

NOMADS IN AL-HEJAZ PROVINCE: A GEOGRAPHIC
STUDY OF NOMADS NEAR THE CITY OF TAIF

By

MOHAMMED ABDULLAH AL-WOHAIBI

Bachelor of Art

King Abdul Aziz University

Holy Mecca, Saudi Arabia

1974

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 1981

Thesis
1981
A477n
cop.2



NOMADS IN AL-HEJAZ PROVINCE: A GEOGRAPHIC
STUDY OF NOMADS NEAR THE CITY OF TAIF

Thesis Approved:

Robert E. Louis

Thesis Adviser

H. F. Rooney

George O. Carney

Norman N. Durham

Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express his gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Robert E. Norris, Professor of Geography and major adviser, for his guidance and encouragement throughout the entire graduate program in general and with this work in particular.

Appreciation is also extended to other members of the committee: Dr. John F. Rooney, Professor and former Chairman of the Department of Geography, and Dr. George O. Carney, faculty member of the Department of Geography.

Grateful acknowledgment is given to all the people who supported this thesis through the field trip to Saudi Arabia, for collection of data in the summer of 1979, especially Dr. Taha E. El-Farra; my cousins, Dr. Abdullah and Dr. Mohammed Al-Wohaibi; and my colleagues, Meraj Merza, Abdul Aziz El-Twaim, and Mehdi Mansouri, who helped me with this thesis.

A special acknowledgment is given to Shaikh Abdullah Al-Thwaibi, Blehed Al-Otaibi, and Abu Arif, for taking me to their people through the field trip to the Nomads in their tents on the desert; the Nomads' hospitality will not be forgotten.

Special acknowledgment should be given to my family, especially my father, Shaikh Abdullah Al-Wohaibi; my mother, Al-Sokair; my wife, Norah Al-Oyed, who supported me throughout my study in the United States of America; and my children, Hani and Rasha, for their love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
General	1
Objectives.	1
Statement of the Problem.	2
Data Collection	2
Review of Literature.	3
Spatial Patterns of Bedouins Settlement.	3
Taha El-Farra.	4
Abdullah Al-Abbadi	4
S. Malik	5
Organization.	5
II. PHYSICAL SETTING AND THE PEOPLE.	7
Social Structure.	11
Nomads and Nomadism Situation.	14
Islam and Nomadism Life.	15
The Tribe.	16
Tribes and Social Situation.	16
Distribution of Tribes	18
Personal Information	19
Tribal Area and Movement.	22
Movement.	26
Recreation.	32
III. STYLE OF LIFE.	36
IV. NOMADS AND THEIR ECONOMIC SITUATION.	43
Animals	46
V. NOMADS AND EDUCATION	52
VI. NOMADS AND HEALTH SITUATION.	68
VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.	76
Conclusions	76
Recommendations	78

Chapter	Page
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	80
APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE.	84
APPENDIX B - GLOSSARY	88

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Some Physical Features in 1977 in Taif Area	10
II. Population of Saudi Arabia by Region	12
III. Age of Households	20
IV. Number of Wives Per Household	21
V. Number of Children Per Household	23
VI. Size of Family by Household	24
VII. Number and Percentage of Nomads Who Can Outline Their Areas	25
VIII. Time at Present Location	27
IX. Percentage of Members of Household Per Occupation	44
X. Saudi/Non-Saudi Workers by Geography Region in 1976	45
XI. The Average Number of Animals Per Group	46
XII. The Average Annual Income of Household Per Group by Saudi Riyals	48
XIII. Number and Percentage of Nomads to the Population in Saudi Arabia	49
XIV. Adult Education Number of Students, Teachers, Schools, and Classes, 1972-1977	56
XV. Ability of Reading and Writing Among Nomads	56
XVI. Number and Percentage of Household Who Have Member of Family Attending Schools, and the Distance to Schools	58
XVII. Population 10 Years and Over by Education Status and Sex at Taif Region	61
XVIII. Population 10 Years and Over by Education Status and Sex at Al-Khorma	63

Table	Page
XIX. Population of Taif Region by Sex	65
XX. Population of Al-Khorma by Sex	65
XXI. The Treatment of Sickness Among Nomads	70

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. The Study area	8
2. The Body of the Tribe	17

LIST OF MAPS

Map	Page
1. The Study Area	9
2. Settled and Nomadic Population in Saudi Arabia, by Region . . .	13
3. Rough Tribal Map of Arabia	24
4. The Last Three Camps of One Household in the Najd Region	28
5. The Last Three Camps of One Household in the Al-Hijaz Region . .	29
6. The Al-Murrah Tribe: The Cycle Journey for Pasture	31

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General

Bedouins (Nomads) have remained in the Arabian peninsula for centuries. During this time there has been little change in their life style. They follow their herds in search of water and pasture as their grandparents did before them. Today the gap between the Nomads and the sedentary people is becoming wider.

Bedouins (Nomads) are found in Southwestern Asia and North Africa. Saudi Arabia has a large number of Nomads in the total population, about one-fourth (or 1.75 million) are Nomads or semi-Nomads.

This study deals with the socio-economic, health, and education problems that face the Nomads of Saudi Arabia today.

Objectives

One purpose of this study is to focus on such Nomadic problems as: family status and life style, education, income, health, recreation, animal care, and tribal area and movement. Data were collected through interviews with Nomads in the Taif region and Al-Khorma. The interview information was collected by using a questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Another purpose of this study is to develop recommendations which might help to solve the problems that the Nomads encounter today.

Statement of the Problem

The problem which this research considers is the status of Nomads in Saudi Arabia. There is presently no comprehensive plan to improve their status and to solve their problems. This study recommends the establishment of an office which will recognize and resolve the various problems the Nomads encounter as a result of their life style.

Data Collection

There are three sources of information: (1) Literature review: the literature on this subject is about Nomads and Nomadism in Saudi Arabia. However, there is not enough information and most of it was written before 1970. There are few dissertations about Nomads in Saudi Arabia. (2) Government sources: the first official census in Saudi Arabia was developed in 1974-1975, but it is unpublished. Some ministries and offices have documents about Nomads; such sources are:

1. The general census of Saudi Arabia.
2. The Ministry of Planning.
3. The Ministry of Agriculture.
4. The Ministry of Education.
5. The Administration Institute.
6. Other official offices.

(3) Questionnaires and interviews: these interviews were taken in the summer of 1979. I was expected to interview at least 100 households, but was only able to interview 63 households. I chose three areas randomly and the households also were chosen randomly. Appendix A contains the questionnaire.

Review of Literature

There is not enough information about the nomads in Saudi Arabia. Most of the writers describe the nomadic tribes and roots, but they did not study their problems with their economic situation, education, health care, and social life. There are few who wrote about the nomads' problems.

Spatial Patterns of Bedouins Settlement

One dissertation was written by Ahmed A. Al-Shamikh. He discussed the project of King Abdul Aziz to settle the nomads. The author said: "In 1912, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, in his efforts to unite the country and control the scattered Bedouin, created the first Bedouin settlement in Saudi Arabia at Artawiah about 300 kilometers north of Riyadh."¹ The author's field study of the Bedouin settlements conducted in Al-Qasim in 1972 showed nomads settling in Bedouin villages, in larger urban centers, or in new villages. Al-Shamikh said: "The government, in encouraging the nomads to settle, must consider the impact of centralization on the environment. The government must consider the availability of adequate water supplies."²

There are some problems, such as providing education, developing a delivery system for welfare, and giving health service, on a large scale, and practical methods have not yet been developed to solve them. Al-Shamikh focused on two patterns of Bedouin settlement:

1. Higar (plural of Higraph), a village of nomads which includes one tribe. They built it themselves with mud. There are no facilities.
2. Hillal (plural of Hillah), areas in or near the cities, each Hillah includes people from more than one tribe.

Some of the nomads who live in Higrah move from place to place during the rainy season in search of water and pasture. "This journey takes place from October to May. They go back to their land and wells from June to September."³ Each tribe knows the territory of its area and they prefer to be in this area rather than another tribe's area. The size and the wealth of the tribe control the size of the tribal land.

Taha El-Farra

Taha El-Farra, in his political geography dissertation, analyzed the difficulties that Ibn Saud faced in building a viable state in a strongly tribal society. El-Farra discussed King Abdul Aziz's program of detribalizing the Bedouins by settling them in villages and attempting to substitute their tribal loyalties with state or national loyalty through religious conviction. The author said: "Ibn Saud used the Ikhwan movement to control the Bedouins and as a military force to expand the emerging state; and that since 1930, the Ikhwan were no longer needed and were replaced by the National Guard."⁴

Abdullah Al-Abbadi

Abdullah Al-Abbadi, in his "Opinion About Bedouins in Saudi Arabia," talked about the places where nomads live, such as: (1) near dry valleys --there are ten long valleys in Saudi Arabia, each one has one tribe or more living near it; (2) in the Red plain and the Gulf plain; and (3) boundaries between Saudi Arabia and its neighbors. Some nomads who live there (in the territory) have more than one nationality. The author also talks about their social life. They have their Chiefs who make the laws and solve the problems between the members of the tribe. The author

said: "The government tries to settle Bedouins by making them farmers, but this is psychologically an unsuccessful idea because Bedouins do not want to stay in one place."⁵

S. Malik

In his dissertation, Malik reported:

The present study approaches the problem by classifying the Saudi migrants into three categories: (1) migrants from urban areas, (2) migrants from villages, and (3) migrants from the desert. . . . In spite of the changes in some aspects of the rural migrant's social life after migration, one can still find among them certain elements of tribal organization, namely hospitality, reciprocal aids, and communal traditional attachments.⁶

Semi-nomads have moved to Riyadh for economic reasons; they live in Hilla. They have low incomes and they spend more than they can make, but they cannot stop welcoming members of their tribes.

According to Malik: "The study will focus upon the condition under which these migrants live and where they concentrate geographically and occupationally."⁷

There are not many nomads who come to cities like Riyadh. In his survey, Malik found that 4.5 percent of the migrants are from the desert.

Organization

A letter from the author's adviser was taken to the Saudi Arabian Educational Mission. This letter advised that the field trip is important for my thesis. Last summer I went to Saudi Arabia, developed the questionnaires, and collected data from the government offices and the libraries.

ENDNOTES

¹Ahmed A. Shamekh, "Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qasim Region, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1975), p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

³Ibid., p. 30.

⁴Taha O. El-Farra, "The Effect of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973), p. 139.

⁵Abdullah H. Al-Abbadi, "Ray Hol Al-Badu fe Al-Mamlakah Al-Arabyyah Al-Saudyyah" (Opinion About Nomads in Saudi Arabia) (unpublished report, Riyadh, 1970), p. 19.

⁶Saleh A. Al-Malik, "Rural Migration and Urban Growth in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1973), p. 15.

⁷Ibid., p. 16.

CHAPTER II

PHYSICAL SETTING AND THE PEOPLE

The study area is located 20°-22° north latitude and 40°-42° east longitude. This area includes (see Figure 1 and Map 1):

1. The city of Taif, which is located on hills with an elevation of 5,500 feet above sea level. It has a population of 100,000 and it is the capital of Saudi Arabia during the summer season. The temperature in this area is pleasant during summer, and slightly cold during the winter season. In 1977, the maximum temperature was 37° Centigrade and the minimum temperature was 3.4° Centigrade. The maximum relative humidity in 1977 was in November and December at 100 percent, and the minimum was in February at 3 percent.¹ (See Table I.)

In the area of natural vegetation the most common kinds of trees are thorn trees. There are several kinds of these trees which grow along the dry valleys and are not tall. There are some grasses that grow after the rain and live for short periods of time.²

2. Bigran is a small village about 50 kilometers south of Taif. The Al-Thibatah tribe is located in this area. Some of them engage in agriculture and some of them are still nomads. Nomads in this area are considered as Hijazi nomads, and they travel short distances.

3. Al-Khorma is a town located 22° north latitude and 42° east longitude in the southern side of Najd plateau on Wadi Subaai (Subaai valley). The elevation of this area is 950 feet above sea level. It has a desert climate with extreme heat in summer and cold in winter,

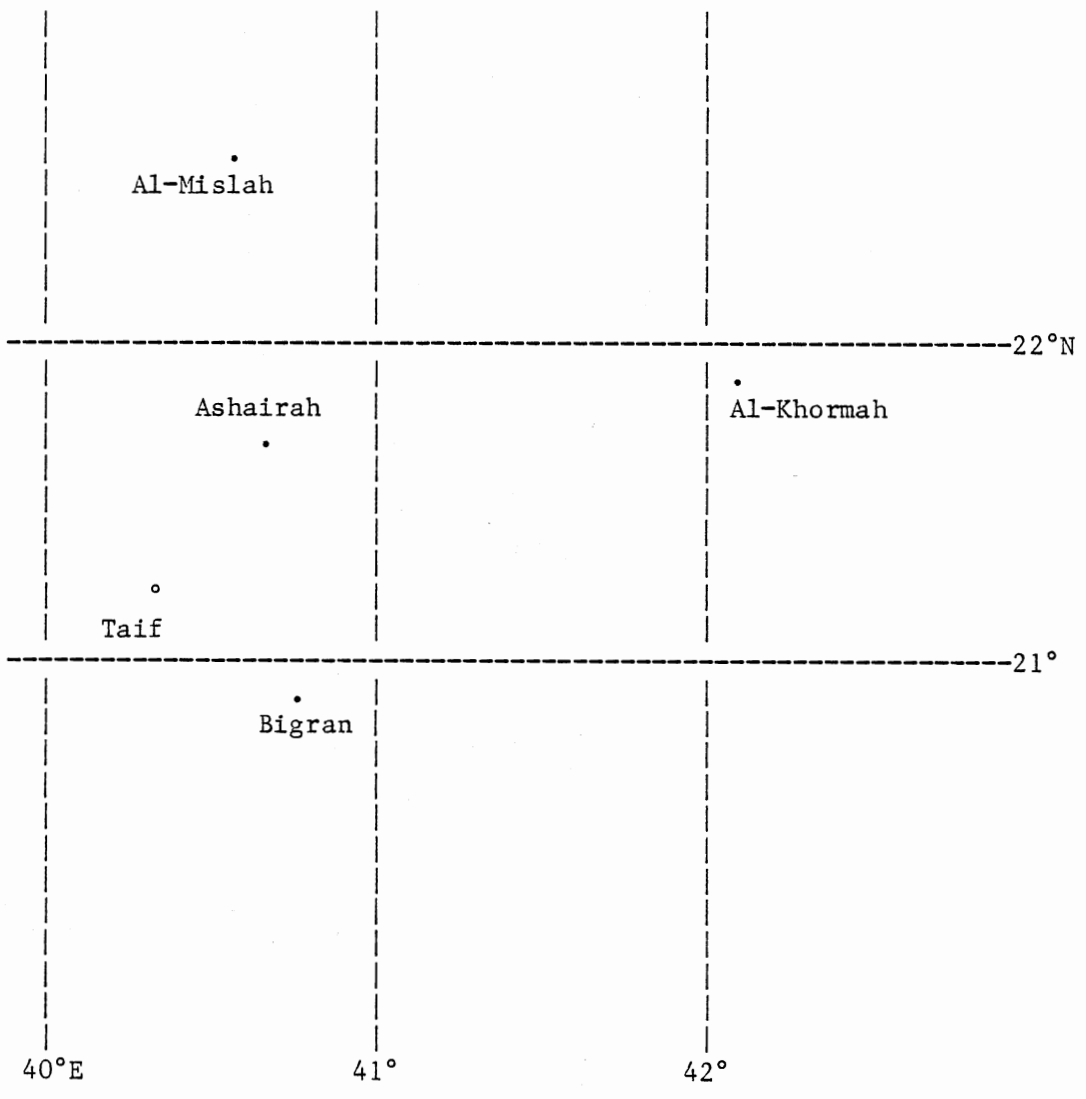
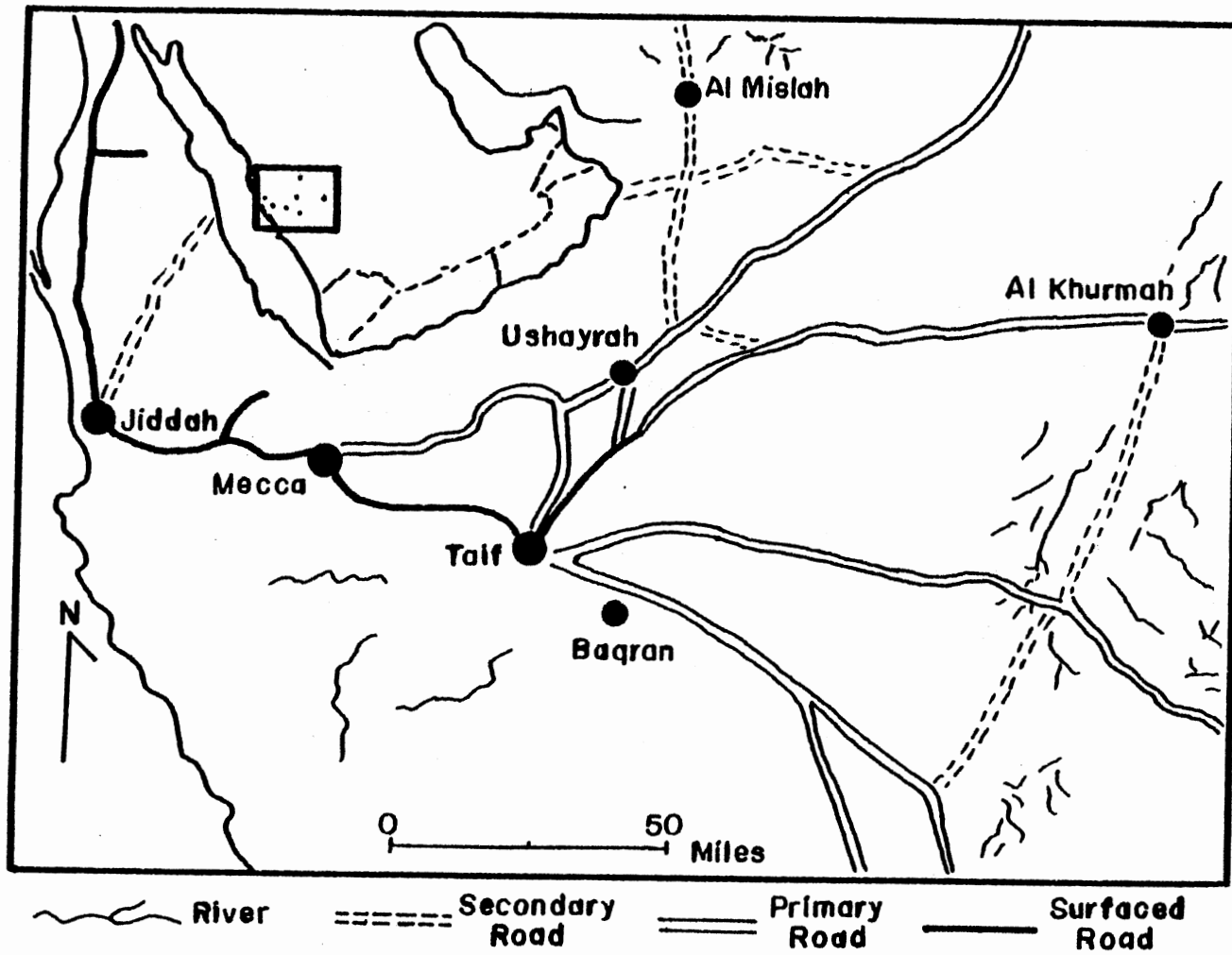


Figure 1. The Study Area



Map 1. The Study Area

TABLE I
SOME PHYSICAL FEATURES IN 1977 IN TAIF AREA

	Avg.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Average Air Pressure	854.9	855.8	857.3	856.0	852.7	857.5	853.1	851.6	852.3	855.0	856.5	857.3	857.1
Average Mean Temperature	22.5	13.7	16.1	20.6	22.2	26.0	28.4	28.5	29.0	27.6	22.3	18.5	16.7
Maximum Temperature	28.8	20.6	23.4	27.5	29.2	32.3	34.5	33.8	34.4	33.6	28.6	25.1	22.9
Minimum Temperature	16.0	7.1	8.2	14.3	14.7	18.9	21.4	23.1	24.1	21.0	15.9	11.5	11.4
Average Relative Humidity	36.6	43.0	40.0	46.0	34.0	28.0	16.0	19.0	27.0	24.0	43.0	47.0	66.0
Distribution of Amount of Rainfall, MM	9.0	---	---	4.7	1.0	5.2	2.5	4.7	6.6	9.8	56.2	---	17.5

Source: Statistical Yearbook, 1978, pp. 15-20.

with a few inches of annual rain. Temperatures exceed 100°F during the summer season, and drop to freezing degrees nightly during the winter season.³

The natural vegetation in this area is poor, after rainfall vegetation grows and lives for a short time.

Bedouins are tribal people who live in tents, raise animals (camels, sheep, and goats) and travel from place to place in search of water and pasture.

Social Structure

The population of Saudi Arabia can be divided into:

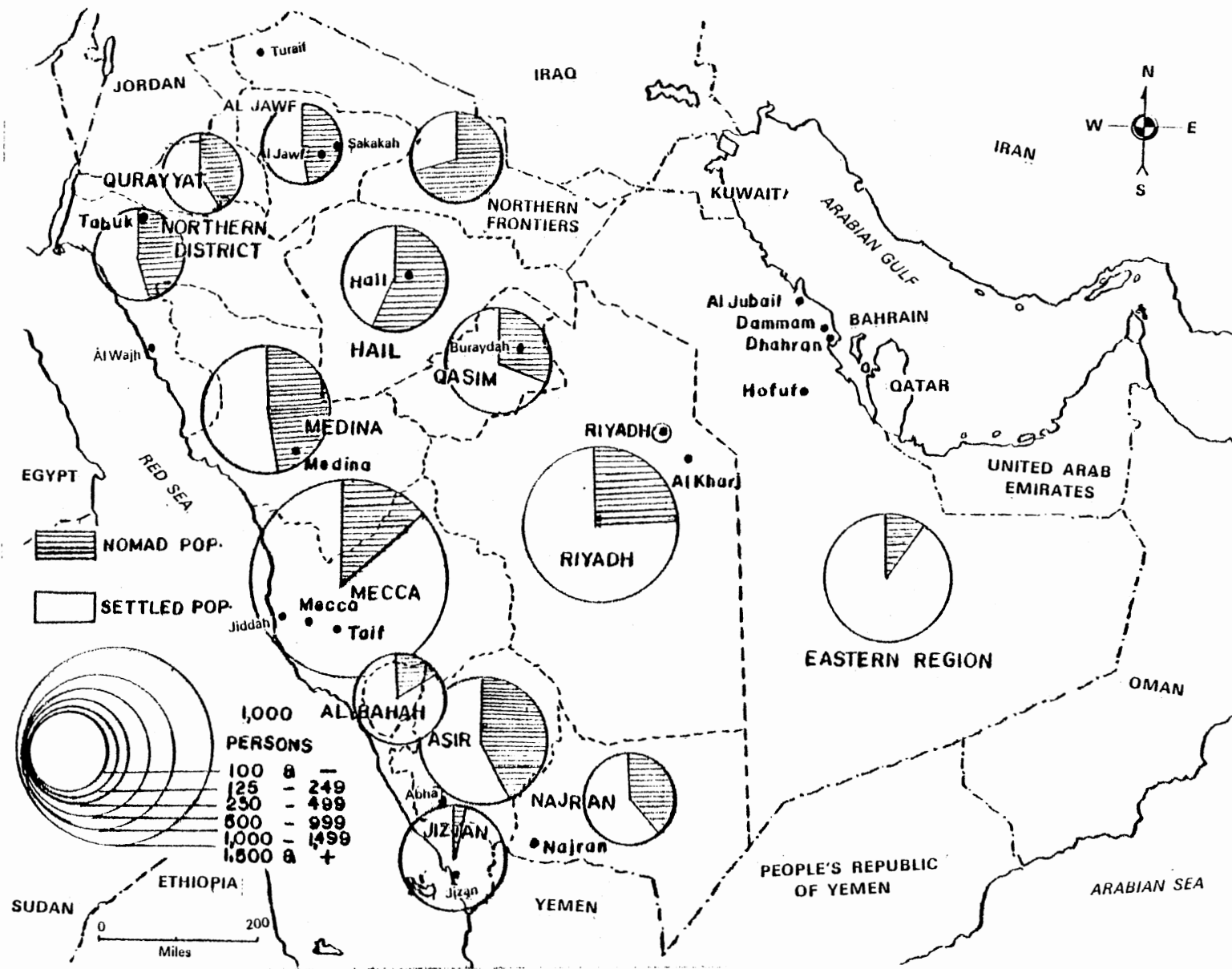
1. Settled people who live in cities or towns and are engaged in sedentary business.
2. Semi-nomads who are settled most of the year in the cities or towns and travel during the rain season in search of pasture.
3. Nomads who travel from place to place in search of pasture and water for their livestock.

Saudi Arabia has a large number of nomad population: "... in 1965, the government found that more than 50 percent of the country's population was nomads or semi-nomads."⁴ According to the census of 1974, nomads were 26.9 percent of the total population. Table II shows the number and percentage of nomads for each region of Saudi Arabia. Each nomad is related to one tribe, and most of the population of Saudi Arabia, including the settled people, are related to tribes. The nomads give their loyalty to their tribe rather than to the nation or the central government.⁵

TABLE II
POPULATION OF SAUDI ARABIA BY REGION

Region	Settled	Nomads	Total	Percentage of Nomads
1. Riyadh	965,805	306,470	1,272,275	24.1
2. Mecca	1,513,634	240,474	1,754,108	13.7
3. Eastern Province	690,188	79,460	769,648	10.3
4. Asser	434,884	246,477	681,361	36.2
5. Medinah	282,195	237,099	519,294	45.7
6. Jizan	387,161	15,945	403,106	3.95
7. Al-Qaseem	215,447	101,193	316,640	31.95
8. Hail	117,210	142,719	259,929	54.9
9. Tabuk	105,388	88,375	193,763	45.6
10. Al-Baha	156,997	28,908	185,905	15.5
11. Najran	91,555	56,415	147,970	38.1
12. Northern Territory	42,666	86,079	128,745	66.9
13. Al-Jouf	34,093	31,401	65,494	47.9
14. Al-Qurayyat	18,432	12,972	31,404	41.0
Nomads on Boundaries	-----	210,000	210,000	100.0

Percentage of nomads in Saudi Arabia is 27.0%.



Map 2. Settled and Nomadic Population in Saudi Arabia, by Region

Each tribe has its own area or dirah where they can move freely and they do not need permission for pasturing and watering.

Intruding into another tribal dirah without the consent of that tribe usually meant war. The voluntary participation of tribesmen in a war can be used as a measure of loyalty of Bedouin to his tribe.⁶

Nomads and Nomadism Situation

At the beginning of this century, most people in the Arabian peninsula were nomads or semi-nomads. When King Abud Aziz Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, united the Kingdom of Saudia Arabia, he found that it was not possible to have a strong state with a society where the tribal law is stronger than the state law.⁷

In the beginning there was little difference between nomads and settled people in Saudi Arabia. Now the gap in social, economic, welfare, and education between nomads and settled people is increasing daily. Something should be done about this situation.⁸ It is easy to observe some of the problems that nomads, who live the nomadic life, have:

1. They lack government services such as health care, education, veterinary care, and social security.
2. Some of them cannot receive the necessities of life because they do not have enough money.
3. They cannot settle over night because they do not have the ability to live as normal settlers.
4. They do not have experience in agriculture, although the government plans to make them farmers.
5. There is not enough pasture for their animals during the dry years. In the case of disease, they lose most of their animals. Because of all or some of the above reasons, nomads are forced to settle down.

They might create a new settlement Hijrah, or a new area in cities or towns (Hilla).⁹

According to El-Farra, the purposes for settling nomads are:

1. To civilize them.
2. To improve their economic condition.
3. To educate them by teaching them how to worship God and how to farm land.
4. To keep them in touch in case of military need.
5. To change their loyalty from tribe to state.¹⁰

The government has tried for a long time to encourage nomads to settle. The first settlement was established in 1913.

Islam and Nomadism Life

Islam encourages nomads to be settled, because they cannot practice religion with nomadic life. At least 40 adult males are required for Friday prayer, and it is not easy to find 40 adult nomads near each other on the desert. The nomads themselves know that ". . . the religion is a sedentary religion."¹¹

Nomadism decreases the ability to learn and to work while Islam considers knowledge and work as main elements which make up Moslem personalities. "Islam encourages work and urges people to seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave. Moreover, Islam considers the seeking of knowledge as a form of God's workshop. . . ." ¹²

The late King Abdul Aziz sent missionaries to the tribes preaching that to become true Moslems they must become sedentary.¹³ Some of them were settled but some are still nomads, and there are few missionaries now.

The Tribe

The body of the tribe is as follows:

1. Family: the smallest unit in the tribe, the family might include three generations living in one household.

2. Thigh: more than one family makes one thigh, and there is more than one thigh in each tribe.

3. Clan or Sub-Tribe: made of more than one thigh, most of the time there are two clans in each tribe.

4. Tribe: which includes two or more sub-tribes or clans (see Figure 2).

Arabs can be divided into two groups of tribes: Kahtan and Adnan. Most of Kahtan's tribes are in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula: South Yamen, North Yamen, and Asir in southern Saudi Arabia. Adnan tribes can be found in Najd, Al-Hijaz, and the northern part of Saudi Arabia.

Throughout the history of Arab tribes, immigration has been from the Arabian peninsula to Jordon, Iraq, Syria, North Africa, and southern Europe.

Because of the Sahara climate, the Arabian peninsula cannot maintain a high density of population. The population will increase because of the oil industry.

Tribes and Social Situation

Nomads give their loyalty to their tribe and support their tribe whether it is right or wrong. An Arab poet illustrated this fact quite vividly:

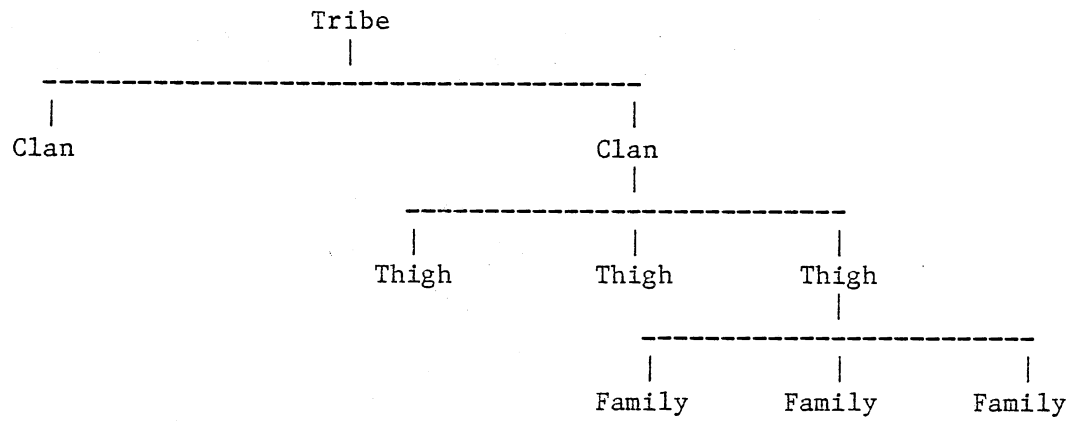


Figure 2. The Body of the Tribe

I am of the Ghaziah (tribe)
 When the Ghaziah errs, I err
 and When the Ghaziah goes a right
 I go a right.¹⁴

Each tribe has its own territory dirah. In this dirah members of the tribe have the right to herd their animals. The main problem is finding water, because watering without permission might cause a tribal war. Today some of the nomads have tankers to carry water, but they pay a great sum of money to do so.

Social status is important, especially in the case of marriage. A Bedouin who is from a high social status will not marry a woman from a low social status. Even if he wanted to, his family and tribe would prevent this marriage. Likewise, a man of low social status, like the Al-Salab tribe, cannot marry a woman of high social status. It is necessary to say that this is not Islamic law; it is tribal law. ,

Nomads are ashamed of such labor as smithery, butchering, barbering, or similar jobs. Bedouins believe these kinds of jobs are for the lowest social status tribes like the Salab tribe or desert gypsies.¹⁵

Before the establishment of a strong central government, the tribal law was practiced among the nomads' society. In the case of murder, the victim's family was expected to seek vengeance and they would execute the murderer if he was equal to the victim. If he was not equal, they would seek another member of the murderer's family or tribe. This revenge often was the beginning of bloodshed. Today the government takes the responsibility for such crimes.

Distribution of Tribes

In Saudi Arabia, there are many tribes. Each tribe has its own area dirah for pasturing and watering, which are usually found near dry

valleys. Some tribes have a large area dirah, such as the Al-Murrah and Otaibah tribes. The size of the tribal dirah depends on the size of the tribe and its strength. Some tribes, such as the Tamim tribe, settled and left the nomadic life; however, most tribes still live a nomadic life.¹⁶ "The number of tribes in Saudi Arabia is about 100. They differ markedly in size, power, degree of nomadism, and perceived social status. The size of tribes varies from 20,000 tents to a few hundred tents. . . ."¹⁷

Personal Information

It is necessary to mention that there are few sources of information on nomads. Therefore, nomads were interviewed in three areas:

Group 1: Included 10 households in the Al-Muslah area (Figure 1). There is no settlement in this area.

Group 2: Included 23 households near the town of Al-Khorma. (See Figure 1; this was done by Mr. Abdul Aziz El-twaim.)

Group 3: Included 30 households near Bigran (see Figure 1).

All responses were taken from males, because nomads prohibit strangers to talk with their females. If there are guests and there is no male at home, the female will, however, welcome and host them. Table III shows the age of the household respondents.

It seems that young nomads do not want to remain nomads. There are jobs for them in the sedentary areas. Both the military and various companies need more laborers. Old nomads have not been able to leave their nomadic life because they love it. Their nomadic life is associated with hospitality, courage, and simplicity, and they do not want to lose them by settling.

TABLE III
AGE OF HOUSEHOLDS

	20-30	31-40	41-50	51 or Over	Total
Number of Responses	4	17	19	23	63
Percentage	6.3	27.0	30.2	36.5	100

Islam encourages Moslem youth to marry as soon as they can. It was found that 61 households (or 96.8%) were married and 2 households (or 3.2%) were not married. Marriage in Arabian culture is a contract between two families to be as one family, and is arranged by the families. Women are important in the life of nomads. "The women in the desert participate extensively in herding, dairy labor, and handy craft . . . the traditional economy of the desert. . . ." ¹⁸

Polygamy is common in nomadic society, because they would like to have as many children as possible. Large families mean strength. It should be noted that Islam permits but does not encourage polygamy. It is permitted only when the man can deal fairly and equally with each of his wives. "It is often pointed out that polygamy is the most practical and by far the most human solution to the problem of the preponderance of females after wars. . . ." ¹⁹ In general, polygamy is not as widespread as many Westerners believe. Table IV shows the number of wives by household.

Islam allows polygamy under strict conditions. ²⁰ The Holy Koran says: "Marry more than one wife, but if ye fear that ye cannot act

TABLE IV
NUMBER OF WIVES PER HOUSEHOLD

	No Answer	Not Married	One Wife	Two Wives	Three Wives	Four Wives	Total
Number of Households	2	2	38	18	2	1	63
Percentage	3.2	3.2	60.3	28.6	3.2	1.5	100

equitably toward so many, marry only one . . . ye can be no means carry yourselves, equally between women."²¹ Nomads are proud of having many children, because they help carry some responsibility. In the past they helped to protect the family and the tribe in case of ride (tribal war). Some of the nomads do not welcome female children, because they are afraid of disgrace. Some Arabs before Islam killed their female children after birth. The Holy Koran discusses this, and prohibits such action. Table V shows the number of children (male, female, and both sexes) by household.

During the interviews, some of the nomads said that some of their children who live in cities or towns to study or find jobs act as a host for their families or relatives or the tribal members when they visit the city or town. Family ties in Saudi Arabia in general and among nomadic society especially are strong. It is common to find three generations in one household. The father, mother, and sons with their wives and children live in one house. Today in cities like Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam, most of the families are small and have two generations. Table VI shows the size of family by household.

The majority of households have a large number of persons who live in one household. Every member in a nomad's household is active, even the small children who take care of small goats and sheep and herd them not far away from the tents. The older members stay at home or visit with their age-mate to drink coffee and tea and listen to poetry. By sunset every member of the family returns home.

Tribal Area and Movement

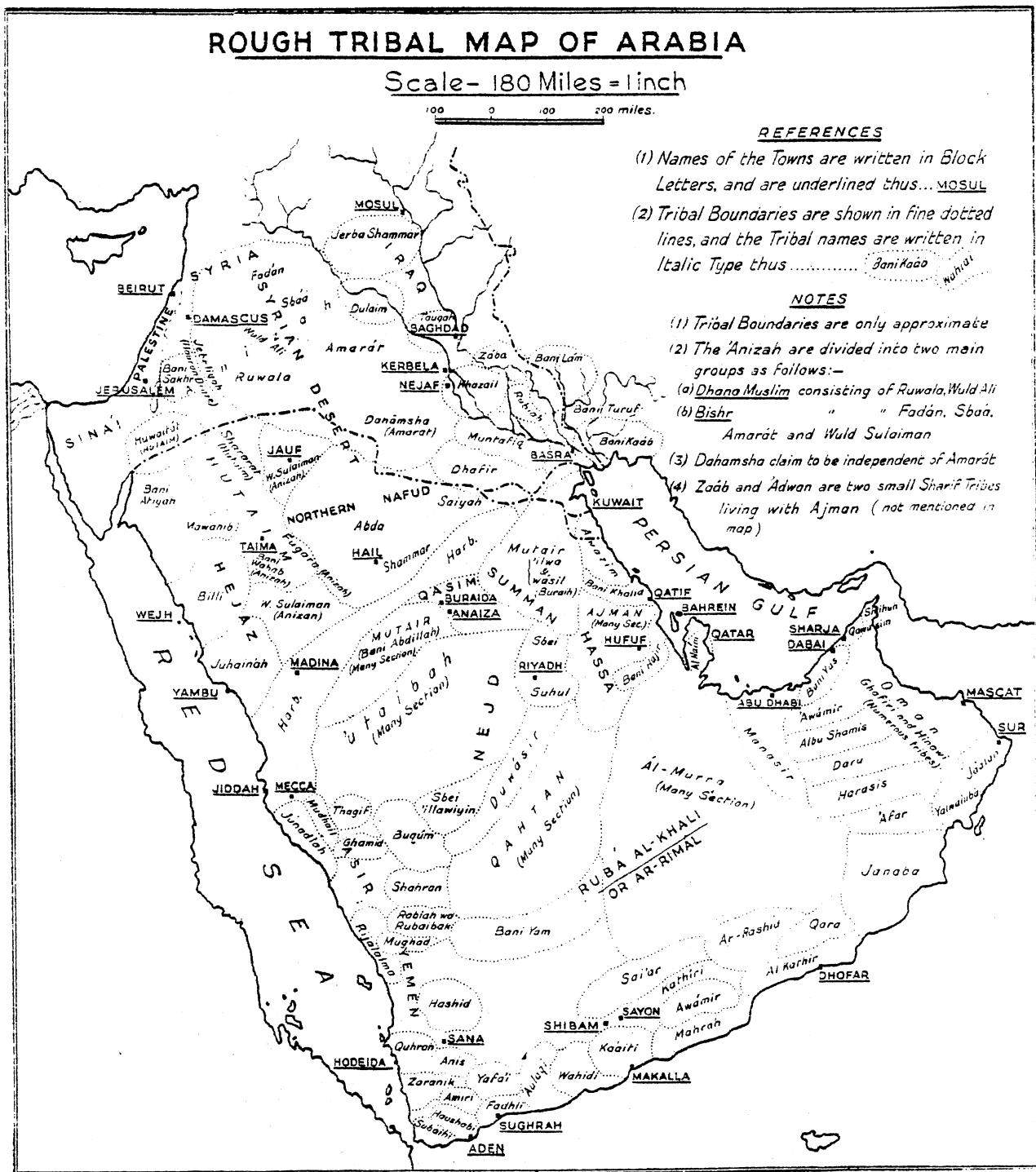
Before uniting the kingdom of Saudi Arabia by the late King Abdul

TABLE V
NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER HOUSEHOLD

	None	1-5	6-9	10 or More	Total
<u>No. of Male Children</u>					
Number of Households	10	44	7	2	63
Percentage	15.9	69.8	11.1	3.2	100
<u>No. of Female Children</u>					
Number of Households	9	48	5	1	63
Percentage	14.3	76.2	7.9	1.6	100
<u>No. of Female and Male Children</u>					
Number of Households	8	20	26	9	63
Percentage	12.7	31.7	41.3	14.3	100

TABLE VI
SIZE OF FAMILY BY HOUSEHOLD

	2-5	6-9	10 or More	Total
Number of Households	20	29	14	63
Percentage	31.8	46.0	22.2	100



Source: H. R. P. Dickson, The Arab of the Desert (London: Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1959).

Map 3. Rough Tribal Map of Arabia

Aziz, each tribe in the Arabian peninsula had a tribal area dirah. There are approximately 100 tribes in the Arabian peninsula (see Map 3), and each one has its own dirah. "The size ranges from the tens of thousands of square kilometers of the tribal territories of the powerful Arabian tribes . . . to a few thousand square kilometers of small tribes. . . ."22

There are many famous powerful tribes like Otaibah, Harb, Anazah, Al-Murrah, Kahtan, and Yam; and there are some weak tribes which are protected by powerful tribes. The Slubah tribe, for example, is protected by the Harb tribe. Each tribal dirah has one or more villages. Valleys are important because of underground water and pasture which grows in the flood plain after a rain. Each tribe also has one or more valleys in its dirah.²³

In the Najd region tribal boundaries are not clear and it could cause tribal war. Not all of the tribal members can outline their tribal area. Table VII shows the result of the question, "Can you outline your tribal area?"

TABLE VII
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NOMADS WHO CAN OUTLINE THEIR AREAS

	Yes	%	No	%	No. of Responses
Group I	7	70.0	3	30.0	10
Group II	8	34.8	15	65.2	23
Group III	<u>17</u>	<u>56.7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>43.3</u>	<u>30</u>
Total	32	50.8	31	49.2	63

The answers of Group I (see p. 19) shows that most of them can outline their dirah by mentioning the name of the area. One of them could outline the tribal area by including other tribal areas. The chiefs can outline their tribal areas well.

In the case of Group II (see p. 19), the majority cannot outline their tribal areas because there are farms along the valley (Wadi Subaai, and most of the nomads do not need to travel long distances to get water and pasture).

Most of Group III (see p. 19) can outline their tribal area dirah because it is not a large dirah and because mountains make the border clear.

When a tribe feels that it is strong enough, it will invade its neighbor tribe and take part of their area. For more than 15 centuries, Arabian tribes have been displaced generally from south to north. Sometimes they stay north of the Arabian peninsula in Jordan, Iraq, or Syrai, and some of the Arabian tribes have traveled to north Africa and south Europe.²⁴

Movement

Nomads used to move with their animals from place to place within the tribal territory in search of pasture and water. The climate directed their movements. They did not stay very long in one place unless there was good pasture. According to El-Farra: "During this period [November through May] the tribesmen and their families accompanied by their slaves and animals changed camp ground about every ten days. . . ."²⁵

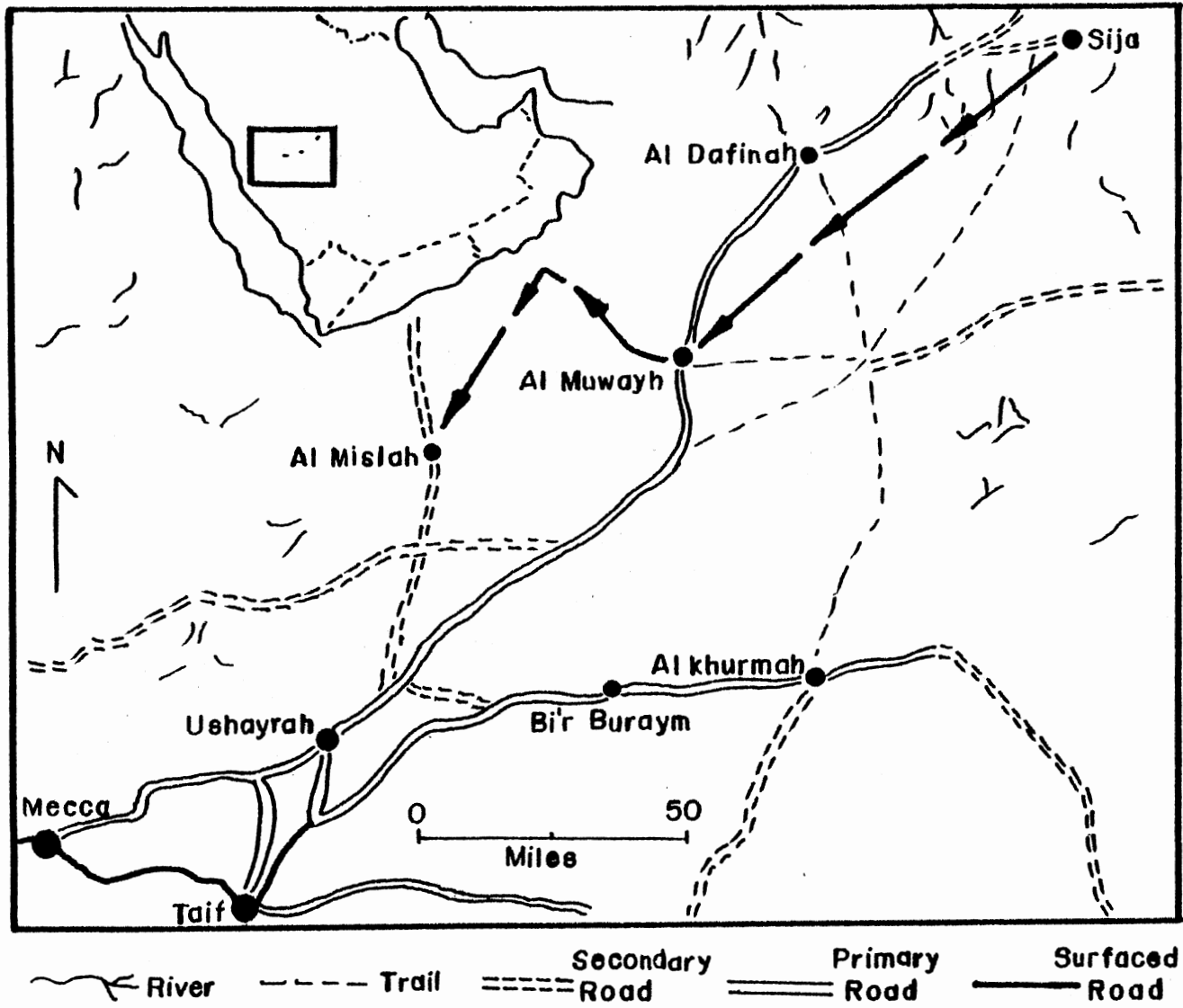
Nomads change camps because of overgrazing. They need to be near a pastoral area. Table VIII shows how long the households remained in their present area.

TABLE VIII
TIME AT PRESENT LOCATION

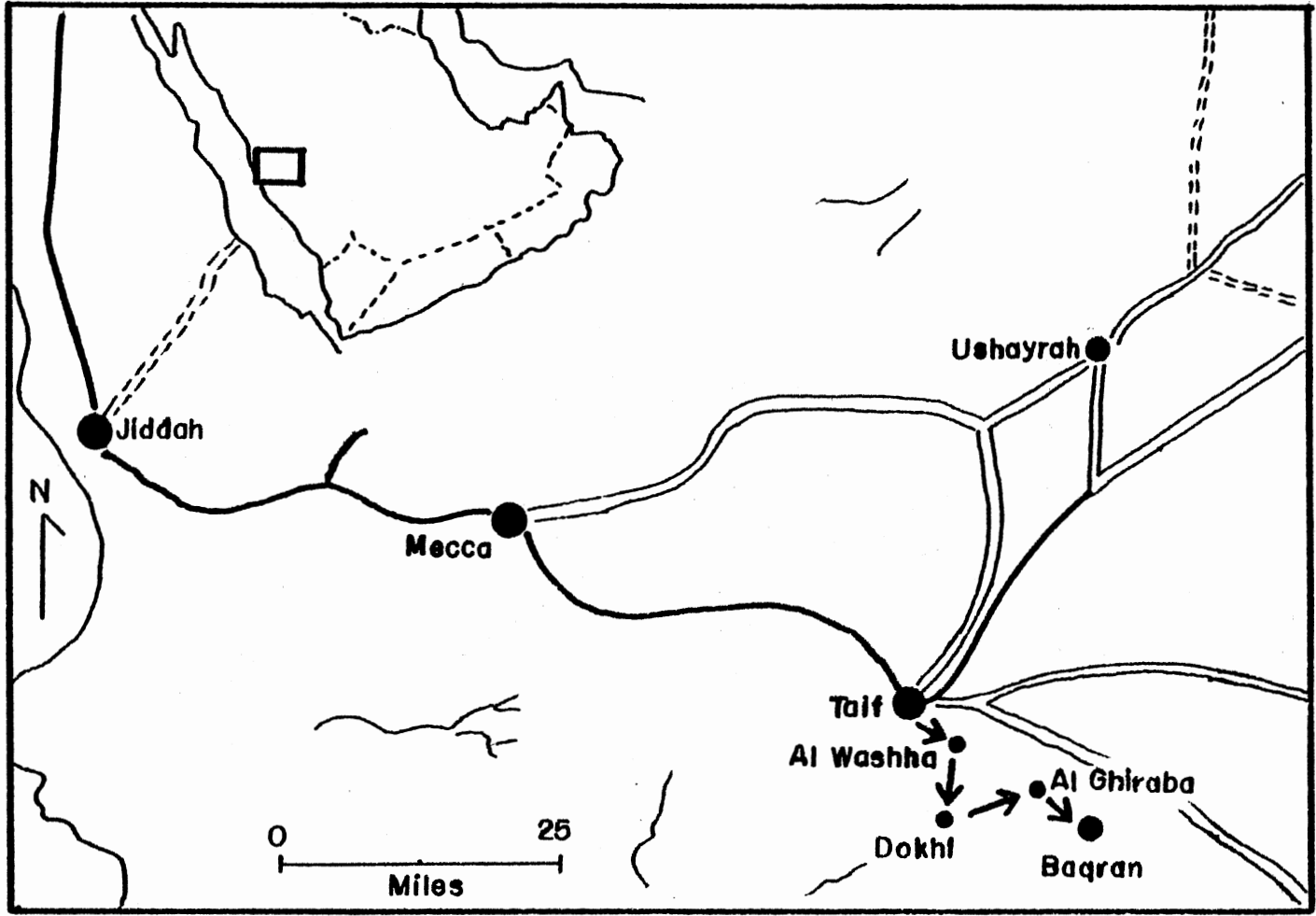
	Less Than One Month	1-4 Months	5-8 Months	9-12 Months	More Than One Year
Group I	4	3	2	-	1
Group II	3	-	2	6	12
Group III	-	-	10	9	11
Total (63)	7	3	14	15	24
Percentage (100)	11.1	4.8	22.2	23.8	38.1

El Farra calculated how many days nomads stayed in one camp ground in the same area. The author of this study found that they stayed in one area from 1 week to 56 months. According to this survey, the average stay in the present area was 54.5 days. Saudi Arabia has a dry climate over most areas in the kingdom. The nomads remained near their Dirah's wells, but they have to buy food for their animals. Some members of the household labored in nearby cities or towns in order to earn money to provide food for themselves and their animals.

Nomads of the Najd region travel long distances. For example, Map 4 shows the last three camps of one household was in Najd Sija for two months, Al-Muwayh for three months, and Kushp for one week. Map 5 shows the last three camps of one household in Al-Hijaz: Al-Washha for one year, Dokhl for six months, and Al-Ghiraba for eight months.



Map 4. The Last Three Camps of One Household in the Najd Region



Map 5. The Last Three Camps of One Household in the Al-Hijaz Region

In the case of tribes who live in the desert and herd camels, like the Al-Murrah tribe, it has been said: "The Al-Murrah members travel with their herds as far southwest as Najran and east to Qatar and borders of Oman, and north to the Kuwait and Iraqi borders"²⁶ (see Map 6).

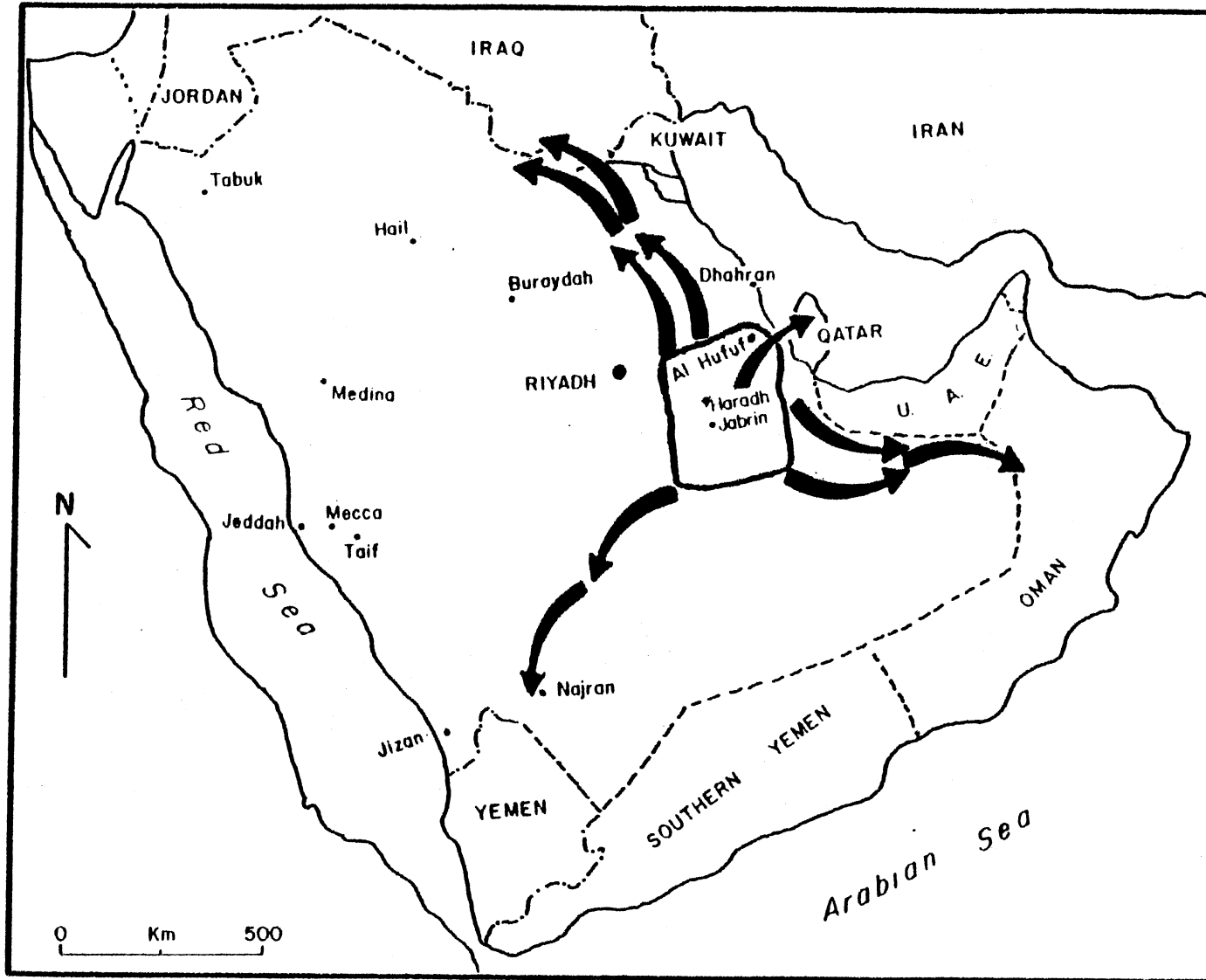
The cycle journey for pasture begins in October when the rain starts. It lasts until the end of May when there is not enough pasture. Then, they return to their wells until the next October, only to repeat the journey.²⁷

Nomads today use trucks and pickups for transportation. The result of the survey shows that 87.3 percent of the households interviewed use trucks or pickups. The remaining 12.7 percent use only camels for transportation. These are the camel herders.

Datsun pickups are the most common car in the Najd region, while Toyota pickups and Jeeps are the most common in the Al-Hijaz region. Nomads use their pickups to travel short distance, but they rent big trucks for traveling long distances. Camel herders travel several hundred miles, but sheep herders do not travel as far as the camel herders in search of pasture.

The result of the survey shows that nomads who live in the Al-Hijaz region do not travel as far as nomads of the Najd region do. In the mountainous region of Al-Hijaz, the shortest distance between two camps was 50 kilometers, and the longest distance was 90 kilometers. The average was 72.3 kilometers. The survey of the Al-Khorma area shows that the shortest distance between two camps was 20 kilometers and the longest distance was 1,500 kilometers. The average distance between two camps was 376.3 kilometers.

Since there are huge trucks to carry the nomads with their tents



Map 6. The Al-Murrah Tribe: The Cycle Journey for Pasture (After Al-Fiar)

and their animals, it is not difficult for them to travel for long distances in search of pasture and water. On the other hand, camel herders do not use trucks for transporting their animals because camels can walk hundreds of miles and can live for days without eating or drinking.

Recreation

More than 30 years ago, new instruments such as the radio and telegraph were prohibited for religious reasons, and most religious people did not use them. Presently nomads are taking advantage of these useful instruments, and a radio is the most useful instrument in the nomad's community. Most of the nomads have one or more radios per household.²⁷

According to the survey, 71.4 percent of the households have one or more radios and 28.6 percent have none. The average number of radios per household was 0.92. Some of the households have up to four radios, because they are inexpensive and small enough to carry in pockets.

In Saudi Arabia, the major broadcasting stations are located in Jeddah, Riyadh, and Dammam. They broadcast over long- and shortwave transmitters and cover the entire country.²⁹

Television is a new communication medium in Saudi Arabia. There are six major television stations in the country which cover the urban areas. Television is not available for nomads who are outside the urban areas.³⁰ Television sets are still expensive for nomads to buy. According to the survey, none of the households have television sets. This may change when sets become cheap and small, and when they can receive the broadcasts.

Nomads who have radios enjoy listening to the religious programs, and there are some social programs like the Nomadic Program. Weather

forecasts are important for them because they need to know about rainfall possibilities. There are 15.5 percent of the households with radios who enjoy music, but the majority do not listen for religious reasons.

The survey shows that 4.7 percent of the households can play classic Rababh which is similar to a violin. The drum is popular and they use it when they have festivals or celebrations. They also use it for war dances. Nomads have time to play games. The youth play games such as foot races, camel races, and wrestling. Older people play games that do not require as much energy, such as chess and tic-tac-toe. In the evenings they sometimes play Al-Samri in which two groups of people sit in two lines in front of each other and sing with a drum. They play some of these games for pastimes.

In his dissertation, Malik relates that:

As soon as the autumn rains come, the grass grows, and water is no longer the immediate necessity of life. At this time of the year, the tribes leave the wells to seek pastures and to hunt deer and other game. Hunting is very popular among the nomads, and they now carry it out in Jeeps and pickup trucks instead of on camels.³¹

The most favorite pastime among nomads is listening to poetry, because the poetry explains their history. Most of the nomads memorize the poetry. Each tribe has its own poems about the greatness of the tribe and its people and their hospitality, especially in lean years. Some times they use poetry as propaganda against their enemies from other tribes.

ENDNOTES

¹Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Statistical Year Book (Riyadh, 1978), pp. 16-19.

²W. B. Fisher, The Middle East, A Physical, Social, and Regional Geography (London, 1963), p. 82.

³A. El-Towaim, Communication Change Among Bedouins: A Case Study of the El-Khurmah Area in Saudi Arabia, unpublished report, 1976, pp. 4-6.

⁴Ahmed A. Shamekh, "Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qaqim Region, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1975), p. 35.

⁵Taha O. El-Farra, "The Effect of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973), pp. 16-18.

⁶Ibid., p. 8.

⁷Ibid., pp. 16-18.

⁸Shamekh, p. 247.

⁹Ibid., p. 226.

¹⁰El-Farra, pp. 214-220.

¹¹Mohammed N. Al-Wohaibi, "Cultural Perspectives of the Adult Reading Problem in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1978), p. 200.

¹²Abdullah S. Al-Obaid, "Human Resources Development in Saudia Arabia: Case of Technical Manpower Progams and Needs" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1979), p. 48.

¹³Shamekh, pp. 245-247.

- ¹⁴El-Farra, p. 39.
- ¹⁵Shamekh, pp. 176-178.
- ¹⁶Faud Hamzah, Qalb Jazirat al Arab (Heart of Arabian Island) (Riyadh, 1968), pp. 30-40.
- ¹⁷Shamekh, p. 35.
- ¹⁸Saleh A. Al-Malik, "Rural Migration and Urban Growth in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1973), p. 166.
- ¹⁹Al-Wahaibi, p. 69.
- ²⁰Al-Malik, p. 139.
- ²¹The Holy Quran, Sarah 4, verse 3.
- ²²Shamekh, pp. 32-35.
- ²³El-Farra, pp. 42-45.
- ²⁴Shamekh, pp. 32-35.
- ²⁵El-Farra, p. 46.
- ²⁶Mohammed H. Al-Fair, "The Faisal Settlement Project at Haradh, Saudi Arabia: A Study in Nomad Attitudes Toward Sedentarization" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1977), p. 135.
- ²⁷Al-Malik, pp. 102-105.
- ²⁸Al-Wohaibi, p. 16.
- ²⁹Ministry of Information, Saudi Arabia (Riyadh), p. 103.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 106.
- ³¹Al-Malik, p. 105.

CHAPTER III

STYLE OF LIFE

The Arabian peninsula has never welcomed a high density population. The pasturing was the main economic concern among the nomad society. The Arabian peninsula is poor in wild vegetation, so a small number of animals need a large area to herd in. This can cause tribes to graze their animals in other tribal areas which sometimes causes tribal wars. Weak tribes found it impossible to stay in their areas without problems, so they left their tribal areas and immigrated. For more than 2,000 years many tribes left the Arabian peninsula for many parts of the world. Tribes left their areas on the Arabian peninsula through the force of the stronger tribes or because of the drought. At the dawn of Islam many tribes left the Arabian peninsula for Syria, Iraq, and Persia. They also went to North Africa, from Egypt to Morocco, and to Europe in Spain.¹

Nomads used to move from the south to the north. The nomads now, however, immigrate to "large cities like Riyadh and Dammam. Oil industry centers also are the targets of migrants from the desert. . . ." ²

During the first decades of this century, many nomads were settled down at hijar nomads' villages. The government encouraged them to do so. At a later time the nomads themselves started settling down either in urban centers or in nomad villages. According to Al-Shamekh, some of the nomads' villages ". . . had a population previously settled in another

Bedouin village . . . the rest of the population settled directly from nomadism."³

There is some change in the nomadic life. Some of the nomads settled down, but those who did not settle also have some changes in their life style.⁴ Some of them use white tents instead of the traditional black. Trucks as a mode of transportation are substituted for camels, and nomads are taking advantage of some modern equipment.

Nomads who live the nomadic life and would like to settle down are facing many problems. The government would like to settle them by making them farmers. This idea is not accepted because they consider agriculture a low social status job, and they have no experience in farming. Therefore, their situation has worsened. They have no education to meet the requirements of jobs in cities, so they must settle in the poorest section of the city because of their low incomes.⁵

Nomads who have settled, either in cities or oil industry areas, still have ties with their tribe in the tribal area. They go back to spend holidays with their relatives and friends in the dirah.⁶ Communication between settled nomads and unsettled nomads is strong. The settled nomads usually act as hosts for the unsettled nomads. The settled nomads, especially those engaged in agriculture, hire other nomads to herd their animals.⁷ The government's settlement projects were unsuccessful, either in Wadi Al-Sirhan or the Eastern province because they want the nomads to become settled agriculturalists.⁸

The nomads' traditions and customs make them look down on craftsmanship and consider it a lower social level. This is also true for agriculture. They can become farmers and provide themselves and their animals with food. "This is [ashamed of crafts], of course, one of

illiteracy's infections which will continue to increase year after year because of the large number of out of school children."⁹

The demand for meat increases all over the world. Since there is a demand for animals and since they are the nomads' economy, the government must teach them how to meet the demand. It is necessary to offer them veterinary science information, selective breeding, and ways to improve feed.¹⁰

Most nomads would like to settle, and they gave more than one reason for doing so. Some of the reasons are as follows:

1. To send their children to school.
2. To practice religion in order to become a true Moslem.
3. To obtain health care which they cannot get while they live the nomadic life.
4. Nomadism as an occupation cannot support their need for modern necessities.
5. Settlement gives them self-respect, and they would ". . . no longer have to depend on government charity."¹¹

It appears that social and psychological status have not been considered in settlement projects. It is the responsibility of the Saudi government and Saudi universities to work together in order to find the best way of settling the nomads.

According to the survey, 88.9 percent of the respondents would agree to stay in any project created by the government if it would provide irrigation water for pastures. The remaining 11.1 percent declined. The reason was that they do not want to leave the tribal land to settle in another land even if there is enough water for pasture.

This result is very important, because it shows that a high percentage

of nomads would like to settle down. Although the survey contains a small sample, it does represent nomads from all over Saudi Arabia. The survey question was: "If the government provided irrigation water for pastures in one place, would you stay at that one place?" The majority said "yes." Those who answered "no" gave the reason that they did not want to leave their tribal land. Only one respondent rejected the project idea because he "did not want such a project to control his movement."

It is not their desire to travel from place to place in search of pasture and water. They do not have any choice.

The government has had three projects to settle nomads:

1. The late King Abdul Aziz tried to settle the nomads in settlement areas called Hijars. This project began in 1912. There were many of these Hijars located across the country.

2. From 1958 to 1965, unsettled nomads of the Northern territory lost more than 90 percent of their livestock from drought. The settlement project was in Wadi Sirhan. The government gave the nomads land to farm and provided them with water and seed. The project was not successful, however.

3. In 1972, the government initiated the King Faisal Settlement Project at Harad. It was located between two main markets: Riyadh and the Eastern province.¹⁴ The project was planned for 1,000 families, but because of the cost, the government decided to manage the project until they repaid the expenses. Most of the nomads left the project area to return to their normal life rather than work as employees.

Nomads adhere to their tribal land and to their tribes. The survey questioned nomads about where they would choose to live. Most (87.3%)

of the nomads chose to remain in their tribal areas. The others (12.7%) gave different answers such as in a city like Taif or Turaba, or on other tribal land, or near the main highway.

Most of the nomads know it is not easy to settle in or near urban areas, because of the lack of land for use. When they do settle, they are subject to deportation if they happen to settle on private land. They cannot afford to buy even a small amount of land in an urban area because it is very expensive. Only the government can give them land near the urban places.

Today as always the biggest problem for nomads who live the nomadic life is lack of rain. Extreme lack of rainfall would cause the nomads disaster because they would lose their livestock. If they lose their livestock in drought years, they would become very poor and unable to support themselves. They are tired of traveling from place to place in search of pasture and water. It costs them money but they cannot avoid it. There are many problems besides these that can be observed through studying the nomadic life.

According to the survey, rainfall provided the greatest happiness among nomads. Rain means life for the nomads. It means pasture and water for their livestock, and provides welfare to them and their communities.

ENDNOTES

¹Saleh A. Al-Malik, "Rural Migration and Urban Growth in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1973), pp. 103-105.

²Ibid., p. 105.

³Ahmed A. Shamekh, "Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qasim Region, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1975), p. 175.

⁴Mohammed H. Al-Fair, "The Faisal Settlement Project at Haradh, Saudi Arabia: A Study in Nomad Attitudes Toward Sedentarization" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1977), p. 132.

⁵Al-Malik, pp. 32-35.

⁶Al-Fair, pp. 11-14.

⁷Motoko Katakura, Bedouin Village: A Study of a Saudi Arabian People in Transition (Tokyo, 1977), pp. 50-53.

⁸Ministry of Planning, The Nomadic Community, unpublished report, p. 2.

⁹Mohammed N. Al-Wohaibi, "Cultural Perspective of the Adult Reading Problem in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1978), p. 8.

¹⁰Laurence Krader, "The Ecology of Nomadic Pastoralism," International Social Science Journal, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1959), pp. 505-510.

¹¹Taha O. El-Farra, "The Effect of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973), p. 193.

¹²Mohammed Awad, "The Assimilation of Nomads in Egypt," Geographical Review, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April, 1954), p. 240.

¹³Shamekh, pp. 45-47.

¹⁴Al-Malik, p. 106.

¹⁵Al-Fair, p. 118.

CHAPTER IV

NOMADS AND THEIR ECONOMIC SITUATION

The society of Saudi Arabia can be divided into: nomads, semi-nomads, and settled nomads. Nomadism is an economic phenomenon. The occupation of nomads is grazing animals--sheep, goats, and camels. The nomads are distributed across the Arabian peninsula, but the Arabian peninsula has never been able to support a high density of population with a pastoral economy.¹

The economic situation of nomads can be studied through their production, consumption, and exchange of products.

The nomads' economy depends on rainfall and pasture. Most of the time pasture and water cannot be found together, and the nomads move about to get them. Thus, they must move in search of water, pasture, or both.

There are no high percentages of nomads engaged in urban occupations like the military, government, farming, or transportation. Table IX shows the occupations in which nomads might engage, and the percentage of households that already engage in such jobs. They need no experience for some of these jobs, but the jobs are limited in number.

Table IX shows that no nomads engage in physical labor. However, there are thousands of foreign workers, most of them unskilled. Nomads could do their jobs but refuse. The problem has two points. First, the nomads look down on on many jobs which are available in the urban areas.

They are not ready to engage in such jobs even though their economic condition would improve. "Adult illiteracy in Saudi Arabia has created a severe manpower shortage, making it necessary to import foreign workers to fill the many jobs which require more than manual labor."² Second, the companies and businessmen prefer foreign workers. They see nomads as lazy, inefficient, and undependable workers rather than untrained, insecure, and possibly underfed people in need of help.³

TABLE IX
PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD PER OCCUPATION

	Military Service	Official	Farmer	Truck Driver	Sheep Herder
Percentage of Household	15.8	4.8	9.5	4.8	100

The Yemeni workers have the same experience as nomads, and they compete with them for jobs. The Yemeni workers come to Saudi Arabia alone. They leave their families behind, and send most of their wages back to their families in Yemen. After making enough money, they return to Yemen to stay for a while but return to Saudi Arabia when it runs out.

The foreign workers outnumber the citizen workers in Saudi Arabia. Most of these workers are unskilled (see Table X). It is important to Saudi Arabia to educate the nomads in order to change their ideas about many jobs of which they are ashamed. It is difficult for nomads to

change the occupations from herders to urban workers because of the lack of work skills and education.

TABLE X
SAUDI/NON-SAUDI WORKERS BY GEOGRAPHY REGION
IN 1976

	Central Region	Western Region	Eastern Region	Northern Region	Southern Region	Total
Non-Saudi Workers	79,838	71,852	48,753	7,764	12,638	220,845
Saudi Workers	23,096	42,383	43,684	5,196	3,984	127,343
Total	111,934	114,235	92,437	12,960	16,622	348,188

Source: Statistical Yearbook, 1978, p. 450.

In his social study, Al-Malik found that "the average monthly income by Saudi Riyal is 490 for non-migrants, 836 for urban migrants, 480 for rural migrants, and 325 for the nomads."⁴ Nomads cannot afford to live in cities with such small incomes. It is not enough money to host one guest. This means poverty to the nomads. They apply for social security aid, but their applications are refused because they are not eligible for such aid. Eligibility for social security aid should be for one of the following:

1. Orphans who are under eighteen years of age.
2. Males who are completely disabled.
3. Non-sustained women.⁵

The money for social security comes from Zakah (Alms). There are

eight kinds of people who are eligible for Zakah. The Holy Koran advises:

Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of God; and for the wayfarer: (Thus is it) ordained by God and God is full of knowledge and wisdom.⁶

Since some of the nomads are poor and needy, they should receive social security because the money for social security comes from Zakah. Based on the Holy Koran, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs should reconsider its policy toward who is eligible for social security.

Animals

The major source of the nomads' income is from their animals. According to the household survey, Table XI shows the average number of animals per group.

TABLE XI
THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF ANIMALS PER GROUP

	Sheep			Goats			Camels		
	Max.	Min.	Avg.	Max.	Min.	Avg.	Max.	Min.	Avg.
Group I*	240	30	99	73	0	27.0	80	0	26.4
Group II*	400	10	130	150	0	59.5	190	0	36.6
Group III*	300	39	142	300	0	59.0	3	0	1.6
All Responses	400	10	120	300	0	54.0	190	0	18.2

*See page 17.

Some of the figures given might not be reliable. A portion of the nomads thought there might be some aid coming from the government based on the number of their animals, so they exaggerated.

Al-Shamekh believes that ". . . with fewer nomads it would be possible to raise the number of animals for each nomadic family several times its present average of about forty sheep."⁸

It was stated in the second development plan that:

Most land in Saudi Arabia is arid or semiarid, suitable only for periodic grazing. Although these vast range lands have been badly overgrazed, they remain important in that they support about three-fourths of the country's livestock population, about 8.5 million in sheep equivalents. . . .⁹

This means the average would be 13.4 sheep per person from the nomad community, if we agree that the nomad population is about 635,000. However, the nomad population is triple this number.

Nomads are the only users of wild pasture for grazing animals. Some 90 percent of the land of Saudi Arabia is used by nomads for their livestock. This provides all local markets with meat and animals.¹⁰

The nomads' economy depends on animal products. They use the animal products of milk, meat, hair, and hide for their daily existence. They also sell some of their animals, especially at al Hajj (Pilgrimage). Most pilgrims kill sheep, goats, or camels. During this period of the year, as sacrifice tens of thousands of animals are brought to the pilgrimage areas, and nomads bring most of these animals.

The nomads' incomes are supplemented from salaries received by serving in the military forces or in the National Guard. This participation of some members of the family can persuade nomads to settle in order to be close to their relatives, thus causing them to become involved in sedentary occupations.

Some nomads have truck driving jobs. They use white (tanker) trucks to deliver water for the animals when the camps are located far away from water wells. A small number of households in the Begran area raise bees. They collect honey twice a year and sell it at Taif. Those eligible for social security receive between 6 to 10 Saudi Riyals per day. They receive payment only once a year.

Table XII shows the average annual income per group according to the survey. The nomads' incomes are subject to increases and decreases depending on the rainfall, but the gap between the nomads' income and the incomes of the sedentary people is wide. According to the Second Development Plan, "gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is estimated to have risen from Saudi Riyal 3,185 in [1969-1970] to Saudi Riyal 23,980 in [1974-1975]."¹¹ This amount should increase to be more than SR 25,000 by 1980. The nomads' income, however, is still low. They need more governmental attention to improve their economy.

TABLE XII
THE AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF HOUSEHOLD
PER GROUP BY SAUDI RIYALS

	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Group I*	30,000	3,000	6,700
Group II*	31,000	3,000	15,304
Group III*	15,000	5,000	7,250

*See page 19.

One question is, how many Bedouin nomads are there in Saudi Arabia? The Ministry of Planning has taken the census of the nomad population across the country. Table II, p. 11, shows the number of nomads in Saudi Arabia. This table divides Saudi Arabia into 14 regions, and gives the number of nomads as a percentage of the total population. In the Second Development Plan, nomads are 10.2 percent of the total population. In the population census of 1974, nomads were 27 percent of the total population. Which one of these two sources is close to the truth?

If the census is reliable, then 17 percent of the nomads will be ignored by the government. If the Second Development Plan is reliable, however, then there will be no problem. A new official census should be taken with more attention paid to the nomads (see Table XIII).

TABLE XIII
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NOMADS TO THE
POPULATION IN SAUDI ARABIA

Region	Number of Nomads	Percent of Regional Population	Total Population
North	263,000	48.2	545,643
Central	152,000	9.4	1,617,021
South	92,000	5.5	1,672,727
West	71,000	4.2	1,690,476
East	57,000	8.4	678,571
Total	635,000	10.2	6,204,438

Source: Second Development Plan, p. 422.

Animals are the nomads' economy and their most expensive possession. When nomads try to change their occupation, they face many problems. As mentioned before, nomads who settle in nomad villages (Hijar) engage in agriculture but still graze animals. The results of the questionnaire show that the nomads at Al-Khormah have higher incomes than those at Begran or Al-Muslah. Some nomads have changed their ideas about agriculture and have become farmers. They now send livestock, livestock products, and agricultural products to the markets, and use the profits to buy food, clothing, and the like.¹¹ The government is trying to improve the nomads' economy by settling them, but the settlement areas should be studied before they are established to determine if the areas have good soil and enough water. If they do, then it is important to teach nomads how to farm and take care of the animals at the settlement.

The government nearly succeeded with the Haradh settlement project: "Instead of distributing the project immediately to the nomads, they decided to operate it themselves [the government] on a commercial basis to pay back the construction costs. . . ." ¹² Such projects when successful will give the green light to begin similar projects across Saudi Arabia. It is the responsibility of the government to improve the nomads' economic, health, and educational conditions. The nomads' chiefs should be educated to improve their tribal economy by modernizing the style of grazing livestock, and to encourage their people to settle so they can establish a new life. The government will do its best to narrow the gap between the nomads and the settled people, but only the nomads can help the government.

ENDNOTES

¹Mildred Berman, "Social change Among the Beersheba Bedouin," Human Organization, Vol. 26, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer, 1967), p. 75.

²Mohammed N. Al-Wohaibi, "Cultural Perspectives of the Adult Reading Problem in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1978), p. 40.

³Ahmed A. Shamekh, "Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qasim Region, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1975), pp. 235-237.

⁴Saleh A. Al-Malik, "Rural Migration and Urban Growth in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1973), p. 189.

⁵Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Social Security in Ten Years (in Arabic), pp. 31-32.

⁶The Holy Quran, Surah 9, verse 60.

⁷Taha O. El-Farra, "The Effect of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973), p. 209.

⁸Shamekh, p. 256.

⁹Ministry of Planning, Second Development Plan, 1975-1980 (Jeddah, 1975), p. 119.

¹⁰El-Farra, pp. 74-77.

¹¹Shamekh, p. 240.

¹²Mohammed H. Al-Fair, "The Faisal Settlement Project at Haradh, Saudi Arabia: A Study in Nomad Attitudes Toward Sedentarization" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1977), p. 120.

CHAPTER V

NOMADS AND EDUCATION

Life in Saudi Arabia today is different than the life that Saudi Arabia once had. Things are changing rapidly. Today we have modern instruments like airplanes, electronic machines, and the like. Schools have been built in all the cities and villages in Saudi Arabia. This widens the gap daily between the nomads and the settled people. There are no big differences from ancient times in the nomads' life style, but the sedentary people are trying to achieve modernization. Educating and training the people are essential elements for development in every sector.

Nomads lack both education and training; thus they are of little value to modernization attempts. Education therefore is very important for Saudi Arabian development. By educating nomads, there would be no shortage of workers. Illiteracy in Saudi Arabia, especially among the nomads, creates a severe manpower shortage. It is necessary to bring foreign workers to fill the many jobs which are available.

The Holy Koran encourages people to educate themselves. The first word sent down from God to His last prophet, Muhammad, was (Read): "Read: In the name of the Lord who createth man from clot. Read and thy Lord is the most bounteous. Who teacheth by the pen, teacheth man that which he knew not."¹ These three verses were the first verses of the Holy Quran revealed by Gabriel to Muhammad. Most nomads know that Islam encourages

people to learn. Some of them refer to this verse: "Say, shall those who know be deemed equal with those who know not."²

The nomads need education for their children, and the government is doing its best to build schools across the country. Education is free from kindergarten through the university level. It is for all people in Saudi Arabia who would like to study, regardless of sex. Alfred Thomas relates that:

not only is education provided free, but students actually receive monthly allowances which enable them to attend schools. This is not just a scholarship program but is available to all who indicate a desire to seek an education. Even books and stationery are provided for pupils free of charge. Monthly allowances are provided to all students of colleges and of teacher-training institutes. . . .³

Free medical care and scholarship are guaranteed to large numbers of students in various Arab and other foreign countries.⁴

The Ministry of Education stated the purpose of education as follows:

. . . to have the students understand Islam in a correct comprehensive manner, to plant and spread the Islamic creed, to furnish the student with the values, teachings and ideals of Islam, to equip him with the various skills and knowledge to develop his conduct in constructive directions, to develop the society economically, socially, and culturally, and to prepare the individual to become a useful member in the building of his community.⁵

In Saudi Arabia, education has four levels:

Elementary Schools (grades 1-6): these schools are located in the urban areas and villages.

Middle Schools (grades 7-9) are located in cities and towns.

High Schools (grades 10-12) are located in cities.

Large colleges and universities are located in large cities like Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam.

These schools mainly are for sedentary people. The question arises as to how to educate the nomads who live the nomadic life? The answer is

to settle them. But it might take a long time before they settle, and the government does not want to wait. Because they live in small groups across Saudi Arabia, which is one-third the area of the United States, it is very difficult to provide education to these scattered groups.

Nomads would like to educate themselves and their children. Tribal chiefs have requested and continue to request the government to open schools in their areas. The government tries to provide them with schools, but there are problems. First, there are only a number of students who might attend any one school. Second, some nomads do not want to send their children to schools, because they need them to help look after the animals. They are not in a position to hire employees for this task. Third, what kind of education should be given to nomads: should it be elementary general education or vocational education? And, what training should be derived from vocational education, industrial or agricultural?⁶ Generally, vocational education is not successful for nomads, because they consider it a craft. They are ashamed of being taught a craft. Fourth, mobile schools might be the solution to this problem, but it is not easy to find teachers who will accept such a job.⁷

According to the survey, 4 out of 63 people interviewed had attended schools. The maximum time they spent in school was two years. It was not enough time for them to learn to read. They attended schools in the Al-Khorma area. The reason seems to be the availability of night schools in that area which are for illiterate people.

There are two stages for adult education and illiteracy:

1. Illiteracy: combating stage which is equivalent in level to the first three grades of elementary education.
2. Follow up stage: equivalent in level to the 5th and 6th grades of elementary education.⁸

Table XIV shows the statistics of adult education in Saudi Arabia. It is necessary to mention that all adult education schools are located in sedentary areas. During the summer season, mobile schools are sent to some large nomad camps. But this is not practical basis, because most nomads are distributed in small groups. Most of them cannot take advantage of this effort.

Table XV illustrates the situation of education among nomads. This table shows how illiteracy is common among the nomads. The kingdom's policy in general and the Ministry of Education in particular towards the nomads in the past was very limited. The Ministry of Education had many difficulties in trying to educate the nomads. For example, lack of manpower; there are many foreign teachers who will not go to the rural areas.

The movement of the nomads in search of pasture and water isolates them from education.⁹ The adult education schools are increasing in number daily. It is not only the Ministry of Education who takes charge of adult education, but also other offices and ministries such as:

1. Girls' Education Administration, which provides education for adult illiterate females.
2. Ministry of Defense, which provides adult education and illiteracy schools for the Ministry's personnel and their families.
3. Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.
4. Directorate of Public Security, which takes care of adult education and illiteracy schools for its personnel.
5. The National Guard, which provides adult education and illiteracy schools for Guard members.
6. Private Education, which provides adult education and illiteracy schools for males.¹⁰

TABLE XIV
ADULT EDUCATION
NUMBER OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS, SCHOOLS, AND CLASSES
1972 - 1977

Years	Number of Students		Number of Teachers	Number of Classes	Number of Schools
	Male	Female			
1972 - 73	52,822	2,293	2,571	2,181	768
1973 - 74	61,524	10,398	3,967	2,814	926
1974 - 75	75,051	24,622	5,953	4,252	1,425
1975 - 76	68,082	27,263	7,131	5,107	1,743
1976 - 77	78,492	43,402	8,425	6,127	2,147

Source: Statistical Yearbook, 1978, p. 66.

TABLE XV
ABILITY OF READING AND WRITING AMONG NOMADS

Ability to	Yes	%	No	%
Read	12	19	51	81
Write	8	12.7	55	87.3

These schools, however, are in urban areas and are for settled people. The nomads have no equality with settled people in terms of education.

The Second Development Plan of 1975-1980 planned to:

Organize annual summer campaigns, beginning in 1975-76 to provide literacy training to nomadic and rural groups. The initial target is 3,000 participants increasing to 5,000 in the campaigns for 1979-1980; a total of 20,000 participants is projected for the plan period.¹¹

Students who graduate from the literacy course will be given an award of Saudi Rigal 500.¹²

The Second Development Plan estimated the number of nomads in Saudi Arabia as 635,000. The plan can give literacy training to 20,000 persons by 1980. This means just 3.1 percent of the total nomad population will receive schooling. This is very limited.

Al-Wohaibi declares:

The illiterate nomads know almost nothing about the outside world, with the exception of what they might hear from educated travelers. . . . Their knowledge of history is limited to what they are able to recite from memory. Quranic knowledge is equally limited, excepting those parts necessary for conducting the five daily prayers.¹³

Cole continues:

For many years Bedouin attendance in the regular school system was extremely low, and the rate of illiteracy was consequently very high among the adult population. Education . . . is highly valued among the Bedouin . . . but it is difficult for them to get an education and they remain nomads.¹⁴

Today, transistor radios and motor vehicles keep some nomads in contact with sedentary people. Radio broadcasts inform them of rainfall distribution. They can then move to where the rain pools are, instead of depending on chance or rumor.¹⁵

Education is important for nomads but especially important for their children. Most nomads want to educate their children, and the government offers free education to all its citizens. But nomads need their

children for certain duties. When they do send them to schools, they need others to replace them. They will pay them, but most of the nomads cannot afford to do so. Table XVI shows the condition of the nomads' education. There are 44.4 percent of the total respondents whose members are attending schools.

TABLE XVI
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD WHO HAVE MEMBER OF
THE FAMILY ATTENDING SCHOOLS, AND THE DISTANCE
TO SCHOOLS

Responses	Does anyone in your family attend school				Total Responses	Distance to Schools by Kilometer		
	----- now -----					-----		
	Yes	%	No	%		Max	Min	Ave
Group I	6	60.0	4	40.0	10	50	12	31.1
Group II	11	47.8	12	52.2	23	100	7	34.8
Group III	11	36.7	19	63.3	30	50	7	13.4
All Responses	28	44.4	35	55.6	63	100	7	24.4

The distance to the schools is a problem. Sometimes nomads stay as close to a school as 7 kilometers, but sometimes they are as far from a school as 100 kilometers. When they are far away from a school, it is necessary to send their children to a settlement area to be near a school. This creates problems also. First, most of the nomads cannot supply

their children with money to use while away from home. And second, the young children find it difficult psychologically to be separated from their families.

The government has opened elementary schools throughout the kingdom, even in the small villages. For example, the Taif region, which is in the Western province, had 219 elementary schools in 1979.¹⁶ There are 42 schools in the city of Taif itself with an average of 15.5 classes per school and an average of 24 students per class. The villages and rural areas of the Taif region have 177 schools with an average of 5.8 classes per school, and 17 students per class. At Begran, for instance, there is one elementary school with 7 classes, 7 teachers, and 128 students, for an average of 18 students per class. The average number of students per class can drop to a small number. For example, at Oshairah (see Map 1), there is a school with 6 classes and 62 students, for an average of 10.3 students per class.¹⁷

Within the Taif region, there are 50 intermediate schools, and 13 of them are in the city of Taif. These schools average 17 classes per school, and 31 students per class. There are 37 intermediate schools in the villages of the Taif region. They average 4 classes per school and 22.7 students per class.¹⁸

The intermediate schools are located in the large villages. Students who are in small villages or nomads who live near these small villages must travel to the city of Taif, or to the nearest village which has an intermediate school in order to study. Some students who graduate from elementary schools quit school to start working in private business or in the government offices.

High schools are fewer in number than intermediate schools. The

city of Taif has four high schools that have an average of 23.5 classes per school and 36.7 students per class. There are nine high schools located in the largest villages of the Taif region. Most of these schools are new. They have an average of two classes per school and 20.3 students per class.¹⁹

Tables XVII and XVIII show the population ten years of age and over by educational status and sex. At the cities of Taif and Emerts, 33.3 percent of the males are illiterate, as are 58.8 percent of the females. The percentage of illiteracy at the villages is 59.9 percent of the males and 94.5 percent of the females. Illiteracy among nomads is 92.7 percent for males and 99.2 percent for females. The illiteracy of the total population is 44.9 percent among males and 73.6 percent among females.²⁰

From 1974 to the present, there are no similar data available to compare. However, there are many schools for boys and girls that have been established, and there are new adult education programs for men and women.

Illiteracy is the number one enemy, especially among women, but awareness of this condition is evidenced by an Arabian maxim:

If you educate a man, you educate one individual,
but if you educate a woman, you educate a family.

TABLE XVII
 POPULATION 10 YEARS AND OVER BY EDUCATION STATUS
 AND SEX AT TAIF REGION

	City of Taif		Villages		Water Points		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	28,343	36,272	25,490	40,221	10,778	12,723	62,611	86,216
Reads Only	3,404	2,162	1,436	192	110	32	4,950	2,386
Literate	24,612	12,416	9,777	1,357	605	10	34,994	13,783
Education Not Shown	123	273	71	309	48	55	242	637
Elementary Schools	14,215	5,896	3,644	274	72	1	17,931	6,171
Intermediate Schools	6,362	2,289	1,104	66	13	-	3,479	2,355
Intermediate Institution	8,920	555	168	8	-	-	1,060	563
Secondary Schools	3,042	827	307	24	-	-	3,359	851
Secondary Institution	642	281	205	11	-	-	847	292
Diploma	355	8	76	1	-	-	431	9
Institution	436	320	23	13	-	-	459	333
University Degree and Over	2,085	268	123	7	-	-	2,208	275

TABLE XVII (Continued)

	<u>City of Taif</u>		<u>Villages</u>		<u>Water Points</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Certificate Not Shown	505	110	76	38	-	-	581	148
Final Total	85,016	61,677	42,500	42,521	11,621	12,821	139,142	117,019

Source: Population Census, Administrative Area of Mecca, 1974, p. 24.

TABLE XVIII
 POPULATION 10 YEARS AND OVER BY EDUCATION STATUS
 AND SEX AT AL-KHORMA

	Al-Khorma		Villages		Water Points		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	1,220	2,095	982	1,262	3,354	2,963	5,556	6,320
Reads Only	123	23	123	15	22	3	268	41
Literate	749	154	296	14	55	-	1,100	168
Education Not Shown	5	14	2	9	6	3	13	26
Elementary Schools	197	55	75	4	9	-	281	59
Intermediate Schools	68	4	22	-	-	-	90	4
Intermediate Institution	19	1	-	-	-	-	19	1
Secondary Schools	12	6	8	5	-	-	20	11
Secondary Institution	13	2	1	-	-	-	14	2
Diploma	19	-	8	-	-	-	27	-
Institution	5	1	5	-	-	-	10	1
University Degree and Over	16	-	16	-	-	-	32	-

TABLE XVIII (Continued)

	Al-Khorma		Villages		Water Points		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Certificate Not Shown	2	-	4	-	-	-	6	-
Final Total	2,448	2,355	1,542	1,309	3,446	2,969	7,336	6,633

Source: Population Census, Administrative Area of Mecca, 1974, p. 24.

TABLE XIX
POPULATION OF TAIF REGION BY SEX

	Male	Female	Total
City of Taif and Capitals	117,813	93,282	211,095
Villages	68,423	67,770	136,193
Water Points	19,167	20,596	39,763
Total	205,403	181,648	387,051

Source: Population Census, 1974, pp. 11-12.

TABLE XX
POPULATION OF AL-KHORMA BY SEX

	Male	Female	Total
Al-Khorma and Capitals	3,901	3,771	7,672
Villages	2,387	2,133	4,520
Water Points	5,494	4,967	10,461
Total	11,782	10,871	22,653

Source: Population Census, 1974, p. 13.

ENDNOTES

- ¹The Holy Quran, Surah 96, verses 1-5.
- ²The Holy Quran, Surah 39, verse 9.
- ³Alfred Thomas, Jr., A Study of the Educational System of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (World Education Services, 1968), p. 4.
- ⁴Taha O. El-Farra, "The Effect of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburg, 1973), pp. 200-202.
- ⁵Ministry of Education, The Education Policy in Saudi Arabia (Riyadh, 1974), p. 10.
- ⁶A. S. Helassi, "The Bedouins and Tribal Life in Saudi Arabia," International Social Science Journal, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1959), p. 534.
- ⁷El-Farra, p. 202.
- ⁸Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Statistical Yearbook (Riyadh, 1978), p. 27.
- ⁹Mohammed N. Al-Wohaibi, "Cultural Perspectives of the Adult Reading Problem in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1978), pp. 3-4.
- ¹⁰Statistical Yearbook, pp. 29-31.
- ¹¹Ministry of Planning, Second Development Plan, 1975-1980 (Jeddah, 1975), p. 279.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 279.
- ¹³Al-Wohaibi, p. 103.
- ¹⁴Donald P. Cole, "The Enmeshment of Nomads in Saudi Arabian Society: The Case of the Al-Murrah" (unpublished report, Cairo, 1972), p. 142.

¹⁵El-Farra, pp. 76-78.

¹⁶Ministry of Education, Statistical Diary (Riyadh, 1979), p. 84.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 318.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 318.

²⁰Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Population Census 1394 A.H., 1974 A.D. Detailed Data, Administrative Area of Mecca, Level of Emirate Area (Dammam, 1977), p. 24.

CHAPTER VI

NOMADS AND HEALTH SITUATION

In Saudi Arabia, health care is free for all people in the kingdom. The following agencies are responsible for health care:

1. Ministry of Health: provides health care for people nationwide. It provides both protective and curative medical care.¹
2. Ministry of Education: provides health care for students up to the secondary level. Most of its clients are located in cities and large towns. The Ministry of Education offers the students protective and curative medical care, and mobile clinics visit schools. Teachers, officials, and all other employees are provided with medical care.
3. General Presidency of Girls' Education: provides health care for female students, teachers, officials, and employees. There are 30 clinics throughout the country.
4. Ministry of Defense: the military provides health care for its personnel and their dependents through its hospitals in big cities.
5. Saudi Red Crescent Society: provides first-aid and emergency medical services, and provides emergency services especially in highway accidents.

At al Hajj (pilgrimage) the Red Crescent provides first aid medical services in its clinics for all pilgrims who come from many countries.

There are some agencies that provide medical and health care, such as the National Guard, Higher Education, Ministry of Labor and Social

Affairs, as well as other agencies.² These government agencies offer free medical care to sedentary people. The hospitals are located in the cities, and the clinics are located in large villages. All of these services are provided for the settled populace. It is difficult for nomads to take advantage of these services. They receive very limited medical care during the summer season from the mobile clinics.

Taif has four hospitals with a total capacity of 2,995 beds, and 46 dispensaries.³ The four hospitals are located in the city of Taif, but most of the dispensaries are located in the large villages and towns of the Taif region. There are mobile health service units that cover the small villages and nomad areas.⁴ The mobile health units make trips to nomad concentrations during the summer, and many nomads receive health care through these clinics.

According to El-Farra:

. . . it is clear that they [nomads] are in need of medical care more than the average citizens in Saudi Arabia. They are in need of both curative and preventive medical care; and lately they have become conscious of the importance and necessity of treatment through modern means.⁵

Nomads do not receive sufficient medical care. Some of them mistrust physicians, and when they become ill they will not see a doctor at the first stages. Results of the questionnaire survey show that 81 percent prefer folk medicine as their first choice. Motoko, in her study at Wadi Fatima, Saudi Arabia, learned that nomads use some kinds of wild grass with homih, diet. The patient would avoid food or least some kinds of food such as meat or eggs. Some old men or women act as folk doctors.⁶ The patient might receive much advice from various individuals to use different kinds of folk medicines. If this failed, then fire is used. Fire is the second choice among the households (see Table XXI).

TABLE XXI
THE TREATMENT OF SICKNESS AMONG NOMADS

	Folk Medicine %	<u>Kay Heated</u> Stick %	Medicine %	Doctor %
First Choice	81.0	1.5	1.5	15.8
Second Choice	4.8	53.9	14.2	23.8
Third Choice	6.3	4.8	36.5	34.9
Fourth Choice	0.0	17.5	20.6	19.0
No Response	7.4	22.2	27.0	6.3

Source: Household Survey.

Fifty-three percent of the nomads use it as their second choice. Al kay is where a heated stick of iron or wood is touched to the infected areas of the body. Each kind of pain indicates the area which is to be burned by the stick. Al Kay is common in the nomad community. Motoko states that ". . . the Bedouins claim that the most painful diseases have been healed by this procedure. Approximately 50 percent of the people in Wadi Fatima have a kay binar scar somewhere on their bodies."⁷ Many professionals treat patients by kay regardless of their age.

When folk medicine and kay fail, patients usually go to a doctor. But, most of the time by then it is too late. They want the doctor to know the problem by himself. If he does not, they do not trust him.

It should be mentioned that hospitals and dispensaries do not keep medical records for the patients. Most of the Saudi population and especially the nomads have never had a check up. They see a doctor only when it is necessary.

Al-Shamekh found in his study that just 12 percent of the nomad villages Hajar have clinics. He reports that ". . . other villages must rely on the nearest clinics for minor illnesses. . . . [villages] must rely on one of the four regional hospitals . . . for major health problems."⁸

Nomads who live in the Taif region must go for minor illnesses to the nearest village which has a clinic. For major health problems, they must go to the city of Taif to a hospital.

Some nomads live as far as 300 kilometers or more from the nearest hospital. In other areas some nomads might live several hundred kilometers from the nearest hospital. When they reach the hospital, they do not receive proper attention. They might visit more than one doctor in

a short time to try to find a quick cure for their illness. Some nomads do not take the medicine which has been prescribed. Also, treatment at hospitals is not equal for everyone. It varies with social status. Thus, nomads often receive less than the best possible care.

Health education is very important for the nation in general and for nomads in particular. Today most nomads do not recognize the necessity of having check ups and visiting the doctor at the first stage of an illness. Preventive medical care is important, especially for children. Medical care for women and children should be provided in order to improve family and community health. Nutrition is important, and nomads should be educated concerning nutritional requirements. Dickson relates ". . . His own food for most of the year consists of only camel's milk and a handful of dates per day. The camel herds get even less than this."⁹

According to the survey, all nomads consider rice, wheat, and dates as primary food. Rice is the main dish and usually they cook rice with milk. They cook rice with meat when they have guests. Nomads make bread from wheat and they eat it with cream, tea, or shortening. They serve dates many times daily, especially when they drink coffee. They drink milk or buttermilk in the morning Saboh and at night Ghabog. There are no vegetables or salads in their diet and fruit, with the exception of dates, is seldom seen at their meals.

Fresh air and sun seem to help nomads retain good health. Berman advises:

One disease which has been attributed to the tribal way of life is osteamatacia, a bone disease caused by insufficient vitamin D and sunshine. It is particularly common among women, since social custom requires that women spend most of their time indoors. . . .¹⁰

This might be true among the older members, but most of the children remain outdoors for long periods of time daily since their work is outdoors.

Nomads who graze camels depends on camel's milk, because "in the sand of the Rub al-Khali it would be impossible for Bedouins to live if it were not for camel's milk, which is their principal food for months at a time. The water of many of the wells there is too briny for human consumption, yet the camels drink it without hesitation."¹¹ Coffee and tea also are common beverages. Arabian coffee is made with cordamom and nomads never add sugar to their coffee. They drink hot tea, sometimes with mint.

Certain diseases, such as Trachoma, Palharzia, Malaria, are associated with geographic locations. It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health to develop mobile clinics, but these clinics are not widespread. It will take time before the government can distribute health service to nomads throughout the country.

Nomads do not believe in family planning because children are wanted, especially boys.

Every Arab woman's greatest desire in life is to have a child. She is brought up with this idea from childhood. The natural desire to become a mother is reinforced by the reproach attached to childlessness and by a woman's knowledge that she will be divorced if she does not produce a son and an heir for her husband.¹²

This is also true among nomads, who are proud of their children. They believe their children will grow up to protect their families and their tribe from their enemies. This is not the only reason for welcoming children. Islam encourages Moslems to marry and have children, and a nomad needs many children, regardless of his wife's health or his

economic status. The women in the Bedouin community do not believe in birth control. Up to now there is not sufficient health care to treat the mother during her pregnancy; she might deliver the baby with the help of an old woman in the community.¹³

People in Saudi Arabia should not be encouraged to use birth control, because there is a shortage of population and manpower. Sebai admits, "When we started to ask mothers, 'How many children would you like to have?' and 'How can a woman prevent pregnancy?' we faced great difficulties. The conservative community did not accept this type of question."¹⁴ Many health problems would be solved by educating the people.

ENDNOTES

- ¹Ministry of Information, Health for All (Jeddah, 1974), p. 4.
- ²Ministry of Planning, Second Development Plan, 1975-1980 (Jeddah, 1975), pp. 370-388.
- ³Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Statistical Yearbook (Riyadh, 1978), p. 100.
- ⁴Second Development Plan, p. 378.
- ⁵Taha O. El-Farra, "The Effect of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973), p. 199.
- ⁶Motoko Katakura, Bedouin Village: A Study of a Saudi Arabian People in Transition (Tokyo, 1977), pp. 66-68.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 66.
- ⁸Ahmed A. Shamekh, "Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qasim Region, Saudi Arabia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1975), p. 206.
- ⁹H. R. P. Dickson, The Arab of the Desert (London, 1959), p. 54.
- ¹⁰Mildred Berman, "Social Change Among the Beersheba Bedouin," Human Organization, Vol. 26, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer, 1967), p. 75.
- ¹¹Roy Lebkicker and others, Aramco Handbook (New York, 1960), pp. 244-247.
- ¹²Dickson, p. 172.
- ¹³Zohair A. Sebai, "Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice of Family Planning: Profile of a Bedouin Community in Saudi Arabia," Journal of Biosocial Science, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1974), pp. 453-457.
- ¹⁴Ibid., pp. 457-58.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Nomadism has existed on the Arabian Peninsula for many centuries. Bedouins in Saudi Arabia live a nomadic existence, traveling from place to place in search of water and pasture for their animals. They herd camels, sheep, and goats on the poor grazing lands of Saudi Arabia. Most of Saudi Arabia is arid, and it has poor vegetation because of the dry climate.

During the first decades of this century, a high percentage of the population was nomads or semi-nomads, and the economy was dependent on animals. After uniting Saudi Arabia, the late King Abdul Aziz ben Saud established nomad settlements (Hijaz) in order to change their life from herding to agriculture. At that time religion was the main purpose for nomads to settle. There were two more projects after the first: one was at Wadi al Sirhan and the other at Haradh; but both projects were unsuccessful.

The tribesmen give their loyalty to their tribe more than to the state. There are many tribes in Saudi Arabia, and each tribe has its own area (dirah). They have the right to pasture and water at their own dirah without permission.

Tribes are distributed near the oases and dry valleys. After a long

they leave their dirahs in search of water and pasture. They might move several hundred kilometers from their dirahs.

Nomads today use trucks and pickups for their transportation instead of camels. They use transistor radios to learn about rainfall and pasture areas. There has been no big change in the nomads' way of life; they live in the desert in tents as they have for centuries. They cannot take advantage of many services that the government offers to the people at the settlement areas.

Nomads' economy depends on their animals, and they have low incomes. It is not easy for them to participate in sedentary jobs to improve their income, and businessmen do not hire them if they can avoid it. If there is not enough rainfall and pasture or the animals become diseased, the nomads will suffer because their animals supply them with food and milk.

The government does not have a comprehensive plan toward the nomads and nomadism. The exact number of nomads is unknown. For example, the Ministry of Planning estimated the nomads as 10 percent of the population. The 1974 census figure, however, put them at 25 percent or more of the Saudi population.

Most nomads are illiterate, and illiteracy exists in all generations. Mobile schools reach nomad camps every summer, but it seems impractical because students cannot attend to their lessons. Most nomads cannot send their children to schools at sedentary areas for various reasons. Nomads, in general, know that Islam encourages Moslems to become educated. Teachers who educate nomads cannot stay away from the sedentary areas for long periods of time.

Nomads do not have sufficient medical care. The Ministry of Health sends mobile clinics each summer to the nomad camps near their wells.

These mobile clinics take care of minor illnesses. In the case of major illness or surgery, they must go to the nearest city hospital. The quantity and quality of the medical care does not satisfy the nomads.

Nomads use folk medicine and heated sticks (kay) for home cures. Most nomads use these methods before they decide to go to the doctor or the hospital.

Health education is necessary among the nomads. With health education, nomads can take better care of themselves.

Recommendations

Nomadism is a social phenomenon on the Arabian Peninsula. It has been there for many centuries, and it cannot be changed overnight. The government of Saudi Arabia would like to have the nomads settle. The settlement should improve their socio-economic status. We should not consider settling the nomads as a target, but we should encourage them to settle in order to improve their income and to provide them with such government services as education, health care, and veterinary care.

We should consider the present services of mobile schools and mobile clinics as a temporary solution.

Initially the government should establish an office bureau or department which could deal specifically with the nomads' welfare. This office must be in charge of making a comprehensive plan to improve the nomads' way of life and their economic condition. This plan should depend on field work and research. University faculty and students should do the research, and the office should direct and support the research. Ministries should help this office by providing services and advice.

The most important thing for nomads is to find water and pasture for their animals. Instead of settling nomads as farmers, why not settle them as herders. Then they would have water and food for their animals, schools for their children, health care, and other government services.

Nomads are in need of help, and the government should take comprehensive care of them. For religious reasons they are ready to settle but they need assistance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Al Quran (The holy book of Islam).

Butler, Grant C. King and Camels. New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1966.

Dickson, H. R. P. The Arab of the Desert. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1959.

Dickson, H. R. P. Kuwait and Her Neighbours. London: Allen and Unwin, 1956.

Fisher, W. B. The Middle East, A Physical, Social, and Regional Geography. Fifth ed. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1963.

Glubb, Sir John Bagot. War in the Desert. New York: W. W. Norton and Company Inc., 1960.

Hamzah, Faud. Qalb Jazinat al Arab. (Heart of Arabian Island.) Riyadh: Maktabat al-Nasr al Hadithah, 1968.

Katakura, Motoko. Bedouin Village: A Study of a Saudi Arabian People in Transition. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977.

Knauerhase, Roman. The Saudi Arabian Economy. New York: Praeger, 1975.

Lebkicker, Roy and others. Aramco Handbook. New York: Arabian American Oil Co., 1960.

Patai, Raphael. Golden River to Golden Road. Society and Change in the Middle East. Third ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969.

Patai, R. The Arab Mind. New York: Scribner, 1973.

Rihani, Ameen. Maker of Modern Arabia. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928.

Szyliowioz, Joseph S. Education and Modernization in the Middle East. London: Cornell University Press, 1973.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. London: Stacey International, 1977.

Thomas, Alfred, Jr. A Study of the Educational System of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. London: World Education Services, 1968.

Vaness, John. Meet the Arab. New York: The John Day Company, 1943.

Public Documents

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ministry of Education. Al-Mufakirah Al-Ihsaiyah, 1979. (Statistical Diary.) Riyadh: Al-Salym Press, 1979.

_____. Ministry of Education. The Educational Policy in Saudi Arabia. Second ed. Riyadh: Al-Salym Press, 1974.

_____. Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Central Department of Statistics. Population Census 1394 A.H., 1974 A.D. Detailed Data, Administrative Area of Mecca, Level of Emirate Area. Dammam: Al-Traiki Printing Press, 1977.

_____. Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Central Department of Statistics. Statistical Yearbook, 1398 A.H.-1978 A.D. 14th issue. Riyadh: National Offset Printing Press, 1978.

_____. Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Central Department of Statistics. The Statistical Indicator. 1st issue. Dammam: Al-Toraiki Printing Press, 1976.

_____. General Administration of Girls Schools. Statistical Directory for Saudi Girls Education in Seven Years, 1961-1967. Beirut: Darlebanon Press, 1968.

_____. Ministry of Information. Health for All. Jeddah: Dar Al-Asfahaniand Co., 1974.

_____. Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Social Security Achievement in Ten Years (in Arabic).

_____. Ministry of Planning. The Nomadic Community. Riyadh: Unpublished report,

Journal Articles

Awad, Mohammed. "The Assimilation of Nomads in Egypt." Geographical Review, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April, 1954), p. 240.

- Berman, Mildred. "Social Change Among the Beersheba Bedouin." Human Organization, Vol. 26, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer, 1967), pp. 69-76.
- Helaissi, A. S. "The Bedouins and Tribal Life in Saudi Arabia." International Social Science Journal, UNESCO, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1959), pp. 532-33.
- Krader, Lawrence. "The Ecology of Nomadic Pastoralism." International Social Science Journal, UNESCO, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1959), pp. 505-510.
- Monteil, Vincent. "The Evolution and Settling of the Nomads of the Sahara." International Social Science Journal, UNESCO, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1959), pp. 572-85.
- Sebai, Zohair A. "Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice of Family Planning: Profile of a Bedouin Community in Saudi Arabia." Journal of Bio-social Science, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1974), pp. 453-61.
- Stone, Kirk H. "The Development of a Focus for the Geography of Settlement." Economic Geography, Vol. 41, No. 4 (October, 1965), pp. 352-55.
- Tannous, Afif I. "The Arab Tribal Community in a Nationalist State." Middle East Journal, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January, 1947), pp. 5-17.
- Vesey-Fitzgerald, Desmond. "From Hasa to Oman by Car." Geographical Review, Vol. 41, No. 4 (October, 1951), pp. 544-60.

Theses and Dissertations

- El-Farra, Taha O. "The Effects of Detribalizing the Bedouin on the Internal Cohesion of Modern State: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973.)
- Al-Fiar, Mohammed. "The Faisal Settlement Project at Haradh, Saudi Arabia: A Study in Nomad Attitudes Toward Sedentarization." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1977.)
- Al-Malik, Saleh A. "Rural Migration and Urban Growth in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1973.)
- Al-Obaid, Abdullah S. "Human Resources Development in Saudi Arabia: Case of Technical Manpower Programs and Needs." (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1979.)
- Shamekh, Ahmed A. "Spatial Patterns of Bedouin Settlement in Al-Qasim Region, Saudi Arabia." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1975.)

Al-Wohaibi, Mohammed N. "Cultural Perspectives of the Reading Problem in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1978.)

Unpublished Material

Abbadi, Abdullah H. "Ray Hol Al Badu fe Al-Mamlakah Al-Arabyyah Al-Saudyyah." (Opinion About Nomads in Saudi Arabia.) Riyadh: Central Planning Organization, 1970.

El-Ali, Izzat. "Past and Present Conditions of Bedouins." Riyadh: Library of the Institute of Public Administration, 1964.

Arabian American Oil Company. "Al-Murrah." Riyadh: Library of Central Planning Organization.

Cole, Donald P. "The Emmeshment of Nomads in Saudi Arabian Society: The Case of the Al-Murrah." Cairo: The American University in Cairo, 1972.

El-Farra, Taha O. "Dawral Jamiiau fe Tathqef al badiyah." (Turn of University Among Educating Nomads.) Riyadh: University of Riyadh, 1974.

Filaly, Mustafa. "Mashru Tawten wa Tahdir Al-Jamaat Al-Badawyyah Fe Al-Mamlakah Al-Arabyyah Al-Saudyyah." (Project of Sedentarization and Urbanization of Nomads in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.) Riyadh: unpublished report, 1964.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Presidency of Council of Ministers Office. "Aspects of Social and Economic Development Project for Northern Bedouins and Qarrayat." Riyadh: Library of Central Planning Organization.

Otkun, Galip. "Outlines of Groundwater Resources of Saudi Arabia." Riyadh: Ministry of Agriculture and Water, 1968.

_____. "Some Aspects of Groundwater Distribution and Exploitation in Saudi Arabia." Riyadh: Ministry of Agriculture and Water, 1970.

Sajini, Husain. "Report About Bedouin in Saudi Arabia." Riyadh: Central Planning Organization, 1965.

El-Tewaim, Abdul Aziz. "Communication Change Among Bedouins: A Case Study of the El-Khurmah Area in Saudi Arabia, 1960-1976."

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____

Location: _____

Name of Tribe: _____

I. Personal Information

1. Male ___ Female ___
2. Age: 20-30 ___
31-40 ___
41-50 ___
51 or over ___
3. Married: yes ___ no ___
4. Number of Wives ___
5. Number of Children: Male ___ Female ___
6. Total number of people living in same structure ___

II. Education

7. Have you ever attended school? yes ___ no ___
If yes, how long? ___ Where? _____
8. Can you read? yes ___ no ___
Can you write? yes ___ no ___
9. Does anyone in your family attend school now? yes ___ no ___
10. How far is the nearest school? ___ kilometers

III. Income

11. List the type of work and place of employment of all of those in your family who are working.

Occupation

Location

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. If you do not work, what is your major source of income?

13. What is the annual income of your household in Saudi Rials?
 _____ Rials
14. Do you trade with other tribes? yes___ no___
 If yes, what are the items used for trade? _____

15. What is your most expensive possession? _____

IV. Health

16. What do you do when you become sick or injured?
- a) Home cures (explain) _____
 b) Fire (explain) _____
 c) Medicine (explain) _____
 d) Doctor (explain) _____
17. How far is the nearest:
- a) Doctor _____ kilometers
 b) Hospital _____ kilometers
18. Do you ever buy food? yes___ no___
19. What are your primary foods? (list three)
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
20. Has anyone in your family ever been to a dentist?
 yes___ no___
- If so, when? _____ Why? _____

V. Recreation

21. Do you own a radio? yes___ no___ How many? ___
 Do you own a TV? yes___ no___ How many? ___
22. Do you enjoy?
- a) Conversation? yes___ no___
 b) Programs? yes___ no___
 c) Music? yes___ no___
23. What musical instruments do you or anyone in your family
 play? _____
24. Name and describe any games you play. _____

25. What is your favorite pastime? _____

VI. Care of Your Animals

26. How many and what types of animals do you own?
 Sheep___ Goats___ Camels___ Others (name)_____
27. Do you ever buy food for your animals? yes___ no___
 If yes, when?_____ Why?_____
28. How far is the nearest water from your animals?
 _____kilometers
29. How do you get the water?_____
30. What do you do when your animals become sick? (explain)

VII. Tribal Area and Movement

31. Can you outline your tribe's land area? yes___ no___
 If so, describe_____
32. How long have you been at this location?_____
33. List the three camp sites prior to this one and when you left each.
- | Location | Date Left |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ |
34. What is your mode of transportation?_____
35. What is the farthest you have ever travelled between camps?

VIII. Life Style

36. If the government provided irrigation water for pastures in one place, would you stay at that one place? yes___ no___
37. If you could live anywhere, where would you choose to live?

38. What would you like to own that you do not now have?_____
39. What is your biggest problem?_____
40. What is your greatest happiness?_____

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

- Adnan: Father of Adnanian Arab tribes.
- Al: The.
- Anazah Tribe: See Map 3.
- Artawiah: The first Bedouin settlement established in 1912.
- Bedouin: (Badawi, Pl. Badu) Arabian Nomads.
- Bigran: Village in Western province, Saudi Arabia (see Map 1 or 5).
- Dirah: Tribal area.
- Ghabog: Milk, served at night.
- al Hajj: Pilgrimage to Mecca.
- Haradh: Settlement project area between Riyadh and eastern province, Saudi Arabia.
- Harb: Tribe (see Map 3).
- Hijrah: Pl. Hajar, tribal village inhabited by people from one tribe.
- Hijaz: Western province, Saudi Arabia.
- Hilla: Pl. Hillal, settlement near urban area inhabited by members of tribes.
- Homih: Diet.
- Ibn Saud: King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, founder and late King of Saudi Arabia (1880-1953).
- Ikhwan: Brothers, religious movement.
- Jeddah: Important city and port of Western province, Saudi Arabia.
- Kahtan: Father of Kahtanian Arab tribes.
- al Kay: Classic treatment of illness by touching the body with a heated stick.
- al Khormah: Town in Saudi Arabia (see Map 1 or 4).

al Muslah: Area in Saudi Arabia (see Map 1 or 4).

Najran: City south of Saudi Arabia (see Map 5).

Oshairah: Village north of Taif, Saudi Arabia (see Map 1).

Otaibah: Tribe (see Map 3).

al Qasim: Region in Najd, Saudi Arabia.

Rababah: Classic musical instrument similar to violin.

Riyadh: The Capital of Saudi Arabia.

Saboh: Milk, served in the morning.

al Salab: Low social status tribe in Saudi Arabia.

Samri: Popular classical song in central Saudi Arabia.

Subaai: Tribe.

Wadi: Valley.

Wadi Fatimah: Cultivated area near Mecca.

Wadi al Sirhan: Cultivated area north of Saudi Arabia.

Yam: Tribe (see Map 3).

Yemeni: Person from Arab Republic of Yemen.

al Zakah: Alms.

VITA

Mohammed Abdullah Al-Wohaibi

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: NOMADS IN AL-HEJAZ PROVINCE: A GEOGRAPHIC STUDY OF NOMADS NEAR
THE CITY OF TAIF

Major Field: Geography

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Riyadh Al-Khabra, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,
April 5, 1950, the son of Abdullah Al-Wohaibi and Fatemah Al-
Sokair.

Education: Graduated from Dar Al-Tawheed High School, Taif, Saudi
Arabia, in 1970; received the Bachelor of Art degree from
King Abdul Aziz University, Holy Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in 1974;
completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree
at Oklahoma State University, in May, 1981.

Experience: Teacher at Abu Mehjan Secondary School at Taif, Saudi
Arabia, 1974-1975; graduate teaching assistant, College of
Education, King Abdul Aziz University, Holy Mecca, Saudi Arabia,
1975-1976.