62-63.

[85] P. Barani, *The Department of State in the Middle East, 1919-1945*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1978), p. 104.

[86] H. Al-Baharna, *The Legal Status of the Gulf States*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1968), p. 134.

to the union and the revival of the Arab territories.[87] Ibn Sa'ud or Abdul Aziz is referred to as the first monarch of Sa'udi Arabia;[88] but prior to 1902, Ibn Sa'ud had lived for almost 10 years in Kuwait. It is especially important to discuss the early life of Ibn Sa'ud in Kuwait before he returned to Riyadh and conquered it.[89]

Under the rule of the Ottomans, the British Empire had certain strategic interests in the Arabian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Arabian Peninsula. According to Bowen,[90] "the British had a sphere of influence and a string of protectorates in the Arabian Gulf, and an outsized role as the sole global superpower, concerned especially with the Suez Canal and the critical Red Sea route to India".[91] The third monarch of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber bin Abdullah, was involved in a close military cooperation with the Ottoman Empire and assisted to their military plans. This strategic interaction attracted the British Empire in the Arabian Peninsula in the 19th century. The British wished to acquire stronger control over the Ottoman state by challenging the latter's military supply and destroying its links with Kuwait. Nonetheless, Sheikh Jaber bin Abdullah declined to cooperate with the British Empire and these strategic plans were not put into practice.[92] The seventh ruler of Kuwait, Sheikh Mubarak, received confidential guarantees from the British Empire in 1899 and was assured that the territory of Kuwait would be protected by Britain. This secret treaty reveals that the British Empire had both a visible and a hidden strategic presence in the Arabian Peninsula during the early 1900s. Another interesting fact is that Ibn Rasheed, the main competitor of the Al Sa'ud royal dynasty, also required British protection at the same time as it was done by Sheikh Mubarak.[93]

Due to the rivalry between the House of Al Sa'ud and the House of Al Rasheed was high, the Sa'udi dynasty had to flee to Kuwait.[94] It was reported by Gideon that "by 1895, they had moved to the British-protected coastal kingdom of Kuwait, where they

[87] H. Alangari, *The Struggle for Power in Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud, Hussein and Great Britain, 1914-1924*, (Ithaca Press, Reading, 1998), p. 39.
[88] M. Breacher, *The New States of Asia: A Political Analysis*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1963), p. 312.
[89] R. Coase, 'The Institutional Structure of Production', *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 82, Issue 4, (1992), pp. 713-719.
[90] W. Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (ABC-CLIO, New York, 2014), p. 103.
[91] Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 103.
[92] Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, p. 105.
[93] G. Cetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908*, Routledge, London, (2006), p. 140; M. Al Thunayan, *[Abdulaziz bin Rasheed and the British protection]*, (1999), p.9-12.
[94] M. Hogarth, Haddad Pasha & William Haggard, 'Across Arabia: From the Arabian Gulf to the Red Sea: Discussion', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 56, Issue 6, (1920), pp. 463-468.

survived under the protection and patronage of its amir (prince), Mubarak Al-Sabah".[95] In turn, Hamm[96] argued that Kuwait was the most important territory in the Arabian Peninsula to attract the attention of the British Empire. The point is that the British intended to establish their own political agents in the region and Kuwait was selected for such a purpose.[97] However, the British could not establish this contact when Sheikh Jaber bin Abdullah ruled the country.[98] There was also difficulty as a consequence of the fact that Kuwait can be viewed as an obstacle to British policies in the Arabian Peninsula. The conflict of interests was demonstrated by Hamm as follows: "Sheikh Mubarak of Kuwait sought to use the treaty as a means of gaining British support for his own independent policies in Arabia and the Gulf and in his dispute with the sultan over the precise boundaries of his sheikdom; for their part, the British saw the agreement with Mubarak as giving them control over any potential terminus to the Baghdad Railway that might be established on the Gulf in Kuwaiti territory".[99] In addition, the ruler of Kuwait wanted to secure his country against growing Russian influence in the region as well as potential threats coming from any Turkish invasion.[100]

It appears that the true meaning of the British protectorate in Kuwait was misunderstood by local political forces. The British Empire was not going to promote the political interests and territorial ambitions of Sheikh Mubarak. Rather, Kuwait was perceived as a site for transmitting the British political influence in the Arabian Peninsula.[101]Viewed in this way, the decision of Sheikh Jaber bin Abdullah not to cooperate with the British Empire was reasonable and wise. However, it also remained the case that Kuwait needed a stronger partner to resist the military forces that surrounded it, namely the Ottomans and the House of Al Rasheed. Given these circumstances, the decision of Sheikh Mubarak to enter partnership relations with the British Empire can be justified. It was admitted by Hamm[102] that Sheikh Mubarak

[95] T. Gideon, 'Sword of Sa'ud and the birth of a nation', *Military History*, Vol. 14, Issue 3, (1997), pp. 50-58.
[96] G. Hamm, 'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia: Strategy, Diplomacy, and Empire, 1898-1918', *University of Toronto*, (2012), pp. 2-358.
[97] E. Monroe, 'Arabia. St John Philby's Contribution to Pre-Islamic Studies', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Vol. 3, Issue 6, (1972), pp. 29-35.
[98] Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, p. 105.
[99] Hamm, *'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia*, pp. 2-358.
[100] Hamm, *'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia*, pp. 2-358.
[101] T. Gideon, 'Sword of Sa'ud and the birth of a nation', *Military History*, Vol. 14, Issue 3, (1997), pp. 50-58.
[102] G. Hamm, 'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia: Strategy, Diplomacy, and Empire, 1898-1918', *University of Toronto*,(2012), pp. 2-358.

supported Ibn Sa'ud and approved of his competition with the Al Rasheed dynasty. This situation demonstrates that the pro-British interests of Sheikh Mubarak were not in conflict with supporting Ibn Sa'ud.[103]

In 1901, Ibn Rasheed attempted to negotiate the possibility of the creation of a British protectorate under his rule in the Arabian Peninsula. His defeat of Ibn Sa'ud and Sheikh Mubarak was chosen by him as a suitable moment for this negotiation. He assumed that the British Empire would help him to control Sheikh Mubarak. However, the British Foreign Office did not accept the political and strategic proposals of Al Rasheed.[104] The treaty between the British Empire and Kuwait was kept secret, and Al Rasheed could not have known all the details that related to the existent British presence in the Arabian Peninsula.[105] The intention of Al Rasheed to closely cooperate with the British Empire demonstrates that the British appeared to be, to him, an attractive strategic partner in the region. Nonetheless, the final choice was made by the British Empire because it had the military strength and political might to promote its own interests in the Arabian Gulf.[106]

Discussing the relationship between Sheikh Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud while the latter was in exile in Kuwait, it should be noted that Sheikh Mubarak performed the role of a political instructor and mentor for Ibn Sa'ud. Furthermore, the ruler of Kuwait had contributed greatly to the political strategy, experience and planning of the Al Sa'ud dynasty. As emphasised by Hassan Abedin,[107] there were not many tribes and rulers in the Arabian Peninsula who could accept refugees from the House of Al Sa'ud while they were persecuted by Al Rasheed. Al Rasheed could take revenge on Sheikh Mubarak, and he did so.[108] Residing in Kuwait, Ibn Sa'ud was surrounded by the heady mixture of cultures and opportunities that have historically always been associated with life in an active port city. Kuwait performed the function of the main port in the Arabian

[103] G. Clayton, 'Arabia and the Arabs', *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, Issue 1, (1929), pp. 8-20.
[104] T. Gideon, 'Sword of Sa'ud and the birth of a nation', *Military History*, Vol. 14, Issue 3, (1997), pp. 50-58.
[105] A. Toynbee, 'A Problem of Arabian Statesmanship', *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, Issue 4, (1929), pp. 367-375.
[106] Hamm, 'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia: Strategy, Diplomacy, and Empire, 1898-1918', *University of Toronto*, (2012), pp. 2-358.
[107] H. Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946'*,(King's College London, 2002), p. 2-344.
[108] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia*, p. 2-344.

Gulf from the 1890s onwards.[109] It received ships from all over the world and attracted caravans from Iraq and Central Arabia. In these conditions, "as a father, Abdul Rahman was certainly concerned about his son becoming enamoured by the distractions of the city and so a tutor was summoned from Al-Qassim to provide Abdul Aziz with the proper instruction in the principles of faith and the teachings of Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab".[110] The education and cultural experiences of the future monarch of Sa'udi Arabia were strictly regulated by his father and tutors.

Mubarak al-Sabah was a younger brother of the ruler of Kuwait. Before becoming the leader himself, he spent much time with Ibn Sa'ud and taught him. The relationships between Ibn Sa'ud and Sheikh Mubarak did not change when the latter started performing formal functions in the government. It was easy for Ibn Sa'ud to enter the ruler's court and understand the political intrigues in which Kuwait was continuously involved. As reported by Abedin,[111] Ibn Sa'ud often observed military officers and listened to their conversations with great pleasure. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to draw a picture of the government in Kuwait as being ideal. When Abdul Rahman and his family resided in Kuwait, the country was full of political contradictions and challenges.[112] Sheikh Mubarak was in open conflict with his brother. The ruler of Kuwait was criticised for high ambitions and growing public expenditure.[113] Some political conflicts can be explained by the complex conditions in which Kuwait was placed. The country was simultaneously under Ottoman pressure, was seeking to pursue its own path, and was also reliant upon the British Empire. In turn, the British Empire perceived Kuwait as its own political agent in the Arabian Peninsula.[114] Under these complex conditions, Ibn Sa'ud was learning to understand the nature of political confrontation, the conflicting demands and expectations of governments, and the role of the British Empire in balancing forces in the Arabian Peninsula.[115]

[109] T. Paris, 'British Middle East Policy-Making after the First World War: The Lawrentian and Wilsonian Schools', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 41, Issue 3, (1998), pp. 773-793.
[110] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia*, p. 2-344.
[111] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia*, p. 2-344.
[112] John Baldry, 'British Naval Operations against Turkish Yaman 1914-1919', *Arabica*, Vol. 25, Issue 2, 1978, pp. 148-197.
[113] Hamm, 'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia: Strategy, Diplomacy, and Empire, 1898-1918', *University of Toronto*, (2012), pp. 2-358.
[114] G. Cetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908*, (Routledge, London, 2006), p. 140.
[115] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia*, p. 2-344.

The strengthening relationship between Kuwait and the British Empire caught the attention of the Ottoman Empire. It was emphasised by Abedin that "the Ottoman officials were increasingly disconcerted over the intimate relations Britain seemed to be forming with Kuwait and by Mubarak's increasingly bold manner".[116] The political behaviour and the overall level of confidence of Sheikh Mubarak changed because he felt strong support from the side of the British Empire and he hoped to get rid of his enemies through Britain's military assistance.[117] It is difficult to identify the degree to which these expectations were objective and justified. However, it should be taken into account that the main focus of this research is the development of the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and the British Empire.[118]

In concluding this section, it can be summarised that the relationships between the Arabian Peninsula and the British Empire started developing long before Ibn Sa'ud's time and the foundation of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia.[119] However, the manifestation of these relations was often concealed and secretive. The example of Kuwait demonstrates that the British Empire was inclined to establish informal patronage over some states to protect its own strategic interests and areas of influence in the Arabian Peninsula.[120] There had been several attempts to establish a Sa'udi State in the Gulf region. However, all these attempts ended in failure because of aggressive attacks from more powerful forces in the region (e.g. The Viceroy of Egypt, the Ottoman Empire and the House of Al Rasheed). In these conditions, the House Al Sa'ud needed to find a reliable and strong strategic partner to be able to protect its interests. It is still difficult to judge whether the British Empire could fully undertake this role as it also pursued its own goals in the Arabian Peninsula such as the construction of communication routes with India and protection of the British colonies from the Ottomans' influence.[121]

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[116] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia*, p.57.
[117] G. Cetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908*, Routledge, London, (2006), p. 140.
[118] W. Thesiger, 'Obituary: H. St. John B. Philby, 1885-1960', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 126, Issue 4, (1960), pp. 563-566.
[119] C. Lewis, 'Ibn Sa'ud and the Future of Arabia', *International Affairs*, Vol. 12, Issue 4, (1933), pp. 518-534.
[120] Hamm, 'British Intelligence and Turkish Arabia: Strategy, Diplomacy, and Empire, 1898-1918', *University of Toronto*, (2012), pp. 2-358.
[121] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946'*,(King's College London, 2002), p. 2-344.

2. Historiography

This thesis focuses on the circumstances surrounding the rise of Ibn Sa'ud to power in the Arabian Peninsula in the early 20th century and examines the development of the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud in the period from 1902 to 1914. Traditional histories have tended to frame accounts of Ibn Sa'ud's relations with Britain narratively rather than grounding them in a more rigorous and systematic analysis of contemporary scholarship. Critical analyses have been largely predicated on a paradigm of grand political/national forces, enacting broad shifts within a narrative model of history. In practice, this usually equates to a heavy focus on the role of leader figures: monarchs, family-heads and other forms of patriarch, as primary determinants in shaping the country's social and political evolution. These different leaders provide convenient if highly generalised categorical divisions by which scholars (past and present) have schematically distinguished Sa'udi history.[122] Even contemporary doctoral theses are, in the vast majority of instances, oriented around Ibn Sa'ud personally.[123]

The person-centred approach comes at the expense of more comprehensive anthropological and sociological analyses. That said, such approaches, in Sa'udi Arabia as elsewhere, have gained far more traction in recent years. The proliferation of secondary sources in recent decades has expanded somewhat the compass of available data and, as a result, the lines of approach they enable have also grown. However, such studies inevitably bear the imprint of the precursor works on which they are built. Many early historical accounts of Sa'udi Arabia were composed by British officials, whose texts necessarily formed the base structure for successor works since.[124] While these accounts are without doubt meticulous in detail, as artefacts born of imperial administrators based on their detailed observant accounts, one necessarily questions the

[122] See for example A. Al-Fahad,. *"The Imamah Versus the Iqal: Hadari-Bedouin Conflict and the Formation of the Sa'udi State",* (Vitalis, 2004); R. & al-Rasheed, M. *Counter-Narratives: History, Contemporary Society, and Politics in Sa'udi Arabia and Yemen*. (New York: Palgrave), pp. 35–76; M. al-Rasheed, *A History of Sa'udi Arabia,* (2nd Ed. Cambridge, 2010): (Cambridge University Press); Vassiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (Saqi Books, London, 2000).

[123] See for example: Abedin, *Abdul Aziz Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946*; T. Al-Azma, *The Role of the Ikhwan under 'Abdul-Aziz Al Sa'ud 1916-1934. (*University of Durham, PhD Thesis, 1999); T. Al-Kabeer,. *The Great Achievement: King Abdulaziz and the Founding of the Sa'udi State*, (University of London, PhD Thesis,1989); M. Al-Kahtani, *The Foreign Policy of King Abdulaziz (1927- 1953): A Study in the International Relations of an Emerging State*. (University of Leeds, PhD Thesis. 2004).

[124] T. Lawrence,. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom. A Triumph.*(Doubleday Doran & Company Inc, New York, 1935); H. Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia Ibn Sa'ud*, (Simon Publications London, 1938); D. Carruthers,. *Arabian Adventure*, (Witherby, London, 1935).

ideological underpinning of their composition. To say the least, such works do not conform to the scholarly impartiality required of contemporary academic practice.

Most of the scholarship of Sa'udi Arabia falls with the imperialistic histories of the British Empire of the 20th century and it is dominated by economic, political and cultural analysis produced in the context of western (direct or otherwise) dominance, something strongly critised later by orientalism. [125] Earlier romantic views of the British Empire have been informed by the works of historians such as Gibbon, Macauley, and Seeley, most presenting the empire in a remarkably similar manner, in an unequivocally positive light, equating the idea of empire with inevitable progress. Viewed through such a lens, the Empire was a benevolent, civilising force, guiding less developed peoples towards enlightenment, with the eventual goal of returning annexed territories to self-rule, something that was not merely a side effect of empire, but the moral, driving purpose behind it. [126] Western imperialism, received its first attack in 1902, with the publication of '*Imperialism*'*;* an attack that can be seen as a product of the growing unease amongst radicals at what J. Hobson himself termed "the cut throat struggles of competing empires".[127] Hobson was a liberal and a radical, whose time as a reporter in the Boer War served to open his eyes to the failures of capitalism, and its mal-distribution of wealth.[128] The Boer War was instrumental in starting to turn opinion against the notion that empire was a civilising, altruistic force.[129] Hobson distilled imperial expansion "essentially to economics", proposing the 'under consumption thesis' – the British desire to export to unsaturated markets - and the subsequent need to defend overseas investments by force,[130] describing the tenets outlining the expansion of the British Empire as 'New Imperialism': a scramble for colonies solely for economic reasons; and a struggle for markets which was essentially worthless, only benefiting a tiny majority. Imperialism, he argued, was pursued purely for selfish reasons; material gain was the sole criterion for the conduct of the Empire.[131] Indeed, British administrations in annexed territories were not even trying to educate the populace and

[125] E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
[126] Wm. Roger Louis, 'Introduction', in '*The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography*', ed. Robin Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[127] J. Hobson, '*Imperialism: A Study*', (Nottingham: Spokesman, 2011).
[128] T. Hunt, T., 'J. Hobson, Lenin and Anti-Imperialism'. *Great British Ideas*. BBC Radio 3. 06/03/2011. Radio.
[129] K. Morgan, 'The Boer War and the Media', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 13 (1), (2002).
[130] Eckstein, A.M., 'Is There a 'Hobson-Lenin Thesis' on Late 19th Century Colonial Expansion?', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 44 (2), May (1991), pp. 297-318.
[131] Hobson, '*Imperialism: A Study*', (Nottingham: Spokesman, 2011), p.12.

obviously did not intend to pass on leadership.[132] New Imperialism, according to Hobson, occurred in areas unlikely to be colonised by white people, and consisted of occupation by small numbers of white traders and officials over indigenous populations that were seen as inferior. He warned of more virulent enemies, who were stimulating the growth of imperialism by influencing government policy, people such as bankers, industrialists, arms dealers "shadowy financiers, pulling the strings of politicians",[133] an excellent case-study for a transnational approach. Although, the present thesis does not focus on economic analysis, 'New Imperialism' can be seen as a discourse that illuminates British attitudes to central Arabia since for many decades, central Arabia was lying on fringe of the British zones of interest (see Map 1b in the appendix) that have prioritised their trade and commerce with India; additionally it helps to explain the prominent role of officials and agents in the making of policies. The importance of these individuals and their role in the development of the relationships are further assessed later in this thesis.

Gallagher and Robinson revised the extent of the British Empire in 1953, arriving at a completely different conclusion to Hobson. Their thesis '*The Imperialism of Free Trade'* redefined 19th century imperialism.[134] They did so by re-evaluating traditionally held Marxist views.[135] In arguing that "Empire had tended to be analysed as if rulers had no subjects and as if Europe's pursuit of profit and power was made in a world untrammelled by external forces", the two proposed that Britain's imperialist policies were not caused by deliberate, greedy, capitalism. Britain's policy, they proposed, was "consistently minimalist".[136] Their economic interpretation concluded that it was vastly preferable for Britain to only take direct control of a colony when there was no other choice; "informal control if possible, formal rule if necessary".[137]

World War I however, transformed the meanings of empires: imperialism had been depicted, on the grandest scale imaginable, as eminently capable of causing widespread

[132] Hobson, '*Imperialism: A Study*', (Nottingham: Spokesman, 2011), p.24.
[133] Hunt and Hobson, Lenin and Anti-Imperialism'. *Great British Ideas.* BBC Radio 3. 06/03/2011. Radio.
[134] Wm. Roger Louis, 'Introduction', in '*The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography*', ed. Robin Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[135] P. Wolfe, 'History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 102 (2), April (1997), pp.399-400.
[136] Wolfe, P., 'History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 102 (2), April (1997), p.400.
[137] R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *Economic History Review*, Vol. 6, (1953).

suffering and harm. It transformed Germany and the Ottoman Empire, Britain's enemies, into "barbaric power[s]"[138] deemed unfit to rule. The world at large began to recognise disconcerting elements of imperialism, hitherto preached only by radicals such as Hobson. Imperialism was not necessarily a purely civilising force; nor was it pursued for purely altruistic motives.

In the post-colonial era (mainly after the 1960s) studies of the empire caused strong debates with historians feeling a moral obligation to proclaim their revulsion to it and their courage to do so.[139] Darwin's thought provoking work, provides a more holistic view of the empire; in it, it becomes apparent that the empire was not always as organised and in control (formal or informal, economic or military, cultural or any other type) of its vast lands and peoples. It was an empire exposed to various internal conflicts at home and external challenges outside such as economic competition and geostrategic challenges in a changing world.[140] And, in its making, the empire relied on many individuals. These officials, appointed from home, had extensive powers and they were placed in positions that could allow them to manage the conflicting interests between their masters in Britain and the colonial subjects.[141] In many cases, as in the present study, these officials played a formative role in the development of the relationships between local leaders and Britain.

It is suffice to say that in the context of most of the 20th century, and because the region under question was never part of the British Empire (for historic reasons discussed earlier in introduction), British historians played little or no attention to it, presenting a distinct lacuna in respect of the finer details regarding Ibn Sa'ud's relationships with the British Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. In effect, the majority of the research covering the topic is comprised of retelling that which is already known, and is usually derived from the same secondary sources in English. Rarely, has such work taken into account the vast plethora of Arab sources (secondary and primary).

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138 W. Louis, 'Introduction', in '*The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography*', ed. Robin Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.19.
139 Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, (Penguin Books 2012), p. xi.
140 Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, (Penguin Books 2012), p. xiii.
141 Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, (Penguin Books 2012), pp. 202-203.

The particulars of the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and the western world did not receive much attention until the 1970s. This, therefore, represents a major gap in existent literature.[142] Much of the existing research in the West had focused on the periods after the 1970s for reasons which are discussed hereafter. The early phases like the period after 1902 have received comparatively little attention.[143] New histories emerged in the 1930s, probably due to a renewed interest in the region after the official birth of the Saudi State in 1932. A sterling example is George Antonius' *The Arab Awakening*, which has been hailed as "the first sympathetic account in English of the development of Arab nationalism", and can accordingly be seen as a direct challenge to British rule.[144] However, in the Arab world only Egypt had experienced a significant nationalist movement before WWI.[145] For most of the 20th century, historians approached the development of the third Sa'udi State through the prism of dynastic historiography.[146] Determann[147] divided most of the 20th century historiography of Sa'udi Arabia to dynastic dealings with the history of Ibn Sa'ud's family and leadership outside of wider political or social contexts. It was mainly after the 1970s, that nationalistic trends tried to combine the earliest dynastic histories of Ibn Sa'ud with emerging Sa'udi nationalism.[148] In a nationalist context, Ottoman and not British imperialism had provided both the frontiers and the common enemy since Arabia was under Ottoman occupation for centuries.

A number of books and thesis attributed the creation/unification of Sa'udi Arabia to the personality and charisma of Ibn Sa'ud without taking into consideration the wider international political context might fall with the former category.[149] It has to be noted that Arab and western histories that dealt with the role of religion (for good accounts see

[142] G. Nonneman, *Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001: A Pragmatic Quest for Relative Autonomy*, International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 77, No. 3,Changing Patterns of European Security and Defence (Jul., 2001), pp. 631-661.
[143] G. Jacob: The Origins of British-Sa'udi Relations: The 1915 Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty Revisited, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3 Sep,(1985), pp.693-703; Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud*, (New York: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1976).
[144] Wm. Roger Louis, 'Introduction', in '*The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography*', ed. Robin Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.19.
[145] Roagan, *The Arabs: A History*, (Penguin Books 2012), p.173.
[146] J. Determann, *Historiography in Sa'udi Arabia: Globalization and the State in the Middle East*, (I.B.TAURIS, London, 2014).
[147] Determann, Historiography in Sa'udi Arabia, p22.
[148] Determann, Historiography in Sa'udi Arabia, p101-140.
[149] M. Almana, *Arabia Unified: Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud*, (Hutchinson Benham, London,1980); Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia Ibn Sa'ud: The intimate study of a King*, (1988); Al-Nowasier, *Sa'udi-British Relations during the 1915-1991 Period*, (PhD diss., the University of Reading, 2004).

Al-Yassini,[150] al-'Uthaymin,[151] Commins,[152]) in the affairs of the period are not part of this research; although religion played a significant role in the life of Ibn Sa'ud. Such works are not considered within this thesis because they are out of its scope which mainly focuses on other elements of the British-Sa'udi relationship and the role of internal and external factors in the developments in Sa'udi Arabia from 1902 to 1914.

A significant number of books on Sa'udi Arabia appeared in the 1970s. This sudden proliferation of writing may be attributed to the increasingly important place of the state in international affairs as well as to the increased professionalisation of history as a discipline. Books appeared studying the economy,[153] and the politics of the country.[154] This period was characterised with the production of nationalistic historiographies that quite successfully managed to join the previously existing dynastic historiography of the Ibn Sa'ud family with Arab nationalism. Kheirallah[155] and other Arab historians[156] praised Ibn Sa'ud more effusively than other historians. Their treatment is understandable as they are Sa'udi nationals, some of them with close links to Ibn Sa'ud, for example Almana worked as translator for Ibn Sa'ud for nine years.[157] Most Arab historiography has attributed the creation of the third Sa'udi state to his charisma and vision for unification. These histories were based mainly on the study of chronicles and

[150] A. Al-Yassini, *The Relationship Between Religion and State in The Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia*, (McGill University, Montreal, 1982).
[151] A. Al-'Uthaymin, *Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab: The Man and his Works*, (I.B.TAURIS, London, with the King Abdul Aziz Foundation, Riyadh, 2009).
[152] D. Commins, The Mission and the Kingdom: Wahhabi Power Behind the Sa'udi Throne, (I.B. TAURIS, 2009).
[153] M. Al-Nuaim, *State building in a non-capitalist social formation: the dialectics of two modes of production and the role of the merchant class, Sa'udi Arabia 1902-1932*, (University of California, Ph.D., 1987); T. Niblock (editor), *State, Society and Economy in Sa'udi Arabia*, (St. Martin's Press, new York, 1981).
[154] G. Linabury, *British-Sa'udi Arab Relations, 1902-1927: A Revisionist Interpretation*, (Columbia University, Ph.D., 1970); D. Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, (The University of Wisconsin, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses; Ph.D., 1972); B. Kashmeeri, *Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation Builder*. (PhD diss., Howard University, 1974); G. Hagar, *Britain, her Middle East Mandates and the Emergence of Sa'udi-Arabia, 1926-1932: A Study In The Process of British Policymaking and in the Conduct and Development of Britain's Relations with Ibn Sa'ud*, (University of Keel, UK, Ph.D., 1981); F. Zedan, *Political Development of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia*,(Miami University, Ph.D.,1981); T. Al-Kabeer, *The Great Achievement: King Abdulaziz and the founding of the Sa'udi State*, (University of London, 1989).
[155] G. Kheirallah, *Arabia Reborn*, (Albuquerque, NM, USA: The University of New Mexico Press, 1952), p.119.
[156] M. Al-Kahtani, *The Foreign Policy of King Abdulaziz 1927- 1953, a Study in the International Relations of an Emerging State*, (University of Leeds, Ph.D., 2004). Kashmeeri, *Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation Builder*, 1974. S. Al-Nowasier, *Sa'udi-British Relations during the 1915-1991 Period*. (PhD diss., the University of Reading, 2004); Almana, *Arabia Unified: Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud*, (Hutchinson Benham, London,1980).
[157] Almana, Mohammed, Arabia Unified: Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud, (Hutchinson Benham, London, 1980), p.16.

official histories and biographies and tend to overstress the role of Islam in the motivations of the leader calling earlier phases the 'age of ignorance' and identifying the start of the Sa'udi history with Ibn Sa'ud family ignoring the multifaceted dynamics of the period.[158] Historians credit the British and Ibn Sa'ud for negotiating the Anglo-Saudi Treaty in good faith (with the exception of Kashmeeri who argues that Ibn Sa'ud's charisma was the primary reason[159]); they equally agree that the British at some points during World War I bent, but did not break, the treaty. This, they further advance, allowed Ibn Sa'ud enough room to politically and militarily manoeuver within his sphere of influence. Most historians also agree that Ibn Sa'ud was an Anglophile politically due to Britain's hegemony and wanted to associate himself with the world's premier power at that time. Ibn Sa'ud's charisma did not escape the attention of British officials either and it facilitated his success with the British officials who negotiated with him, most notably St. John Philby.[160] Philby was convinced that Ibn Sa'ud could maintain control over his kingdom due to his charisma and used this as an argument for support for Ibn Sa'ud as early as 1918, when he arrived in the kingdom.[161] Even later western authors treat Ibn Sa'ud with sympathy.[162]

As part of the postcolonial scholarship of the second half of the 20th century most of the work on the Arabs fit with a particular historic formation that is Orientalism. Orientalism has vividly coloured much of Ibn Sa'ud interpretations. In his work (which is about the Arab world in general and not Saudi in particular), Said demonstrated how western historians, in an attempt to define, control and justify their treatment of the Orient saw the Arabs as primitive, childish, not trust-worthy and un-Western. Many who wrote about Ibn Sa'ud present him in this context as the romantic yet unsophisticated nomad who managed to create a nation, reinforcing the same stereotypes they try to avoid. Philby's descriptions serve as an example of such approach with a stronge dose of romantic admiration as he writes his chronicle of the 'great reign' of a 'great King'[163]. Of course, Philby was one of a very few westerners who had direct access and experience of the Arab world and its people. For, the rest of

[158] Determann, *Historiography in Sa'udi Arabia*, p24-62.
[159] Kashmeeri, *Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation Builder,* p.165.
[160] Kashmeeri, *Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation Builder*. (PhD diss., Howard University, 1974), Xerox University Microfilms (75-2184). P.166.
[161] Kashmeeri, *Ibn Sa'ud: The Arabian Nation Builder,* p.167.
[162] D. Holden and J. Richard, *The House of Sa'ud*, (Sidgwick & Jackson, London, UK, 1981); Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia Ibn Sa'ud: The intimate study of a King*, 1988.
[163] Philby, *Saudi Arabia*, p.358.

them ‘were profoundly ignorant about the Arabs and …their information was derived entirely from the tales of the Arabian nights’ as Amir Faysal exclaimed.[164] Edward Said exposed the dynamics of power in the production of knowledge about ‘the other’ by western intellectuals. In so doing he argued that they have controlled the representations of the Arab-Muslim world from the middle of the 18th century to the present, and that this played a key role in the development of western imperialism.[165] Said has further argued that rejection of Orientalist thinking does not mean that the historian refuses the differences between 'the West' and 'the Orient,' but rather, it offers a more critical evaluation of such differences. The present work has taken some inspiration from such ideas although, for purposes of clarity and for keeping the argument focus, it does not explore in detail how such ideas are manifested in the actions and words of the protagonists of the period (or indeed in the historiography of Orientalism). However, something that the author of this thesis took into account methodologically is Said’s advise that studies of the Arab world can be more meaningful when the study entails smaller culturally consistent regions;[166] and central Arabia under Ibn Sa’ud’s ruling became such a region.

Interestingly post-colonial discourse is not very often applied in Sa’udi Arabian history in contrast to other areas such as the Middle East or Africa – maybe because Sa’udi Arabia was never a British colony or maybe because, as some scholars argue, postcolonial discourse was consciously rejected as a western formation.[167] Postcolonial themes such as resistance, otherness, class demarcations are explored within Arab novels of the Middle East and the Gulf states.[168] However, these are notable exceptions and include studies of the Arabic diaspora communities.

From the point of view of British historiography, Ibn Sa’ud was often seen as part of what they called Wahhabism.[169] British pre-war policy was to keep Ibn Sa’ud at arms-

[164] Rogan, *The Arabs: A History*, p.197.
[165] E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
[166] E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
[167] M. Anouar, *Unveiling Tradition: Postcolonial Islam in a Polycentric World* (Duke University Press, 2000).
[168] M. Al-Musawi, *The Postcolonial Arabic Novel: Debating Ambivalence* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003); L. Abu-Lughod, Cultural Studies in Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 18 (1989), pp. 267-306,
[169] M. Crawford, *Ibn Abd al-Wahhab*, (ONEWORLD, London, 2014); D. Commins, *Islam in Sa’udi Arabia*, (I.B.TAURIS, London, 2015); A. Beatty, *The wahhabi Tribe: an analysis of authority in the Unification of the Arabian Peninsula 1902-1932*, (McGill University, Montreal, MA, 2003); Commins, *The Mission and the Kingdom: Wahhabi Power Behind the Sa’udi Throne*,2009; Al-'Uthaymin,

length in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula while maintaining the power of the sheikdoms along the coast.[170] For Troeller, Ibn Sa'ud was not simply "the Wahhabi zealot that most of his followers were" but possessed other qualities that allowed him to negotiate with the British with a clear mind.[171] Ibn Sa'ud immediately recognised, upon recapturing Riyadh in 1902, that the British were crucial in his plans to create an independent Arabian state due to their ability to choose allies and protect his interests. Some believed that Ibn Sa'ud masterfully balanced the religious needs of his people with the political requirements of the day, especially when dealing with foreign powers.[172]

In a similar manner, more modern scholars (after the 1970s) have looked beyond religion in an effort to incorporate wider socio-economic and political backgrounds into their histories of the period under study. Within these histories, scholars describe Ibn Sa'ud as a measured, highly intelligent leader who believed British assistance was necessary.[173] Silverfarb considers him an extremely patient man who skilfully maintained communication with the British envoy in India, Sir Percy Cox,[174] in an effort to find common ground.[175] Al-Nowaiser agrees with both Silverfarb and Linabury with regards to Ibn Sa'ud's considerable political ability. He cites Ibn Sa'ud's "sense of purpose, his cunning, his brinksmanship skills; his manipulation of inter-bureaucratic battles between the Government of India and the Foreign Office," among several other factors.[176] Most importantly, Al-Nowaiser praises Ibn Sa'ud for accomplishing a balancing act that ensured the existence of an independent Sa'udi nation.[177] In his eyes,

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Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab: The Man and his Works, 2009. The use of this term is primary documents is discussed in chapter 1.

[170] Leatherdale, *Britain and Sa'udi Arabia, 1925-1939*, p.14.

[171] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.28.

[172] G. Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud*, (New York: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1976), p.25.

[173] Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.15-16.

[174] Cox, Sir Percy Zachariah (1864–1937), diplomatist and colonial administrator. In 1904 Cox was promoted acting political resident in the Arabian Gulf as well as consul-general for the Persian provinces of Fars, Lurestan, and Khuzestan. He became resident in 1909. He had responsibility for the defence of the region, no easy task after the Persian revolution of 1905–7 and one which twice necessitated the calling in of imperial forces, to Bushehr in 1909 and Shiraz in 1911. He had also to promote British interests generally. At Kuwait Cox improved relations with the local ruler, Mubarak, and opened negotiations with Ibn Sa'ud; Robert Pearce, 'Cox, Sir Percy Zachariah (1864–1937)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32604, accessed 1 Feb 2017]

[175] Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.17.

[176] Al-Nowasier, *Sa'udi-British Relations during the 1915-1991 Period*. (PhD diss., The University of Reading, 2004). P.92-93.

[177] Al-Nowasier, *Sa'udi-British Relations during the 1915-1991 Period*, p.93.

Ibn Sa'ud managed to manipulate the British and the Ottomans against each other knowing that when general war came in Europe, the Ottomans would be arrayed against the British. A more recent study by MacLoughlin,[178] also praises the remarkable qualities of Ibn Sa'ud as a person and as a leader. Overall, Sa'udi foreign policy was defined by that which Ibn Sa'ud believed would secure his own rule and for tackle internal and external challenges. [179] And, in doing so, as Philby states, Ibn Sa'ud had never made a mistake.[180]

Another important debate, that is essential to the premise of this thesis, centres on the events of 1905-1906. These signify a turning point in the British - Sa'udi relationship. It is well established that the British did not initially see the Arabian Peninsula as being within their sphere of influence. The Ottomans claimed it and the British did not want to provoke a war with them.[181] Due to the fact that the Arabian Peninsula was considered a wasteland, the British did not give it much attention with the exception of the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf coasts. However, the non–interventionist policy of previous years, stemming from the London Convention for the Pacification of the Levant in 1840 (see page 16) was changed in 1905-1906 (as discussed in Chapter Two). Some have argued that the reason behind this change in policy was the political change in London whereby the Liberals gained control in government and, consequently, had to review the foreign and military affairs of the Empire.[182] However, a more significant changing factor is considered to be the Ottoman threat.

British strategy during the late 19th and early 20th century was to let the Ottoman Empire exist as it was because they feared that a rapidly expanding Russia, their rivals in the Central Asian Great Game, would compete for influence in the Middle East and gain more warm water ports. Concurrently, Ottoman foreign policy was concerned with the British and their expansionary aims (as discussed in the previous chapter). The Ottomans did not recognize that the British were sceptical of Ibn Sa'ud for most of the pre-World War I period. The Ottomans were so afraid of British expansion that "it was vital to make sure that leading locals" in Ottoman-loyal areas of Iraq and Arabia "held

[178] L. McLoughlin, *Ibn Sa'ud Founder of a Kingdom*, (Oxford Macmillan Press in association with St Antony's College, 1993).
[179] Nonneman, *Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001*, (Vol. 77, No. 3, Jul., 2001), pp. 631-661.
[180] Philby, *Sa'udi Arabia*, p. xii.
[181] Leatherdale, *Britain and Sa'udi Arabia, 1925-1939*, p.10.
[182] Abdol Yaccob, 'British policy on Arabia before the First World War: an internal argument', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, Vol. 38, Issue 1, (2008), pp. 323.

official titles to mark them as Ottomans, even if they carried out no duties".[183] Most of the Arabian people, especially the people of Al-Hasa, had no previous contact with the British; they were Ottoman subjects and Istanbul barely recognized their needs.[184] Ibn Sa'ud was able to recognise this and immediately attempted to open negotiations with the British. Ibn Sa'ud sought to build an alliance with the British as early as 1902 in an effort to fight the Ottoman Turks, who were hitherto in control of the Arabian Peninsula.[185] Silverfarb's account is fairly straightforward, but sometimes leans slightly in favour of Ibn Sa'ud. Anscombe, who examined the Ottoman-British-Sa'udi relationship in detail, argued that the Ottomans were always eager to govern Sa'udi Arabia but ultimately failed because the Ottoman Empire was spread too thinly, had major transportation and administration issues and that, as a consequence of these two factors, when it reacted to Ibn Sa'ud's actions it was too late. He also argued that "too much continued to center on trying to halt the spread of British influence".[186] The British- Ottoman operations allowed enough room to Ibn Sa'ud to ensure the existence of an Arabian state.[187] This thesis argues that the Ottoman control in the developments of the period is not as active and direct as previously thought; it was Ottoman neglect that allowed Ibn Sa'ud to discuss terms with the British who would not completely choke his dream of establishing an Arabian nation (which occurred after the war). Ibn Sa'ud's ability to recognise the strongest power in the region and perform a balancing act was exactly that which was required to keep the independence of his lands from Britain and the Ottomans. Moreover, because Ibn Sa'ud understood that the British imperial interests were focused elsewhere (and they would not attempt an invasion of Arabia due to the nature of the peninsula) he could negotiate with the British from a position of relative strength. In addition, the British were not interested in conquering the entire area, and kept their interests in protecting or contorling the areas close to the Suez. This has changed after the annexation of Al Hasa; a successful strategy, since, towards the end of the period under study, Sa'udi foreign policy was integrated into the British Imperial policy.[188] Once direct relationship started, the British influence in the

[183] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf and the Creation of Kuwait, Sa'udi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.221.
[184] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf and the Creation of Kuwait, Sa'udi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.221.
[185] Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.9.
[186] F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf and the Creation of Kuwait, Sa'udi Arabia, and Qatar, 1871-1914*. (PhD diss, Princeton University, 1994), University Microfilms International (9505015), P.215.
[187] P. Satia, *The Secret Center: Arabia Intelligence in British Culture and Politics, 1900-1932*. (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2004), University Microfilms International (3165552), p.1.
[188] A. Al-Enazy, *The Creation of Sa'udi Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud and British Imperial Policy 1914-1927*, (Routledge, London, 2009).

regions was extended by economic measures (loans to Ibn Sa'ud) and other political means (diplomats, administrators, and military assistance) that secured the British 'informal empire' as discussed previously in the section.

The final essential debate is the role of the capture of Al-Hasa in 1913 and how this dramatically transformed the British Sa'udi relationship. Historians have traditionally argued that 1913 is the turning point in the British-Sa'udi relationship because of WW1.[189] Certainly, WW1 was extremely influential in the making of the modern Middle East; with the Ottomans losing control, the other imperial powers divided the Middle East and drew borders that are still causing disputes today. Most of the Arab World found it self divided between the British and the French with little or no involvement. Very few countries managed to gain sovereignty and devise their own borders independently, and Saudi Arabia is one of those that carved its own existence independent from either British or Ottoman rule. [190] With regards to the British, and in the context of the events of 1913-1914, this thesis posits there was a more pressing geopolitical issue that forced the change in British attitude towards Ibn Sa'ud. That was the capture of Al Al-Hasa that brought Ibn Sa'ud to the east coast established Sa'udi Arabia as an important player in the international arena and forced the British to negotiate with him. Following from others who payed attention to the crucial importance of Al Hasa [191] chapter 4 evaluates its capture by Ibn Sa'ud and its role in changing the Sa'udi-British relationships.

For the entire post-war period, Britain was successful in this pursuit because Ibn Sa'ud was concentrating on resisting the Turks and could not move on the Trucial States. The closest Ibn Sa'ud came to threatening the neutral British posture and antagonizing them was after the capture of Al-Hasa, on the eastern Arabian Gulf, in 1913 from the Ottomans.[192] Ottoman conflicts far away from the Arabian Peninsula allowed Ibn Sa'ud to take advantage of the situation in Al-Hasa.[193] As discussed in Chapter Four, Ibn Sa'ud believed that his capture of Al-Hasa, a territory important to his

[189] J. Goldberg, The 1913 Sa'udi Occupation of Al-Hasa Reconsidered, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Jan., 1982), pp. 21-29.
[190] Rogan, *The fall of the Ottomans*, p.404.
[191] Nonneman, Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001, (Vol. 77, No. 3, Jul., 2001), p. 639; Goldberg, Jacob: *The Origins of British-Sa'udi Relations: The 1915 Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty Revisited*, The Historical Journal, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Sep, 1985), pp.693-703
[192] Leatherdale, *Britain and Sa'udi Arabia, 1925-1939*, p.15.
[193] W. Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2008), p.87.

late grandfather during his unsuccessful struggles with the Ottomans, would solidify him as the premier power within the Arabian Peninsula. However, Western and Arab historians agree that this was not enough of an impetus for the British to take action. Ibn Sa'ud was convinced that his previous rejection, due to the British not considering his state as an Arabian Gulf state, would be alleviated now that Al-Hasa, an important agricultural region bordering the Arabian Gulf, was under his control. Ibn Sa'ud's conquest of Al-Hasa did cause the British to take him more seriously in terms of building an alliance. However, greater geopolitical realities still existed with the Ottomans, and the British could not risk endangering their relationship with the Ottomans because the latter posed a greater direct risk to British interests in the area – for instance cutting off Suez and the eastern Mediterranean.[194] Instead, Britain chose to sign a treaty with the Ottomans that established new borders of Ibn Sa'ud's state, which they agreed would include Al-Hasa as part of Ibn Sa'ud's realm.[195]

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 also played a part as an existential threat to the ageing Ottoman Empire; Mehmed V, the Ottoman sultan, was forced to use most of his men and resources in Southeast Europe to unsuccessfully quell Bulgarian, Serb, and Greek revolts.[196] Mehmed V could not devote the resources required to keep Al-Hasa, a far-flung Arabian territory under Ottoman control. Bowen states that the Ottomans neglected the Al-Hasa tribes for decades, so they did not rise up against Ibn Sa'ud's forces.[197]

Another factor that led the British to play both sides within the Arabian Peninsula off each other during World War I was the fact that Hussein bin Ali was more willing to fight the Ottomans while Ibn Sa'ud sought British protection against the Ottomans and would not proactively fight for them. The Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty stipulated that Ibn Sa'ud could not negotiate with any other foreign power, including British allies. Due to the Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty, the British were obliged to assist Ibn Sa'ud. Ibn Sa'ud though he was not interested in fighting the Ottomans, as the British might have hoped, but in expanding his territories.[198]As a result of this he consolidated his power masterfully by using the British as an arms source to vanquish Ibn Rasheed. Ibn Rasheed was Ibn

[194] Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.18.
[195] Al-Rasheed, *A History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.41.
[196] Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia,* p.87.
[197] Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia,* p.87.
[198] Rogan 'The Arabs: A history', p. 219-20.

Sa'ud's primary concern during most of the conflict, while Hussein bin Ali remained his overarching concern due to his close relationship with the British (this relationship had continued during the war where Hussein offered military assistance[199]). Some scholars argued that Britain wisely remained out of the conflict between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed as they considered it a Muslim conflict where they could only antagonise the locals into forming alliances against them.[200] The fact though, that was known to officials like Sir Percy Cox and Philby[201] as well as historians thereafter, is that Britain supported and armed both Hussein and Sa'ud because it suited its policy for a divided Arabia, with no dominant power.[202]

British-Sa'udi relationships in the period under study started with the British establishing direct contact with Ibn Sa'ud and ended with Ibn Sa'ud's victory over his local rivals.[203] It is worth noting that in the introduction to his work, Troeller acknowledged that his work did not intend to discuss internal developments in the Arabian Peninsula.[204] That could be true for most of the existing literature with regard to the fact that authors have usually taken an approach focused mainly on aspect of the history of the period (religious, social, economic, military) and examine a limited range of primary sources with less focus on the Arabic ones. In contrast and, resultantly furthering existing academic knowledge, the present work combines a number of approaches and adopts a cross-boundary perspective. These traditional approaches do not take into account the complexities of the period that is crucial for the early developments that led to the formation of the third Sa'udi State. Nonneman,[205] argues that this relationship cannot be simply understood as a result of the Arab state being dependent nor can it be understood as simply a result of Ibn Sa'ud's power. Scholars mostly agree that it was the result of complex external/international dynamics, local personalities, and personal strategies. Cumulatively these factors helped Ibn Sa'ud to consolidate power and gain autonomy.[206] Nonneman based his analysis of long term Sa'udi foreign policy on both regional and transnational factors, providing a fresh

[199] J. Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), p.316.
[200] Al-Rasheed, *A History of Sa'udi Arabia,* p.42.
[201] Philby, *Sa'udi Arabia*, p.273.
[202] Rogan, *The Arabs: A History*, p.225.
[203] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.28.
[204] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, introduction xxi.
[205] Nonneman, *Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001*, (Vol. 77, No. 3, Jul., 2001), pp. 632.
[206] Nonneman, *Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001*, (Vol. 77, No. 3, Jul., 2001), pp. 632. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf and the Creation of Kuwait, Sa'udi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.73.

perspective; in his work he identified a number of factors such as the Ibn Sa'ud, the ruler's family and diplomatic administrators.[207] Nonneman's multi-layered analysis seems to be influenced by transnational perspectives in current history. Transnational history, as a concept under development since the 1990s and still under debate, offers the theoretical perspective that underlies the present work.

3. Research Methodology and Research Questions

Transnational history, a relatively new approach, is defined as 'the study of movements and forces that have cut across national boundaries'.[208] In addition to acknowledging the importance of states, empires, and the like, it also pays attention to networks, processes, beliefs, and institutions that might be functioning outside strictly defined political spaces.[209] From a methodological point of view, some of these concerns in the study of Arabs were raised by Edward Said: he always felt uncomfortable within national boundaries and he critiqued the western representations of the Arab world as rigid and one-sided because they did not take into account the fluidity of the Arab world, a world in 'perpetual flux' and a world that lacks 'stable definition'.[210]

That fluidity of borders, people, relationships, networks and affiliations that played a formative role in the creation of the Third Sa'udi State can be better studied using a transnational perspective. The premise of the present thesis involves the study of early relationships and the flow of information/communication between empires (British and Ottoman), tribal pre-state regions (Najd and Hassa), local rulers (Ibn Sa'ud, Mubarak Al-Sabah and Ibn Rasheed), various administrators representing political institutions, and other non nation-state level political entities (Kuwait, Qatar, Trucial States). Thus it comprises a complex network of places, factors, and institutions which share a series of connected histories. It appears that a transnational perspective offers sufficient flexibility for the study as well as providing a mechanism by which to garner an understanding of the development of relationships in polycentric and ever-changing

[207] Nonneman, Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001, (Vol. 77, No. 3, Jul., 2001), pp. 631.
[208] A. Iriye, 'Transnational History' [review article], *Contemporary European History*, 13(2004), pp. 213.
[209] C. Bayly, Sven Beckert, Matthew Connelly, Isabel Hofmeyr, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed, 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', American Historical Review , 111 :5 (2006), pp. 1459.
[210] E. Said, Orientalism Reconsidered: *Cultural Critique No. 1* (Autumn, 195), pp. 89-107.

contexts that go beyond singular nation-states.[211]

Transnational history involves research that cuts across national boundaries and allows research in more than one national archive;[212] it has been suggested that this approach is very appropriate for research in pre-nation state formation, such as, in this case, the Sa'udi third state. This approach can help the investigation of early phases of negotiating the Sa'udi –British relationship, how this was perceived, interpreted and presented in different contexts with the diverse socio-political dynamics of the British Empire, the Ottoman Empire, as well aws with regard to domestic challenges from opposing powers such as Ibn Rasheed's, and the pre-nation state tribal communities under Ibn Sa'ud. To understand the complex, multi-layered dynamics that underpin the developments from 1902 to 1914 it is necessary to cross national or other boundaries and work with different archives and divergent nationalistic narratives. In Saunier's words, 'This is not just a matter of giving everyone their due share, or giving voice to the dominated and the vanquished…What is at stake is the capacity to estimate the expectations of the protagonists, their behaviour, and the result of what happens across lines of difference'.[213] In practice, this meant that this thesis discusses events and protagonists following a chronological order (as an organizational unit), tackling both traditional historic understanding and current interpretations and bringing in the transnational perspective.

The aforementioned interpretations of Ibn Sa'ud's political/military skills and intentions are consistent with the repeated requests of Ibn Sa'ud for British protection as well as with his political and military strategies. The analysis of new primary sources brings new light to the earliest phases of this development and indicates that Ibn Sa'ud had developed a clear strategy with regards to approaching the British to support rather than the Ottoman Empire and Ibn Rasheed as early as 1903. This is discussed further in Chapter One. This thesis builds upon previous research by analysing a number of published and previously unpublished documents and through so doing offers a fresh multi-layered perspective on the role of the Arab leader. Ibn Sa'ud appears to have been a highly skilled leader; a leader motivated not only by religious beliefs –as stressed by traditional historiography- but also by an overpowering desire to gain control over his

[211] P. Saunier, *Theory and History: Transnational History*, (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2013), p.11.
[212] S. Macdonald, Transnational history: a review of past and present scholarship, UCL Centre for Transnational History (CTH), 2016.
[213] Saunier, *Theory and History: Transnational History*, p.134.

ancestral territories and by a political/strategic vision to bring a unified Arabia to the international stage. These aspects are discussed further in Chapter One. Thereafter, as discussed in Chapters Two, Three, and Four, crucial changes took place affecting all parties involved: the Al-Hasa tribes took a middle position in the regional struggles; the British declared neutrality in both the Balkan dispute and the Al-Hasa conflict to keep their options open; and a World War emerged. By taking a transnational perspective, it can be argued that in this polycentric context Ibn Sa'ud stood at the intersection of local/regional politics, colonial concerns, political struggles, trade and business interests as well as religious fights, and was one of the main protagonists who changed the 'circulatory regimes'.[214]

In this context, the research questions of this thesis are as follow:

1) How were domestic/local/internal events and disputes in Najd (Riyadh and Al Al-Qassim) related to Ibn Sa'ud's personality and vision to consolidate power and how are these inter-related with the geopolitical changes in the international arena and his commitment to gain British support?
2) How were the same domestic/local Sa'udi events perceived by the British, what was the impact of these perceptions on the way that the British reacted following their own interests in the Gulf and with regard to their own domestic and imperial expectations?
3) How did the same domestic Sa'udi affairs develop in the changing dynamics of the Gulf related to the Ottomans' Empire political and military involvement in the regions?
4) How did other minor factors influence the course of developments?

Overall, the thesis investigates multifaceted dynamics in the Sa'udi-British-Ottoman worlds in the period 1902-1914 so as to explain how the British position towards Ibn Sa'ud was transformed by the end of this period. The thesis views these transformations as part of an entangled network of protagonists, secondary officials, international and local challenges involving diverse political formations (Empires, tribes, colonial institutions, independent agents) and cultural encounters.

As demonstrated in the historiography, very little research has been directed towards investigating the nature and extent of British relations with Ibn Sa'ud over this period.

[214] Saunier, *Theory and History: Transnational History*, p.76-77.

This can be attributed to the fact that the official and direct relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud started with the Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty in 1915. Much previous research has been focused on the period starting from the signing of the Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty followed by Ibn Sa'ud's official declaration of the modern day Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia in 1932 and ending with Ibn Sa'ud's death in 1953. It appears, therefore, that the nature and extent of the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud during the period starting from Ibn Sa'ud's rise to power in 1902 to the signing of the Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty has been neglected. The period in question receives little coverage in all major works on Saudi Arabia or on British-Saudi relationships. Most historians have dedicated little space to the period of the present study. For example: Linabury,[215] who is closer to the period under study, argues that WWI was 'instrumental' in the relationship, whilst Abenin[216] in his long-term study from the end of the 19th century to the end of the WWII, dedicates a few pages to the British –Saudi relations. In like manner Aldamer[217] also deals only with the later period after 1939. Al Semmari[218] deals with British - Saudi – German relations before WWII but the scope of the thesis is on the latter period. Troeller's[219] focus is in the period 1910 – 1926 (from first contact with British official – Shakespeare? to the capture of Hedjaz) and there is a summary of events from 1901 to 1914 in pages 10-12 and in 21-25. Silverfab's[220] study covers in detail the period 1914-1919. Al Kabeeer and Kasheemeri [221] on the other hand, although very important in understanding Ibn Sa'ud rise to power and the consolidation of Arabian tribes, are not covering British–Saudi relationships in any extent. Al Nuaim's study[222] presents a similar problem with gaps in research in the first quarter of the 20th century-mostly focusing on religion and politics. Kostiner's work[223] is arguing that Ibn Sa'ud revived Wahabism providing a justification for its territorial expansion shaping the political goals that lead to the third Saudi state during WWI and afterwards (briefly covering the

[215] Linabury 1970 British – Saudi arab relations 1902-1927 : a revisionist interpretation
[216] Abenin 2002: Abdul Aziz Al saud and the Great Game in Arabia 1896-1946: pages 75 -88
[217] Aldamer 2003: Saudi Arabia and Britain: changing relations 1939-1953: 4-6
[218] Semmari 1989: Saudi- Arabian – German political and economic relations 1926-1939: page 29
[219] Troeller 1976 : The birth of Saudi Arabia: The rise of the house of Saud
[220] Silverfab 1972: British relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919: Chapter 1
[221] Kasheemeri 1973 : Ibn Sa'ud the Arabian Nation Builder; Al Kabeer 1989 – the great achievement king Abdul Aziz and the founding of the third Saudi state
[222] Al Nuaim 1987 : state building in a non-capitalist social formation: the dialectics of two modes of production and the role of the merchant class, Saudi Arabia 1902 -1932: pages 208-305
[223] Kostiner Joseph 1993: the making of Saudi Arabia: 1916-1936: pages 7-9.

earlier to WWI period in the introduction (pages 7 to 9). Al –Enazy [224] also studies the period after the Anglo – Saudi treaty in 1915 and in chapter 2 in less than twenty pages he covers the period before the WW1 while keeping the main within the wider Middle Eastern scene before WWI. Al-Nowaiser's[225] publication, albeit a significant long term study, starts after the period in question. The present work bridges this gap and provides a holistic analysis of the multiple components that shaped the Saudi-British relationship in the period 1902-1914.

4. Primary Sources

The research methodology used in this thesis is based on an analytical method using historical documents, which includes the research material gleaned from primary sources directly related to the subject of study. The research undertaken is more empirical in its approach than theoretical. Post-colonial theoretical approaches to imperialism have inspired the author, extended his understanding and helped the formation of the research questions. Methodologically, the author based his research perspective on a transnational approach, especially in working with primary sources. Saunier has re-iterated the importance of research with primary sources: "it is when they inch their way through the original material that they see circulations, connections and formations taking place".[226] In transnational terms, it means that the research took place within a specified spatial and chronological context and content. Accordingly, the research identified key players/protagonists and evaluated connections and relationships as they emerged from the study of primary sources instead of starting with a general system (globalisation, nationalism, etc.) and subsequently explore its manifestations. Starting with the original documents this research traced communications of individuals and institutions (examples in page 6 and in Fig. 2 in the appendix) with access to transnational territories and looked at how they helped these formations. Upon reflection, more work could be done in evaluating the ideological impact that some philosophical/political concepts had on the actions and words of individuals; also in evaluating how the language barriers affected or not communication, in which way, and in tracing these issues in different archives. The present thesis has favoured British and Arab archives. Limitations imposed by time and language barriers did not allow

[224] Al –Enazy 2010: the creation of Saudi Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud and the British imperial policy 1914-1927.
[225] Al-Nowaiser 2004 : Saudi-British relations during the 1915-1991 period
[226] Saunier, *Theory and History: Transnational History*, p.117.

research in Ottoman or French archives that would have helped a more integrated transnational approach. This is, however, an endeavour the author is planning to undertake in the future, with the Ottoman archives.

The primary sources in this research comprised a variety of documents, including telegrams, letters, notes, instructions, reports, personal communications, photographs, maps. The author tried also to incorporate new types of material, for example the recently digitised collections of documents and original photographs of the Gertrude Bell Archive available online at Newcastle University. Additionally, a visit to the Harold Dickson Collection at the University of Oxford (St. Antony's College) produced digital copies of the correspondence of Sir Percy Cox; here I make limited use of these documents but there are plans for future research. For the purposes of the present analysis all documetns related to Sir Percy Cox were taken from the India Office Library and Records (IOR) at the British Library London. Primary sources consulted for this thesis came mainly from official British archives. Documents from the British Foreign Office, Colonial Office, War Office and Cabinet papers were examined at the National Archives at Kew, London. The relevant records of the Government of India (India Office Records, I.O.R) and the Public Record Office (P.R.O) were examined at the British Library in London. Documents examined from the Archive International Group (Cambridge Archive Editions, Tuson et al., 1984) included the Arabian Treaties 1600-1960; Gazetteer of the Arabian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia; King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence 1904-1953 and Records of Sa'udi Arabia 1902-1960. Information from British newspapers was obtained online from The British Newspapers Archive.[227] All these documents comprise official correspondence and are now part of national archives. As such, it has to be said, that they offer testimonies that have been carefully thought in advance, screened by officials and probably edited before they riched their final form. More research into personal correspondence or in oral history would have offered an insight into the ideologies, motives, feelings and shortcomings of the individuals involved.

In addition, primary Sa'udi sources form an important part of this work. Background information was collected from Arabic literature sources available at a number of Sa'udi Arabian institutions in Riyadh, including the King Abdul Aziz Foundation for Research

[227] www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/ (accessed 1st Dec 2016)

and Archives, King Fahd National Library, King Abdul Aziz Public Library and King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies, and some libraries of Sa'udi Universities such as King Sa'ud University and Imam University in Riyadh. Moreover, Arabic translations of British documents consulted in this work include *King Abdul Aziz Al Sa'ud: His Life and Reign in Foreign Documents* by Saad A Sowayan et al., 1999, which helped identify a number of the primary sources consulted in this thesis. Arab official sources present similar limitations to the British ones. Additionally, sources that are negative or critical to Ibn Sa'ud are unlikely part of the national archives.

Information obtained from English and Arabic sources was compared and integrated in order to provide a comprehensive account of the research questions. Most of the events are discussed in a chronological manner: Ibn Sa'ud's actions, British responses to those actions, and the divisions between the British foreign office and the India Office. From reconstructing the events, the study answers the main research questions and provides support for the main arguments advanced within this work.

The study focuses on the two most important regions for the establishment of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia; Najd and Al-Hasa. Najd, where Ibn Sa'ud was born, is located in the heart of the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Hasa gained its strategic importance as a local province in the east of Arabian Peninsula with access to the Arabian Gulf (Map 2 in the list of maps).

5. Thesis Outline

The thesis is composed of an Introduction followed by four main chapters which address the two main strands of the thesis (internal development during Ibn Sa'ud's rise to power and his relationship with Britain) in chronological order. The Introduction sets out the scene of the research by presenting the historic background to the relationship between the British Empire and Ibn Sa'ud. The second part of the introduction is dedicated to historiography, and also outlines the research context for the research questions. Chapter One examines the early developments in the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain in Najd region from 1902 to 1904 including his recapture of Riyadh and annexation of Al-Qassim. Chapter Two provides a discussion of the Ottoman challenge to Ibn Sa'ud's emerging rule during the period from 1905 to 1906 and the British position towards it and towards Ibn Sa'ud's attempts to establish a

relationship with Britain. Chapter Three deals with the internal and external challenges to Ibn Sa'ud's rule from 1907 to 1912 including the dispute between the British Government of India and the Foreign Office regarding Britain's policy and attitude towards Ibn Sa'ud, and his encounter with Captain William Shakespear in 1909. In addition, the chapter discusses further internal challenges that were faced by Ibn Sa'ud in 1908 and 1909. The final chapter, Chapter Four, is dedicated Ibn Sa'ud's annexation of Al-Hasa region and the British position between 1912 and 1914. The thesis ends with a conclusion section.

Overall, the focus of this thesis is on Ibn Sa'ud and the early developments in his relationship with Britain leading to their direct relationship with the signing of the Anglo-Saudi Treaty in 1915. Specifically, the research aims to examine the nature and extent of relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain during his rise to power in the period from 1902 to 1914. Based on the analysis of primary documents for the period, it is argued that Britain had no significant interests in the central Arabian Peninsula region and was only interested in securing its interests in the coastal areas of the peninsula including the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea. As a result, it did not engage in a formal or direct relationship with Ibn Sa'ud. On the other hand, Ibn Sa'ud was keen to establish relations with Britain in order to secure their protection. However, a lack of British response to his requests for protection throughout this period meant that he established his control over major cities and regions in Arabia including Riyadh, AlAl-Qassim[228] and Al-Hasa without British support. It is argued that, in the context of transnational polycentric world, conflicting networks, and complex negotiations, Ibn Sa'ud's control of the strategically important region of Al-Hasa on the coast of the Arabian Gulf in 1913 represented a key development leading to the establishment of a direct relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud in the form of the Anglo-Sa'udi Treaty of 1915.

[228] A region located in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula and part of the main region of Najd.

Chapter One: Development of the Relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain in Najd (1902-1904)

This chapter investigates the early relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain in the period between 1902 and 1904. It predicates on the idea that at this point, the central Arabian Peninsula was not of strategic importance to the British Empire, and argues that this partly accounts for its reluctance to establish relations with Ibn Sa'ud. The British were primarily interested in control of the coastal areas which governed access to the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea. Britain's position would later change as Ibn Sa'ud's power and control in the peninsula grew. This chapter examines this progress in terms of investigating the development of Ibn Sa'ud's power in Najd and then the rest of the peninsula, the effect of the developments on his relationship with Britain as well as the effects of the Ottoman Empire on this growing relationship. To understand the development of a network of relationships in this period, the research investigates a number of primary sources related to the direct communications between:

- Ibn Sa'ud and the British Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and Kuwait as well as with Ibn Rasheed (indirectly-oral communications).
- British Empire (London) and the Ottoman Empire, as well as with the India Government.
- The Britisih Government in India and Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak Sheikh of Kuwait.
- The Ottoman Empire with the British Empire, and Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed.

Chapter One provides answers to the first research question by looking into details of how domestic/local/internal events and disputes in Najd (Riyadh and Al Al-Qassim) related to Ibn Sa'ud's personality and vision to consolidate power and how these inter-related with the geopolitical changes in the international arena and his commitment to gain British support.

The period from 1902 to 1904 was characterised by the official non-involvement of the British Empire in the Sa'udi affairs in the Arabian Peninsula. The British wished to preserve the status quo and remained politically neutral.[229] This position was preconditioned by the earlier agreements between the British and the Ottoman Empires under which both were supposed to control the hostilities between Kuwait and the

[229] A. Vassiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (New York University Press, New York, 2000), p. 74.

House of Al Rasheed.[230] The attitudes towards Ibn Sa'ud and the growing Sa'udi state were not regulated by the mentioned agreements. In turn, Ibn Sa'ud was highly interested in the British protectorate and requested British assistance several times.[231] This was partially because he came to realise that there was a need to balance the powers of the British in Arabian Peninsula during his years in Kuwait.[232] On the other end of the spectrum, it is reported that "the British effort to ensure the cooperation of the rulers in the area, in case a war against the Ottomans became inevitable, raised in particular the question of Ibn Sa'ud, whose overtures for British protection and support London had consistently rejected since 1902".[233] The main reason why Ibn Sa'ud was refused is that he was not perceived as a permanent and reliable partner at the early stages of the Sa'udi state. After capturing Al-Qassim[234] and consolidating his power in this region, Ibn Sa'ud attempted to form an alliance with the Ottoman Empire.[235] Traditionally, the latter's interests were opposed to the British Empire; the Ottomans wished to prevent the growth of the British influence in the Arabian Peninsula.[236]

1.1. Ibn Sa'ud's Recapture of Riyadh and expansion in Najd and the British Position (1902)

Riyadh is the largest city of Sa'udi Arabia and has been its capital city since the 19th century; the city is of immense strategic importance, in both material and symbolic terms. There have been numerous battles between different forces with regard to the control of the city. The recapture of Riyadh in 1902 took on additional nationalistic importance in 1950s when the event started to be celebrated as the beginning of the birth of the nation under Ibn Sa'ud.[237] The earliest attempts to capture Najd were taken together with Mubarak Al-Sabah, the ruler of Kuwait, following the escape of Abdul Rahman and his family to Kuwait. Specifically, Sheikh Mubarak moved his military

[230] J. Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (InfoBase Publishing, New York, 2010), p. 142.
[231] B. Lewis, 'Ibn Sa'ud and the Resurrection of the Wahhabi Power in Arabia', *Bulletin of International News*, Vol. 3, Issue 12, 1927, pp. 3-7.
[232] Abedin, *'Abdul Aziz Al Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia'*, pp. 2-344.
[233] J. Goldberg, 'Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud: A Balanced Reappraisal', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22, Issue 1, (1986), pp. 74-88.
[234] A region located between Riyadh in the South and Hail in the North. It was distinguished as a trading and commercial centre.
[235] S. Aldamer, *Sa'udi British relations, 1939-1953*, (Durham Theses, 2001), pp. 2-381.
[236] C. Riley, *Historical and Cultural Dictionary of Sa'udi Arabia*, (The Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, 1972), p.45.
[237] Determann, *Historiography in Sa'udi Arabia*, pp. 49-50.

forces to the north of Kuwait in December 1900.[238] Besides the Al Sa'ud dynasty, Mubarak Al-Sabah was supported by a number of tribal rulers who participated in the military campaign against Hail.[239] Mubarak Al-Sabah and Imam Abdul Rahman Al Sa'ud organised a meeting with the leaders of Al-Qassim region. After full support had been obtained, Sheikh Mubarak and Imam Abdul Rahman launched an attack against the House of Al Rasheed in Najd; however, Riyadh was still not controlled by Mubarak Al-Sabah and Abdul Rahman. The British did not approve of Mubarak and Imam Abdul Rahman's invasion and strategic movement to the north since it could potentially interfere with their relationships in Kuwait.[240] Nevertheless, the ruler of Kuwait did not seek or follow the advice of the British Empire concerning these plans; and, as a result, no direct protection was afforded the house of Al Sa'ud at this time.[241]

Ibn Sa'ud's allegiances are important to understanding how he overcame the hindrance represented by the British rebuff. The role of Mubarak Al-Sabah was important in terms of spreading Sa'udi influence in the Arabian Peninsula. Indeed, Sheikh Mubarak initiated the capture of Najd and gathered many powerful allies around him.[242] He was therefore an extremely important strategic ally. Indeed, it can be argued that Sheikh Mubarak had more negotiational power than Abdul Rahman Al Sa'ud. Importantly, Mubarak did not plan to take Riyadh himself and allowed the Al Sa'ud dynasty to capture the city. Abdul Rahman stayed in the general army, but his son, Ibn Sa'ud went to Riyadh and captured it. Ibn Sa'ud was thus eligible to claim his leadership and control over Riyadh relying on his hereditary rights and previous opposition with the house of Al Rasheed.[243]

The name "Ibn Sa'ud" had been in active use in history books since Riyadh's recapture.[244] Traditional dynastic historiography presented Ibn Sa'ud's capture of

[238] G. Gause, 'The Foreign Policy of Sa'udi Arabia: The Formative Years, 1902-1918', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, Issue 4, (1989), pp. 569-570.
[239] Aldamer, *Sa'udi British relations, 1939-1953*, (Durham Theses, 2001), pp. 2-381.
[240] R. Harrison, *Britain in the Middle East: 1619-1971* (New York Bloomsbury).
[241] Goldberg, Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud: A Balanced Reappraisal', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22, (Issue 1, 1986), pp. 74-88.
[242] L. Pelly, 'A Visit to the Wahhabi Capital, Central Arabia', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 35, Issue 1, (1865), pp. 169-191.
[243] G. Gause, 'The Foreign Policy of Sa'udi Arabia: The Formative Years, 1902-1918', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, Issue 4, (1989), pp. 569-570.
[244] J. Kechichian, A History of Sa'udi Arabia, *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 65, Issue 1, 2011, pp. 159-161.

Riyadh as a clear victory over the Al Rasheed dynasty.[245]A closer examination of the facts does not support this view. Ibn Sa'ud's victory was not perceived as such, although his claim to ancestral lands seemed to be understood abroad. Kemball (in his letter to the Government of India dated 19th February 1902) seems aware of the fact that Ibn Sa'ud's claim over Najd stemmed from his desire to "re-establish himself in the kingdom of his ancestors".[246] Nevertheless Kemball still thought that Ibn Sa'ud might be defeated by Ibn Rasheed. Ibn Sa'ud is also presented as a "direct descendant of the old Wahhabi Ameer's" in Najd in a detailed article in *The Standard* (3rd March 1902, Bombay),[247] inferring negative connotations since the Wahabi movement was seen as threatening to British interests. Ibn Sa'ud gained apparent control over the city for a short period of time but his position was not strong enough to oppose to Al Rasheed's army.[248] The Al Rasheed's governor of Riyadh was concealing himself in the fortress and reinforcements were expected from Hail. Despite this is has been argued by Linabury that the threats coming from Ibn Rasheed should not be overestimated.[249] Linabury[250] argues that Ibn Sa'ud gradually consolidated his position in Riyadh until the end of 1902 without any serious risk of invasion. Abedin[251] was convinced that the position of Ibn Sa'ud in Riyadh was desperate and hopeless. The apparent disagreement between authors indicates that there is no clear account as to the truth of the situation in Ryiadh.

This regional volatility represented a significant milestone in the shifting political relations of the region. These unstable conditions, in addition to the pressure of Ibn Rasheed's invasion, meant that it became expedient for Sheikh Mubarak to seek British support. The Foreign Office accordingly sent three ships to enter the Kuwait harbour to demonstrate Her Majesty's commitment to the Kuwaiti ruler.[252] The military forces of

[245] Almana, *Arabia Unified: Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud*, p.31.
[246] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, Primary Documents 1902-1960, Penelope Tuson and Anita Burdett (eds) vol. 2 1902-1918, Archive edition 1992, p. 15 (Enclosure 1 in no 122).
[247] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, Primary Documents 1902-1960, Penelope Tuson and Anita Burdett (eds) vol. 2 1902-1918, Archive edition 1992, p. 16.
[248] H. Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946*, (King's College London, 2002), pp. 2-344.
[249] G. Linabury, *British-Sa'udi Arab Relations, 1902-1927. A Revisionist Interpretation*, (Columbia University, Washington, 1970), p. 24.
[250] Linabury, *British-Sa'udi Arab Relations, 1902-1927. A Revisionist Interpretation*, p. 24.
[251] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946*, (King's College London, 2002), pp. 2-344.
[252] L. Turner, *The Political and Economic Impact of Sa'udi Arabia's Industrialization Policies*, (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, 1980), p. 25.

Ibn Rasheed stayed several miles away from Kuwait. As argued by Abedin:[253] "It was clear that British support made all the difference. Mubarak's special relationship had put off the Ottomans and deterred Ibn Rasheed. The drama was costly nevertheless for Mubarak. Although the Al-Rasheed were thwarted, he had risked his position in Kuwait, and could have provided the Turks with the excuse they sought to invade".[254]

Driven by Sheikh Mubarak's support, Ibn Sa'ud wished to make another attempt to capture Riyadh in 1901. However, Ibn Sa'ud was not able to gain support from the local tribes.[255] This was a significant problem for Ibn Sa'ud. With limited resources, especially manpower, it became expedient to seek tribal support via asserting publicly the intention and context of his military pursuit. Accordingly, in January 1902, Ibn Sa'ud entered Riyadh with a green banner, signifying that he had returned to the struggle for Islam and the principles of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (and thus the purified form of Islam for which al-Wahhab was the founder). This was an important strategic move, enabling Ibn Sa'ud to establish an ideological purpose. After the recapture of Riyadh, Ibn Sa'ud was appointed the Amir of the city. His father, Abdul Rahman, was honoured by being given the title: Imam. Ibn Sa'ud was driven by the objective of establishing close religious and political relationships in Riyadh; hence he sought to forge familial alliances, marrying the daughter of the principal judge. While Ibn Sa'ud's position in Riyadh was still threatened by the forces of Ibn Rasheed, his winning the country's first city was an ideological gain of immense moment. Ibn Sa'ud's victory was also a great symbolic loss for the Al Rasheed dynasty, which simultaneously bore the dishonour of having ceded the capital.[256]

The course of historic events that describe the capture of Riyadh is problematic partly because of the later nationalistic historiographical distortion.[257] Ibn Sa'ud himself represented the events in many different versions: an understandable outcome considering he necessarily had to trade on his reputation in order to advance his political and military objectives. It is important to acknowledge the difficulty of extracting

[253] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946', King's,* (College London, 2002), pp. 2-344.
[254] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946'*, p. 68.
[255] C. Lewis, Ibn Sa'ud and the Future of Arabia, *International Affairs*, Vol. 12, Issue 4, 1933, pp. 518-534.
[256] L. Turner, *The Political and Economic Impact of Sa'udi Arabia's Industrialization Policies*, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, (1980), p. 25.
[257] Determann, *Historiography in Sa'udi Arabia*, pp. 49-50.

consistent and stable information from inconsistent and volatile situations, such as warfare.

Meanwhile, the House of Al Rasheed was preparing another attack to take back Riyadh, with military support from Constantinople. The Ottoman Empire did not support Ibn Rasheed so as to avoid direct conflict with the British Empire.[258] While the British Empire and its political agents[259] in the Arabian Peninsula were closely observing these military movements, their grasp on the situation was incomplete. Indeed, the British only learned that Riyadh had been recaptured by Ibn Sa'ud, at the end of January in 1902.[260] Mubarak informed the British Political Residency in the Arabic Gulf -Kemball- that Ibn Sa'ud had taken control of Riyadh after killing Ibn Rasheed's representatives and a number of his supporters.[261] British representatives present in the Arabian Peninsula expressed strong doubts that Ibn Sa'ud's regime would survive.[262] Kemball sent a letter to the British Government of India confirming the information that Ibn Sa'ud controlled Riyadh and that there was a possibility to expand his control and re-establish his family rule over Arabia. He also indicated that Ibn might still be defeated by Bin Rasheed.From such exchanges it can be inferred that, during these early stages of Sa'ud's rise, the British did not perceive the power and the influence of Ibn Sa'ud as strong and long-lasting. This was an assumption supported by the fact that the military threats arising from the Al Rasheed dynasty were still a serious consideration. Indeed, it is likely that the British thought that Riyadh would be recaptured by Ibn Rasheed.[263] On 3rd March 1902, the UK-based newspaper *The Standard* reported the capture of Riyadh by Ibn Sa'ud under the title "A Fight in the Arabian Peninsula". It stated that the events were an attempt by the Sa'ud family to regain their sovereignty and to overthrow Ibn Rasheed, and that many of the tribes had followed Ibn Sa'ud.[264] The tone of this report in portraying Ibn Sa'ud's actions was

[258] G. Bell, 'A Journey in Northern Arabia',*The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 44, Issue 1, (1914), pp. 76-77.
[259] An agent was a political appointment of a person who acted as an envoy to the ruler of a region, often outside imperial territory, and who represented the interests of the British government in the area.
[260] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, Ungar, New York, (1964), p. 321.
[261] IOR: L/Pand S/7/142, a letter from Mubarak to Cox translated from Arabic to English and dated on 31st January 1902.
[262] Muinnuddin Khan & Harford Jones, 'A Diplomat's Report on Wahhabism of Arabia', *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, 1968, pp. 33-46.
[263] J. Kostiner, *The Making of Sa'udi Arabia 1916-1936*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, (1993), p. 23.
[264] IOR: L/P&S/3/389, Extract from (The Standard newspaper), dated 3 March 1902, under the title (fight in the Arabian Peninsula), this report provides information on the House of Sa'ud and the history of the

indicative of Britain's 'wait and see' approach. Its significance lay in the fact that the British government had no intention of being prematurely altruistic in its support of Ibn Sa'ud. Instead the reality of *realpolitik* mandated that the British government eventually ally itself with whichever faction emerged victorious. Any precipitate move to support Ibn Sa'ud could jeopardize this process if Ibn Rasheed was eventually victorious.

The contribution of Sheikh Mubarak to strengthening the position of the Al Sa'ud dynasty in Najd was considerable.[265] The British expected Mubarak to follow his interests in the Gulf. In a communication letter by Consul Wratislaw (from Basra written on 31st July 1902) Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor, the ambassador of Britain in Constantinople was informed that "Mubarak is notoriously aiding and abetting Ibn Sa'ud, who could have done little without his help". [266] This was an ongoing worry and growing concern for the British. In another letter from the Foreign Office to the India Office signed by Sanderson and dated 19th September 1902, the British not only disapproved but also advised "the Sheikh of Kuwait should be warned to abstain from encouraging any action likely to involve him in difficulties with the Imperial Ottoman Government or with the Emir of Najd".[267]

This example prompted Abdul Rahman to solicit the British protectorate himself. To this end, in 1902, Abdul Rahman, as representative of the Al Sa'ud dynasty, wrote to Kemnball informing him about the Russian interest in his case but officially requesting "of your Benevolent Government to consider me as one of their protected"[268] in the Arabian Peninsula.[269] It was essential for Abdul Rahman, if he wanted to secure an enduring hold in the region, to attract the attention and support of the British Empire.[270] However, the British did not take this proposal of Abdul Rahman seriously, deeming the Al Sa'ud dynasty's position in Najd as insufficiently strong, and further assumed that the Al Sa'ud family's hold in the region would be temporary.[271] Simultaneously, the Sa'udi dynasty attempted to form a strategic partnership with the Ottoman Empire to

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emergence of the Wahhabi movement and the first of Sa'udi Arabia state, as well as the conflict between Mubarak Al-Sabah Sheikh of Kuwait and the ibn Rasheed the Emir of Hail.

[265] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946*, (2002), pp. 2-344.

[266] Records of Sa'udi Arabia: no 174, p. 27.

[267] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, no 188, p. 27.

[268] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, dated 14th of May 1902 translated from Arabic, no 164, p. 21.

[269] E. Rutter, 'A Journey to Hail', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 80, Issue 4, (1932), pp. 325-331.

[270] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946*, (King's College London, 2002), p.70.

[271] W. Thesiger, A Journey through the Tihama, the 'Asir, and the Hijaz Mountains, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 110, Issue 4/6, (1947), pp. 188-200.

secure its interests.[272] The Ottomans were aware of Abdul Rahman's plans to capture Al-Hasa and consequently strengthened their presence in the coastal regions even more, in effect banking on a return to the status quo. Indeed, the Ottoman Empire awarded Ibn Rasheed with medals to demonstrate that the House of Al Rasheed was still the Ottomans' vassal and a strategic partner.[273]Again, these symbolic gestures were of great importance: the Ottomans' imperial patronage represented a clear statement of allegiance and thus of intent – a statement which logically backed up the British perception of Sa'ud's influence as only an interim digression in the assured reinstatement of that which had previously been the status quo.

It is reasonable to argue that both Abdul Rahman and Ibn Sa'ud were in a very complex situation. The British Empire and the Ottoman Empire pursued their own strategic interests in the Arabian Peninsula. This in turn meant that the House of Al Sa'ud needed to develop a weighted approach to their international relationships.[274] Moreover, the interests of the British conflicted with those of the Ottomans, and Ibn Sa'ud wished to choose the most reliable partners. The choice was made in the favour of the British Empire for several reasons. First, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was close and the British Empire was gaining more power in the Arabian Peninsula. Secondly, the British could provide Ibn Sa'ud with more technologically advanced military equipment.[275] Thirdly, the intensity of the conflict between the Ottomans and the House of Al Sa'ud was higher compared to the conflict between the house of Al Sa'ud and the British Empire.[276] Specifically, the Ottomans supported Ibn Rasheed who was the biggest enemy of Abdul Rahman and Ibn Sa'ud. Additionally, the British supported Kuwait, which had previously been strategic partner for the House of Al Sa'ud.[277] Finally, the British Empire commanded far superior naval power.[278]

Despite rebuffs from both the Ottomans and the British, Ibn Sa'ud and his father continued to gain power and influence in the region. Specifically, Ibn Sa'ud received

[272] J. Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (InfoBase Publishing, New York, 2010), p. 142.
[273] Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 142.
[274] F. Al-Nafjan, *The Origins of Sa'udi-American Relations: from recognition to diplomatic representation (1931-1943)*, E. Al Nafjan, Riyadh, (2009), p. 92.
[275] M. Harrison, *Sa'udi Arabia Foreign Policy: Relations with the Superpowers*, (University of Durham, Durham, 1995), p. 15.
[276] D. Silverfarb, Britain and Sa'udi Arabia on the Eve of the Second World War', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, Issue 4, (1983), pp. 403-411.
[277] M. Breacher, *The New States of Asia: A Political Analysis*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1963), p. 312.
[278] D. Potts, *The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1990), p. 35

support from the local tribes in Najd and their rulers. Ibn Sa'ud was, as a result able to capture several smaller cities in Najd in 1902.[279] Ibn Sa'ud's success in consolidating forces was not without mitigation, however. When Ibn Sa'ud came out from Kuwait with his followers, he failed to obtain the support of the families of Ajman: this rebuff signalled the limiting factor in Sa'ud's ability to augment his military capacity through strategic alliance alone. At this stage material incentives came into play, with Ibn Sa'ud gaining followers from groups of tribes -such as Al Murrah, Subaie, and Al-Suhoul. This came to be a central part of Sa'ud's strategy thereafter. The number of such groups increased until it reached 1000 knights riding camels and 400 knights riding horses. Sa'ud led them while invading through Al-Suman and Al-Dahna Desert together with the tribes of Qahtan until he reached Najd. Ibn Sa'ud returned to Al-Hasa to recuperate and reassess his military position. Finding terms advantageous to his cause, he proceeded to conquer the tribes of Qahtan near Sudair, and attacked and defeated the tribe of Matir. This was a huge bonus strategically, materially and with regard to reputation with Ibn Sa'ud's victories promulgated widely, he accumulated war-wealth and inspiring more recruits to join his cause.[280]

The British expected Mubarak to follow their own interests in the Gulf. These interests, as Hobson stated, were characterised by minimal response and/or informal patronage over some areas that could protect trade routes with the British colonies and provide 'material gain'.[281] In addition, Kuwait was clearly under their patronage. The British Empire had a sizeable navy in the Gulf[282] and used it to closely observe the military movements and invasions taking place there. However, the fact that Riyadh was recaptured by Ibn Sa'ud was learned by the British only at the end of January 1902.[283] This successful taking of the city by Ibn Sa'ud was perceived by the British as an independent act and decision. At the same time, the political agents of the British Empire that were present in the Arabian Peninsula expressed strong doubts that Ibn Sa'ud's regime would survive.[284] A historical document consisting of a letter from the

[279] H. Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud*, (Kegan Paul International, London, 1998), p. 34.
[280] H. Wahba, *[The Arabian Peninsula]*, pp. 244-246.
[281] Hobson, *Imperialism: A study*, p. 12.
[282] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, p. 32, (inclosure in No 2 letter by Commander Cartwright to Rear Admiral Drury).
[283] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, Ungar, New York, 1964, p. 321.
[284] M. Khan & H. Jones, A Diplomat's Report on Wahhabism of Arabia, *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, (1968), pp. 33-46.

Sheikh of Kuwait Mubarak to the British Political Resident of the Gulf (Bushehr) dated 31st January 1902 enclosed within another letter from Lieut-Col. Charles Arnold Kemball (British Political Resident in the Gulf, Bushehr) to H. S. Banes, the Secretary of the Indian Government's Political Department (Calcutta) on the 6th February 1902. In the letter the Sheikh of Kuwait informs the British Political Resident that Abdul-Aziz Al Sa'ud has taken complete control of Riyadh and his men have killed Bin Rasheed's worker; it also informs that the tribes of Najd have become affiliated to Ibn Sa'ud.[285]

Kemball also confirms in another letter dated 19th February 1902 the recapture of Riyadh by Ibn Sa'ud. These documents additionally mention that Imam Abdurrahman Al Faisal father of Abdul-Aziz (Ibn Sa'ud) received a monthly allowance from the Government of the Ottoman Empire and the possibility of Ibn Sa'ud establishing his ancestors' kingdom. The documents also highlighted the possibility of Bin Rasheed potentially defeating him.[286]

Up until Ibn Sa'ud's control of Riyadh, Britain and the other major powers did not pay much attention to either Ibn Sa'ud (considering him as a Wahhabi zealot) or Najd and the centre of the Arabian Peninsula; they were considered as only a barren desert area with a population predominantly comprised of Bedouins who were loyal to the heads of their tribes. As a result, Britain only kept a close eye on the developments in the Arabian Peninsula, especially after its alliance with the Sheikh of Kuwait. As seen in a letter sent on 31st July 1902 from the British Consul in Basra to the British Ambassador in Constantinople which indicated that Mubarak Al-Sabah, Sheikh of Kuwait, was providing effective help to Ibn Sa'ud and such interference could result in a direct involvement in the conflict between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed.[287] The British Foreign Ministry and the India Office notified and warned Mubarak Al-Sabah not to intervene in the conflict between Ibn Rasheed and Ibn Sa'ud in order to not cause trouble with the Ottomans or with Ibn Rasheed. This was also supported by the Secretary of India, Lord George Hamilton,[288] in a letter sent to Kemball asking him to

[285] 142/7/S&P/L, dated 31st January 1902.
[286] FO12/20/S&P/L, dated 19th February 1902.
[287] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from A. C. Wratislaw the British consul in Basra to Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor The British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 31st July 1902.
[288] Hamilton, Lord George Francis (1845–1927), From 1895 Hamilton was Secretary of State for India, a post he held for a record eight years. He was a diligent defender of the independence of Indian government, even against the cabinet, but was able, when Lord Elgin was viceroy, discreetly to steer Indian policy from London. From 1899, when Curzon succeeded Elgin, relations deteriorated, and

warn Mubarak Al-Sabah not to carry out any actions that could cause trouble with Ibn Rasheed or with the Ottoman authorities.[289]

Ibn Sa'ud persisted in his overtures toward the British Empire. Specifically, he sent a letter to the British Political Resident in the Gulf, Lieut-Col. Charles Arnold Kemball, asking the British government to trust him as a man with whom they could form close relations.[290] He also mentioned that he had turned down an offer of help by a senior Russian official while he was in Kuwait. However, the British government decided to ignore Ibn Sa'ud's letter, and instructed Kemball not to provide Ibn Sa'ud with any kind of encouragement, in line with the policy of the British government not to interfere in the internal affairs of Najd. Further evidence of the early requests by the Sa'ud family to establish relations with the British government include a telegram sent by Kemball on 22nd May 1902 to the Indian British government informing them that he received a letter from Imam Abdul-Rahman stating his intention to leave Kuwait and head to Riyadh, and asking to establish a close relationship with the British government. In this telegram, Kemball mentioned that it was difficult to predict the chances of the Sa'ud family's success in regaining power. However, he stated that the fact that Ibn Sa'ud had managed to keep hold of Riyadh for a relatively long period suggested that his efforts could be successful. This juncture represents a significant recalibration of British assessment of Sa'ud's position, where the latter's position has progressed from being seen as probably temporary to being difficult to predict. Kebmall consequently recommended that Britain should remain neutral and that he was not going to respond to the Imam's letter, thereby effectively hedging Britain's bets.[291] It is clear from these letters and the British reaction that Britain had elected to ignore the Sa'ud family's early attempts to establish a relationship during the period after Ibn Sa'ud's control over Riyadh. This was largely due to the British policy of not interfering in the affairs of Najd in order to avoid any problems with the Ottoman Empire. It can be further argued

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Hamilton could not prevent the feud between viceroy and Kitchener as army commander. He published in 1916 and 1922 two discreet volumes of autobiography. He died in London, on 22nd September 1927; John Ramsden, 'Hamilton, Lord George Francis (1845–1927)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33667, accessed 1 Feb 2017].

[289] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A telegram from the Minister of India Lord George Hamilton in to the British Government of India, (Simla), dated 22nd September 1902.

[290] J. Lorimar, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman and Central Arabia* (Calcutta: superintendent Government Printing, 1908), Arabic edition, p. 1719-1720.

[291] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, Telegram from Lieut-Col. Charles Arnold Kemball The British Political Resident in the Gulf Acting British Government of India (Simla), dated Shiraz on 22nd May 1902; Also L/P&S/20/FO12, dated 23rd May 1902.

that Britain's oppositional stance toward the Ottomans - as well as its policy of neutrality in Najd, made it more politically expedient to wait until the scales had tipped in one direction or the other. The region's incertitude had, after all, frustrated earlier efforts at forecasting probable outcomes.

The strengthening of the alliance between Ibn Rasheed and the Ottomans made the dividing lines even clearer between the Ottoman Empire and the House of Sa'ud. This rendered the British Empire a more appealing ally to Sa'ud. Ibn Rasheed realised that an attack against Riyadh had become necessary. He headed towards Riyadh, but was tricked by Ibn Sa'ud, to proceed to the region south of Riyadh near the village of Dilam, where a battle took place in November 1902. The battle of Dilam ended with a limited victory for Ibn Sa'ud and resulted in the withdrawal of Ibn Rasheed and his followers to Al-Hafr north of Riyadh. Ibn Sa'ud's victory in the Battle of Dilam was reported in a British document, whilst a letter from Ibn Sa'ud to the Sheikh of Kuwait informed the latter of his victory was noted along with a comment that it was likely that the Sheikh of Kuwait was going to declare his open support for Ibn Sa'ud despite a British warning for him not to intervene in the conflict between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed.[292] Following the Battle of Dilam, Arab tribes congratulated Ibn Sa'ud and declared their support and allegiance to him.[293] The battle of Dilam weakened Ibn Rasheed's position in the region, and boosted that of Ibn Sa'ud's and helped him to expand his authority in the northern areas of Riyadh. Consequently, a new balance of power had been established in the region.

One of the research objectives of this doctoral project is to evaluate the impact of the British-Saudi relationship on the evolution and survivability of the Ibn Sa'ud regime. It can be summarised that at the early stages, the British did not perceive the power and the influence of Ibn Sa'ud as likely to be either strong or long-lasting. This position is explained by the fact that the military threats arising from the Al Rasheed dynasty were still high. It was highly probable that Riyadh would be recaptured by Ibn Rasheed.[294]

[292] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A letter from M. G. Cartwright the commander of the British ship "Cusack and the highest British naval officers in the Gulf to Drury Rear-Admiral (Bushehr) dated 21st November 1902.
[293] For further information of this battle details, as the preparation of armies and the names of the famous dead, take a look on a letter from the news agent in Kuwait to the Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf, dated 23rd November 1902, and the letter footnote says it has reached Almqimih on 2nd December 1902, IOR: R/15/1/475 and the date 23rd November 1902. Also there is information about this battle in a telegram from the British Government of India to Lord George Hamilton the Minister of India, dated 11th December 1902, IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12.
[294] Kostiner, *The Making of Sa'udi Arabia 1916-1936*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993), p. 23.

Overall, the period from 1900 to 1902 was marked by a high degree of uncertainty in British relations with the Arabs of the Gulf. [295] This also describes the nature of the relationship between the British and Ibn Sa'ud. Abdul Rahman and Ibn Sa'ud had made several attempts to contact the representatives of the British Empire and ask for protectorate status. Nonetheless, these attempts failed because the Al Sa'udi position in Riyadh was not strong enough. The British viewed Ibn Sa'ud only as a temporary partner who was not beneficial to them.[296] After Ibn Sa'ud's position in Najd had strengthened, the political agents of the British Empire started perceiving the intentions of the House of Sa'ud more seriously, and the correspondence between these agents – Kemball and Ibn Sa'ud- offers a first-hand account of an example of New Imperialism.[297] Even though the survivability of the Ibn Sa'ud regime was estimated as low, the British viewed Ibn Sa'ud as a potential leader who could resist the influence of the Ottoman Empire in the region and expand its political and military influence. Ibn Sa'ud, was also proven to be more of a strategist than a simple man. In addition, after Ibn Sa'ud's recapture of Riyadh, his army moved to annex the provinces of Al Washam, Alshu'aib, Almahmal[298] and Alsser South of Al-Qassim, and thus his emirate expanded to the borders of Al-Qassim.

Mubarak's actions against the expressed wishes of the British appears significant during Ibn Sa'ud attempts to consolidate his power. In this early phase, alliances and relationships between the dominant imperial powers (British and Ottomans) evolved around the principle of protecting the spatial and political status quo. However, both imperial powers underestimated the persistence and actions of a smaller player, Ibn Sa'ud, expecting that the leader with the bigger army and territory, Ibn Rasheed, would prevail. Nevertheless, by 1904 Ibn Sa'ud had extended not only his relationships with old friends like Mubarak but also his territory ruling over Al Quassim and gaining support from a number of tribes of Arabia.

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[295] G. Cetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908*, (Routledge, London, 2006), p. 140.
[296] G. Clayton, 'Arabia and the Arabs', *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, Issue 1, (1929), pp. 8-20.
[297] Hobson, Imperialism: A study; Hunt, Hobson, Lennin and Anti-Imperialism in BBC radio 3 (6th March 2011).
[298] For more detailed information see: Al Abdulmohsen, bin Obaid, *[forbidding first ticket and gratitude]*,c 2, p. 5; Al-Mukhtar, *[History of Sa'udi Arabia in the Past and Present]*, c 2, p52; J. Ibrahim, *[Historical Atlas]*, p. 139.

1.2. Russian Attempts to Establish a Relationship with Ibn Sa'ud

Shortly after the Sa'ud family took control of Riyadh, the Russians attempted to establish a connection with them. Scholars[299] have noticed that during a brief visit by Ibn Sa'ud to Kuwait to transport the remaining members of his family back to Riyadh, he was visited by the Russian Consul in Bushehr who arrived on a navy boat (Boyarin) along with the commander of the boat and a number of military Russian officers.[300] The commander of the boat stated in a report: "we talked, of course, about the [Ibn Sa'ud's] recent victory. Ibn Sa'ud said in this regard that the case would have been over much sooner, but for the continued secret help offered by the Ottomans to Ibn Rasheed among which were two cannons. Despite an understanding between the Ottomans and the British of not interfering in Najd, the Ottomans continued to support Ibn Rasheed in order to prevent the Wahhabis from controlling Najd and taking it from the rule of the Ottoman Empire". The commander also stated that Ibn Rasheed was defeated and retreated to the area of 'Jabal Shammar', and that most of the tribes sided with Ibn Sa'ud. He also reported on the happiness and joy of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah after the victory of Ibn Sa'ud over their opponent Ibn Rasheed.

When the British government found out, it explained to Ibn Sa'ud the danger of the interference of foreign countries in the affairs of Najd and advised him not to accept any offers made by Russians.[301] It is clear that the meeting between the Russians and Ibn Sa'ud is what most sources refer to, and that Russia had offered its help and support to Ibn Sa'ud who, as events showed, declined to accept the offer.[302] It was stated in a report by Lieut. Armstrong[303] that the Russian Consul in Bushehr went to Kuwait in December and offered Imam Abdul-Rahman support and protection; but Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah convinced the Imam not to accept the Russian help. Instead Imam

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[299] J. Lorimar, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman and Central Arabia* (Calcutta: superintendent Government Printing, 1908), Arabic edition, p. 1145-1146; Al-Ghannaam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment..]*, pp. 56-57. *Razhvan, [Russian ships in the Gulf]*, p. 158.

[300] Linabury, *British – Sa'udi Arab Relations, 1902-1927: A Revisionist Interpretation*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1973), p. 25.

[301] G, Saldanha, *The Political History of Kuwait in the Mubarak era*, comments by: Alchterh Fattouh, (1985), pp. 247-248.

[302] Al-Ghannam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment]*, p.57.

[303] IOR: L/P&S/3/391, A report prepared by the British senior of the naval officers, Lieut. J. Armestrang, in the Arabian Gulf addressed to the General Commander of the British Navy in the East Indies, dated 27th May 1902, and is attached with a letter signed by Evan MacGregor in the British Navy Admiralty, the Undersecretary of the British India Office, dated 19th July 1902.

Abdul-Rahman requested support and protection from the British government due to his fear of the Ottomans, whom he believed, supported his opponent Ibn Rasheed.

Further evidence of Russian's attempt to develop a relationship with the House of Sa'ud was a letter from Ovssenko, the Russian general consul in Bushehr, to Mubarak Al-Sabah, Sheikh of Kuwait on 16th March 1902, in which he thanked him for the good treatment that Russian navy officers had received in Kuwait. In this letter, he sent his greetings to Imam Abdul-Rahman. Ovssenko sent another letter to Sheikh Al-Sabah informing him of an intended visit to Kuwait by a Russian doctor.[304] It is worth mentioning that the Russian animal scientist, Bogoea Flanski, who visited Bahrain in April 1902, stated that the Sheikh of Darren, Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahab, had given him a message on behalf of Imam Abdul-Rahman to Ovseenko, the Russian consul in Busheher. However, there was no mention of the content of this letter.[305] Another document, which was dated 14th May 1902, included a letter from Imam Abdul-Rahman to Charles Arnold Kemball, the British Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf. This letter stated that the Russian consul in Bushehr visited Imam Abdul-Rahman and asked him to write a letter explaining the ill-treatment he had received from the Ottomans, and their support of his rival Ibn Rasheed. However, Abdul-Rahman refused to engage with any power other than the British government.[306] Such evidence supports the idea that there was a newly developing relationship between Russia and Abdul-Aziz. This is further enhanced by the details mentioned in the translated letter from Ovseenko the General Russian Consul in Bushehr to Mubarak Al Subah Sheikh of Kuwait, dated 16th March 1902.[307] In this letter the Russian Consul thanks Sheikh Mubarak for the good treatment received by the Russian Cruiser Officials in Kuwait, as well as expressing his greetings to Sheikh Jaber and Sheikh Abdurrahman Bin Faisal father of Abdul-Aziz. Another document mentions the intention of one doctor visiting Kuwait who sends his greetings to both Sheikh Jaber and Sheikh Abdurrahman Bin Faisal, the father of Abdul-Aziz.[308]

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[304] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, Translation to English for the message from Ovseenko the Consul of Russian in (Bushehr) to Mubarak Al-Sabah Sheikh of Kuwait, dated 23 March 1902.
[305] Al Ghannam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment]*, p. 55; Razvan, *[Russian ships in the Gulf]*, p. 111.
[306] IOR: R/15/1/475, A message of Imam Abdurrahman Al Sa'ud to Lieut. Col. Charles Arnold Kemball British Political Resident in the Gulf, which is stamped with the seal of Imam Abdulrahman, written in Arabic, and translation to English, dated Kuwait on 14th May 1902.
[307] FO12/20/S&P/L, dated 16th March 1902.
[308] FO12/20/S&P/L, dated 23rd March 1902.

The Russians' desire to be involved in the Arab affairs makes for an intriguing sub-plot. Interestingly, Sheikh Mubarak introduced Ibn Sa'ud to a Russian Consul who wished to offer Russian patronage to the House of Al Sa'ud. Furthermore, Muhammad Al Sa'ud, the brother of Ibn Sa'ud, contacted a French Captain in 1903 to request support. This was a strategic ploy organised to "provoke" the British Empire and demonstrate that the latter could miss its chance to establish formal relations with the increasingly powerful Al Sa'ud dynasty. Hence Ibn Sa'ud employed a shrewd strategy simulating interest in allegiances that would undermine Britain's position in the region.

In March 1903, Ibn Sa'ud, in the presence of Sheikh Mubarak, met with Commander Kemball who represented the British Empire. Mubarak asserted that Ibn Sa'ud wished to receive the British Empire's military assistance and patronage.[309] However, it was also mentioned by Sheikh Mubarak that the Russians had provided money and assistance to the House of Al Sa'ud against the Al Rasheed dynasty.[310] Sheikh Mubarak expected that Commander Kemball would not miss this "opportunity" and would offer a formal partnership to Ibn Sa'ud. In turn, Ibn Sa'ud said that he would have fought against the Ottoman Empire more effectively if British patronage had been provided. Regardless of the fact that Commander Kemball was concerned by these political wranglings, he could not guarantee that the British would provide the support Sa'ud desired.[311] Overall, the implications of the Russian involvement are significant since Ibn Sa'ud tried to use it to lure the British interest towards his cause. Although the official stance of the British Government remained unchanged, the policy deployed got British attention the sympathy of Kemball for his cause.

1.3. Ibn Sa'ud's Annexation of Al-Qassim and the British Position (1903-1904)

1.3.1. Ibn Sa'ud's Progress towards Al-Qassim

The house of Sa'ud made several attempts to establish a relationship with the British Empire in 1902 and early 1903.[312] However, these attempts were not successful. The

[309] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, (Ungar, New York, 1964), p. 321.
[310] Al-Nafjan, *The Origins of Sa'udi-American Relations: from recognition to diplomatic representation 1931-1943*, (Eman Al Nafjan, Riyadh), 2009, p. 92.
[311] J. Kechichian, 'A History of Sa'udi Arabia', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 65, Issue 1, (2011), pp. 159-161.
[312] G. Nonneman, Sa'udi-European Relations 1902-2001: A Pragmatic Quest for Relative Autonomy', International Affairs, Vol. 77, Issue 3, (2001), pp. 631-661.

main barrier to British-Sa'udi relations at this stage was that the British Empire did not consider Ibn Sa'ud and his father to be permanent and reliable partners.[313] The period from 1903 to 1904 nevertheless marked an important turning point in regional events, with Ibn Sa'ud consolidating his power in the Arabian Peninsula, and the British Empire undertaking a re-evaluation of its view of the role of the House of Sa'ud in regional affairs.[314]

During this time, Ibn Rasheed was still a powerful actor in Najd and this jeopardised the development and security of Kuwait. It also constituted a significant threat to Sa'ud's political ambitions. Ibn Rasheed represented the paramount threat to the House of Sa'ud's ascendancy, not only because Ibn Rasheed was an influential, powerful figure in the region, but also because his military means, with Ottoman backing, amounted to an existential threat to the house of Sa'ud. The military assistance of the British Empire was, consequently, a primary goal for Ibn Sa'ud's. Such support would be a great boon in the struggle with Ibn Rasheed; moreover, it would counteract the hegemonic power of the Ottomans' support for Ibn Rasheed. In addition, Sheikh Mubarak would benefit from the suppression of the house of Al Rasheed;[315] thus Sheikh Mubarak arguably saw Ibn Sa'ud as a sort of shield for his own interests and territorial safety.

A principle challenge to British-Sa'udi relations was the irregular nature of communications between Ibn Sa'ud and political agents of the British Empire. All the meetings hitherto mentioned within this chapter occurred when Ibn Sa'ud arrived in Kuwait.[316]However, the Governor of Riyadh could not be absent from his throne city for a long period of time because it left the city exposed. Ibn Rasheed was well aware of this vulnerability and capitalised on it in 1903 when Ibn Sa'ud was in Kuwait attacking Riyadh.[317] The spring and the summer of 1903 were marked by continuous conflicts between Ibn Rasheed and the Sa'udi army, creating a constant state of volatility which destabilised the region. The situation was still too uncertain for Britain to come down on either side. [318]

[313] D. Hogarth, *The Arab world today*, (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 1926), pp. 406-414.
[314] J. Baldry, 'British Naval Operations against Turkish Yaman 1914-1919', *Arabica*, Vol. 25, Issue 2, (1978), pp. 148-197.
[315] Baldry, 'British Naval Operations against Turkish Yaman 1914-1919', pp. 148-197.
[316] W. Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (ABC-CLIO, New York, 2014), p. 103.
[317] Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 103.
[318] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, p. 34, No 51 and p. 35, No 35.

Mubarak's intention to assist Ibn Sa'ud seems constant[319] in his competition with the house of Al Rasheed, however, represented a challenge to the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the British Empire which the British could not safely ignore.[320] For this reason, the British Ambassador in Constantinople decided to exert control over Kuwaiti support of Ibn Sa'ud. Officially, Sheikh Mubarak refused to recognise his involvement in the war between the houses of Al Sa'ud and Al Rasheed. However, it was obvious to the British Empire that Kuwait was assisting their old friend, Ibn Sa'ud.[321] These suspicions forced Nicolas O'Connor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, to move to Kuwait from Constantinople in order to seek to exert some measure of control over Sheikh Mubarak's ambitions.[322] This suggests that the British were aware of the growing power of Ibn Sa'ud in Najd and wished to limit his influence in order to avoid possible conflicts with the Ottoman Empire. Ibn Rasheed represented the Ottoman Empire and was still faithful to it. On the other hand, the official representation in Kuwait and the appointment of a political agent of the British Empire there would mean changing the status quo, a step the British considered too radical to take at that juncture.[323]

The beginning of 1904 witnessed new military conflicts between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. In January 1904, the army of Ibn Rasheed approached the borders of Kuwait. However, Ibn Rasheed could not simply enter Kuwait without the permission of their stronger strategic partner, the Ottoman Empire. Given that the relationship between Kuwait and the British Empire were obvious, the Ottomans were expected to authorise the invasion.[324] However, no such permission was given and Ibn Rasheed had to return to Hail. From an external perspective, and especially from the vantage of Ibn Sa'ud, this refusal undermined Ibn Rasheed's position; weakening the value of his supposed Ottoman patronage. That said, it is questionable whether the Ottomans could have given Ibn Rasheed such permission to enter Kuwait and openly confront Sheikh Mubarak without greatly exacerbating tensions between themselves and the British Empire.[325] In

[319] Records of Sa'udi Arabia p. 35 inclosure in No 30.
[320] Aldamer, *Sa'udi British relations, 1939-1953*,(Durham Theses, 2001), pp. 2-381.
[321] Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud*, (Kegan Paul International, London, 1998), p. 34.
[322] L. Frank, The First Oil Regime, *World Politics*, Vol. 37, Issue 4, (1985), pp. 586-598.
[323] G. Gause, 'The Foreign Policy of Sa'udi Arabia: The Formative Years, 1902-1918', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, Issue 4, (1989), pp. 569-570.
[324] P. Woodward, *Oil and Labor in the Middle East: Sa'udi Arabia and the Oil Boom*, Praeger, New York, (1988), p. 34.
[325] W. Langer, 'Some Recent Books on International Relations', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 12, Issue 1, (1934), pp. 689-692.

a telegram from the Indian Governor to Mr Broderick representations to the Ottomans are suggested in order to advise them not to interfere in the tensions in Najd; otherwise the British would have to respond.[326] Even though Ibn Rasheed was not able to follow through on his intentions, his actions nevertheless evidenced the fact that he was a real military threat to both Ibn Sa'ud and Sheikh Mubarak.[327] In a telegram, dated February 1904, from O'Connor, the British Ambassador, to the Marquis Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, the former expressed a belief that the Ottoman Sultan would hesitate to send troops to Najd because this would help increase the unrest there. The reply from the British government to Ambassador O'Connor was to inform the Porte not to help Ibn Rasheed, the Prince of Najd, since increasing his power would be a threat to Kuwait. The government also asked him also to remind the Ottoman government of the Ottoman-British memorandum of understanding issued in October 1901 whereby both parties agreed that the British government exerted power over Mubarak Al-Sabah, while the Ottoman government exerted power over Ibn Rasheed in order to preserve stability.[328]

Meanwhile, Ibn Sa'ud intended to expand his presence in the Arabian Peninsula and capture the central part of Arabia. The Governor of Riyadh approached Al-Qassim in May of the same year, seeking to check the level of internal divisions.[329] The first battle for Al-Qassim was won decisively by Ibn Sa'ud's forces, with one of the enemy army's leaders being killed. The death of this leader demoralised Ibn Rasheed as well as other military officials in Hail.[330] Al-Qassim and central Arabia were consequently kept under Ibn Sa'ud's control between March and April 1904. Regardless of the fact that Ibn Sa'ud's military campaign in Al-Qassim was successful; reinforcements from the Ottomans were expected. As a result, Ibn Sa'ud knew he would face a struggle for the independence of his state.[331] At the same time, the power and military skills of the Governor had proved considerable: a fact underlined by Ibn Sa'ud's forces defeating a far more professional and organised military in Al-Qassim.[332]

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[326] Records of Sa'udi Arabia p. 36 inclosure in No 37.
[327] Frank, 'The First Oil Regime', *World Politics*, Vol. 37, Issue 4, (1985), pp. 586-598
[328] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders- The Story of borders and territorial sovereignty in the Gulf]*, (Saqi Books, London. 2014), p.180; Bidwell, vol II, Part VI. pp.11-12.
[329] D. Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Sa'udi Arabia*, (I.B. Tauris, London, 2006), p. 276.
[330] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946* , p. 70
[331] J. Philby, 'Arabia To-Day', *International Affairs*, Vol. 14, Issue 5, 1935, pp. 619-634.
[332] J. Goldberg, 'Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud: A Balanced Reappraisal', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22, Issue 1, (1986), pp. 74-88.

Despite Ibn Sa'ud's capturing of Al-Qassim, the Ottoman Empire did not authorise Ibn Rasheed's invasion of Kuwait. The British presence in Kuwait was still strong enough that the Ottomans were wary of the consequences of such permission, not wishing to force Britain's hand by giving incentive for direct confrontation. It is important to consider that such expedience on the Ottomans' part was born of a defensive position, in that the Empire was, at this period in time, on its last legs and therefore in no position to overtly challenge Britain's power.[333] In May 1904, Ibn Sa'ud asked for British protection again. The Governor of Riyadh understood that the Ottoman Empire and Al Rasheed would unite their military forces and would attempt to force him out of Al-Qassim.[334] A week after this request the Ottoman army joined Ibn Rasheed near the city of Buraidah. The Ottomans brought highly trained, professional contingent, artillery and more than 2000 soldiers.[335] This battle was especially important in determining the future balance of power in the region. Ibn Sa'ud himself was wounded and many soldiers from the Sa'udi army were killed in the battle. Nevertheless, frequent conflicts between the Ottomans and Ibn Rasheed demoralised their army and Ibn Sa'ud capitalised on this and gained advantage.[336]

Within these complex conditions, the position of the British Empire and the British Foreign Office was unclear. According to the agreement that was signed in 1901, both the British Empire and the Ottoman Empire were supposed to prevent conflicts between Sheikh Mubarak and the House of Al Rasheed. However, nothing was mentioned concerning the hostilities between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed.[337] The British accordingly attempted to convince Sheikh Mubarak to avoid the conflict, hoping that this show of British power would result in a similar response from the Ottomans with respect to Al Rasheed. From the British point of view, though, there were still more benefits from maintaining the status quo rather than sponsoring Sa'ud – even if such support would diminish Turkish influence in the region. It has been argued that if Mubarak was prevented from helping Ibn Sa'ud, it would allow the Turks to gain supremacy in Najd.[338] It seems that this was indeed the case since ultimately this would weaken Mubarak's position and might even lead to an attack on Kuwait - which would

[333] Bell, 'A Journey in Northern Arabia', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 44, Issue 1, (1914), pp. 76-77.
[334] Abedin, *Ibn Sa'ud Al-Sa'ud and the Great Game in Arabia, 1896-1946* , p. 70
[335] Silverfarb, *British Relations With Ibn Sa'ud Of Najd 1914-1919*, (Ph.D. Thesis, The University of Wisconsin, 1972), p.12.
[336] J. Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (Infobase Publishing, New York, 2010), p. 142.
[337] Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud*, p. 34.
[338] Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 142.

bring Britain into direct conflict with the Ottoman Empire. That was more objectionable than the re-establishment of the Al Sau'd dynasty, which was seen as less fanatical than territorial.[339] Hence a key British policy priority was to avoid open conflict with the Ottoman Empire, which is clearly evident in the correspondence between the Government of India and Broderick: in this telegram, concerns are expressed about the level of support to Ibn Rasheed by the Ottomans and there is also comment that if it continues the British might ask Sigh Mubarak to provide 'active assistance against the Turks'. Nevertheless it was also the case that, at this time (May 1904), the British seemed not to be in danger of losing their authority in Kuwait and were more concerned with this than the 're-establishment of the Wahhabi dynasty'.[340] However, they were also pondering the possibility of providing military assistance to Ibn Sa'ud via Kuwait, either by importing arms or relaxing the measures then in place which prevented the arms trade in the region. In the event, they decided not to do so until they had a clearer picture about the Ottoman support to Ibn Rasheed.[341] By summer 1904, the British were not aware of any immediate threat to their authority by Ibn Sa'ud. In addition they were using the territorial fights to negotiate with the Ottomans the extent of control over Kuwait, because 'Kuwait is an enclave in Turkish territory with no defined boundaries'[342] especially 'towards the interior'.[343]

In August 1904, Ibn Rasheed continued searching for the opportunity to destroy his enemy, Ibn Sa'ud. Simultaneously, the Ottomans provided Ibn Rasheed with new soldiers, and military equipment.[344] This supply of men and equipment from the Ottoman Empire prompted Ibn Rasheed to lead new attacks against Sa'ud's forces. However, these efforts were hampered by the low morale of the Turkish soldiers, who were demoralised as a consequence of the previous defeats that they had suffered. This morale deficit was made worse by Ibn Rasheed's harsh and severe military command.[345] Further, Ibn Rasheed's treatment of Turkish soldiers, compared to that which he exerted over his own Bedouin loyalists, was perceived as unfair, further demoralising the

[339] Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 78.
[340] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, p. 52 inclosure in No54.
[341] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, p. 52 inclosure in No54 and p. 53, No 55.
[342] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, p. 43, No 51.
[343] Records of Sa'udi Arabia, p. 52 inclosure in No54.
[344] P. Woodward, *Oil and Labor in the Middle East: Sa'udi Arabia and the Oil Boom*, (Praeger, New York, 1988), p. 34.
[345] M. Khan & H. Jones, 'A Diplomat's Report on Wahhabism of Arabia', *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, (1968), pp. 33-46.

contingent.[346] By September 1904, the situation became increasingly bleak for Ibn Rasheed, who, planning to attack a village, saw many of his now highly demoralised Turkish soldiers flee from the battlefield. As a result, many Ottoman captains, majors and lieutenants were killed by Ibn Sa'ud. This defeat was a humiliation for the Ottoman Empire in general and Ibn Rasheed in particular.[347] It demonstrated that Ottoman support was increasingly irrelevant; Turkish forces had lost the will to fight, and that, as the corollary of both, Ibn Rasheed was an ineffectual commander. This kind of defeat logically damaged Ibn Rasheed's ability to win hearts and minds in the region; it made him and his patrons look weak. Disinformation was spread to hide the defeat; but the victory of Ibn Sa'ud was obvious. Of key importance, here, was the Ottomans' apparent weakness, which further cleared the way for Ibn Sa'ud to gain regional influence, a factor that was augmented by a revolt in Yemen that diverted Ottoman forces away from Central Arabia.

Ibn Sa'ud's father sent a letter to the British Resident in Bushehr dated 1st May 1904 asking for British support to oppose the invasion of the Ottoman army that was coming to support Bin Rasheed. In the event, the British remained neutral, rebuffing requests for military assistance from Ibn Sa'ud. Furthermore, they restrained help and involvement from Kuwait.[348]

In summary, the period from 1903 to 1904 was marked by the non-involvement of the British Empire in Sa'udi affairs. Importantly, it was during this time that the British Empire ceased to consider Ibn Sa'ud an unimportant political stakeholder in the Arabian Peninsula. Ibn Sa'ud had captured central Arabia by the end of 1904. By this time, with Ottoman influence much diminished in Najd, the Ottomans at last extended diplomatic overtures to Ibn Sa'ud, hoping thereby to maintain some degree of influence in the region: whereupon the Turks kept overall control while Ibn Sa'ud would be made Governor of Najd. The readiness of the Ottoman Empire to establish an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud was important insofar as it made such an alliance similarly expedient for the

[346] E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam*, (Ungar, New York, 1964), p. 321.
[347] R. Coase, 'The Institutional Structure of Production', *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 82, Issue 4, (1992), pp. 713-719.
[348] R/15/1/476 on 1 May 1904 and in Records of Sa'udi Arabia page 52 inclosure in No54 and page 53, No 55.

British. However, Sheikh Mubarak as well as the British did not want Ibn Sa'ud to cooperate with the Turks.[349]

The end of 1904 was marked by further attempts by Ibn Sa'ud and his father Abdul Rahman to establish relations with the Ottoman Empire. These actions were motivated by Ibn Sa'ud's intention to diversify his allies and reduce his dependence on Kuwait and Sheikh Mubarak. The Sharif of Mecca was employed by Ibn Sa'ud to channel his communications with Constantinople. During this time, Ibn Sa'ud attempted to convince the Sultan that he had not meant to fight against the Ottoman Empire.[350] He also returned the ammunition and rifles that belonged to the Ottoman army. Thus Ibn Sa'ud was assuming a more circumspect, strategically and diplomatically minded approach to extending his influence. A similar position was demonstrated by Abdul Rahman. The latter announced himself to be a faithful vassal of the Sultan. Both Ibn Sa'ud and Abdul Rahman accused Ibn Rasheed of spoiling the relationship between the House of Al Sa'ud and the Ottoman Empire.[351] Moreover, it was unacceptable for the Al Sa'ud dynasty to establish relations with Al Rasheed and the Ottomans at the same time. In turn, it was in the Ottomans' interest to resolve the conflict between the Al Sa'ud dynasty and the Al Rasheed dynasty because this opposition could attract the British Empire to the Arabian Peninsula.[352] In short, the Turks wished to prevent the British initiatives in the Arabian Peninsula.[353]

It follows, that the British Empire did not contribute to the formation of an independent Sa'udi state in the early stages. Evidently, this was much to do with a desire on the part of the British to uphold the status quo as well as their desire not to interfere until one side was evidently stronger. The ambiguous position of the British Empire was also partially a consequence of the complex diplomatic relations that existed between the British and Ottoman Empires. These parties had agreed not to provoke or encourage the rivalry between Sheikh Mubarak and the House of Al Rasheed. No agreement had been made with respect to Ibn Sa'ud.[354] Nevertheless, the

[349] A. Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Post-War Imperialism*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1984), p. 175.
[350] G. de Gaury, 'The End of Arabian Isolation', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 25, Issue 1, (1946), pp. 82-89.
[351] Hogarth, 'The Arab world today', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, (1926), pp. 406-414.
[352] W. Langer, 'Some Recent Books on International Relations', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 12, Issue 1, (1934), pp. 689-692.
[353] J. Kendall, The New A-Z of Empire: A Concise Handbook of British Imperial History', *Reference Reviews*, Vol. 26, Issue 4, (2012), pp. 61-62.
[354] M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, (Knopf, New York, 1930), p. 64.

absence of a specific agreement was not equivalent to the presence of tacit support or opposition. Rather, the British seemed to favour letting the situation play out: this serviced the policy and appearance of neutrality as well as allowing for regional conflicts to lessen the strength of potential challengers to Britain's power in the Arabian Peninsula. From a transnational perspective it demonstrated how complex relationships were negotiated constantly between individuals, organisations, empires and other entities where everybody involved pursued individual and personalised agendas. Political attitudes, imperial plans and local territorial claims were entangled and overlapped. Into this complex web of intricacies Ibn Sa'ud constantly tried to pursue his vision against greater and far more experienced empires.

1.3.2. Battles of Al-Qassim and the British position

It is crucial to understand the British position, which was largely oriented around a strategy of minimising the influence of imperial rivals. This explains the desire of the British government in India not to provoke the old Ottoman Empire: lest it might throw itself into the arms of Germany. Further, Britain wanted to keep control of those coastal areas it commanded, east and west of the Arabian Peninsula, areas which would have been of strategic interest for Ibn Sa'ud.

A report by Curzon, Viceroy of India, dated 26th March 1904 addressed the political situation in the Arabian Peninsula.[355] Curzon stated that relationships with the House of Sa'ud broke off after the Turks took control of Al-Hasa and advised that Britain should actually begin re-establishing relations with Najd. This counsel was premised on one important point: the Ottoman Empire had built a railway in Hejaz, which offered the potential of eventual extension to Najd, thus allowing Ottoman influence to expand. Britain, he advised, should take a more active role in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. Moreover, Curzon referred to the meeting between Ibn Sa'ud and the captains of two Russian ships, *Infret* and *Boyarin* when he (Ibn Sa'ud) was in Kuwait in March 1903. Curzon proffered that this meeting could lead to Russian intervention in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. Curzon ended the report by stressing the importance of having close relations with the central Arabian Peninsula, especially in the case of the success of Ibn Sa'ud and his father. As a result, and despite the India

[355] Ibrahim, *[princes and invaders]*, p. 185.

Office's policy of non-intervention in the Arabian Peninsula, Curzon suggested Britain had better take action before a rival power did. In consequence, Curzon warned of a potential alliance by Sa'ud with Russia.[356]

Ibn Sa'ud's progress towards Al-Qassim represented a turning point in his battle to establish control over Najd. Feeling the pressure of Ibn Sa'ud's progress, Ibn Rasheed requested help from the Ottoman Empire. After several attempts, the Ottoman Empire responded to Ibn Rasheed's requests by sending eleven military battalions of the Ottoman army.[357] Up until this point, the Ottomans had made it a priority to avoid direct confrontation with the British; this logically entailed refraining from overt meddling in Kuwaiti affairs. However, Ibn Sa'ud's precipitous success, in addition to pro-Rasheed factions, pushed the Ottomans to reconsider this non-interventionist policy. Further factors were at play in shaping the Ottomans' decision, such as rumours that Ibn Sa'ud had an agreement with Britain, which gave the latter the right to control the Arabian Peninsula; and that Ibn Sa'ud might well restore the former Sa'udi state which the Ottoman Empire had worked hard to destroy.

It can be argued that the Ottoman Empire chose to side with Ibn Rasheed in order to challenge the increasing influence of Mubarak Al-Sabah in Najd. With regard to this, it should be noted that the success of Ibn Sa'ud in the region has been largely thanks to weapons coming through Kuwait with the support of Mubarak Al-Sabah.[358] Contemporaneous correspondences amongst British officials were cautious of such assistance and warned that Mubarak Al-Sabah should not interfere in the affairs of Najd.[359] It is clear, through an analysis of the content of the British correspondences, that repeated advice was given to Mubarak Al-Sabah not to attempt to be part of the dispute in Najd, or assist Ibn Sa'ud; providing evidence that the British government was careful, at that time, not to interfere in the affairs of Najd and did not have a direct relationship with Ibn Sa'ud.

Evidence of the British knowledge of the Ottoman support for Ibn Rasheed came from the British Residency in Ottoman Mesopotamia, Newmarch, in a telegram dated

[356] J. Qasim, *[the Arabic Gulf 1840 to 1914]*, p. 304.
[357] Aerynan, *[Najed Relations with major power]*, p. 109.
[358] J. Lorimar, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman and Central Arabia (Calcutta: superintendent Government Printing, 1908), Arabic edition, c 3, pp 1539-1552.
[359] IOR: R/15/1/476, Telegram from FE Crow To the British Political Resident in the Arabain Gulf (Bushehr), Dated 23rd April 1904.

25th April 1904. The telegram stated that Ibn Rasheed was in the region of As Samawah on the Euphrates River, and that the Ottoman Empire provided him with four brigades of infantry, each consisting of 600 soldiers, as well as money and military supplies. Newmarch also stated that these armies would be provided with three new cannons from Istanbul and three field cannons, with the armies being additionally trained in how to use them.[360] When the telegram arrived in Simla,[361] it was directed on 28th April 1904 to the Secretary of India in London, with an added comment that the Turks should be warned against interfering in the affairs of Najd so as not to provoke the British into actions in these regions to protect its interests.[362] On 29th April 1904, the British Ambassador in Istanbul sent a delayed telegram to the British government informing them that the Ottomans were starting to support Ibn Rasheed, providing him with men, weapons, and money, and that the beginning of May would witness the movement of the Ottoman army from As Samawah to Onaizah. The telegram also disclosed that Mubarak Al-Sabah would help Ibn Sa'ud, that he would provide him with men and money, and that Mubarak would also order that the water wells on the way of the campaign be destroyed. O'Connor argues that Mubarak Al-Sabah helped Ibn Sa'ud in the wars in Najd; however, he does not adduce adequate evidence for this assertion to be taken as conclusive as opposed to speculative.[363] In addition, it is not unreasonable to suppose that involved parties might seek to promulgate a long-lasting alliance with eventual victors, after the fact – even where the actual existence of such an alliance is not wholly historically accurate.

On 5th May 1904, the India Office sent a message to the British Foreign Office stating that the former has asked its representatives in the Gulf to advise Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah of Kuwait not to hurl himself in tribal affairs and the conflict inside Najd in the Arabian Peninsula.[364] At this point, a split in opinion occurred amongst

[360] IOR: R/15/5/24, Telegram from Lieut.- Col. Charles Arnold Kemball British Political Resident in the Arabain Gulf (Bushehr) to the secretary of the British Government of India in the outer circle, Dated 25th April 1904. Also see: IOR: R/15/5/24, a telegram from Major LS Newmarch British Political Resident in the Arabian Peninsula under Ottoman rule to the secretary of the British Government of India in the outer circle, Simla parts, dated 25th April 1904.

[361] Simla: also known as Shimla; it was declared in 1864 as the summer capital of British India.

[362] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A telegram from the British Government of India to St. John Brodrick Secretary of State for India in London, dated 28th April 1904.

[363] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A telegram from Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor British ambassador in Constantinople to The Marquess of Lansdowne British Foreign Minister, Dated 29th April 1904; Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], p.186.

[364] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from A. Godley India Office to the British Foreign Office, Dated 5th May 1904; Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], P. 186.

British officials regarding the issue of providing support to Ibn Sa'ud. Major Cox and Consul Crow[365] were the main supporters of the view that Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah should help Ibn Sa'ud if the Ottoman Turks offered help to Ibn Rasheed. This would enable Mubarak Al-Sabah to keep his influence among the tribes. The British Foreign Office and the Government of London did not agree with this view and preferred to keep the status quo of not interfering in the affairs of Najd so as not to provoke the Ottoman Empire, and to keep Kuwait away from the central Arabian Peninsula's problems.[366]

The situation developed when the British government confirmed that the Ottoman Empire was prepared to send its armies to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. The British Foreign Secretary Lansdowne sent a letter to the British Ambassador in Constantinople asking him to protest to the Ottoman government. The letter sought to remind them of the commitment of October 1901 and of all the correspondences and agreements that existed between Britain and the Ottoman Empire. He also mentioned that the Ottoman government appeared to have provided aid to Prince Ibn Rasheed of Najd: in direct contravention of the fore-stated agreements. The British government had also learned that the Ottomans intended to provide effective help to Ibn Rasheed in the ongoing inter-tribal conflicts; so the British Foreign Secretary asked the British Ambassador in Constantinople to inform the Porte that Britain would stress its advice to the Sheikh of Kuwait to keep him neutral and its desire that the Ottomans would not take any action that would increase existent levels of unrest in the Arabian Peninsula.[367]

It is interesting to note the divisions that existed between the Ottoman and British positions. The Ottomans supported Ibn Rasheed against Ibn Sa'ud fearing the spread of British influence to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. The British feared any disturbance to their interests in Kuwait. Therefore, there were no great efforts from Britain to prevent the Ottoman campaign to Najd. Britain's sole priority in the early 20th century was that Kuwait remained insulated from the region's other troubles; that Kuwait and Mubarak Al-Sabah be under its control because of Kuwait's strategic

[365] F. F. Crow: The British Consul in Basra, 1904 – 1906.
[366] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A telegram from the British Government in India (Simla) to St. John Brodrick Secretary of State for India, dated 9th May 1904; Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], P. 187.
[367] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12A,A message from The Marquess of Lansdowne The British foreign minister to Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor The British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 10th May 1904.

importance.[368] The British representatives discovered that Mubarak Al-Sabah contravened the imperial metropole's neutral position.

Ibn Rasheed had warned the Ottoman Empire that Ibn Sa'ud would grow stronger and control the whole of Hijaz, including the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina, and that he would expand and go to Al-Hasa and Al-Qatif, after seizing the important region of Al-Qassim.[369] When Ibn Sa'ud knew that the Ottoman Empire was preparing to help his opponent, he sent a letter of protest to Major Percy Z. Cox, the British Political Resident, asking for help and support of the British against this interference. Likewise, he sent a letter to Mubarak Al-Sabah to remind him to refuse French and Russian overtures, explaining that he still preferred to seek alliance with the British.[370]

On 30th May 1904, the Ottoman forces moved from As Samawah to Najd; however, these armies were diseased because of the long travel distances, which battered the morale of those armies that reached Alqraa.[371] At the end of June 1904, the famous battle of Al-Bukairyah[372] took place, where Ibn Rasheed and the Ottoman army initially managed to narrowly defeat Ibn Sa'ud.[373] The British government estimated that Ibn Sa'ud would not be able to repel the Ottoman troops but that he would have enough strength to contain them. Ibn Sa'ud appealed to the people of Al-Qassim and the Otaiba and Moutair tribes to fight with him. This support greatly helped Ibn Sa'ud's victories in Al-Qassim.[374] Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire provided supplies from Medina to support Ibn Rasheed. Mubarak Al-Sabah informed the British Political Resident that Imam Abdul Rahman Ibn Sa'ud's father, said that if it was sure that the Ottoman provided supplies to Ibn Rasheed, he (Ibn Sa'ud) would not be able to repel him. However, in the event of withdrawal of the Ottoman troops, he (Ibn Sa'ud) would be

[368] Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], pp. 188-189.
[369] IOR: R/15/1/476, message from the British agent in Kuwait to the British Political Resident, dated 11th May 1904.
[370] IOR: R/15/1/476, A telegram from Major Percy Z. Cox British Political Resident Acting Gulf (Bushehr) to the outer circle of the British Government of India (Simla), accompanied by a message Ibn to Sa'ud Cox., dated 16th May 1904.
[371] A small town located around 30 kilometres North West of Buraidah in Al-Al-Qassim region.
[372] Zarkali, *[Peninsula during the reign of King Abdulaziz]*, c 1, p. 150; 'Uthaymeen, *[History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia],* pp. 85.86.
[373] To see the details of the battle: Abdullah Saleh, 'Uthaymeen, [*King Abdulaziz famous battles to unite the country]*, (1998), pp. 89-95.
[374] Aerynan, *[Najed Relations with major power]*, p.127.

able to defeat the forces of Ibn Rasheed. Ibn Sa'ud also repeated to Mubarak his request that the British government provide protection.[375]

A letter in Arabic from Imam Abdul Rahman to Stuart Knox,[376] in which he welcomed his arrival to Kuwait, wished him a pleasant stay there, and informed him of the machinations of Ibn Rasheed against him and his family. It also contained much criticism of the horrors of the practices of the Ottoman army against the people of Najd. Further, it disclosed that he looked forward to Britain supporting him against the Ottoman forces and to establishing relations with Britain similar to those it had with Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain.[377] This letter showed that Ibn Sa'ud was looking for an imperial power to help him stand against the Ottomans. This was why he asked for British protection: not necessarily to face Ibn Rasheed but, rather, to counteract Rasheed as an effective proxy for the Ottomans. Emphasising the Ottoman role in Ibn Rasheed's ambitions was, it can be surmised, calculated to make the case of allegiance more appealing to Britain; who, it may be argued, were expected to see the struggle between the two houses more in terms of a way of containing Ottoman influence – as opposed to advancing dynastic ambitions, *per se*. Accordingly, Ibn Sa'ud hoped that the British government would want to reduce Ottoman power.

The armies of Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed met again in the battle of Al-Shnanah in September 1904, concluding this time with victory for Ibn Sa'ud. This victory proved a decisive one for the House of Sa'ud as it proved its military competence whilst also demonstrating Ibn Rasheed's ineptitude. In light of previous and indeed humiliating defeats involving Turkish forces, the Ottomans could no longer afford to keep backing someone who increasingly proved himself to be an incapable leader. This point is particularly important when placed within the context that Ibn Rasheed's losses made the Turks look weak on two fronts: as ineffectual patrons and ineffectual soldiers. Moreover, in the eyes of the world, such continual wrong-decision making rendered Ottoman judgement doubtful; making it seem as though the Ottomans' were incapable of correctly assessing the regional situation, and therefore no more able to address issues effectively. These numerous negatives proved in aggregate too much to countenance; the scales began to tip decisively. The Ottoman position changed from

[375] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.192.
[376] Stuart George Knox: The British Political Agent in Kuwait from 1904 to 1909.
[377] IOR: R/15/5/24, A message in Arabic from Abdulrahman to Stuart George Knox British political agent in Kuwait, dated 13th August 1904.

supporting Ibn Rasheed to supporting Ibn Sa'ud.[378] The Ottoman State decided that Al-Qassim should be kept under its direct rule, that territories north of Al-Qassim should be under Ibn Rasheed's rule, and that those South of Al-Qassim should be under Ibn Sa'ud's control. This, however, was too little too late for Ibn Sa'ud, who favoured legitimate alliance with the British as opposed to a compromise with the Ottomans. Sa'ud's army had effectively dealt with seasoned Turkish soldiers and through so doing had rendered this relatively paltry offer of compromise inadequate. Ibn Sa'ud would have appeared weak if he had accepted both to his own army and to the peoples of the region. Moreover, such an acceptance would have scuppered any hope of an alliance with the British.

The correspondence amongst Knox and Cox reveals that Knox told Mubarak Al-Sabah that the British government would prefer Ibn Sa'ud to accept Ottoman protection in return for his independence. The reason for this was that the British government feared the military threat presented by a powerful enemy of Sheikh Mubarak such as Ibn Rasheed on the outskirts of Kuwait; they thus accepted the supervision of the Ottoman government of Ibn Sa'ud. However, Mubarak was completely opposed to this; he saw that this situation would end with the Ottoman Empire seizing Najd.[379] Furthermore, the British government monitored the latest developments and asked its officials to inform the government of any attempt by the Ottomans or any other forces to intervene in the situation in Kuwait. They were also asked to provide the government with periodic reports about the ongoing conflict in Najd between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed and also recommended that they warn Mubarak Al-Sabah against any attempt to interfere in the political movements in the Arabian Peninsula. Britain was also keen to obtain information about the arms trade and the number of weapons being sent to Ibn Sa'ud. The British wished to prevent this trade.[380] Britain was prudently seeking to monitor events in the hope of anticipating any concentration of power that would imperil British interests in the region.

In a telegram sent to the Viceroy of India on 30th December 1904, the Secretary of State for India in London stated: "His Majesty's Government would like that it is clearly

[378] Al Mokhtar, *[the history of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia in the past and present],* c 2, p. 32.
[379] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO13, A message from Knox to Cox, dated 3rd September 1904.
[380] IOR: R/15/5/59, A message from CL S Russell Assistant Secretary to the Government of British India in the Political Department (Simla) to Cox British Political Resident in the Gulf, Dated 7th September 1904.

understood that its interests and its influence is limited only to the coastline of the eastern Arabian Peninsula".[381] During the final days of 1904, the Governor of Baghdad paid a private visit to the British Consul General in Baghdad from which British officials understood that the Governor of Baghdad attempted to test the British officials' waters telling the Consul that he would lead a huge Ottoman campaign consisting of seven thousand men to the centre of Najd, and that he would bring in extra Ottoman forces from the state of Adana if the original number of troops was not enough. When they heard of the news of the campaign, Ibn Rasheed and Ibn Sa'ud wrote to the Consul and stated that they wanted peace and accepted Ottoman power.[382] In doing so, the Governor of Baghdad was trying to deliver a message to the British government that the Ottoman Empire was still in a position of strength and that it controlled the situation in the areas remote and distant from the Ottoman capital, although, in fact, the conditions of the Ottoman State, at the pre-World War I time, showed that it was collapsing.

In summary, the period from 1903 to 1904 was characterised by the non-involvement of the British Empire in Sa'udi affairs. Regardless of the British protectorate in Kuwait, the political agents of the British Empire would not influence directly the decisions taken in this country. The possibility of influencing Ibn Sa'ud and his decisions was even more limited for the British during the analysed period of time.[383] Nevertheless, the British Empire ceased to consider Ibn Sa'ud an unimportant political stakeholder in the Arabian Peninsula especially after Ibn Sa'ud had captured central Arabia by the end of 1904. The readiness of the Ottoman Empire to establish an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud stimulated the British to do the same. However, Sheikh Mubarak was not in favour of Ibn Sa'ud establishing cooperation with the Ottomans.

The analysis of the primary documents referred to within this part of Chapter One also revealed that during this period of time, British officials held different views towards their relationship with Ibn Sa'ud. This is particularly important from a transnational perspective, since it demonstrates that diplomatic relationships are built and influenced by individuals, their character and affiliations. For example, Cox saw, in light of the directions and views of O'Connor, the British Ambassador in

[381] IOR: L/P&S/18/p437: Historical memorandum on the Relations of the Wahhabi Amir's. Also see: Busch, op.cit.pp 259-260; Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.14.
[382] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO13, A political intelligence report league for the week ended 26th December, 1904, issued by the Major LS Newmarch British Consul General in Baghdad and addressed to the British Government of India, Dated 26th December 1904.
[383] Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Sa'udi Arabia*, (I.B. Tauris, London, 2006), p. 276.

Constantinople that the Ottomans should have a free hand in dealing with Ibn Sa'ud in Najd and keep the interests of the British government exclusive to maintaining its relations with Kuwait.[384] Cox was very careful in dealing with Ibn Sa'ud and always stressed that Knox should be extremely cautious in dealing with Ibn Sa'ud and not to commit himself, promise, or even show any tendencies, which might be understood by him as meaning that the British Government of India had a desire to help him. This should be taken as an early indication that the approach of the British Government and the approach of the India Office were not aligned as to how to deal with Ibn Sa'ud; something that developed to a complete divergence later on (Chapter 3.1).

1.3.3. The Appointment of a British Political Agent in Kuwait

In response to the unfolding events in Al-Qassim, British officials in the Gulf began to think about appointing a British political agent in Kuwait. An agent was a political appointment of a person who acted as an envoy to the ruler of a region, often outside imperial territory, and who represented the interests of the British government in the area. Deliberations and correspondents began amongst officials because of the desire of the British Government of India to contain Ibn Sa'ud. Cox, in an attempt to get the government of London officials' attention and gain their support, mentioned in an urgent telegram that if the British government did not collaborate with Ibn Sa'ud, it was likely that he would establish contact with the Russian Consul. Cox pointed out that it was necessary to appoint a British agent in Kuwait to closely monitor events.[385] As a reaction to the Ottoman Empire sending its army to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, The Marquess Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, asked Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor,[386] the British Ambassador in Constantinople, in a telegram, to urgently present a protest to the Ottoman government in order to try and dissuade it from sending troops to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[387] In 1904 British representatives in the Gulf indicated that the situation in Najd was getting more dangerous. British officials

[384] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO13, A message from Cox to the British Government of India, Dated 10th September 1904.
[385] H. Hoskins, 'Background of the British Position in Arabia', Middle East Journal, Vol. 1, Issue 2, (1947), pp. 137-147.
[386] O'Conor, Sir Nicholas Roderick (1843–1908), diplomatist, born at Dundermott, Ballymoe, co. Roscommon, Ireland on 3rd July 1943 and died at his post in the British embassy, Constantinople, on 19 March 1908; T. H. Sanderson, 'O'Conor, Sir Nicholas Roderick (1843–1908)', rev. H. C. G. Matthew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35288, accessed 1 Feb 2017].
[387] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO13, A message from The Marquess of Lansdowne British Foreign Minister to Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 21st May 1904.

did not know on what basis they could put pressure on the Ottoman government to stop them providing aid to Ibn Rasheed, and that it was desirable for the time being to maintain the territorial integrity of Kuwait, and that it was sufficient to monitor the developments of the situation in Najd. They also repeated that it was necessary and useful to appoint a British agent in Kuwait.[388] This was consistent with the views of O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, who viewed Ibn Sa'ud's policy of seeking to re-establish the state of his ancestors in the Arabian Peninsula as a potential threat to Britain's interests in Kuwait. He also saw that the British government's policy should move towards strengthening its position in Kuwait, while waiting for developments on which it could reassess the situation.[389]

Furthermore, British officials suggested that the British Ambassador in Constantinople should inform Ottoman officials that the British government had no desire to assist Ibn Sa'ud and did not support anyone intervening in the conflict in Najd. British officials also asked the British Ambassador to inform Ottoman officials that supporting Ibn Rasheed would strengthen him to the point of the Ottomans losing control over his actions. This in turn could alter Britain's relationship with Mubarak. Though some British officials believed that the advance of Ottoman troops should be stopped so as to ensure that Britain's interests in the Gulf would not be affected in the future, the response of the British viceroy in India (Simla) showed that this was unlikely. He disagreed with those who expressed this view, and further believed that the success or fall of Ibn Sa'ud would not threaten the British government's authority in Kuwait. However, he did see that Britain would have a greater potential to maintain the territorial integrity of Kuwait if it did not try to prevent the Ottoman intervention in favour of Ibn Rasheed. He also believed it was appropriate for the British government to have a political agent in Kuwait.[390] In this context, Brodrick,[391] the Secretary of State

[388] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor British ambassador in Constantinople to The Marquess of Lansdowne British Foreign Minister, dated 23rd May 1904.
[389] IOR: R/15/5/59, A telegram from St. John Brodrick Secretary of State for India in London to the British viceroy in India (Simla), dated 25th May 1904.
[390] IOR: R/15/5/59, A telegram from the British viceroy in India (Simla) to St. John Brodrick Secretary of State for India in London, dated 29th May 1904.
[391] Brodrick, (William) St John Fremantle, first Earl of Midleton (1856–1942), politician, was born in London on 14 December 1856. In 1880 Brodrick entered the House of Commons as a Conservative, unopposed for West Surrey. His first office was that of Financial Secretary to the War Office (1886–92). In 1895 he became under-secretary of state for war, and in 1898 Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He was sworn of the privy council in 1897. From 9th October 1903 to 11th December 1905 Brodrick was Secretary of State for India; J. B. Atkins, 'Brodrick, (William) St John Fremantle, first earl of Midleton

for India, suggested, after the approval of the British Foreign Office, to authorise the Government of India to appoint one of its officers as a political agent in Kuwait and proposed considering the help of Ibn Sa'ud.[392] Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, approved Brodrick's proposal and sent an officer to Kuwait.[393]

It is argued that the British Government of India was interested in Najd and the central Arabian Peninsula, and that through monitoring the situation there it became more aware of the implications of the developments of events in Najd for Kuwait. Initially, the British Government's of India's request for the appointment of an agent in Kuwait, was rejected by the Government of London. This was because the latter objected to any form of relationship between the Government of India and those of Najd and the centre of the Arabian Peninsula in line with its policy of non-interference in the affairs of Najd. This rejection was repeatedly mentioned in the telegrams received by the Resident on 8th January 1904 and on 23rd May 1904. However, following the sending of Turkish troops to the region, the view of the British Government changed and it confirmed the appointment of a Political Agent in Kuwait. These events support the view that the British government was not interested in what was happening in Najd and did not mind whether it was ruled by Ibn Sa'ud or Ibn Rasheed. It further supports the view that Britain was only concerned with protecting its interests in Kuwait, and wanted to reduce any unrest in neighbouring areas. British policy was pursuing two distinct objectives with the main aim of maintaining stability in the region, so that they did not lose their grip on Kuwait. The first objective was to prevent the Ottoman government from helping Ibn Rasheed against Ibn Sa'ud; while the second was to try to prevent weapons from reaching the Port of Kuwait, which was the source of Ibn Sa'ud's supply. Therefore, the interests of Ibn Sa'ud were jeopardised because of the British government's lack of interest in providing him with support.

On 24th November 1904, based on the viewpoint of the Government of India, Knox, the British Political Agent, arrived in Kuwait. Amongst the jobs entrusted to him was the responsibility to collect information about the conflict between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed in Najd, and investigate the importing of weapons to Kuwait, especially

(1856–1942)', Rev. H. C. G. Matthew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32085, accessed 1st Feb 2017]

[392] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from A. Godley India Office (London) to the British Foreign Office, dated 2nd June 1904.

[393] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from TH Sanderson from the British Foreign Office to the Deputy Minister of India (London), dated 21st June 1904.

guns to Ibn Sa'ud.[394] Importantly, London's view, represented by the State Department, was the opposite to that of the Government of India. The Government of India began to show its interest in the central Arabian Peninsula and the desire to preserve Kuwait and protect it from the German threat, as Curzon was the Viceroy of India and feared the possibility of the establishment of understanding between the Ottoman Empire and Ibn Sa'ud, which might push Mubarak Al-Sabah to be disloyal loyal to Britain. Whilst Britain was committed to the stated policy of non-interference in the internal affairs in Najd the above mentioned developments meant that it also had little option but to appoint a British Resident in Kuwait to monitor events closely. However, it withdrew him shortly after, and was instead satisfied with some frequent visits at different times to keep the British policy drawn and not to affect the existing negotiations, in that period, between Britain and the Ottoman state concerning the Ottoman forces' occupation of the Gulf Boubyan Island which Britain was keen to evacuate the Ottoman forces from, but Britain tended in that period to alleviate the militancy follow-up in the arms trade.[395]

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah of Kuwait held a meeting with the British Political Resident in the Gulf, Captain Knox after the victories of Ibn Sa'ud on Ibn Rasheed in Al-Qassim to raise his concerns about Ottoman attempts to get closer to Ibn Sa'ud and expressed his fears of the results of that rapprochement if it did come into effect. At the same time, he was concerned about the growing power of Ibn Sa'ud and his fear that the situation would turn against him. In that meeting the Resident told him that he could not mediate before he received express consent so to do from the British government. He also discussed with the Sheikh the possibility that the British government would ask Sheikh Mubarak to discuss with Ibn Sa'ud the possibility of concluding a peace agreement with the Turks. This would have included recognising his independence in return for a formal recognition of Turkish sovereignty. Knox also stressed that this was his personal point of view and that, therefore, it did not reflect the official position of the British government.[396] As a result, the British Government of India asked the British Resident in the Gulf, Cox, to request Knox not to interfere in the domestic affairs of Najd or even to provide any tips or guidance to Sheikh Mubarak, from which it could be

[394] IOR: L/P&S/18/B 164, British Relation with Wahhabis.
[395] Al Ghannam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment]*, p. 62; F. Al-Freihi, *[The Weapon trade in the Arabian Gulf 1879- 1914]*, (King Abdulaziz Foundation, Riyadh, 2004); Bidwell, pp.45.
[396] Al Ghannam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment]*, p. 63.

understood that the British government would like to see a Turkish presence in these areas.[397] The British Foreign Office sent a telegram to the India Office in London on 16th December 1904, to confirm that the interests of His Majesty's Government were solely limited to the eastern coastal line of Arabia, and that no action or statement should be initiated which might show that there was a relationship between the British government and the tribal-based conflict in Najd.[398] The telegram also mentioned repeatedly the warning made by Lord Curzon to the Kuwait Sheikh not to get involved in the conflict in Najd between Ibn Rasheed and Ibn Sa'ud, and the Sheikh of Kuwait should refrain from giving any opinion or advice to Ibn Sa'ud with regard to Ottoman attempts to reach an understanding with him.[399]

Throughout this period, the British government was never decisive in its correspondences with Imam Abdul Rahman and Ibn Sa'ud; sometimes it ignored their messages and did not reply to them, and at other times it informed them that the matter was under consideration and that it could not give them a final answer until responses had come from the British Foreign Office. This style benefited the British government in two ways: the first was to keep its relations with Ibn Sa'ud indirect. The second was that it enabled them to identify the developments in the political situation in the region. This was evident in a letter from Cox to Abdul Rahman showing, as was habitually the case with such correspondence from British officials, that the matter was under study in British political circles, and that he would have to wait for a response.[400] British officials chose Captain Stuart George Knox as the British Political Agent in Kuwait, but there came British orders to postpone his departure, and that was during July 1904.[401] However, documents show that there was confusion and misunderstanding with regard to his appointment and the postponing of his work, as another letter indicated that the one intended was Kuwait's British official of the Post Office which was about to be established. Successive correspondences showed that Knox was required to work as a British Political Agent in Kuwait. This would involve developing a relationship with Mubarak while articulating and protecting British interests in Kuwait. Here it becomes clear that the British government had hesitations and fears of the British Political Agent

[397] Bidwell, *The Affairs of Arabia*, pp. 90-91
[398] IOR: L/P&S/18/B 437, Historical Memorandum on the Relations of the Wahhabi Amir's; Busch: Ibid, pp 259-260.
[399] R. Bidwell, *The Affairs of Arabia 1905-1906*, Vol 1 Part 11, (Frank Cass, London 1971), P70.
[400] IOR: R/15/1/476, a message from Major Percy Cox to Imam Abdul Rahman, Dated 6th June 1904.
[401] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A telegram from the British Government of India to St. John Brodrick Secretary of State for India (London), Dated 4th July 1904.

appointed in Kuwait and the effect that his appointment might have on the British interests in the region; this matter took place at the end of July 1904.[402]

When Knox began his work as a British political agent in Kuwait, he sent a message to Imam Abdul Rahman on 4th July 1904 informing him of his appointment.[403] This message could be considered by Ibn Sa'ud as the start of a positive development in the relation with Britain. However, the British Political Resident in Kuwait did not make progress in establishment a proactive and mutually beneficial relationship with Ibn Sa'ud. As a result, policy remained the same: not to assist Ibn Sa'ud or interfere in the domestic affairs of Najd.[404]

For the period 1902 -1904 all the actual meetings mentioned in chapter 1, occurred when Ibn Sa'ud was in Kuwait. However, the correspondence was not direct and took place in a complex, time-consuming manner involving different agents in Kuwait, Bushehr, Calcuta, Constantinople and London (see Map 3 in the appendix and Fig. 2). In such an example, Mubarak (Kuwait) was the one informing the British Political Resident in the Arabic Gulf Kemball (Bushehr)[405] that Ibn Sa'ud had taken control of Riyadh after killing Ibn Rasheed, in a letter dated 31st January 1902. Kemball then writes to H. S. Banes, the Secretary of the Indian Government's Political Department (Calcutta)_on the 6th February 1902 that Abdul-Aziz Al Sa'ud has taken complete control of Riyadh and that the tribes of Najd have become affiliated to Ibn Sa'ud[406] (in the process some more information or observations are added since events keep developing). Busheir features less prominatelly in the corresondance after the appointment of Captain Stuart George Knox as the British Political Agent in Kuwait in 1904. This flow of correspondence demonstrates most vividly the central role of Kuwait and Calcutta (and Simla) in the early and indirect communications between Ibn Sa'ud and the British. Kuweit was central to communication with other empires too (for example with the Russians as exemplified by correspondence between the General

[402] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from FH Villiers From the British Foreign Office to the Deputy Minister of India, Dated 23rd July 1904. Also, (IOR) L/P&S/20/FO12, a telegram from, Dated 24th July 1904.
[403] IOR: R/15/5/24, A message from Captain Stuart George Knox British Political Agent in Kuwait to Abdulrahman, dated 4th August 1904.
[404] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p .191.
[405] IOR: L/Pand S/7/142, a letter from Mubarak to Cox translated from Arabic to English and dated on 31st January 1902.
[406] 142/7/S&P/L, dated 31st January 1902.

Russian Consul in Bushehr and Mubarak Al Subah Sheikh of Kuwait, dated 16th March 1902).[407]

Calcuta (and in the summer Simla) regulated much of the communications in the Middle East: in one example The Secretary of State of India, Lord George Hamilton writes to Kemball asking him to warn Mubarak Al-Sabah not to carry out any actions that could cause trouble with Ibn Rasheed or with the Ottoman authorities[408] but also writes to the British Government of India, (Simla), dated 22nd September 1902 on the same issue.

Other networks existed around the main centres of communication. For example, Constantinople was very central in this network as well as Basra (Fig. 2). London was in direct correspondence (via telegraph) not only with Calcuta and Simpla but also with Constantinople (examples seen earlier in this chapter as the British Ambassador in Constantinople sent a telegram to the British Foreign Ministry in London informing that the Ottomans were starting to support Ibn Rasheed). Communication from Basra to Constantinople to London was also quite common (in one example Wratislaw the British consul in Basra writes to Sir Nicolas R.O'Connor The British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 31 July 1902 indicating that Mubarak is providing effective help to Ibn Sa'ud and such interference could result in a direct involvement in the conflict between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed).[409] The former example indicates, that short messages/news expressed in telegrams; analysis and opinions in letters and lengthy correspondacne as indicated by the later.

Once in London, the news had to be communicated by the different departments of His Majesty's Government and brief instructions are often sent in telegramms. Letters and telegrams are exchanged between Foreign Office to the India Office and back. For example, The British Foreign Office informs the India Office in London with a telegram dated on 16th December 1904 that the interests of His Majesty's Government were solely limited to the eastern coastal line of Arabia, and that no action or statement

[407] FO12/20/S&P/L, dated 16th March 1902.
[408] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A telegram from the Minister of India Lord George Hamilton in to the British Government of India, (Simla), dated 22nd September 1902.
[409] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO12, A message from A. C. Wratislaw the British consul in Basra to Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor The British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 31st July 1902.

should be initiated which might show that there was a relationship between the British government and the tribal-based conflict in Najd.[410]

Overall, for the period 1900-1904, it is evinced that the early communications between Ibn Sa'ud and political agents of the British Empire (spread in various locations across the Midlle East) were more irregular, with long time intervening and at their fastest when Ibn Sa'ud was in Kuwait. The appointment of the British Resident in Kuwait in 1904 was a positive development and indeed facilitated communication. It is evident that the Britihs official position not to interfere in central Arabia was constant in all communication from London to the agencies in the Middle East. However, small divergences and opinions started to emerge in the correspondence from the Midle East to London. As later events have proved, compared to the central Government in London who had the final word and adhered to formal imperial policies, agents located within the local/regional networks indicate a more realistic understanding of Ibn Sa'ud and the changing dynamics in the Middle East.

1.4. Conclusion

The British attitude towards Ibn Sa'ud during the period from 1902 to 1904 was characterised by confusion, trying not to promote any cooperation with him, refraining from getting involved in the domestic affairs of Najd as much as possible, and working to maintain the status quo especially in the coastal areas of the Gulf. Nevertheless, there were factors and developments that arose which affected the region and encouraged Britain to move away from providing assistance to Ibn Sa'ud during that period, despite the fact that Ibn Sa'ud tried several times to ask for help and British protection. The requests were rejected implicitly, and sometimes with no response. The reason for this was due initially to shifts in British-Ottoman relations that were characterised throughout the nineteenth century by harmony and implicit alliance against common enemies, particularly Russia, and any state which threatened the Ottoman entity, which is a threat to British interests.

The Ottoman Empire ceased to provide aid to Ibn Rasheed as a commitment to that promise at first, but when it saw the scale of Ibn Sa'ud began to outweigh that of Ibn Rasheed, it began to assist Ibn Rasheed. Given the deep-seated hostility between

[410] IOR: L/P&S/18/B 437, Historical Memorandum on the Relations of the Wahhabi Amir's; Busch: Ibid, pp 259-260.

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah and Ibn Rasheed, the former continued to provide aid to Ibn Sa'ud, regardless of the position of both the British and Ottoman empires. As for the British position, it continued to not get involved in Najd's domestic affairs since the early stages of the conflict. Again, Britain warned Sheikh Mubarak against doing that too, and adherence to position continued in varying degrees throughout the stages of the conflict depending on the exact nature of British-Ottoman relations at the specific given time. Following Ibn Sa'ud's annexation of Al-Qassim and most of the Najd region in 1904, a change in the position and attitudes of the Ottomans and the British towards Ibn Sa'ud became evident. Although Britain was sticking to its declared policy of not intervening in the domestic affairs of Najd directly or through its ally, the Sheikh of Kuwait, Mubarak Al-Sabah, began to reconsider its position. The Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, in an attempt to strengthen its influence in the Arabian Peninsula, provided help to Ibn Rasheed in Najd (in Al-Qassim region).

The conflict of views that took place between British officials in both the Government of India and the State Department illuminates the complexities of diplomatic communication. These differences, confusion and disagreement that shaped key decisions. The Government of India was of the view that Ibn Sa'ud and his followers had become a regional state that would not be fanatical in the framework of the local surroundings, and that the British influence in Kuwait might be affected if Britain wanted to prevent Ibn Al-Sabah from helping his ally, Ibn Sa'ud. It was also likely, at that point, that the Ottoman Empire might control the centre of Najd, and they saw this as being worse than a state under Ibn Sa'ud in Najd. It also feared that if the Ottoman State had control over Najd it might be inclined to attempt to take control of Kuwait.

The Government of India suggested the appointment of a Political Agent in Kuwait, and the continuation of arms export from Kuwait. As such, a number of considerations could be seen through the viewpoint of the Government of India; first is that some British officials do not see any restrictions on Mubarak's intervention in the conflict in Najd; second is that some British officials thought that the strengthening of Ibn Sa'ud may eventually lead to the existence of a threat to Kuwait because of the intolerance of the Wahhabi state; third is that the quantities of weapons coming to Ibn Sa'ud from

Kuwait was to strengthen his position against Ibn Rasheed.[411] Ibn Sa'ud's victory in Riyadh followed by that in Al-Qassim changed the balance of power in the region and led to a shift in the Ottoman policy towards him. The policies of the major Gulf countries changed after the heavy defeat of the Turkish armies and the armies of Ibn Rasheed in Al-Qassim. Ibn Sa'ud became the most powerful leader in the Arabian Peninsula. The Ottoman state realised that its ally, Ibn Rasheed, was weak after the defeats mentioned and, as a consequence, adopted a new policy based on the recognition of Ibn Sa'ud as Governor of Najd under Ottoman sovereignty through some intermediaries and the Governor of Basra.

Consistently with the previous period, the period from 1903 to 1904 was marked by the non-involvement of the British Empire in Sa'udi affairs. Nevertheless, the British Empire ceased to consider Ibn Sa'ud an unimportant political stakeholder in the Arabian Peninsula. Ibn Sa'ud had captured central Arabia by the end of 1904. The readiness of the Ottoman Empire to establish an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud stimulated the British to do the same. However, Sheikh Mubarak of Kuwait as well as the British did not want Ibn Sa'ud to cooperate with the Ottomans. The end of 1904 was marked by further attempts on the part of Ibn Sa'ud and his father Abdul Rahman to establish relations with the Ottoman Empire as well as the British. These actions were also motivated by Ibn Sa'ud's intention to diversify his allies and reduce his dependence on Kuwait and Sheikh Mubarak.

Taking a transnational perspective to this period, it can be concluded that all the aforementioned histories transected in the personage of Ibn Sa'ud. By the end of this period Ibn Sa'ud had emerged as a political leader deliberately entangled in complex networks comprising not-only his supporters locally, but also imperial powers (British, Ottoman, Russian), local enemies (Ibn Rasheed and his ally tribes), and regional politics (Kuwait). Within this polycentric network, relationships and boundaries remain fluid- a fluidity that Ibn Sa'ud used to the best of his advantage.

[411] Howarth, *The Desert King, A life of Ibn Sa'ud*, p.48; Al-Saadoun, ibid, p.99.

Chapter Two: The Ottomans in Al-Qassim and Ibn Sa'ud's early interest in the Eastern Coast (1905-1906)

The previous chapter investigated Ibn Sa'ud's attempts to gain support from the British after the capture of Riyadh while the Ottomans supported Ibn Rasheed and the British adhered to their non-intervention policy. Al-Qassim had been in the middle of disputes over control of the hinterland of the Arabian Peninsula since the eighteenth century (as was discussed in the historic background and elaborated upon in Chapter 1). Building upon this discussion, this chapter investigates how the period 1905-1906 became a turning point, not only in the British-Sa'udi-Ottoman relationship, but also in the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarack. It pays particular attention to the role of intermediaries such as agents and officers operating in the area in an attempt to map in detail their role in creating perceptions and influencing decisions. The second part of this chapter looks more deeply into the strategic plans of Ibn Sa'ud to annex Al-Hasa and the significance of the events in his long-term plan to gain British support.

2.1. Ibn Sa'ud and the Ottomans in Al-Qassim (1905-1906)

The following sections investigate the significance of the Ottoman military presence in Al-Qassim and the events around the Safawn meeting that tipped the scales in favour of Ibn Sa'ud against Ibn Rasheed; it is followed by a detailed analysis of the British reactions and positions that were expressed in the correspondence of the time. The Battle of Rawdat Muhanna where Ibn Rasheed was killed is discussed in detail and the changing relationships between the parties involved are interpreted from a transnational perspective.

2.1.1. The Ottoman Military Presence in Al-Qassim 1905

In January 1905, the Turkish soldiers who gathered in Najaf at the end of 1904 marched to Al-Qassim. It contained around 3000 soldiers along with six cannon led by Ahmed Faydi Pasha, the Sixth Army Marshal in Baghdad. He was an old, experienced man who exceeded seventy years of age. He was, however, known to have high energy. Upon his arrival in Al-Qassim, he met with the Ottoman soldiers coming from Al Medina and they joined him. In April 1905, four squads of Ottoman soldiers arrived in Al-Qassim from Al Medina, and comprised approximately 750 soldiers. Ahmed Faydi

Pasha's forces coming from Al Najaf moved and took the route of Badia Al Samawah. Upon their arrival in Al-Qassim, they surrounded Buraidah,[412] and entered there without any resistance. The armies were received well. The Ottoman forces entered Buraidah on 15th April 1905,[413] and entered Unaizah three days later. Each protection unit contained around 100 soldiers. The Ottoman flag was raised, the Ottoman Empire national anthem "Al Salam Al Hamidi" was sung, and the sultan of Turkey prayed aloud during group prayers from on top of the mosque platforms.[414]

Najd was subsequently divided administratively, according to the Ottoman method. The Ottoman powers made Riyadh a province[415] and considered Ibn Sa'ud its ruler. Imam Abdul Rahman was appointed to it and it included Al Washm, Sudair, and its subsidiaries until Al-Qassim. Buraidah was named a province, with Saleh Ibn Mohanna having the highest status in it. Unaizah was made into a municipality with Ibn Sa'ud as its governor. Ibn Rasheed was banned from having a presence in Al-Qassim.[416] Even with this partition, there were still disputes and uncertainty as the Arabs did not know if the administrative divisions were subsidiaries of Basra or Al Medina, although the Turkish authorities believed that they were a subsidiary of Basra. It was clear that south Najd had become a province of Basra, and that Ibn Sa'ud became its leader with his headquarters in Riyadh.[417] However, for several reasons, circumstances did not allow for the completion of this Ottoman project. One of those reasons was that Ibn Sa'ud did not like or approve of this division and was forced to agree at first so that he could organise his internal affairs. Controlling local tribes and being recognised as a leader by them was of crucial importance since it was key to the balance of power internally.[418]

Ibn Rasheed received orders from the Ottoman government to withdraw and retreat to Ha'il. He was hesitant at first, but later obeyed upon getting direct orders from the

[412] FO 248/842, Periodical report by Cox, the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 1st – 7th May 1905.
[413] Buraydah: The capital of the province of Al Al-Qassim, it has significance because it is located in the central part of Najd, an agriculture and trading centre, Peterson, *Historical Dictionary of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.29.
[414] Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf History*, p. 507. Faseleef, *Arabic History*, p. 206.
[415] D. Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1972), p.19.
[416] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Crow to O'Conor, dated 19th May 1905. Also see, FO 248/842, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 15th – 21st May 1905. Also see, Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.209.
[417] M. Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer* (Garnet Publishing, Reading, 2011), p. 507.
[418] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf*, p. 159.

Ottoman Sultan.[419] At that time, the British officials in the Gulf had expressed their satisfaction with the Sa'udi-Ottoman agreement as this would lead to a calming of the situation in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula. It would also have positive effects on the safety of Kuwait which concerned the British government.[420]

After his control over Al-Qassim, and the fleets of the Ottomans and Al Rasheed joined forces, Ibn Sa'ud headed to help his friend, Qasim Al-Thani, the ruler of Qatar, to end a revolution against him. Qasim Al-Thani was a supporter of Ibn Sa'ud and had helped him previously in his wars in Najd by supplying him with weapons.[421] It is worth mentioning that in the years 1905 and 1906, and despite a ban by Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, the arms trade flourished in the Gulf and Kuwait as arms came from Mesopotamia, via the Zubair route to the centre and north of the Arabian Peninsula.[422] Ibn Sa'ud's relations with Faik Pasha, the Governor of Al-Hasa, were good, and he had won Ibn Sa'ud's trust and support. The Ottoman State accused him of sending supplies to Ibn Sa'ud, and this was the reason for his removal from his position as Governor of Al-Hasa in November 1904 and the appointment of Najib Beik in his place – to tighten the economic embargo on Ibn Sa'ud.[423]

At the beginning of 1905, Walter B. Townley, Britain's Advisor and Deputy in Constantinople, sent a telegram to the British Foreign Secretary, the Marquess of Lansdowne, which stated that the Turkish Sultan's viewpoint on the issue of ceasing to send reinforcements to Najd, following the request of Ibn Sa'ud's father (Imam Abdel Rahman) for amnesty and promising loyalty and obedience, was beginning to change. Townley also indicated that the Ottoman military officials had advised the Sultan against sending troops to Najd because all previous Ottoman campaigns to Najd had failed to establish a long-term presence. For example, Ibrahim Pasha's successful military campaign, which led to the fall of the first Sa'udi state and the destruction of its capital Diriyah in 1819, did not settle there, and these armies did not protect the area but withdrew from it. Also, the campaign that was sent to assist Ibn Rasheed in Al-Qassim

[419] FO248/843, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 20th – 28th May 1905.
[420] Records of Sa'udi Arabia no 188, pp. 27, 32 (enclosure in no 2); Al-Harbi, *The Relationship between Sultanate Najd and its Subsidiaries with Britain*. p. 37.
[421] D. Al Harbi, *[Ilaqat Sultanate Najd w Twabi'ha Ma' Britania]* (*The Relationship between Sultanate of Najd with Britain*), p. 38.
[422] F. Alferehi, *[Tijarat Alsilah fi Alkhaleej Alaraby 1879-1914]* (*Arms Trade in the Arab Gulf, 1879-1914*), p. 90.
[423] R. Bidwell, *The Affairs of Arabia 1905-1906*, Vol. 1 Part 1 (Frank Cass, London 1971), pp. 7-8.

against Ibn Sa'ud in 1904 was defeated and he retreated. Nevertheless, the Ottoman Sultan did not listen to the views of the Ottoman military officials, especially after he received a letter from the Sharif of Mecca stressing the necessity of stopping Ibn Sa'ud's incursions to prevent him from expanding and reaching Mecca. At that point, the Sultan decided to send a campaign led by Faydi Pasha from Baghdad to Najd, in spite of calls from within the Ottoman ruling establishment to accept Ibn Sa'ud's loyalty and submission. However, those requests ended up being ignored, following accusations by the Sharif of Mecca that Ibn Sa'ud had received support from a foreign power (referring to Britain, as it was the dominant power in the Gulf and because of its relations with Mubarak Al Sabah).[424] The documents and correspondence have proved that during this early period after Ibn Sa'ud's control over Riyadh in 1902 and Al-Qassim in 1904, Ibn Sa'ud did not receive any support or assistance from Britain or any other international forces, and that the accusations of outside assistance were because he had set out from Kuwait, where British dominance prevailed at that time. Therefore, Ibn Sa'ud's relations with Mubarak Al Sabah were the cause of this accusation.[425]

Another telegram from Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne on 2nd January 1905, confirms that the Ottoman Sultan suddenly decided to send a massive force to Najd to support Ibn Rasheed against Ibn Sa'ud, and that he ordered the occupation of all cities and major centres in Najd and its coastline, as well as the arrest of all leaders and sheikhs, deporting them to Istanbul.[426] This confirms what Monahan, the British Deputy Consul in Basra, said about sending a battalion from Baghdad to Najd. He also pointed out that the real purpose behind this campaign was to occupy the major places in Najd. Monahan also mentioned that the Ottoman Deputy Governor in Basra had invited Ibn Sa'ud to Basra. However, Ibn Sa'ud did not go, and sent a letter to the Ottoman Sultan declaring his loyalty to him, and at the same time announcing his control over Al-Qassim.[427]

[424] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO13, A letter from the British advisor and deputy in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Minister, dated 2nd January, 1905. Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.204.
[425] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.204.
[426] IOR: R/15/5/24, Walter B. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne, 2nd January 1905. Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], p.205.
[427] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, The British advisor and deputy in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 2 January, 1905. Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.205.

It was mentioned in a lengthy memorandum written by Mohammad Hussein, British Deputy Consul in Jeddah on 3rd January 1905, concerning the ongoing affairs in Najd, that Ibn Sa'ud had sent two letters; the first to the Ottoman Governor of Hijaz, and the second to the Sharif of Mecca, due to his status as the leader of all Arab tribes and their sheikhs. Therefore, Ibn Sa'ud asked that some of his correspondences to the Ottoman Sultan be through the Sharif of Mecca to make sure that they would find their destination. Ibn Sa'ud explained that he had no intention of revolting against the Turkish Ottoman government, or opposing it, and that he was forced to fight its armies when it took sides with his enemy, Ibn Rasheed. Ibn Sa'ud also offered to return the money and spoils taken from the Turkish troops, including cannon and rifles.[428]

The French authorities were aware of the developing events and were following them. A letter from Rouet, the French Deputy Consul in Baghdad, to the French Foreign Minister, dated 23rd February 1905, stated that a military campaign under the leadership of Ahmad Faydi Pasha had been organised in Al-Najaf to be sent to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. He said that this army was weak and that the Ottoman ship *Calypso*, which transported arms and ammunition to the Turkish Sixth army, had malfunctioned and had been forced to return to Constantinople. On the other hand, this campaign did not gain popular support because the majority of this army was Arab and they did not want to fight other Arabs in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[429]

In a French memorandum addressed to the French Foreign Minister, information about the Turkish armies were mentioned, including that it was divided into seven armies, and the exact location of each one. In the same memorandum, it was mentioned that the Arabs were the people most oppressed by the Turks in all of the Ottoman Empire, which led the Arabs of the nation to evade joining the Turkish armies that headed to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula because they did not want to fight their fellow Arab people.[430] These events demonstrate not only the fluidity of the situation in terms of information, but of people as well.

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[428] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, A memorandum regarding the on-going events in Najd prepared by Mohammad Hussein, British Deputy Consul in Jeddah, dated 3rd January 1905.

[429] N.S.-Turquie/140, A letter signed by G. Rouet, French Deputy Consul in Baghdad to the French Foreign Minister, dated 23rd February 1905, (Nouvelle Serie, Ministere des Affaires Etrangeres, Archives Diplomatiques, Quai d'Orsay, Paris).

[430] N.S.-Turquei/140, A memorandum signed by Najib Azouri, President of Arab League to Rouvier, French Foreign Minister, dated 21st July 1905.

At the end of 1905, Captain Stuart George Knox wrote a lengthy report about the political situation inside the Arabian Peninsula, information obtained from Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah. He described each situation in Ha'il, Riyadh and Al-Qassim. Mubarak mentioned that the political situation in Ha'il was on the verge of collapsing as most of the city's original residents had fled because of the fighting in the Arabian Peninsula. Additionally, the remaining people in Ha'il were Ibn Rasheed's soldiers. Also mentioned in the report is the information that Hamood Ibn Rasheed, who was considered one of the chief commanders for Ibn Rasheed, had lost four of his sons in the ongoing battles between him and Ibn Sa'ud. As for Riyadh, Mubarak Al Sabah had mentioned that safety and prosperity had prevailed therein, that it was completely free of Turkish soldiers, and that Imam Abdul Rahman, the father of Ibn Sa'ud, was involved in it. As for Al-Qassim, Ibn Sa'ud and his forces were involved there as well. There were also thirty Turkish soldiers as guardians to Onaiza, fifty in Buraidah and the remaining Turkish army, which was estimated to be 600 soldiers, led by Lieutenant-General Sidqi Pasha, was located outside those two cities. Knox mentioned that Al-Qassim was enjoying peace and prosperity after the defeat of Ibn Rasheed and he was heading for Ha'il. Another significant piece of information that Knox mentioned in his report was that there were signs of disagreement between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak Al Sabah, especially after Ibn Sa'ud attacked and defeated the tribes Harb and Bani Abdullah from Mutayr, both of which had sided against him. Mubarak had good relations with both of those tribes; at that point Mubarak threatened to withdraw his support from Ibn Sa'ud.[431] The increased tensions and fluctuations in the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarack are the subject of a separate section.

2.1.2. Safwan Meeting

Imam Abdul Rahman attempted to meet with the Governor of Basra with the purpose of offering the allegiance of his son, Ibn Sa'ud, to the Ottoman government. The Ottoman government requested from the Governor of Basra to meet with him and request any guarantees he could offer to ensure good conduct from the tribes that

[431] IOR: R/15/5/24, Report on the political situation in the Arabian Peninsula written by Knox, the British political agent in Kuwait, dated 28 October 1905. Also see, L/P&S/20/FO31, letter from F. E. Crow the British Consul in Basra to Sir Nicholas R O'Conor the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 18th November 1905. Also see, FO 248/844, periodical report from Cox, for the period 25th – 31st December 1905.

followed him.[432] British officials followed the developing situation of the Safwan meeting. Townsley notified Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, that a meeting in Safwan had taken place on 8th February 1905 between the Governor of Basra, Mubarak Al Sabah, and Imam Abdul Rahman, the father of Ibn Sa'ud, inside the Basra state borders. That same day, the Governor of Basra sent an extended telegram to the Ottoman government.[433] The meeting ended with Imam Abdul Rahman declaring his and his son's allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan. Additionally, Abdul Rahman showed the Ottoman officials that his enemy, Ibn Rasheed, had been inciting the Ottoman Empire and its officials against him.[434] Thus, he had not received his dues from the Ottoman Empire, which forced him to fight Ibn Rasheed and the empire's soldiers with him. He emphasised that under no circumstances would he allow Ibn Rasheed to interfere with the affairs of Najd and he would fight him. Imam Abdul Rahman also stated that he was not at war with the Ottoman Empire and that he did not wish to fight it as long as it did not support Ibn Rasheed against him.[435]

One of the most important Ottoman requests in the Safwan meeting was establishing an Ottoman state between Najd and Ha'il, so that a clear division was made between Ibn Sa'ud's and Ibn Rasheed's, as the Al-Qassim province would be an Ottoman state. Ibn Sa'ud's father neither accepted nor rejected this offer, but promised to discuss it with his son and the residents of Najd so that it could be considered.[436] After that, the two Ottoman leaders, Sidqi Pasha and Faydi Pasha, neither of whom had a desire to fight, both played a huge role in convincing Ibn Sa'ud to agree to have a military base in Unaizah and Buraidah. Despite the objections of the residents, Saleh Ibn Mohanna wanted to be separated from Ibn Sa'ud and become a direct part of the Ottoman Empire so that it could protect him.[437]

At that time, the situation worsened in the Arabian Peninsula. The Yemen uprising began, which forced Marshal Ahmed Faydi Pasha to leave Al-Qassim and head towards Yemen, based on orders received from the Ottoman government. He was appointed

[432] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Walter B. Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 10th February 1905.
[433] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Telegram from Walter B. Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 12th February 1905.
[434] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Walter B. Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 14th February 1905.
[435] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.206.
[436] M. Al Othaimayn, *The History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia*, Part 2, p. 89.
[437] Al Oraynan, *The Relations of Najd with its Surrounding Powers*, p. 128.

judicial commander for the Yemen uprising.[438] After that, Sidqi assumed control of the forces in Al-Qassim. He established his base in Alshihyah while leaving some of his men in Buraidah and Unaizah. Despite that, the feuds did not end between Ibn Rasheed and Ibn Sa'ud. Ibn Sa'ud's followers were attacked by Ibn Rasheed's followers, which included the clan of Bani Abdullah from the tribe of Mutair. In return, the followers of Ibn Rasheed attacked the followers of Ibn Sa'ud.[439]

Signs of change began to show from Saleh Ibn Mohanna, as he wanted to be the leader in Buraidah under the Ottoman Empire's protection and not under the ruling of Ibn Sa'ud. At that time, the residents of Al-Qassim reestablished their ties with Ibn Rasheed.[440] Before the arrival of Ahmed Faydi Pasha's forces in Al-Qassim, the Turkish troops in Al-Qassim were suffering from an extreme shortage of supplies and funds. A portion of them left for Alshihyah. Another portion headed towards Alshimasiyah on their way to Kuwait. However, after Saleh Al Muhana improved his relations with Ibn Rasheed, he intercepted the withdrawing soldiers' path, in an attempt to return them to Ibn Rasheed's side.[441]

The news of the Safwan[442] meeting was relayed by the Sheikh of Mahmara; he told the British Consul that the Ottoman Governor of Basra offered to meet Ibn Sa'ud or his father and that the Ottoman Sultan accepted this proposal and authorised Mubarak Al Sabah to arrange a meeting place.[443] Captain Stuart George Knox, the political agent in Kuwait, wrote a letter dated 4th January 1905, to the political resident in Bushehr, explaining that Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah met him on 30th December 1904 and informed him that he had received a friendly letter from the Governor of Basra, Mukhlis Pasha, which included an order from the Ottoman Sultan to Ibn Sa'ud, the Ottoman Governor of Basra, and Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah to meet in Safwan to agree on the future of Najd. Mubarak told Knox that the Ottoman Sultan stipulated that Mubarak should participate in the meeting. Nonetheless, Knox expressed his doubts about the

[438] FO 406/21, Memorandum about the situation in the Arabian Peninsula prepared by the General Chiefs of Staff in the British War Office to the British Foreign Minister, dated 23rd May 1905. Also see, 7N/1635, report number 25 prepared by Commandant Delon, French military official in Constantinople to the French War Minister, Dated 31st July 1906.
[439] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.209.
[440] FO248/843, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 10th – 16th July 1905.
[441] FO248/843, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 17th – 23rd July 1905.
[442] Safwan is a town in southeast Iraq on the border with Kuwait.
[443] FO248/842, Periodical report from Cox, the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period 1st – 7th January 1905.

political resident in Bushehr regarding the possibility of holding such a meeting. He also expressed his concerns in the event of the arrival of Ibn Sa'ud in Kuwait and asked for his instructions because Knox, as he put it, felt embarrassed ignoring Ibn Sa'ud's requests. What confirms this is that, at the end of the letter, Knox mentioned that if he did not receive a prompt reply, he would inform Ibn Sa'ud that his previous requests of tightening relations with Britain have been referred to higher authorities and that he had not received a reply yet.[444] These comments signify the British position in the period, but there is an underlying effort to change that. Based in Kuwait, Knox seems to have a clearer insight about Ibn Sa'ud's strategies, something that British officials located further away could not.

On 11th January 1905, news arrived that the army of the Governor of Baghdad, Ahmad Faydi Pasha, had left Baghdad for Najd with ten infantry battalions, 1,200 soldiers, 35 field cannon and six other cannon.[445] However, no details were mentioned in a report prepared by Commandant Dupont, the French Military Attaché in Constantinople, in which he discussed the situation in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula and Kuwait. It was noted in this report that Faydi Pasha, chief of the Sixth Turkish army, had supplied Ibn Rasheed with four battalions, an artillery battery,[446] 1,000 old rifles, 800 Martini rifles, large quantities of ammunition and monetary aid of 12,000 Turkish lira.[447]

In a letter to the Ottoman Sultan from Imam Abdul Rahman, the father of Ibn Sa'ud, it was stated that Imam Abdul Rahman had offered his allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan, whom he described as the great Caliph. He also pledged to pay taxes and dues on time, and was prepared to provide assistance to the Sultan's forces. He wrote that Ibn Rasheed had portrayed him as a rebel against the Ottoman Sultan and wanted to control Najd and Mesopotamia, and that this was not correct, but it was Ibn Rasheed who sent money and gifts to Constantinople to bribe the officials and incite them against Ibn

[444] IOR: R/15/5/24, a letter from Captain Stuart George Knox, British Political Agent in Kuwait, to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) dated 4th January 1905.
[445] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, A memorandum regarding Najd prepared by Mohammad Hussein, British Deputy Consul in Jeddah, dated 11th January 1905.
[446] PAAP 026 Bonin/14, A report on the situation in the Arabian Peninsula and Kuwait prepared by Commandant Dupont, the French military attaché in Constantinople, dated 20th August 1905, (Archives de l'Armee de Terre, Ministerevde la Defense-Vincennes).
[447] 7N/1635, Report number 1309 about the issue of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf from Lieutenant-Colonel Dupont, the French military attaché in Constantinople, to the French War Minister, dated 20th October, 1905, (7N: Troisieme Republique, Attachés militaires), (7N/1635, Archives de l'Armee de Terre, Ministerevde la Defense-Vincennes).

Sa'ud. It was also mentioned in the letter that Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Ibn Thani, the sub-Governor of Qatar announced their allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan in a telegram they sent on 28th November 1904.[448]

Mubarak Al Sabah clarified at the Safwan meeting with the Governor of Basra that he had no ties to the affairs of Najd. He also stated that the Governor should discuss and resolve the situation with Imam Abdul Rahman and his son, Ibn Sa'ud. Mubarak attempted to skip the meeting to give the Governor a chance to resolve the situation; however, the Governor insisted that Mubarak attend. At that point, Mubarak attended the meeting without expressing any opinions. After that, the orders came from Constantinople to appoint Ibn Sa'ud governor for Najd. The Ottoman government also decided to place troops in Al-Qassim and begin to establish official relations with Ibn Sa'ud.[449] After the Safwan meeting, the Governor of Basra met with Imam Abdul Rahman and the Sheikh of Kuwait, Mubarak, for a second time near the place of their first meeting next to the Qashaneya wells.[450] The Governor proposed that the empire would send civil workers along with Ottoman military protection to Najd. Imam Abdul Rahman agreed to this; however, he would not accept any interference of any kind by Ibn Rasheed in the region.[451] Sheikh Mubarak and Imam Abdul Rahman also requested a written pardon from the Ottoman Sultan for Imam Abdul Rahman and his son Ibn

[448] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, A translation from Arabic to English of a telegram sent by Imam Abdul Rahman (Ibn Sa'ud's father) to the Ottoman Sultan, dated 15th January 1905. Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.205.

[449] R/15/5/24, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 15th February 1905. Ibrahim *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.206.

[450] Qashaneya Wells: A place between Basra and Kuwait, close to Safwan where the first meeting between the father of Ibn Sa'ud, the Governor of Basra, and Mubarak Al Sabah occurred.

[451] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Telegram from Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to Lansdowne, the British Foreign Minister, dated 17th February 1905. For this view, Loremer mentions that it was agreed through negotiations that Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed would rule all properties and areas that their ancestors ruled as they were categorised as employees belonging to Topkapi Palace; see *The History of the Arab Countries in the Gulf Guide*, gathered and commented by Mohammad Al Khodeeri, 2001, p. 505. The disputed region, Al-Qassim, was to be occupied by Turkish forces with the acceptance of the two princes, thereby coming under the direct control of the Turkish administration. This plan was indeed implemented. A small military protection unit was placed in Al-Qassim, and the envisioned partition for the country began. Ibn Sa'ud was more powerful than Ibn Rasheed so he saw this as a slight to him, which led him in the future to expel the Turkish military protection unit in Al-Qassim. The Arabic account of this differs. Al Hathlool mentions that it was agreed upon between Ibn Rasheed and Ibn Sa'ud that Al-Qassim would be a neutral land, independent of Al Hijaz, and that the Ottoman empire would have two military bases in it, one in Buraidah and the other in Unaizah with consultants from the Turks; see Al Hathool, *The History of the Kings of Al Sa'ud*, p.66. Ibn Sa'ud's father did not accept this resolution but promised them that he would present it to the residents of Najd. When Ibn Sa'ud was made aware of this, he refused it completely. In addition, the residents of Al-Qassim refused it. Al Zarkaly and Al Rayhani supported this view; see Al Zarkaly, *History of the Arabian Peninsula*, 1/16, Al Rayhani, *The Recent History of Najd*, p. 149.

Sa'ud.[452] Relations improved between the Ottoman states and Ibn Sa'ud after the Safwan meeting; orders were given to the Governor of Basra on the importance of making the payments on a regular basis to Ibn Sa'ud in the future.[453]

As a result of the change in policy by the Ottoman Empire towards Ibn Sa'ud and becoming closer to him, Ibn Rasheed began causing problems for the Ottoman Empire. He began treating the Ottoman soldiers poorly with the goal of putting pressure on the Ottoman government into taking a firm position against Ibn Sa'ud, as testified by one of the Ottoman generals and a few officers who were able to escape due to the poor treatment by Ibn Rasheed.[454] During this time, the Ottoman military campaign had left from Najd towards Al-Qassim. This military campaign was comprised of four brigades each containing six hundred soldiers and six cannon. This campaign faced difficulties on its way to Al-Qassim; however, assurances were given by the Basra Governor that this campaign would be peaceful and was to be followed by the appointment of a governor for Al-Qassim in addition to some civil employees. Additionally, there would be military protection; however, Ibn Rasheed would have no ties to it. Imam Abdul Rahman accepted this and was assured he would receive the written pardon for himself and his son, Ibn Sa'ud, from the Ottoman Sultan.[455]

In Calcutta, the British government of India published its annual report for the year 1905, highlighting the political situation in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula and that Ibn Sa'ud played a chief role in the politics of that area in 1905 (contradicting the view of central British intelligence in London). The report also referred to the change in Ottoman politics towards Ibn Sa'ud by becoming closer to him and satisfying him in addition to abandoning Ibn Rasheed. Additionally, the report mentioned that peace and

[452] R/15/1/477, Telegram from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), dated 23rd February 1905. Also see: L/P&S/FO31, a telegram from Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to Lansdowne, the British Foreign Minister, dated 24th February 1905.
[453] FO 248/844, Periodical report from Cox for the period from 13th – 19th November 1905. Also see, FO 248/844, periodical report from Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) on behalf of the Resident, for the period of 27th November – 3rd December 1905.
[454] FO 248/844, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 20th – 26th November 1905.
[455] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Monahan, Acting British Consul in Basra, to Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, dated 24th February 1905.

prosperity began to spread in Najd after the conflict between the two leaders had quietened down.[456]

Overall, a complex network of agents and communications emerges vividly from the analysis of the primary correspondence documents. This network (names, titles and location are in the table on page 6) emerges dispersed within a polycentric world, with various officers from the British, Ottoman and French Empires placed in various key locations (see diagram in Fig. 2 and Map 3) and playing an intermediary but crucial role in the formation of relationships between Ibn Sa'ud and the respected centres, since the centres do not yet correspond with Ibn Sa'ud directly. This presents the historian with a unique opportunity to look into the details of such networks as they usually take a peripheral role or go unnoticed in formal traditional histories.[457] Thus, the present analysis of the primary documents in this chapter reveals a reality that is strikingly different to this perception.

2.1.3. The British Position towards Developing Relations between Ibn Sa'ud and the Ottomans

As stated in the introduction of this chapter (and established in detail in the historiography section) Britain was always more concerned with the territorial claims and disputes with the Ottoman Empire and less with local Arabian conflicts. The situation at Al-Qassim and the results of the Safwan meeting raised a number of concerns to British officials.

In Cox's letter to Knox, he mentioned that the Safwan meeting would have long-term results and that there was controversy in British political circles; the British Indian government on one side and the British government in London on the other. He also stressed that he should try not to meet with Ibn Sa'ud, which in this particular case this was impossible anyway, and that Ibn Sa'ud asked him to commit to supporting him, so Knox should reply that he had not yet received any instructions from the British government regarding this matter. Although this might bother Ibn Sa'ud, as Cox suggested, no encouragement should be given to him.[458] Cox, who was following the

[456] IOR: R/15/6/504, Administrative report issued by the British Political Resident in the Gulf and the political agent in Muscat, for the years 1904/1905, prepared by Cox on behalf of the British Political Resident and released by the Indian government in Calcutta, in 1906.
[457] Saunier, *Transnational History: Theory and History*, p. 36.
[458] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Cox to Knox on 18th January 1905.

development of the events for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, mentioned that Imam Abdul Rahman, Ibn Sa'ud's father, travelled from Najd to Kuwait on his way to meet the Governor of Basra in Safwan. Mubarak Al Sabah also travelled, accompanied by 1,000 men. In the same telegram, it was mentioned that Knox would remain reserved on the issue and would try not to meet Ibn Sa'ud. Cox also stated that Mubarak's position would be strengthened and that he would be more confident when a British military ship would be moored in the ports of Kuwait.

The British government had decided that it would send a British officer to Kuwait from time to time; however, the situation changed after the Ottoman armed intervention in the centre of Najd in 1904 in the ongoing dispute between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. Therefore, the India Office decided to appoint a political agent in Kuwait, and Captain Stuart George Knox was appointed to this position in August 1904, and he fulfilled his duties at that time according to the instructions of the British government. However, the Ottoman Turkish ambassador was informed by his government that this was a temporary appointment, and he requested from the Government of India to withdraw Knox for a period.

At this point, India British government decided that this was not the time to show the weakness of Britain's interests or make concessions to its demands. Nonetheless, the Ottoman government was to see what the situation would develop into and whether Ibn Sa'ud would remain ruling Najd and to what extent he would accept the Ottoman sovereignty. Cox mentioned that the Ottoman government would try to use Ibn Sa'ud to entice Mubarak Al Sabah to renounce his allegiance to the British government. After pressure from the Ottomans and the desire of the Government of India to not stir any troubles, the British Government decided that it would temporarily, and inconspicuously, withdraw Knox. He was asked to apply for a vacation during the summer. It was also mentioned in the letter that what was meant by appointing an agent was not to encourage sending a diplomat or officer to Riyadh, but to guarantee receiving as much information as possible from Kuwait.[459]

In an Arabic letter from Mubarak Al Sabah to Knox on 22nd January 1905, he wrote that the Ottoman government in Basra had arrested Hamid Alhamad, who was an agent

[459] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, A letter from India's British Government to St John Brodrick, the Minister of India, signed by eight British officials and they are: Curzon, Kitchener, E. R. Elles, A. T. Arundel, Denzil Ibbetson, H. Erle Richards, J. P. Hewett, E. N. Baker, dated 19th January 1905, in Fort William.

of Suleiman Alshbeily, an influential merchant in Basra and originally from Unaizah in Najd. He also mentioned that since there were large business transactions between Mubarak Al Sabah and Alshbeily, this would cause a large-scale disturbance in the business, and all of this was because the Ottoman authorities believed the rumours spread by Ibn Rasheed and Youssef Alibrahim.[460] In a periodic report prepared by Cox for the period from 15-22 January 1905, rumours spread regarding the arrival of Ibn Sa'ud to adjacent areas in Kuwait on his way to the Safwan meeting.[461] Before the Safwan meeting was held, and on 23rd January 1905, the India British government in Calcutta sent a telegram to the Political Resident in the Gulf, reiterating the necessity of clarifying that its interests in Kuwait must be completely confined to the coastal strip east of the Arabian Peninsula, and that no action should be taken regarding the inside and the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. It also mentioned that Knox must repeat his warning to Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah to not intervene in the interior issues, and that Knox must avoid meeting Imam Abdul Rahman as long as he did not enter Kuwait.[462]

Before the Safwan meeting was held, the Governor of Basra sent a telegram to Constantinople on 21st January 1905 seeking consultation and instructions regarding whether he was allowed to meet Imam Abdul Rahman, Ibn Sa'ud's father, in Safwan and to begin negotiations.[463] It was reported that the Governor of Basra had seriously attempted to solve the problem of Najd, as its residents had become weary from war and chaos. What made this easier was that Mubarak Al Sabah and Imam Abdul Rahman had adopted a view which might help the Governor of Basra in the success of his mission. This would also lead to limiting Ibn Rasheed's influence, which pushed him to try to destroy the Safwan meeting's chances of success, because any revolution inside Najd would force Ibn Sa'ud to withdraw from the meeting and return to Najd to protect it.[464] Imam Abdul Rahman proposed to be in Safwan, while the Governor of Basra proposed to be in Al-Faw, or somewhere close to Basra.[465]

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[460] IOR: R/15/1/477, A translation from Arabic to English of a letter from Mubarak Al Sabah to Knox, dated 22nd January 1905.
[461] FO 248/842, A periodical report from Cox for the period 15th – 22nd January 1905.
[462] IOR: R/15/1/477, A telegram from the India British government (Calcutta) to the British Political Resident in Kuwait, Cox, dated 23rd January 1905.
[463] IOR: R/15/1/477, A telegram from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, to Cox on 23rd January 1905. Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.205.
[464] IOR: R/15/1/477, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 23rd January 1905.
[465] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, A letter from Walter Townley, the British Deputy in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Minister, dated 24th January 1905.

Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah received numerous letters from British officials informing him not to intervene in Najd and to assist Ibn Sa'ud. At that point Mubarak expressed his frustration at these repeated requests. He said he was being prevented from interfering in something that did not concern him; he did not assist Ibn Sa'ud with soldiers or money. However, Kuwait was indispensable to the residents of Najd as they purchased all their needs from it. It was therefore considered an economic hub for them. He also stated that Ibn Rasheed was his enemy and he would be happy if Ibn Sa'ud defeated him. Additionally, it had been proven to him that Ibn Rasheed and Youssef Al Ibrahim were subverting public opinion against him. They had paid off newspaper owners to distort his reputation and write that Britain had assisted Ibn Sa'ud, which was untrue.[466] Even though Imam Abdul Rahman offered his allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan, the Ottoman Sultan ordered a military attack on Najd led by Faydi Pasha; this attack was launched from Najaf. Furthermore, Talib Al Naqeeb was headed to Najd to bring peace between the rival princes, Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed.[467] Ottoman officials accused some of the merchants, including Hamid Al Hammad and others, of helping Ibn Sa'ud and giving him information about Ottoman military preparations. Therefore, when the opportunity came, they arrested them in Basra and had Baghdad decide their fate there.[468] Imam Abdul Rahman continued his path from the edges of Kuwait until he reached the area of Al Sabeheya in order to meet with Mubarak Al Sabah before heading to Safwan. Cox noted that Mubarak Al Sabah was extremely anxious about this meeting. Youssef Al Ibrahim was located in Al Najaf to purchase camels in support of Ibn Rasheed against Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Sabah.[469]

Written in a secret report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), was that the Ottoman government had appointed Ibn Sa'ud as governor to the entire Najd area under the condition that he adhere to the guidance of Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah only.[470] However, this report contained an opinion because the British authorities sometimes got their information

[466] IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from Mubarak Al Sabah ruler of Kuwait to Cox, dated 26th January 1905.
[467] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Memorandum by H. H. Lamb from the British embassy in Constantinople, dated 30th January 1905; included with it is a translation of the speech from Imam Abdul Rahman (Ibn Sa'ud father) to the Ottoman Sultan, dated 15th January 1905.
[468] IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from Cox to James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, dated 1st February 1905.
[469] FO 248/842, Periodical report by Cox, the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 30th January – 5th February 1905.
[470] FO 248/842, Secret report from Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 20th – 26th February 1905.

from Mubarak Al Sabah; they noticed that at times he exaggerated in an attempt to strengthen his position with them. Mubarak may have added the statement that Ibn Sa'ud must adhere to his guidance as it would be noticed later that the relationship between Mubarak Al Sabah and Ibn Sa'ud was deteriorating. This was evident from a memorandum written by Knox in which he stated that the Safwan meeting resulted in two basic conditions; first, that Ibn Rasheed must not interfere in the affairs of Najd, and the Ottoman government should have a presence in Al-Qassim. Secondly, the Kuwaiti sheikh was entered as a party to this settlement, although the Kuwaiti sheikh did not agree to this, because he did not have ties with Najd. He was only a supporter of Ibn Sa'ud because of their friendship and because Ibn Rasheed was his enemy. Knox also added that Mubarak mentioned that he discussed with the Governor of Basra the subject of British protection for Kuwait. He also stated to him that the Ottoman government had no authority over Kuwait and he depended on the British for protection. At the same time, he had the utmost respect for the Ottoman government.

At the end of the meeting, an agreement was reached on the place where the Ottoman military protection would be centred in Al-Qassim. Also discussed were the release of the three merchants in custody and the withdrawal of Ibn Rasheed from Al Zobair and the outskirts of Basra.[471] Mentioned in another report was that the Ottoman government allocation to Imam Abdul Rahman of £120 more than that allocated to Ibn Rasheed.[472] As for Mubarak Al Sabah, who was instructed several times by the British government to take a neutral position in the Safwan meeting, and because he did so in accordance with those instructions, Cox promised to relay this to the British government which would appreciate this gesture from him.[473] This was evidence that the British government would limit Mubarak Al Sabah's options and movements; it even considered that by doing this it had imposed a siege upon him. As it is evinced from these documents, the language and directions of the British are typical of those used in controlling their protectorates; well-established imperial methods and practices that, nevertheless, Mubarak sometimes ignored to advance his own interests and that could not really be appropriate to deal with the independent Ibn Sa'ud.

[471] FO 248/842, Secret report from Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 20th – 26th February 1905.
[472] FO 248/842, Periodical report by Cox, for the period of 6th – 12th March 1905.
[473] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Translation of a letter from Arabic to English from Cox to Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, the Sheikh of Kuwait, dated 7th March 1905.

The Governor of Basra met individually with Imam Abdul Rahman after the second joint meeting they had with Mubarak Al Sabah. He also met individually with Mubarak Al Sabah and requested of him that he allow Ottoman troops to be sent to Kuwait, in addition to establishing a post office and health clinic in exchange for eliminating his country's ties with Britain.[474] However, Mubarak proved to the British government that he wanted to continue his friendly relations with Britain. He also assured them that he had no connection to the Najd situation as interfering in it would harm Kuwait. Thus he was only working towards keeping Kuwait peaceful and growing its trade.[475]

During the period of the Safwan meeting, some of the Turkish soldiers who were defeated in Al-Qassim had arrived in Kuwait. Many others had died from being wounded, from illness or starvation. At that time, it was noticed that Kuwait had experienced a huge economic boom due to the trade in Kuwaiti markets of stolen goods from Turkish soldiers, such as tents and other items.[476] The British ambassador in Constantinople, O'Conor, mentioned that, because of the observation of the Ottoman campaign leader, Faydi Pasha (who had moved to Al-Qassim during the Safwan meeting), there was a shortage in transportation methods from Najaf to Al-Qassim, he decided to keep the majority of his troops in a place about 100 miles from Najaf. He only took with him two brigades, six cannon and 100 horsemen, and he advanced to Lena.[477] From there he sent to Ibn Rasheed requesting that he meet him along the way and bring with him 300 camels. O'Conor also noted that, after the Safwan meeting, Imam Abdul Rahman requested from the Turkish government the resumption of the payment of his dues that the Ottoman Empire had stopped, the sum of 58 Ottoman lira per month, over a period of ten years.[478]

During this time, Ibn Rasheed began spreading rumours in the Yildiz Palace. He sent Al-Hasan Al Haji, Ibn Rasheed's agent in Basra, to Rasheed Pasha, Ibn Rasheed's secret agent in Yildiz Palace, stating that Ibn Rasheed had defeated the Bedouin thieves – by which he meant Ibn Sa'ud and his followers – spreading this fake news to gain the

[474] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, to The Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Minister, dated 13th March 1905.
[475] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah to Cox, dated 15th March 1905.
[476] FO 248/842, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 20th – 26th March 1905.
[477] Lena, a village in northern Najd.
[478] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, to Lansdowne, the British Foreign Minister, dated 27th March 1905.

allegiance and support of the Ottoman officials.[479] Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah sent a letter to the Governor of Basra after attending the Safwan meeting, stating that attending both meetings along with Imam Abdul Rahman during the period of 8-15 February 1905 was proof of Imam Abdul Rahman's submission to the Ottoman Empire. Additionally, Imam Abdul Rahman sent a telegram to Agha Pasha, a member of the emperor's family in Constantinople, divulging to him how they had suffered at the hands of Ibn Rasheed from bloodshed and looting. He also requested the acceptance of the Ottoman Sultan, indicating to him that he went to meet the Governor of Basra and offered him his submission and allegiance.[480]

For the sake of protecting its interests, Britain was not distant from the ongoing negotiations. It also feared French and Russian interference in the affairs of the Arabian Peninsula as it became clear that these two countries, either separately or jointly, were attempting to establish relations with Ibn Rasheed. Britain was monitoring the Safwan negotiations through Mubarak as if it were a participant. At the same time it prevented Mubarak from acting alone. Britain, represented by Cox, requested Knox, its agent in Kuwait, not to communicate with Ibn Sa'ud at all or meet with him unless Ibn Sa'ud pursued a meeting with him which the agent could not avoid.[481]

What emerged under a transnational perspective so far is that:

- The agendas of the British Government in India in respect to Ibn Sa'ud started diverging, maybe because of different worldviews (depending on geographical proximity and political interests).
- The British and Ottoman empires were distracted with territorial disputes internationally and failed to pay attention and understand the long-term impact of local Arab conflicts.
- A series of conflicting interests emerged, evident in the primary documents, that reveal the correspondence and interpretations of those events; and, finally.
- The British did not yet have an agenda to deal with Ibn Sa'ud, representing a frustration over his requests as an independent agent that did not fall with the crucial

[479] IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from F. E. Crow the British Consul in Basra to the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 3rd April 1905. Also see, R/15/1/477, letter from Crow to the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 14th April 1905.
[480] IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from F. E. Crow the British Consul in Basra to the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 22nd April 1905.
[481] Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.207.

areas that were already under the power of the empire, either as protectorates or mandates.

2.1.4. The Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna and the Death of Ibn Rasheed

Even though British policy was careful not to interfere in the affairs of the mid Arabian Peninsula, Britain was worried about direct interference from the Ottoman Empire especially sending Ottoman soldiers and weapons to help Ibn Rasheed defeat his rival, Ibn Sa'ud. Britain was careful to ensure the balance of power for many reasons. One of those reasons was that if Ibn Rasheed defeated Ibn Sa'ud, it may tempt him into considering reattempting to gain control of Kuwait or blockading and disturbing it and thus affecting British interests. On the other hand, if Ibn Sa'ud had been victorious and dominated the middle of Najd, that success may tempt him to look towards the Eastern Coast of the Arabian Peninsula to control the Arab Emirates (Gulf Sheikhdoms) which were tied to Britain via protection treaties. Therefore, in reality, Britain wished to maintain the status quo in the region.[482]

The Ottoman Empire came away from its military experience in Al-Qassim and its support to Ibn Rasheed with two important conclusions. The first was that Ibn Rasheed was not truthful in his assessment that most of Najd's residents supported him; they found the opposite true in that most residents had disdain for his rule. In addition, it became clear to the Ottomans that Ibn Rasheed did not care for the Ottoman soldiers sent to assist him. The second conclusion was that Ibn Sa'ud was a leader who enjoyed great popularity in Najd; therefore, it was not easy to defeat him. They also discovered that Ibn Sa'ud was cooperative and considerate of the safety of the Ottoman soldiers withdrawing from Najd. Ibn Sa'ud also made it clear to the Ottoman officials after defeating Ibn Rasheed that what he and his followers did was self-defence in response to the attacks by Ibn Rasheed.[483] After talks between Ibn Sa'ud and the Ottomans reached an impasse, Al-Qassim residents split into three groups. One group wanted to maintain Ibn Sa'ud's leadership; they were the princes of Unaizah and its residents, in addition to the residents of the Buraydah and the towns belonging to it. The second group wanted independence from Ibn Sa'ud and to join the Ottoman Empire, and included the prince of Buraydah and a few of its residents. The third group wanted to

[482] Al Othaimayn, *(The Famous Battles of King Abdel Aziz to Unite the Country)*, p.105.
[483] Al Othaimayn, *(The Famous Battles of King Abdel Aziz to Unite the Country)*, p.106.

join Ibn Rasheed; these were the leaders of the town of Al Rass, as they had ties with Ibn Rasheed and wanted to regain their emirate.[484]

On 11th April 1906, the Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna took place,[485] and Ibn Rasheed was killed in this battle.[486] A series of correspondence reveals the frustrations, fears and reactions of the various participants. After Mubarak Al Sabah received news of Ibn Sa'ud's victory against his tenacious rival, Ibn Rasheed, he sent a special messenger to the Sheikh of Al Mahmara. He informed him that Ibn Sa'ud had surprised Ibn Rasheed and his army in the Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna.[487] He also informed him that he had killed Ibn Rasheed and annihilated many of his soldiers.[488] Ibn Rasheed was killed on 11th April 1906 as Ibn Sa'ud's army raided Ibn Rasheed by surprise and killed 400 of his followers while wounding another 250.[489] A French document[490] confirmed the killing of Ibn Rasheed based on news from Topkapi Palace and reveals that the situation in Najd was cause for concern. In addition, there was the possibility that Najd and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula may experience periods of insurgency after the death of Ibn Rasheed.

In a British report about the Arabian Peninsula at the end of April 1906, it was noted that the Ottoman soldiers' situation in Najd was very bad. They were being killed and harmed by the residents of Al Badia and Ibn Rasheed. Additionally, the Ottoman forces had decreased in number from 4,000 to approximately 400. It was also stated in the report that Mubarak Al Sabah was attempting to bring peace with Ibn Rasheed through Sheikh Khaz'al, the Sheikh of Al Mahmara.[491] He also attempted to bring peace between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed.[492] O'Conor pointed out the dangerous consequences that

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[484] Al Othaimayn, *(The History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia)*, Part 2, p.100.
[485] For more information about the Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna see, Almana, *Arabia Unified*, pp. 45-49.
[486] Williams, *Ibn Sa'ud - The Puritan King of Arabia*, p. 65; Al Othaimayn *The Famous Battles of King Abdel Aziz to Unite the Country*, p. 109.
[487] Rowdhat Muhanna is located 30 miles east of Buraydah.
[488] IOR: R/15/1/478, Telegram from Cox to the British government in India, Simla, dated 25th April 1906. Also see, IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, telegram from the British government in India to John Morley, Minister of India in London, dated 29th April 1906.
[489] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.210.
[490] PAAP 026 Bonin, Letter dated 11th May 1906.
[491] Sheikh Khazal Bin Jasib Al Kaaby Al Amery (1862-1936), Prince of Al Mahmara or Arabstan (currently named Khuzestan), President of the Mohessin Arabic tribe. Assumed power after his brother Sheikh Mozal in 1897, he controlled most of the tribes which were part of the Ka'ab tribe. He was known for his power and firmness. He was the last ruler of the Ka'ab descendants in Ahwaz. On his watch the Emirate was lost and became part of Iran. Al Zarkaly, Al A'lam, *Tarajom Dictionary*, Part 2, p. 305.
[492] FO 248/875, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 23rd – 29th April 1906.

would result if Ibn Sa'ud was able to annex Ha'il and return it to the Sa'udi family. Therefore, the importance of Ibn Sa'ud had increased, which required greater caution. The British government was also advised to follow his relationship with the Sheikh of Kuwait and the sheikhs of the Trucial States.[493]

The official circles of the Ottoman Empire spread the news of Ibn Rasheed's death. The Governor of Basra informed the Governor of Baghdad, who in turn informed the Ottoman government. After receiving news of his death, the secretary of the Ottoman Sultan sent a telegram on 29th April 1906 to Mutab Ibn Rasheed, giving his condolences regarding the death of his father. He also informed him that he would work on punishing the perpetrators. A sultan decree had been issued appointing him to the same position his father held. Additionally, the salary and benefits his father used to receive would now be given to him. The assistance Ibn Rasheed was receiving at that time was 200 Ottoman Lira per month sent from Baghdad via Karbala. Additionally, he received 200 bags of rice per year sent from Basra through Kuwait and then onto Ha'il.[494] The Governor of Basra demanded revenge for the death of Ibn Rasheed and accused Mubarak of conspiring to kill him. He also demanded that immediate steps be taken to bring back order to the land and to arrest Ibn Sa'ud. However, Topkapi Palace did not agree with his views. There was, however, another point of view mentioned by O'Conor; a telegram was issued by the Grand Vizier to the Governor of Baghdad stating that the events had escalated in Al-Qassim due to military interference by the Ottomans in the affairs of that city. He also stated that this interference should stop immediately and the necessary steps should be taken to restore calm to the area.[495]

In a letter from Mohammad Hussein, the acting British consul in Jeddah, he referenced Ibn Rasheed's death in the Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna and that Ibn Sa'ud had declared himself the leader of the east. He sent correspondence with this information to Constantinople, Basra, to the Governors of Baghdad and Basra, Al Hejaz, the Arab sheikhs and their leaders in Al-Hasa', Qatar and Bahrain. The messengers who were sent returned with greetings and gifts. He also sent a delegation to Mecca, which then headed to Yanbu. It was also said that they were heading to Egypt

[493] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, to Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, dated 1st May 1906.
[494] Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer*, p. 515.
[495] IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, to Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, dated 8th May, 1906. Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.210.

carrying a message to the Khedive.[496] At that time the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak Al Sabah became temporarily tepid due to a dispute over the allegiance of some of the Bedouin tribes and the payment of *jizya* (taxes). However, the cold relations between them did not last long.[497]

As a result of Ibn Sa'ud's victories in Al-Qassim, a British report predicted that he would face problems from the Ottoman State, especially after he arrested Saleh Ibn Muhanna, Emir of Buraydah and sent him to Riyadh. A report written by Cox mentioned that the Governor's meeting with Ibn Sa'ud took place in Al Bukairiyah and that the Governor delayed any military action in Al-Qassim until he received orders from Constantinople. The report also mentioned that Sidqi Pasha, commander of the Ottoman forces in Al-Qassim, had reached Kuwait along with a number of his troops who had bad ideas about Najd.[498]

Sidqi Pasha, commander-in-chief of the Ottoman forces in Najd, was summoned to Baghdad. He headed there in late August 1906 and handed over his duties to Sami Pasha Al Faruqi,[499] who was appointed military commander and civil chief. Al Faruqi camped in Al Sheheia (30 miles south west of Buraidah). It seems that the relationship between Sami and Ibn Sa'ud were not as cordial. Sami asked Ibn Sa'ud to meet with him in his camp. However, Ibn Sa'ud refused and the meeting took place on neutral ground. A number of subjects was discussed during the meeting. The most important issues were the building of new forts in Buraydah and Unaizah to receive constant Ottoman battalions[500] and the release of the surrogate Saleh Ibn Hasan Ibn Muhanna. Ibn Sa'ud refused both requests on the grounds that the Ottomans had previously decided that their battalions in either Buraydah or Unaizah would not exceed 100

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[496] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Mohammad Hussein, the acting British consul in Jeddah, to Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 13th May 1906. Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.210.

[497] Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer*, p. 512.

[498] IOR: L/P&S/7/193, A periodic report by Cox, British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar) for the period 27th August – 2nd September 1906. Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud*, p.83.

[499] Sami Pasha Al Faruqi was a leader of Arabic origin who lived in the Ottoman state. He replaced Sidqi Pasha who was accused by the Ottoman government of being unserious in serving the goals of the state following the killing of Ibn Rasheed. Al Zarkali, *(The History of the Arabian Peninsula)*, part1, 173. Ibn Hathloul, *(The History of Al Sa'ud Kings)*, p.71.

[500] The difference on the Al-Qassim issue overshadowed the negotiations between Ibn Sa'ud and Al Faruqi and they did not reach a mutual agreement. The discussions between the two sides became severe and at the end Ibn Sa'ud threatened Al Faruqi with war should he fail to withdraw peacefully. This drove Al Faruqi to make a truce with Ibn Sa'ud the next day and carry out his orders, Al Zarkali, *The History of the Arabian Peninsula*, Part 1, p. 174. Ibn Hathloul, *(The History of the Al Sa'ud Kings)*, p.72. Al Otheimeen, *(The History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia)*, Part2, p. 108.

soldiers. Ibn Sa'ud refused the fact that Al-Qassim would become a province of the state. A verbal clash happened between the two men and Ibn Sa'ud left the meeting. Al Raihani[501] stated that Al Faruqi was a tough and strong leader and that Ibn Sa'ud was in the position of the strong victor who controlled the centre of the Arabian Peninsula and could not easily surrender Al-Qassim to the Ottoman State. This was despite the Pasha offering Ibn Sa'ud an amount of money and annual allowances. However, Ibn Sa'ud rejected this proposal as he was becoming stronger and would not give up Al-Qassim. Ibn Sa'ud then offered Al Faruqi two options: to move with his remaining Turkish troops to the Al Sirr area between Al-Qassim and Riyadh, or that the Turkish forces would leave Najd altogether and Ibn Oud would be responsible for deporting him and his troops so as to send the Mesopotamian troops to Mesopotamia. Should he reject both options, Ibn Sa'ud would declare war on Al Faruqi and his forces.[502] Ibn Sa'ud neglected the second request and guaranteed Al Faruqi that Ibn Muhanna had escaped from his prison in Riyadh and was killed by some Bedouins in the desert. A short while later, the Ottomans' situation in Al-Qassim had become even worse. Ibn Sa'ud became more powerful and almost in full control, despite the presence of the Ottoman forces.[503] This change in the status and power of Ibn Sa'ud in the region signaled a change for the worse in the long friendship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak; a change that did not escape British officials in the region.

2.2. Ibn Sa'ud's Early Interest in Al-Hasa and the Eastern Coast and the British Position

When Ibn Sa'ud defeated his fierce rival, Ibn Rasheed, the Ottomans withdrew their force from Al-Qassim. The significance of these events is discussed in the first section that follows. Disputes calmed down late in 1906. This created an imbalance of power on the Arabian Peninsula and Ibn Sa'ud gained large control of the area. At that point, Ibn Sa'ud began to think of expanding eastwards towards the coastal sheikhdoms and Oman and thought of regaining Al-Hasa and Al Qateef, which had been controlled by his ancestors. The following two sections of the second part of this chapter investigate the details of Ibn Sa'ud's move to the east coast and the Trucial states and reveal a web of

[501] Al Raihani, *(The Modern History of Najd)*, p.158.
[502] Alangari, *Struggle for Power in Arabia - Ibn Sa'ud, Hussein and Great Britain 1914-1924*, p.36; Al Ereinan, *(The Relations of Najd with Surrounding Powers)*, p.133.
[503] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]* p.214; Al Khudeiri, *(The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer)*, p. 515. Ibn Hathloul, *(The History of Al Sa'ud Kings)*, p.70.

complex and entangled relationships between Ibn Sa'ud, the sheikhs of the various sheikhdoms on the east coast, and the British intermediaries positioned in Kuwait, Bushehr and Calcutta.

2.2.1. The Withdrawal of the Ottoman Forces from Al-Qassim

The Turks found that their occupation of Al-Qassim was no longer accepted by its residents and that it was dangerous for them to keep their forces in Al-Qassim, especially following Ibn Sa'ud's threats. The Turkish government decided to decrease the number of its troops stationed there and begin a gradual withdrawal. This withdrawal began on 3rd November 1906. The Ottoman Sultan ordered the commander of the army's sixth brigade in Baghdad to withdraw his troops from Al-Qassim except for two battalions, which would be decreased to only one within a year.[504] The chief commander wrote back to his leaders asking for permission to withdraw and return.[505] The Ottoman officials' reply came to inform the Ottoman leader in Al-Qassim that they would be receiving supplies and new brigades led by Major General Sami Al Faruqi.[506] When the Ottoman orders were issued to the soldiers to evacuate Najd, British reports recorded that part of these forces headed to Medina. These forces were led by Sami Al Faruqi, who suffered from shortages of food, along with his soldiers in their return. It is said that they depended on eating locusts. Others headed to Kuwait on their way to Basra. The Ottoman soldiers received considerable support from Ibn Sa'ud during their withdrawal as part of his army accompanied them for protection until they had passed the Hafr al Baten area.[507] Ibn Sa'ud also appointed one of the most famous desert guides to accompany them. Reports mention that the number of withdrawing forces was between 700 and 800 men. They also had six cannon. Ibn Sa'ud supplied them with 2,000 camels to carry them and their luggage.[508] The reports also stated that the total number of forces withdrawing from Al-Qassim, whether through the Basra or Medina routes, was 1,500 men and that their conditions were dire. Trust in the Turkish forces

[504] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, An extract from letter number 80 from the British consul to the British surrogate in Constantinople, dated on 10th November 1906.
[505] An Ottoman document from Hussein Al-Al-Hasani, Ottoman surrogate of the forces moving in Al Kahfa, to the Governor of Basra, dated 24th June 1905, Hussein Al-Al-Hasani, *Memoirs of an Ottoman Officer in Najd- The General Conditions in the Najd Region*, translation and comments by Suhail Saban, p.11.
[506] An Ottoman document from the general commander to Hassan Al-Al-Hasani, Brigade leader in Al-Qassim, signed by five advisors, dated 31st July 1905, H. Al-Al-Hasani, *Memoirs of an Ottoman Officer in Najd*, translation and comments by Suhail Saban, p.11.
[507] IOR: L/P&S/7/196, Periodic report from Cox, of the period 26th November to 2nd December 1906.
[508] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A news letter from Knox to Cox, dated 25th December 1906.

was lost and fear dominated the Turkish authorities with the chance that Ibn Sa'ud would cut off the railway line heading to Hijaz.[509]

The withdrawn Turkish forces reached Kuwait within 25 days. However, Mubarak Al Sabah did not allow them to enter, so they continued their journey to Basra, which they reached safely. A small number of no more than 50 soldiers remained in Al-Qassim.[510] Ibn Sa'ud showed great interest in supervising the secure withdrawal of the troops until they had exited the centre of the Arabian Peninsula safely. This caused Sultan Abdel Hamid to thank Ibn Sa'ud for his good treatment of the withdrawing forces.[511] With the departure of the Ottoman forces from Al-Qassim, Ibn Sa'ud became the only force controlling the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[512] This had a role in the disruptions that happened in Al-Hasa in 1907, as is discussed in later chapters.

2.2.2. Ibn Sa'ud and British Interests in Qatar, the Coast of Oman and the Trucial States

Ibn Sa'ud was bothered by the Turkish procedures in Al-Qassim because it forced him to stop his military operations towards Ibn Rasheed. Accordingly, he redirected his focus towards the Gulf Coast. At that time, Ibn Sa'ud was in the area of Al Hafer, and sent a missive to Sheikh Issa Ibn Ali Al Khalifa, Sheikh of Bahrain, informing him that he would be coming with his armies towards Al-Hasa to protect the path from the Bedouin and tribal attacks. He also stated that he intended to visit Sheikh Jasim Al Thani in Qatar to assist him with some of the uprisings that had sprung against him. One of them was an uprising against him by his brother, another to break up disputes that occurred between some groups of the Ajman tribes.[513] He requested that they pay the Zakat required upon them, which they used to pay to his forefathers. It appeared that Ibn Sa'ud was taking this step with the goal of warning the British authorities, which had

[509] Al Khudeiri, *(The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer)*, p. 519.
[510] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A telegraph from F. E. Crow, dated on 31st December 1906. Al Khudeiri, *(The History of the Sa'udi Arab Lands in the Gulf Guide)*, p. 518.
[511] Al Ereinan, *(Relations between Najd and the Surrounding Powers)*, p. 133.
[512] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter signed from Knox to Major A. W. Baird, in Al Ahwaz, dated 24th December 1906.
[513] FO248/843, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 31st July – 6th August 1905. Also see, FO248/843, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 7th – 13th August 1905. Al Rayhani, *The Recent History of Najd*, p.154.

taken a negative position against him in his conflict with the Ottomans, regarding the disturbance he could cause.[514]

From there, Ibn Sa'ud sent letters to the rulers of the Oman coast informing them that he intended on visiting them the following year. It was understood from his letters that he wanted to annexe the coastal cities using the argument that it once belonged to his forefathers. This triggered fear among the rulers of those countries.[515] One of his letters was to the Sheikh of Dubai on 29th August 1905.[516] Ibn Sa'ud also sent a letter to Sheikh Zayed Ibn Khalifa, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, on the same date, informing him that he had reached Al-Hasa and he had established peace between the Bedouin and the tribes. He also hinted that the Ottoman forces in Al-Hasa were complying with his orders. It appeared that this was in order to prove that he was on good terms with the Governor of Al-Hasa at that time and that reconciliation had occurred between him and the major tribal leaders in the Al-Hasa area. This included Mazeed and Noah Ibn Shreem from the tribe of Aal Mara, Ibn Shabaan from the tribe of Bani Hajar, Mansoor Ibn Ghanim from the tribe of Al Khayrayn; they had all reconciled with Ibn Sa'ud as well as with the tribe of Al Ajmaan.[517] After that Ibn Sa'ud had the appearance of a protector of law and order. At the end of July and the beginning of August 1905, Ibn Sa'ud visited the Al Jaforah desert next to Doha, Salwa and Qatar. This was an unexpected visit and a source of discomfort for the Turkish authorities in Al-Hasa. Even though they were confused at first, in the end they sent a team to greet him in the Jaforah desert, in consideration of the fact that the Turkish authorities had recognised him as a leader by name.[518]

The British government was concerned with the movements of Ibn Sa'ud in the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula. This was out of fear that he may expand his ruling to the east. When the British government found out about his visit to Al-Hasa and his correspondence with the coastal rulers, they began to follow the developments of his trip seriously. Britain considered that Ibn Sa'ud was heading towards the Eastern Coast

[514] Al Ghanam, *The Regional and International Political Environment in the Arabian Peninsula,* p.65.
[515] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 23. Al-Harbi, *The Relations between Sultanate Najd and its Subsidiaries with Britain*. p.38.
[516] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Translation to English from Arabic of a letter from Ibn Sa'ud to the Sheikh of Dubai, dated 22nd August 1905.
[517] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Translation to English from Arabic of a letter from Khaled Bin Abdullah Al Sowedy to Sheikh Zayed Bin Khalifa, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, dated 29th August 1905.
[518] Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer* p. 418, p. 509. *(Gulf Gazetteer,* p.1500/999*).*

and that this would pose a danger to its authority and its influence, as he was successful in controlling the Gulf Sheikhdoms. The British resident agent in Al Sharja was hired to follow Ibn Sa'ud's movements and correspondence and to supply the British authorities with reports about all subsequent developments. Britain began striving to stop Ibn Sa'ud's expansion. The British Political Agent in Al Sharja obtained copies of Ibn Sa'ud's correspondence with the coastal rulers. The Sheikh of Abu Dhabi began to feel uncomfortable with how close Ibn Sa'ud was getting, so he went to the Sultan of Muscat to consult with him.[519] Once Ibn Sa'ud began to think about visiting the coastal cities, Captain Arthur P. Trevor proposed taking the necessary steps to prevent Ibn Sa'ud from performing this visit. The reason was that they expected that his appearance in Oman, or any coastal city, would cause them problems.[520] His victory could also lead to the reappearance of division and fighting in the Arabian Gulf, which the British navy had suffered from for a long time.[521]

Britain's reaction towards the possibility of Ibn Sa'ud visiting Oman and the Gulf Coast was mentioned in a letter by Russell to Cox, the Political Resident in Bushehr, dated 5th December 1905. In this he authorised the political agent in Kuwait to question the Kuwaiti Sheikh Mubarak about attempting to prevent this visit through Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, so that he could influence Ibn Sa'ud by controlling the weapons shipments.[522] His Majesty's government, however, decided that there was no need for a mediator with Ibn Sa'ud in his attempts to interfere in the affairs of Oman and the Gulf Sheikhdoms; if he came close to doing so he would be warned directly without a mediator.[523] Britain followed with interest news about Ibn Sa'ud visiting to the Eastern Coast of the Arabian Peninsula and his motivation for it, until it was sure that Ibn Sa'ud had no intention of attacking the coast, and that he had returned to Najd, because he was busy fighting Ibn Rasheed.[524]

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[519] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from the residing British agent in al Shariqa to Cox, dated 5th October 1905. Also see, FO 248/844, periodical report from Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 9th – 15th October 1905. Al Oraynan, *The Relationship between Najd and its Surrounding Powers*, p.129.

[520] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Captain Arthur P. Trevor the acting British resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) to the British government of India, dated 29th October 1905.

[521] Al Oraynan, *The Relationship between Najd and its Surrounding Powers*, p. 129.

[522] Speech by L. Russell, the Deputy Secretary of the Indian government for Foreign Affairs to Cox the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), dated 5th December 1905, in Fort William, R/15/5/24.

[523] Al Khodery, *History of Sa'udi Arabia in the Gulf Guide*, p.533.

[524] Al Oraynan, *Najd's Relations with its Surrounding Powers*, p. 130.

Ibn Sa'ud's attempt to visit Oman worried Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah; therefore, he met with Cox to discuss this matter. However, Cox mentioned that this matter was not of significance. It would, however, bother the British government, should there be any developments after this alleged visit.[525] In the meantime, a representative for Ibn Sa'ud and Sheikh Jasim Al Thani in Bushehr sent a letter to the Ottoman Sultan in Constantinople dated 18th February 1906, showing and renewing both their loyalties to the Ottoman Sultan. Further, the Sultan should not listen to the instigators against Ibn Sa'ud and not to use force against him. Included in the letter was that Abdel Aziz Ibn Rasheed had been engaging in abuses since the passing of his uncle, Prince Muhammad Ibn Rasheed. This led the residents of Najd to request Ibn Sa'ud to thwart his truculent actions. Thus Ibn Sa'ud was able to restore peace and safety to the city.[526] The British authorities had observed the representative of Jasim Al Thani and Ibn Sa'ud in Bushehr. Cox reported that it had been observed that three people from Najd had arrived in Bushehr from Bahrain and it was believed that they were delegates from Ibn Sa'ud. The report indicates that those individuals were under surveillance.[527]

With regard to the visit Ibn Sa'ud intended on making to the Pirates Coast and Muscat, the Indian government proposed that they contact him through either the Sheikh of Kuwait or the Sultan of Muscat to find out how committed he was to the declaration of 1866. That declaration prevented hostility towards British nationals residing in his land or harming them. It also prevented interference in the affairs of the tribes that had alliances with the British government. It should be noted that the British government did not propose or agree to this declaration because it gave Sa'udis control over Muscat's customs. The British government in India emphasised the importance of warning Ibn Sa'ud that should he not adhere to this declaration or interfere in any affairs of Oman or the Gulf sheikhdoms it would consider this an unfriendly act and would take the necessary steps to turn him away. The Indian government proposed that those steps should include restricting the importation of weapons through Kuwait or any other route. If necessary, the British government was also prepared to resort to providing weapons from its navy in the Gulf to the targeted sheikhdoms. Additionally, the British government in India advised that no steps should be taken when considering imposing a

[525] IOR: R/15/478, Letter from Knox, political agent in Kuwait, to Cox, dated 14th February 1906.
[526] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Telegram in Arabic translated to English sent by a representative for Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Al Thani from Bushehr to the Ottoman Sultan in Constantinople, dated 18th February 1906.
[527] FO 248/875, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 12th – 18th February 1906.

naval blockade in the Gulf to confront possible interference in Muscat by Ibn Sa'ud without first consulting the British ambassador in Constantinople on ways to communicate with him through non-Turkish Ottoman channels.[528]

However, at approximately the same time, the fear of Ibn Sa'ud visiting Oman faded, especially after the letter Cox sent to the British government in India dated 23rd February 1906. It came on the heels of a report prepared by Knox stating that Ibn Sa'ud's situation in Najd was unstable and it was unexpected that he would shift his attention to the Trucial states. The report also indicated that Ibn Sa'ud was not in agreement with Mubarak Al Sabah; even though Mubarak's relations with the Ottomans were amiable, the relations between Ibn Sa'ud and the Ottomans were becoming increasingly tense. Knox also commented that Ibn Sa'ud did not heed the advice of Mubarak Al Sabah in dealing with the Ottomans.[529]

At the height of the tension between Ibn Sa'ud and the Ottomans, he sent a personal messenger, Musaed Ibn Swelam, to the British Political Agency in Bahrain. He told the Political Agent, Captain Francis B. Prideaux, that Ibn Sa'ud felt that he was strong enough to remove the Ottoman Turks from Al-Hasa and Al Qateef. Additionally, he wished to enter official relations with the British government based on treaties. In return, he was prepared to allow a British political officer to reside in Al-Hasa and Al Qateef. However, Prideaux informed the British government of his doubts that Ibn Sa'ud had enough power to remove the Ottomans. He also did not give Musaed Ibn Swelam any positive indications. When the British refused this offer, Musaed Ibn Swelam and two others headed to Bushehr; from there they sent an extensive telegram to the Ottoman Sultan on behalf of Jasim Al Thani. It was also mentioned in a commentary by Cox that Ibn Sa'ud was upset that the Ottoman Sultan did not stop Ibn Rasheed's unruliness. In the commentary, it was noted that, before sending the telegram, Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Al Thani had attempted to discover the perspective of the British representative in Bahrain.[530] British officials were aware of the movements of Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Al Thani's messengers. It was mentioned (in a report by Cox) that they had returned from Bushehr to Bahrain, after which they were able to send a

[528] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, A. Godley's letter, from the Ministers of India in London to the British Foreign Ministers, dated 22nd February 1906.
[529] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Cox to the British government in India, dated 23rd February 1906.
[530] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Cox to the British government in India, dated 23rd February 1906.

telegram to the Ottoman Sultan in which the Prince of Qatar, Jasim Al Thani, was interceding for Ibn Sa'ud.[531]

On 22nd April 1906, Cox sent a warning letter from the British government to Sheikh Zayed Ibn Khalifa, the Governor of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Bottay Ibn Soheel, the Governor of Dubai, Sheikh Saqir Ibn Khaled, the Governor of Al Sharja, Sheikh Rasheed Ibn Ahmed, the Governor of Um Al Qoween, Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibn Hamid, the Governor of Ajman, and all the sheikhs of the Trucial States. The letter stated that the British government would not view in good light any liking or favourable leaning towards Ibn Sa'ud or any of his agents, as it could harm British trade. This came after British officials found out that Ibn Sa'ud and his father, Abdul Rahman, intended on heading towards northern Oman, and the correspondence that had occurred between the sheikhs allied with the British government.[532]

Many letters and messengers were sent between the British Political Agent in Kuwait and the rulers of the coast in fear of Ibn Sa'ud's expansion eastwards. There were letters from Sheikh Zayed, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, expressing fear of Ibn Sa'ud's intentions towards Oman. Therefore, he was quick in calling for alliances with Dubai and Sharjah. He also called for a settlement to the disputes between Sharjah and Fujairah and an understanding between the Al Qawasem and Hinnawi bani Yas tribes to prevent Ibn Sa'ud from any infiltration into Oman.[533]

Letters from the Trucial Coast were sent to Cox repeatedly. Sheikh Batti Ibn Suhail, ruler of Dubai, sent a letter to Cox informing him that he had received the British Resident's letter and had taken note of the warnings in it not to engage or correspond with Ibn Sa'ud and that he promised to abide by the orders of the British resident.[534] In another message, Sheikh Rashed Ibn Ahmed, ruler of Umm Al Quwain, informed Cox that he had received his letter, and taken note of its content and the warning it which included – not to engage or contact Ibn Sa'ud. Sheikh Rashed promised to abide by the

[531] FO 248/875, Periodical report by Cox for the period of 19th – 25th February 1906.
[532] IOR: R/15/1/556, Letter from Cox to: Sheikh Zayed Bin Khalifa, the Governor of Abu Dhabi; Sheikh Bottay Bin Soheel, the Governor of Dubai; Sheikh Saqir Bin Khaled, the Governor of Al Shariqa; Sheikh Rasheed Bin Ahmed, the Governor of Um Al Qoween; Sheikh Abdel Aziz Bin Hamid, the Governor of Ajman and all the sheikhs of the Trucial states, dated 22nd April 1906.
[533] IOR: L/P&S/7/193, A periodic report by Cox, British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), for the period 20th – 26th August 1906.
[534] IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Batti Ibn Suheil, ruler of Dubai, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.

British Resident's request.[535] Also, Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibn Humeid, ruler of Ajman, sent a letter to Cox informing him that he had received the British Resident's message and had taken note of the warning in it, which included not to engage with or contact Ibn Sa'ud. In this letter, Sheikh Abdel Aziz pledged to abide by the British Political Resident's request.[536] Sheikh Khaled Saqer Sultan, ruler of Sharjah, also sent a letter to Cox informing him that there would be no contact between him and Ibn Sa'ud and that he should avoid getting close to him.[537] The deputy of the British Residency in Sharjah sent a letter to the British Political Resident and the British Consul General in the Gulf, informing them of his receipt of the British Resident's letter and his receipt of replies from the Sheikhs of Dubai, Ajman, Sharjah and Umm Al Quwain.[538]

Mubarak Al Sabah raised the issue of the British protection of Ibn Sa'ud once again in late August 1906. He made it clear to the British Political Resident the benefits of this protection and that, if it was to be given, a convoy would be sent on a daily basis from Kuwait to the interior of the Arabian Peninsula. Mubarak's worry that there were signs of the return of Ottoman authority to Al-Qassim was also clear, as news had reached him that the number of Ottoman soldiers there was almost 3,000 men.[539]

Cox mentioned in his report in September 1906 that the Emir of Al Majma'ah, Abdullah Al Askar, was still in control of Al Majma'ah and had not declared his surrender to Ibn Sa'ud. However, he was paying the Zakat to Ibn Sa'ud. Although Ibn Sa'ud had appointed Abdul Mohsen Al Tweijri as his representative for the whole of the Sudair area, Al Majma'ah refused to recognise this representative. The report also discussed the economic state of Ibn Sa'ud and his followers. They had become rich as a result of the spoils they had gained after defeating Ibn Rasheed. The same report also considered the killing of Saleh Al Muhanna and his brother, Muhanna, after escaping prison in Riyadh.[540]

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[535] IOR:L R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Rashed Ibn Ahmed, ruler of Um Al Qwein, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.
[536] IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibn Humeid, ruler of Ajman, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.
[537] IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Saqr Ibn Khaled Ibn Sultan, ruler of Sharjah, to Cox, dated 6th September 1906.
[538] IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from the British residency agent in Sharjah to the political resident and British general consul in the Gulf, dated 3rd September 1906.
[539] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 28th August 1906.
[540] IOR: L/P&S/7/193, A secret report by Cox for the period 3rd – 9th September 1906.

That Ibn Sa'ud was heading east in the Arabian Peninsula towards the reconciled coast and Oman concerned the British authorities. This visit had a similar effect on the sheikhs of the region, as Sheikh Zayed, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, headed to Muscat to visit its Sultan and consult with him.[541] The British government's concern was relayed in a letter from the British Government in India to John Morley,[542] the Secretary for India.[543] In addition, the possibility that Ibn Sa'ud might attack the Trucial state sheikhs and Oman, combined with the possibility that Wahhabism might regain its power in the region, increased. On the other hand, the British Government in India moved in another direction, and commissioned Major Percy Z Cox, the British Political Resident in the Gulf, to confirm the facts from Sheikh Mubarak, the Sheikh of Kuwait. At that time, the Indian government also began communicating with Ibn Sa'ud either through the Kuwaiti Sheikh or the Sultan of Muscat, to gauge his commitment after British nationals residing in his territory were hurt. Further, they wished to advise him not to interfere in the affairs of the Arabian tribes allied with the British government. It also wanted to warn him that the British government would not tolerate any interference with the affairs of the Gulf sheikhs. It may also have sought to impose a ban on the weapons he received through Kuwait or any other route. Additionally, it may resort to using force against him through the British navy. Cox had alerted Knox in a letter on the importance of preventing this visit;[544] the reason is that Ibn Sa'ud may have had the idea of reviving the Wahabi influence his fathers in the Sa'ud family had previously enjoyed in the Trucial States and Oman. Therefore, Cox believed that the best way to prevent this visit was through the Sheikh of Kuwait. In a return correspondence from Knox to Cox,[545] he mentioned that he spoke with Sheikh Mubarak of Kuwait about Ibn Sa'ud's visit. Mubarak informed him that he wrote to Ibn Sa'ud telling him not to go through with this visit and warned him about the problems this visit may cause him because the dangers posed by Ibn Rasheed were still ongoing. Knox also mentioned that Mubarak did not support all of the actions by Ibn Sa'ud. This indicated a worsening of the

[541] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 23.
[542] Morley, John, Viscount Morley of Blackburn (1838–1923), politician and writer, Secretary of State for India (1905-1910). In 1917 Morley published two volumes of recollections consisting mainly of extracts from his diaries and letters; David Hamer, 'Morley, John, Viscount Morley of Blackburn (1838–1923)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35110, accessed 1st Feb 2017].
[543] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from the British government in India to John Morley the Minister for India in London, dated 11th January 1906, in Fort William, signed by Minto, Kitchener, A. T. Arundel, Denzil Ibbetson, H. Erle Richards, J. P. Hewett, E. N. Baker and C. H. Scott.
[544] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Cox to Knox, dated 17th January 1906.
[545] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 19th January 1906.

relations between Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud at that time. Knox also believed that another reason for the dispute between Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud at that time was Mubarak's fear that Ibn Sa'ud may utilise a different port other than Kuwait.[546]Al-Harbi also supported this opinion.[547] It was likely that Mubarak was in agreement with the British government on preventing this visit due to a conflict in personal interest. If Ibn Sa'ud was to obtain a coastal area, it would mean redirecting Najd's commerce away from Kuwait. All efforts to control communications and areas crucial to transportation, trade, and movement of goods and people appear to fall within the premise of a transnational analysis since the emphasis is on the study of areas and people 'in-between' connections.[548] From this perspective, it could be argued that Ibn Sa'ud, having gained independence from Ottoman rule and having understood the British interest in the area, with their established protectorates and trade routes between the Gulf, India and the east, tried to carve his place and his power 'in-between' the established boundaries and relationships of the time. Moving to Al-Hasa was crucial to this plan.

2.2.3. Ibn Sa'ud's Early Plans to Annex Al-Hasa Region

British officials noticed that Ibn Sa'ud was beginning to think about controlling the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula, mainly focusing on Al-Hasa, especially after Ibn Sa'ud headed to Qatar to help Jasim Al Thani defeat the uprisings which had begun in opposition to him. Captain Francis B. Prideaux, the British Political Agent in Bahrain, confirmed this. He noted that one of Ibn Sa'ud's commanders named Musaed Ibn Swelam informed him that Ibn Sa'ud felt he had enough power to expel the Ottomans from Al-Hasa and Al Qateef. Additionally, Ibn Swelam claimed that Ibn Sa'ud wanted to finalise his treaty with the British government by allowing them to appoint a political officer in Al-Hasa in exchange for protection from any naval attack by the Ottomans. Prideaux added that he informed Ibn Swelam that if Najd became independent, the British government might accept establishing relations with its leaders. However, he did not believe that Ibn Sa'ud had enough power to become free from the Ottomans. The agent also pointed out that as long as Britain was in a state of peace with the Ottoman Empire, it would not do anything to prevent them from reclaiming their land if Ibn

[546] IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 3rd February 1906.
[547] Al Harbi, *The Relationship between Sultanate Najd and its Subsidiaries with Britain*, p.39.
[548] Saunier 2013, *Transnational History: Theory and History*, pp. 39, 51.

Sa'ud was successful in obtaining it.[549] This view confirms that Britain wanted to maintain its policy of not interfering in Najd. This was further validated by an article published in the *London Standard* newspaper, dated 16th June 1906, under the headline "The Struggle for Influence in the Arabian Peninsula".[550] Mentioned in it was the notion that Prince Ibn Sa'ud had appealed to Britain for support, backing and protection, but Britain refused to offer him any.

In a letter to Sir Louis W. Dane, Cox mentioned that Ibn Sa'ud wanted to enter into a stronger relationship with the British government. This was in light of what was mentioned by Sheikh Jasem Ibn Thani that Ibn Sa'ud had become strong enough to take the Ottomans out of Najd and Al-Hasa. Ibn Sa'ud wanted to know if the British government could provide him with naval support similar to that it provided for Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, Sheikh of Kuwait.[551]

Cox considered that this was a good time to restudy and re-evaluate the situation in the Arabian Peninsula, especially after he had realised Ibn Sa'ud's potential capabilities. Ibn Sa'ud had repeated three times in 1906 his requests for recognition and direct relations similar to those of the other Sheikhs of the Gulf region;[552] Cox hoped that the British government would benefit from this situation and he advised it to enter into relations with Ibn Sa'ud. He thought that adopting any negative position against Najd would not be in the interest of the British government. Such a position could be understood wrongly as a hostile position on the part of the British government towards the element controlling Najd – Ibn Sa'ud. Cox noted that Ibn Sa'ud had officially requested Britain's help and that the time seemed suitable to answer his request. Cox also stated there were disadvantages to not having a direct channel of communication with Ibn Sa'ud. He considered the British authorities' surprise at Ibn Sa'ud's intention to visit the coast of Muscat as an example of one of these negatives. Cox considered that a close relationship with Ibn Sa'ud would urge him to provide assistance in areas such as piracy and arresting notorious people such as Ahmed Ibn Salman. Cox therefore strongly supported the opinion of O'Conor, British ambassador to Constantinople, to

[549] IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Captain Francis B. Prideaux, the British Political Resident in Bahrain, to Cox, dated 9th February 1906.
[550] PAAP 026 Bonin/14, Article by M. L. Buxton, titled *"The Struggle for Influence in the Arabian Peninsula", The London Standard*, 16th June 1906.
[551] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.
[552] Troeller, *the Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*. p. 24.

prepare a meeting between Ibn Sa'ud and a representative of the British government on board a British ship, as this would allow the British government to directly identify Ibn Sa'ud's ambitions.[553]

Cox wondered whether the status quo agreement signed between the British government and the Ottoman state could be used in the interest of the independence of Najd, considering that peace dominated at the time and there were no active competitors to Ibn Sa'ud. Cox also viewed that Ibn Sa'ud and his soldiers could not oppose the Ottoman state forever unless Britain was to limit Ottoman intervention using diplomatic means. It would also be difficult to remove the Ottoman forces from Najd in the future if they kept pressure high on Ibn Sa'ud. Since signs were emerging of the tri-alliance mentioned by Sheikh Mubarak between Ibn Sa'ud, Mubarak Al Sabah and Ibn Rasheed, this gave the British a good opportunity to inform the Ottoman state that it should leave Najd for its Sheikhs. Cox also expressed his opinion that it would be unwise to sign any agreements with Ibn Sa'ud except those concerning Britain. Furthermore, the British Government of India should ask the British central government to take steps in dealing with the Najd issue in a way that would bring more satisfaction.[554]

It should be mentioned that Cox received information from Najd that the Ottomans were inquiring of the reasons for the reconciliation between Ibn Sa'ud and Miteb Ibn Rasheed. The information also included that the Ottomans had informed Ibn Rasheed that he had no authority to sign this treaty. Further, the Ottoman chief commander in Al-Qassim asked the people of Al-Qassim to surrender and bear the charges that the Ottoman state wished to impose on them.[555]

Knox mentioned on 10th October 1906 that the an alliance between the Sheikhs of Al Muhammara, Kuwait, Riyadh and Ha'il was unlikely as the peace treaty between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed seemed fragile. In addition, it was likely that Ibn Rasheed would welcome the Ottomans once more on the condition of eliminating Ibn Sa'ud. Knox also believed that the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak Al Sabah began to change and that Ibn Sa'ud's fear of Ottoman control during that period had prevented

[553] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906; Aldamer, *Sa'udi Arabia and Britain Changing Relations, 1939-1953*, p.5.
[554] IOR: R/15/1/478, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.
[555] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 26th September 1906.

him from troubling Mubarak Al Sabah. Despite the friendship between Mubarak Al Sabah and Ibn Rasheed, Knox noted that the only joint interests between them were trade and enforcing order.[556]

During that period, the leaders of the Trucial states worried about the expansive intentions of Ibn Sa'ud. Zayed, Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, expressed his fears that Ibn Sa'ud would occupy Khour al Adeed and that this would lead him to occupy Abu Dhabi and Oman on his way. However, Cox requested permission from the British government to inform Sheikh Zayed that the British government recognised that Khour Al Adeed lay in the Abu Dhabi territories and that it was prepared to prevent its occupation by any external powers.[557] The relationships were all quite tenuous with no long-term guarantees; Knox stated that "there are many enemies of Ibn Sa'ud who would turn against him after the first setback he faces".[558]

In Jackson's note, he stated that the conditions of the Ottoman forces in Buraydah, Unaizah and Al Sheheia were extremely bad and that their soldiers were continuously escaping military service. There was also great hatred from the Arabs towards the Ottomans. Further, the tribes were forming alliances against the Ottoman soldiers. Jackson also observed that Miteb Ibn Rasheed was receiving allowances from the Sultan worth 250 Ottoman Lira paid to him from Karbala and handed to him in Ha'il by the Sultan's deputy.[559] In late October 1906, the Ottoman Sultan ordered the Ottoman forces stationed in Al-Qassim to leave Najd and Ibn Sa'ud began organising their transfer to Medina. Sources stated that the Mutair tribe ended its relationship with Ibn Sa'ud and changed its allegiance to Ibn Rasheed. Therefore, problems were being heaped upon Ibn Sa'ud at the end of 1906.[560] At the end of October 1906, Ibn Sa'ud began pressuring the Ottoman administrator to clear Al Sheheiah of his Ottoman soldiers. The administrator asked for a twenty-day time limit to prepare the arrangements for the journey.[561]

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[556] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 13th October 1906.
[557] IOR: R/15/2/160, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.
[558] IOR: R/15/1/478, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 18th September 1906.
[559] IOR: R/15/5/24, A memorandum including information obtained by John Calcott Gaskin and signed by him, dated 24th September 1906.
[560] IOR: L/P&S/7/195, Periodic report signed by J. H. Bill, First Assistant of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), on behalf of the resident, for the period 29th October – 4th November 1906.
[561] IOR: L/P&S/7/195, Periodic report signed by J. H. Bill, First Assistant of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), on behalf of the resident, for the period 5th – 11th November 1906.

Due to the poor relationship between Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud, and Ibn Sa'ud's suspicions of Mubarak's intentions towards him, he tried to communicate with British authorities through someone other than Mubarak Al Sabah. Therefore, he sent his special envoy, Musaed Ibn Swelam, who was one of his most famous commanders, to Sheikh Jasem Al Thani. Ibn Sa'ud wanted Sheikh Jasem as a link between him and the British authorities. Sheikh Jasem asked to meet Captain Francis B. Prideaux, the British Political Agent in Bahrain, in November 1906. Sheikh Jasem informed the British agent that the resources of Najd had dried up as a result of the wars and that Ibn Sa'ud asked for Britain's protection and the formation of an understanding with him. Whereas Ibn Sa'ud was intending to regain Al-Hasa and Al Qateef, which were under the rule of his ancestors, he proposed to the British that if he were to succeed in expelling the Turks from Al-Hasa, he wanted to study the opportunity of signing an agreement with the British government. He was also suggesting that he was able to control the Ottoman armies on the ground. He wanted the British government to promise to protect him from the Turks should they attack him from the sea. Therefore, he was looking for naval protection in return for allowing the British government to appoint a political representative on its behalf in the Al-Hasa and Al Qateef oasis. Prideaux replied that he believed it was impossible for the Indian government to sign an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud in this regard due to the friendly relations between Turkey and Britain.[562]

Mubarak wrote to Ibn Sa'ud that it would be unwise to interfere in Sheikhdoms which were bound to treaties with Britain. Ibn Sa'ud wrote a friendly reply to Mubarak, maintaining that he had no bad intentions towards them. The report also indicated that Ibn Sa'ud had made a visit to the outskirts of the Ottoman Al-Hasa Sanjak in July and August 1906. He indicated that he had come to bring order and security. The Ottomans present were discomfited by his visit, which led them to send a representative to meet him, where they found a warm reception.[563]

[562] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Captain Francis B. Prideaux, British Political Agent in Bahrain, to Cox, dated 17th November 1906; Al Khodery, *the History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer*, p.534.

[563] IOR: R/15/1/710, The administrative report issued by the British political residency in the Gulf (Bushahar) for the years 1905-1906, It was prepared by Cox who dated the first chapter 23rd September 1906. The other chapters have different dates. The report was published by the Indian Government in Calcutta in 1907.

In September 1906, Cox[564] repeated to the Government of India his belief that it would be useful to enter into some form of relationship with Ibn Sa'ud for the following reasons:

1- Ibn Sa'ud may interpret this indifference or refusal as a hostile position by the British government.
2- A friendship agreement between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain would dismiss the fears of the Sultan of Muscat and the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast.
3- A friendship with Ibn Sa'ud could eliminate piracy.
4- Should such an understanding be reached, it would help the agents to deal with the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast and would help in travelling to Najd.
5- Ibn Sa'ud could turn to another power should he find no response.

According to Troeller,[565] on 9th November the Secretary of State of India, John Morley, informed the Government of India by telegram that: "His Majesty's government maintained the view that their interest and influence should be confined to the coast. No steps should be taken to enter into relations without my previous sanction".

At that point, Cox requested an official response be made to Ibn Sa'ud so that Cox's reputation would not be harmed due to seeming negligent in the eyes of Ibn Sa'ud. As a result, a response came from John Morley that the policy made earlier in 1904 should be fully maintained. This policy stated that the British interest was confined to the coast. He added that Nicholas O'Conor's policy of not dealing with Ibn Sa'ud should be maintained and, should Ibn Sa'ud repeat his request, he should be answered as follows, if necessary: "His proposals involve considerations which are impossible for His Majesty's government to entertain and that no reply is to be expected". As a result, O'Conor's instructions were maintained and Ibn Sa'ud's requests of protection were rejected. Therefore, Britain's policy of not getting involved in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula was clear.

In October 1906, Sheikh Jasem Al Thani sent another written request to Prideaux asking to meet him urgently in person. Prideaux was unable to meet with him and so sent his personal translator, In'am al Haq. Jasem Al Thani informed them that Ibn Sa'ud

[564] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 24.
[565] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 25.

had contacted him again and feared that Sheikh Mubarak had not presented his case to the British officials with enough enthusiasm. He also informed them that Ibn Sa'ud would like to meet with Captain Prideaux in person and in any place in the desert he determined. Ibn Sa'ud was anxious to regain the Al-Hasa province, which was very important for the Najd province economically. He was also anxious to gain British protection, in case of his success, and wished to sign the same agreements with Britain as those of the Sheikhs of Oman and the Gulf. He also agreed that a British political official would remain in his kingdom. Ibn Sa'ud's requests were the same as before and were repeated again in November of the same year. It is noted here that these repeated urgent requests took place before the withdrawal of the Turkish forces from Al-Qassim. They were urgent due to the arrival of Sami Al Faruqi and his forces from Medina.[566] In the meantime, in early November 1906, four columns of Ottoman soldiers totaling 1,200 men arrived at Al-Qassim. The Ottoman administrator began stationing them in Buraudah and Unaizah in coordination with Ibn Rasheed. However, Ibn Sa'ud opposed their presence and complained to Ibn Rasheed, whose excuse was that he was unable to object to the wishes of the Ottoman Porte.[567]

Ibn Sa'ud contacted Mubarak Ibn Sabah and informed him that a small number of Ottoman soldiers would be stationed in Buraydah and Unaizah. He asked Mubarak to try to mediate with the Ottoman authorities and sent him a paper with 80 signatures by Ottoman officers acknowledging Ibn Sa'ud's good treatment and help and that he was a loyal follower of the Ottoman state.[568] Therefore, Ibn Sa'ud, the diplomat of the desert, was able to convince the Ottoman officers of the justice of the cause he was fighting for. The Ottomans were also convinced that there was no contact between him and the British whatsoever, especially after the Governor of Basra had checked with Mubarak and other sources of his. When the Basra Governor asked Mubarak about the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud, Mubarak answered that the British were uninterested in Najd. At that point, the Ottoman view of Ibn Sa'ud changed, especially after the Al-Qassim events. The Governor of Basra started viewing Ibn Sa'ud as an extension of the Ottoman presence in the region.[569]

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[566] Al Khodery, *the History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer*, p. 535.
[567] IOR: L/P&S/7/196, Periodic report signed by J. H. Bill, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), on behalf of the resident, for the period 11th – 12th November 1906.
[568] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, on 20th November 1906.
[569] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.216.

Cox stated in a telegraph to the State Department of the British Government of India dated 13th November that he realised that the British government maintained its previous viewpoint of limiting British interests to the coastal area only. He also stated that he realised the necessity of taking no steps to enter into relations with Najd or to send a British agent to the internal regions before obtaining the consent of the British Government of India.[570]

In summary, Najd was a theatre of continuous disputes between the followers of Ibn Sa'ud and those of Ibn Rasheed. These disputes increased in ferocity with the continuous intervention of the Ottoman Porte and its support of Ibn Rasheed. However, when Ibn Sa'ud defeated his fierce rival, Ibn Rasheed, disputes calmed down in late 1906. This created an imbalance in the balance of power in the Arabian Peninsula as following the death of Ibn Rasheed, Ibn Sa'ud gained control over much of the area and peace prevailed in the region. At that point, Ibn Sa'ud began to think of expanding eastwards towards the coastal Sheikhdoms and Oman and regaining Al-Hasa and Al Qateef, which had been controlled by his ancestors. This caused worry to the Gulf Sheikhdoms and the British authorities. The British authorities were quick to warn the Gulf Sheikhdoms from trying to contact Ibn Sa'ud or cooperating with him in any way. This also led it to send a warship to the shores for fear of any advancement by Ibn Sa'ud towards the Sheikhdoms, which had signed treaties with the British government. Additionally, as there was no direct channel of communication with Ibn Sa'ud, the British officials asked Mubarak Al Sabah to inquire about Ibn Sa'ud's intentions.

For the sake of protecting its interests, Britain was closely monitoring the developments since it feared French and Russian interference in the affairs of the Arabian Peninsula. The network of communications that emerged at the end of chapter one, becomes even more complicated at the end of 1906 since more individuals and more institutions are entangled directly or indirectly with Ibn Sa'ud. An extensive, and not always perfect network, that seems dispersed within a polycentric world, with various officers from the British, Ottoman and French Empires placed in various key locations and with Arab leaders pursuing highly individualistic agendas (see diagram in Fig. 2 and Map 3). And, while the network of communications between the international centres of the empires functions as before (with London, Constantinople

[570] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Com to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Indian Government, in Calcutta, dated 24 November 1906.

and Calcutta as the locations of key imperial agents communicating via a series of formal telegrams, letters and reports), another, more regional network appears to play a significant role in feeding key information and shaping attitudes.

The agents in Basra prefer to get instructions from London via Constantinople (for example the Governor of Basra sent a telegram to Constantinople on 21st January 1905 seeking consultation and instructions regarding whether he was allowed to meet Imam Abdul Rahman, Ibn Sa'ud's father, in Safwan and to begin negotiations).[571]

Calcutta, as the main location of the British Government of India, receives and publishes the most comprehensive analytical reports about the evolving situation (as for example its annual report for the year 1905, highlighting the political situation in the middle of the Arabian Peninsula and that Ibn Sa'ud played a chief role in the politics of that area in 1905 (contradicting the view of central British intelligence in London). The report also referred to the change in Ottoman politics towards Ibn Sa'ud by becoming closer to him and satisfying him in addition to abandoning Ibn Rasheed).[572]

Kuwait remains a trusted friend to British interests and Knox is again instructed to must his warning to Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah not to intervene in the interior issues, clarifying that its interests in Kuwait must be completely confined to the coastal strip east of the Arabian Peninsula, and that no action should be taken regarding the inside and the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[573] The British report about the Arabian Peninsula at the end of April 1906 also states that Mubarak Al Sabah was attempting to bring peace with Ibn Rasheed.[574] Mubarak was also the first to receive news of Ibn Sa'ud's victory against Ibn Rasheed.[575]

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[571] IOR: R/15/1/477, A telegram from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, to Cox on 23rd January 1905. Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.205.

[572] IOR: R/15/6/504, Administrative report issued by the British Political Resident in the Gulf and the political agent in Muscat, for the years 1904/1905, prepared by Cox on behalf of the British Political Resident and released by the Indian government in Calcutta, in 1906.

[573] IOR: R/15/1/477, A telegram from the India British government (Calcutta) to the British Political Resident in Kuwait, Cox, dated 23rd January 1905.

[574] Sheikh Khazal Bin Jasib Al Kaaby Al Amery (1862-1936), Prince of Al Mahmara or Arabstan (currently named Khuzestan), President of the Mohessin Arabic tribe. Assumed power after his brother Sheikh Mozal in 1897, he controlled most of the tribes which were part of the Ka'ab tribe. He was known for his power and firmness. He was the last ruler of the Ka'ab descendants in Ahwaz. On his watch the Emirate was lost and became part of Iran. Al Zarkaly, Al A'lam, *Tarajom Dictionary*, Part 2, p. 305.

[575] IOR: R/15/1/478, Telegram from Cox to the British government in India, Simla, dated 25th April 1906. Also see, IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, telegram from the British government in India to John Morley, Minister of India in London, dated 29th April 1906.

The official communication circles of the Ottoman Empire spread the news of Ibn Rasheed's death. The Governor of Basra informed the Governor of Baghdad, who in turn informed the Ottoman government. After receiving news of his death, the secretary of the Ottoman Sultan sent a telegram on 29th April 1906 to Mutab Ibn Rasheed, giving his condolences regarding the death of his father. He also informed him that he would work on punishing the perpetrators. A sultan decree had been issued appointing him to the same position his father held. Additionally, he received 200 bags of rice per year sent from Basra through Kuwait and then onto Ha'il.[576]

Additional interest is expressed by agents of the French Empire with communication flowing from French Deputy Consul in Baghdad, to the French Foreign Minister in Paris and the French Military Attaché in Constantinople, to the French War Minister (Baghdad to Paris / Constantinople to Paris). A French document[577] confirmed the killing of Ibn Rasheed based on news from Topkapi Palace and reveals that the situation in Najd was cause for concern. In addition, there was the possibility that Najd and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula may experience periods of insurgency after the death of Ibn Rasheed. While the British seem concerned in asserting their long term policy in central Arabia, the French seem to be the first to be aware of the long term impact that the victory of Ibn Sa'ud over Ibn Rasheed meen for the Ottoman control of the region.

The other area of attention in this chapter, has been the local/regional communication networks. For, if the communications within empires were complicated, the communications between local Arab leaders were equally so, despite the closer geographical distance between them. Chapter two brings closer attention to some telling examples of such local communications. The relationships as emerged here were all quite tenuous with no long-term guarantees, something that did not escape Knox who stated that "there are many enemies of Ibn Sa'ud who would turn against him after the first setback he faces".[578] Moreover, while the vast lands of empires were connected with infrastructure such as rails, and post services and telegraphs, there were no transportation methods from Najaf to Al-Qassim as Faydi Pasha (who had moved to Al-Qassim during the Safwan meeting) noticed. However, to assert his victory over Ibn

[576] Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer*, p. 515.
[577] PAAP 026 Bonin, Letter dated 11th May 1906.
[578] IOR: R/15/1/478, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 18th September 1906.

Rasheed in the Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna Ibn Sa'ud had declared himself the leader of the east and he sent correspondence with this information to Constantinople, to the Governors of Baghdad and Basra, Al Hejaz, the Arab sheikhs and their leaders in Al-Hasa', as well as Qatar and Bahrain (see communications in Fig. 2), reaching every party involved in the affairs of the Middle East. The messengers who were sent returned with greetings and gifts. He also sent a delegation to Mecca and there was word that they were heading to Egypt carrying a message to the Khedive.[579] Moreover, when he moved on to the Trucial states, Ibn Sa'ud sent a message to Sheikh Issa Ibn Ali Al Khalifa, Sheikh of Bahrain, informing him that he would be coming with his armies towards Al-Hasa to protect the path from the Bedouin and tribal attacks. He also stated that he intended to visit Sheikh Jasim Al Thani in Qatar to assist him with some of the uprisings that had sprung against him Sheikh of Dubai on 29th August 1905.[580] Ibn Sa'ud also sent a letter to Sheikh Zayed Ibn Khalifa, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. The Sheikh of Abu Dhabi began to feel uncomfortable with how close Ibn Sa'ud was getting, so he went to the Sultan of Muscat to consult with him. Cox asked them and they all wrote back to him. Sheikh Rashed Ibn Ahmed, ruler of Umm Al Quwain, informed Cox that he – not to engage or contact Ibn Sa'ud. Sheikh Rashed promised to abide by the British Resident's request.[581] Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibn Humeid, ruler of Ajman, sent a letter to Cox informing him that he had received the British Resident's message and had taken note of the warning in it, which included not to engage with or contact Ibn Sa'ud. Sheikh Abdel Aziz pledged to abide by the British Political Resident's request.[582] Sheikh Khaled Saqer Sultan, ruler of Sharjah, also sent a letter to Cox informing him that there would be no contact between him and Ibn Sa'ud and that he should avoid getting close to him. Overall, Ibn Sa'ud and Cox are emerging as masters of communication.

[579] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from Mohammad Hussein, the acting British consul in Jeddah, to Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, dated 13th May 1906. Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.210.
[580] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Translation to English from Arabic of a letter from Ibn Sa'ud to the Sheikh of Dubai, dated 22nd August 1905.
[581] IOR:L R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Rashed Ibn Ahmed, ruler of Um Al Qwein, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.
[582] IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibn Humeid, ruler of Ajman, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.

2.3. Conclusion

Al-Qassim was viewed as a buffer zone between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed but also between Kuwait and Ibn Sa'ud. The area had experienced corruption and unfair taxation under loose Ottoman control that often had caused civil unrest; nevertheless, the Ottomans were more concerned about safeguarding their imperial boundaries elsewhere than resolving local territorial disputes.[583] On the other hand, the British position remained steadily one of non-intervention, while some frustration over the methods to deal with Ibn Sa'ud is apparent since the territories claimed by Ibn Sa'ud were in close proximity or had a relationship with almost all the geographically and strategically important regions in the Middle East.[584] What the analysis of the primary sources reveals is that the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud could not be framed under the known imperial methods of dealing with colonies, protectorates and mandates in the Middle East. In the period under question, the imperative was to investigate the details of how this relationship was changing.

During the period 1905-1906, the British-Ottoman operations allowed room for Ibn Sa'ud to work towards the creation of an Arabian state,[585] coupled with the failure of the Ottomans to govern Sa'udi Arabia.[586] Ibn Sa'ud's strategy was consistent in asking support from the British, realising that they were not interested in a direct invasion but in establishing more 'informal' control over economic and military patronage;[587] this was proven to be the case by the end of the period in 1914. The battles at Al-Qassim are significant in the transformation of British-Ottoman-Sa'udi relations. Traditionally, Al-Qassim and Al-Hasa were viewed as part of local tribal conflicts. Ibn Sa'ud was not yet the recognised leader and most British historiography was concerned with the wider international significance of the local Arab developments than Ibn Sa'ud and his plans to establish a kingdom. However, Al-Qassim and Al-Hasa, as has been established in this chapter, were crucial in the history of pre-state formation in Sa'udi Arabia because they signify turning points not only in the British Sa'udi relationship, but also because they reveal the plans of Ibn Sa'ud for greater power in Arabia and internationally as early as 1905. Additionally, taking a transnational perspective, this chapter pays

[583] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf*, p. 153.
[584] Leatherdale, *Britain and Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 3.
[585] Satia, *The SCcret Senter: Arabia Intelligence in British Culture and Politics, 1900-1932*, p.1.
[586] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf*, p. 215.
[587] Al-Enazy, *The Creation of Sa'udi Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud and British Imperial Policy 1914-1927*, Routledge 2009.

particular attention to the role of communication and of intermediaries in the development of events; it discusses in detail the attitudes and influence of individuals positioned within a vast bureaucratic network spanning across lands, empires and other territories with less specified borders, and looks at how they were able to foster or hinder the integration of Ibn Sa'ud's plans with the policies of the British Empire.

Chapter Three: Ibn Sa'ud and the British: Internal and External Challenges and conflicts from 1907 to 1912

After Abdel Aziz Ibn Rasheed was killed by Ibn Sa'ud's followers, Cox suggested that the British government should reach a friendly understanding with Ibn Sa'ud. However, the British Government decided to confine its interests to the Trucial Coast. In his request for British support, Ibn Sa'ud revealed that he was planning to regain the Al-Hasa and Al Qateef oases as they both belonged to his ancestors. These two oases were also important economic resources. The British government of India decided that it was time to formulate a new policy in the region. This was in part prompted because it saw that the strengthening of Ibn Sa'ud's rule could pose a threat to Kuwait. After discussions between Cox and O'Conor, the British government decided its interests in the region must be confined to the Trucial Coast.[588]

At that point, Ibn Sa'ud felt confident of his position among the tribes. This led him to repeat his request to obtain some sort of British recognition. This was carried out through his friends, the Sheikh of Kuwait Mubarak Al Sabah and the Sheikh of Qatar Jasem Al Thani. Ibn Sa'ud mentioned in his requests that he felt stable as Governor of Najd and also believed that he could wipe out the Turkish presence from the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. He aspired to seize control of the sea from the Turks and to reach an agreement with the British government by which it would protect him from any Turkish naval attack. Although the British Political Resident knew that it was unfavorable to sign an official British agreement with Ibn Sa'ud, he still undertook friendly unofficial correspondence with him. Nevertheless, the British government continued its previous policy and also ordered the Sheikhs of Kuwait and Qatar not to respond positively to Ibn Sa'ud's requests.

The first section of this chapter examines the diverging relationship between the British Governemnt and the India Office with relation to their respective attitudes and policies towards Ibn Sa'ud. The analysis of primary documents reveals conflicts and frustrations that eventually took a formulative role in the relationship between the British and Ibn Sa'ud. The second part of the chapter explores how internal conflicts

[588] IOR: L/P&S/18/B164, A memorandum by the political department of the British government of India on the British relations with the Al Sa'ud family, January 1908. It includes a number of names of British officials.

between Ibn Sa'ud and his tribes, and other Arabian tribes (for example Otaibah, Moutair, Kahtan Harb, Aldowser, Al Agman amongst others) as well as with his long standing friend Sheikh Mubarak, resulted in changed affiliations and a shifted balance of power in the region. Overall, the chapter maps the changes in the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud. In addition, and from a transnational perspective, the chapter emphasises how conflict promoted resolutions and changes to existent boundaries and communications in a polycentric world with multiple centres of power.

3.1. The Dispute between the British Government of India and the Foreign Office towards Ibn Sa'ud

Following the British elections of 1905, authority was handed over to politicians who favored stopping British expansion and limiting war expenses. British foreign policy changed. The Liberals in power in London initiated a non-intervention policy according to which the British Empire should not interfere with the domestic and internal affairs of Arab countries.[589] This policy has been characterized as a failure since the British failed to recognise that a strong Ibn Sa'ud and his expansive plans could eventually pose a threat to British interests in the Gulf region.[590] Nevertheless, Britain was commited to keep the existent balance of power in the region and remained sceptical at the prospect of giving support to someone who was considered a rebel to the Ottoman Empire; an empire that was of strategic importance to Britain.[591]

At the beginning of 1907, the authority of the Ottoman state had been weakened in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. This was due to a number of reasons including the withdrawal of the Ottoman forces (as discussed in Chapter Two), Ottoman defeats in Najd, and the defeats of the Ottoman armies in Yemen. In turn, this led to the defeat of these armies at the hands of Ibn Sa'ud. Meanwhile, Ibn Sa'ud's power and confidence increased in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[592] In January 1907, the Wali of Basra invited Imam Abdel Rahman, Ibn Sa'ud's father, to meet with him in Safwan. Their first meeting was in April 1904.[593] He also asked that Mubarak Ibn Sabah should be at

[589] Vasiliev, The history of Sa'udi Arabia, 132.
[590] D. Holdn and R. Johns, The house of Sa'ud, 192.
[591] E. Ingram, National and International Politics in the Middle East: Essays in Honour of Elie Kedourie, p. 103.
[592] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Cox to Lois W. Dane, British government of India secretary in the foreign department in Simla, dated 4th January 1907.
[593] See Chapter Two

the meeting. This was after conflict had once more broken out between Al Sa'ud and Al Rasheed.[594] The change of the political conditions in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula had also affected the Al Rasheed clan.[595] In particular, the killings that happened at the beginnings of 1907 within the family such as the killing of Miteb Ibn Abdel Aziz Ibn Rasheed and his two brothers. They were killed by Sultan Ibn Hammoud Al Rasheed who gained leadership of the Hail emirate and the Al Rasheed clan (January 1907- April 1908).[596] Sultan sent a messenger to Mubarak Ibn Sabah asking to conciliate with him and with Ibn Sa'ud. At the start of 1907 it was also stated in British reports that the Wali of Basra was extremely fearful of the transfer of Ibn Sa'ud's loyalty to the British government.[597] British officials were following the development of events in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[598]

Studying the British correspondences between the British officials revealed that there were two conflicting trends or theories among them:

- The first theory represents the viewpoint that the British Government of India was administratively responsible for the Arabian Gulf region. It was represented by the King's Deputy in India, the British Residency officials in Bushehr and the British Political Agent in Kuwait.
- The second and stronger theory represents the viewpoint of the British Foreign Ministry, and was represented by the British Foreign Secretary, Lansdown, and the British Ambassador to Constantinople, O'Conor.

Due to their geographic proximity to the events with which this thesis is concerned, the adopters of the first theory supported intervention in the affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula and the establishment of productive relations with Ibn Sa'ud. However, the adopters of the second theory did not accept such an approach. They warned against engaging in any form of cooperation, support or even encouragement of Ibn Sa'ud. They preferred a policy which was committed to upholding the status quo so that the British Empire did not find itself in dispute with the Ottoman state.

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[594] IOR: L/P&S/7/198, The periodic political report of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushire) for January 1907.
[595] IOR: R/15/1479, To view the family tree of the Al Rasheed family from its first prince until 1907, it is included in a letter from the British political resident in the Gulf (Bushire) to Sir Louis Dane, dated 10th February 1907.
[596] IOR: L/P&S/7/199, The periodic report from Mrs. Bill, dated 24th February 1907,.
[597] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 21st January 1907.
[598] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Lieutenant L. Birdwood, special aid to the British political resident in the Gulf (Bushire), to the British political agent in Kuwait, dated 22nd January 1907.

Concurrently, Britain had attempted to gain assurances from Russia to stop carrying out any hostile activities against Britain in India and the ports of the Arabian Gulf. This led to a British-Russian understanding and to the start of a series of protracted negotiations that led to the signing of the Petersburg Accord in 1907.[599] The two sides were able to resolve all their differences and signed the 1907 agreement; this ended the problems that had hitherto existed between the two with regard to Afghanistan, Tibet, and Persia. According to this agreement, Persia was divided into three regions. The northern region was under Russian control and the southern region was under British control. Both countries vowed to respect each other's authority. The third neutral region lay between the northern and the southern regions and both countries decided jointly on everything related to it. Therefore, Britain had eliminated Russia's competition in the Arabain Gulf region; Russia had stopped interfering in the Gulf's affairs and had recognized British sovereignty of the Gulf.[600]

Ibn Sa'ud contacted the Government of India once again in March 1906. He also sent his envoy to Bahrain to meet with British officials there. They engaged in negotiations and Ibn Sa'ud's agent informed the British that Ibn was working on expelling the Ottomans from Al-Hasa. The British position had, as a consequence of the viewpoint of the officials of the Government of India changed towards Ibn Sa'ud. Cox informed his government that Ibn Sa'ud's situation had changed in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. Cox was of the opinion that Britain had to formulate a new policy towards Ibn Sa'ud. He saw that there were large advantages to be gained from adopting a policy of understanding with Ibn Sa'ud. Diverging completely from his previous stance (after the Battle of Rowdhat Muhanna and the recapture of Al-Qassim, see section 2.1.4), Cox suggested, in late 1906, a list of ideas in a reply to Ibn Sa'ud's repeated requests for British protection, especially from a maritime invasion.[601]

1- Cox showed that if the British government ignored Ibn Sa'ud's courting, he could view Britain as an enemy.
2- If there was to be an understanding with Ibn Sa'ud, this would be better for Britain, even regarding its relations with the Gulf Sheikhdoms as this would eliminate their fears of Ibn Sa'ud.

[599] N. Dosari, [Russian Attempts to intervene in the Arabain Gulf], p.234.
[600] B. Al-Khusousi, [Studies on the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabain Gulf], part 2, p.164.
[601] Gary, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 24.

3- An understanding with Ibn Sa'ud would limit piracy in the northern gulf, which was an issue bothering the British government.
4- The people who inhabited the centre of the Arabian Peninsula wished to get rid of Ottoman dominance and they could turn to another power for help if Britain failed to assist them.

Cox said that it was time for Britain to change its policy towards Najd. He reasoned to the British Government that this should be achieved quickly because the British Government was not able to protect the Gulf Sheikhdoms in a large part of the Arabian Gulf coast except via the navy. They could not achieve their stated policy aims of protection through land because of the British policy of non-intervention in the affairs of Najd. From Cox's point of view, the first policy could not succeed unless there were divisions between the leaders who controlled the centre of the Arabian Peninsula – as had been the case in the past. However, this was not the case anymore because Ibn Sa'ud had gained control of large parts of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula and had started to expand eastwards towards the ports of the Gulf in the hope of securing seaports for himself. Given these developments Cox saw that it was necessary for Britain to have good relations with this leader.[602]

The British Government of India noticed that Ibn Sa'ud was trying to take control of a port on the coasts of the Arabian Gulf. Indeed, it also asked the British government in London to adopt a new policy towards Ibn Sa'ud. It attached Cox's suggestions with its request and further suggested that Ibn Sa'ud would not challenge the power of the British government as he lacked the capabilities to do so. However, Britain could benefit from his friendship without officially supporting him, by obligating him not to harm the Gulf Sheikhdoms who were worried by his movements.[603]

As it was impossible for the British government to meet the wishes of Cox towards Ibn Sa'ud without endangering its relationship with Ottoman state, it did not accept Cox's suggestions which were also the viewpoints of the British government of India. After consultation with the Foregn Office, the Government of India also decided not to communicate with Ibn Sa'ud.[604] This decision is traditionally viewed as yet another unsuccessful attempt by Ibn to obtain support from the British Empire for his plans for

[602] Al-Harbi, [The Relationship between the Najd Sultanate and its Extensions and Britain], p.41.
[603] Al-Harbi, [The Relationship between the Najd Sultanate and its Extensions and Britain], p.42.
[604] D. Hogarth, the Arab World today, pp. 406-414.

independence from the Ottoman Empire;[605] however, the strong divergence in Cox's original approach from the previous year has to be noted; this signified the beginning of official voices starting to support Ibn Sa'ud. They would subsequently grow louder.

Meanwhile, the British Ambassador to Constantinople, O'Conor, whose ideas were adopted by the British Foreign Office, saw that Britain could not take a risk with the Ottoman state as that would cause a threat to the British presence in Kuwait and the Omani coast.[606] O'Conor mentioned that he was not sure that the rule of the Ibn Sa'ud family served British interests. He suggested that if Ibn Sa'ud was to establish a stable government in the future, the British government would have to reconsider its policy towards him.[607] In April 1907, O'Conor urged the British government not to engage with Ibn Sa'ud or interfere in the internal affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. Grey,[608] Foreign Secretary, agreed with O'Conor's viewpoint and saw it as unwise to implement the suggestion of the British Government of India. This is because it would be seen as implicit approval of Ibn Sa'ud strengthening his authority. The British government agreed with O'Conor's viewpoint that it was unwise to get involved with Ibn Sa'ud or to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of the Arabian Peninsula. At that point, the British government issued a proclamation that it did not agree with the suggestions that had been advanced by the Government of India and Cox. It said that if a letter was sent to Ibn Sa'ud, this would be seen as approval of Ibn Sa'ud. Further, it would strengthen his position and would also constitute a form of interference in the internal affairs of the Arabian Peninsula. Cox had to inform Ibn Sa'ud's delegates not to expect any direct reply to Ibn Sa'ud.

In contrast, the British Government of India continued discussing Najd affairs with the British Foreign Office and commented on Cox's suggestions. In so doing it showed that there was no objection by Morley, Secretary of India, regarding this issue. It also pointed out that it was necessary to send the suggested letter to Jasem Al Thani and from him to Ibn Sa'ud with some modifications. This was viewed as being especially

[605] D. Holdena and R. Jones The house of Sa'ud, p. 192.
[606] Silverfarb, British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud if Najd 1914-1919, (Ph.D. Theses, University of Wisconsin, 1972, p.18.
[607] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from O'Conor to the British foreign ministry, dated 1st April 1907.
[608] Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933), politician, countryman, and author, The Foreign secretary under Campbell-Bannerman; Keith Robbins, 'Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2011 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33570, accessed 1st Feb 2017].

the case it had after discussed the letter with the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey. With regard to sending a warning to the Ottoman Sublime Porte with respect to the repeated passing of Ottoman forces through Kuwait, the India Office did not object. This was, however, dependent upon the warning being in line with the directions of the Marquess of Lansdowne and Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor as to the need to reduce the sharpness of the messages tone. The tone should be in light of the reality, realised by the British Government of India, that the passing of these forces was merely a withdrawal of those Ottoman forces which had suffered defeat in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. At the end of the letter, Morley did not see a reason to change either British policy or British influence in the coastal region or the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula at the beginning of 1907.[609] The British King's Deputy in India reviewed conditions in the eastern Arabian Peninsula in a telegraph from him to the British India Office in London. He requested permission to inform Ibn Sa'ud that the British government was keen on establishing friendly relations with him as long as he acted in a way that did not oppose British interests. However, he did not see the necessity to provide him with any official promises of support as this could be opposed by the Ottoman state. The King's Deputy also suggested that this letter should be sent to Ibn Sa'ud through Sheikh Jasem of Qatar.[610] The British government suggested sending a letter to Ibn Sa'ud stating two things. First, that the British government sought to establish friendly relations with him as long as he acted in a way that does not oppose British interests. Secondly, that it was still studying the issue of whether it should complain to the Sublime Porte with regard to the increase in Ottoman forces passing through it from Kuwait to Najd and vice versa.[611] It is of significant importance with regard to the changing relationships between Ibn Sa'ud and the British that this was the first time that the latter had sought to establish direct-albeit conditional- relationships with Ibn Sa'ud.

[609] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter signed by A.Godley, India Office in London, to the British deputy foreign minister, dated 27th March 1907.

[610] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A copy of a telegraph from the British King's deputy of British India in London, dated 15th February 1907.

[611] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from the British government of India to John Morley, British minister of India in London, dated in Forte William on 21st February 1907, and carrying the signatures of members of the government of India such as: H.Erle Richards, Denzil Ibbetson and Kitchener. It is noticed that, when referring to the large number of letters between the British government of India, the British Ambassador to Constantinople, O'Conor, and the King's Deputy in India regarding the British stance on Najd, a number of characters were mentioned. These included: Mubarak Al Sabah, Sheikh of Muhammara, Ibn Rasheed, Jasem Al Thani, Lloyd, and Sir. Edward Grey.

A series of diplomatic exchanges followed with regards to issues of wording. On 9th April 1907, when Cox insisted on the need to reply to Ibn Sa'ud so that the latter did not consider a non-reply as reluctance, the India Office consulted the Government of India on the form of the suggested reply to be sent to Ibn Sa'ud. It was decided that the reply would be along the following lines: with the great desire of the British Government to strengthen friendly relations with the prince as long as he respected its interests and its treaties with the princes of the coast, it did not see the need at the meantime to give him any official promise of protection as this would lead to the hostility of the Ottoman government towards him. When the Foreign Office consulted O'Conor, he objected to this reply and advised the government not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Arabian Peninsula. He saw that this reply could be understood implicitly as strengthening the rule of Ibn Sa'ud, which was not desired.[612] The Government of India complied with this position and sent a message to Cox saying that if he was to find it necessary to reply to Ibn Sa'ud, he should inform him, through one of his agents, that as long as Ibn Sa'ud's suggestions contained considerations inapplicable by the British Government, he should not expect any reply. It is evinced that the Government in London tried not to engage itself officially in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula since it still adhered to its previous policy position. However, the frustration as to how to deal with Ibn Sa'ud in this context is evident alongside the differences in opinion that existed between the British Governemnt in London and that in India.

In May 1907, the British Government cut off any attempts by Ibn Sa'ud to communicate. Morley stated his desire that no official relations whatsoever be established with Ibn Sa'ud. This was particularly important because of the international situation. He wrote to the Government of India stating that it should confine its attention to the Gulf coasts and should not give any attention to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. It was understood by the Government of India that if Ibn Sa'ud was to banish Ottoman control over the Arabian Peninsula, he would be able to overcome British control of Kuwait and the Omani coast. This was especially likely as he had strong relations with the Prince of Qatar and some of the emirates that neighboured Al-Hasa. Morley also stated that it was unreasonable for Britain to continue encouraging Ibn

[612] Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud if Najd 1914-1919*, p.19; Al-Harbi, *Relations between the Najd Sultanate and its Extensions and Britain*, p. 43; Al Khudeiri, *[History of the Sa'udi Lands in the Gulf guide]*, p. 535.

Sa'ud while it simultaneously recognized the sovereignty of the Sublime Porte over Al-Hasa.

Overall, the relationship between the British and Ibn Sa'ud during this period had made some progress. For the first time the British had considered establishing direct correspondence with him. However, no official connections had, as of yet, been made because the British prioritised other international interests - especially the British–Ottoman relationship. At the same time, the conflicting approaches between the London and Indian governments with regards to the new more powerful status of Ibn Sa'ud were becoming more significant. Albeit slowly, they were starting to promote a slow but crucial, and positive, change that would, ultimately, prove favourable to Ibn Sa'ud.

3.2. Ibn Sa'ud's Internal Challenges: Tribal Wars and the Ottomans

During this period Ibn Sa'ud faced successive crises internally. Most of them were due to the slaughter that had occurred within the Al Rasheed family, the ruling family in Hail. This reflected on the latter's relations with Ibn Sa'ud. In addition, some of the people of Al Al-Qassim went out of the obedience of Ibn Sa'ud, Al Hazaznah opposed him in Al-Hariq, the grandchildren of Sa'ud Al Faisal opposed him in southern Riyadh and Al-Hasa and joined the Al Ajman tribe, and he was defeated in Al Hadiyyah in 1910 which was followed by Sharif Mecca's campaign on Najd and Ibn Sa'ud being forced to recognise Ottoman sovereignty in return for the release of his brother, Saad.[613] Ibn Sa'ud's relationship with Mubarak al Sabah also fluctuated during this period because Mubarak Al Sabah's policy was based on two distinct principles.[614] The first was to maintain his position in Kuwait and the second was to take advantage of available opportunities to spread his authority into neighboring areas; not only Najd but also Ottoman Mesopotamia. The coup against the authority of Sultan Abdel Hamid II in 1908 led to political instability in the Ottoman state and the strengthening of the Arab national movement in its Arab provinces. Basra was within these provinces and its role in this movement was led by Talib Pasha Al Naqib. The latter formed an alliance with Mubarak Al Sabah and Sheikh Khaz'al and they carried out broad political activities and added to the conflicts between Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud.

[613] Al Ghannam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment]*, p.68.
[614] Al Saadoun, Rellations between Najd and Kuwait, p.122.

From 1909 to 1912 internal problems and revolutions against Ibn Sa'ud began to increase. These were predominantly caused by local Al-Hasa tribes who were stirred up by some members of Ibn Sa'ud extended family. The Al Ajman tribe around Al-Hasa began to cause trouble for Ibn Sa'ud after its men were encouraged by some members of the Al Sa'ud family, who were imprisoned in Hail and were released after the killing of Abdel Aziz Ibn Rasheed, to seize authority from Imam Abdel Rahman and Ibn Sa'ud. In addition, some tribes began to distance themselves from Ibn Sa'ud. One of these tribes was the Al Subaie tribe whose sheikh established contact with Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah but did not fall under his protection.[615]

Other problems that faced Ibn Sa'ud were the worsening of his relations with Mubarak. Knox states that Sheikh Mubarak feared that British protection would be transferred from him to Ibn Sa'ud, especially after Ibn Sa'ud's victories in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[616] The most significant problem that Ibn Sa'ud faced was the return of war between him and Ibn Rasheed. Although Britain did not interfere directly in such local conflicts, British officials kept a close eye on developments. British Consul in Damascus, wrote to the British Consul in Constantinople[617] describing to him that Sultan Ibn Rasheed had become master of Hail. Ibn Rasheed wrote to Ibn Sa'ud offering to form friendly relations with him. Ibn Sa'ud replied that he would be happy to establish friendly relations with him with the following conditions:

1- That he expelled the members of the Aba al Kheil family who had fled to Hail.
2- That he returned the weapons (rifles and swords) which Prince Mohammed Ibn Rasheed had taken over from Ibn Sa'ud's men twenty years ago (in 1887). These weapons included two Ottoman cannons.
3- That he fought the Mutair tribe.
4- That he refrained from contact or sign any agreements with anyone outside the Shummar mountain area except through Ibn Sa'ud himself.
5- That he withholds from carrying his own flag except with the permission of Ibn Sa'ud.
6- That he paid 5000 Ottoman Liras to Ibn Sa'ud.

[615] IOR: L/P&S/7/201, A signed letter from Knox to Cox, dated 17th March 1907, I.O.R. LR/15/5/24, The Periodic political report by Cox, dated 24th March 1907.
[616] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from O'Conor to the British foreign ministry, dated 15th May 1907.
[617] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from G. P. Devey, British Consul in Damascus, to O'Conor, dated 15th April 1907.

Sultan Ibn Rasheed refused Ibn Sa'ud's conditions. Ibn Sa'ud found out that his army was smaller than that of Ibn Rasheed. As a result, he decided to leave Al Al-Qassim and not engage in battle.[618] O'Conor pointed out that the British were in favour of the status quo and that, accordingly, it was unwise for the British government to intervene in the internal conflicts between the Arab tribes. Moreover, the British government saw a need to limit Mubarak Al Sabah from carrying out any military action in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula except that needed to defend Kuwait.[619]

In addition, Ibn Sa'ud was faced during that period with the problem of divisions in tribal loyalties. Uteibah, Qah'tan and Breih tribes from Mutair were loyal to Ibn Sa'ud, whereas, Harb and Shummar tribes joined Ibn Rasheed. Al Muhanna, Emirs of Buraydah, conspired against Ibn Sa'ud and joined Ibn Rasheed.[620] Mubarak Al Sabah also changed his policy towards Ibn Sa'ud after Ibn Sa'ud's increase of power; Mubaruk began to support Ibn Rasheed against Ibn Sa'ud.[621] Another problem that faced Ibn Sa'ud was to fight Faisal Al Dweish, Sheikh of the Mutair tribe. Their two armies clashed close to Al Majma'ah and Ibn Sa'ud launched another attack in May 1907.[622] Al Majma'ah did not take sides in the conflict although he was paying Zakat to Ibn Sa'ud.[623]

In a report on the Arabian Peninsula and its modern history prepared by the General Staff of the British War Office, dated 4th June 1907, with an appendix of the map of the Arabian Peninsula[624] (see list of maps), information on the geography, location, area, terrain and divisions of the Arabian Peninsula were stated. The report also contained information on the inhabitants of the area and an historical overview of the history of Najd since the call of Shiekh Mohammed Ibn Abdel Wahhab until Ibn Sa'ud's regaining of Al-Hasa. The report also mentioned that it was difficult to estimate Ibn Sa'ud's real power due to the instability of the loyalty of the tribes. It was also

[618] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, A letter from G. P. Devey, British Consul in Damascus, to O'Conor, dated 15th April 1907.
[619] IOR: L/P&S/10/50, a letter from O'Conor to the British foreign ministry, dated 15th May 1907.
[620] Mohammed Almana, Arabia Unified A Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud, p. 55.
[621] IOR: L/P&S/7/203, The periodic political report by Mrs. Bill, dated 26th May 1907.
[622] IOR: L/P&S/7/203, The periodic political report prepared by Cox, dated 9th June 1907.
[623] The periodic political report by Mrs. Bill, dated 2nd June 1907, the names of the dead and wounded in this battle can be referred to in the following file: IOR: L/P&S/7/203.
[624] FO 371/354, a report on the Arabian Peninsula and its modern history, prepared by the general staff of the British War Office, dated 4th June 1907.

mentioned in the report that Najd was practically independent and that Ibn Sa'ud had stable control of it.

It was stated in a letter from Cox to the British Political Agent in Bahrain that until 1907, the British government was still adhering to its position towards Ibn Sa'ud of not providing him with any help or assistance and that British interests were confined to the Gulf coast region.[625] Concurrently, Ibn Sa'ud was experiencing a critical period internally due to the many problems and revolutions against him. The people of Buraydah turned against him and attacked his followers in Uneizah. Ibn Sa'ud headed out to fight them. Mubarak Al Sabah, who was not on good terms with Ibn Sa'ud during this period, had a role in provoking problems between Ibn Sa'ud and the people of Buraydah. Mubarak sent a letter to the people of Buraydah warning them of Ibn Sa'ud. In addition, he sent a letter to Ibn Sa'ud urging him to have mercy on the people of Al Al-Qassim. Meanwhile, the Sublime Porte issued an order to appoint Ibn Sa'ud as chief of the nomad tribes residing close to Al-Hasa and as protector of the caravans travelling between Al-Hasa, Al Aqeer and the centre of Najd.[626]

During this period, the British officials in the Gulf received requests from both Ibn Sa'ud and his rival, Sultan Ibn Rasheed, asking for British protection. However, the reply to both of them was that the British government was committed to the status quo.[627] Sultan Ibn Rasheed's power increased in 1907. This caused worry and discomfort for Ibn Sa'ud, in addition to that which was already troubling him due to the many insurrections and internal problems that he was facing due to bad people being against him. As a result of all of these negative factors crowding in on him, Ibn Sa'ud asked Mubarak Al Sabah for help, whereas Ibn Rasheed asked for help (in the form of an alliance) from the Druzes of Huran Mountain through his agent in Al Jawf, Saleh Al Muzeini.[628] Ibn Sa'ud also faced, as noted, an instability of loyalty from his followers. The Mutair tribe left Ibn Sa'ud and joined Ibn Rasheed. Buraydah was separated from Ibn Sa'ud. Uneizah, however, remained under his rule. He was a good chap; loyal to Ibn Sa'ud. Al Majma'ah was independent but paid Zakat to Ibn Sa'ud.[629] In addition, the Al Ajman tribe opposed Ibn Sa'ud and attacked tribes that were passing through territories

[625] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Cox to the British political agent in Kuwait, dated 13th May 1907.
[626] IOR: L/P&S/7/204, The periodic political report prepared by Mrs. Bill, dated 30th June 1907.
[627] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Bill, dated 15th July 1907.
[628] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 3rd September 1907; IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from G. P. Devey, British consul in Damascus, to O'Conor, dated 6th September 1907.
[629] IOR: L/P&S/7/206, The periodic political report by Mrs. Bill, dated 8th September 1907.

under his rule. For example, they attacked and robbed a trade caravan from Al Al-Qassim travelling to Kuwait. This negatively affected Ibn Sa'ud's expansion and movements.[630] Ibn Sa'ud sent his delegate to Sheikh Mubarak asking for advice and direction after the aggravation of the situation in Najd. However, in reality, Ibn Sa'ud had another intention for sending his delegate to Mubarak; to find out Mubarak's plans towards him.

As soon as the British officials noticed Mubarak's movements, they repeated their request to him not to interfere in the affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[631] Moreover, Campbell mentions, in his letter to the British Foreign Secretary, Mubarak's desire to intervene in the dispute between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. Campbell explains that this action would drag Mubarak into political action in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, Morley asked him to warn Mubarak as to the consequences of him taking such action.[632] In late September 1907, there was conflicting news of a violent battle taking place between the forces of Ibn Sa'ud and those of Ibn Rasheed. This battle ended with the victory of Ibn Sa'ud, his entering the city of Buraydah, and his appointing Abdullah Ibn Jalawi as Prince of the city.[633]

3.2.1. The End of Aba Al-Khail Emirate (1908)

Regarding the Aba Al-Khail emirate in Buraydah and the provocations of its leader against Ibn Sa'ud, when Sultan Ibn Rasheed had taken control of a caravan belonging to the people of Al Al-Qassim heading to Sham, the people of Buraydah asked for help from Ibn Sa'ud and facilitated his entrance into their territory even though its prince, Aba Al-Khail, was on Ibn Rasheed's side during that period. When Ibn Sa'ud arrived, he found that the conditions were not appropriate, so he headed to Fid, close to Hail, to confront the followers of Ibn Rasheed. There, negotiations were held between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed and were mediated by Ibn Twalah. This drove them to make peace and a truce. Accordingly, Ibn Sa'ud returned to Buraydah, besieged it and was able to regain it on 21st May 1908. He also besieged its leader, Aba Al-Khail, who agreed to surrender in return for being able to depart peacefully. He left for Mesopotamia and appointed

[630] IOR: L/P&S/7/207, The periodic political report by Mrs. Bill, dated 22nd September 1907.
[631] IOR: R/15/5/24, A telegraph from the foreign department of the British government of India, Simla, to the British political resident in the Gulf, dated 25th September 1907.
[632] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from C. G. Campbell, British India Office in London, to the British deputy foreign minister, dated 3rd October 1907.
[633] IOR: L/P&S/7/207, The periodic political report prepared by Mrs. Bill, dated 6th October 1907.

Prince Ahmed Al Sudeiri as Prince of Buraydah. Subsequently, Buraydah and its neighbouring areas were controlled by Ibn Sa'ud.[634] It is evident tha the British officials followed these events, as it was stated in the periodic political report that, in late May 1908, Mohammed Aba Al-Khail, Prince of Buraydah, surrendered and handed Buraydah over to Ibn Sa'ud.[635]

In mid 1908, Ibn Sa'ud had an agent in Al-Hasa named Ibn Mashouq. In a periodic report by Trevor, it was mentioned that Ibn Matouq's authority there was increasing continuously and that normal Al Hofuf cases were presented to him to look into. He had also ensured the safety of the roads instead of the Turkish soldiers.[636] After Ibn Sa'ud regained Buraydah, Sultan Ibn Rasheed's envoy arrived, informing him of the truce and reconciliation with Ibn Rasheed. However, the authority in Hail did not remain in the hands of Sultan Ibn Hammoud Ibn Rasheed, as his brother, Sa'ud, captured and killed him in April 1908. Sa'ud Ibn Hammoud Ibn Rasheed seized power in Hail.[637] However, Sa'ud then lost power himself when the Al Sabhan family took control of Hail in September 1908. The family was led by Hammoud Ibn Sabhan who was guardian over the young prince, Sa'ud Ibn Abdel Aziz Ibn Rasheed – the latter was around ten years of age. Sa'ud took power in Hail and sent a letter to Ibn Sa'ud asking for reconciliation and agreeing to the conditions which Sultan Ibn Hammoud Ibn Rasheed had refused in the past.[638] Hammoud died a few months later and his brother, Zamel Al Sabhan, took charge because of this. He fought Ibn Sa'ud in the Al Ash'ali battle,[639] which took place on 26th March 1909. Ibn Sa'ud was victorious. Problems began to pile on the Shummar mountain- Hail emirate, especially since many of its followers left for Hejaz or north of Hail. This drove Zamel Al Sabhan to ask for reconciliation with Ibn Sa'ud.[640] The *Al Hejaz* newspaper reported the content of a letter from the Turkish Wali to Sa'ud Ibn Abdel Aziz Ibn Rasheed after the latter became Prince of Hail. This was in reply to

[634] Ibrahim Al Qadi, *[Al Qadi History]*, Arabic manuscript, pp.32,33; Al Rayhani, *[The History of Najd and its Subsidiaries]*, 5th Edition, Riyadh, 1981, pp.175-177; Al Othaymeen, *[The History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia]*, part 2, p.118; Vasiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.265.
[635] IOR: L/P&S/7/218, A periodic political report by Trevor, dated 21st June 1908.
[636] IOR: L/P&S/7/218, A periodic political report by Trevor, dated 7th June 1908.
[637] Vasiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.265.
[638] IOR: P&S/7/223, A periodic political report by Captain Trevor, dated 18th October 1908, see also, a periodic political report by Captain Trevor, dated 1st November 1908.
[639] Almana, *Arabia Unified A Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud*, p. 55.
[640] Al Othaymeen, *[The History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia]*, part 2, p.123; Ibn Hathloul, *[The History of the Al Sa'ud Kings]*, part 1, 2nd Edition, p.80.

letter previously sent by Ibn Rasheed to the *Wali*.[641] The *Al Moayyad* newspaper also mentioned the transfer of power to Sa'ud Ibn Abdel Aziz Al Rasheed with the help of his uncle, Al Sabhan.[642] Cox and Bill mentioned that towards the end of 1908, Ibn Sa'ud was in control of Najd and it seemed that the rule of Al Rasheed was shrinking. They also mentioned that the Turkish Sublime Porte did not intervene after the departure of the Turkish forces from Al Al-Qassim and that the building of the Hejaz railway line was underway. It was assumed that once it was finished and trains were steaming along its length that the course of events would change. [643]

The situation changed at the beginning of 1909. Sa'ud Ibn Rasheed gained more power. This was in part due to the fact that many returning tribes chose to be obedient to him. In particular, the Al Aslam tribe from Shummar.At the same time, Ibn Sa'ud began losing power, especially after he lost the obedience of the Uteibah and Mutair tribes. Therefore, Ibn Sa'ud abandoned the idea of attacking Al-Hasa, which he had, until this happened, been planning to do.[644] In January 1909, additional Ottoman forces reached Al-Hasa. It was said that these forces were to be used against Ibn Sa'ud, but there is another point of view that they were sent to protect the caravans of the Al Ajman and other tribes.[645] Cox mentions that based on news that reached Mubarak Al Sabah from Baghdad, the Ottoman government set allowances worth 220 Ottoman Liras a month for Ibn Sa'ud provided that he sought help from the Ottoman state and took its advice and did not consult or follow Mubarak Al Sabah.[646]

The economic situation in Najd in late 1908 and early 1909 was extremely difficult. This year was named the "year of hunger". This is because there was a scarcity of food and, as a result, people starved. Indeed, a severe famine hit Najd and many people suffered from it. Many people, along with a goodly number of camels and sheep died

[641] N.S.-Turquie/142, A letter from the Turkish Wali to Ibn Rasheed published in the "Al Hejaz" newspaper in May 1910. It is also included in report no. 39 from Paul Lepissier, French deputy consul in Jeddah, to the French Foreign Minister, dated 20th May 1910; Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], p.220.
[642] N.S.-Turquie/141. An extract from the Egyptian Al Moayyad newspaper, published on 16th November, quoting its reporter in Medina, attached to letter no. 369, signed by Vicomte Dejean, French Charge d'Affaires in Cairo, to Stephen Pichon, French Foreign Minister, dated 18th November 1908,
[643] IOR: R/15/1/710, The administrative report issued by the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushire) and the Political Agent in Muscat for the years 1908- 1909, prepared by Cox, published by the Indian government of Calcutta in 1909.
[644] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO34, A letter from G.P.Devey, British consul in Damascus, to Sir Gerard Lowther, British ambassador to Constantinople, dated 19th January 1909.
[645] IOR: L/P&S/7/226, A periodic political report prepared by Trevor, dated 7th February 1909.
[646] IOR: R/15/5/24, A draft letter from Knox transmitted by Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, dated 17th March 1909.

due to the severe drought. The Zakat, which was an important source of income for Ibn Sa'ud, decreased during this period.[647] Philby mentions that the drought was terrifying in the central Arabian Peninsula. Mousl also mentions that the natural disaster of drought, spread disease and epidemics. This led to the further aggravation of Ibn Sa'ud's internal conditions and his inability to control the situation, led to the emergence of even more anger and divisions amongst some of his followers. In addition, the fall of some rain in the northern Arabian Peninsula contributed to the migration of some nomadic tribes and, as a result of this, they changed their allegiance in favour of Ibn Rasheed.[648] However, after some effort – and eventual rain, Ibn Sa'ud was able to control and overcome his internal problems.[649] British reports touched on the Najd famine of 1909 and it was reported that 15 people died of starvation in Uneizah alone. This was only one city in Najd.[650] In May 1909, severe fighting broke out between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed in which Ibn Sa'ud was victorious.[651]

Major J. Ramsay[652] explains that he visited Jar Allah al Dakheel, the unofficial representative of Ibn Sa'ud in Baghdad. He mentioned that this person had good relations with Ibn Rasheed, Ibn Sa'ud's rival. Ramsay mentioned that Jar Allah informed him that Ibn Sa'ud had asked Ibn Sweilem to head to Constantinople to express to the Ottoman Sultan his and Ibn Sa'ud's preparedness to raise the Ottoman flag and pay taxes to the Ottoman state should the Sultan recognise Ibn Sa'ud as Prince of the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. This was especially important since most of the people of the Arabian Peninsula wished Ibn Sa'ud to be their leader. In addition, Ibn Sa'ud had received many letters from Aseer and the southern parts of the Arabian Peninsula asking to join him.[653]

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[647] Al Raihani, *[The Modern History of Najd]*, p.180; Al Othaymeen, *[The History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia]*, Part 2, p.124.
[648] A. Musil, *The North Hejaz*, New York, 1926, pp. 22-23.
[649] Vasilev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.263.
[650] IOR: L/P&S/7/228, A periodic political report prepared by Cox, dated 11th April 1909.
[651] IOR: L/P&S/7/229, A periodic political report prepared by Cox, dated 23th May 1909.
[652] Major J. Ramsy: The British Political Resident in Baghdad, 1906.
[653] IOR: R/15/1/479, Memorandum No. 20 attached to a letter from Lieut. Col. J. Ramsay, acting British political resident in the Arabian Peninsula lands under Ottoman authority and the British general consul in Baghdad, to S. H. Butler, Secretary of the British government of India in the foreign department in Simla, dated 19th June 1909.

3.2.2. Al Hazaznah's Movement (1909)

Trevor mentioned in his periodic political report the news of Ibn Sa'ud's attack on Al Hareeq after its Sheikh, Rasheed Al Hazani, killed five men from Al Khathlan who were loyal to Al Sa'ud. After destroying the fort in which Rasheed Al Hazani had barricaded himself, Ibn Sa'ud took control of the place and appointed Musaed Ibn Sweilem as his agent and Prince there.[654]

In late 1909, the Ottoman state wanted to renovate and fortify its forts in Al Zubarah and Al Aqeer. It also wanted to supply them with canons to protect them from attacks by Ibn Sa'ud and others. As the Turks feared any suspicious movements by Ibn Sa'ud, when Ibn Sa'ud asked his agent in Al-Hasa, Saleh Al Azal, to attend to him in Najd, the Turkish administrator in Al-Hasa refused to allow him to travel. This was because Ibn Sa'ud was intending to attack Al-Hasa with the help of Jasem Al Thani. Mubarak Al Sabah also helped in the defeat of the Al Ajman tribe which had been robbing the caravans in the Al-Hasa region. However, when Sheikh Mohammed Ibn Hithleen, Sheikh of Al Ajman tribe, heard of this alliance, he went to meet with Ibn Sa'ud and asked for the safe return of everything he had stolen from Sheikh Mubarak and Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Thani. It was also mentioned in the report that Sheikh Sa'ud Ibn Lami, Sheikh of Al Jabalan from Mutair, had attacked Ibn Sa'ud's men and that, as a result of this, Ibn Sa'ud had asked Mubarak to punish him as a sign of his real cooperation and so as to improve relations between them. Mubarak agreed and arrested and imprisoned him.[655] In this way internal problems played a large role in creating divisions and the emergence of some alliances. It was stated in an article in the French published *Le Phare d Alexandri* newspaper that the Arabs were victims of internal differences. The article adds that it seemed that the Al Sa'ud family were moving towards regaining their past role and authority.[656]

Overall, Ibn Sa'ud emerged victorious from a series of internal conflicts and established his position as the strongest leader. As seen, Ibn Sa'ud's internal struggles with old and new enemies had a direct impact on his relatinships with both the Seikh of

[654] IOR: L/P&S/7/233, A periodic political report prepared by Major Trevor for September 1909.
[655] IOR: L/P&S/7/235, A periodic political report prepared by Major Trevor for September 1909.
[656] N.S.-Turquie/141. An article in French published in "Le Phare d Alexandrie" newspaper issued on 18th September 1909. Its content is in report No. 236 from Andre Ribot, French Deputy Consul in Cairo, to Stephen Pichon, French Foreign Minister, dated 20th September 1909.

Kuwait and the British Empire. The fluctuations in the relationships between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak also had a direct influence on the support that he received from Mubarak. In addition, while the British kept a distance officially, unofficially they were closely monitoring developments. Cox had argued that a divided Arabia served the interests of the British Empire better than a unified one; the events discussed here are offer evidence in support of that view.

3.3. Changing Relations between Mubarak, Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed's Dynasty

British political analysts for Kuwait and the Arabian Peninsula expected a feud to arise between Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah and Ibn Sa'ud. The British Political Agent in Kuwait indicated that after Ibn Sa'ud's victory over Ibn Rasheed in Al-Qassim, he began to seriously consider the old requests by previous Najd governors with regard to collecting royal payments from Oman's rulers.[657] Signs of an increasing crisis between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak Al Sabah started to emerge. In particular, there was a difference in opinion regarding the matter of zakat. Ibn Sa'ud's followers asked for zakat from the tribe of Al Ajman. This had previously been paid to Mubarak Al Sabah. Mindful of this, Al Sabah wrote to Ibn Sa'ud in an attempt to stop him from doing that; however, Ibn Sa'ud did not listen. The Ottoman Sultan issued orders reinstating the monthly allocations to Ibn Sa'ud. Concurrently, it was also reported that the son of the Sultan was bothered by Ibn Sa'ud's refusal to heed the orders and he urged Ibn Sa'ud to keep calm.[658]

After Ibn Sa'ud's victories in Al-Qassim, some of his followers went to Al-Hasa under the leadership of Mohammed Al Sa'ud. They collected zakat from the tribe of Al Ajman at the same time that the followers of Mubarak Al Sabah collect zakat. This led to an upswing in the nature of the crisis between the two camps. As for Al Majmaa, it was led at that time by Ibn Askar. He did not submit to Ibn Sa'ud even though he wanted reconciliation with him. At that time, Sultan of Al Daweesh, Sheikh Batn Olwa from the tribe of Moteer, met with him and led negotiations between him and Ibn Sa'ud. The Ottomans did not want Ibn Askar to surrender to Ibn Sa'ud, as Ibn Awn, Sheikh Al Zubair sent messengers to inform him of the Ottoman support for him. However, the

[657] IOR: L/P&S/7/189, Periodical report by Captain A. H. Stevens on behalf of the British political resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 7th – 13th May 1906.
[658] IOR: L/P&S/7/189, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 14th -20th May 1906.

messengers were killed close to Al Sabeheya and the letters were delivered to Ibn Sa'ud.[659] After this rise in Ibn Sa'ud's powers, the British government decided to send a naval ship to the Arabian coast to warn him about heading towards the coastal sheikhdoms or Oman. They also did this to stop him from approaching the coast.[660]

British reports showed that Ibn Sa'ud began appearing in areas north of Hail and that he was successful in freeing some of his clan members who had been imprisoned in Hail by Ibn Rasheed. In the east, Ibn Sa'ud's delegates arrived in Al-Hasa carrying news of his victory. At this news, Ibn Juma from Qateef began carrying presents to give to Ibn Sa'ud.[661] This was important because as regional and tribal conflicts have a long history of existence in the region since, any leader who wanted to keep the balance of power in Arabia, needed to control the tribes.[662]

Another crisis in the relationship appeared following Ibn Sa'ud's victory in Rawdat Muhanna. As a result of this victory Mubarak's relationship with him declined. In contrast, Mubarak's relationship with Al Rasheed improved. Khaled Al Oun Sheikh Al Zubeir had a role to play in the improvement of the relationship between Mubarak Al Sabah and Al Rasheed because Khaled Al Oun was a large supporter of Al Rasheed.[663] Ibn Sa'ud sent many messengers to the east of the Arabian Peninsula to spread the news of his victories over Ibn Rasheed. A number of messengers headed to Al-Hasa and Qatar and were received with honour and great joy. They carried valuable gifts back to Ibn Sa'ud.[664] Regarding the Zakat, the people of Hail refused to pay it to Ibn Sa'ud and their city's gates were closed in the face of the Zakat collectors. However, Ibn Askar, the Emir of Al Majma'ah paid the Zakat to Ibn Sa'ud.[665]

In a meeting between Cox and Mubarak Al Sabah, Mubarak mentioned that he had received a friendly letter from Ibn Rasheed on 24th February 1906. The letter proposed

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[659] IOR: L/P&S/7/189, Periodical report by Cox the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 21st -27th May 1906.
[660] IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from the first assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 10th June 1906.
[661] IOR: L/P&S/7/190, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British political resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 4th -10th June 1906.
[662] Anscome, *The Ottoman Gulf*, p. 153. Al-Enazy, The creation of Sa'udi Arabia, 2009.
[663] IOR: L/P&S/7/190, A periodic report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), for the period 11th – 17th June 1906.
[664] IOR: L/P&S/7/190, A periodic report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), for the period 18th – 24th June 1906.
[665] IOR: L/P&S/7/190, A periodic report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), for the period 25th June - 1st July 1906.

that the relationship between them should be as close as the relationship between Mubarak and his uncle and grandfather. Mubarak replied that he was a man who loved peace and that he welcomed establishing friendly relations if Ibn Rasheed was serious about peace, abstained from attacking his neighbours and remained within his borders. Mubarak mentioned to Knox that he hoped to establish a peace process and that, once this process was implemented and bore fruit, all parties would benefit and it would end the current state of war. The peace process was based on the following points:

- Najd and Al Dawaser Valley would belong to Al Sa'ud.
- Al Kahfa, Hail, and the Bedouin land of Jabbal Shammar would belong to Ibn Rasheed.
- Kuwait, Unaizah, Buraidah, Sudair and Al Washm would belong to Mubarak Al Sabah.
- There would be a three-way alliance joining these powers.

Knox noticed that Mubarak had ambitions in Najd, mainly the area of Al-Qassim, so that he could have a buffer zone between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. Mubarak Al Sabah explained that peace could be achieved based on these conditions and that Ibn Rasheed would have had enough income to prevent him from attacking his neighbours. Mubarak also mentioned to Cox that the Ottomans would not approve of this three-way alliance between him, Ibn Rasheed and Ibn Sa'ud. Cox asked Mubarak a few questions regarding his relationship with Ibn Sa'ud, and Mubarak reassured him that he listened to his advice. Cox thanked Mubarak regarding the news he had heard about Ibn Sa'ud halting his visit to Oman. Talks also included the long telegram sent by Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Al Thani from Bushehr to Constantinople. Mubarak explained that he had had knowledge of it in complete detail from Musaed Ibn Swelam.[666] This is an opinion that is disputed; it appears that Mubarak did not have knowledge of it, as his relationship with Ibn Sa'ud was poor. Additionally, Knox wrote that he doubted what Mubarak said.

At the end of February, Mubarak Al Sabah informed Cox that he had received a letter from the Governor of Basra regarding Ibn Sa'ud's allocations and entitlements, informing him that the Ottoman Sultan had decided to pay Ibn Sa'ud on a regular basis. However, he would not be reimbursed for previous late payments due to a funding shortage within the Treasury. Additionally, the payments were allocated for a new

[666] IOR: R/15/5/24, Diary prepared by Knox containing his signature regarding the conversation that took place between Cox and Mubarak Al Sabah on 7th March 1906.

railroad in Al Hijaz and to establish new military barracks in Basra.[667] Cox mentioned that perhaps Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Al Thani's latest correspondence to Constantinople was to remove any doubts that the Ottoman Empire and others may have had before advancing against them in Al Hofuf.[668] Around this time, news about Ibn Sa'ud's actions were regularly reported in British newspapers: "The sheiks are now allied with Ibn Sa'ud (one of the two most important Emirs in Central Arabia)"[669] and continued to cover the "rebellion in Arabia".[670]

On 20th March 1906, the British ambassador in Constantinople sent a letter to the British Foreign Office, in which he indicated that he believed it would be more impactful if the British government warned Ibn Sa'ud directly about interfering with the Gulf Sheikhdoms rather than through Mubarak Al Sabah. O'Conor proposed sending a British naval ship to be stationed in every area along the Sheikhdom coast that Ibn Sa'ud intended on visiting and to inform him in a clear manner that Britain would not allow any interference in the affairs of the Sheikhdoms that had deals tying them to Britain.[671]

With regard to Ibn Sa'ud's intention to visit the Pirate Coast, Godley proposed that Cox should send a warning to the Trucial State sheikhs from the British Government in India that, in light of the current situation, it would not take lightly any plots arranged between any of them and Ibn Sa'ud.[672]

Cox informed Prideaux that he was upset by his decision to meet Musaed Ibn Swelam, Ibn Sa'ud's messenger, and informed him that it would have been preferable if he had notified his superiors prior to communicating with Ibn Sa'ud. Cox added that the British government was currently studying the position it would take regarding Ibn Sa'ud.[673] British officials agreed on the proposal and the recommendation made by

[667] FO 248/875, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 5th – 11th March, 1906.
[668] IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Cox to the Foreign Agency Secretary of the British Government in India, (Simla), dated 18th March 1906.
[669] *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 14th March 1906, Devon, England, p.4 and *Belfast Newsletter*, 13th March 1906, p. 7, Antrim, Northern Ireland (The British News Paper Archive).
[670] *Dundee Courier*, 6th of July 1906, p. 5, *Angus Scotland* (The British Newspaper Archive).
[671] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from the British Ambassador in Constantinople, Sir Nicolas R O'Conor, to Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, dated 20th March 1906.
[672] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from A. Godley from the India Office in London to the British Foreign Minister, dated 24th March 1906.
[673] IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Cox to Captain Francis B. Prideaux, the British Political Agent in Bahrain, dated 4th April 1906.

India's Governor General as to the importance of issuing a warning to Ibn Sa'ud about what would happen if he did not provide satisfactory guarantees about his visitation intentions. The British government would consider any attempt to interfere in the affairs of the coastal sheikhdoms as an unfriendly act. John Morely, the Secretary of State of India, was of the opinion that a warning should only be issued if Ibn Sa'ud came near or appeared on the coast. He also wanted the warning to be direct as proposed by O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople.[674] After Mubarak Al Sabah had reached a friendly and peaceful agreement with Ibn Rasheed, his relations worsened with Ibn Sa'ud. Ibn Sa'ud had discovered that there were relations between Al Sabah and Ibn Rasheed and that they were plotting against him when one of the correspondents sent from Ibn Rasheed to Mubarak Al Sabah fell into the hands of Ibn Dwehi, one of the senior sheikhs of Al Thafeer. The latter relayed the information to Ibn Sa'ud.[675]

Loremer[676] said about the events of 1906 and 1907 that Mubarak Al Sabah's stance after Ibn Sa'ud's victories in Al Al-Qassim was similar to that of the people of Buraydah. He hated the idea of either Ibn Sa'ud or Ibn Rasheed having full control over Najd. His position changed in favour of Ibn Rasheed, whose authority was weakened. He changed his position in an attempt to find some sort of balance of power. This was clear from Mubarak's request to Knox, without permission from Ibn Sa'ud, that Britain extend its protection to Najd. Mubarak saw that this was most suitable. This led Knox to ask him: "Do you want the Turks to return to Najd again and the British soldiers to head to Najd to fight them?" Mubarak replied: "Your reputation is strong enough to deter them". However, Cox accused Mubarak of deceiving all parties.[677]

In late 1907, an observer to the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak noticed a fluctuation in their relationship. At the end of 1907, their relationship improved. This was clear from Mubarak's willingness to cooperate with Ibn Sa'ud when he captured Faisal Al Dweish, Sheikh of the Mutair tribe, but agreed to release him in return for 180 camels.[678] He was released in late 1907.[679]

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[674] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO31, Letter from John Morely, Minister of India in London, to Earl of Minto, General Governor of India, dated 13th April 1906.
[675] FO248/875, Periodical report by Cox for the period of 16th – 22nd April 1906.
[676] Al Khudeiri, *[The History of the Sa'udi Lands in the Gulf Guide]*, p.520.
[677] IOR: R/15/5/8, An extract from a report on the affairs of Kuwait and Najd, undated.
[678] IOR: L/P&S/7/209, The periodic political report of the British Political Resident in the Gulf, dated 1st December 1907.
[679] IOR: L/P&S/7/210, The periodic political report of the British Political Resident in the Gulf, dated 15th December 1907.

Knox was surprised by Mubarak's insistence on British protection of Najd. Knox mentioned that Mubarak saw that the Al Rasheed family had been weakened to a great extent, and that Ibn Sa'ud had become superior. This had led him to become independent from Mubarak. Therefore, Mubarak tried to cause stability between all parties. Due to his fear of the return of the Ottomans once more to the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, Mubarak carried out the following actions:[680]

First, Mubarak intervened in the dispute between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. This was carried out actively by Abdel Aziz Al Hassan, who was from Al Tarafeyah in Al Al-Qassim, and worked as an agent for Mubarak. He separated the Mureir tribe from Ibn Rasheed and calmed them. He also asked Ibn Sa'ud to exercise calm and stay in Riyadh and asked Ibn Rasheed to exercise calm and remain in Hail. Al Hassan called on Al-Qassim to remain independent of all parties and for it to be under Mubarak's authority to ensure its independence. Mubarak wished to take control of the province. Moreover, Al Hassan's bias towards Ibn Sa'ud was noticed when he informed Ibn Sa'ud of the right time to attack Ibn Rasheed. The British opposed this attempt by Mubarak – this was in keeping with their policy of non-interference in the affairs of Najd. This was mentioned by Cox when he telegraphed the British government. Once more he warned Mubarak not to become entangled n Najd affairs and not to declare his independence from Al Al-Qassim. As a result, Mubarak tempted Ibn Rasheed to attack Ibn Sa'ud. The latter became convinced that he was not strong enough to stand alone. He was also convinced that he could not succeed without the support of Mubarak.

Secondly, one of the problems that led to the worsening of relations between Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud was that the people of Buraydah sent out a delegation to negotiate with Mubarak Al Sabah in Kuwait on account of the annual Zakat that they had to pay to Ibn Sa'ud. Mubarak's position was tough with the notables of Buraydah as he did not trust them.[681] Nevertheless, he contributed in the mediation between them and Ibn Sa'ud and asked Ibn Sa'ud to forgive them and accept their apology. Ibn Sa'ud

[680] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.218.
[681] IOR: L/P&S/7/214, A periodic political report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor, 1st assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf and the temporary Acting Resident, dated 16th February 1908, the negotiating delegation included Suleiman Al Hassan Aba al Kheil, Mohammed Ibn Shareeda, Suleiman al Issa and Al Rabadi; see also, Abdel Aziz Abdel Ghani Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], p.219.

agreed to this.[682] Al Sadoun[683] mentions that Mubarak was trying to clear his image in front of Ibn Sa'ud after some offences that Ibn Sa'ud had discovered against him.

Finally, at the beginning of 1911, Sheikh Mubarak asked Ibn Sa'ud to help him fight against the Al Zufeir tribe. However, when Ibn Sa'ud arrived, Mubarak informed Ibn Sweit, Sheikh of Al Zufeir, that Ibn Sa'ud's forces were close to him. This led Ibn Sweit to escape. Mubarak was accused of foul play, in the words of Vasiliev.[684]

By the end of 1911, the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak was fluctuating from friendship, to conflict and hostility. Trust had definitely been lost to the mists of intrigue, betrayal, and mistrust. Throughout the early phases of Ibn Sa'ud's plans, the role of Mubarak was important in terms of spreading Sa'udi influence within the Arabian Peninsula. Indeed, Sheikh Mubarak helped Ibn Sa'ud many times;for example with the capture of Najd. In the early years Mubarak had more negotiating power than Ibn Sa'ud.[685] However, the increasing power of Ibn Sa'ud, especially with local tribes, and his expansive territorial claims seem to have unsettled Mubarak and his long term friendly relations with the Sa'ud family. This latest phase caused a change in Mubarak's policy towards Ibn Sa'ud as he began to warn the British officials against supporting him.[686]

Summarising, the most significant changes in communications that influenced decision making during this period relate to two areas:

- One is the divergence of opinion towards Ibn Sa'ud with the British Officials in the Middle East and in London.
- The other is the change of attitude and policy of Mubarak towards Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Sa'ud's attitudes to local leaders. These expose the multi-dimmensional dynamics of local/regional networks involving Ibn Sa'ud, Mubarack, Arab tribal leaders, Sheiks of Trucial States and imperial powers.

In the context of imperial international communications, most significant lines of communication are still between London, Constantinople, Bushehr, Kuweit, but the

[682] Sheikh Khaz'al, *[The Political History of Kuwait]*, Part 2, p.190.
[683] Al Sadoun, *Relations between Najd and Kuwait*, 1983, p.121.
[684] Vasiliev, *The history of Sa'udi Arabia*, p.267.
[685] Gregory Gause 'The foreign policy of Sa'udi Arabia: the formative years 1902-1918', *Middle Eastern studies vol 25, issue 4, 1989:* 569-570.
[686] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 13th May 1907.

centre for decision making is within His Majesty' Government in London, represented in the exchanges by the Foreign Secretary.

In this chapter the divergence in opinion between His Majesty's Government (in London) and the imperial agents in the Middle East becomes more apparent. As traced in the analysis of primary sources, two fronts have completely different approaches to Ibn Sa'ud. On the one hand, King's Deputy in India, the British Residency Officials in Bushehr (Cox) and the British Political Agent in Kuwait (Knox) think that the time is right to engage directly with Ibn Sa'ud. That contradicts the line of policy as expressed by the British Foreign Office, and as it was represented by the British Foreign Secretary (Lansdown), and the British Ambassador to Constantinople, (O'Conor). One telling exchange involves O'Conor from Constantinople urging the British government in London not to engage with Ibn Sa'ud or interfere in the internal affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula in April 1907. Grey,[687] having the last word in the matter as Foreign Secretary, agreed with O'Conor's viewpoint and saw it as unwise to implement the suggestion of the British Government of India and Cox. Despite, the extensive communications, letters, factual and analytical reports produced over the months by the imperial officers closer to the developmetns, the Foreign Office of His Majesty's Government was not ready to change its formal policy. Thus, when the British officials in the Gulf received requests from both Ibn Sa'ud and his rival, Sultan Ibn Rasheed, asking for British protection they reply to both of them was that the British government was committed to the status quo,[688] a policy that remained constant especially Russia had stopped interfering in the Gulf's affairs and had recognized British sovereignty of the Gulf [689] signing the Petersburg Accord in 1907 echoing [690] "informal control if possible, formal rule if necessary".[691]

In the local/regional context, the increasing power of Ibn Sa'ud, especially with local tribes, and his expansive territorial claims seem to have unsettled Mubarak and his long

[687] Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933), politician, countryman, and author, The Foreign secretary under Campbell-Bannerman; Keith Robbins, 'Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2011 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33570, accessed 1st Feb 2017].
[688] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Bill, dated 15th July 1907.
[689] B. Al-Khusousi, [Studies on the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabain Gulf], part 2, p.164.
[690] N. Dosari, [Russian Attempts to intervene in the Arabain Gulf], p.234.
[691] R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *Economic History Review*, Vol. 6, (1953).

term friendly relations with the Sa'ud family. This latest phase caused a change in Mubarak's policy towards Ibn Sa'ud as he began to warn the British officials against supporting him.[692] His position changed in favour of Ibn Rasheed, whose authority was weakened. He changed his position in an attempt to find some sort of balance of power. This was clear from Mubarak's request to Knox, without permission from Ibn Sa'ud, that Britain extend its protection to Najd. Mubarak saw that this was most suitable. This led Knox to ask him: "Do you want the Turks to return to Najd again and the British soldiers to head to Najd to fight them?" Mubarak replied: "Your reputation is strong enough to deter them". However, Cox accused Mubarak of deceiving all parties.[693]

British officers, local sheikhs and various imperial administrators and delegates played a plethora of roles in the formation of communications and relationships that were changing constantly. These conflicts caused changes in alliances and negotiations in a way that would mature in the following period, as discussed in chapter 4.

3.4. Conclusion

During this period, the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and the British has changed more dramatically than traditional scholarship has previously suggested. This can be seen in:

- the divergence between Britain and the British Government in India in how to deal with Ibn Sa'ud.
- the way in which Ibn Sa'ud effectively dealt with local tribal conflicts and emerged as a stronger leader causing considerable frustration to the British government, the India Office and Mubarak.
- In the conflicts with Mubarak that made Mubarak actively try to stop the British supporting Ibn Sa'ud.

It is safe to assume that not everything discussed between the various individuals has been officially recorded. British officers while transmitting the official 'non involvement' strategy to Ibn Sa'ud's delegates, were also demonstrating sympathy to his cause (as in the case of Cox for example). Britain (the London based government) followed Arabian developments closely but was also very concerned to appear neutral. Indeed, throughout the period they did not get involved in direct communications with Ibn Sa'ud, avoided any direct communications with him, used protégées in the Gulf to

[692] IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 13th May 1907.
[693] IOR: R/15/5/8, An extract from a report on the affairs of Kuwait and Najd, undated.

send him messages and ensured that they did not damage their own relationships with the Ottomans. The way that these conflicts (between the British and the India Offices, Ibn Sa'ud, Ibn Rasheed-son and the local tribes, Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak) developed is reminiscent of a web of entangled relationships. These tangled webs existed between a number of individuals (tribal leaders, sheikhs, officers and other intermediaries) and powerful institutional formations that shape the fluid and overchanging network of local, regional and international politics. The following chapter further investigates these interlocking and changing relationships up to the point that Britain established direct relationships with Ibn Sa'ud.

Chapter Four: Ibn Sa'ud's annexation of Al-Hasa and the British position (1912 – 1914)

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first investigates how the role of a new official, Captain Shakespear,[694] changed (or not) the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud. Captain Shakespear's role in the outcome of the British-Sa'udi negotiations has been extensively debated, with some scholars arguing that things could not be the same without him,[695] and others pointing to the serious shortcomings and misunderstandings of his analysis of the situation in Arabia.[696] The analysis in this chapter will illuminate this argument further by demonstrating that Captain Shakespear's role, albeit important, was not the reason behind the change in the British attitude. As this thesis posits throughout, the Saudi-British relationship did not start on the eve of WWI but with the early requests of Ibn Sa'ud for British protection as early as 1902 and developed, although not in a linear fashion, over the period in question, and through the various phases explored in this thesis. This development took the relationship from a 'non-involvement' stance and the use of indirect communications to a direct relationship with Ibn Sa'ud in 1915. The second part of the chapter is dedicated to the early plans and the final capture of Al-Hasa; these events have been debated in the historiography in detail. The present analysis aims at demonstrating how crucial this event was in promoting a direct relationship with Britain, in a way that was more significant than WWI, or the declining British-Ottoman relationship or, indeed, Captain Shakespear's efforts. The intercalary section on the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Husein of Mecca serves to illustrate not only the ongoing local conflicts but to draw out

[694] Captain William Henry Shakespear was born in the Indian Punjab province on 29th October 1878, as his father was working there as an advisor for forestry affairs for the government of India. He travelled to Britain and completed his studies, graduating from Sandhurst. He returned to India in 1898 and worked with the Bombay police for four years. He then worked in the political department of the King's Deputy in India office. He was then promoted to work as consul in Bandar Abbas in 1904 and then assistant to the political resident in the Gulf and consul in Muscat in 1905. He then worked as assistant to the resident in Hyderabad in 1907. He then worked as assistant to the political resident in the Gulf and was then appointed as Political Agent in Kuwait in 1909. This position was the connection point between him and Ibn Sa'ud, Winston, *Captain Shakespear*, pp. 30-41. Captain William Henry Shakespear work as British Political Agent in Kuwait in 1909, He became the first British official to meet and deal personally with Ibn Sa'ud after the outbreak of WWI. Shakespear sent to Ibn Sa'ud to sign the treaty between him and Britain. He was killed on 24th January 1915 at the Battle of Jarrab, Peterson, *Historical Dictionary of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 148; Douglas Carruthers, Captain Shakespear's Last Journey, *Geographical Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 5, (May, 1922), pp. 321-334.

[695] G. Troeller, Ibn Sa'ud and Sharif Husain: A Comparison in Importance in the Early Years of the FirstWorld War, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Sep., 1971), pp. 627-633

[696] Goldberg, The origins of the British Sa'udi treaty, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Sep., 1985), pp. 693-703.

the differences in attitude between the British and Arab leaders, always trying to illuminate the relationship between the British and Ibn Sa'ud. The overall aim of the chapter is to exemplify how the British eventually decided to engage formally and directly with Ibn Sa'ud, overturning their long-term refusal of his requests.

4.1 The Political Scene during the Period Leading up to the Annexation of Al-Hasa

When studying the framework of international relations and comparing them with the internal and diplomatic framework controlling British politics towards Ibn Sa'ud, especially in the late years before the beginning of World War I, it is clear that the British government was occupied with major issues internally and externally. In light of these facts, the view of the government in London, duly represented by the Foreign Secretary, who depended on the British ambassador in Constantinople to evaluate the extent of relations to be made with Ibn Sa'ud within the period between his emergence in Najd in 1902 and until just before the start of WWI, was that the Sa'udi developments were a subsidiary issue incomparable to major international events. This viewpoint was opposed by the Government of India which was close to Ibn Sa'ud and naturally was more concerned with local/regional developments. However, the influential powers were the British Foreign Office and the Government in London and their view dominated policies until the start of WWI.[697] Traditionally, the historiography has seen WWI and the changing British-Ottoman relations as the turning point in British-Sa'udi relations; however, this begs the question: was WWI the only significant factor that changed the balance of power in Arabia? Shifting all the attention to this factor underplays the local context in Arabia and overlooks other significant factors, such as the plurality of agendas and objectives pursued by the various centres involved in entangled power relationships that are at the core of this thesis.

While the British were occupied mainly with their imperial concerns and preserving the status quo, the Ottoman Empire was facing internal problems, such as the rise of the Young Turks project. The Young Turks, included different parties, operating from theor center in Salonica (Greece), all bound by the common goals to fight against the absolutism of the Ottoman Empire and move to a parliamentary democracy; Sultan Abdel Hamid fearing th spread of a major uprsising happening in Macedonia, and not trusting its military officers called his cabinet and after a day's delegetions declared the

[697] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, pp. 34- 35.

restoration of the constitution.[698] The Ottoman state also faced external problems, as Austria took control of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, Crete declared its unity with Greece, and Bulgaria declared its independence as a kingdom. In 1911, Italy invaded Tripoli (Libya), in 1912, the Balkan Wars began and, in 1913, as the Balkan Wars were about to end, the Ottoman Empire was defeated and lost all of its lands in Europe.

Troeller observes that the period between 1909 and 1912 was a period of true rivalry between Britain and Germany. This was clear through Germany's substantial increase in the building of ships as part of its expansionist desires, not only on a European level but also globally. This caused a worsening of relations and the beginning of a challenge between the two sides. Moreover, Britain was occupied with numerous issues, including internal problems such as the crisis of granting Ireland autonomy, the British Parliament's decision to limit the powers of the House of Lords, and the Conservatives' attempts to undermine the constitutional government in Britain during the period between 1911 and 1914.

The period between 1910 and the start of WWI witnessed a split of opinion in British political circles regarding how to deal with Ibn Sa'ud's rising force and his increasing expansion in the Arabian Peninsula. It also saw Ibn Sa'ud increasingly request British recognition of his status. The Government of India, the India Office and the residencies and agencies affiliated to it in the Gulf, expressed their desire to cooperate with Ibn Sa'ud to prevent him from harming British interests in the Gulf. On the other hand, the British Foreign Office and its representatives concentrated primarily on resolving outstanding issues between Britain and Turkey in the Middle East. Continuing with the official position of the Empire, the British Foreign Office also viewed the issue of Ibn Sa'ud as a subsidiary and marginal problem amidst the general international context and, in particular, British-Turkish relations.[699] However, this longstanding view of the British was about to come to an end, with the British engaging in direct negotiations with Ibn Sa'ud that concluded with the first Anglo-Sa'udi treaty in 1915. As noted during the course of this thesis, intermediaries such as officials and agents played a formative role in relationships in that they not only observed and reported situations but interpretations and emotions as well. In this context, the ambiguous role of Captain

[698] Rogan, *The fall of the Ottomans*, p. 4-5.
[699] Troeller, *The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia*, pp. 34- 35.

Shakespear in this crucial period, just before the initiation of direct communication between Ibn Sa'ud and the British Empire, deserves a thorough exploration.

4.2. Captain Shakespear's Missions and Ibn Sa'ud

Shakespear was appointed as Political Agent in Kuwait in 1909 as Knox's successor. Shakespear's political work involved several issues, most importantly, the direct responsibility of British-Kuwaiti relations, following the conditions, events and changes in the neighbouring areas, especially the Arabian Peninsula, and communicating with the political leaders and tribal Sheikhs. He was also responsible for providing his views, advice and directions to British policy makers concerning the conflicting forces in Najd and the effects of these conflicts on British-Ottoman relations. Shakespear studied the conditions of the region as soon as he was appointed as agent by reading the reports of the political agents in Kuwait and their correspondence with the British Government of India and the British Foreign Office. He realised the magnitude of the Ottoman support for Ibn Rasheed and that Ibn Sa'ud was facing the backed Ibn Rasheed alone. Nevertheless, he had accomplished many victories by regaining most of Najd. Therefore, Shakespear appreciated that the policy towards Ibn Sa'ud needed revision and so he sent a letter to the political resident describing the errors of not supporting Ibn Sa'ud or objecting to Ottoman support for Ibn Rasheed. However, his requests found no response and the Government Secretary in India sent word to Cox, informing him of the necessity of Shakespear's compliance with the British policy of not intervening in the affairs of the Ottoman state in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[700]

The role of Shakespear in the British-Sa'udi relationship has been extensively debated. Most scholarly work praises the British officer for his efforts with admiration. His friendship with Ibn Sa'ud, his passion to help him, and his tragic death,[701] all contributed to his myth. Gertrude Bell first, and Philby later, have expressed their admiration for this passionate individual.[702] The historian, however, needs to ask: in the long line of officers serving the British Empire and its interests in the Middle East, would the outcome be different without Shakespear's interference? Throughout the period between the appointment of Shakespear as Political Agent in Kuwait in 1909

[700] Winstone, *Captain Shakespear: A Portrait*, p. 70; Al-Harbi, *[The Relationship between the Sultanate of Najd and its Annexes and Britain]*, p. 44.
[701] Captain Shakespear was killed on 24 January 1915 in the Battle of Jarrab between the forces of Ibn Sau'd and Ibn Rasheed.
[702] Goldberg, *Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud*, p.75.

until just before the beginning of WWI in 1914, contact between Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud was occasional, personal and unofficial. During that period, Ibn Sa'ud tried to convince the British officials to recognise him as master of Najd as he had been successful in gaining large parts of its territories. After the start of WWI in 1914, which is not within the scope of this study, communication and meetings between the two sides became of a formal nature as British officials tried during this period to win Ibn Sa'ud to their side in the wars against the Central Powers. During the period before WWI, Shakespear showed interest in Najd affairs and started to write reports and follow the internal events in Najd, especially those regarding Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. He obtained his information from the people of Kuwait and the people of Najd who came to Kuwait, especially caravan merchants.[703]

Captain William Henry Irvine Shakespear mentioned in a report dated 10th January 1910 that the general conditions were relatively calm in Najd in 1909. This was due to the halt of attacks between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed and shortages of food in Najd during that period. However, there were some internal raids between tribes. Shakespear explained that, according to the information he had received, that Ibn Sa'ud was thinking of regaining Al-Hasa as he considered it as part of the territories of Al Sa'ud. The shortages of food in Najd also had a role in driving Ibn Sa'ud to take control of Al-Hasa, which was known for its economic strength in the desert.[704] Shakespear indicated that Ibn Sa'ud's status and power had declined in late 1909, especially after some tribes abandoned him. In the meantime, Ibn Rasheed gained strength. Shakespear also observed that Ibn Rasheed's economic conditions were good and that this created a balance of power between the two sides. This explains why neither of the two sides carried out any attacks against the other during that period. Shakespear also mentioned that Mubarak Al Sabah wished to maintain this balance of power between the two sides.[705] Shakespear explained that the writings of Suleiman Al Bassam, a famous merchant from Mecca, in a notebook which he sent to Dr Hussein and which the latter

[703] K. Al Masoud, Captain Shakespear and his Mission to King Abdel Aziz: A Documentary Study 1911-1915, (*College of Literature and Human Sciences Magazine*, King Abdel Aziz University, Jeddah, 2008, Vol. 16, No.1), pp.31-97.
[704] IOR: R/15/1/710, The administrative report of 1909 issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushire), prepared by Cox, published by the Government of India in Calcutta in 1911.
[705] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from Captain Shakespear to Major Trevor, dated 4th January 1910.

sent to Monahan, British consul in Jeddah, represented the conditions in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, taking into consideration Al Bassam's bias to Ibn Rasheed.[706]

During that period, Ibn Sa'ud was looking for an opportunity to attack Al-Hasa in late 1909 or early 1910. However, when Sheikh Jasem Al Thani, Sheikh of Qatar, knew of this, he sent some financial and other gifts to Ibn Sa'ud and cautioned him that the time was not right to carry out any action against Al-Hasa at that time. This letter proved the degree of harmony and cooperation between Ibn Sa'ud and Sheikh Jasem Al Thani.[707]

It was noted in an extract from a report by the British Political Agency in Kuwait at the beginning of February 1910 that Ibn Sa'ud had destroyed the Al Hareeq fort and detained Al Hazzani, Sheikh of the region. Ibn Sa'ud had also attacked the Al Ajman tribes and seized a large amount of spoils. Therefore, five of Ibn Sa'ud's cousins, sons of Sa'ud Ibn Faisal, were used to convince Ibn Sa'ud to return the spoils to Al Ajman as they were owned by one of their maternal uncles. However, Ibn Sa'ud refused this and asked them not to intervene in this matter. Nine of Ibn Sa'ud's sons headed to a place named Al Raqeeqa and wrote to the Governor of Basra, asking his permission to stay in Al-Hasa. Also, one of the problems that faced Ibn Sa'ud during that period was that rumours spread that he was involved in the Al Ajman tribe's attack on Kuwaiti camels and caravans. Therefore, Ibn Sa'ud intended to meet with Sheikh Mubarak to prove his innocence of this accusation.[708]

It was stated in a report issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait at the beginning of March 1910 that Ibn Sa'ud, some of his relatives and 130 of his senior courtiers, as well as his brother Mohammed, who was leading Ibn Sa'ud's 1,200 man army, and the Al Ajman tribes, had all arrived to show their allegiance to Mubarak al Sabah. It was also recorded in the report that Ibn Sa'ud and some of his relatives had met with the British Political Agent in Kuwait. Mubarak provided Ibn Sa'ud with many financial and other gifts which included £7,000, two Arabian horses, around 70 camels, many clothes and a large amount of rice, coffee, dates and sugar. It was decided that Ibn Sa'ud's armies would join Mubarak's armies to fight the Al Zufeir tribe, as a declared

[706] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from Major Trevor, dated 16th January 1910.
[707] IOR: L/P&S/7/237, A political report from Major Trevor for January 1910.
[708] IOR: R/15/5/25, An extract from the periodic report issued by the British political agency in Kuwait, dated 2nd February 1910.

goal. However, the British officials were suspicious that the real goal was to fight the armies of Ibn Rasheed.[709]

Shakespear mentioned that his meeting with Ibn Sa'ud was not previously arranged. He noted in his narrative on one of his internal journeys to discover Kuwait that he had returned to Kuwait on 28th February 1910 and had heard of Ibn Sa'ud's presence there. He therefore made a visit to Sheikh Mubarak and met with Ibn Sa'ud.[710] He mentioned the great celebration made by Mubarak for him and his followers starting on 26th February 1910. Ibn Sa'ud was accompanied by his younger brother, Sa'ud, and his son, Turki. His two brothers, Mohammed and Saad, joined him later. Shakespear recorded his impressions of this meeting, which were positive, such as Ibn Sa'ud's interest in the habits of foreigners. It is worth noting here that Shakespear took some photographs of Ibn Sa'ud and his men. One of these pictures is considered the first photograph of Ibn Sa'ud in history.[711] After his first meeting with Ibn Sa'ud in Mubarak Ibn Sabah's palace, Shakespear formed an impression of Ibn Sa'ud's personality. He described him as honest, clear, easy to deal with, with a wide scope of mind and very intelligent, an opinion that coloured his analysis thereafter. Shakespear also reminded Ibn Sa'ud of the visit of Colonel Lewis Pelly to Riyadh. The Sheikhs of Al Ajman declared their allegiance and submission to Sheikh Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud mediated their acceptance and forgiveness. After that, Ibn Sa'ud left Kuwait and went to his camp, where his armies and the armies of Mubarak would head to discipline the Al Zufeir tribe, even though there were rumours that the real goal was Ibn Rasheed and his armies.[712] Shakespear is considered the main entrance for relations between Ibn Sa'ud and the British government, even though these relations came late and did not carry an official nature until after the beginning of WWI.

British-Indian circles began to show some interest after some indications of the emergence of new leadership in the Arabian Peninsula. The officials in India saw the importance of reaching an understanding with these new leaders. This included Ibn Sa'ud, whose serious intentions of regaining Al-Hasa were observed. The British

[709] IOR: R/15/5/26, Extract from the periodic report No. 9 issued by the British political agency in Kuwait, dated 2nd March 1910.
[710] IOR: R/15/1/479, Extracts of Captain Shakespear's memoirs for February 1910, dated 10th March 1910.
[711] To view Ibn Sa'ud's first photograph, refer to the appendices.
[712] A letter from Captain Shakespear to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushire), dated 9th March 1910, I.O.R. R/15/1/479.

Government of India extended a policy of openness towards Ibn Sa'ud. However, this collided with the opposing viewpoint of the British Foreign Office.[713] The British government repeated its warning to Mubarak not to engage in any military campaign that could cause a collision with the Ottoman state. Trevor touched on Ibn Sa'ud's latest visit to Kuwait and stressed the need to warn Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah about participating in operations that could cause his involvement in the problems of Najd or with the Ottomans. This included an indication and reminder of the warning of Lieutenant Colonel Campbell to Mubarak Al Sabah in 1901 and an indication that British policy was still committed to the status quo of not interfering in the affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. This policy was based on not giving the Ottomans an excuse to interfere in the affairs of Kuwait. Trevor also asked the British Political Resident in Kuwait to meet with Sheikh Mubarak and warn him again about participating in any military campaign that could lead to a clash between him and the Ottomans. Trevor mentioned that Sheikh Mubarak would insist that his campaign was directed against the Al Muntafaq tribes and that this sort of action was accepted by the Ottomans. However, he had to understand well that the British government was not willing to participate in any adventures inside the Arabian Peninsula.[714]

Indeed, the armies of Mubarak and Ibn Sa'ud headed to Al Muntafaq close to Al Zubeir. Their armies suffered a major defeat on 16th March 1910 in a battle known as the Hadeyah Battle,[715] named sarcastically after the defeat and withdrawal and because of the large amounts of spoils left by the withdrawing army, despite the large number of fighters in the army and the huge preparations for the battle. The armies of Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak were forced to withdraw due to the considerable number of deaths.[716]

In mid-1910, after fighting had stopped for a while between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed, the latter's power began to emerge, especially after his victories against the Anza tribe in Al Jawf. He started to head to the areas of the tribes affiliated to Ibn Sa'ud. Whereas the Uteibah tribe held off Ibn Rasheed when he attacked it and

[713] M. Al Nahhas, *Al Sa'ud in the Arabian Peninsula*, Dar el Kitab el Jame'i, Cairo, p. 86.
[714] IOR: R/15/5/25, A letter from Major Trevor, Acting British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushire) to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 22nd March 1910.
[715] For more details of this battle, refer to Al Sadoun, *The Relations between Najd and Kuwait*, p. 125; Sheikh Khaz'al, *The Political Histroy of Kuwait*, Part 2, p. 232; Al Rayhani, *The Modern History of Najd*, p. 185.
[716] IOR: R/15/5/26, Extracts from the periodic report issued by the British political agency in Kuwait, dated 23rd March 1910; IOR: R/15/5/26, for more on the details refer to a memorandum prepared by Captain Shakespear on Sheikh Mubarak's military preparations, dated 28th March 1910.

managed to take over 200 horses from his army, Ibn Rasheed achieved his real triumph in the western part of Ibn Sa'ud's territory, when he managed to take over the money house that belonged to Ibn Sa'ud in this region.[717] In March 1911, Shakespear went on a journey to the Arabian Peninsula. His main object was to meet with Ibn Sa'ud when he found that he [Shakespear] was near Kuwait, to the east of the Arabian Peninsula. That journey was unofficial and not permitted by the British government. The reason for the journey was to determine the status quo and political developments in the Arabian Peninsula. It was also meant to evaluate the size of Ibn Sa'ud's army. Ibn Sa'ud and Shakespear met in Thaj, where the former expressed his wish to strengthen his relations with Britain. Ibn Sa'ud spoke with Shakespear about the history of the relations between his family and Britain, which went back to the Second Sa'udi State. He reminded Shakespear of the agreement between his grandfather Faisal Ibn Turky and Louise Billy when he visited Riyadh in 1865. He also talked about the hostility of the Ottomans towards him and their support for his rival, Ibn Rasheed. Furthermore, Ibn Sa'ud pointed to the fact that the Ottomans were staying in Al Al-Hasaa and how their stay harmed the economy of Najd. He suggested a proposal that if Britain helped to get rid of the Ottomans, he would welcome having a British political agent in his country. He hinted that he was thinking about retrieving Al Al-Hasaa, which once belonged to his ancestors, if the Ottomans were stopped by British ships from the coast. In addition, Ibn Sa'ud told Shakespear that he had tried at an earlier time in 1906 to propose his retrieval idea to Cox if the British would offer naval assistance.[718] Shakespear had already known that the British government was not willing to cooperate with Ibn Sa'ud; therefore, he simply told him that he had no jurisdiction to discuss political matters with him. At that time, Britain was committed to agreements with the Ottoman state to protect its interests in the Gulf. Britain could not assist Ibn Sa'ud because that would have been a breach to its treaties with the Ottoman state.[719]

In addition, through his talks with Ibn Sa'ud, Shakespear came to the conclusion that the inhabitants and leaders of the Arabian Peninsula did not feel comfortable about their relationship with the Ottomans. He also found out that there had been some

[717] IOR: R/15/5/25, An extract from periodic report No. 20 issued by the British political agency in Kuwait, dated 18th May 1910.
[718] Troeller, *The Birth of Sudi Arabia*, pp. 39; A. Al- Inany, *[Rehlat Al kapten William Ervin Shakespear in the Arabian peninsula]* (Captain William Ervin Shakespear's Journeys in the Arabian Peninsula), Book Chapter, Resources of the Arabian Peninsula's History, 1979, Riyadh, pp 486-472.
[719] Al- Harby, *Najd Sultanate' Relations with Britain*, p46.

correspondence between Ibn Sa'ud, Ibn Rasheed, Imam Yehia and AlIdrisi with regards to coordinating a concurrent rebellion against the Turkish Ottomans; Ibn Sa'ud wanted to expel them from Al-Hasa and Al Qatif. He also wanted Britain to offer him naval protection. For that reason, Ibn Sa'ud sent some of his personal deputies, one of whom was Ibn Mashouq, to discuss the matter with the British Resident. Shakespear also pointed out that Ibn Sa'ud had never raised the Ottoman flag in his territories. Shakespear told Ibn Sa'ud that Britain did not have any interests in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula or any other places except for the coast of the Gulf. He also told him that his country was on good terms with the Ottomans, and that the British government did not have any intentions of changing its policies in the Arabian Gulf.[720]

Al Masoud[721] mentioned something similar. He said that the talks with Shakespear did not go as well as Ibn Sa'ud had hoped. This was mainly because Shakespear's responses were similar to the British policy. At that time, some British-Ottoman negotiations were taking place about establishing a railway station that would connect Baghdad with the Arabian Gulf. Shakespear thought of the importance of dealing with the leaders of the Arabian Peninsula which was why he sent his proposals to Cox and asked that they be delivered to the highest authorities. He also pointed to the fact that supporting Ibn Sa'ud would revive trade in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. Cox mentioned the news about the arrival of Ibn Mashouq, Ibn Sa'ud's Deputy, to Al-Hasa in Bahrain, and that he had carried a letter sent to Sheikh Eissa informing the latter as to Ibn Sa'ud's attack on some fellows from Al Ajman. Then, Ibn Mashouq headed to Basra carrying letters sent to the Turkish Ottoman authorities in Constantinople.[722]

In a report by Shakespear sent to the British government, Shakespear pointed to the private conversations that he had with Ibn Sa'ud, and commented that, as a result of these, he could see how generous and honest Ibn Sa'ud was. He also mentioned that Ibn Sa'ud was not too religious. In addition, Shakespear reported that he continuously repeated to Sa'ud how the British government would not approve his requests mainly because it was only interested in issues pertaining to the coast of the Arabian Penninusla rather than geo-political events that arose in its centre. In addition, Shakespear stated that Ibn Sa'ud was thinking about taking over Al-Hasa and Al Qatif since they belonged

[720] IOR: R/15/5/27, A letter draft signed by Captain Shakespear to Cox, dated 18th March 1911.
[721] Al- Masoud, Captain Shakespear and his mission regarding King Abdul Aziz, *Journal of Arts And Humanities* – KAU, pp 31-97.
[722] IOR: L/P&S/7/248, A political report prepared by Cox about March 1911.

to his ancestors. Ibn Sa'ud told Shakespear that he understood the British position regarding the Gulf coast's sheikhs, and that he did not mind the British flag being raised instead of the Turkish Ottoman one over the harbours therein.[723] Shakespear's observations were proven right; he demonstrated a deep understanding of Ibn Sa'ud's thinking, but his interpretations also included misconceptions about the situation in Arabia; misconceptions that were heavily influenced by personal admiration for Ibn Sa'ud. Indeed, he may be seen to have been slightly in awe of Ibn Sa'ud and this made him represent Ibn Sa'ud as the undisputed and accepted leader of Arabia who could unite all tribes against the Turks. [724]

At the beginning of April 1911, Shakespear became sure that Ibn Sa'ud did not have any intentions of attacking Al Qatif. From a military perspective, Shakespear was able to review Ibn Sa'ud's military forces and how prepared his army was. He mentioned that the Sa'udi forces did not have any type of artillery and that Ibn Sa'ud's camp had only Martini-Henry and Martini-Metfords rifles. Shakespear also noted that what made Ibn Sa'ud's military camps different from the camps of other tribes was their organization and discipline.[725] After his return to Kuwait, Shakespear wrote to Cox expressing his opinions. He told Cox that he had made good relations with Ibn Sa'ud and that his stay in Al-Hasa would reinforce the position of the British government in the region. Shakespear also mentioned some of his suggestions in his letter and asked Cox to report them to the Indian government so that the latter would look into them. He also commented that the behaviour of the Ottomans in the Arabian Gulf clashed with British interests. In making these comments he advanced the view that it would be better for Britain to support Ibn Sa'ud, who opposed the Ottomans and to start a friendship with him even from a distance. Although Cox agreed with Shakespear and preferred Ibn Sa'ud over the Ottomans in Al-Hasa, he doubted Ibn Sa'ud's ability to successfully face the Ottomans. On 17th April 1912, Ibn Sa'ud sent a letter to Shakespear telling him that Raunkiaer had arrived in Riyadh and that his father, Imam Abdul Rahman, had met him. Raunkier's scientific mission, as Ibn Sa'ud told Shakespear, was made easy. Whatever support he needed, he was provided with. Later on, the traveller headed towards Al-

[723] IOR: L/P&S/7/248, A report from Captain Shakespear to Cox, dated 8th April 1911.
[724] Goldberg 'Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud: A Balanced Reappraisal', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Jan., 1986), pp. 74-88.
[725] IOR: R/15/5/25, Pieces of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 12th April 1911; see also, IOR: L/P&S/7/249, A political report prepared by Cox about April 1911.

Hasa.[726] Alenazy[727] mentioned that Raunkiaer was sent by Austria and Germany to review the situation with a view to trying to draw Ibn Sa'ud to their side; however, his journey did not achieve this goal.

As a result of the issues hitherto discussed, Ibn Sa'ud's relationship with Shakespear (and other British officials) was enhanced. They started corresponding with each other more, and exchange gifts. In addition, Ibn Sa'ud's deputies such as Musa'ed Ibn Sweilim, and Abdullah Ibn Hamad Al Nafeesi moved around more freely than had previously been the case. When Raunkiaer started his scientific journey to Najd, he carried a recommendation letter from Shakespear in order for his journey to be easy. Exchanging letters continued after they met in Thaj.[728]

There is an extract which talks about Leachman's[729] voyage from Damascus to Najd. Leachman arrived in Buraidah after Ibn Sa'ud left. When Ibn Sa'ud found out, he sent one of his men to bring him to Riyadh. Leachman was accompanied by a servant and a translator, as he could not speak Arabic. This was also mentioned by Shakespear.[730] During Leachman's voyage, the Ottomans spread a vicious rumour that Leachman was a British intelligence agent. As a result of this particular reason, Ibn Sa'ud did not hesitate in making him meet Turkish officials in Al-Hasa. They received him and realised that he was sent by the Scientific and Geographic Society to collect some information about Najd. After that, Leachman went to Buhshir to meet with the British Political Resident. In a letter that Ibn Sa'ud sent to Shakespear on 24th January 1913, he told him that he

[726] Al- Masoud, Captain Shakespear and his mission regarding King Abdul Aziz, *Journal of Arts And Humanities* – KAU, pp 41.
[727] Alenazy, *The Creation of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 35.
[728] Al- Masoud, Captain Shakespear and his mission regarding King Abdul Aziz, *Journal of Arts And Humanities* – KAU, pp 31-97.
[729] Leachman, Gerard Evelyn (1880–1920), army and intellegence officer and traveller. On his return to India, Leachman was assigned to military intelligence in Simla, where he learned Arabic and German and studied intelligence reports from Arabia. He arrived in southern Iraq late in 1909 to begin his career in the field, one of a cohort of colourful contemporaries including Douglas Carruthers, T. E. Lawrence, Alois Musil, S. F. Newcombe, Conrad Preusser, Barclay Raunkiaer, William Shakespear, E. B. Soane, and Wilhelm Wassmuss. Like many of them Leachman took to wearing Arab dress. In 1910 he undertook a journey into the desert south of Baghdad, apparently in an effort to persuade the Rasheeds of Ha'il not to attack Ibn Sa'ud. In March 1911 the Royal Geographical Society awarded him its Gill memorial medal for his account of these travels (published in the Geographical Journal, 38, 1911, 265–74), and also offered to fund a modest expedition to central Arabia. He set off from Damascus at the end of 1912, probably with the connivance of Ibn Sa'ud visiting Qasim and Riyadh and bringing back the first photographs of members of the Sa'udi royal family; Peter Sluglett, 'Leachman, Gerard Evelyn (1880–1920)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/51600, accessed 1 Feb 2017]
[730] IOR: R/15/5/25, A letter draft from Captain Shakespear to Cox, dated 23rd December 1912; see also, IOR:R/15/5/25, A piece of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 25th December 1912.

bore the consequences of the Ottoman calumny against him only because of his loyalty to, and friendship with, the British. If there had been a treaty between him and the British, things would have been different.[731] On 27th January 1913, Shakespear sent a letter to Ibn Sa'ud through which he told him about the development of international events in Europe, especially the Balkan Wars and the Ottomans' position in relation to that war. He also thanked him for receiving Leachman, the British traveller, whom he had not known about until Mubarak told him. He also expressed his embarrassment for not knowing about Leachman's visit. In the same letter, Shakespear announced his intention to go to Najd and visit that area. In March 1913, Ibn Sa'ud sent Shakespear his response telling him that he [Ibn Sa'ud] was near Al Majma'ah and that he welcomed his visit.[732]

Shakespear met with Ibn Sa'ud again during an unofficial visit. On another occasion, when he realized that Ibn Sa'ud was nearby, Shakespear again decided to visit his camp and get to know him.[733] In that meeting Ibn Sa'ud received information about the Balkan wars and the battles fought by the Ottoman State. He expressed how sorry he felt for not having the British government to support his cause. Ibn Sa'ud explained to Shakespear how he had retrieved vast lands from the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, and how the Ottomans could not harm him except through the eastern coasts, and Sharif of Mecca, whom Ibn Sa'ud thought was in alliance with the Turks against him. As a result of this, as well as for economic reasons, he desired to expel the Ottomans from Al-Hasa. It should be recalled at this juncture that Al-Hasa was a rich area that was blessed with a number of different ports, the most important of which was Uqair. He also believed that both Al-Hasa and Qatif had belonged to his family since the first and second Sa'udi State; however, after controlling it, Ibn Sa'ud hoped it would be a great resource for his emirate and he expressed his strategic thinking about the issue. During the meeting with Shakespear, Ibn Sa'ud mentioned how the Ottomans had already recognized his grandfather, Imam Faisal bin Turki, the ruler of Al-Hasa. Furthermore, Ibn Sa'ud talked to Shakespear about the missing document that was more of a British recognition to his grandfather, and how it had been signed by Lewis Pelly in 1865. Shakespear, however, mentioned that the document had never been found, and that its

[731] Al- Masoud, Captain Shakespear and his mission regarding King Abdul Aziz, *Journal of Arts And Humanities* – KAU, pp 31-97.
[732] Al-Rayhani, *[Tareekh Najd Al Hadeeth]* Najd's Recent History, pp184- 188.
[733] Cox political report about March 1913, L/P&S/10/827

very existence had also never been recorded in any form of official British record. Copies of letters supporting this view can be found today in the Digital Library of Qatar. [734] At the end of the meeting, Shakespear emphasized to Ibn Sa'ud how Britain could not interfere in affairs it considered to be internal to the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, however, he expressed to his officials his hopes that they would look into Ibn Sa'ud's issue, and the affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula. He also expressed the importance of them not rejecting his openness to them. He believed that Ibn Sa'ud's power was going to grow, so he pleaded with the British government to reconsider its relations with Najd Emir.[735]

Shakespear warned Ibn Sa'ud that if he was to move toward Al-Hasa the British government would never risk its relations with the Ottoman State for him. From the visit, Shakespear deduced that Ibn Sa'ud was going to eventually try to take over Al-Hasa and Qatif, and that the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula hated the Ottomans and that they believed that they could resist them [the Ottomans]. When Shakespear returned to Kuwait, he wrote a report about his journey. He emphasised how he hoped Ibn Sa'ud would be paid careful attention and how, if the Ottomans did not change their policies towards him, he would expel them from Al-Hasa and Qatif. If this happened, he maintained, it would force Britain to establish relations with him despite its desire to avoid formalising ties. Furthermore, Shakespear explained how, if Ibn Sa'ud was recognized as the person in control of Najd and Al-Hasa, he would commit to his promise to never interfere in the affairs of the Gulf Sheikhs, and would also undertake to maintain the status quo. If, however, the British government rejected his offers of establishing friendly relations with him, it would definitely make him feel hateful, which, in turn, could affect British interests along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. [736]

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[734] Records and Private Papers, Mss Eur F126/55 in Qatar Digital Library Official correspondence between Lewis Pelly and the Political Department, Bombay concerning Pelly's visit to Riyadh.

[735] A letter from Shakespear to Cox dated to 15th May 1913; 27\5\15\R. In the letter, four names were mentioned including the envoys sent by Ibn Sa'ud's grandfather, Imam Faisal bin Turki, to Sirl Lewis Pelly. The four names were Mohammed bin Mani', Abdulaziz bin Umar, Saleh al Widawi and Ibrahim bin Ghanem. Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain, p*. 50.

[736] Al Harbi: '*:'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain, p*. 51.

In the letter that he sent to the Indian Government on 26th May 1913, Cox suggested recognising Ibn Sa'ud as an independent governor. This did not contradict with the British recognition of Najd as part of the Ottoman State. Britain could, in addition he suggested, assign a British Agent there upon the approval of the Ottoman State. Lord Harding- the King's Deputy in India- though, expressed a contrary view and stated how he did not want to trigger the issue of sovereignty in Najd at a time when British-Ottoman talks were about to come to an end. Such talks were related to an agreement signed later on 29th July 1913.[737] He saw it as best to maintain friendly relationship with Ibn Sa'ud until the future revealed itself.

Using Grey as a spokesperson, the British Foreign Office expressed how disturbing it was for Shakespear to visit Ibn Sa'ud without asking for permission. It considered it a violation of the government's instructions which stated that Britain would not interfere in the affairs of the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, such visits created doubts about the intentions and aspirations of the British. As for Shakespear's claim that rejecting Ibn Sa'ud's request for cooperation could result in making the latter angry and that this might negatively affect British interests in the Gulf, Grey said that such feelings were unimportant compared with the resulting emotions of establishing a direct relationship with the Emir and his Highness' government. Cox received a reply from the British Foreign Office stating that Hid Majesty's government should remain completely objective.[738] The Foreign Office concluded its instructions by stating that in the light of the status quo and the correspondence from the British officers in the Gulf, Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary, was one of those who called for sending strict instructions to Cox preventing him and those working under him from making any contact with Ibn Sa'ud and other Arab Sheikhs, who did not have any relations with Britain. The only correspondences approved were the official ones. This demonstrated frustrations and anger over the role and individual actions of officials who seemed to take too many

[737] The British-Ottoman agreement dated to 29th July 1913 discussed the situation of Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait. In that agreement, the Ottoman State renounced its rights in Qatar and Bahrain. As for Kuwait, it remained under the Ottoman State's control but on papery only; the Ottoman State would not interfere in the affairs of the Ottoman country, nor would it send its soldiers there. Placing Kuwait as part of the agreement caused lots of criticism; because the Ottomans in that agreement disclaimed their simplest rights. The sovereignty was by name Ottoman, and in reality Brish. Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 54

[737] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p.52

[738] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya,* p.52

liberties. The instructions reiterated the fact that it was important for all officials to know that the main thrusts of British policy; they were built on international considerations, not merely regional and local ones: to maintain the integration of Ottoman borders in Asia. The India Office replied to the British Foreign Office on 9th July 1913 stating its agreemtn with the voiced opinions of the Foreign Secretary. The India Office stated how Captain Shakespear did not listen to its advice. The India Office pointed to how it was going to send information to the Indian government about how the future visits of political envoys were going to be limited to the guidelines contained within the proposed British-Ottoman treaty.[739]

On 11th July 1913 the Viceroy of India received a letter from the India Office sent by Crowe. The letter mentioned an observation made in an earlier letter, (dated March 1913), about Captain Shakespear. It was noted that he had attempted to stay in Al Majm'a town when he heard that Ibn Sa'ud was nearby, so that Shakespear might visit him. Further restrictions were imposed on the officials so that they would be forced to follow official instructions; political envoys were not to move around unless they received instructions from His Majesty's government. Further, their movements should be limited to the borders of Kuwait as stated in the British-Ottoman treaty.[740]

Philby argued that the death of Captain Shakespear played a crucial role in changing the British position. This has been heavily disputed.[741] It is apparent that Shakespear provided the British with useful intelligence and maps as well as first hand observations. He was aware of that fact that it was very difficult to verify news since retreats were presented as victories and major expeditions as minor rides. He had also noted discrepancies between what he witnessed and what was reported in official correspondence. [742] Overall, this thesis agrees with Golderg's analysis that Shakespear was accurate in understanding Ibn Sa'ud commitment to get Britain's support but that he also misunderstood a couple of important issues related to Ibn Sa'ud's strategic planning: first, he thought that Ibn Sa'ud would move against the Turks; secondly, he

[739] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya,* p.53
[740] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* p.53
[741] Troeller, Ibn Sa'ud and Sharif Husain: A Comparison in Importance in the Early Years of the First World War, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1971), pp. 627-633
[742] Abdol Yaccob, 'British policy on Arabia before the First World War: an internal argument', Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, Vol. 38, Issue 1, (2008), pp. 319-326.

overestimated Ibn Sa'ud's acceptance with the local tribes[743] underestimating deeply established tribal feuds and longstanding tribal rivalries.

4.3. The Dispute between Ibn Sa'ud and the Sharif of Mecca

Ibn Sa'ud was not the only leader in the Arabian Peninsula to negotiate with the British or the Ottomans. Indeed, as seen in Chapter Three, a number of other tribal leaders tried, albeit unsuccessfully. What is of significance for the discussion within Chapter Four is that the British had also tried to establish relationships with other Arab leaders. If the relationship between the British and Sharif Husein of Mecca is compared with that of Britain and Ibn Sa'ud it becomes apparent later that the British had completely different attitudes to Ibn Sa'ud. It is important to look at the relationships between the British and these two different leaders because it illuminates further reasons behind the latter change in the British attitude towards Ibn Sa'ud.

Sharif Hussein Ibn Ali as Emir of Mecca in an attempt to strengthen their control over the Asian region (Arabian Peninsula included). When he took office, he started sending detailed reports about the power of Ibn Sa'ud that was emerging in Najd. In so doing he stressed, through continuous warnings, the danger of Ibn Sa'ud's control over Najd and the impact of such control on the Ottoman State in the future. He requested that they put an end to Ibn Sa'ud's new movement. However, though, the first two years of his rule he did not achieve any notable progress. In 1910, he led a campaign against the tribes and Ibn Sa'ud in Najd.[744]

The year 1910 witnessed several incidents that troubled Ibn Sa'ud, first of which was the revolution led by the grandchildren of his uncle Imam Sa'ud Al Faisal and their attempted coup against his rule.[745] Of the problems Ibn Sa'ud faced, Al Muntafiq leader's assault against Mubarak and the latter's call for help from Ibn Sa'ud; especially that at that time there was a misunderstanding between the two and they both wanted to prove their goodwill towards the other. The Al Hadiya battle took place and was won by the Al Muntafiq Leader. In the meantime, Ibn Sa'ud had to face the invasion of Ibn Rasheed which was followed by the Sharif of Mecca's campaign against Najd.[746] During

[743] Goldberg J. 1986 Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud: A Balanced ReappraisalMiddle Eastern Studies, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Jan., 1986), pp. 74-88
[744] Al-Ghannam, *[The Regional and International Political Environment]*, p70.
[745] Williams, *Ibn Sa'ud- The Puritan King of Arabia*, p. 68.
[746] Almana, *Arabia Unified A Portrait of Ibn Sa'ud*, p. 55

the campaign, Sa'd, Ibn Sa'ud's brother, was held captive. The fact that Otaibah Tribe was divided into two parts, one in the east and the other in the west of the Arabian Peninsula, contributed to creating a conflict-prone environment.[747] When Sa'ad, Ibn Sa'ud's brother, was held captive, Ibn Sa'ud had to agree to make a truce with Ibn Rasheed and leave the garrison which was stationed to the south of Riyadh. This caused him a lot of troubles. He, then, moved towards As-Sir, in the centre of Najd, from where negotiations and communications started between him and the Sharif of Mecca. Sharif Khalid Ibn Loay and Mohammed Ibn Hindi, Sheikh of Otaibah, intervened in the situation; in fact, the latter's followers had a hand in capturing Sa'ad Ibn Abdul Rahman. The negotiations ended with the release of Sa'ad and Ibn Sa'ud's agreement to the conditions of the Sharif of Mecca. Ibn Sa'ud agreed, after Khalid Ibn Loay told him, that the only reason why the Sharif wanted the submission paper was to have a better reputation with the Ottoman state. Ibn Sa'ud, handed him the submission document. However, history has proven that no real submission happened. Ibn Sad considered that agreement non-binding due to the fact that he had signed it underduress. The Sharif later on returned to Mecca without a fight.[748] After his brother was captured, Ibn Sa'ud sent a letter to Mubarak asking him for advice as to whether or not to send a complaint to the Ottoman Wali of Basra about Sharif Hussein's assault. Mubarak opposed Ibn Sa'ud's idea and told him that there was nothing they could do. Ibn Sa'ud took Mubarak's advice. Although the Turks and Ibn Sa'ud and his ancestors were not on good terms, Ibn Sa'ud understood the importance of being loyal to the upper hand as long as it served his interests so to do.[749]

Some of the problems Ibn Sa'ud faced were mentioned in *Shams Al Hakikah* journal.[750] This periodical was issued in Mecca. Some of the problems were the fact that the Sharif of Mecca had recently asked Ibn Sa'ud to pay an annual Zakat (Islamic taxes)

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[747] Troeller, *The Birth of Sudi Arabia*, pp. 38.

[748] Troeller, *The Birth of Sudi Arabia*, pp. 39; Al Uthaymeen, *[History of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia]*, part 2, pp. 124; Al Sadoon, [Adwa' 'alaHamlat Sharif Makkah 'ala Al-Al-Qassim 1910] (An Insight on Makkah's Sheriff's Campaign on Al-Al-Qassim 2010), *Al-DarahMgazine*, Al-Riyadh, (1984), pp 69-73; bin Hathlool, *[TareekhMulook Al Sa'ud]* (History of Al Sa'ud Kings), Part 1, p83; Vasiliev, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, *[Tareekh Al Arabiya Al-Sa'udiya]*, p. 267.

[749] Troeller, *The Birth of Sudi Arabia*, pp. 39

[750] "Shams Al-Haqeeqa" Journal: A French report says tha this journal belongs to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in Jaddah and speaks in its name in Holy Makkah. Its director is Mohammad TawfeeqMakki. Its objective is to follow up the political and administrative reorganization of Jaddah Governorate; quarterly report no. 3 about the political situation in Hejaz from Bertrand, the French Consul in Jaddah to Pichon, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 4th April 1909; N.S.-Turquie/430. (Mention the location of the French Archive).

of 900 Ottoman Liras[751] for the Al Al-Qassim region and the other regions under his control. He also demanded that Ibn Sa'ud should pay the arrears of the previous three years.[752] In addition, the Sharif of Mecca sent his messenger to Mubarak As-Sabah while waiting for the latter's support (in the form of supplies and livestock), to the centre of Najd.[753]

One of the other problems Ibn Sa'ud faced at that time was the nature of his relationships with his cousins, the sons of his uncle including Sa'ud Ibn Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa'ud Ibn Faisal. Sa'ud sent a blind man called Ibrahim Ibn Abdullah Ibn Salama to the British to see if it was possible to receive naval support from them. In exchange, he offered to expel the Ottomans from Al Qatif and Al-Hasa. He wanted to free himself from Ibn Sa'ud's control. Ibn Sa'ud clarified to them that he would approve a British agent to stay in Al Qatif so long as he was Arab. Mackenzie also mentioned that Ibn Sa'ud, in person, asked for something similar in February 1906.[754] In his letter to the political British Agent in Bahrain dated 9th July 1910, Cox gave instructions that the Agent would by no means respond to any attempts for talks with Ibn Sa'ud's rival Sa'ud Ibn Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa'ud Ibn Faisal.[755]

In one of his letters to the British Ambassador in Constantinople dated 5th August 1910, Abdul Rahman, the Deputy of the British Consul in Jeddah, pointed that the Sharif of Mecca left Ta'if leading 4,000 armed men. He announced his intention to attack Ghamd and Zahran tribes. His real purpose was to attack Ibn Sa'ud. The Consul's deputy said that the Sharif wanted Ibn Sa'ud to submit to him since he had not paid taxes for the previous three years.[756] Andre Ribot, French Deputy Consul in Cairo, was on the lookout for the Sharif of Mecca. He sent Stephen Pichon, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, a letter dated 18th November 1909 telling him about the military campaign that Sharif had led against the frontiers of Najd. He described how the Sharif had taken over a big number of tents, as well as camels and sheep. In addition, he had

[751] 6000 majidies equaled 1000 pound, Kenneth Williams, Ibn Sa'ud- The Puritan King of Arabia, p. 71.
[752] Troeller, The Birth of Sudi Arabia, pp. 38.
[753] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Jaddah to Sir Gerard Lowther, the British Consul in Constantinople, dated 11 June 1910; Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani Ibrahim, [Princes and Invaders], p.222.
[754] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter signed by Captain Charles F. Mackenzie, the British Political Agent in Bahrain to Cox, dated 9th July 1910.
[755] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter signed by Cox dated 16th July 1910.
[756] FO/195/20350, A letter from Abdul Rahman, the Deputy British Consul in Jeddah to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 5th August 1910; Troeller, The Birth of Sudi Arabia, pp. 38.

killed some people from Najd while heading towards Ibn Sa'ud. The *Al Liwaa* newspaper published details about the incident.[757]In addition, Paul Lepissier, the French Deputy Consul in Jeddah, wrote in one of his reports that the Sharif of Mecca, while heading to Najd, decided to offer financial and spiritual support to Ibn Rasheed for the purposes of finishing Ibn Sa'ud, teaching Mubarak As-Sabah a lesson, and forcing Ibn Sa'ud and the people of Najd to submit, first, to him, and then to the Ottoman state.[758] In addition to the aforementioned problems that faced Ibn Sa'ud, some of the men belonging to Bani Tamim tribe in Al Hota and Al Hareeq revolted against Ibn Sa'ud's officials who were responsible for the castle in Al Hareeq. Clashes happened between the two parties and ended with Fahd Ibn Mommar's, one of Ibn Sa'ud's men, stopping the rebels.[759]

The Sharif of Mecca intervened to make peace between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed. He demanded that Al Al-Qassim come under his control; he also mentioned that he would send Al Bassam, one of Mecca's merchants, to be in charge there either peacefully or by force. However, Ibn Sa'ud mentioned in a letter that he sent to the Sharif that Ibn Rasheed and Yusuf Ibn Ibrahim tried to take over Al Al-Qassim, but they all failed. Later on, the Sharif went to Najd. A battle started between the Sharif and Ibn Sa'ud's men near Arjaa well and ended with victory for Ibn Sa'ud's followers.[760] The Sharif's success in receiving pledges from Ibn Sa'ud in exchange for the release of his brother was reflected in the following conditions that he imposed on Ibn Sa'ud:

1. Ibn Sa'ud's announcement of submission to the Sharif of Mecca and the Ottoman State.
2. Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed must stop their raids on the centre of the Arabian Peninsula and obey the Ottoman Sultan.
3. Ibn Sa'ud's agreement to pay annual Zakat to the Sharif of Mecca along with Al Al-Qassim's revenues which was 6,000 Ottoman Liras.

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[757] N.S.-Turquie/141.
A letter with the no. 309, signed by Andre Ribot,Charge d'Affaires of the French Consulate in Cairo to Stephen Picon, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 18th November 1909.
[758] N.S.-Turquie/142. A report with the no. 49, signed by Paul Lepissier, Charge d'Affaires of the French Consulate in Jeddah to Stephen Pichon, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 17th August 1910.
[759] IOR: R/15/5/25, A piece from the periodical report issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 31st August 1910.
[760] IOR: L/P&S/7/245, A political report from Captain Birdwood, the Chief Warrant Officer to the British Political Resident in the Gulf and the Charge d'Affaires of the Residency about September 1910.

4. The people of Buraydah and Unaizah must be given the right to choose the leadership they wished whether Ibn Sa'ud, Ibn Rasheed or the Sharif.
5. Ibn Sa'ud must offer comprehensive support to the Sharif whenever the Ottoman government wanted to recruit some of the people of Najd.
6. The Otaibah tribe must be under the control of the Sharif of Mecca. He also had the right to punish those who attacked, disturbed, or stopped it from merchandising with Najd, whether the attackers were Ibn Sa'ud or anyone else. If the tribe caused a problem, the Sharif was responsible for its punishment.[761]

Some of the reasons why the Sharif accepted releasing Sa'ad Ibn Abdul Rahman were Ibn Sa'ud's agreement to submit and his associated agreement to pay annual Zakat. In addition, the fact that at that time Ibn Rasheed had stopped supporting the Sharif made him stop and not confront Ibn Sa'ud. During that time, Ibn Rasheed was on good terms with Ibn Sa'ud.[762] The Sharif of Mecca released Sa'ad Ibn Abdul Rahman and gave him 12 Omani camels as a present. Ibn Sa'ud sent 12 of his best Arabian horses to the Sharif of Mecca with a piece of paper that said he held no grudge towards the Sharif and had no intention of fighting him. He also told him, in the letter, that he did not consider the Sharif an enemy. Ibn Sa'ud reported to the Ottomans his loyalty, sincerity and submission to the Sultan. In a diplomatic manner, Ibn Sa'ud was able to save his brother from captivity and stopped any possible bloodshed. However, what was written on that piece of paper was never applied in reality; Ibn Sa'ud considered it invalid since he had to sign it under compulsion.

Ibn Sa'ud confirmed to him the fact that he did not hate the Ottoman government and that the people of Najd recognised his authority and willingly chose him to be their governor.[763] In one of his letters to Stephen Pichon the French Minister of Foreign Affairs dated 25th October 1910, Paul Lepissier, French Deputy Consul in Jeddah, mentioned that the Sharif of Mecca had returned from his campaign in Najd which had taken around two and a half months. He told him that it did not achieve the desired goals and that although the Sharif had met with Ibn Rasheed near Unaizah and asked to meet Ibn Sa'ud, Ibn Sa'ud did not attend and sent his brother, Sa'ad, and some of his

[761] IOR: L/P&S/7/246, A political report from Cox about November 1910; Sa'ud bin Hathool, *TareekhMulook Al Sa'ud,* (History of Al Sa'ud Kings), Part 1, p83.
[762] IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from Captain Skakespear to Cox, dated 6 November 1910.
[763] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p223; Al- Oraynan, *[Ilaqat Najd belKuwaa Al- Muheeta]* (Najd's Relations with the surrounding Forces), p 137.

followers to assess the situation. The Sharif captured Sa'ad forcing Ibn Sa'ud to accept the conditions of announcing submission and paying Zakat in exchange for the release of his brother.[764]

Another opinion about the matter states that the main reason behind the Sharif of Mecca's campaign against Najd was not to end Ibn Sa'ud or to force him to pay taxes for the Topkapi Palace. Rather, the real reason was to postpone the establishment of a railway between Jeddah and Mecca since such an establishment was against the Sharif's interests. The establishment of a railway between Mecca and Jeddah was against the Sharif's interests with the Arabian tribes, which were considered as an insurance for his independence. The Arabian tribes had excellent manpower. Building a railway would deprive these tribes from getting the resources that they needed to maintain their lifestyles. They used to get them from securing and transporting the travellers and pilgrims to Mecca.[765]

In the end, the Sharif of Mecca sent a letter to the House of Khilafah in the Ottoman State announcing his victory. *The Times* newspaper issued on 6th October 1910 in London published an article entitled 'Submitting the Arabian Tribes'. In the article, it was said that all the Arabs in Najd submitted to the Ottoman government because of the capturing of Sa'ad Ibn Abdul Rahman, the brother of Ibn Sa'ud. The latter, the article said, accepted his need to submit to the Sharif of Mecca and the Ottoman state in exchange for the release of his brother.[766] The truth, however, was something different. The Sharif of Mecca did not actually achieve his goals; especially not his most important which was taking over Al Al-Qassim. The Sharif of Mecca retreated with the only thing he achieved: receiving promises of submission from Ibn Sa'ud, which were proven to be only verbal and were never truly applied.[767]

After Ibn Sa'ud was done with the Sharif, he went to meet with his opponents in Al Hareeq. He attacked them and eented Al Hareeq[768] His opponents, however, from his

[764] A report with the no. 60, signed by Paul Lepissier, Charge d'Affaires of the French Consulate in Jeddah to Stephen Pichon, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 25th October 1910; N.S.-Turquie/142. (Mention the location of the French Archive).
[765] N.S.-Turquie/144. A letter with the no. 4 signed by Norbert Armez, the French Consul in Jeddah to Reymond Poincare, the Prime Minister and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 29th January 1912.
[766] IOR: R/15/1/479, A piece entitled *"Submitting the Arabian Tribes"* from the Londoner Journal *"Times",* issued on 6th October 1910.
[767] Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p224.
[768] Williams, *Ibn Sa'ud- The Puritan King of Arabia*, pp. 68-73.

cousins and Al Hazaznah, fled to Al Hoota, then headed to the Sheeh and stayed at Al Ammar. Ibn Sa'ud's cousins left the Sheeh where they were captured and were sent to the Saleel where they were taken and killed. That way, Ibn Sa'ud was able to stop those who troubled his control over Najd.[769]

Overall, the situation in Arabia was complex and provoked Ibn Sa'ud into a battle not of his choosing. However, the events that unfolded are informative with regard to what they suggest about Ibn Sa'ud view of Ottoman rule: he wanted independence but no direct confrontation and this dictated his approach to the Porte. On the other hand, the conflicting agendas of Husein and Ibn Sa'ud proving that Shakespear was wrong to expect them to unify under the latter show that while the relationship with Husein and the British was based on military concerns over fighting the Turks, the British attitude to Ibn Sa'ud was not dominated by the same war expectations but by post-war concerns for the safeguarding of their interests in the Gulf (as it will be investigated in the section about Al-Hasa). Britain was caught between two sides of a civil war between Ibn Sa'ud and Hussein Ibn Ali.[770] Sir Percy Cox supported Ibn Sa'ud while the Foreign Office through Cairo supported Hussein bin Ali.[771] Nevertheless, until the annexation of Al-Hasa, the imperial British government adhered to its official position of non-interference.[772]

4.4. Ibn Sa'ud's Annexation of Al-Hasa, Sa'udi-Ottoman Relations, and the British Position

Ibn Sa'ud threatened the neutral British position and started antagonising them after the capture of Al-Hasa from the Ottomans in 1913.[773] The final annexation of this region was probably the most significant game changer in the period. However, it should not be approached as a short-term event that had this massive impact, but, as this thesis stipulates all along, it should be understood as part of Ibn Sa'ud's long term, solid commitment to see his ancestral lands independent and to gain the support of the most prominent power in the Gulf, the British. As it will be explained in this section, Ibn

[769] IOR: L/P&S/7/246, A political report from Cox about December 1910; Sa'ud bin Hathoul, part 1, p83.
[770] Linabury, *British Sa'udi Arab Relations 1902-1927*, p.6.
[771] Linabury, *British Sa'udi Arab Relations 1902-1927*, p. 6.
[772] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO36, A letter signed by Sir Lowther to Sir Edward Grey, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 13th February 1911.
[773] Leatherdale, *Britain and Sa'udi Arabia, 1925-1939*, p.15; W. Bowen, *The History of Sa'udi Arabia*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2008), p.87.

Sa'ud's strategic goal to capture Al-Hasa, that started earlier in 1906,[774] succeeded in turning the central Arabia situation to a Gulf problem; therefore, it would force the British to deal with it in a direct way since Arabia now was placed within the British interests and commerce in the Gulf. On the other hand, this thesis also stipulates that the main reason for the change in attitude from the British was not the declining relations with the Ottomans (although they might have eased the way), nor the war concerns during WW1 (since at the end Britain got no commitment for military support by Ibn Sa'ud) but concerns over stability and protection of British interests in the Gulf after the War. Somehting the Ibn Sa'ud could and did guarantee.

Ibn Sa'ud raided the Al Da'en and Mahfouth tribes who belonged to Al Ajman tribe in Al Jawf near Al-Hasa. Then, Ibn Sa'ud marched towards Al Raqiqa region near Al-Hasa; the people of these tribes sought shelter in the fortification and informed the Governor of Al-Hasa about their severe conditions and that they agree to Ibn Sa'ud's demands. Ibn Sa'ud demanded they return all of the things that they had stolen from his followers and that they must agree him building a fortification in the Al Raqiqa region. The Governor of Al-Hasa met with Ibn Sa'ud and treated him respectfully and promised to submit to his wishes.[775] One of the things Ibn Sa'ud demanded was the arrest of a number of figures such as Fahd Ibn Hithleen, Khamees Ibn Mneikher; the Sheikh of Al Safran. Ibn Sa'ud pardoned the rest of the people.[776]

In a letter from R. Ritchie, Deputy of the India Office, to the Foreign Office, Ritchie mentioned Ibn Sa'ud's desire to build relationships with the British government. Ritchie said that back then some were still opposing the idea of adopting the 'risk' policy in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula as the situation was in 1904. He pointed to some of the correspondence sent; the last of which was a letter from Sir A. Godley that dated back to 29th April 1904,[777] Shakespear supported Ibn Sa'ud's demands and tried to convince the British officials into accepting them. He told the officials that if the British offered naval support only, Ibn Sa'ud could take over Al-Hasa and Al Qatif and thereby expel the Turks from Al-Hasa (something that he misunderstood according to Goldberg).[778] In

[774] See chapter 2 for more details.
[775] IOR: R/15/5/25, Pieces of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 25th May 1911.
[776] IOR: L/P&S/7/251, A confidential political report from Cox about June 1911.
[777] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO36, A letter signed by R. Ritchie, Undersecretary of India in London to The British Foreign Office, dated 7th June 1911; see also: the same document IOR: L/P&S/7/248.
[778] Goldberg J. 1986 Captain Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud: A Balanced ReappraisalMiddle Eastern Studies,

addition, Ibn Sa'ud's approval of allowing a British Political Agent to stay in Al Qatif or Al Uqair did not necessarily mean having to be involved in internal territories; taking into consideration the fact that the British were not responsible for protecting the tribes living therein.

Arthur Hirtzel, Secretary of the Political Department, was in favour of the opinions of Cox and Shakespear about Ibn Sa'ud. He supported their ideas for three years. He also said that Ibn Sa'ud's approval of allowing a British Political Agent to stay in Al Qatif or Al Uqair did not necessarily mean having to be involved in the affairs of the centre of the Arabian Peninsula.[779] When Cox expressed his opinion about that matter, he said that any agreement with Ibn Sa'ud had to be reviewed by returning back to the Topkapi Palace and taking into account the British interests in the Gulf. Cox suggested the following as the basis for an agreement:

1. Ibn Sa'ud must force his nationals to be committed to the naval truce.
2. He must never send armed boats without the approval of the British Government.
3. He would not allow the use of the coast as a base for piracy.
4. He must keep good relations with the sheikhs who were friends with Britain.
5. He forbade importing naval weaponry.

Cox also mentioned that if the Turks refused the British point of view, the British government must remind them of the fact that they still had Al-Hasa and Al Qatif under their control.[780] As is evinced, British official diplomacy still placed British-Ottoman relations higher than those relating to Ibn Sa'ud.

Cox sent his proposals to the British Government of India. The Government was convinced by the opinions of Cox and Shakespear. A draft of a memorandum was sent to the British Foreign Office. The British Government of India pointed to the fact that all such suggestions were worth examining. The letter and proposals took some time; the British Foreign Office opposed the 'risk' policy of intervening with the affairs of Najd; the opposition was not less than it had been in 1904. However, because of the stubborn behaviour of the Ottomans in the Arabian Gulf, Shakespear and Cox thought it

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[779] Troeller, *The Birth of Sudi Arabia*, pp. 41.

[780] IOR: R/15/5/27, A letter from Cox to Sir Henry Mcmahon, the British Foreign Secretary for India, Simla, dated 23rd July 1911; Troeller, The Birth of Sudi Arabia, pp. 41

would be best if His Excellency reconsidered the policy applied in the Arabian Peninsula.[781]

When Cox and Shakespear's reports reached the office of William Lee-Wamer, who was an advisor and member of the government's council at the India Office, Lee-Wamer's comments were discouraging. He did not approve of the application of a new policy in the Arabian Peninsula. He said that they should be very careful and not intervene impulsively. He also pointed out that the only reason why Ibn Sa'ud welcomed the stay of the British Resident was because of Ottoman pressure. If the pressure did not exist, he mentioned, Ibn Sa'ud would immediately attack Muscat and take it over and advance towards the sea. Germany could take the Ottomans' state side, too. For such reasons, it was imperative that the British did not get involved in the affairs of the Arabian Peninsula. Furthermore, Lee-Wamer said that the railway of Hejaz would lead to so many changes that he found it wise for Britain not to get involved.

Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, had a different opinion. He said that the proposal of The Marquess of Crewe should be taken into consideration. The latter had suggested that it would be possible to respond to Ibn Sa'ud's attempts to place the Ottomans under difficult circumstances near the Arabian coast of the Gulf. Nevertheless, they should also adhere to their original policy.[782] The British officials in the Gulf were disturbed by Ottoman policy in the Gulf. They knew that they would eventually have to respond to Ibn Sa'ud's initiatives; however, they found it best not to respond to him at that particular time.[783] Although the conciliation between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rasheed had lasted for a year, some changes happened that caused the nature of their relationship to change once more. For instance, the Bani Abdullah tribe, from Mutayr, who used to pay an annual Zakat to Ibn Sa'ud, paid the Zakat to Ibn Rasheed in 1911. This forced Ibn Sa'ud to negotiate with Ibn Rasheed.[784] As for the Otaibah tribe, the backbone of the Sharif of Mecca's power, it paid Zakat to Ibn Sa'ud and became his

[781] Al- Harby, *[Najd Sultanate' Relations with Britain]*, p 48; Howarth, The Deaert King, The Live of Ibn Sa'ud, p. 91.
[782] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO36, A letter from Sir Louis Mallet from the British Foreign Office to the India Office in London, dated 28th July 1911.
[783] IOR: R/15/5/27, A copy from a semiformal letter from the Deputy British Foreign Secretary for India, Simla, to the British Resident in the Gulf, dated 30th August 1911.
[784] IOR: R/15/5/25, Pieces of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 20th September 1911; see also, IOR: L/P&S/7/253, A political report prepared by Cox about September 1911.

ally. Using much of its power helped Ibn Sa'ud in a battle against the Bani Abdullah and Harb tribes, which took place between Najd and the Medina as a punishment for paying Zakat to Ibn Rasheed. Due to the fact that the Otaibah tribe joined Ibn Sa'ud, the Sharif of Mecca ordered that all the communications with Najd would be disconnected and that its commercial convoys would be robbed.[785]

At the beginning of 1912, and after the Turks saw how Ibn Sa'ud's power had grown stronger, they contacted him in the hope of drawing him to their side. Sulaiman Shafiq Pasha contacted the Wali of Basra so that he might learn the point of view of Ibn Sa'ud and the Arabian leaders about the national movement that was rebellious at that precise time. Ibn Sa'ud expressed his opinion and suggested that the Topkapi Palace would make an agreement with the Arabs; provided that there were no compulsions. The meeting would be on neutral ground in the presence of all the Arabian leaders. It was suggested that one of two courses of action might be fruitful. Either the Arab country would remain the same; a group of dispersed polities that were ruled by local independent management and followed a Wali; that or the Arabs would make a new system that allowed every Arabian polity to follow an elected governor. Either way, the Arabs would remain under Turkish authority. Although Ibn Sa'ud's proposals were sent to the Constantinople nothing happened.[786]

In 1902, Britain officially announced that it considered the authority of the Sheikh of Kuwait to be limited to Kuwait City and the region directly surrounding it. In 1912, as an introduction to signing a British-Turkish treaty, some information was received about identifying the borders of Kuwait. Critical to this thesis is those lands which were included in Ibn Sa'ud's rule. Throughout the political stages of Kuwait, its sheikhs' authority was limited to Kuwait City. In 1908, Lorimer,[787] who represented the semi-

[785] IOR: L/P&S/7/253, A political report from Captain R. L. Birdwood about October 1911.
[786] Troeller, *The Birth of Sudi Arabia*, pp. 43; Alenazy, *The Creation of Sa'udi Arabia*-, p. 31.
[787] John Gordon Lorimer is known principally for his massive compilation in six volumes entitled Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia, published by the government of India in 1908 and 1915, based on 'personal enquiries carried out between 1902 and 1906'. The Gazetteer, republished in 1970, is part geographical and navigational handbook, part historical survey, and part detailed account of Britain's relations with the Ottomans and the other political authorities in Arabia and the Gulf. In 1909 the foreign department of the government of India appointed Lorimer political resident in Turkish Arabia, stationed at Baghdad; in April 1911 he became consul-general. Like his friend and contemporary Captain Shakespear, Lorimer felt that Britain should take due note of the weakening Ottoman position in northern Arabia and commit itself more firmly to the rising star of Ibn Sa'ud.On 9 February 1914 Lorimer died at Bushehr while cleaning a loaded gun; Peter Sluglett, 'Lorimer, John Gordon (1870–1914)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38933, accessed 1st Feb 2017].

official point of view of the British, suggested that Kuwait's regional borders would go west until Hafr Al Batin, and south until the Munifa mountain. Although Lorimer himself admitted that the Sheikh of Kuwait did not remain outside their city markets, the British authorities tended to announce the Sheikhs of Kuwait's authority and control to be over a crowded and regional zone around Kuwait city. In 1912, Shakespear suggested making the southern borders of Kuwait extend to Musaylimah, to the south of Munifa Mountain. Cox, however, refused and preferred Lorimer's suggestion. In 1913, the India Office in London wondered whether they should continue to adhere to the British position of 1902. They also wondered whether they should recognize the independence of Kuwait within the aforementioned borders. Cox responded with a moderate solution saying that they would recognize the Kuwaiti authority entirely as part of the 1902 proposal and that the Sheikh of Kuwait would have administrative authority over the rest of the region included in Lorimer's proposal. This is how the idea of green and red lines, which was adopted the July Agreement in 1913, first occurred.

In an attempt to resolve British–Turkish disagreements, both parties agreed to divide the territories in the Gulf region and the Arabian Peninsula between them. Although Britain was eager to expand the Kuwaiti Sheikh's authority over land and people to confront the Turks, two lines were drawn around the city of Kuwait to mark the Sheikh's authority. To the north, a red semicircle centred in Kuwait was drawn with a diameter of 80 miles. A similar semicircle with the same centre was drawn to the south and its diameter was 200 miles. According to the agreement that was to be signed, the Kuwaiti Sheikh was to have direct and complete authority over the area within the red line, and authority over the people and tribes –but not the land– within the green line. Shakespear agreed with Ibn Sa'ud with regard to outlining the area around the city of Kuwait only. Unlike Cox, Shakespear believed that the whole idea of the two lines was no more than ink on paper. Even if it was taken into consideration, it would not last long with the ongoing political changes during that the period. Besides, the Turks rejected the British idea of a "Grand Kuwait"; they insisted that the Kuwaiti Sheikh's control could not cross in any way more than 12 miles to the south where Al-Ajman tribe resided. Although Cox's opinion was adopted in the beginning, subsequent events proved Shakespear right. The agreement was never approved by the formal authorities between Britain and the Ottoman State, so it was not legally binding. Afterwards, Ibn

Sa'ud imposed his dominance on Al-Hasa, and when he later signed the Treaty of Darin with Britain, it did not include any reference to the two lines.[788]

During the British-Ottoman agreement and before the signing of the treaty, Ibn Sa'ud joined Al-Hasa to his state. Britain had already recognised Al-Hasa and Najd as part of the Ottoman state and referred to it as 'the Ottoman Sanjak of Najd".[789] In a letter from Cox to Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 13th May 1913, it was said that Ibn Sa'ud had taken over Al-Hasa without facing much resistance, and that he had started to threaten Al Qatif and Uqair. On 15th May 1913; Cox sent a letter to the Indian Government explaining in greater detail Ibn Sa'ud's take-over of Al-Hasa based on the information he had received from the British Political Agent in Bahrain. Cox was told that the people of Al-Hasa had cooperated with Ibn Sa'ud and welcomed his coming, and that the Turkish garrison had left Al-Hasa and headed towards Uqair; he also mentioned that the garrison was on its way to Bahrain, from which it was going to Basra.[790]

Although Britain recognised Al-Hasa as part of the Ottoman state, it knew that Ibn Sa'ud had taken it over, making their recognition worthless. Cox reported to the British officials on 13th May 1913 the contradiction between various items of the British-Ottoman agreement, which was under negotiation and which assumed the Ottomans' presence in Al-Hasa, and the fact that Ibn Sa'ud had taken over that area. Cox also pointed to the fact that Ibn Sa'ud's control over Al-Hasa came at an inconvenient time to both the British and Ottomans, since it would cause embarrassment to both parties or could stop the negotiations. However, the British still explicitly and implicitly recognised Al-Hasa as part of the Ottoman state. The British Government was in a difficult position, since it did not know how to deal with the Ottomans who were going to cross the sea to meet with Ibn Sa'ud, to whom it could not offer any support.[791]

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[788] M. Al-Naeem, *[Al-Hodoud Al- Siyasiya Al-Sa'udiya – Al-Bahth 'an Al-Istiqrar]* (*The Sa'udi Political Borders: A Search for Stability*), Dar Al Saqi, Beirut, 1999, pp 5-6.

[789] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p.55.

[790] FO 371/1820/29150 Letter from Shekespear to Cox, 20th May 1913. FO 371/1820/110543 Letter from Cox to Grey 13 May 1913. FO 371/1820/26541 Letter from Cox to Government of India, 15th May 1913. Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p.55. The report issued from Trevor, the Political Agent in Bahrain. Dated to 12th May 1913, 15/2/56/R

[791] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p.56

The King's Deputy in India reported to London on 31st May 1913 that the tenth article of the British-Ottoman agreement contradicted with reality. The article stated that Britain admitted the ownership of Al-Hasa by the Ottoman State, while in reality the Ottomans had been expelled by Ibn Sa'ud. Therefore, it was Ibn Sa'ud who was ruling it. Cox again found it best to establish a friendly relationship with Ibn Sa'ud.[792] The King's Deputy suggested getting the Ottomans to admit what was actually happening. He further suggested that the British should get the right of assigning a representative to Ibn Sa'ud as was the case in Bahrain, and to make deals with him. In addition, Britain should have a role in preventing the trading of weapons, slaves, and maritime piracy. The Deputy concluded his letter stating that such notes were written after taking into consideration how urgent the matter was. It was necessary to maintain good relations with Ibn Sa'ud and to wait to see how things developed.[793]

India Office responded on 4th June 1913 by sending a letter to the British Foreign Office. It stated that it was impossible for it to discuss Najd at such a critical time in the ongoing negotiations. His Majesty's Government could not care about the hostility existing in the Arabian Peninsula as the Government's policy was to never intervene in the area. However, if it was clear that Ottoman authority was going to fall, there should be some understanding either with the Ottoman Government or with the new one in Najd represented by Ibn Sa'ud.[794]

On 7th June 1913, the British Foreign Office responded to the India Office saying that Sir Edward Grey completely agreed with the Indian Government's point of view regarding how impossible it was, at a critical time of the negotiations, to discuss Najd without risking the failure of negotiations with the Ottoman State. Therefore, Grey refused to take part in the official negotiationswith Haqqi Basha, the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs. He preferred for things to remain the same for as long as possible. The letter was concluded through referring to how unconvinced Grey was by the victory achieved by Ibn Sa'ud against the Ottoman authorities in Al-Hasa.[795] As for Ibn Sa'ud, he announced that he was the actual ruler of Al-Hasa. He sent copies of that

[792] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p.57
[793] FO. 371/1820/25653, Letter from India Office to Foreign Office, dated 4th Jun 1913.
[794] FO. 371/1820/25653, Letter from India Office to Foreign Office, dated 4th Jun 1913.
[795] FO. 371/1820/25653, Letter from India Office to Foreign Office, dated 4th Jun 1913. Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 57

announcement to Cox on 13th June 1913. He also mentioned how he wanted to discuss his relationship with Britain.[796]

Since Cox could not disobey the orders he had received on 9th July 1913, he wrote to Ibn Sa'ud telling him that the British Government appreciated the friendly feelings but that he could engage in further comment. On 7th August 1913, Cox wrote to the Indian Government telling them that Ibn Sa'ud, along with his army, was near the coast. It was important for the British to know about such developments. Harding agreed with Cox, and found it necessary to follow a new policy with Ibn Sa'ud. He also said that Ibn Sa'ud's expansion had placed him in range of British interests and power. Therefore, a policy that called for ignoring Ibn Sa'ud was not appropriate. Ibn Sa'ud could interfere in Qatar, or in the affairs of the Trucial States. Perhaps, he would interfere in the affairs of Amman as well. Harding came to the conclusion that if British officials did not come to an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud, the situation could turn against them. As for the Sheikhs of the Trucial States, the British authorities in the Gulf could assure them that they were under the British protection[797] in case they were ever threatened by Ibn Sa'ud.[798]

Despite the pressure that British officials supporting the perspective of the Indian Government tried to put on London's Government, the latter did not want to modify the British policy. On 21st August 1913, the London Government contacted the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs Ibrahim Basha and explained to him the rise of Ibn Sa'ud's power in the Gulf. It also expressed to him the fears they had about Ibn Sa'ud's possible interference in Qatar, and how, if they did not cooperate with him, it would cause distress in the region. Furthermore, they explained how their treatment of Ibn Sa'ud was neither that of a friend nor an enemy. It appears, then, that the British Government was careful not to take any further step towards Ibn Sa'ud without mentioning it to the Ottoman State first. The British recognition of the Ottoman sovereignty paved the way for negotiations with Ibn Sa'ud. However, the Ottoman State set a condition that Britain

[796] FO. 371/1820/38503, Letter from Ibn Sa'ud to the Consul-Jeneral at Bushire, dated 13th June 1913.
[797] The British protection of the sheikhdoms of the Gulf was different from the British Garrisons, which were similar to colonies. It offered an early recognition to the Emirates to have their own sovereignty over their regions; recognizing them as semi-independent. To differentiate between the different protected areas legally, that was termed "Protected States". Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain*, p. 59.
[798] IOR. L/P&S/18/B437, Historical Memorandum on the Relations of the Wahabi.

would not do anything to change the current situation. [799] In the end, the Political Agent in Kuwait was the one to inform Ibn Sa'ud that his government [the British] could not offer any help regarding his issues with the Topkapi Palace.

On 11th September 1913, Cox wrote to Ibn Sa'ud telling him that he [Cox] was authorised by his government to tell Ibn Sa'ud that the British Government would maintain the friendly relationship they had,[800] if Ibn Sa'ud pledged to stay away from anything that would disturb the status quo, or anything that would cause trouble to the Arab Emirates whose rulers had relations with the British Government. In October 1913, the British Foreign Office proposed to the Indian Government that the latter would issue instructions to Cox that the agreement between the British Government and the Ottoman State would be in effect once it was signed, and that his Majesty's Government believed that it depended on the ending of negotiations between the Ottoman State and Bagdad Railway Company. The British-Ottoman agreement would not be in effect until those negotiations were over. On 4th November, the Indian Government issued instructions that Cox should inform Ibn Sa'ud that if he triggered that issue, the British-Ottoman agreement would be in effect. When Ibn Sa'ud received the letter on 11th September 1913, he became more interested in settling his relations with the Ottomans.[801] At that point, Ibn Sa'ud accused Trevor, the British Agent in Bahrain, and Eissa Al Khalifa, the Sheikh of Bahrain, of having helped and supported Turkish soldiers. He sent them a warning that if they did such a thing again, he would invade their regions.[802] The British Agent sent a letter to Ibn Sa'ud telling him that he and Eissa did not help the Turkish soldiers, because he was afraid that Ibn Sa'ud would invade Bahrain Island and other ports on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Sheikh Eissa Al Khalifa also responded and denied knowing anything about the Turkish soldiers' movement. He also mentioned that the Turkish Governor of Al-Hasa, who had been expelled from Al-Hasa, stayed at Bahrain port but left soon after. The Sheikh

[799] IOR. L/P&S/18/B437, Historical Memorandum on the Relations of the Wahabi.
[800] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 61
[801] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 61.
[802] FO/371/1820/25792, Letter from Cox to Viceroy in India, Bushire, dated 5th Jun 1913.

thought they were leaving for Basra; he did not know that they were returning to Uqair.[803]

Ibn Sa'ud sent a letter to Cox objecting to what the British Agent had done. He stated when the letter reached the Indian Government, orders were released that a letter should be sent to Ibn Sa'ud telling him that his Majesty's Government had not assisted Ottoman forces, and that it appreciated Ibn Sa'ud's friendship.[804] On 9th July 1913, Cox sent a letter to Ibn Sa'ud acknowleged the letter of objection, and that he received orders from the Government authorising him to inform Ibn Sa'ud that the British Agent in Bahrain did not offer any sort of help to the Ottoman forces against him;[805] apparently, it was no longer the lack of the desire for no interference in the policy of the Arabic Peninsula that dictated the lannguage of the document, but rather Ibn Sa'ud's presence in the Gulf Coast that was perceived as a threat to the British interests in the area.[806]

As for the Ottoman Empire, after Ibn Sa'ud expelled their forces from Uqair for the second time, they went to Bahrain. The Ottoman State ordered the movement of Hamidiya Ferry from Aden and Marmaris from Mumbai to Basra to transport the Ottoman soldiers from Basra to take over Al-Hasa again.[807] When Ibn Sa'ud found out, he sent to the Ottoman authorities in Basra a number of his letters which detailed how willing he was to be an Ottoman Wali of Najd and Al-Hasa, and how he would keep the area stable. At that point, the Ottoman officials found it necessary to start negotiating with Ibn Sa'ud; theysent their envoy to negotiate with him.

After those negotiations and with Sa'udi-Ottoman closeness increasing, the British Government found no excuse for not dealing with Ibn Sa'ud. This was especially important as he was, by this juncture, in control of the ports which, in turn, made him him in control of British trade in the Gulf. His position also could threaten the Gulf sheikhdoms that had already signed treaties with Britain.[808] The British Government decided to get closer to Ibn Sa'ud, so it sent both Shakespear (as he was known for his personal relationships and had knowledge of the area) and Trevor to meet with him. The

[803] A. Attar, [Saqr Al Jazeera], p1, ed. 2, Arab Association Press, Jeddah, p. 189.
[804] FO/371/1820/31140, Letter from Secretaery of State to Viceroy Foreign Department, dated 3rd July 1913.
[805] FO/371/1820/39571/ Litter from Coc to Ibn Sa'ud, dated 9th July 1913.
[806] FO/371/1820/37422, Letter from the secretary to The Government of India in the Foreign Department, Simla, dated 9th Aug 1913.
[807] FO/371/1820, Letter from Crow to Lowther, Basra, dated 23rd May 1913.
[808] Khaz'al, the Political History of Kuwait, p2, p198.

meetings took place on 15-16 December 1913 in Uqair. In that meeting, Ibn Sa'ud said that all he wanted was to be left in peace. Since the British Government would ensure peace and security would spread in the Gulf, he just wanted a confirmation from the British Government that he was the real ruler of the area. Once that was settled, he would be very happy to work with them in stopping piracy, weapons smuggling, and in keeping the King's peace at sea.[809]

Since at that time Ibn Sa'ud had also been negotiating with the Ottomans to be recognised as the Wali of Najd, and a draft memorandum had been prepared; Ibn Sa'ud showed it to the British officials. The draft included the following conditions:

1- The Ottoman Garrison would return to Al-Hasa, just like before.
2- Judges and officials would be assigned according to a decree issued by the Topkapi Palace.
3- Ibn Sa'ud would pay an annual amount of 3,000 Ottoman coins (Ottoman majidi).
4- Ibn Sa'ud would not contact with any foreign country without the approval of the Ottoman Government.
5- All foreign traders and agents must be removed from the area.
6- Ibn Sa'ud would pledge not to give any railways or car services privileges to any foreign countries.

Ibn Sa'ud was not happy about the Ottoman conditions, so he asked for the support and friendship of the British (again). He also discussed with them the circumstances of the Gulf's Sheikhdoms, including Qatar; mainly because he was afraid his rivals would go there.The results of the meeting in Uqair were that Ibn Sa'ud agreed to postpone his signing of the Ottoman agreement for three months, and that he would not harm British interests. There was an indication that the officials in the Indian Government wanted to attract Ibn Sa'ud to stand against the Germans, who would – unless he stood up to them - go to the Gulf through the Ottoman State.[810]

After meeting with Ibn Sa'ud, Shakespear wrote a report to the British Government saying that Ibn Sa'ud was going to commit to Britain regarding the Sheikhs of the

[809] FO/371/3390/19070, Letter from British Commitment to Ibn Sa'ud; IOR. L/P&S/18/B437, Historical Memorandum on the Relation of the Wahabi.
[810] FO/371/3390/19070, from British Commitments to Ibn Sa'ud.

Omani Coast and Qatar. He also mentioned that after Ibn Sa'ud's control of Al-Hasa, he could be dealt with as an Arab leader.[811] Temporarily, Knox took Cox's job because the latter went on vacation. Knox believed it was unwise for the British to base their actions on the assumption of the control of Ibn Sa'ud being permanent. In addition, the British Foreign Office found the Ottoman recognition of Ibn Sa'ud worrying. The British Government found it necessary to allege that the conditions imposed on Ibn Said indicated how uninterested the Ottomans were in establishing friendly relations with him. [812]

On 9th March 1914, the British Foreign Office sent a petition to the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs Haqqi Basha.[813] Within it they explained how difficult the situation was for the British Government regarding Ibn Sa'ud. The British protested against three conditions in the proposed Sa'udi-Ottoman Agreement. In so doing they further commented on their view as to what Ibn Sa'ud should have in the Anglo-Ottoman agreement that was signed on 29th July 1913. It found it best for Ibn Sa'ud to adhere to the following:

1- Ibn Sa'ud was not to interfere in the affairs of the coastal areas, or the policy of the Gulf Sheikhdoms, including Qatar.
2- Ibn Sa'ud was to pledge, like all other Sheikhs, to maintain the freedom of the water passage, to fight piracy and to follow up with the work of the tribes.
3- Ibn Sa'ud was to cooperate with the British Government regarding the access of weapons.
4- Ibn Sa'ud was to allow the British traders to enter Qatif and to treat them greatly during their stay.

The Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs refused the claim that Al-Hasa could only be invaded through Bahrain. He emphasized that his country would never breach the neutrality of Bahrain's water. After a little while, the Ottoman Government informed the British Ambassador in Istanbul that Ibn Sa'ud was going to soon be called "the ruler of

[811] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 69
[812] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 70
[813] FO/371/3390/19070, Letter from British commitments to Ibn Sa'ud.

Najd". This would place him under Ottoman control. It would also mean that he would not pose any danger to British interests in the Gulf. [814]

On 26th February 1914, Ibn Sa'ud sent a letter to Trevor asking why he had not heard anything from him since their meeting in Uqair. The main reason was that the British Government insisted on not interfering in their affairs. On 12th April 1914, one of the British officials wrote that the British Foreign Office had returned to its previous attitude and pretended that Ibn Sa'ud did not exist.[815] Ibn Sa'ud decided to negotiate with the Ottomans. The negotiations took place in As-Sabihiya region. During the negotiations, the British Political Agent in Kuwait asked for permission to meet with Ibn Sa'ud. Obligingly, the latter accepted and as a result they met. The British Government, apparently, wanted to see how the negotiations were going. However, the British Political Agent returned without any information. Ibn Sa'ud was known to be very secretive and careful.[816]

On 12th May 1914, Mellet, the British Ambassador in Istanbul, sent a letter to Grey, the Forigen Secratary, while negotiations were taking place between Ibn Sa'ud and the Ottomans. He requested the Minister inform British officials in the Gulf not to contact Ibn Sa'ud until the negotiations were over. Based on the recommendation of Mellet, the Foreign Office sent letters to the British officials in the Gulf and instructed them not to contact Ibn Sa'ud unless it was absolutely necessary. The instructions showed that the British Government had recognized the agreement it had with the Ottoman State; namely, that Ibn Sa'ud was part of the Ottoman State. Ibn Sa'ud was to be dealt with as an Ottoman employee, or not to be dealt with at all.

As for Ibn Sa'ud's talks with the Ottomans, they resulted in an agreement signed on 15th May 1914 that included the following articles:[817]

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[814] IOR. L/P&S/18/B251, the relations with Ibn Sa'ud.
[815] Abdul Ghani, Princes and Invaders, p.. 248
[816] As-Sabihiya is a region located in the south of Kuwait, where As-Sabihiya Conference took place in 1914 between the Emir of Najd – Abdul Aziz Al Sa'ud- and the Ottoman State, whose delegation included Talib Basha Al Naqib (1862-1929) who headed the delegation; and other members including Abdul Latif Basha Al Mandil, Ahmed Basha Al Sani', Jamal Beik and Sami Beik, who was the last to govern Al Ahsa. The conference took place through Kuwait. Sheikh Jaber Al Sabbah attended the conference, which took place because the Emir Abdul Aziz Al Sa'ud took over the Ottoman Al Ahsa in 1913. Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 71.
[817] FO/371/3390, British Commitment to Ibn Sa'ud.

- Najd would be under the control of Ibn Sa'ud for life, and his descendants would be taking his place afterwards according to an Ottoman creed; as long as he remained loyal to the State.
- Ibn Sa'ud would be assigned as a technical military official wherever he wanted, and a number of Ottoman officials as well.
- Ibn Sa'ud would assign the Ottoman soldiers at the ports.
- Ibn Sa'ud would be in charge of the customs and fees according to the Ottoman legislations.
- Any decrease in local outcomes would be compensated for from customs, the ports, the correspondences and mail; any 10 % increases would be referred to Istanbul.
- Ibn Sa'ud would raise the Ottoman flag on buildings and ships.
- Any correspondences about weapons would be issued from the War Office in Istanbul.
- Ibn Sa'ud was not to interfere in foreign affairs and international treaties; he was also not allowed to offer any privileges to foreigners.
- Ibn Sa'ud would directly contact the Ministry of the Ottoman State or the Ottoman War Office in Istanbul.
- Ibn Sa'ud would agree to establish mail posts in Najd and use Ottoman stamps.
- In case of war between the Ottoman State and any foreign force, when Ibn Sa'ud would be called for help, he should provide enough men and weapons – as much as possible – when asked to by the government.

On 9th July 1914, Tal'at Basha, the Ottoman Ambassador in London, presented a memorandum to the British Foreign Office, which stated that an Ottoman decree had been issued to assign Ibn Sa'ud as the leader and Governor General of Najd; and that Ibn Sa'ud had no right to conduct any agreements with foreign countries. Moreover, Ibn Sa'ud was to always respect all treaties between the Ottoman State and other countries. Later, Ibn Sa'ud mentioned to Shakespear that he had agreed to work with the Ottoman State because of the pledges and guarantees he had been promised by the Ottomans, mainly the recognition of his sovereignty over the area.[818]

[818] Philby, Arabian Jubilee, p. 38.

Ibn Sa'ud's agreement with the Ottoman State offered him multiple things. Of these, the most important was being recognized as the ruler of Najd and Al-Hasa, a recognition of great profit to Ibn Sa'ud. Based on that recognition, Ibn Sa'ud received 250 Ottoman coins as the ruler of Najd and Al-Hasa. Other results included Ibn Sa'ud having a guaranteed source for weapons. Another aspect that was in favour of Ibn Sa'ud's interest so as to the fact that Najd at that time was going through some financial setback and was suffering from a lack of food; this spared Ibn Sa'ud from paying taxes to the Ottoman State.[819] It is worth noting that the First World War ended any application of the agreement, which was why it was the end of the Ottoman presence in the Gulf and the Al-Hasa Garrison.

British diplomacy considered the Arabian Peninsula to have been divided into two parts: one part included the northern and southern parts which were part of the Ottoman rule; the second part included the remaining areas governed by local Arab Sheikhs. British interests were mainly focused on Aden, the surrounding areas, and the southern coast of the island They were also focused on the Coast of the Persian Gulf and the Amman Gulf. Those areas were managed directly by the Indian Government (see Maps 1a and 1c in the appendix). As for the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, Britain did not want to interfere there. Nevertheless, it monitored Ibn Sa'ud's expansion while also supporting Hussein, a double game that as Philby notes became 'a source for much trouble' later[820]

When the First World War started, Britain tried to protect the Iranian Oil Field and the refinery established in the South of Persia. The British Government also found itself committed to protecting the Gulf Sheikhdoms with which it had signed treaties. It is worth noting here, that this period signifies a change in the British imperial interests from mainly trade and communications with India to oil supply since most of British ships operated in oil by 1913.[821] By 1914, The prospect of oil and its combination with commerce and communication became of strategic imperial importance.[822] However, the British still thought that there is no oil in central Arabia. The British Embassy in Istanbul noticed that it was time to contact Ibn Sa'ud, fearing that the Ottoman State

[819] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 74
[820] Philby 'Sa'udi Arabia', p. 273.
[821] Rogan 'The Arabs: A History', p. 219
[822] Rogan 'The Arabs: A History', p. 219

would go to war. The British Ambassador wrote on 1st September 1914 saying, "It is definitely wise to try to reestablish our friendship with Ibn Sa'ud… It is only right to say that at the beginning of this year while the Topkapi Palace seemed to behave properly, I refused to seem a conspirer with that leader – meaning Ibn Sa'ud".

On 21st September 1914, British Intelligence received a letter stating that Ibn Sa'ud had joined the Ottomans.[823] The correspondences were sent to make sure the news was right. However, the British Indian Government said it was impossible to believe such a rumour since Ibn Sa'ud was in Riyadh, and he did not have enough power for a mission that big. Ibn Sa'ud told the British officials about the Ottoman offers he received regarding helping them; he asked them to reconsider their policy regarding him, and told them about how their interests could be at risk if they did not sign an agreement with him. That warning reached the British Government on 27 September 1914. The British Government found it better to send an envoy to Ibn Sa'ud so to convince him to offer his help to the Ottoman State. By doing so they also helped to ensure that no riots in the Arabian Peninsula would rise. Captain Shakespear was chosen as an envoy, mainly because of his good relationship with Ibn Sa'ud, for being fluent in Arabic, and because he was known for knowing fhow to deal with the Bedouin; the local leaders and the tribes' sheikhs. The British, having overcome the frustrations of their earlier raletionship, assigned Shakespear to this mission on 1st October 1914 initating the first official British negotiatior with Ibn Sa'ud.

Knox, the British Agent, met Mubarak in Kuwait on 14th October 1914 to show him the letters sent from the British Government to Ibn Sa'ud. Mubarak added how they included two attachments; one of which called for Ibn Sa'ud to stand by Britain, and the second was to inform him of Shakespear's arrival as an envoy from the British Government. When Ibn Sa'ud realized that the British Government was sending Shakespear and that it was looking forward to receiving his help, he decided to make the most of it. He found it best not to commit anything towards Britain, and to negotiate with them until they made their attitudes towards him clear. In the meantime, the British had engaged the Ottoman army in Basra which led to its downfall on 22nd November 1914; leading the situation in the Persian Gulf to change. As a result, Shakespear and Delamain asked Ibn Sa'ud to cooperate with the British forces. However, Ibn Sa'ud

[823] L/P&S/10/387 a telegram from M. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey dated 21st September 1914.

remained neutral, and sent a reply on 28th November 1914 stating that he could not help Britain, and that he wished to remain neutral so that his country would not be weakened. After the fall down of Basra, Shakespear reached Ibn Sa'ud and met with him in Al Khafs on 31st December 1914. Ibn Sa'ud tried to explain his attitude and justified his decision diplomatically saying that the letters he received did not include clear guarantees. Shakespear came to the conclusion that Ibn Sa'ud did not have any intention of changing his neutral attitude. Ibn Sa'ud said that he was free to do whatever he wanted with the Ottomans until there was an official treaty between the British Government and him. At that point, Shakespear requested a first draft in which Ibn Sa'ud would clarify his conditions. Later, Shakespear wrote a report on 4th January 1915 that guaranteed Ibn Sa'ud's requests.

Ibn Sa'ud remained neutral until he saw that Britain's victory was guaranteed. He realized that there could be an agreement between Britain and the Ottoman State after the war, and that the Ottomans would want some of the Arabian Peninsula returned. Therefore, Ibn Sa'ud refused to help the British in Basra. He also did not commit to the Ottomans. In short, Ibn Sa'ud remained neutral. He did not want to commit himself to Britain without having a clear understanding of their attitude towards him, even though he was seeking the British protection and found it better than joining the Ottomans. In the end, the Dareen agreement was signed; or as it was called at the time, the English-Najdi agreement. It was considered a new and important stage in the direct relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain; it was signed on 25th December 1915 and it was a triumph for Ibn Sa'ud as, through it, he was guaranteed British support without any comprosises (such as military assistance to WWI efforts). Ibn Sa'ud's consistency in aligning the interests of his country within the colonial framework of British interests in the Gulf has been proved to be not only realistic but also strategically effective.

4.5. Conclusion

The change in attitude that transformed the British position from adhering to a policy of 'non-involvement' and prioritising Britih-Ottoman relations to direct communication with Ibn Sa'ud has traditionally been attributed to the challenges of WWI and the changing British-Ottoman relationship. This chapter has explored this issue in the context of the entangled relationships between the British, the Ottomans and Ibn Sa'ud. In so doing it answered the following questions:

- What was the role of Shakespear in the developments of the period? Could the outcome have been different without him?
- Why did Britain back Husain and refuse to support Ibn Sa'ud for so long? Why did direct communications eventually start?

It has been argued that Shakespear's passionate attempts provided no evidence that the British ever concerned themselves with his analysis of events or that his views and reports directly influenced policy. Shakespear seems to have gained a greater reputation after his dramatic/romantic death and this may have been because of the overly sympathetic writings of Gertrude Bell. Nevertheless, he provides a rich source of information-albeit coloured by admiration to Ibn Sa'ud.

The other issue discussed in this chapter, the situation with the Sharif of Mecca, provides yet another example as to how local complexities and tribal power challenges directly influenced events. In this multifaceted dynamic situation, alliances were flexible since every party were pursuing their own interests. The British exploited this and managed to secure Husein's support against the Ottomans. Whilst Britain's dealings with Husein can be understood within the context of WWI, their relationship with Ibn Sa'ud cannot solely understood as a procuct of WWI. It was a long-term relationship that went through various canges until the Treaty of 1915. The terms of the treaty in 1915 prove that the British were still concerned more about the safety of their commerce and communication with areas of investment after the war.

Overall, the period 1910 – 1913 is characterised by a very entangled network of communications involving central Arabia with British, Ottoman, French and in one occasion Austrian-German agents. In this context, there are events that cannot be assessed properly for lack of direct evidence (as seen Alenazy[824] mentioned that Raunkiaer was sent by Austria and Germany -to review the situation with a view to trying to draw Ibn Sa'ud to their side- he was met by Ibn Sa'ud's father and he did not achieve this goal. It is also safe to assume that not everything happening was written down. For example Shakespear expressed his embarrassment to Ibn Sa'ud for not knowing about Leachman's visit since he did not know that the British traveller had met Inn Saud until Mubarak told him much later.

[824] Alenazy, *The Creation of Sa'udi Arabia*, p. 35.

Local networks are changing not only as a result of local tribal wars and changing affiliations but also because of imperial policies to create infrastructure in areas of interest. A telling example is this chapter is the Sharif of Mecca's campaign against Najd that aimed to postpone the establishment of a railway between Jeddah and Mecca The establishment of a railway between Mecca and Jeddah was against the Sharif's interests with the Arabian tribes, which were considered as an insurance for his independence since they possessed excellent manpower and he used them for securing and transporting the travellers and pilgrims to Mecca.[825]

The Foreign Office continues to actively stop the imperial agents in the area (most notably Shakespear and Cox) from meeting with Ibn Sa'ud and from pursuing any relationships that might be perceived as opposite to the official British position. The ongoing correspondence was not approved by Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary, was one of those who called for sending strict instructions to Cox preventing him and those working under him from making any contact with Ibn Sa'ud and other Arab Sheikhs, who did not have any relations with Britain.

Nevertheless Shakespear and Ibn Sa'ud are pursued direct communications via personal correspondence and face-to-face meetings in many occasions. These took place either in Kuwait or in locations designated by Ibn Sa'ud. The first time Shakespear met Ibn Sa'ud was not pre-arranged but it happened when had returned to Kuwait on 28th February 1910 and had heard of Ibn Sa'ud's presence there. He therefore made a visit to Sheikh Mubarak and met with Ibn Sa'ud.[826] Shakespear recorded his very positive impressions of this meeting and of Ibn Sa'ud and he wrote to Cox expressing his opinions (stating that he had made good relations with Ibn Sa'ud and that his stay in Al-Hasa would reinforce the position of the British government in the region and that the behaviour of the Ottomans in the Arabian Gulf clashed with British interests). Although Cox agreed with Shakespear and preferred Ibn Sa'ud over the Ottomans in Al-Hasa, he doubted Ibn Sa'ud's ability to successfully face the Ottomans. A few years later, it is Ibn Sa'ud who directly asks for a treaty of protection. In a letter that Ibn Sa'ud sent to Shakespear on 24th January 1913, he told him that he bore the consequences of the

[825] N.S.-Turquie/144. A letter with the no. 4 signed by Norbert Armez, the French Consul in Jeddah to Reymond Poincare, the Prime Minister and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 29th January 1912.
[826] IOR: R/15/1/479, Extracts of Captain Shakespear's memoirs for February 1910, dated 10th March 1910.

Ottoman calumny against him only because of his loyalty to, and friendship with, the British. If there had been a treaty between him and the British, things would have been different.[827]

Higher up in the hierarchy, Lord Harding- the King's Deputy in India- though, expressed also takes a direct view and stated how he did not want to trigger the issue of sovereignty in Najd at a time when British-Ottoman talks were about to conclude. Such talks were related to an agreement signed later on 29th July 1913. The British-Ottoman agreement dated to 29th July 1913 discussed the situation of Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait. In that agreement, the Ottoman State renounced its rights in Qatar and Bahrain. As for Kuwait, it remained under the Ottoman State's control but on paper only; the Ottoman State would not interfere in the affairs of the Ottoman country, nor would it send its soldiers there .[828] However, and for first time Lord Harding- the King's Deputy in India saw it as best to maintain friendly relationship with Ibn Sa'ud.

From that point, it will take another two years until the English-Najdi agreement, the direct oficial documetns involving Ibn Sa'ud and Britain; it was signed on 25th December 1915 and it was a triumph for Ibn Sa'ud as, through it, he was guaranteed British support without any comprosises (such as military assistance to WWI efforts). Ibn Sa'ud's consistency in aligning the interests of his country within the colonial framework of British interests in the Gulf has been proved to be not only realistic but also strategically effective.

[827] Al- Masoud, Captain Shakespear and his mission regarding King Abdul Aziz, *Journal of Arts And Humanities* – KAU, pp 31-97.
[828] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p. 54
[828] Al Harbi*: 'Alaqit saltanit Najd w mulhaqat'ha bi britanya* [Arabic]. *The Relationship between Najd Authority and Its Regions with Britain,* p.52

Conclusions

As briefly explored in the introduction, the relationship between the Arabian Peninsula and the British Empire developed long before Ibn Sa'ud's time and the foundation of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia. The British Empire was inclined to establish informal patronage over some states to protect its own strategic interests and areas of influence in the Arabian Peninsula, as indeed happened in the case of Kuwait and other sheikhdoms in the Gulf. Several attempts to establish a Sa'udi state in the Gulf region before Ibn Sa'ud's time had ended aggressively with attacks from more powerful forces in the region (e.g. the Viceroy of Egypt, the Ottoman Empire and the House of Al Rasheed). In Britain, Ibn Sa'ud saw a reliable and strong strategic partner who could protect its interests and offer him patronage. However, for the period under investigation, the British Empire pursued its own goals in the Arabian Peninsula with an attitude that was dictated "…consistently, not by a desire to expand its empire, but rather to safeguard imperial interests by applying a minimal response to each danger as it arose".[829] The greater geopolitical realities established mainly in the nineteenth century had forced the British to prioritise their relationship with the Ottomans, who posed a greater risk to cutting off the Suez and the eastern Mediterranean.[830] Conventional historiography sees that position lasting until the outbreak of WWI, which is considered a turning point in the Saudi-British relationship because the war "…freed Britain from its previous non-intervention policy in the affairs of the interior"[831] by changing the balance in the British-Ottoman relationship.

This thesis has demonstrated that the period 1902-1914 is crucial in order to understand the changing Sa'udi-British relationships that emerged as the result of complex external/international dynamics, local and secondary personalities, as well as personal strategies. Ibn Sa'ud initiated contact and he remained committed in getting British support despite a series of refusals until he consolidated power, gained autonomy, and finally – by annexing Al-Hasa – transformed the central Arabian problem to a Gulf one that Britain had to deal with. This thesis argues that these events played a more significant role in transforming the Sa'udi-British relationship to one

[829] Linabury, *British Sa'udi Arab Relations 1902-1927: A Revisionist Interpretation*. (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1973), University Microfilms (73-8967). i.
[830] Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.18.
[831] Al-Rasheed, *A History of Sa'udi Arabia,* p.42.

featuring direct engagement than did the outbreak of WWI or the positive (and formative, as it is demonstrated) role of officers such as Cox and Shakespear.

Chapter One depicted the highly volatile situation in the early years of the rise of Ibn Sa'ud to power, from 1902 to 1904. The chapter looked at the alliances and relationships between the dominant imperial powers (British and Ottoman), and how these evolved around the principle of protecting the spatial and political status quo, a policy characterised by the British as 'non-involvement' (no direct contact with Ibn Sa'ud in person or official correspondence, no material support of weapons or other resources). Beyond the official non-involvement policy expressed by the government in London and under close scrutiny, the British position appears to have been characterised by frustration and ambiguity from the very beginning. Britain seemed uncertain how to deal with Ibn Sa'ud, who appeared independent; additionally, central Arabia was not part of their Gulf interests. Nevertheless, by 1904, Ibn Sa'ud had extended not only his relationships with old friends like Mubarak but also his territorial ruling over Al Al-Qassim and his support from a number of tribes of Arabia. By the end of this period, Ibn Sa'ud emerged as a political leader who was deliberately enmeshed in a complex network comprising not only his supporters locally, but also imperial powers (British, Ottoman, Russian), local enemies (Ibn Rasheed and his ally tribes), and regional politics (Kuwait). Within this polycentric network, relationships and boundaries remain fluid – a fluidity that Ibn Sa'ud used to his best advantage.

It emerged in the thesis that, during the early stages of Ibn Sa'ud's endeavours, the British did not perceive his power and influence as strong and long-lasting. Overall, the period from 1900 to 1902 was marked by a high degree of uncertainty in British relations with Ibn Sa'ud. Abdul Rahman and Ibn Sa'ud had made several attempts to contact the representatives of the British Empire and ask for protectorate status. Nonetheless, these attempts failed because the Al Sa'udi position in Riyadh was not strong enough. After Ibn Sa'ud's position in Najd had strengthened, the political agents of the British Empire started to take the intentions of the House of Sa'ud more seriously, and the correspondence between these agents –Kemball and Ibn Sa'ud– offers a first-hand account of an example of Hobson's New Imperialism in practice, whereby it can be seen how a small number of officials and their sympathies and understandings influence policy.

Even though the survivability of the Ibn Sa'ud regime was estimated as low from the very beginning, the British viewed Ibn Sa'ud as a potential leader who could resist the influence of the Ottoman Empire in the region and expand his political and military influence. This had already placed the Arab leader in the sphere of their interests and they closely followed developments, although officially they adhered to their 'non-involvement' policy. The ambiguous position of the British Empire with respect to Ibn Sa'ud, is explained by the complex diplomatic relations between the British and the Ottoman Empires. Nevertheless, the absence of a specific agreement was not equivalent to the presence of tacit support or opposition. Rather, the British seemed to favour letting policy, the appearance of neutrality, and an allowance for regional conflicts lessen the strength of potential challengers to Britain's power in the Arabian Peninsula. The first chapter of this thesis pays particular attention to drawing out the complex network of individuals, transnational institutions and relationships that serve diverse and conflicting agendas. Political attitudes, imperial plans and local territorial claims are entangled and overlapped with Ibn Sa'ud constant commitment to pursue his vision against greater and far more experienced empires.

In this context, Chapter Two discussed the expansion towards Al-Qassim and the early plans to expand towards Al-Hasa that were important for Ibn Sa'ud's domestic and international politics. Particular attention is given to the period 1905-1906 which, as presented here, was the first significant turning point not only in the British-Sa'udi-Ottoman relationship, but also in the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak. The analysis of Chapter 2 justifies the annexation of Al-Qassim and Al-Hasa as highly critical turning points in the history of pre-state formation in Sa'udi Arabia. They signify turning points in the British-Sa'udi relationship and prove that the plans of Ibn Sa'ud for greater power in Arabia and internationally were well formed and being executed as early as 1905. By 1905, the agendas of the British government in London and the British government in India in respect to Ibn Sa'ud started diverging, perhaps because of different world views (depending on geographical proximity and political interests). The British and Ottoman empires were also distracted by territorial disputes internationally and failed to pay sufficient attention or understand the long-term impact of local Arab conflicts.When Ibn Sa'ud began to think of expanding eastwards towards the coastal Sheikhdoms and Oman, and thought of regaining Al-Hasa, the British authorities were quick to warn the Gulf Sheikhdoms against trying to contact Ibn Sa'ud

or cooperating with him in any way. Adhering to their 'non-involvement' policy kept them from dealing with Ibn Sa'ud directly (instead the British used Mubarak Al Sabah), but apparently allowed them to manipulate anybody else according to British agendas.

The primary sources reveal a relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud that is characterised by uncertainties and frustrations, mainly because it was one that could not be framed under the known imperial methods of dealing with colonies, protectorates and mandates in the Middle East). In this context, the analysis and justification of the role of intermediaries in changing perceptions, influencing decisions, and, at some point, formulating policies, demanded more significant attention. Individuals positioned with a vast bureaucratic network spanning across lands, empires and other territories with less specified borders were able to foster or hinder the integration of Ibn Sa'ud's plans with the policies of the British Empire.

Building upon previous chapters, Chapter Three (1907-1912) explored a series of emerging conflicts and tensions including the British–India divergence in attitude over how to deal with Ibn Sa'ud; the increasingly antagonistic relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak, who tried unsuccessfully to extend British support to Najd over his rule; as well as a series of conflicts and actual wars between Ibn Sa'ud and local tribes in his efforts to expand and consolidate his power. The way that these conflicts have developed represents a web of tangled relationships between a number of individuals and powerful institutions that shaped a fluid and ever-changing network of local, regional and international politics. Chapter 3 further demonstrates the fluidity of borders and the struggles for power, in particular how conflicts promote resolutions and formations of boundaries and communications in a polycentric world with multiple centres of power.

The major contribution of Chapter Three in the overall argument of the thesis is that it maps the changes in the relationship between Britain and Ibn Sa'ud via a series of communications and turbulations related to internal and external factors at the time (i.e. the British-India differences, the local tribal conflicts, the changing relations with Mubarak, and the diminishing role of the Ottoman Empire in the region). It argues that the relationship between the British and Ibn Sa'ud during this period had made some positive progress since the British side, for the first time, was considering establishing direct correspondence with him. However, no official connections had yet been made

because the British continued to prioritise their international interests, especially the British-Ottoman relationship. On the other hand, the emerging conflicting approaches between the London and India offices with regard to the new, more powerful status of Ibn Sa'ud are truly significant because it would seem that they promoted a slow but crucial positive change that ultimately proved favourable to Ibn Sa'ud.

Finally, Chapter Four, in trying to investigate all the factors that might have influenced the Sa'udi-British relationship, looked at the controversial role of Captain Shakespear and the events leading to the annexation of Al-Hasa, up to how this paved the way to the Anglo-Sa'udi treaty. The change in attitude that transformed the British position from 'non-involvement' and prioritising British-Ottoman relations, to direct communication with Ibn Sa'ud, was traditionally attributed to the challenges of WWI and the changing British-Ottoman relationship. This chapter explored the issue in the context of the entangled relationships between the British, the Ottomans and Ibn Sa'ud, but also, for comparative purposes, in the relationship between them and another Arab leader, Sharif Husein. The situation with Sharif of Mecca provided yet another example of the local complexities and tribal power challenges and wars between Ibn Sa'ud and other tribal leaders, as indeed the previous chapter described. In this multifaceted dynamic situation, alliances were flexible, since every party was pursuing their own interests. The British exploited this and sought to support Husein against the Ottomans (signing a treaty with him to aid their war effort in the Middle East). Although the dealings with Husein can be understood within the context of WWI, the relationship with Ibn Sa'ud cannot. The terms of the Anglo-Najdi treaty (Darin) in 1915 prove that, for the British, the safety of their interests in the Gulf after the start of the WW1 was of primary concern. It is also concluded that Captain Shakespear's role, albeit important, was not the reason behind the change in the British attitude and the beginning of a direct relationship with Ibn Sa'ud. The overall aim of the chapter is to exemplify how the British eventually decided to engage formally and directly with Ibn Sa'ud, overturning their long-term refusal of his requests.

Overall, Ibn Sa'ud emerged victorious from a series of internal conflicts and established his position as the strongest leader in the region, controlling local tribes and territories. As this thesis has demonstrated, Ibn Sa'ud's internal struggles with old and new enemies had a direct impact on his relationships with both the Sheikh of Kuwait

and the British Empire. The flunctuations in the relationship between Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak had a direct influence on the support he received from Mubarak (including in diplomatic communications). On the other hand, while the British kept their distance officially, unofficially they closely monitored developments via their intermediaries. Cox had argued that a divided Arabia served the interest of the British Empire better than a unified one, and the events discussed here offer evidence on that point. Through their correspondence, British officials held different views and sympathies regarding their relationship with Ibn Sa'ud. This is particularly important from a transnational perspective, since it demonstrates that diplomatic relationships are built and are influenced by individuals, as well as their character and affiliations. For example, Cox saw, in light of the directions and views of O'Conor, the British ambassador in Constantinople, that the Ottomans should have had a free hand in dealing with Ibn Sa'ud in Najd and kept the interests of the British government exclusive to maintaining its relations with Kuwait.[832] Cox was very careful in dealing with Ibn Sa'ud and always stressed that Knox should be extremely cautious in dealing with Ibn Sa'ud and not to commit himself, promise, or even show any inclination one way or another in a manner which may be understood as the British Government of India's desire to help him.

British officers, local sheikhs, various administrators and delegates in between played a vital role in the formation of communications. It is safe to assume that not everything discussed between the various individuals will have entered the record. By avoiding direct communications with Ibn Sa'ud, Britain sought to appear neutral and instead used its protégées in the Gulf to send him messages. Such messengers included the Sheikh of Kuwait and the Sheikh of Qatar. Similarly, messages were passed via contacts that were occasional, personal, and unofficial, as in the case of Captain Shakespear's relationship with Ibn Sa'ud, and were ratified with the exchange of gifts and personal correspondence.

The way that these conflicts (between the British and the India Offices, Ibn Sa'ud, Ibn Rasheed-son and the local tribes, Ibn Sa'ud and Mubarak) developed represents a web of entangled relationships between a number of individuals without borders (tribal leaders, sheikhs, officers and other intermieiaries) and powerful institutional formations

[832] IOR: L/P&S/20/FO13, A message from Cox to the British Government of India, dated 10th September 1904.

that shape the fluid and overchanging network of local, regional and international politics.

The golden thread in the present analysis could be found in the term "fluidity": of borders, people, relationships, networks and affiliations. All of these played a formative role in the creation of the Third Sa'udi State during its early phase. This fluidity has characterised the greater part of Arabian history, and might seem too hard to grasp to a Western Cartesian mind. This seems to be the case for the most part of the history of pre-state and state formations in Arabia:

> In 1935…The independent states in the Arabian Peninsula …number[ed] seven. But of those described a half-century ago (Yemen, 'Asir, al-Hijaz, Najd, Kuwait, Jabal Shammar, and Jawf), only two still exist in similar form…This immense change provides an illustration of the fragile and transitory nature of traditional Arabian states, given their foundations on shifting tribal allegiances, their absolute dependence on strong and capable leadership, and their lack of firm territorial grounding.[833]

This thesis explored a 12-year period of transnational Arab history in order to understand pre-state formation in Saudi Arabia and the role of Saudi-British relationships in this period. It studied exhaustively a complex network of places, factors, individuals and institutions with connected histories and even more connected or disconnected archives. It viewed transnational relationships as fluid and ever-changing in a polycentric world that expanded beyond nation-states. It concluded that the role of Britain, or WWI or the role of some prominent officers (like Captain Shakespear), albeit facilitating, seem less change-making than other factors.

The overall premise of the present thesis is that the early (1902-1914) relationships and flow of information/communication between empires (British and Ottoman), tribal pre-state regions (Najd and Al-Hasa), local rulers (Ibn Sa'ud, Mubarak Al-Sabah and Ibn Rasheed), various administrators representing political institutions, and other non nation-state political entities (Kuwait, Qatar, the Trucial States), along with the un-weathered commitment of Ibn Sa' ud to get British support and the sympathetic ear of officers, were all responsible for the change in British policy. This did not happen abruptly but developed over time and involved various frustrations and ambiguities. Nevertheless, at the end of this period, the British Empire abandoned its long-lasting

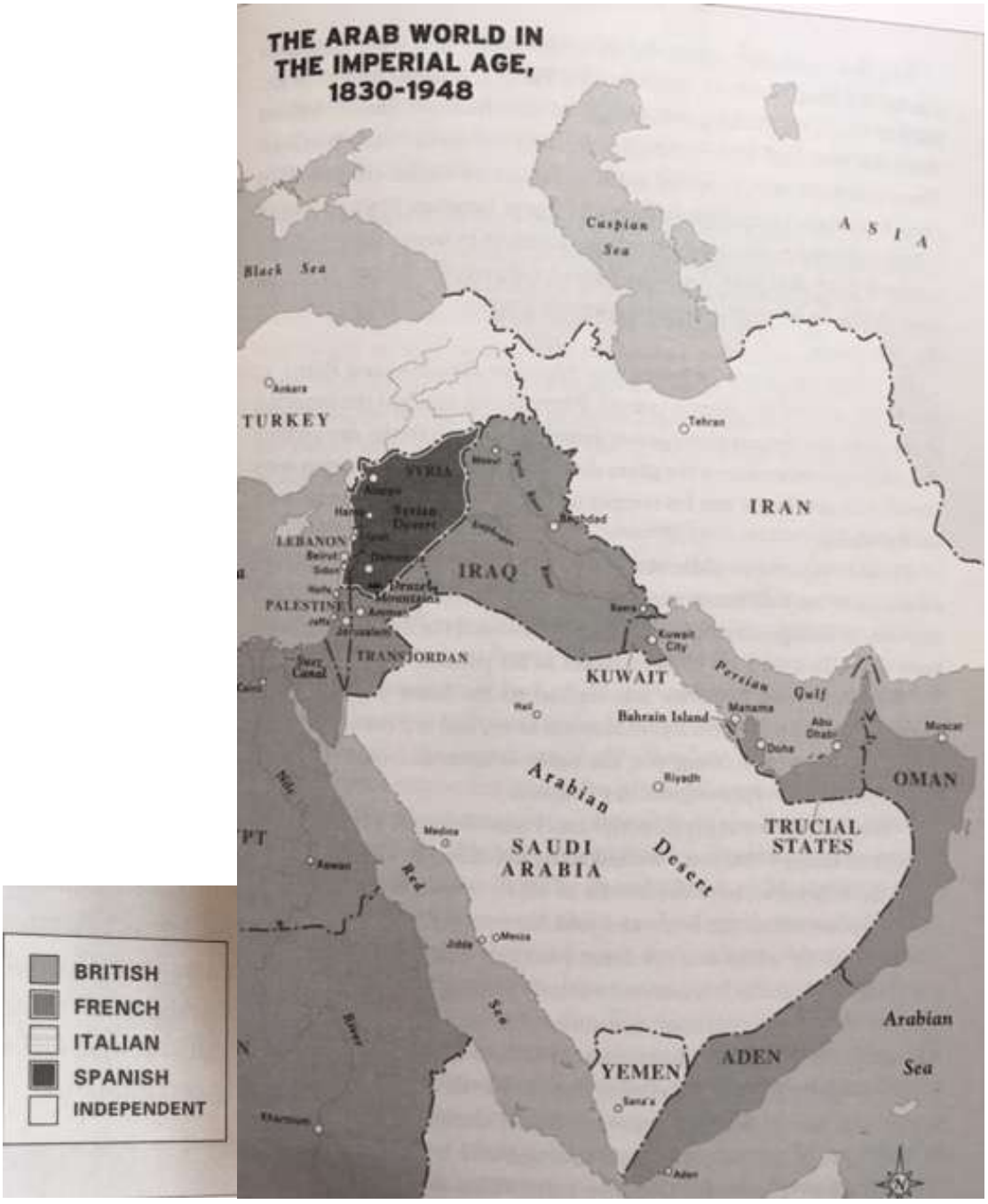
[833] J. E. Peterson, The Arabian Peninsula in Modern Times: A Historiographical Survey, in *The American Historical Review* Vol. 96, No. 5 (1991), pp. 1435-1449.

non-involvement policy and entered into an enduring relationship with Sa'udi. In Ibn Sa'ud's words:

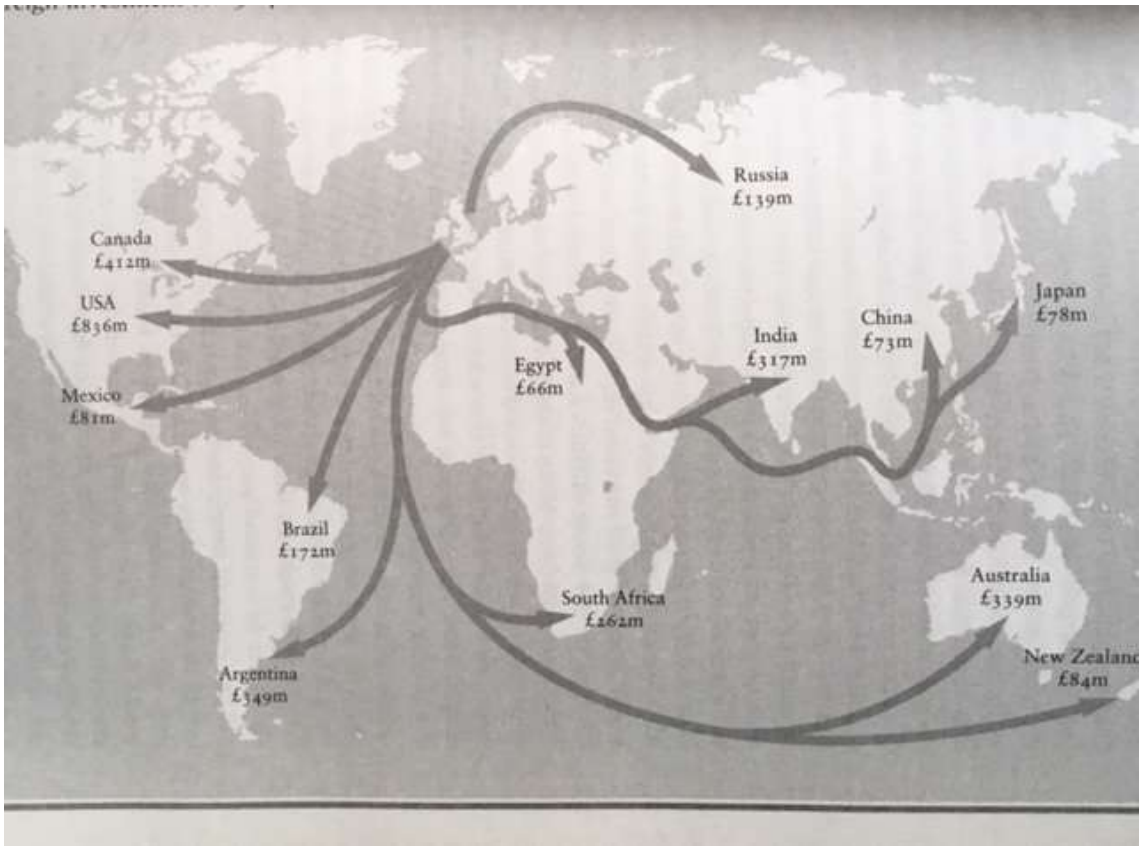
> May the country we built never fall down and may there be no differences amongst us as it has been founded on sincerity.[834]

[834] L/P&S/10/385 Ibn Sa'ud to Shakespear (original Arabic), 3 May 1914.

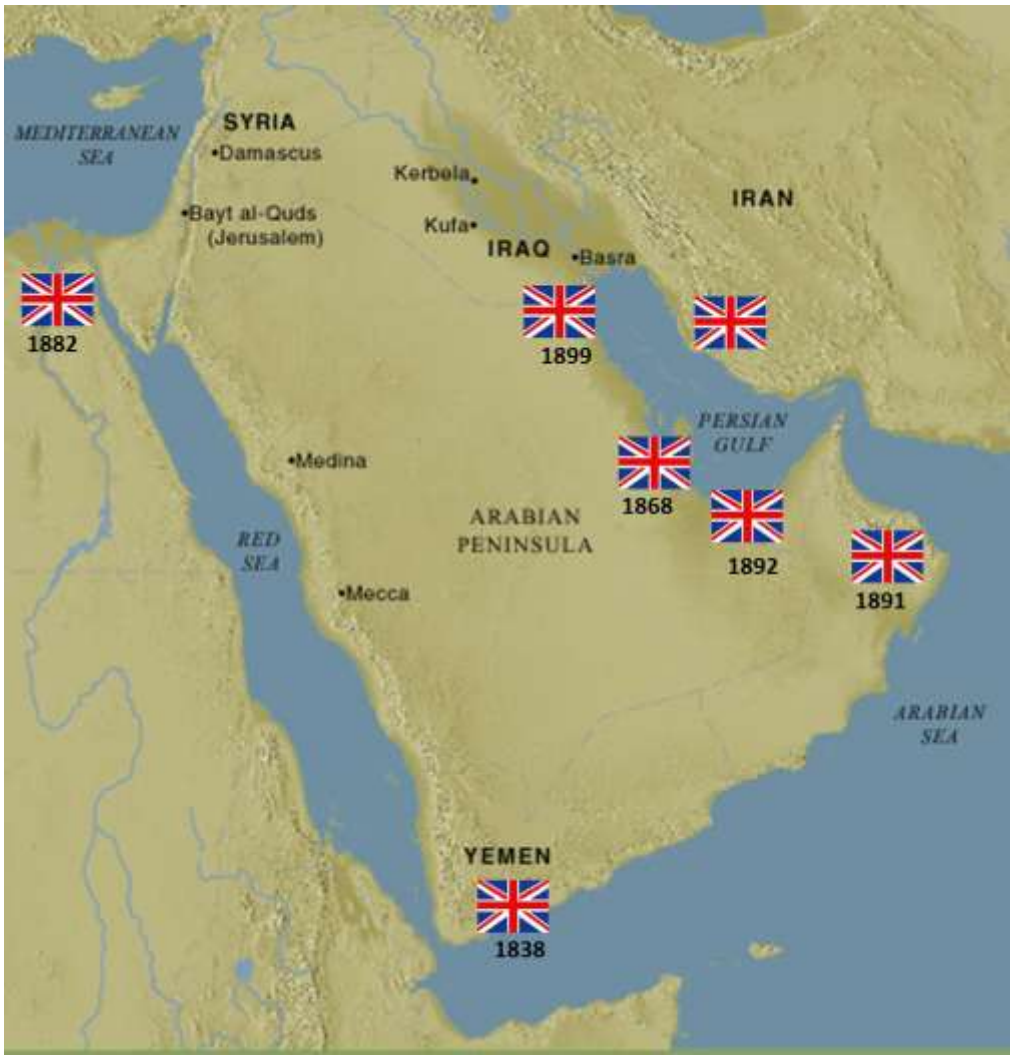
Appendices



Map 1a: The Arab World and the distribution of Imperial powers (adapted from Darwin 2012, pp. 136-137)

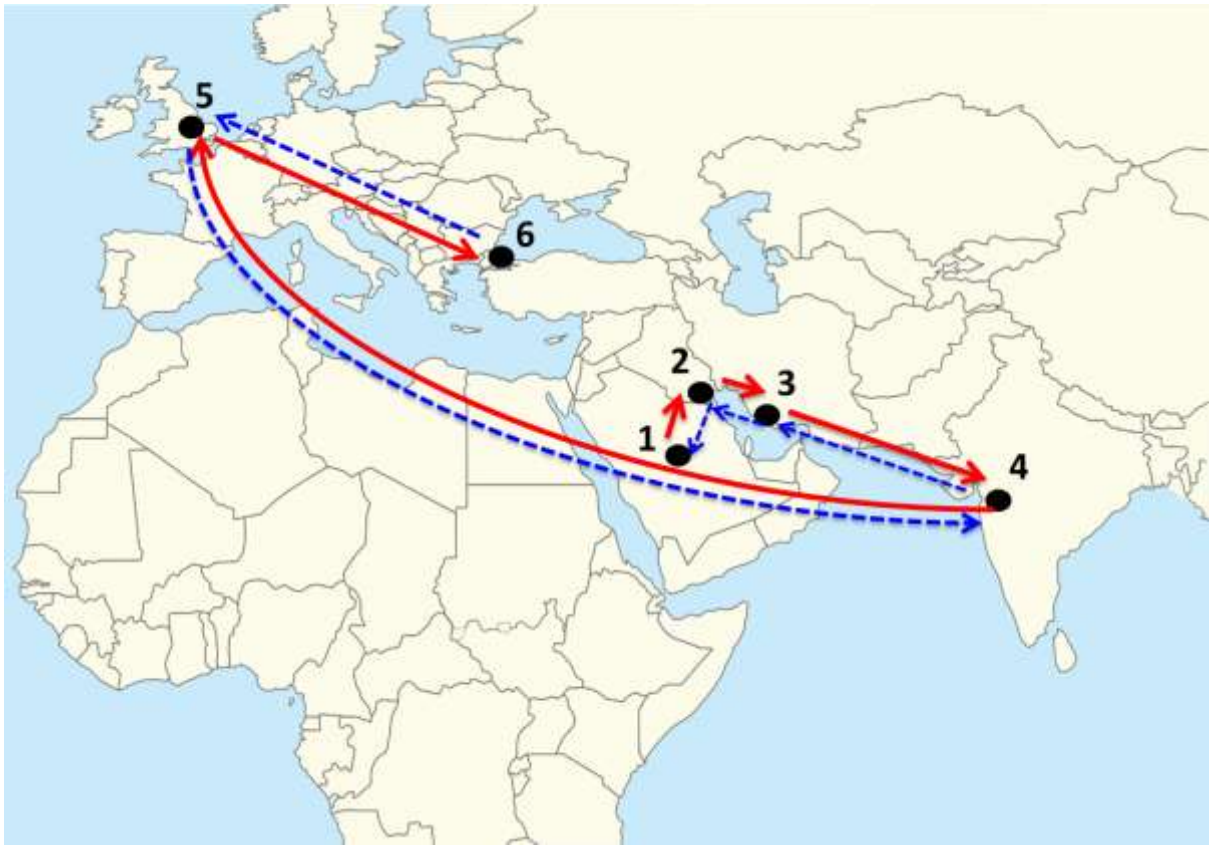


Map 1b: Areas of British imperial investment up to circa 1914 (adapted from Darwin 2012, p.183)



Map 1c: A map showing the locations of the British Political Residencies (Bushehr, Cairo and Aden) and Agencies (Kuwait, Bahrain, Sharjah and Muscat) in the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula. This map is adapted from Google Images.

Map 2: An illustration of the approximate areas of control under the main local leaders during the period of this study (1902-1914), This map is adapted from Google Images.



Map 3: An example of the direction of correspondence between Ibn Sa'ud and Britain during the period of this study (1902-1914). A communication (in red) went from Riyadh (1) via Kuwait (2), Bushehr (3), and Mumbai (4) to London (5). The British government used to consult with the British ambassador in Istanbul (6) before sending a reply in the opposite direction (in blue). The map is adapted from Google Images.

Fig. 1: A photo of Ibn Sa'ud amongst his brothers, sons and some of his followers (adapted from Philby, 1955).

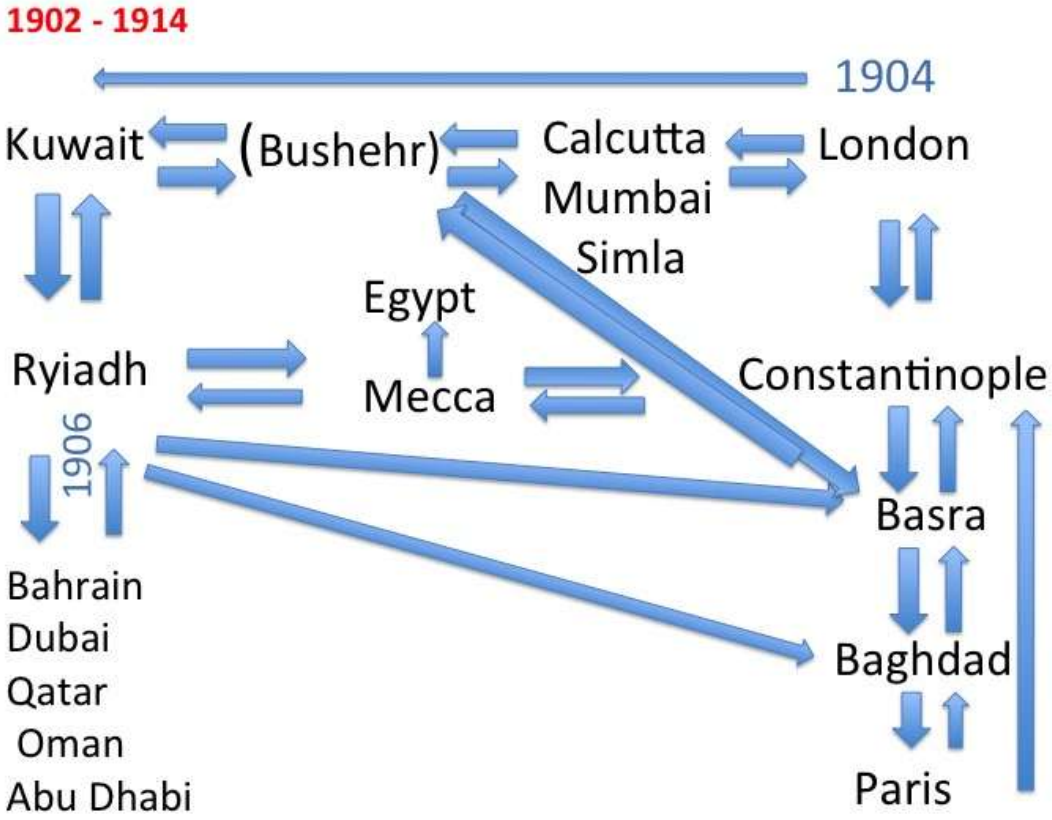


Fig. 2: A Schematic representation of significant links of communications discussed in chapters 1-4 from 1902 to 1914.

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FO 248/844, Periodical report from Cox, for the period of 20th – 26th November 1905.

FO 248/842, Periodical report from Cox for the period 15th – 22nd January 1905.

FO 248/842, Periodical report by Cox, the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 30th January – 5th February 1905.

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FO 248/842, Secret report from Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 20th – 26th February 1905.

FO 248/842, Periodical report by Cox, for the period of 6th – 12th March 1905.

FO 248/842, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 20th – 26th March 1905.

FO 248/875, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 23rd – 29th April 1906.

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FO 248/844, Periodical report from Cox, for the period 25th – 31st December 1905.

The British Library, London

India Office Library and Records, (IOR)

IOR: R/15/

IOR: R/15/1/475 dated 23rd November 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, dated 11th December 1902.

IOR: R/15/1/475, A message of Imam Abdurrahman Al Sa'ud to Lieut. Col. Charles Arnold Kemball, British Political Resident in the Gulf, which is stamped with the seal of Imam Abdulrahman, written in Arabic, and translated into English, dated in Kuwait on 14th May 1902.

R/15/1/476 On 1st May 1904 and in Records of Saudi Arabia page 52 enclosure in No. 54 and page 53, No. 55.

IOR: R/15/1/476, Telegram from F. E. Crow to the British Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf (Bushehr), dated 23rd April 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Telegram from Lieut. Col.dCharles Arnold Kemball, British Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf (Bushehr) to the Secretary of the British Government of India in the outer circle, dated 25th April 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A telegram from Major LS Newmarch, British Political Resident in the Arabian Peninsula under Ottoman rule to the Secretary of the British Government of India in the outer circle, Simla parts, dated 25th April 1904.

IOR: R/15/1/476, Message from the British Agent in Kuwait to the British Political Resident, dated 11th May 1904.

IOR: R/15/1/476, A telegram from Major Percy Z. Cox, British Political Resident Acting Gulf (Bushehr) to the outer circle of the British Government of India (Simla), accompanied by a message Ibn Sa'ud Cox, dated 16th May 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A message from Captain Stuart George Knox British Political Agent in Kuwait to Abdulrahman, dated 4th August 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A message in Arabic on the front to Abdulrahman Captain Stuart George Knox, British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 13th August 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/59, A message from C. L. S. Russell, Assistant Secretary to the Government of British India in the Political Department (Simla) to Cox, British Political Resident in the Gulf, dated 7th September 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/59, A telegram from St John Brodrick, Secretary of State for India in London to the British Viceroy in India (Simla), dated 25th May 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/59, A telegram from the British Viceroy in India (Simla) to St John Brodrick, Secretary of State for India in London, dated 29th May 1904.

IOR: R/15/1/476, A message from Major Percy Cox to Imam Abdul Rahman, dated June 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A message from Captain Stuart George Knox, British Political Agent in Kuwait forward Abdulrahman, dated 7th August 1904.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Walter B. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne, January 1905.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Report on the political situation in the Arabian Peninsula written by Knox, the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 28th October 1905.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Captain Stuart George Knox, British Political Agent in Kuwait, to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) dated 4th January 1905.

R/15/5/24, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 15th February 1905.

R/15/1/477, Telegram from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), dated 23rd February 1905.

IOR: R/15/6/504, Administrative report issued by the British Political Resident in the Gulf and the Political Agent in Muscat, for the years 1904/1905, prepared by Cox on behalf of the British Political Resident and released by the Indian Government in Calcutta, in 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Cox to Knox, 18th January 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, A translation from Arabic to English of a letter from Mubarak Al Sabah to Knox, dated 22nd January 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, A telegram from the British Government in India (Calcutta) to the British Political Resident in Kuwait, Cox, dated 23rd January 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, A telegram from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, to Cox on 23rd January 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 23rd January 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from Mubarak Al Sabah, ruler of Kuwait to Cox, dated 26th January 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from Cox to James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Basra, dated 1st February 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from F. E. Crow, the British Consul in Basra to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 3rd April 1905.

R/15/1/477, Letter from Crow, to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 14th April 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/477, Letter from F. E. Crow, the British Consul in Basra to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 22nd April 1905.

IOR: R/15/1/478, Telegram from Cox to the British Government in India, Simla, dated April 25th 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, to Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 8th May 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter signed by Knox to Major A. W. Baird, in Al Ahwaz, dated 24th December 1906.

IOR: R/15/478, Letter from Knox, Political Agent in Kuwait, to Cox, dated 14th February 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/556, Letter from Cox to Sheikh Zayed Bin Khalifa, the Governor of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Bottay Bin Soheel, the Governor of Dubai, Sheikh Saqir Bin Khaled, the Governor of Al Shariqa, Sheikh Rasheed Bin Ahmed, the Governor of Um Al Qoween, Sheikh Abdel Aziz Bin Hamid, the Governor of Ajman and all the Sheikhs of the Trucial States, dated 22nd April 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Batti Ibn Suheil, ruler of Dubai, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.

IOR: L R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Rashed Ibn Ahmed, ruler of Um Al Qwein, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibn Humeid, ruler of Ajman, to Cox, dated 2nd September 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from Sheikh Saqr Ibn Khaled Ibn Sultan, ruler of Sharjah, to Cox, dated 6th September 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/556, A letter from the British Residency Agent in Sharjah to the Political Resident and British General Consul in the Gulf, dated 3rd September 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 3rd February 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Captain Francis B. Prideaux, the British Political Resident in Bahrain, to Cox, dated 9th February 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 26th September 1906.

IOR: R/15/2/160, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/478, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 18th September 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A memorandum including information obtained by John Calcott Gaskin and signed by him, dated 24th September 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/710, The administrative report issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushehar) for the years 1905-1906, prepared by Cox who dated the first chapter 23rd September 1906. The other chapters have

different dates. The report was published by the Indian Government in Calcutta in 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, on 20th November 1906.

IOR: R/15/1479, The family tree of the Al Rasheed family from its first prince until 1907, included in a letter from the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) to Sir Louis Dane, dated 10th February 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Lieutenant L. Birdwood, special aid to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 22nd January 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Cox to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 13th May 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Bill, dated 15th July 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 3rd September 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from G. P. Devey, British Consul in Damascus, to O'Conor, dated 6th September 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A telegraph from the Foreign Department of the British Government of India, Simla, to the British Political Resident in the Gulf, dated 25th September 1907.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from C. G. Campbell, British India Office in London, to the British Deputy Foreign Minister, dated 3rd October 1907.

IOR: R/15/1/710, The administrative report issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushehr) and the political agency in Muscat for the years 1908-1909, prepared by Cox, published by the Indian Government of Calcutta in 1909.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A draft letter from Knox transmitted by Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, dated 17th March 1909.

IOR: R/15/1/479, Memorandum No. 20 attached to a letter from Lieut. Col. J. Ramsay, Acting British Political Resident in the Arabian Peninsula lands under Ottoman authority and the British General Consul in Baghdad, to S. H. Butler, Secretary of the British Government of India in the Foreign Department in Simla, dated 19th June 1909.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Letter from the First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated June 10th 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/24, Diary prepared by Knox containing his signature regarding the conversation that took place between Cox and Mubarak Al Sabah on 7th March 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Cox to the Foreign Agency Secretary of the British Government in India, (Simla), dated 18th March 1906.

IOR: R/15/1/478, Letter from Cox to Captain Francis B. Prideaux, the British Political Agent in Bahrain, dated 4th April 1906.

IOR: R/15/5/8, An extract from a report on the affairs of Kuwait and Najd, undated.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 13th May 1907.

IOR: R/15/1/710, The administrative report of 1909 issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushehr), prepared by Cox, the report was published by the Government of India in Calcutta in 1911.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from Captain Shakespear to Major Trevor, dated 4th January 1910.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from Major Trevor, dated 16th January 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/25, An extract from the periodic report issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 2nd February 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/26, Extract from the periodic report No. 9 issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 2nd March 1910.

IOR: R/15/1/479, Extracts of Captain Shakespear's memoirs for February 1910, dated 10th March 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/25, A letter from Major Trevor, Acting British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushire) to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, dated 22nd March 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/26, Extracts from the periodic report issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 23rd March 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/26, For more on the details refer to a memorandum prepared by Captain Shakespear on Sheikh Mubarak's military preparations, dated 28th March 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/25, An extract from periodic report No. 20 issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 18th May 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/27, A letter draft signed by Captain Shakespear to Cox, dated 18th March 1911.

IOR: R/15/5/25, Pieces of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 12th April 1911.

IOR: L/PandS/7/249, A political report prepared by Cox about April 1911.

IOR: R/15/5/25, A letter draft from Captain Shakespear to Cox, dated 23rd December 1912.

IOR: R/15/5/25, A piece of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 25th December 1912.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from James Henry Monahan, the British Consul in Jeddah to Sir Gerard Lowther, the British Consul in Constantinople, dated 11th June 1910; Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.222.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter signed by Captain Charles F. Mackenzie, the British Political Agent in Bahrain to Cox, dated 9th July 1910.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter signed by Cox dated 16th July 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/25, A piece from the periodical report issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 31st August 1910.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A letter from Captain Skakespear to Cox, dated 6th November 1910.

IOR: R/15/1/479, A piece entitled *"Submitting the Arabian Tribes"* from the Londoner Journal *"Times",* issued on 6th October 1910.

IOR: R/15/5/25, Pieces of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 25th May 1911.

IOR: R/15/5/27, A letter from Cox to Sir Henry Mcmahon, the British Foreign Secretary for India, Simla, dated 23rd July 1911.

IOR: R/15/5/27, A copy of a semiformal letter from the Deputy British Foreign Secretary for India, Simla, to the British Resident in the Gulf, dated 30th August 1911.

IOR: R/15/5/25, Pieces of the news bulletin issued by the British Political Agency in Kuwait, dated 20th September 1911.

IOR: L/PandS/7/253, A political report prepared by Cox about September 1911.

IOR: R/15/5/25, A letter signed by T. Wilson Arnold to Captain Shakespear, dated 31st December 1912.

IOR: R/15/1/711, The administrative report issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the year 1912.

IOR: R/15/1/711, The administrative report issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the year 1912.
IOR: R/15/1/711, The administrative report issued by the British Political Residency in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the year 1912.

India Office Library and Record, The British Library, London.

IOR: L/PandS/

IOR: L/and/ S/7/142, A letter from Mubarak to Cox translated from Arabic to English and dated 31st January 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/3/389, Extract from *The Standard* newspaper, dated 3 March 1902, under the title "Fight in the Arabian Peninsula", this report provides information on the House of Saud and the history of the emergence of the Wahhabi movement and the Saudi Arabian state, as well as the conflict between Mubarak Al-Sabah Sheikh of Kuwait and Ibn Rasheed, the Emir of Hail.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A message from A. C. Wratislaw, the British Consul in Basra to Sir Nicolas R. O'Connor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 31st July 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A telegram from the Secretary of India, Lord George Hamilton in to the British Government of India, (Simla), dated 22nd September 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, Telegram from Lieut-Col. Charles Arnold Kemball, The British Political Resident in the Gulf, Acting British Government of India (Simla), dated in Shiraz, 22nd May 1902; Also L/PandS/20/FO12, dated 23/5/1902.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A letter from M. G. Cartwright, the commander of the British ship *Cusack* and the highest British naval officers in the Gulf to Drury Rear-Admiral (Bushehr) dated 21st November 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/3/391, A report prepared by the senior British naval officer, Lieut. J. Armestrang, in the Arabian Gulf addressed to the General Commander of the British Navy in the East Indies, dated 27 May 1902, and is attached with a letter signed by Evan MacGregor in the British Navy Admiralty, the Undersecretary of the British India Office, dated 19th July 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, Translation to English from Russian, the message from Ovseenko, the Consul of Russia (Bushehr) to Mubarak Al-Sabah Sheikh of Kuwait, dated 23rd March 1902.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A telegram from the British Government of India to St John Brodrick Secretary of State for India in London, dated in 28th April 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A telegram from Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor British Ambassador in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, British Foreign Secretary, dated 29th April 1904; Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.186.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A message from A. Godley, India Office to the British Foreign Office, dated 5/5/1904; Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p. 186.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A telegram from the British Government in India (Simla) to St John Brodrick, Secretary of State for India, dated 9th May 1904; Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p. 187.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12A, A message from the Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary to Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 10th May 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO13, A message from Knox to Cox, dated 3rd September 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/18/p437, Historical memorandum on the relations of the Wahhabi Amirs. Also see: Busch, op.cit. pp 259-260; Silverfarb, *British Relations with Ibn Sa'ud of Najd 1914-1919*, p.14.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO13, A political intelligence report league for the week ended December 26, 1904, issued by Major L. S. Newmarch, British Consul General in Baghdad and addressed to the British Government of India, dated 20th-26th December 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO13, A message from Cox to the British Government of India, dated 10th September 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO13, A message from the Marquess of Lansdowne, British Foreign Secretary to Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor, British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 21st May 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A message from Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor, British Ambassador in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, British Foreign Secratary, dated 23rd May 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A message from A. Godley, India Office (London) to the British Foreign Office, dated 2nd June 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A message from T. H. Sanderson from the British Foreign Office to the Deputy Secretary of India (London), dated 21st June 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/18/B 164, British Relations with Wahhabis.

IOR: L/PandS/18/B 437, Historical Memorandum on the Relations of the Wahhabi Amirs; Busch: *Ibid*, pp. 259-260.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A telegram from the British Government of India to St John Brodrick, Secretary of State for India (London), dated 4th July 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO12, A message from F. H. Villiers from the British Foreign Office to the Deputy Secretary of India, dated 23rd July 1904. Also (IOR) L/PandS/20/FO12, A telegram, dated 24th July 1904.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Crow to O'Conor, dated 19th May 1905. Also see, FO 248/842, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 15th - 21st May 1905. Also see, Ibrahim, [*Princes and Invaders*], p.209.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO13, A letter from the British advisor and deputy in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 2nd January 1905. Ibrahim *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.204.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, The British advisor and deputy in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 2nd January 1905. Ibrahim *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.205.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A memorandum regarding the ongoing events in Najd prepared by Mohammad Hussein, British Deputy Consul in Jeddah, dated 3rd January 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A memorandum regarding Najd prepared by Mohammad Hussein, British Deputy Consul in Jeddah, dated 11th January 1905.

N.S.-Turquie/140, A letter signed by G. Rouet, French Deputy Consul in Baghdad to the French Foreign Minister, dated 23rd February 1905, (Nouvelle Serie, Ministere des Affaires Etrangeres, Archives Diplomatiques, Quai d'Orsay, Paris).

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Walter B. Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 10th February 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Telegram from Walter B. Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 12th February 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Walter B. Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, dated 14th February 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A memorandum regarding Najd prepared by Mohammad Hussein, British Deputy Consul in Jeddah, dated 11th January 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A translation from Arabic to English of a telegram sent by Imam Abdul Rahman (Ibn Sa'ud's father) to the Ottoman Sultan, dated 15th January 1905. Ibrahim, *[Princes and Invaders]*, p.205.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Telegram from Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 17th February 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Monahan, Acting British Consul in Basra, to Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, dated 24th February 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/FO31, A telegram from Townley, British Deputy in Constantinople, to Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 24th February 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A letter from India's British Government to St John Brodrick, the Secretary of India, signed by eight British officials, being: Curzon, Kitchener, E. R. Elles, A. T. Arundel, Denzil Ibbetson, H. Erle Richards, J. P. Hewett, E. N. Baker, dated 19th January 1905, in Fort William.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A letter from Walter Townley, the British Deputy in Constantinople to the Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 24th January 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Memorandum by H. H. Lamb from the British Embassy in Constantinople, dated 30th January 1905; included with it is a translation of the speech from Imam Abdul Rahman (Ibn Sa'ud father) to the Ottoman Sultan, dated 15th January 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Translation of a letter from Arabic to English from Cox to Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah, the Sheikh of Kuwait, dated 7th March 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Sir Nicolas R. O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, to the Marquess of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 13th March 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah to Cox, dated 15th March 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, to Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 27th March 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, to Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, dated 1st May 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Mohammad Hussein, the Acting British Consul in Jeddah, to Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 13th May 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/193, A periodic report by Cox, British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar) for the period 27th August – 2nd September 1906. Armstrong, *Lord of Arabia: Ibn Sa'ud*, p.83.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, An extract from letter number 80 from the British Consul to the British surrogate in Constantinople, dated 10th November 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/196, Periodic report from Cox, of the period 26th November to 2nd December 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A news letter from Knox to Cox, dated 25th December 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A telegraph from F. E. Crow, dated 31st December 1906. Al Khudeiri, *(The History of the Saudi Arab Lands in the Gulf Guide)*, p. 518.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Translation to English from Arabic of a letter from Ibn Sa'ud to the Sheikh of Dubai, dated 22nd August 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Translation to English from Arabic of a letter from Khaled Bin Abdullah Al Sowedy to Sheikh Zayed Bin Khalifa, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, dated 29th August 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from the Residing British Agent in al Shariqa to Cox, dated 5th October 1905. Also see, FO 248/844, periodical report from Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for the period of 9th – 15th October 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Captain Arthur P. Trevor, the Acting British Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) to the British Government of India, dated 29th October 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, letter from F. E. Crow, the British Consul in Basra to Sir Nicholas R. O'Conor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 18th November 1905.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Telegram in Arabic translated into English sent by a representative for Ibn Sa'ud and Jasim Al Thani from Bushehr to the Ottoman Sultan in Constantinople, dated 18th February 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, A. Godley's letter, from the Ministers of India in London to the British Foreign Secretarys, dated 22nd February 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Cox to the British Government in India, dated 23rd February 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Cox to the British Government in India, dated 23rd February 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Telegram from the British Government in India to John Morley, Secretary of India in London, dated 29th April 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/193, A periodic report by Cox, British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), for the period 20th – 26th August 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 28th August 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/193, A secret report by Cox for the period 3rd – 9th September 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from the British Government in India to John Morley, the Secretary of India in London, dated 11th January 1906, in Fort William, signed by Minto, Kitchener, A. T. Arundel, Denzil Ibbetson, H. Erle Richards, J. P. Hewett, E. N. Baker and C. H. Scott.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Cox to Knox, dated 17th January 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO31, Letter from Knox to Cox, dated 19th January 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Cox to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Government of India, Simla, dated 16th September 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 13th October 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/195, Periodic report signed by J. H. Bill, First Assistant of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), on behalf of the Resident, for the period 29th October – 4th November 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/195, Periodic report signed by J. H. Bill, First Assistant of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), on behalf of the Resident, for the period 5th – 11th November 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Captain Francis B. Prideaux, British Political Agent in Bahrain, to Cox, dated 17th November 1906; Al Khodery, *The History of the Arabic Countries in the Gulf Gazetteer*, p.534.

IOR: L/PandS/7/196, Periodic report signed by J. H. Bill, First Assistant to the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushahar), on behalf of the Resident, for the period 11th – 12th November 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Com to Sir Louis W. Dane, Secretary of State of the Indian Government, in Calcutta, dated 24th November 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/18/B164, A memorandum by the Political Department of the British Government of India on the British relations with the Al Saud family, January 1908. It includes a number of names of British officials.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Cox to Lois W. Dane, British Government of India Secretary in the Foreign Department in Simla, dated 4th January 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/198, The periodic political report of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr) for January 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/199, The periodic report from Mrs Bill, dated 24th February 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from Knox to Cox, dated 21st January 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from O'Conor to the British Foreign Ministry, dated 1st April 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from F. A. Campbell from the British Foreign Ministry to the India Office's Agent in London, dated 16th April 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from John Morley, Secretary of State for India, to the British Governor General in India and his council, dated 3rd May 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/203, The periodic political report by Gertrude Bill, dated 2nd June 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter signed by A. Godley, India Office in London, to the British Deputy Foreign Minister, dated 27th March 1907.

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IOR: L/PandS/7/201, A signed letter from Knox to Cox, dated 17th March 1907.

I.O.R. LR/15/5/24, The periodic political report by Cox, dated 24th March 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from O'Conor to the British Foreign Office, dated 15th May 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from G. P. Devey, British Consul in Damascus, to O'Conor, dated 15th April 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/10/50, A letter from O'Conor to the British Foreign Office, dated 15th May 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/203, The periodic political report by Mrs Bill, dated 26th May 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/203, The periodic political report prepared by Cox, dated 9th June 1907.

The periodic political report by G. Bill, dated 2nd June 1907; the names of the dead and wounded in this battle can be referred to in the following file: IOR: L/PandS/7/203.

IOR: L/PandS/7/204, The periodic political report prepared by Mrs Bill, dated 30th June 1907.

IOR: R/15/5/24, A letter from Knox to Bill, dated 15th July 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/206, The periodic political report by Mrs Bill, dated 8th September 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/207, The periodic political report by Mrs Bill, dated 22nd September 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/207, The periodic political report prepared by Mrs Bill, dated 6th October 1907.

IOR: L/PandS/7/217, A periodic political report by Trevor, dated 24th May 1908.

IOR: L/PandS/7/218, A periodic political report by Trevor, dated 21st June 1908.

IOR: L/PandS/7/218, A periodic political report by Trevor, dated 7th June 1908.

IOR: PandS/7/223, A periodic political report by Captain Trevor, dated 18th October 1908, see also, a periodic political report by Captain Trevor, dated 1st November 1908.

IOR: L/PandS/20/FO34, A letter from G. P. Devey, British Consul in Damascus, to Sir Gerard Lowther, British Ambassador to Constantinople, dated 19th January 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/226, A periodic political report prepared by Trevor, dated 7th February 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/227, A periodic political report by Cox, dated 21st March 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/228, A periodic political report prepared by Cox, dated 11th April 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/229, A periodic political report prepared by Cox, dated 23rd May 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/233, A periodic political report prepared by Major Trevor for September 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/235, A periodic political report prepared by Major Trevor for September 1909.

IOR: L/PandS/7/189, Periodical report by Captain A. H. Stevens on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 7th – 13th May 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/189, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 14th – 20th May 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/189, Periodical report by Cox, the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 21st – 27th May 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/190, Periodical report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period of 4th – 10th June 1906.

IOR: L/PandS/7/190, A periodic report by Captain Arthur P. Trevor on behalf of the British Political Resident in the Gulf (Bushehr), for the period 11th – 17th June 1906.

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IOR: L/PandS/7/245, A political report from Captain Birdwood, the Chief Warrant Officer to the British Political Resident in the Gulf and the Charge d'Affaires of the Residency about September 1910.

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