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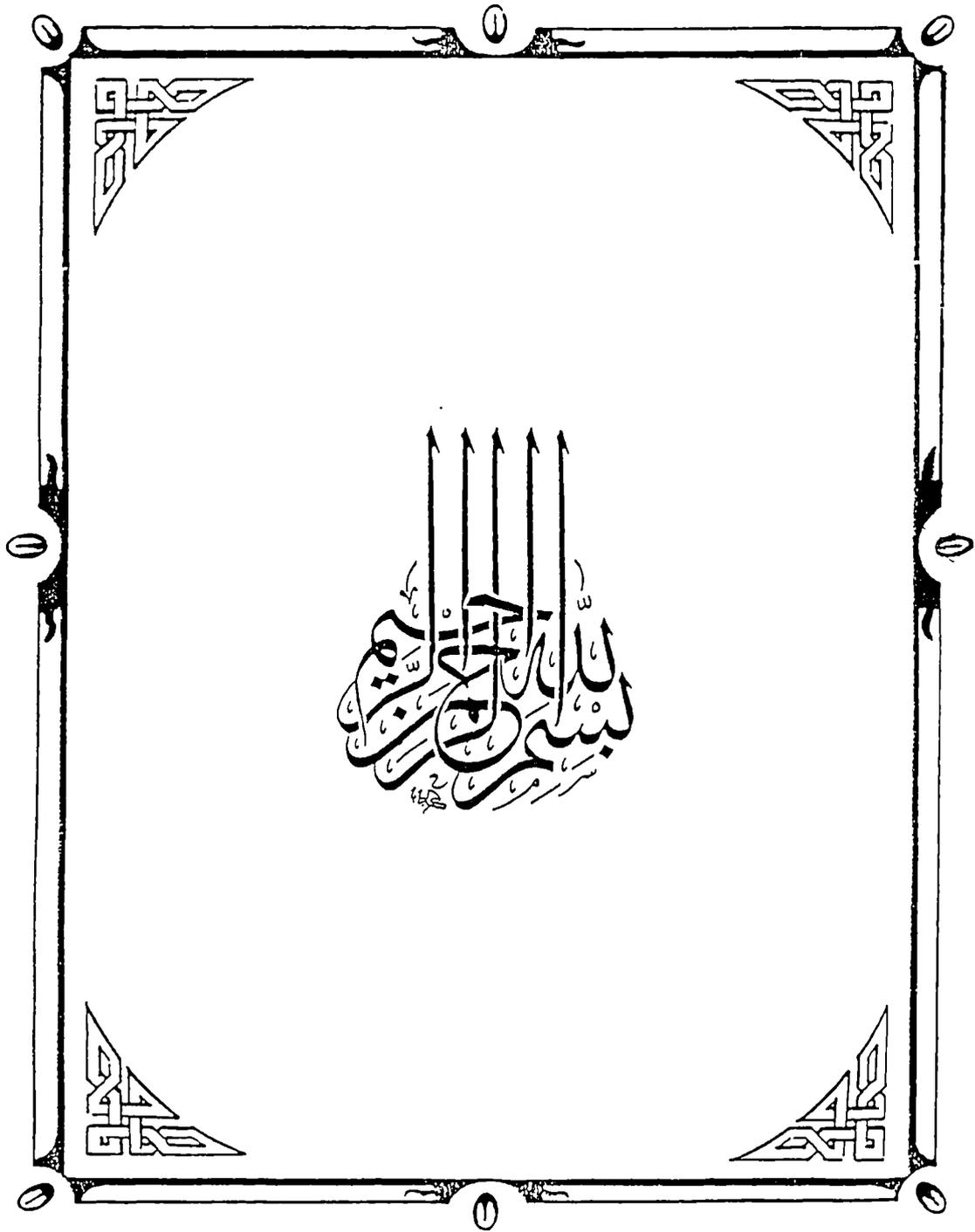
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# **The Federal Boundaries of the United Arab Emirates**

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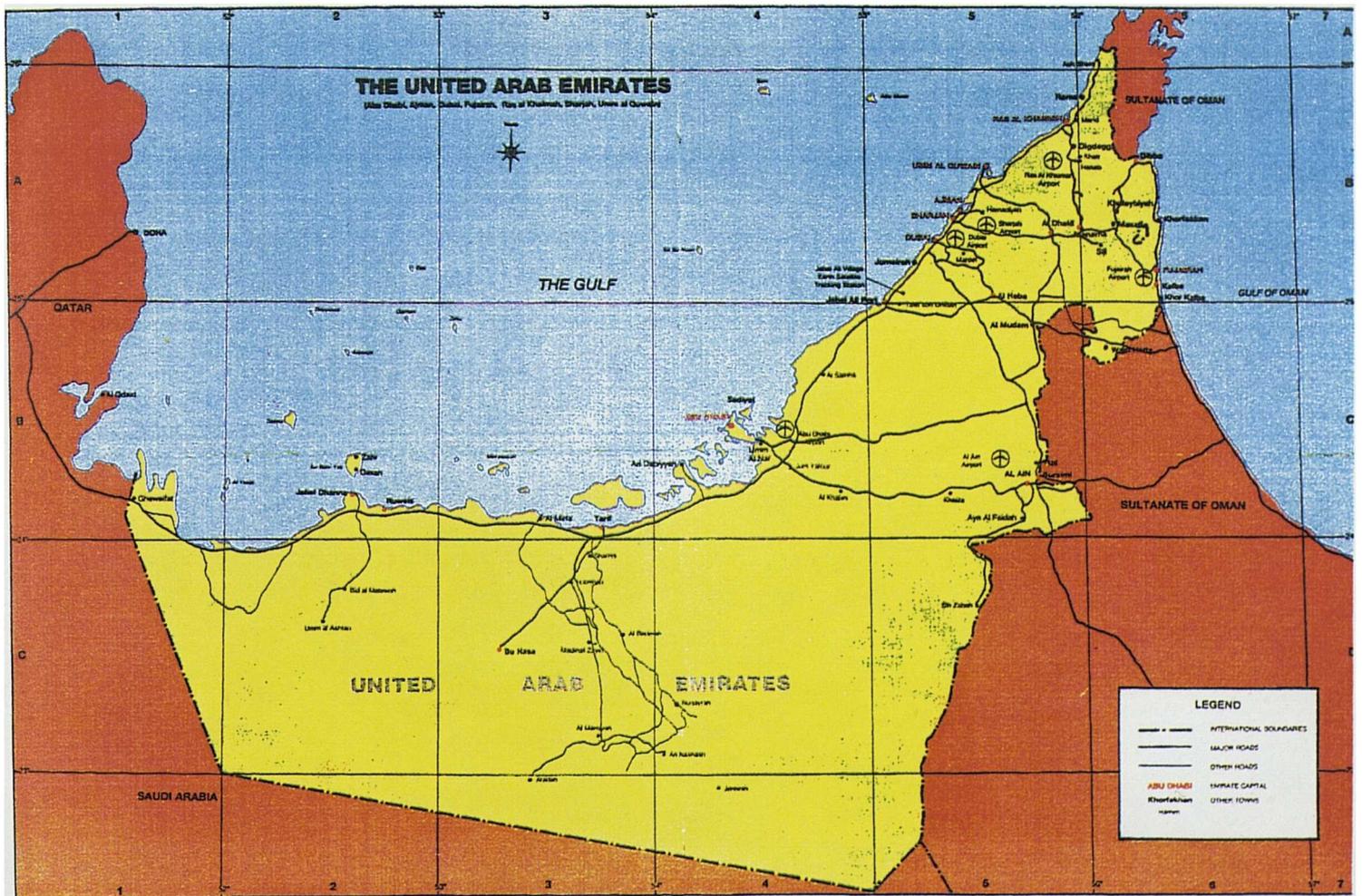
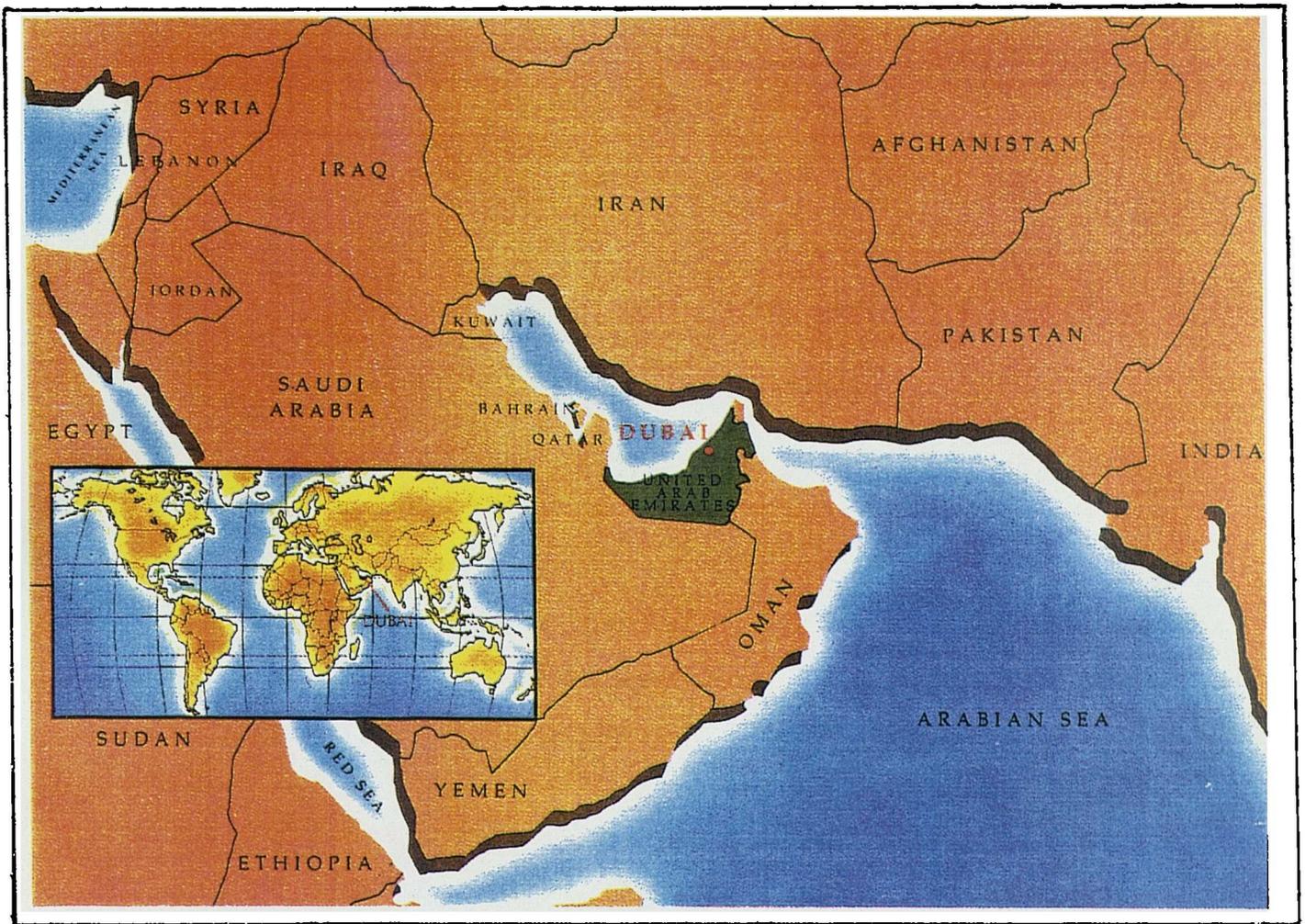
**Hesam Mohammed Jalil Sultan Al-Ulama**

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June 1994**

**- 2 DEC 1994**



## **Abstract**

The United Arab Emirates is located on the south-eastern flank of the Arabian Peninsula, between latitudes 22° and 26° north and longitudes 51° and 57° east. It is bordered to the north by the Arabian Gulf, to the west by Saudi Arabia, to the south by the Sultanate of Oman and Saudi Arabia, and to the east by the Gulf of Oman. These international boundaries form the framework on which the internal boundaries between the Emirates have emerged.

The federation of the U.A.E. is yet still young. The six former Trucial States joined together in federation on 2 December 1971, while the seventh Emirate, Ras al Khaimah joined on 10 February 1972.

This thesis concentrates on the internal boundaries demarcation history, and on the settlement of territorial disputes in the U.A.E. and provides a general analysis of a future strategy for an acceptable settlement to the inter-Emirates territorial disputes.

The study has concentrated on five points:

1. Discussion and analysis of the most important factors affecting the demarcation of the inter-Emirate boundaries. The study argues that the main reason for the creation of inter-Emirate boundaries was the arrival of the oil companies in the region and the concomitant granting of oil concessions.
2. Describing the individual Emirate's boundaries, which necessarily have a history of development. The study highlights, amongst other historical documents, the first Trucial States boundaries map which was drawn up by the Research Department at the Foreign Office in February 1963.
3. Identification and discussion of the major boundary dispute problems.
4. The study examines some of the area's problems as a result of the territorial disputes and methods used in the inter-Emirate boundaries settlement. The study also examines the future of the inter-Emirate boundaries.
5. Also highlighted is the 1974 agreement between Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E., and the agreement's articles are examined accurately for the first time, and the text of the original agreement text is reproduced in the appendix.

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## **Declaration**

No material in this thesis has been submitted for a degree in the  
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## Dedication

To the memory of my father who loved reading books and encouraged me, and to mother and my family.

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I would also like to thank individuals who agreed to be interviewed and provided me with useful information, especially Mr. Julian Walker (Assistant Political Agent in Dubai, 1953-55 and the last Political Agent in Dubai, 1970-71) (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Mr Peter Grove (Cartographic, Map Section, Library and Records Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office), the Right Honorable Lord Martin Buckmaster (Political Officer in Abu Dhabi from 1955 until 1958, Member of the House of Lords), Sir Donald Hawley (Political Agent in Dubai from 1958-1961), Mr Edward F Henderson (Political Officer in Abu Dhabi from 1959-61,

and member of the Centre for Documentation and Research in Abu Dhabi since 1976), Sir John Wilton (Political Officer in Dubai from 1951-52), Mr Ronald Codrrei, Mr Julian Lush and his wife, Mrs Sara Lush, Mr Stewart of Sir William Halcrow Consultant Company, Mr John Harris, Mr Neville Allen, OBE, Col. Jack Briggs, Adviser to the Dubai Police Force, Mr Roy Gazzard, Mr Bryan Kendall who was the director of the Trucial States Council for many years and who was involved in many construction projects in the area.

Honoured thanks are due to His Highness Shaikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasemi, member of the Supreme Council of the U.A.E., and the Ruler of Sharjah, for the information he supplied to me.

My appreciation and thanks extends to His Excellency Essa Saleh Al Gurg, C.B.E, (the Director of the Development Office, Trucial States Council) and the U.A.E. Ambassador in the United Kingdom (1991- ) for useful information on the formation of the U.A.E. federation and for his support and encouragement. Great appreciation is extended to the following people: Mr Abdul- Rahim Al Maary, U.A.E. Cultural Attache, U.A.E. Embassy, London, Mrs Yana, U.A.E. Embassy Library, Ms. Cristain, the Ambassador's secretary. I should also like to thank Peter Hughes of Alpha Word Power in Durham.

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To all my friends, in particular Ali Omran, Dr. Jamal Al Mehairi, Mohammed Ahmed, Adel Ghafan, Mohammed Jakka, Dr. Saif Salem, Hashim Sarhan, Dr Ahmed Al-Najjar and any I may not have mentioned here, who have helped me in one way

or another, particularly those who agreed to be interviewed, I would like to say thank you very much indeed.

Finally, my deep appreciation and gratitude go to my mother, who encouraged me the most, and to my wife, who knows how to combine her responsibilities both as an excellent wife and a perfect mother, and my two sons Mohammed and Sultan for their understanding, encouragement and patience that they gave me throughout the years of my study. It is to them I dedicate this work.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

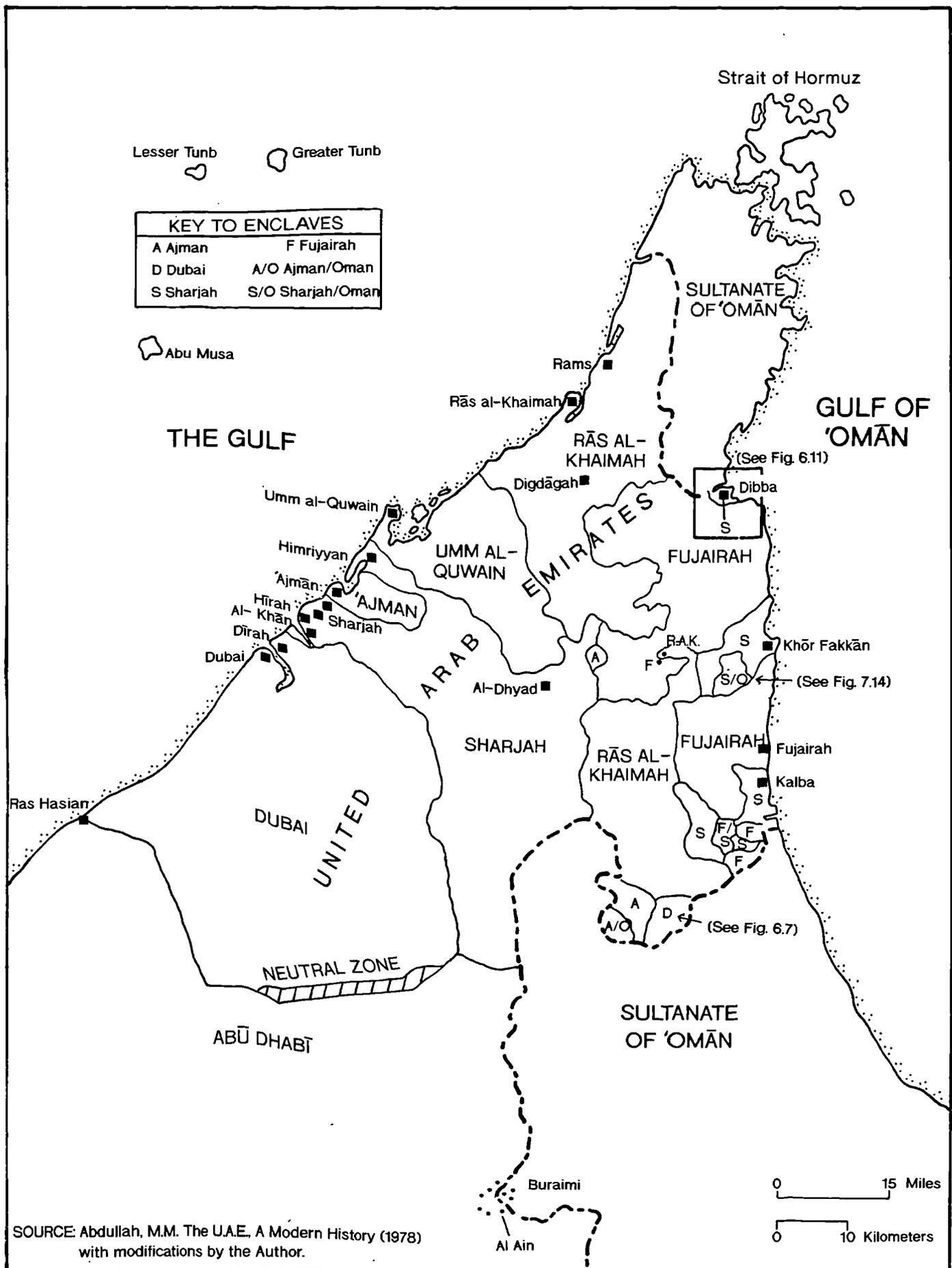
The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) was formed on 2 December 1971. There have been three changes in the area it occupies: on 10 February 1972, when Ras Al Khaimah joined the Union; on 21 August 1974 when almost 6,000 km<sup>2</sup> were ceded to Saudi Arabia as a means of demarcating the boundary between them; and on 30 November 1971 when Iran occupied Abu Musa island and the Tunbs islands. Including the islands, occupying about 5,900 km<sup>2</sup>, the U.A.E. currently occupies a total area of 77,700 km<sup>2</sup>. Before 1974, the total area of the country had been 83,600 km<sup>2</sup>.

The U.A.E. is made up of seven Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. Uniting these Emirates are a common language, a common culture, a common religion and a common currency. Unique in their complexity, the Emirates lie fragmented across the Musandam Peninsula and the northern fringe of the Empty Quarter, like a bizarre jigsaw puzzle: in place of the expected seven pieces, there are twenty (see Figure 1.1).

Internally, as can be seen from the folded map attached to the thesis of the boundaries of the U.A.E. (formerly the Trucial States) which was prepared and drawn by the British Foreign Office in 1963, and which is still used as the official map of the U.A.E., only Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain form integral areas. The other five Emirates comprise many units: Dubai, two; Ras Al Khaimah, two; Fujairah, five; Ajman, three; and Sharjah, six. It is evident, therefore, that to travel to every part of most of the Emirates requires transit across neighbouring Emirates.

The map is even more complex than this, for there are three parts of neighbouring Oman (which is an independent state, not an Emirate of the U.A.E.) separated by land from the main part of Oman by U.A.E. territory: the northern tip of the

Figure 1.1 Map of the internal boundaries of the United Arab Emirates



Musandam Peninsula, Wadi Madha (located within the enclave of Sharjah: Khur Fakkan), and Walaya Mahadha. In brief, the broad reason behind the patchwork arrangement is that sovereignty was originally based on tribal allegiance to a Shaikh, rather than to a tract of land. The potential for oil revenue, subsequent to the discovery of oil in the region, precipitated the need to demarcate territorial boundaries. This process required the existing patchwork of tribal allegiances to be mapped onto the land.

The details of the mosaic of enclaves and neutral zones which dominates the political geography of the U.A.E. today is the result of many factors relating to the area's history. It may be that the demarcation of international boundaries between the Trucial States and the Sultanate of Muscat were easier to define than the internal boundaries between the Trucial States themselves.

Historically, the earliest boundary delimitation of the area was devised by the Government of India, and was officially recorded in Lorimer's Gazetteer in 1905. However, no boundary lines are shown on the map which Hunter made for it.

The most important single influence on the changing shape of inter-Emirate boundaries was the signing of treaties between the British government and the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast during the nineteenth century. There has been a fluctuating number of Shaikhdoms: the number reduced from 8 in 1820, to 6 by 1835, to 5 in 1914, and finally increased to 7 in 1952 until federation in 1971.<sup>(1)</sup> These changes inevitably resulted in the reduction or enlargement of the size of some Emirates, such as Sharjah.

The emergence of inter-state boundaries came after the 1930s. Prior to this time, there was little need for boundary lines to exist in the region. The development of oil resources changed everything. Before the 1930s the idea of a state with defined boundaries was largely confined to the political belief of the colonial rulers. The tribes

of the area had quite different perceptions of the political organisation of space. Historically, tribal affiliation was the main determinant of political allegiance, and political boundaries were dependent on tribal loyalties to individual Shaikhs and consequently were subject to frequent change. Geographical features were rarely significant determinants of tribal areas.

Inter-state boundaries in the Trucial States changed frequently during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Allegiance to a state was based on tribal loyalties and tribal *dirah* (tribal grazing grounds). In Arabia, *dirah* was a flexibly defined area, changing in size according to the strength of the tribe which wandered within it.<sup>(2)</sup>

In the mid-1950s, the British Government sent a diplomat, Julian Walker, to the Trucial States with the difficult task of drawing up a plan for the definition and demarcation of inter-state boundaries. Even after six years of surveys and negotiations, Walker was able to settle only some of the conflicting territorial claims, with the rest remaining unresolved. In January 1955 the Trucial Shaikhs agreed to accept the adjudication of the Political Officer. In May 1955, Julian Walker presented the boundaries report, including his recommendations on disputed boundary settlements. Subsequently, during 1956 and 1957, Mr P. Tripp, the Political Officer in Dubai, sent official letters to the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast informing them of their boundaries. Between 1963 and 1967 the Foreign Office sent the the Right Honorable Lord Martin Buckmaster to the region to find a solution to the unresolved areas, the most important of which was the Omani enclave of Wadi Madha.<sup>(3)</sup>

In 1968 the British government announced that it was to withdraw from east of Suez by 1971. Britain's announcement to withdraw came as a shock to the rulers of the Emirates because they found themselves confronted with a responsibility with which they could not possibly cope. The gravity of the situation was exacerbated by the need for protection and stability in order to be able to use the oil wealth for development

programmes. The rulers also faced other serious local and regional problems: the Buraimi dispute was still unresolved; disputes between Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Oman were still active; and there were disputes amongst the Emirates, and between the Emirates and Oman.

Britain's withdrawal announcement precipitated armed conflict between certain Emirates. Julian Walker had found it impossible to make any recommendation in the case of 9 unresolved boundaries, such as that between Dubai and Sharjah, and between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah which remains unresolved even today. Despite the formation, in 1971, of a federation in which these seven units united into one state, civil conflicts still break out between them. Short conflicts have occurred between members of the Union, even since federation, such as the conflicts between Dubai and Sharjah (1973 and 1975); between Sharjah and Fujairah (1972 and 1974) in the eastern province of the U.A.E. where Sharjah has three enclaves: Dibba Al-Husn, Khur Fakkan and Kalba; and between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah (1974). However, the proposal for a federation among the Gulf States was put forward to reduce as far as possible the tension of the boundary disputes. The first attempt to establish a union of nine including Qatar and Bahrain failed and the result was a union of seven (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al Khaimah and Fujairah). Britain left the area after a century and a half (1820-1971) of protection, leaving behind many serious unresolved border disputes.

In the 22 years since the establishment of the U.A.E., the federation has survived despite its territorial disputes. In some cases, the federation has succeeded in resolving boundary disputes between federal members, whereas in others it has failed to settle its internal border and territorial disputes *permanently*.

The internal boundaries map of the U.A.E. (Figure 1.1) shows the geographical distribution of each Emirate's territories and enclaves and illustrates the main problems, which can be summarised as follows:

- a. The modern political map of the United Arab Emirates is a unique mixture of large coastal expanses whose territorial definition is reasonably clear, and a maze of tiny enclaves within the mountainous interior south of the Musandam peninsula where sovereignty is greatly fragmented.
- b. As a result of tribal distribution, the territories of Dubai and Ras al Khaimah are each made up of two parts, Ajman three parts, Fujairah five parts, and Sharjah six parts. Abu Dhabi and Umm Al-Quwain are comprised of single territorial units. (See Table 1.1.)
- c. Some small territories belong to more than one Emirate. For example: the village of Dibba on the Oman coast, with a population no more than 3000, is divided between Oman, Sharjah and Fujairah (see Chapter 6).
- d. However the most surprising fact about the geographical distribution of the Emirates is that some of them have within their own borders an area of land belonging to another Emirate. For example, the Emirate of Fujairah has within it a piece of land that belongs to Ajman. This curious situation of one part of a territory within another territory came about when some Shaikhs bought land within the territory of another Shaikh.<sup>(4)</sup>

The division of the border of the Emirates on a tribal basis has caused many political and some military clashes between the Emirates (see chapter 6).

**Table 1.1 The total area of each Emirate and coastal lengths:**

Emirate	Area/km	% Total	Coast Length/km	No. of Territorial Units
Abu Dhabi	67,350	86.7	480	One linked section from Ras Kumais east to Ras Hasian west.
Dubai	3,900	5	72	2 sections: 1. Dubai city on the Arabian Gulf. 2. The enclave of Hatta close to Oman border.
Sharjah	2,600	3.3	55	6 sections: 1. Sharjah city. 2. Khur Fakkan. 3. Kalba. 4. Dibba Al Husn. 5. Wadi Al-Helu. 6. A part of Oman's Madha enclave (Nahwa and Shis)
Ras Al-khaimah	1,700	2.2	64	2 sections: 1. City of Ras al-Khaimah to Oman border in Musandam. 2. The south section: Wadi al-Qur, Huwailat Village.
Fujairah	1,500	1.5	71	5 sections: 1. The city of Fujairah. 2. North Section. 3. Dibba al- Gurfa. 4. Wahalah and Ahfarah. 5. Ain Al-Samah.
Umm Al-Quwain	750	1	24	1 section: A single contiguous unit from the coast to Falag al-Mualla.
Ajman	250	0.3	15	3 Sections: 1. Ajman city, as semi enclave of Sharjah. 2. the enclave of Manamah. 3. the enclave of Masfut near Hatta of Dubai.
Total	77,700	100	781	

Source: The Author.

## A. Significance of the study

In spite of many superb studies concerned with international boundary disputes and territorial disputes, the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. have usually appeared only briefly in general articles and surveys of the boundary disputes in the Arabian Peninsula.

No previous study has specifically examined in depth the main concern of this study. Boundaries have played an important part in the recent history of the U.A.E. Two boundary disputes in particular have been of sufficient magnitude as to rock the structure of the U.A.E. as a state. One was the internal border dispute in 1985 between Dubai and Sharjah. During this dispute, Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayyan threatened to resign as President of the federation if the dispute was not settled peacefully.<sup>(5)</sup> Once the boundary dispute was settled in 1985, the way was paved for more development projects to take place in the country (see Chapter 7). The other major, this time external, boundary dispute, was between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia. The 1974 agreement finally ended Saudi claims to al-Buraimi Oasis and left six Al-Buraimi villages in Abu Dhabi, (U.A.E. ) namely Al-Jaheli, Al-Qataarah, Al-Muwaijee, Al-Hili, Al-Masoodi, Al-Muhtaredh and three in the Sultanate of Oman, namely Hamasa, Sa'ara and Buraimi <sup>(6)</sup> (see Chapter 4).

The geographical location of the Emirates added impetus to the need to bring peace to the region. This idea was well illustrated by Sir Alec Douglas Home, the British Foreign Secretary, in a statement to the House of Commons on 6 July 1970, when he said that Britain might contemplate maintaining small units and permanent bases there. He continued:

*"The urgent tasks now are, first to create a climate favourable to the settlement of the local disputes, some of them far reaching and important. The second is to consult the leaders of the Gulf as to how Britain can best contribute to the pattern of stability in the area. We shall go into such consultations with a completely open mind.....I am setting in motion the diplomatic machinery necessary to try and help in the settlement of disputes and find out from the rulers and leaders in that area how they think that Britain can best help them create the stability which all of them want and need."*<sup>(7)</sup>

The federation of the U.A.E. is a member of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and one of the Gulf oil producing countries. It has a strategic location at the entrance

of the Strait of Hormuz, and two coasts; the eastern on the Gulf of Oman and the western on the Arabian Gulf.

From these geographical characteristics of the U.A.E. it can be concluded that the stability of the U.A.E. is connected to the stability of the Gulf region as a whole, and any threats to this stability might tempt outside powers, such as Saudi Arabia or Iran, to intervene. In other words, boundary conflicts in the Emirates are potentially more than local affairs.

Another, if less critical, point is that internal problems emerging from boundary disputes tend to delay the process of development of the U.A.E. This in turn could weaken the Gulf states which are seeking to co-operate in different fields for greater strength.

The internal boundary of each Emirate is the identification of the individual boundaries of the Emirate which together form its shape. Sometimes, boundary disputes can be pacified by resolving other issues, but leaving the issue of the boundary unresolved. It is important to future stability, however, that boundary disputes are resolved by identifying border lines, which should be marked after the signing of a formal agreement between the Emirates concerned. This process helps to guarantee the stability of the region and the federal government should mark the internal and the external border lines in a clearly defined way in order to reduce the likelihood of a new Gulf crisis. A principal reason for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 was that the boundary lines between the two countries was never fixed and clearly demarcated until after Kuwait was liberated in February 1991, when a United Nations committee demarcated the boundary in April 1992 (according to MEES, 27 April 1992, P.D1) and marked its line with pillars.

## **The significance of this study**

This study offers some explanation for the internal boundary disputes which may arise from time to time between federal members of the U.A.E.. The people of the U.A.E. do not fully understand the meaning and the importance of the boundaries. Therefore, the study examines the function of the internal boundary with respect to the construction, expansion and master planning of the economic development of some parts of the country. This is an important theme because there has been little discussion of these internal boundaries by officials, academics and commentators. Discussion with officials on this topic are problematic, as boundaries are considered an extremely sensitive subject for discussion.

This thesis draws on the report concerning the Trucial Coast boundary settlement prepared by Julian Walker in March 1955. This report, with only one or two exceptions, provided the basis for the internal divisions of the contemporary U.A.E. when the various Shaikhdoms agreed to a political federation in 1968. In this agreement (the Semaih Agreement, 18 February 1968), Abu Dhabi and Dubai agreed to resolve their boundary disputes, thus clearing the way for federation of 1971.

### **B. Aims of the study:**

To understand the present geographical distribution of the territories and enclaves among the U.A.E. members, it is necessary to uncover the historical facts through historical documents: the present situation is the result of the past.

The aims of this study are:

- a. To examine and analyse the geographical distribution of the Emirates' territories.
- b. To examine the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. from a geopolitical point of view.

- c. To identify and discuss the major problems caused by boundary disputes in the U.A.E., and especially the difficulties of boundary demarcation which faced Julian Walker through his survey in the early part of the 1950s.
- d. To focus on problems of territorial dispute settlement in the U.A.E..
- e. The study aims to plug a gap in the literature concerning the internal boundaries of the U.A.E.. The U.A.E. internal boundaries have usually been included only briefly, and most previous studies included inter-Emirates' boundaries as a small section within the larger context of the U.A.E.

The thesis is structured to answer the following questions:

1. When were the different internal boundaries recognized in the region?
2. What are the factors which contributed to the emergence of inter-Emirate boundaries, and what effect did they have on the current shape of the Emirate?
3. What are the effects, if any, of boundary disputes on the social and economic life of the U.A.E.?
4. What is the future strategy for the settlement of internal boundary problems?

The study also examines documentary maps prepared by the British Foreign Office.

### **C. Previous Studies**

Most studies mention the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. as a small section of a larger study of the U.A.E. Until now, the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. have never been taken as a subject on their own. The literature available on the U.A.E. in general is not extensive, and the geographical literature of the U.A.E. is particularly scanty. This study, from a political geographical perspective, is the first comprehensive study concerned solely with the internal boundaries of the U.A.E..

The other principal studies which contain information about the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. include *Arabian Boundaries, Primary Documents 1853-1957* (1988), edited by Richard Schofield and Gerald Blake<sup>(8)</sup>. The complete set of this publication is 30 volumes. These selections of documents relevant to the boundary issue have been reproduced by Archive Editions. Three volumes are concerned with the boundary between Saudi Arabia and the Trucial States (U.A.E): volumes 15, 16 and 17. However volumes 23 to 25 contain maps.

Volume 14 is on *Trucial Coast internal boundaries 1902-1957*. This is the first publication which provides valuable documents on the internal boundaries of the Trucial States (U.A.E). The documents published have been reproduced from originals in the Public Record Office and the India Office Library and Records in London. This volume contains 755 pages and includes interesting documents on recognition of the Emirate of Fujairah as independent from 1939-1950.

J.G. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia (1908-1915)*, London, Gregg Reprint (1970)<sup>(9)</sup>. This is a rich source for the history and geography of the Gulf. In some parts there are useful descriptions of the Trucial Coast's territories, in particular a boundary description between the Trucial Coast and Oman in the Musandam area.

Two studies have recently been published. One is by Bernard Burrows, *Footnotes in the Sand, the Gulf in Transition 1953-1958* (1990)<sup>(10)</sup>, which gives some insights into the Buraimi dispute and boundary demarcation in the area. The second is by John Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers, The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert* (1991)<sup>(11)</sup>. Although this book contains 399 pages, the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. (Trucial States) is dealt with on page 275 when it highlights the Abu Dhabi-Dubai War, and on page 327 there are two paragraphs on the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. The majority of the book examines the main boundary

claims of Saudi Arabia with its neighbours: Abu Dhabi, Oman, Qatar and Yemen, and in particular the boundary dispute between Abu Dhabi-Qatar and Saudi Arabia. An older book is *The Trucial States* (1970) by Donald Hawley<sup>(12)</sup>, who spent three years, (1958-61) as the British Political Agent in the Trucial States. Sir Donald Hawley exhibited a deep interest in tracing the history of the Emirates, and his book was the first to take the seven States of Trucial Coast as a subject on their own historically. His research was undertaken largely in the Department of Geography and the Middle East Centre, University of Durham, during a period of sabbatical leave from the Diplomatic Service in 1967-68. His book discuss the developments under British administration, and also provide helpful information, mainly in the appendices. Internal boundaries of the U.A.E. are, however, mentioned on only three pages (289-291) of Geographical Appendix 6 titled 'Frontiers.'

*Eastern Arabian Frontiers* (1964), by J.B. Kelly<sup>(13)</sup>, about 304 pages, contains useful background to the Saudi Arabia-Abu Dhabi border dispute. Also by the same author is *Arabia, the Gulf and the West* (1980)<sup>(14)</sup>, which is 504 pages in length. However, the author described the book's main purpose as to offer another interpretation of the recent history of Arabia and the Gulf, and of Western relations with the area. Again very little is to be found on the internal boundaries of the U.A.E., amounting to no more than a page. Other volumes of particular value to scholars of the U.A.E. include the work of M.M. Abdulla, who concentrates on the modern history of the U.A.E. in his book *The United Arab Emirates, A Modern History* (1978)<sup>(15)</sup>; *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates* (1982) by Frauke Heard-Bey<sup>(16)</sup>, which provides useful information on the more recent historical background; and Sir Rupert Hay's *The Persian Gulf States* (1957)<sup>(17)</sup>. Hay was another British official who served in Bahrain as Political Resident for the Gulf from 1953 to 1958. Whereas Hawley's book deals only with the Trucial States, Hay's book deals with all the Gulf Shaikhdoms.

*The United Arab Emirates: An Insight And A Guide* (1975), by Michael Tomkinson<sup>(18)</sup> is a good introduction to the country with general information.

Another valuable work is that contributed by John Duke Anthony, *Arab States of the Lower Gulf* (1975)<sup>(19)</sup>, which is a good guide to the dynamics of the federal and the individual Emirate politics.

A valuable study is contributed by Husain Mohammed Al-Baharna *The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States: A study of their treaty relations and their international problems* (1968)<sup>(20)</sup>. The book deals with political and constitutional affairs.

A very useful series published by Gower for the International Institute for Strategic Studies is entitled *Security in the Persian Gulf*, in four volumes. The two volumes which deal fleetingly with political disputes within the U.A.E. are:

1. *Domestic Political Factors* (1982), edited by Shahram Chubin<sup>(21)</sup>,
2. *Sources of Inter-State Conflict* (1981), edited by Robert Litwak<sup>(22)</sup>.

One of the most substantial works dealing with security issues in the Gulf is Anthony H. Cordesman's *The Gulf, and the Search for Strategic Stability: Saudi Arabia, the Military Balance in the Gulf, and Trends in the Arab-Israeli Military Balance* (1984)<sup>(23)</sup>.

This substantial book (985 pages) offers some shrewd geostrategic perspectives, especially relating to boundary disputes between the Gulf States, and in particular, the boundary dispute between the U.A.E. with its two neighbours, Saudi Arabia and Oman. Finally, *Mushkilat Al-Hudud Al-Syasiyyah fi-Sahel Al-Gharbi Lil-Khaleej Al-Arabi*, [*Political Boundary Problems in the West Coast of the Arabian Gulf*] (1975), M.A. thesis by Abdul Hameed Gunaim, University of Cairo<sup>(24)</sup> must be mentioned.

All the studies mentioned above have dealt with the history of boundary demarcation far too briefly. Whilst some provide a valuable description of the internal boundaries

of the U.A.E., none offers any recommendations, particularly with regard to boundary dispute settlements.

## **D. Study Methods**

The main sources for this thesis come from the official archives and records of the Public Record Office at Kew in England. The maps have largely been collected from the Cartographic and Map Section of the British Foreign Office.

Data collection was based on the following:

### **1. Written library materials**

Materials such as books, articles and maps relating to this study were collected from various sources in both Arabic and English language.

#### *(a) Public Record Office*

In 1947 the British Foreign Office replaced the Indian Government in handling British interests in the Gulf area, and in 1949 a British Political Agent was appointed to Sharjah for the first time, replacing the local representative who had looked after British interests since 1823. After three years the Political Agency was transferred to Dubai.

The granting of oil concessions between the two World Wars created an awareness of the internal boundary demarcation in the Trucial States and these became crucial after 1947. Since the 1950s, and because of the security needs of the oil exploration teams in the interior and to define the limits of the territory of each Shaikhdom, the British became involved in demarcation the boundaries between these Shaikhdoms.

The Public Record Office is in Kew, near Richmond in Surrey. It houses collected volumes relating to the Gulf region in general, and to the Trucial States in particular. Huge quantities of documents on a myriad of subjects, such as oil concessions, Trucial Oman Scouts, political Annual Reports, and boundaries of the Trucial States, are

available in the Public Record Office, especially file numbers FO 3710/114648, FO 371/1016 and FO 371/126932.

These documents are gathered under the category of the Trucial States. The abbreviation FO refers to the Foreign Office. The Eastern Department's general correspondence series is numbered 371. Every document bears a special code.

It is important to note that every available document is at least 30 years old from the time of issue.

*(b) Other official reports*

1. Municipality of Dubai.
2. Sharjah Ruler's Court.
3. Municipality of Fujairah.
4. Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Dubai, U.A.E.
5. Ministry of Electricity and Water, Dubai, U.A.E.
6. Centre for Documentation and Cultural Studies, Abu Dhabi.
7. Foreign Office, London.
8. Sir William Halcrow Consultants, Reports (1991).
9. British Petroleum Company (BP), Middle East, Dubai Office.
10. Dubai Petroleum Company.

*(c) Newspapers and periodicals also used in this study*

1. *MEED*, Middle East Economic Digest.
2. *MEES*, Middle East Economic Survey.
3. *ARR*, Arab Report and Record.

4. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons.
5. *Al-Khaleej*, (Arabic) newspaper published in Sharjah, U.A.E.
6. *Al-Bayyan*, (Arabic) newspaper published in Dubai, U.A.E.
7. *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, (Arabic) newspaper published in London.

## 2. Fieldwork

Books and articles could not provide all the data required for this study, therefore the researcher carried out a number of fieldwork trips in order to answer some of the questions thrown up by this study. Three trips were carried out between 1991 and 1993; (20 March 1991- 20-May 1991), (23 February 1992 to 29 April 1992), (1 January 1993 to 15 May 1993). The researcher interviewed local farmers, some bedouins and officials, and took photographs.

## 3. Interviews

The researcher interviewed many informative experts in the U.A.E., as well as British officials who had worked in the area:

### *a. In the U.A.E.*

The researcher interviewed Mr Duncan Watkins, the director of Planning Section, Survey Department of Dubai Municipality; Mr Edward F. Henderson, an expert on boundary questions, particularly regarding the Buraimi dispute; Mr Jack Briggs, Adviser to Dubai Police Force; His Excellency Essa Saleh Al-Gurg, C.B.E, the U.A.E. Ambassador to the United Kingdom (Director of Development Office, Trucial States Council).

*b. In the United Kingdom*

In Durham, the researcher interview His Highness Shaikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qasemi, Ruler of Sharjah on 22 October 1992. In London, the researcher had the opportunity to interview Mr Julian F. Walker, (Foreign and Commonwealth Office); Julian Walker was Assistant Political Agent (1953-55, Dubai) and demarcated the inter-Emirates boundaries. A second interview with Mr Walker was carried out on 21 July 1991 in Durham.

Also in London the researcher interviewed the R.H. Lord Martin Buckmaster in the House of Lords on 16 January 1991.

In Reading, the researcher interviewed Sir Donald Hawley, on 26 July 1991. He was a Political Agent in Dubai from 1958-61. Hawley was one of those who exhibited a deep interest in tracing the history of the Emirates.

## **E. Research Problems**

There have been difficulties in obtaining information concerning the agreements of boundary dispute settlements between the Emirates. Not only have most treaties not been published, but also border and territorial disputes in the entire Gulf region are considered to be classified information, and access to the relevant documents is highly restricted. Boundary disputes in the region are highly sensitive issues which are live to the present day, and seldom will a government official talk about this matter or even comment on this topic. Many of the people interviewed considered the topic to be of interest, but also highly sensitive, being in the Gulf. There was extreme reluctance to disclose anything, even with the consent of their manager.

Only two agreements have been collected by the researcher which are:

- a. The Dubai-Sharjah boundary agreement of April 1985.

- b. The U.A.E-Saudi Arabia agreement of 21 August 1974 of Al-Buraimi dispute settlement (see Appendix A and B).

Another difficulty is that as there are seven Emirates, there are seven Municipalities, each with their own archives for papers and reports. For example, in trying to collect some official reports on the geographical situation of the villages, it is necessary first to find out to which Emirates these villages belong. The Municipality of each Emirate has to be visited separately, and the director of each Municipality contacted. Seven Emirates means there are seven Municipalities, situated in seven Emirates each with its own local laws, regulations and procedures. The Director of each Municipality is likely to decline an interview on boundary matters if they recognize the subject of the research. Many government officials refused to assist or even co-operate claiming that they knew nothing about this subject even though they may have much information.

## **F. Structure of the thesis**

The thesis has been divided into eight chapters.

Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the study, a brief geographical and historical picture of each Emirate, and the establishment of the federation of the U.A.E., as well as describing objectives and methodology followed in the study.

Chapter 2 is concerned with the political geography of federalism and definitions of federation and confederation. It concludes with a comparative study between the U.A.E. as a federal state and contemporary examples of other federal countries.

In Chapter 3, the protectorate treaties from 1820-1892, and the tribal areas are discussed. It also examines the internal boundary agreements and the emergence of some Shaikhdoms and the disappearance of other Shaikhdoms as a factor in shaping the internal boundaries.

Chapter 4 poses the question, what are the factors which affect boundary demarcation in the Trucial States? In addressing this question, Chapter 4 examines the relationship between the discovery of oil and the emergence of the political concept of territorial sovereignty.

Many writers who have written about Saudi Arabia's boundaries with the U.A.E., such as Abdulla, M.M (1978, pp.200-212), refer to a satisfactory boundary agreement between Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. in 1974, but without providing details. The lack of information is made good in this chapter, according to the text of the original agreement.

The chapter also briefly examines the international boundaries of the U.A.E. with its neighbours, Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman, concentrating on the boundary agreements which have been signed recently after the establishment of the federation. The chapter also examines the recent (1992) dispute on Abu Musa island between the U.A.E. and Iran.

Chapter 5 gives a comparison between the 1937 map of the internal boundaries of the Trucial Coast with the 1963 map which was prepared by the Research Department, Foreign Office, London. It also discusses the methods used by Julian Walker.

Chapter 6 focuses on some selected boundary disputes such as the Abu Dhabi-Dubai internal boundary, and the Dubai-Sharjah internal boundary and the 1981 settlement of the dispute. The chapter focuses also on the enclaves of Hatta in Dubai, Masfut in Ajman, and Madha in Oman. The partition of Dibba is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 7 provides some selected examples of projects which have been cancelled due to boundary disputes in the U.A.E.. This chapter also explores the benefits of boundary dispute settlement and examines the Dubai-Sharjah border settlement as an example.

Chapter 8, concluding the thesis, includes recommendations to solve the remaining disputes regarding boundaries in the U.A.E. This chapter also provides a general analysis of a possible future strategy for settlement of the inter-Emirates territorial disputes.

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## Chapter 2

# The Political Geography of Federalism

### 2.1 Introduction

Political geographers are interested in how states are organized. Such organization tends to be the result of a long process of evolution. A federal state, by definition, is made up of several administrative units, each of which may have different characteristics. Each administrative unit has a government responsible for administering local matters. In some federal states a central authority controls these local governments. In the U.A.E. the situation is different.

The purpose of this chapter is to subject the political system of the United Arab Emirates to a geographical analysis in order to compare and contrast the political patterns, responsibilities and organisation of the federal member states with the United Arab Emirates as a whole.

The problems of 'federalism' are reflected in the variety of definitions of the term that have been suggested by political scientists. Distinctions between countries which operate a federal system tend to cloud or blur any definition of federalism, and make it difficult to measure the strength of federalism.

A federation is usually born when a number of separate or autonomous political units agree to combine together to create a state with a single sovereign central government, whilst retaining for themselves some degree of guaranteed regional autonomy. However, it can also happen in the opposite direction, when a unitary state decides to become federal (e.g. Yugoslavia in the 1940s). In a very simple way, a federation can be defined as a group of units such as states, emirates, republics, provinces, lands or territories, united with one government which decides foreign

affairs, defence, etc., but in which each state has its own government to determine those of its own domestic affairs which the 'central' federal government has devolved to it, or which has never been handed over to the central authorities.

In a model federal system, central government has responsibility for matters affecting the federation, such as foreign policy, tariffs and immigration control, whilst local governments administer affairs concerning the individual state.<sup>(1)</sup> In *Modern Political Ideologies*, Riff defines federalism as "a constitutional device for securing the decentralization of authority within a state by regulating the distribution of power on a territorial basis."<sup>(2)</sup> Yet that need be no more than a 'county council arrangement'. A constitution invariably seeks to clarify the relationship between the government with the responsibility for the whole of a state's territory, and that concerned with only part of it, i.e. central government and localized government. Some, but not all, of the powers of central government are devolved upon the member bodies. Central government's functions cannot be assumed by the local government, nor the local governments' by the central government. Whilst neither is subordinate to the other, sometimes local government is expected to carry out the requests of central government.<sup>(3)</sup>

### **2.1.1 Federation and confederation**

The question arises as to the line of demarcation between a federation and confederation. The term 'confederation' implies that the power and functions of the central government are limited by the member states, which is the case in both Canada and Switzerland, although in the case of Switzerland, the term 'confederation' does not in reality produce all these confederal traits. The term 'federation' suggests much greater power at the centre than distributed amongst the units of local government. This situation describes the United States of America, where the federal government, the President and the Supreme Court have progressively expanded their powers.<sup>(4)</sup>

In a confederation, the central government is theoretically looser and weaker than in a federation. Local government in a confederation tends to influence the functions of central government, whereas a federal central government is likely to be in autonomous control of the military, foreign affairs and diplomatic relations with other states and will involve itself in foreign policy issues including declaring war and suing for peace. In a federation, there is a direct relationship between the central government and the people who share in the task of constitution, but in a confederation the member states retain their sovereignties and therefore, the central authority cannot force its decisions on any of the constituents.<sup>(5)</sup> Confederations have normally limited their concern to defence, foreign affairs and economics, but have not become involved in the control of the internal affairs of the member states. Confederation can be seen as little more than a treaty arrangement, and depends on a continuing joint interest between the member states.<sup>(6)</sup>

A confederation is an association between states in which the central government is dependent upon the local or regional governments. The purpose of a federation is to strengthen the ties between its member units, promoting co-operation between them in all fields.

However, bearing in mind the foregoing, many commentators use the terms interchangeably, and except where specific distinctions are being made, it is not helpful to be over-concerned about the use of one or other term regarding any one country.

### **2.1.2 Reasons for federation**

A basic question underlying federalism is why specific states have adopted federal constitutions. In theory, the federal framework should be suitable for all states which are neither small nor homogeneous.<sup>(7)</sup> Federalism has proved itself to be the best way for diverse political units to share the rule of a large united country. Federal state government has evolved in this century holding out the promise of political

integration in place of fragmentation. It can offer a flexible structure capable, as part of a democratic system, of accommodating the social and regional differences which exist in any country. Conversely, some say that federalism exacerbates these differences, and the purpose of central government having strong authority is to protect state unity. Whilst individual members seek to enlarge their autonomy, they need to be willing to acquiesce to federal power in order to make workable this larger economic and political unit.

Federal structures thus offer one type of solution to the problems of government in diverse societies. In any situation, one or more of a number of factors may be motivating the establishment of a federal state:

- a. Establishing military security and strong defence.
- b. Need for independence, particularly from a colonial power for which union may be necessary.
- c. The wish of a departing colonial power not to leave fragmentation behind it (Southern Africa, West Indies).
- d. Potential economic advantages such as the larger markets which exist within a federation, and which are required for greater economic security.
- e. Political leadership.
- f. A more forceful influence in foreign affairs.
- g. Geographical contiguity.
- h. Similarity of political institutions.<sup>(8)</sup>

One or more of the factors listed above are usually needed before the desire for union can be pursued. It is worth noting that, in particular cases, factors which could be thought to operate against the formation of a federation, may in fact be irrelevant,

such as: language, religion, race, separation by great distance, differences in historical background, and nationality. For example, the union of the United States of America was established before any sense of common nationality had come into being; and whereas in some regions language demarcates borders between different groups of people, in other regions the desire for union surpasses language barriers. For instance, in Canada, the desire for union has, until recently, outbalanced the problems associated with having two official languages (French and English), two Christian cultures (Roman Catholic and Protestant) and a plethora of indigenous peoples who are now finding their political voice and will shortly be recognised as constituting a new Territory within the union. In Switzerland, the advantages of federation are sufficiently strong to overcome the problems associated with four languages: German, French, Italian and Romance, and two Christian cultures, Roman Catholic and Protestant.

There are, however, factors which may strengthen the desire to be separate. There may be a divergence of economic interests, such that union might mean economic advantage for some units, but economic loss for others; therefore, they remain, or may become, independent for economic purposes. There may be geographical factors which amplify the desire to be separate: great distance, mountain ranges or maritime features, serving to isolate communities and prevent economic development from reaching all parts of the country or state. Divergence of nationality can be enough to pull a country apart, such as in the former Yugoslavia. This point is developed further below. Differences of language, race or religion may be enough to precipitate secession. In Switzerland and Canada the desire for union grew up in spite of these differences, but the desire for separation within the federal union was directly produced by these differences. Dissimilarity of social and political institutions had its effect in the United States of America, where slave states were anxious to keep under their own control decisions about the future of the institution of slavery within their own borders. Civil war ensued, but did not result in the break up of the federation.

### 2.1.3 The geography of federalism

A question arises here regarding the geography of federalism. Federal government has to be organized on a regional basis. The term 'federalism' is made meaningless if it is used to embrace too wide an assortment of arrangements that are not primarily groupings of territories. The socio-political life of any region needs to be sufficiently strong to allow federalism its regional dimension.<sup>(9)</sup> Different states will differ in warmth towards the federal arrangements, in composition, in interests and in function. For example, were there no functional differences there might be no need for federalism. The important point is that those characteristics which are different are territorially grouped, and because of that they provide a reason for a federal system of government. Federalism, unlike a unitary system, does not force unity out of diversity, but allows diversity by legalising it, through the one constitution.

One of the important functions of federalism is to identify and resolve questions of government which exist in a complicated interaction of spatial differences and similarities. Therefore, federalism may owe a great deal to geography. In this respect, federalism depends less on constitutions and more on the spacial distribution of society.<sup>(10)</sup> It is possible to examine any country or state and classify it as a federal system or otherwise, not through its constitution but through its people and their activities. The legal constitution may be a poor guide to reveal the extent to which a society is federal. Federalism is not determined by legal and constitutional technical expression alone, but involves economic, social, political, and cultural forces that have made the exterior forms of federalism crucial. Federalism is a solution to certain kinds of political organization problems.

The fact that the importance of federalism does not lie exclusively in the constitutional structure but in the society itself underlines the importance of demonstrating the relationship between federalism and the geography of the area. Geographical

influences can promote unity as well as being a main factor of encouraging states towards the union. This argument is examined in greater detail in the following discussion. The degree of integration in any society or nation depends on unique historical, cultural, economic, and political determinants. Each society creates circumstances which allow them to feel differentiated from other societies. These diversities are connected with factors which may be economic, religious, ethnic or historical. Any of these factors can be taken up by one or other group within the population in a quest for self expression. These diversities may be located in specific territorial areas, in which case the result can be a federal society. Where they are not grouped territorially, then the society cannot be said to be federal. A sensitive point in the political geography of federalism is that the geographical diversities may not always follow the boundary lines of the component units of the state.<sup>(11)</sup> This can easily be demonstrated by focusing analysis on any one of a variety of countries, for instance the United States of America and the former Yugoslavia.

To found and maintain a federal system in any state requires a convergence of social structure and geographical factors such as population, area and several units or territories. Federalism provides co-operation in the face of diversity. The type or the size of population and territories are unimportant. Federalism is based on regional loyalties which is incompatible with what Robinson describes as: "Countries of large area and small population, or even of rather large populations concentrated in widely scattered areas, which are obviously 'suitable' for this kind of system."<sup>(12)</sup> According to Robinson, New Zealand, for example, is unsuitable for federalism because the qualifications of the population distribution and the large land area are both absent. However, the past few decades have seen the formation of number of small federal states. For example, the Comoros (1,860 km<sup>2</sup>), St. Kitts-Nevis (270 km<sup>2</sup>) and the United Arab Emirates (77,700 km<sup>2</sup>), each became united in one federal country even though the area of each of these countries is relatively small.

Federalism can be interesting to the social geographer in examining the phenomena of social integration and diversity. It may also be of interest to an economic geographer engaged in the study of distribution of the federal budget to local units. Yet federalism is primarily interesting to a political scientist, whose study is focused on factors which arise from a federated state, analysing its relationship with area, population, territorial questions and its federal boundaries as a new nation of today. A political geographer also studies territories containing different cultural groups, which the federal constitution helps to bind together whilst allowing them to remain apart.

These points are illustrated below by means of case study material. In general, all modern federal states owe something to the United States Constitution of 1787 when the 13 original states found themselves with more common interests to unite them than conflicting ideas to divide them. A federation emerged, and the United States today consists of 50 states which exercise a measure of internal self-government. However, defence, foreign affairs, the higher levels of justice, and internal security are the responsibility of the federal government.<sup>(13)</sup> After the U.S. constitution, other states emerged as a political federal system notably Canada in 1867, Australia in 1901, and post Second World War West Germany. Consequently, these older federations were frequently selected as models to be followed in the search for political and economic success.

#### **2.1.4 The viability of federations**

A common feature of all existing federal states is that they have been seen as viable federations. When a federation is no longer viable, it breaks up. In the three years 1990-1992, three European or part-European federations collapsed: the Soviet Union (U.S.S.R.), Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. These three federations had been to a greater, or in the case of Yugoslavia lesser, extent within the ambit of the Soviet

Union's geo-political hegemony. Table 2.1 gives details of federations around the world in 1989, just prior to the political earthquakes in central and eastern Europe.

**Table 2.1: Federal States in 1989**

No.	Name	Population ('000,000)	World ranking (Pop)	Area km <sup>2</sup>	World ranking (Area)	Number of federal units
1	Argentina	31.20	28	2,780,092	8	22
2	Australia	15.76	48	7,686,848	6	6
3	Austria	7.55	73	83,853	109	9
4	Brazil	143.30	6	8,511,965	5	23
5	Canada	25.63	31	9,976,139	2	10
6	Comoros	0.47	147	2,236	160	3
7	*Czechoslovakia	15.50	50	127,899	93	2
8	*West Germany	60.73	12	248,229	73	10
9	India	785.00	2	3,287,590	7	25
10	Malaysia	15.82	49	329,749	60	13
11	Mexico	81.70	11	1,972,546	14	31
12	Nigeria	105.45	9	923,768	31	19
13	Pakistan	101.90	10	803,942	35	4
14	St Kitts-Nevis	0.04	163	49,000	163	2
15	*Soviet Union	280.00	3	22,274,90	1	15
16	Switzerland	6.47	80	41,293	121	26
17	U.A.E.	1.60	127	77,700	110	7
18	U.S.A.	241.00	4	9,372,614	4	50
19	Venezuela	17.80	43	912,050	32	20
20	*Yugoslavia <sup>1</sup>	23.20	32	255,804	72	6

\*These federal states no longer exist

<sup>1</sup> As of 1993, The name 'Yugoslavia' is officially applied to a federation of two states: Serbia and Montenegro, with a combined population of 10,400,000.

Source: *Political Systems of the World*, Chambers, 1989. pp.18-22.

On 3 October 1990, the German Democratic Republic was united with the Federal Republic of Germany. The following year, Czechoslovakia began to dissolve as a federation, and on 1 January 1993 two new independent states were born: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

In August 1991, the greatest political collapse imaginable occurred: the Soviet Union (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) dissolved into 15 separate sovereign states. On 21 December 1991, the former Russian Federated Socialist Republic (the core of the Soviet Union, stretching from the Baltic to the Bering Strait) was renamed the Russian Federation, and became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.), which was an attempt by most of the 15 former Soviet states to retain a measure of economic co-operation.

The death of Yugoslavia's long-standing leader, General Tito, prefigured and precipitated, albeit ten years later, the death of the European federal state of Yugoslavia (Table 2.2). Whilst the dissolution in itself may prove to be less significant historically than the collapse of the Soviet Union, its effect on the United Nations makes it geo-politically potentially catastrophic. Six federated states diminished to two: Serbia and Montenegro. Between September and December 1991, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia, all resigned from the former federation. The new, diminished, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was declared on 27 April 1992. Its borders remain provisional. In the meantime, two of the newly independent states, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, have formed a confederation.<sup>(14)</sup>

**Table 2.2 The Former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1991)**

No.	Republic	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population	Density (km <sup>-2</sup> )
1	Serbia	88,361	9,791,475	111
	<i>Serbia proper</i>	44,968	5,824,211	130
	<i>Vojvodina</i>	21,506	2,012,517	94
	<i>Kosovo</i>	10,887	1,954,747	179
2	Croatia	56,538	4,601,469	81
3	Bosnia-Herzegovina	51,129	4,124,008	81
4	Macedonia	25,713	1,912,257	74
5	Slovenia	20,251	1,891,864	93
6	Montenegro	13,812	615,267	45
	<b>Total</b>	255,804	22,427,585	88

Sources: Serbia: *The Europa World Year Book 1993*, Vol.II, 1993, p.3232; Croatia: *Ibid*, p.861; Bosnia-Herzegovina: *Ibid*, p.556; Macedonia: *Ibid*, p.3250; Slovenia: *Ibid*, p.2539; Montenegro: *Ibid*, p.3232.

Whilst viability may be a function of some political processes, there is no one political system from which federations naturally or more successfully spring. Whilst the U.S.A., Canada and Switzerland are western democracies, political power in the U.A.E. and Malaysia is much more concentrated. The short-lived C.I.S. operated from a different basis again. Economically, federations exist in a variety of circumstances. Whilst the U.S.A., Canada and Switzerland are rich western nations, many federations, such as India, Pakistan and Mexico are poor Third World (economically developing) countries.

An ongoing factor relating to the viability of a federal state is whether the federation continues to serve the purpose for which it was formed. In the case of the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite countries, the thawing of the Cold War, and therefore the removal of military threat, broke the bond which had maintained those federations since and before the Second World War. In the case of the U.A.E., the military threats remain.

### 2.1.5 Other failed federations

Some federations have been proposed resulting from the breakup of empires, federation being seen as a way of managing or solving many different problems. For example, a united, independent Maghreb was proposed by some Arab nationalist leaders in the early 1950s, to be composed of Morocco, Tangier, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. However, many differences of opinion arose among them. France granted independence to Morocco and Tunisia in 1956, and Tangier joined Morocco. After a long, bloody war between France and the Algerian F.L.N., the latter won independence in 1962, and the chance for federation was lost.<sup>(15)</sup> Another example of a proposed federation that failed was in East Africa. Since the 1920s, the British territories of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika had been co-operating and governed in increasingly close association and the movement toward a federation was growing. Ordinary people, however, had little enthusiasm for federation, which was echoed by their black African leaders. Then Tanganyika won independence in 1961, followed by Uganda in 1962. Kenya became an independent state in December 1963.<sup>(16)</sup> Another four federations were promoted by Britain: the West Indies, Central Africa, South Arabia, and Malaysia. The first three of these failed to come to fruition. Malaysia alone succeeded, and even then failed to incorporate Singapore. The West Indies and Central Africa federal proposals disintegrated before independence, and each unit went its own way toward independence. Civil war broke out in Aden and southern Arabia. In 1958, Egypt and Syria, followed by North Yemen, joined to form what was called the United Arab Republic, but after an unhappy marriage they were divorced in 1961. Indonesia's federal period lasted less than 8 months after independence, ending in August 1950. During 1989-91, the solid rock of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was shattered, the underlying reason being economic collapse, although President Gorbachev's political policies are generally seen as facilitating the events which precipitated these changes.<sup>(17)</sup> Yugoslavia similarly

disintegrated at the same time and for similar economic reasons,<sup>(18)</sup> (for former Yugoslavia, see Table 2.2).

At the beginning of 1990, twenty states in the world had federal constitutions. As with most other aspects of political systems, history, geography and culture are the strongest factors behind the choice of a federal structure. It is for this reason that, despite their small numbers, forty per cent of the world's population lived in states with federal constitutions. However, by the beginning of 1994, the number of federal states had shrunk to seventeen, listed in Table 2.1, which also gives details of population, area and the number of federated units.

## 2.2 The Federal System of the United Arab Emirates

A contemporary example of a state created with a federal system is the United Arab Emirates, which was formed of six Gulf Emirates in December 1971, and shortly joined by a seventh (Table 2.3). Since then, only two tiny countries have emerged with a federal government: the Comoros in 1975, and St. Kitts-Nevis in 1983.

**Table 2.3: Area and Population of the U.A.E., 1991**

Emirate	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population	% of total	Density (km <sup>-2</sup> )
Abu Dhabi	67,350	798,000	41.8	11.8
Dubai	3,900	501,000	26.2	128.5
Sharjah	2,600	314,000	16.5	120.8
Ras al-Khaimah	1,700	130,000	6.8	76.5
Ajman	250	76,000	4.0	304.0
Fujairah	1,150	63,000	3.3	54.8
Umm al-Qaiwain	750	27,000	1.4	36.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,700</b>	<b>1,909,000</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>24.6</b>

Source: *The Middle East and North Africa 1993*, 39th edition, 1993, p.933.

The purposes of this section are to examine the experience of the working of federalism in the United Arab Emirates; to compare the U.A.E. experience with that in some other federal states; and to evaluate the success or failure of the federal

system in dealing with the economic and social diversities in those states. The establishment of the United Arab Emirates as a federal government is explored in detail in Chapter 3, section four.

After three years of discussion, the governments of various Emirates agreed to establish the new federal government as a union of their respective Emirates. Initially, at independence on 2 December 1971, there were six Emirates, namely: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain and Fujairah. In the same year the United Arab Emirates became a new member of both the Arab League and the United Nations.<sup>(19)</sup> On 10 February 1972 a seventh Emirate joined the federation: Ras al-Khaimah.<sup>(20)</sup> The union thus consists of the seven Arab shaikhdoms formerly known as the Trucial States. Although a federal state requires a federal capital, the case of the U.A.E. is a little different, as mentioned in Article 9 of the U.A.E. provisional Constitution:<sup>(21)</sup>

*"The capital of the union shall be established in an area allotted to the union by the emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai on the borders between them and it shall be given the name 'Al-Karama'. There shall be allocated in the budget for the first year the amount necessary to cover the expenses of technical studies and planning for the construction of the capital. However, construction work shall begin as soon as possible and shall be completed in not more than seven years from the date of entry into force of this constitution.*

*Until the construction of the union is complete, Abu Dhabi shall be provisional headquarters of the union."<sup>(22)</sup>*

A general comment about the above article is that the federal capital of the U.A.E. is Abu Dhabi, in the westernmost Emirate and the largest member in the union, and the richest oil producer since the establishment of the federation on 2 December 1971 to the present day. Construction of Al-Karama as the federal capital is still not underway on the site mentioned in the constitution. East and Prescott comment that, to avoid friction and internal jealousies, it is important that the federal government

chooses as capital territory a free, convenient, and above all 'neutral', site to be a token of political unity and a centre which can play a significant role in unifying the state.<sup>(23)</sup> The failure to construct this important symbol of federation is a measure of the pervading lack of motivation regarding the development of federal (as distinct from local) projects which the U.A.E. has experienced.

To examine the ideas above more deeply, several federal states will be targeted. The choice of site for the capital city constitutes a clear political statement. Washington D.C. and Canberra were built on neutral ground, whilst Ottawa, the capital of Canada was built at the interface between the English and French speaking regions. Another example, Brasilia, the capital of Brazil, was built within a newly established federal district, the site of which was chosen to avoid the two dominating cities of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, to establish the economic development of the interior. After the Second World War, the choice of capital of the Federal Republic of Germany was Bonn, a small and relatively unimportant university town. Canberra lies in one of two enclaves of federal territory known as the Australian Capital Territory. The capital itself is not a member state of the federation. The same rule applies to other federal countries such as India with its capital New Delhi, Malaysia's capital Kuala Lumpur, and similarly, if less strongly, for Mexico, Argentina and Venezuela.

It can be concluded from the foregoing that Abu Dhabi as the federal capital of the United Arab Emirates and the most powerful Emirate in the union, is unusual, although not unique: Belgrade, capital of the former Yugoslavia, had long been capital of Serbia. However, most federal countries choose their capital city to be separate from any other political unit in order to avoid problems. The U.A.E. would benefit were the decision to implement the article which stipulates that the federal capital of the union should be established on the border between Abu Dhabi and Dubai to be taken. The benefit would be significant for U.A.E. citizens, in that the distance to the capital city from any other part of the U.A.E. would be shortened, especially from the northern Emirates. A great

many people work in the federal ministries of the U.A.E. in Abu Dhabi and in the oil companies which are situated in the federal capital (even though some of them are staff in the maritime oil field which belongs to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi).

### **2.2.1 The Federal Government of the U.A.E.**

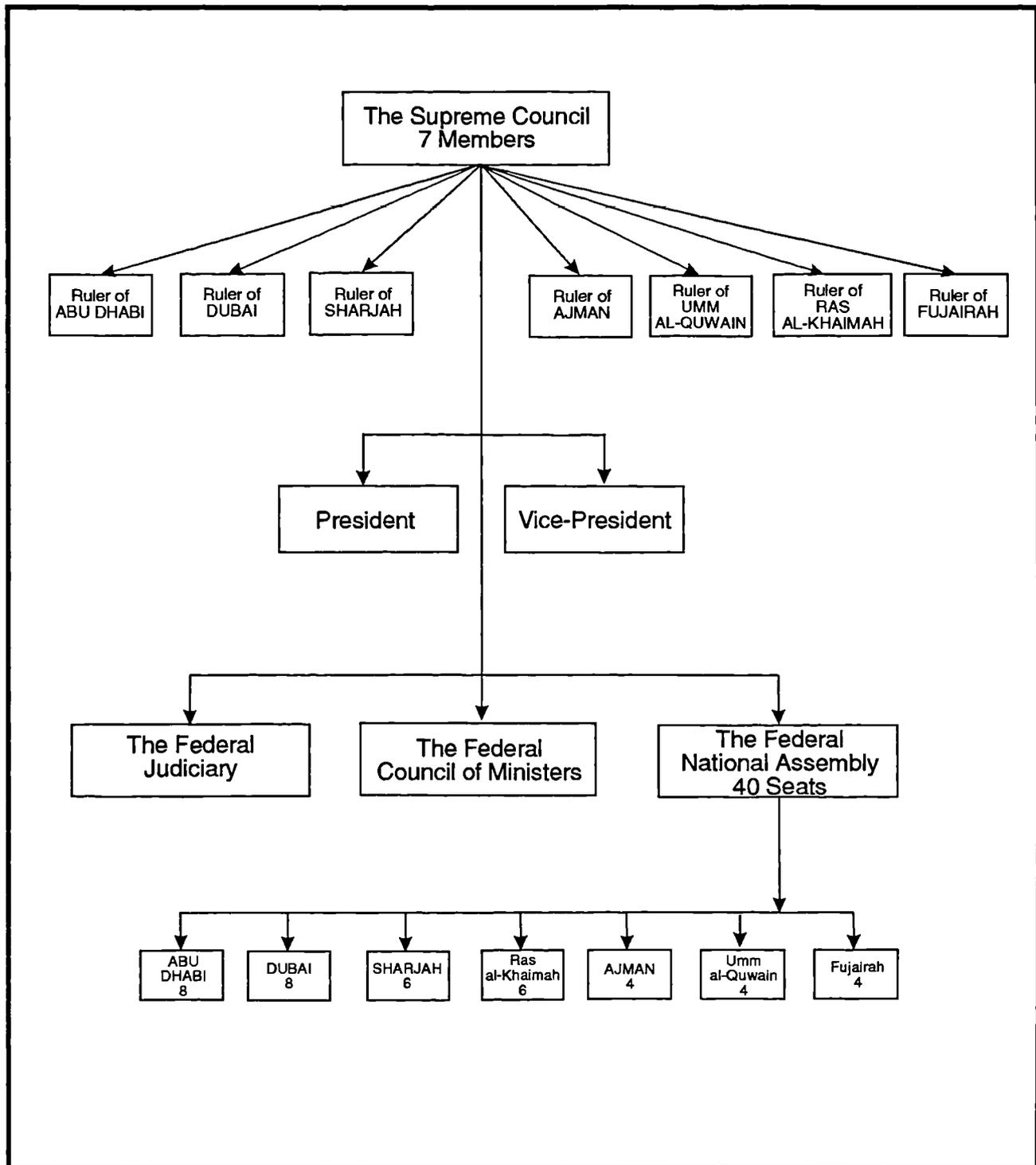
The chief organs of the federal government (see Figure 2.1) are:

- a. The Federal Supreme Council.
- b. The President of the Union and a Vice-President.
- c. The Federal Council of Ministers.
- d. The Federal National Assembly.
- e. The Federal Judiciary.

#### **a. The Supreme Council**

The highest federal authority is the Supreme Council of the Union (SCU). It consists of all the rulers, or their deputies, of the member Emirates. Decisions of the SCU require the presence of at least five of its seven members, including the rulers of both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. It has the power to decide policy, elect the president and his deputy, admit new members to the federation and appoint the prime minister and the judges of the Federal Supreme Court. It also ratifies all federal laws, although the president has the right to approve and fulfill them.<sup>(24)</sup> The SCU seldom meets more than once a year, but the rulers often meet informally on a more regular basis. Each Emirate has one vote in the council. Decisions by the SCU must be approved by a majority of five out of seven. The SCU has the final decision in all matters concerning the union's general policies, the ratification of international treaties, agreements and the declaration of war. The SCU plans the general policy of the Union, and approves all federal laws including the general annual budget. The SCU is the fundamental body of the federal structure, supervising all union affairs, internal and external.<sup>(25)</sup>

**Figure 2.1 THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE OF THE U.A.E.**



SOURCE: Author

## **b. The President**

The President of the Union and his Deputy are both elected by the SCU for a period of five years, subject to renewal. Since the foundation of the federation in December 1971, the president of the U.A.E. has been H.H. Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nehayyan, who is the ruler of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Thanks largely to him, the U.A.E. federation has survived for 22 years: according to Kelly he was, and remains, the moving force behind the federation. Shaikh Zayed has from the start been the most dedicated champion of the federation, a dedication which has been resisted by Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah, and interpreted by the other rulers as indicative not so much of a federal spirit but of Shaikh Zayed's recognition that Abu Dhabi has the most to gain from federation.<sup>(26)</sup>

The President represents the federal union both domestically and internationally, and it is the President who signs and issues all federal laws. In addition, the President appoints the Prime Minister of the federal government. The head of state also acts as commander-in-chief of the armed forces.<sup>(27)</sup> Further, he appoints the president and member-judges of the Supreme Court.

## **c. The Council of Ministers**

The Council of Ministers is in a better position than the Supreme Council to benefit the union, especially in the sector of social services. The Council of Ministers consists of the following portfolios:

- a. Foreign affairs.
- b. Federal defence and the armed forces.
- c. Protection of the Union's security.
- d. Drafting federal laws.

- e. Annual general budget and the final accounts.
- f. Affairs of federal employees and the federal judiciary.
- g. Federal nationality, passports, residence permits and immigration.
- h. Communication services: postal, telegraph, telephone and radio services.
- i. Education and universities.
- j. Public health and medical services.
- k. Electricity services.
- l. Air traffic control.
- m. Union finance and Union taxes, duties and fees.
- n. Union Information.

At the beginning of every financial year the Council of Ministers shall

*"Submit to the President of the Union for presentation to the Supreme Council a detailed statement of internal achievements, the union's relations with other states and international organizations, accompanied by the Cabinet's recommendations on the best method to consolidate the union."<sup>(28)</sup>*

In the U.A.E. it has become accepted practice that the President, Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers of the Interior, Foreign Affairs and Information are from Abu Dhabi, whilst the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, and Ministers of Finance and Defence are from Dubai. However, the Provisional Constitution does not specify from which Emirate federal ministers should be drawn. In 1971 the ministries of foreign affairs, interior and information were allocated to Abu Dhabi; and the ministries of defence, finance and economy and industry to Dubai. Alongside this federal government, each Emirate runs its own civil service which takes the form of departments attached to the Ruler's office. For example, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi has a 16 member formal executive council made up of its heads of government

departments most of whom are members of the Al-Nahhayan ruling family and other families allied to them such as the Al-Suwaidi. Abu Dhabi also has its own national consultative council and created the Abu Dhabi Supreme Petroleum Council outside the federal oil ministry. The oil affairs of the Emirate of Dubai are controlled directly by the ruler of Dubai's office, and are not under the authority of the federal oil ministry. These local departments illustrate the point that the Emirates place greater emphasis on federal co-ordination in areas such as education and health, but in the fields of sovereignty, natural resources, defence and internal security, they remain independent of federal authority. For example, the Emirate of Dubai has its own defence force, police force, and oil affairs ministry outside the federal oil ministry (which therefore places it outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC]), and its own independent health department.

In fact, under the U.A.E. federal constitution, each of the seven member Emirates retains total responsibility in respect of its own oil affairs. Oil policy, therefore, remains in the hands of the individual Emirate. Only three Emirates export significant quantities of oil. In order of volume, these are Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah. This means that the (federal) Minister for Petroleum and Mineral Resources has little power, and his principal function often appears to be to represent the federation at meetings of international oil organisations, such as OPEC. The lack of control and authority are likely to have been what prompted the minister, Yousef Omair bin Yousef, to resign on 18 February 1994.<sup>(29)</sup> This is the first time since the establishment of the federation that a federal government minister has chosen to resign.

#### **d. The Federal National Assembly (or Council)**

The U.A.E. parliament, established on 13 February 1972, is known as the Federal National Council. The total membership of this body (appointed by the ruling body in each Emirate) is fixed at 40 seats, allocated between the Emirates as follows: eight

seats each for Abu Dhabi and Dubai; six seats each for Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah; and four seats each for Ajman, Umm al-Quwain and Fujairah. Whilst this parliamentary distribution loosely reflects approximate ranking of the Emirates, in terms of population and economic strength, it weights representation heavily in favour of the smaller, weaker Emirates. This weighting may explain why the powers of the Assembly are limited, and its role confined to consultation and making recommendations.

**e. The Federal Supreme Court**

The Judiciary is the fifth pillar of government in a federal state. Article 94 of the Provisional Constitution of the U.A.E. stipulates

*"Justice is the basis of rule. In performing their duties judges shall be independent and not subject to influence except by the Law and their conscience."*<sup>(30)</sup>

The federal judiciary consist of a Supreme Court and a number of federal Courts. These courts deal with federal bodies and Union affairs. The federal Supreme Court is the highest judicial authority in the Union. It is made up of five judges who, on formal request adjudicate disputes on the constitutionality of federal laws, between individual Emirates in the Union and the federal government or between Emirates.<sup>(31)</sup> Such disputes can relate to internal boundaries between one Emirate and another, as happened between the Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah in 1980s. The four justices are led by a President who is appointed by the President of the federal Union, and approved of by the SCU.

The seven member Emirates of the federation are extremely different in terms of their territorial size, populations and material resources.<sup>(32)</sup> The most privileged of the Emirates are Abu Dhabi and Dubai, by virtue of their relatively large areas and financial resources. Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the most powerful of the seven states,

came together as a result of the joint wisdom of their rulers, Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan and Shaikh Rashid Bin Said Al Maktum. It is not unimportant that the families of both rulers originated from the same basic tribal group, the Bani Yas, whereas the rulers of the other Emirates belong to different tribal network. Tribal affiliations remain strong in this balance of power.

A major weakness of the federal system in the U.A.E. is that the central government does not have sufficient independent financial resources and must therefore depend on contributions from the richest and largest of the seven Emirates, namely Abu Dhabi and Dubai. These two Emirates control the two major sources of income: mineral resources (largely oil) and trade. As a result, the main executive and legislative powers in the federal government are concentrated into the hands of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. These two Emirates control the resources on which the federation survives, and both Abu Dhabi and Dubai have pledged to contribute 50 per cent of their revenues from petroleum to the federal budget. However, in practice only Abu Dhabi does this. Dubai justifies not doing so on the grounds that it directly finances many projects in Umm al- Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah.

There are, as in any federal state, strong competitive tendencies at work in the union's projects. The fundamental reason for the dissipation of socio-economic energy in the U.A.E. is the absence of a strategic master plan even to approach dealing with the structural characteristics of the state's economy, and its social, political, and geographical attributes. The absence of an overall strategy has resulted in various examples which demonstrate the weakness of planning in the U.A.E.. For example, each Emirate had a cement plant, and between 1973 and 1979, five international airports were built, for Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, and Fujairah.<sup>(33)</sup> A further international airport, scheduled to open in 1994, is currently under construction at Al Ain.<sup>(34)</sup> Several high-capacity seaports were established along only

600 km of western coastline in Abu Dhabi (Zayed port), in Dubai (Rashid and Jabal Ali ports), in Sharjah and in Ras al-Khaimah. Two seaports were built on the east coast not more than 100 km apart: one in Khur Fakkan and the other in Fujairah. This unco-ordinated distribution reflects the evident weakness of central government, and how the individual ruler of each Emirate can prepare an economic plan for his own Emirate by generating a kind of competition between them in development projects. The situation perpetuates serious fragmentation, and it is unlikely to change until the nature of relations between the federal authority and the individual Emirates is first changed. Moreover, the weakness of the federal administration on the Union can be obvious through federal services provided by the federal government, such as electricity and water. These services were provided by the federal ministry only to Ajman and Umm al-Quwain. Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah cities maintained their own independent systems.

It can be concluded from the foregoing that these structural weaknesses reflect the superiority of the local government of some Emirates over the federal government. A further example is the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources which acts in respect only of Abu Dhabi's resources. Dubai and Sharjah are completely autonomous in their petroleum policies, and the other four Emirates are not oil producers.<sup>(35)</sup>

Another symbol of the weakness of federal authority is the flying of individual flags. According to Article 5 of the Provisional Constitution:

*"The union shall have a Flag, an Emblem and a National Anthem. The flag and the Emblem shall be prescribed by Law. Each Emirate shall retain its own flag for use within its territories".<sup>(36)</sup>*

The constitution thus authorizes each Emirate to run up its local flag. This local loyalty exists in local departments of police, public security, justice, and communications and

radio and television stations in the Emirates of Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah. The Sharjah flag was abolished by the Ruler of Sharjah, and replaced by the union flag to demonstrate his commitment to the federal cause. The Emirates of Abu Dhabi, the federal capital of the state, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, and Fujairah followed suit. However, Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah still run up their local flags alongside the federal or the Union flag on buildings of non-federal departments, such as local health services departments, sport clubs, local municipalities and police stations. To facilitate further integration, this Article could be amended to require Emirates to run up the federal flag alone. This kind of amendment can be made very easily, because of the flexibility of the still-provisional constitution.

### **2.2.2 Obstacles and dangers facing the federal system of the U.A.E.**

The federal system of the U.A.E. faces a number of obstacles and dangers: the struggle for power within Emirates, the assertion of tribalism, different visions of Federation, and the tension between the autonomy of the Emirates against the authority of the Federation.

#### **2.2.2.1 Struggle for power within Emirates**

The struggle for power within the Emirates was more obvious prior to 1971. Several Trucial States rulers had come to power by deposing or assassinating their predecessors.<sup>(37)</sup> The present ruler of Ras al-Khaimah, for example, deposed his uncle Shaikh Sultan Bin Salim in 1948. Shaikh Shakhboub ruled Abu Dhabi from 1928 to 1966. He was, however, unwilling to use oil revenues for modernisation and development. He was, therefore, peacefully removed and replaced by his brother, Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan, who has been ruler of Abu Dhabi ever since, and President of the U.A.E. since 1971.

Unlike in some other Gulf states, transfer of power takes place using the principle of male primogeniture: the Shaikh must designate his eldest son to succeed him. If the eldest son is too young to assume the reins of power, a regent is appointed to act as a deputy ruler.

Subsequent to 1971, the same intra-family rivalries have persisted, and indeed have blown up into inter-Emirate rivalries. The most recent example of this was on 17 June 1987 when Shaikh Abdul Aziz al-Qasemi, commander of Sharjah's armed forces, led a coup against the ruler, his brother, Shaikh Sultan al-Qasemi. Shaikh Abdul Aziz al-Qasemi announced through the official U.A.E. news agency (WAM), which is controlled by Abu Dhabi, that his brother was abdicating at the request of his family, having mismanaged the Emirate's economy. However, the ruling family of Dubai took a different view. In a statement, they insisted that Shaikh Sultan was the legitimate ruler, and asked the Federal Government to "correct the situation and restore legitimacy." The Federal Government responded: "Security of the Federation is indivisible, and the basic procedure of succession is of concern to all [Emirates]. The situation should be handled with decisiveness and firmness."<sup>(38)</sup> On 21 June 1987 the U.A.E. Supreme Council reinstated Shaikh Sultan as ruler, and Shaikh Abdul Aziz was appointed Crown Prince.<sup>(39)</sup> Shaikh Sultan was seen as possibly the most 'liberal' of the seven ruling shaikhs, which did not best please Abu Dhabi, which preferred to see a stronger ruler, and thus supported Abdul Aziz.<sup>(40)</sup> Dubai's support for Shaikh Sultan strengthened because of the boundary agreement between Dubai and Sharjah, which had been settled in April 1985 by H.H. Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed al-Qasemi and H.H. Shaikh Maktum bin Rashid al-Maktum.

From Sharjah's coup, it can be seen how the integration and stability of the union can be affected by dynastic rivalries. It can also be seen that Abu Dhabi and Dubai took different attitudes towards the coup: Abu Dhabi supported Abdul Aziz, and it was

Abu Dhabi which permitted the transmission of Abdul Aziz's broadcast; Dubai supported Sultan, and insisted on his rights as a ruler. This difference in response and perception could easily be exploited by unfriendly countries. Moreover, the lack of political stability revealed by the coup, and the difference of opinion between Abu Dhabi and Dubai could act as an enticement for unfriendly countries to intervene in the internal affairs of the U.A.E.. This is the spectre which faced the Supreme Council, threatening the integration of the U.A.E. as a whole. While the international military threat to the U.A.E. remains strong, then the U.A.E. Supreme Council has little choice but to agree a common policy on ruling internal affairs.

#### **2.2.2.2 Assertion of tribalism**

Tribes were the basic political unit of traditional society in the Trucial States, as throughout the entire Arabian Peninsula. The interposition of British political officers, and the diplomacy of the British political agents in the lower Gulf in the nineteenth century to control conflicts, failed to prevent tribal clashes occurring. Even after independence in 1971, inter-tribal conflict has occurred, although fixed internal boundaries have now replaced the traditional *dirah* (a term explored in detail below) on which tribal loyalties were based.

By the 1980s about 85 percent of the Bedouin people of the Arabian Peninsula had been settled,<sup>(41)</sup> although this assault on a long-standing cultural lifestyle and identity has not expunged the tribal system from the U.A.E.. Bedouin people represent between 5 and 15 percent of the legal population of each Emirate.<sup>(42)</sup> Modernisation of the economy has not resulted in the departure of tribal ways of thinking.<sup>(43)</sup> Beneath the veneer of the modern state and its concomitant environmental changes, the lives of the people and their social attitudes remain tribal.

Although the world regards the U.A.E. as a federal state, effective political authority in each Emirate lies with the respective ruling families, who are, by definition, part of the most powerful elite within the dominant tribal group in each Emirate.

Tribalism is a principal factor slowing down the process of settling internal U.A.E. boundary disputes. It has been one of the main causes of political friction in the region (Trucial Oman), and the cause of many wars. Rather than identify themselves as Emirati, many Bedouin and other tribal people in the U.A.E. identify themselves as Amri (of the Awamir tribe) or Mansoori (of the Manasir tribe). Similarly, people from Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Umm al-Quwain identify themselves respectively as Dhabiani, Dabawi and Quwaini, rather than Emarati.

Abu Dhabi has the greatest number of tribal groups, and had a private National Consultative Council of fifty members appointed by the ruler, Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan. The fifty members were divided between the four Abu Dhabi tribes: Dhwahir, Awamir, Manasir and Remaithat.

One of the ways in which tribalism is a serious obstacle to the strengthening of the federation is that tribal loyalty is to a ruler as a person: the tribal shaikh. In modern times the tribal shaikh has also become the ruler over a tract of land, and that land has become joined in federation with the land of other tribal shaikhs. However, tribal loyalty has not been transferred away from loyalty to the ruler to a tract of land, to land joined in federation, or to the abstract concept of a political federation. Tribal loyalty remains faithful to the tribal shaikh, and this, through the concept of communal tribal land ownership, is fundamental to the whole issue of internal boundaries within the U.A.E..

### 2.2.2.3 Different visions of Federation

Most of the seven Emirates have their own unique view of federation. Abu Dhabi is strongly unitarist, wanting to be as integrated and unitary a federal state as possible. Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah take a local separatist position. Accordingly, Shaikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi, who is also the President of the Federation, makes affirmative statements about a strong federation, whereas Shaikh Rashid Bin Said Al-Maktum, ruler of Dubai from 1958 to 1990, desired a loose federation in which Dubai could enjoy a high degree of autonomy. This difference was described by a Middle East commentator:

*"Shaikh Rashid was content to concentrate on his phenomenally successful business enterprises, and leave the conduct of the U.A.E.'s foreign affairs to Shaikh Zayed, who represented a strong collective U.A.E. personality to the outside world."*<sup>(44)</sup>

*"Shaikh Rashid was an Arab tribal Shaikh who happened to be a business genius, and he was quite content to allow Abu Dhabi to conduct the foreign policy of the U.A.E., provided he could continue to pursue his own interest of making Dubai a major financial and trading centre."*<sup>(45)</sup>

The Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah has traditionally taken an independent view, and, significantly, was the last Emirate to join the Federation, albeit only two months later, on 10 February 1972 (see Chapter 3).

These differences between Emirates are illustrated in the following:

*"Characteristically, owing to their conflicting territorial claims, they have had poor relations with their immediate neighbors [sic], and good relations with the ruler just beyond. This leapfrog pattern of good and bad relations has resulted in a sense of mutual animosity permeating both sides of nearly every frontier within the U.A.A. [sic] down to the present day. In terms of intra-regional political alignments, this pattern tends to put Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Umm al-Qaywayn [sic] and Fujayrah [sic] in one group, and Dubai [sic], Ajman and Ra's al-Khaymah [sic] in another."*<sup>(46)</sup>

In Chapter 6, it will be shown how the boundary dispute between Dubai and Sharjah ran into settlement difficulties when Dubai refused to refer the dispute to the Federal Supreme Court, and was only settled on the signing of a border agreement in April 1985. The relationship between Dubai and Sharjah improved first when Shaikh Maktum, the eldest son of Dubai's ruler, took full charge of the Emirate's affairs, and then in June 1987 when Dubai supported Shaikh Sultan during the attempted coup, rather than his brother, Shaikh Abdul Aziz. Shaikh Maktum was Crown Prince of Dubai until the death of his father in 1990, at which point he became ruler of Dubai, and both Vice-President and Prime Minister of the U.A.E..

The boundary dispute between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah remains unresolved due to the cool relations between the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah and the ruler of Fujairah. The ruler of Ras al-Khaimah, who has ruled since 1948, remains proud of his family history, and still considers that Fujairah is part of Qawasim territory, of whom he is the tribal leader (see Chapters 3 and 7).

#### **2.2.2.4 Tension between the Emirates and the Federal Government**

There is tension between the Emirates (the local level) and the Federal Government (the centre).

Article 127 of the Provisional Constitution stipulates:

*"The member Emirates of the Union shall contribute a specified proportion of their annual revenues to cover the annual general budget expenditure of the Union ..."*

However, Abu Dhabi contributes the lion's share of this: 98 percent of the U.A.E. annual budget.<sup>(47)</sup> The main reason given why Dubai contributes less than one per cent of the federal budget is that the Dubai government, which is not under Federal Government jurisdiction, pays for most of Dubai's domestic budget. In contrast to the other Emirates, Dubai's military, police force, health department, etc., are paid

for by the Dubai government. This degree of financial autonomy draws comparisons between Dubai and Singapore, which left the Malaysian Federation.

The oil companies in Abu Dhabi are under the authority of the Federal Ministry of Petroleum (which is a member of O.P.E.C.). However, this Federal Ministry has no power or authority over the oil affairs of the other oil-rich Emirates: Dubai, Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah. These latter Emirates operate outside O.P.E.C., selling their oil on the open market.

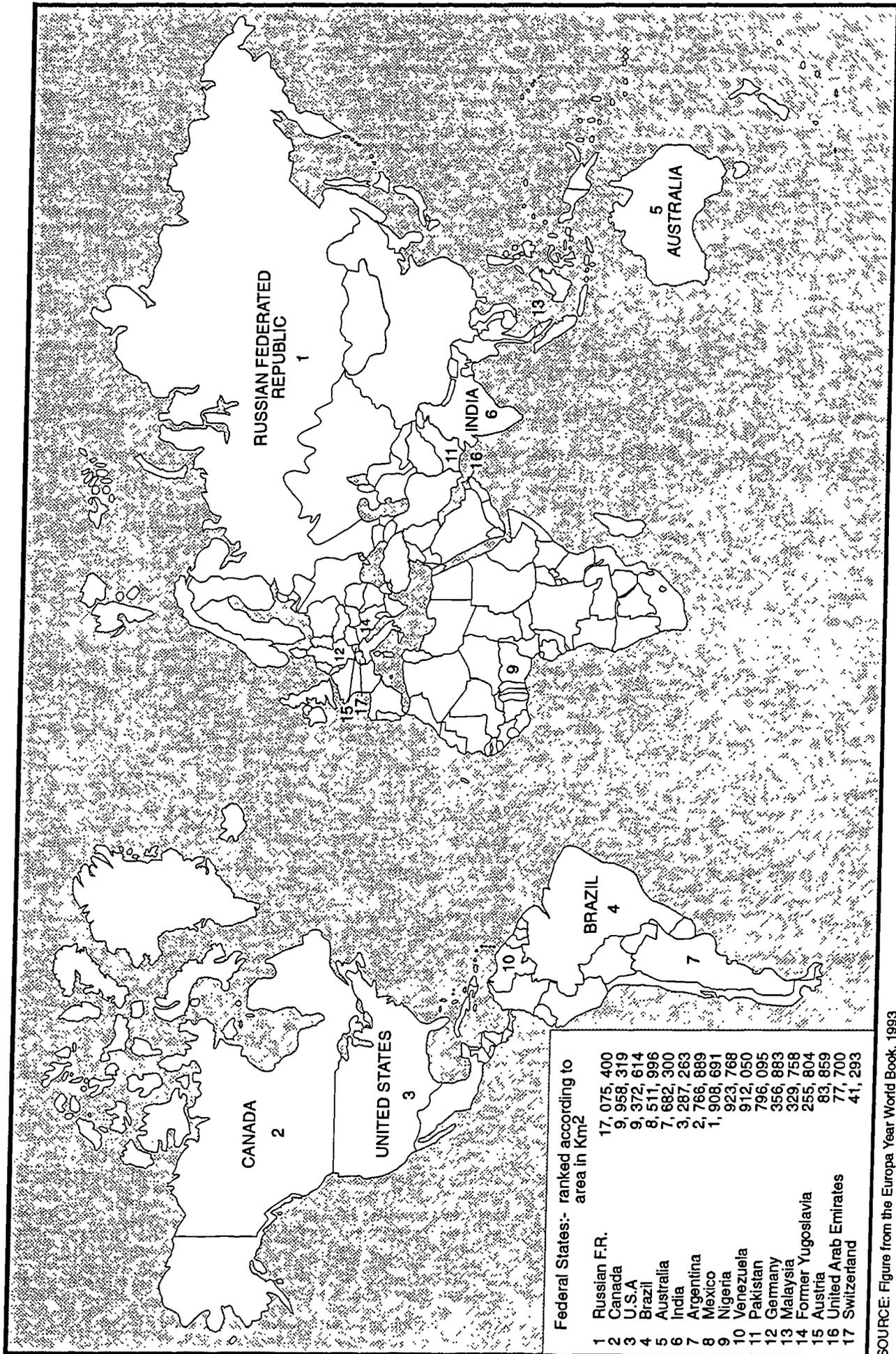
### **2.3 Comparison between the U.A.E. and other federal states**

The aim of this section is to identify and examine the respects in which the United Arab Emirates as a federal state differs from several selected contemporary federal states, such as the United States, Canada, Malaysia and India (see Figure 2.1).

The United Arab Emirates is a unique example of a federation from two broad viewpoints: (a) the background of the Union and the experience of the region in which the Union took its shape; (b) the characteristics of the Union which contains the nature of the federation and the political nature of its existence.

According to educational method programmes in the U.A.E. schools illustrate the loyalties to the Union or to the Federation, and not to the individual Emirate. However, the socio-political environment of the U.A.E. is the traditional tribal life that depends on several groups of tribes with traditional leaders. The head of the tribe could be the elder, and the tribal confederation is provided by the ruling family deriving from tribal loyalty. The loyalty of a tribesman extends from the family to the tribe, and only then to the state. The important point here is that a tribesman's loyalty to the state is accorded to the ruler as a person, not to the state as territory. During the eighteenth century the tribal influence stretched along the Gulf coast, establishing new ways of life involving new models of economic activity such as fishing and

Figure 2.2 World map showing contemporary federal states



SOURCE: Figure from the Europa Year World Book, 1993

pearling, as well as involvement in agriculture. Afterwards, a number of city states emerged along tribal lines. Next, the discovery and exploitation of oil in the area gave the greatest motivation for the development of the region claimed by each tribe. Tribalism is a fact of life in Eastern Arabia, and particularly in the United Arab Emirates. In this respect, the U.A.E. differs from the other federal states around the world. The tribal nature of U.A.E. society is examined in detail in Chapter 3.

Another distinguishing feature between some federal states and the U.A.E. as a federal state, is the role of political parties as an element of federal structure. The party structure of the political system in the United States incorporates two parties; in the former Czechoslovakia, one party; in the former Yugoslavia, one party; Malaysia and Pakistan are tentatively multi-party states. In several small federal states the picture is the same. The Comoros Islands is made up of three islands; its political structure is federal with one political party. St. Kitts and Nevis is a federal state of two islands in which two parties operate. However, in the U.A.E. there are no political parties, and the highest authority is the Supreme Council of Rulers which includes the Shaikhs of all the Emirates.<sup>(48)</sup>

A third dissimilarity between the U.A.E. and other federal states is its size. A majority of federal states occupy large areas. In contrast, as shown in Table 2.3, the total area of the United Arab Emirates is a mere 77,700 km<sup>2</sup>, and the largest state of the Union is Abu Dhabi (67,350 km<sup>2</sup>). The largest federal state in Australia is Western Australia occupying 2,525,500 km<sup>2</sup>. India occupies a total area 3,287,263 km<sup>2</sup>, in which the largest federal unit is Madhya Pradesh the area of which is 443,446 km<sup>2</sup>. The total area of Canada is 9,215,430 km<sup>2</sup>, the largest Province of which is Quebec: 1,356,790 km<sup>2</sup>. The former Yugoslavia occupied an area 255,804 km<sup>2</sup>, the largest republic of which was Serbia 88,361 km<sup>2</sup>. Malaysia occupies an area of 329,758 km<sup>2</sup>, the largest federal state of which is Sarawak the area of which is 124,449 km<sup>2</sup>, twice the area of

Abu Dhabi, and larger even than the total area of the U.A.E.. For a federation, the U.A.E. is thus small in population, and in area.

Every federal state is unique, and differs from other federal states in a variety of ways: the number of units, the size and area of each unit, socio-cultural factors such as demography, economic factors such as the natural resources and productive wealth of each unit. It is possible, however, to recognise that some federal states are not so dissimilar to others. The federal state possibly most similar to the U.A.E. is Malaysia.

Malaysia is a federation of eleven states of peninsular Malaysia and the two states of Sarawak and Sabah (Table 2.4). Formerly under British protection, the eleven states were united as the Malayan Union in April 1946, transforming into the Federation of Malaya in February 1948. Malaysia was established on 16 September 1963. Less than two years later, on 9 August 1965, Singapore seceded from the Federation claiming irreconcilable differences with the Malaysian central government. As an independent country, Singapore was admitted to the United Nations in September 1965, and in the following month became a member of the Commonwealth. There are parallels between Singapore and both Qatar and Bahrain. The two Gulf states were originally part of the process forming a federation of Gulf states. However, their oil revenues allowed them to achieve independence from the other Gulf states and not be tied into a federation which would limit their sovereignty. Neither Gulf state has a land boundary with what became the U.A.E. (although the two countries have disputed maritime boundaries). Whilst there are also parallels between Singapore and Dubai, not least the reluctance of the Dubai government to see eye to eye with the U.A.E. presidency, there are also differences. In spatial terms, Dubai is contiguous with, and central to, much of the U.A.E., and this would make secession for Dubai more problematic.

In Malaysia, every five years, a supreme head of state is elected by the nine princely rulers from among their own number. This situation is paralleled in the U.A.E. in that overall authority is vested in the Supreme Council of the seven Emirate rulers (each of whom is monarch in his own state), and the President and Vice-President are elected by the Supreme Council from among its members. The U.A.E. Prime Minister and Council of Ministers are appointed by the U.A.E. President. In Malaysia, the head of state appoints a cabinet of ministers headed by a Prime Minister.

**Table 2.4: Malaysia's States, Area and Population, 1993**

No.	State	Area (Km <sup>2</sup> )	Population
1	Johore	18,986	2,106,500
2	Kedah	9,426	1,412,800
3	Kelantan	14,943	1,220,100
4	Malacca	1,650	583,500
5	Negri Sembilan	6,643	723,800
6	Pahang	35,965	1,054,800
7	Penang & Province Wellesley	1,031	1,142,200
8	Perak	21,005	2,222,200
9	Perlis	795	187,700
10	Sabah	73,711	1,470,200
11	Sarawak	124,449	1,669,000
12	Selangor	7,956	1,978,000
13	Trengganu	12,955	752,000
14	Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur	243	1,232,900
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>329,758</b>	<b>17,755,900</b>

Source: *The Europa World Year Book 1993*, Vol.II. 1993, p.1851.

The federal states of the U.A.E. and Malaysia share similar histories of formation. They both experienced periods of British protection, having formerly been self-governing.

On withdrawal of British protection, each of the Trucial Shaikhdoms and the Malaysian states were too small to be forming independent political units alone: the

total area of Ajman is a mere 250 km<sup>2</sup>; Umm al-Quwain, 750 km<sup>2</sup>; and Fujairah, 1150 km<sup>2</sup>.

Military threat has been a potent factor in the rise and maintenance of both federal states. Malaya was granted independence within the Commonwealth on 31 August 1957, after the British departure from Malaya in the mid-1950s. Formerly, the eleven states of Malaya under British protection were united as the Malayan Union in April 1946, and became the Malayan Federation in February 1948. It is not insignificant that Singapore and Brunei opted out of the Malaysian Federation (as did Qatar and Bahrain from the nascent U.A.E.), and that Sarawak and Sabah were taken in. For the U.A.E., neighbouring Gulf states (e.g. Iran and Saudi Arabia) had shown their ambitions regarding the Trucial Coast. Even after federation on 2 December 1971, there remained regional claims with threatened the small Emirates (explored in detail below).

The final section of this chapter provides detail regarding the life and development of the Union in order to understand the background to its integrative nature.

Federalism is stronger in some countries than others. The strongest federal states are arguably Australia, Canada, Switzerland and the United States, with India and Germany following closely behind. The Mexican, Venezuelan and Argentinian federal systems are weak and in many respects nominal. From Table 2.1 two points can be concluded: the United Arab Emirates remains unique in the Arab world, notwithstanding the 'official' line in several Arab states to move towards union/federation (e.g. Yemen, Syria-Lebanon, U.A.R., Libya, *et al*). Compared to other federal states, the U.A.E. is amongst the world's smallest in terms of area and population.

**Table 2.5: Small Federal States, Area and Population**

No.	State	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population (Official estimates)
1	Comoros	1,860	484,000 (1986)
2	St. Kitts-Nevis	270	44,000 (1988)
3	U.A.E.	77,700	1,909,000 (1991)

Source: *The Europa World Year Book 1993*, Vol.II. 1993.

More detailed comparisons are possible by comparing more detailed information regarding a few federal states and their constituent parts. Data regarding population and the area of the states' constituent units are compared between the United Arab Emirates, the former Yugoslavia and Malaysia.

The total legal population of the U.A.E. was 1.6 million in 1985 (according to the most recent official National Census), and 1,909,000 in 1991 (official estimate), ranking the U.A.E. 125th in the world. In 1994, the total population of the U.A.E. has been estimated at 2,083,000 (see Figure 2.3).<sup>(49)</sup>

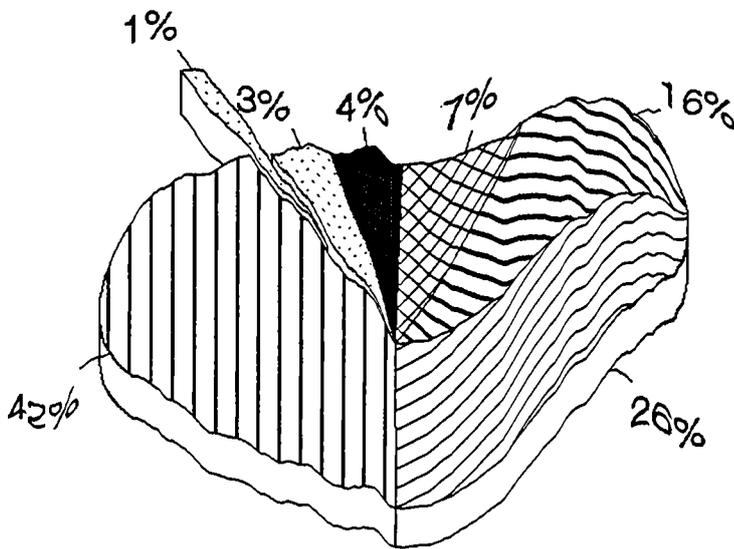
Table 2.3 shows the population percentage of each Emirate. The diagram shows that the population of Abu Dhabi is nearly double that of Dubai, the second Emirate. Indeed, the population of Abu Dhabi is greater than the population of the five Emirates of Ajman, Sharjah, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah put together. The population of the Emirate of Umm al-Quwain is a mere two percent of the total population of the U.A.E.. Such disparities are not unique in the federal world.

## **2.4 Some other federal countries**

This section will briefly examine two functioning federal states, looking in general at some differences between them, and focusing on common factors that are found in states organised according to federal principles. On the basis of geographical and systematic diversity, two federal systems are chosen for analysis: the U.S.A. and Switzerland.

# Population of the United Arab Emirates.

Figure 2 . 3



POPULATION BY EMIRATE (1991, OFFICIAL ESTIMATES)

Source: Figures from the Middle East and North Africa 1993

### **2.4.1 The United States of America (U.S.A.)**

Most of the U.S.A. lies in the North American continent between Canada to the north and Mexico to the south. Two additional states, Alaska to the west of Canada, and Hawaii, in the central Pacific Ocean, bring the number of U.S. states to fifty, the area of the U.S.A. to 9,373,000 km<sup>2</sup> (ranking fourth in the world), and the population to 249,975,000 (ranking third in the world). Alaska is the largest state, with a total area of 1,530,700 km<sup>2</sup>. The District of Columbia is a federal territory, with a total area of 178 km<sup>2</sup>. The state with the greatest population is California, with a total population of 30,867,000. The state with the smallest population is Wyoming, with a total population of 466,000.

Each of the existing fifty U.S. states has its own constitution, assembly and elected Governor. There have been scores of boundary disputes between not only the U.S.A. and its neighbours, but also between U.S. states. This has to do with the fact that much U.S. territory was acquired over a long period of time by various means including purchases, royal grants and annexation. The situation was exacerbated by the sparse population, a dearth of information about the population, and because states retain considerable sovereignty in territorial matters. Although most of these disputes have been settled by negotiation, arbitration or by decision of the Supreme Court, some persist today.<sup>(50)</sup> (The U.S. is not unique in the Americas for protracted boundary negotiations between federated states. In Brazil, where the federated states have less sovereignty than in the U.S., a boundary dispute between Espirito Santo and Minas Gerais was not settled until 1963, when the Governors of the two states signed a treaty incorporating the suggestions of a joint commission.<sup>(51)</sup>)

After 1787, the U.S. adopted a federal system because there was no practical alternative. The country was too vast for the contemporary communication systems to maintain as an indivisible political unit. Besides, the people had become too fond

of state government to relinquish all to government by men far away. The federal government took responsibility for defence, foreign affairs and the authority to co-ordinate and regulate inter-state commerce. Even today, state governments remain influential bodies, and there remain many legal differences between states.

#### **2.4.2 Switzerland**

The Swiss Confederation lies in central Europe, bounded to the north by Germany, to the south by Italy, to the east by Austria and to the west by France. The Swiss federation has deep historical roots, stretching back into the Middle Ages (1291). The modern federation was set up under the 1848 constitution, in part to be economically sufficiently viable to exploit the advantage of a central location in Europe, and in part for self-protection from more powerful surrounding countries. (This latter was also a principal motivation for the federation of the Trucial States into the U.A.E.. The proximity and ambitions of the much more powerful states of Iran and Saudi Arabia encouraged the Emirates' Shaikhs to bond themselves together.)

The largest canton in Switzerland is Bern, with a total area of 6,049 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 952,595. The smallest canton is Basel-Stadt, with a total area of 37 km<sup>2</sup>. The canton with the greatest population is Zurich, with a total population of 1,159,080. The canton with the smallest population is Innerhoden, with a total population of 13,714 which to complicate matters, is legally a half canton.

Switzerland, with 26 cantons, is a shining example of a plural society that has welded itself into a nation-state. There are four main languages: German, French, Italian and Romansch. The religion is divided nearly equally between the two principal (and historically antagonistic) Christian denominations: in 1980 50.4% of the population were Protestants, and 43.6% were Roman Catholics. Despite these and other cultural differences, Switzerland is not now a country of strife and divisions. The people of the cantons, whilst celebrating their political and cultural independence from each

other, also identify themselves as Swiss, and therefore as different from those who, despite sharing a language or religious affiliation, live the other side of their international boundaries.<sup>(52)</sup>

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The only successful example of a federal country to date in the Arab world is the United Arab Emirates. The Moslem world's tendency is to federate federal state rulers (e.g. Shaikhs) rather than populations and their elected representatives (e.g. U.S. Senators as distinct, perhaps, from U.S. State Governors), which is reflected in the more successful Malaysian and the United Arab Emirates experiences as compared with the less successful Pakistani effort.<sup>(53)</sup> The United Arab Emirates' federal system, which primarily offers the Emirates a system of security, also offers the U.A.E. citizens a wider choice of employment and a better quality of services. Wealth in the U.A.E. is directly associated with the government which distributes the benefits of oil to the people through various channels: projects for building houses, schools, hospitals and a modern road network linking the Emirates with each other. The federal government also runs all sorts of services in the main cities and in small towns.

The most important features of the federal system of the United Arab Emirates have been identified, and the comparative study has shown the characteristics of unity and fragmentation. It may be further deduced from Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 that the geographical elements of the United Arab Emirates differ markedly from most other federal states, both in terms of area and of population. By elucidating the federal structure of the United Arab Emirates, it has been possible to see the significance of the political power which still plays a major role in the smaller units.

The formation of the United Arab Emirates was made feasible by many factors such as the history, geography, ethnic similarity, language, culture and religion shared by all the people of the area. Its chief motivation was political expediency. It can only be hoped that the Union will achieve its goals and improve on its existing achievements of closer co-operation between the Emirates for their common benefit, promoting progress in all fields. Success is not, however, guaranteed. The federation of the U.A.E. is still young, it has a small population and a weak federal spirit (especially seen in Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah). There are unsettled boundary disputes between the Emirates of Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah and their more powerful neighbours, Saudi Arabia and Iran. There have been internal disputes between the ruling families in the U.A.E., such as that between Shaikh Sultan of Sharjah and his brother Shaikh Abdul-Aziz in 1987. This incident, between members of the ruling family of Sharjah, elevated existing tensions between Abu Dhabi and Dubai, which to some degree shocked the Union. The dispute was finally resolved initially by Dubai and then by the Supreme Council. The U.A.E. needs to maintain its policy of keeping as many friends as possible in the Gulf, and in the Arab world as a whole. The Union's President, Shaikh Zayed, has played an important role in shaping the U.A.E's foreign policy and in seeking to promote Gulf security and Arab unity. The U.A.E. has looked to Britain and the U.S.A. for protection, when, for instance, in mid-1992 Iran annexed Sharjah's part of Abu Musa island. Iran, formerly seen by some, though not by all, of the Emirates as a dependable Gulf ally, sought to take over the whole of Abu Musa island. This incident alone should convince each Emirate member in the federation that in the contemporary world there are serious risks for a state which is weak, in the case of the U.A.E. Emirates an apparent failing manifested in being small both in area and in population. The strength and the protection of the state and its people lies within the federation and the Union, especially in such a sensitive conflict area like the Middle East, and the Gulf in particular.

The Emirates have shown over the past two decades that they can co-operate reasonably, to their mutual benefit, and there are numerous instances which prove this. In January 1978, Shaikh Zayed appointed his son, Sultan, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, about which Shaikh Rashid the Vice-president of the Union and ruler of Dubai became very angry. The situation was very tense, and was poised on a knife-edge. However, diplomacy was used to resolve the issue.<sup>(54)</sup> When the boundary dispute between Dubai and Sharjah blew up in 1975, the U.A.E. President announced that, until the two Emirates had settled their differences peacefully, he would refuse to step down as President and would prevent candidates from standing for election (see Chapter 6). Boundary disputes are examined in detail in the following chapters. The U.A.E. has succeeded, to date, in achieving varying degrees of viability as a federation. Thanks to oil revenues, the government has been able to expand the base of current and development expenditure, and has thus funded most of the economic and social development projects in the poorer Emirates, particularly in Fujairah, Ajman and Umm al-Quwain.

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20. The first article of the fundamental Constituents stipulates:  

"The United Arab Emirates is an independent, sovereign, federal state and is referred to hereafter in this Constitution as the Union.

The Union shall consist of the following Emirates: Abu Dhabi- Dubai- Sharjah- Ajman- Umm al-Qawain- Fujairah- Ras al-Khaimah.(12-1). The original signatories of the Constitution did not include Ras al-Khaimah, which adhered to the Union on 10 February 1972. A new paragraph was added by a declaration of Constitutional Amendment No.1 [1972]."
21. Since the establishment of the U.A.E. in December 1971, the federation has operated with a provisional constitution, renewed at five-yearly intervals, most recently in October 1991.
22. Ministry of Information Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates, p. 3.
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24. The Provisional Constitution of the U.A.E., Article 46-Article 50 of chapter 1 of part 4: The Union Authorities. Published by Ministry of Information.
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28. *The Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates*, Chapter 3, Article 65, Ministry of Information, Abu Dhabi, p.17.
29. *Middle East Economic Survey*, 28 February 1994, p.47.
30. *The Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates*, Ministry of Information, Abu Dhabi, p.24.
31. *The Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates*, Article 99, Ministry of Information, Abu Dhabi.
32. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi is the largest Emirate: 67,350 km<sup>2</sup>, followed by Dubai: 3,900km<sup>2</sup>, and Sharjah: 2,600 km<sup>2</sup>. Ajman is the smallest Emirate: 250 km<sup>2</sup>. See Table 2.3.
33. The researcher concurs with Edward Henderson, Political Officer of Her Majesty's Government in Abu Dhabi from 1959-61 and now one of the staff of the Documentation Centre in Abu Dhabi, when he says: "In Abu Dhabi, major development did not start until 1966 when, under the leadership of Shaikh Zayed, something approaching a miracle took place. The money coming to Abu Dhabi was also used to help development in other separate Trucial States; until then only Dubai, by the exertions of its Ruler and merchants, had been able to expand at all before oil was found there. From 1966 Shaikh Zayed as Emir directed the growth and development of Abu Dhabi.... " See his

- book, *This Strange Eventful History, Memoirs of Earlier Days in the U.A.E. and Oman*, Quartet, London, 1988, p.177.
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  35. Heard-Bay, F., *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, Longman, London, 1982, p.389.
  36. *The Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates*, Ministry of Information, Abu Dhabi. p.3.
  37. For more details on 'the challenge to power', see Zahlan, R., *The Origins of the United Arab Emirates*, Macmillan, London, 1978, pp.34-54. Zahlan says: "Only in Dubai, where all the rulers in the last century and a half have died a natural death, have more sophisticated methods prevailed." (Ibid. p.34)
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## Chapter Three

### Historical background, with special reference to relations between the U.A.E. and Great Britain

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the historical background to the establishment of the United Arab Emirates is presented, with special reference, for reasons outlined below, to the period between 1937 and 1985. The aim is to show how historical factors shaped the dynamics of the independent state which emerged, creating a politically fragmented territory.

This chapter in the history of what would become the U.A.E. begins on 22 May 1937 when Shaikh Sa'id bin Maktum, ruler of Dubai, became the first of the Trucial States rulers to sign a concession agreement with the Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) Company Ltd.. Other Trucial States rulers later followed suit.<sup>(1)</sup>

The establishment of petroleum interests led, also in 1937, to the posting of the British Political Officer, albeit only during the winter months, to Sharjah, but with responsibility for all the Shaikhdoms. It can be seen from the list of British representatives in Hawley's book that the first resident political officer in 1937 was Captain J.B. Howes.<sup>(2)</sup> On the arrival of the oil companies in the area, the granting of oil concessions raised the question of boundaries between the Shaikhdoms and with their neighbouring countries.

Prior to the mid-1930s, according to Sir Donald Hawley, the Trucial States had been unaffected by concessional competition. However, between 1935 and 1936 the D'Arcy Oil Company initiated oil exploration operations in most of the Trucial States. Furthermore, in 1936 a representative of the Iraq Petroleum Company visited the

area and in 1937 the rulers of Dubai and Sharjah granted concessions to this company.<sup>(3)</sup> The internal history of the Trucial Shaikhdoms during the early twentieth century had been described as of "no general interest or importance"; the majority of the eight pages of Mr J.G. Laithwaite's memorandum on the Trucial Chiefs<sup>(4)</sup> emphasized only the external threats posed by Saudi Arabia and Persia. This position changed dramatically in the mid-1930s as two developments greatly increased the strategic importance of the Trucial coast:

- a. Air agreements were signed with the various Shaikhdoms for the landing and refuelling of British civil and military aircraft.
- b. The granting of oil concessions by local rulers began in 1937 as explained above.<sup>(5)</sup>

Thereafter, territorial definition of each Shaikhdom became urgent, and the rulers of each Shaikhdom, with no clearly defined territory, were compelled to adjust to European concepts of territorial sovereignty.

Although it would be impractical to attempt to give here a comprehensive historical survey of the area, the key events which have links with boundary demarcation will be identified. This material will elucidate the relationship between the historical background of the area and the shape of the inter-state boundaries.

### **3.2 Location**

The United Arab Emirates is located at the south-eastern end of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and south, and by the Sultanate of Oman to the east and by an isolated outcrop of the Sultanate of Oman which bounds the United Arab Emirates from the north. The coastline of the seven U.A.E. emirates extends for nearly 650 km (400 miles) from the border with the Sultanate of Oman, to Khur al-Odaid which is close to the Qatar peninsula. The total length of the

international borders is 1,173 km (729 miles): the border with the Sultanate of Oman runs 513 km (319 miles), and that with Saudi Arabia, 650 km (400 miles) Six of the Emirates lie on the west coast namely: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, and Ras al-Khaimah, whilst the seventh, Fujairah is situated on the eastern coast and has direct access to the Gulf of Oman. The climate is arid with high temperatures the year round apart from a few weeks in the winter. Air humidity is also very high.

The total area of the U.A.E. has been estimated at 77,700 km<sup>2</sup>. According to the last official census held in 1985, the total population of the U.A.E. was 1,622,464. More recent official estimates show population growth: 1,909,000 in 1991, and 2,083,000 in 1994 (see Chapter 2). The population is concentrated in the main coastal towns.

The coast which extends from the base of the Qatar peninsula eastward to the Musandam peninsula was usually known in English as the Trucial Coast or the Trucial States or the Trucial Shaikhdoms. By Arabs it was called the Oman Coast because the name Oman historically covered the whole southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula.

### **3.3 Early History**

European powers had pursued an interest in the area long before the advent of the oil era. The first Europeans to appear were the Portuguese, who arrived at the beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>(6)</sup> Their objective was to dominate trade between Europe and the areas bordering the Indian Ocean. The first significant Portuguese voyage into the area was made by Vasco da Gama in 1497. By 1650 the Portuguese had evacuated Oman, losing their entire hold on the Arabian shore. Despite their strong forts, some of which are still to be seen on the top of the mountains, step-by-step the Portuguese lost their hold and they were forced to leave the Gulf in 1650. There followed a period of commercial and political rivalry between the Dutch

and the French, and the British after the British established their empire in India. The East India Company was founded in 1600 by a group of London merchants who soon established trading centers in India. By the mid-eighteenth century, Britain had become the foremost European power in the area after the collapse of the Portuguese, Dutch and French positions. Thus began a period of British political domination lasting about 200 years.<sup>(7)</sup> British interests in the Gulf were commercial and strategic, trade and naval stations for security of the maritime route to India. In support of this assertion, Sir William Luce states:

*"our interests in the coast were to exclude other foreign powers whose ambitions might threaten the security of our Indian Empire or our communications with it through the Gulf, and after the British withdrawal in 1947 from India where our imperial interests had been the sole reason for the growth of our long connection with the Trucial Coast, that a new interest - oil - began to draw us into that closer involvement with the landward and internal affairs of the Trucial States which our forebears had so studiously avoided."<sup>(8)</sup>*

### **3.3.1 The Treaties with Britain**

Britain engaged in special treaty relationships with each of the rulers of the area. These treaties became the cornerstone of Britain's political, strategic, military, economic, commercial, and administrative presence in the area for 150 years.

In the early nineteenth century, the Gulf had attained strategic importance. In November 1819 the Bombay government instructed Sir William Grant Keir to launch a maritime attack against the al-Qawasim of Ras al-Khaimah with the aim of destroying their defences, to sink and set fire to all the ships and local dhows and destroy their military power. The attack succeeded. A treaty was subsequently signed in January of 1820 between the British Government and the rulers of all the Shaikhdoms on the coast. This treaty bound the Shaikhs to keep the peace at sea. In exchange the British guaranteed them protection against aggression by others. The treaty was signed by some of the Shaikhs in the old fort of Falaya, just outside Ras

al-Khaimah. It laid the basis for a close and continuing relationship between the British and the whole region for the following century and a half.

In 1820, the first treaty was signed with Shaikhs of Jazirat al Hamra (the Red Island, which now belongs to the Emirate of Ras al- Khaimah) <sup>(9)</sup> The Shaikhs of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman and Umm al Quwain also signed. Shaikh Sultan Bin Saqr signed as chief of Sharjah, and Hasan Bin Rahmah as Shaikh of Khatt and Falaiyah. It was agreed that the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah should be the first to sign the treaty followed by the other Shaikhs. Shaikh Qadhib Bin Ahmed as chief of Jazirah al-Hamra signed the peace treaty on 8 January 1820, Shaikh Shakbut of Abu Dhabi on 11 January; Shaikh Zaid Bin Saif on behalf of his nephew the Shaikh of Dubai, by Sultan Bin Saqr of Sharjah on 4 February, and finally, by Rashid Bin Hamaid of Ajman and Abdullah Bin Rashid of Umm al-Quwain on 15 March 1820.<sup>(10)</sup>

Separate signature of this treaty, shows that the Shaikhs of Ajman and Umm al-Quwain were considered to be independent rulers, alongside the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras al-Khaimah. Jazirat al-Hamra no longer enjoys independence, and is now a part of Ras al-Khaimah. The Emirate of Fujairah, was not, in 1820, an independent Shaikhdom, but a part of the Qawasim Shaikhdom. It lies on the eastern coast of the Musandam Peninsula and consists of a handful of Sharqiyyin villages: Murbah, Qidfah, Ghurfa. Fujairah's independence was recognized by the British Government in 1952.<sup>(11)</sup>

The General Treaty of Peace constituted the genesis of the Gulf states as separate political units, and of their Shaikhs as independent rulers. The extent of these separate political units, and how far the authority of their rulers extended was not considered until over a century later when oil companies developed their interest in the region.

The principal objective of this general treaty was to secure maritime peace and safety in the region. Article 4, stating that, the British Government entertained no political

or territorial ambitions in the Persian Gulf and would not interfere in ordinary local disputes.<sup>(12)</sup> The treaty marked the beginning of a period of unbroken British involvement with what was known in Europe as the Pirate Coast. British involvement was extended during the nineteenth century in other treaties.

The 1820 treaty contains 11 articles. Articles 2, 7, 8 and 9 define the crime of piracy and outline the number of sanctions. Articles 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 regularise local maritime activities.

Article 3 is essential to the treaty. It stipulates:<sup>(13)</sup>

*"The friendly Arabs shall carry by land and sea a red flag with or without letters on it. The whole forming the flag known in the British Navy by the title of white pierced red."*

The last sentence of the article stipulates:

*"This shall be the flag of the friendly Arabs, and they shall use it and no other."*

Some rulers of the Trucial States adopted flags in other designs but the colour was restricted to red and white. The Abu Dhabi flag was red with a small white square in the upper corner. The Dubai and Ajman flags were white about one-third the length of the flag. The Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah flags were a red square in the centre of a white background. Fujairah has a plain red flag. The Umm al-Quwain flag was similar to that of Dubai and Ajman, but its design was changed in 1960 and the new one differed from that of Dubai and Ajman in that it had a crescent and star in white in the middle of the red area of the flag.<sup>(14)</sup>

It may therefore be concluded that, between 1820 and 1960, the Emirates became formally separate political entities, each with its own flag, passport and geographical boundaries. When the United Arab Emirates came into being, with the exceptions of Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah, five of the seven Emirates abolished their local flags and

replaced them with the federal flag. In Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah, the local flag is flown on government departments alongside the federal flag (see photograph, Figure 3.1).

Another treaty concluded, in 1853, between all the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast to put an end to the maritime conflicts was a 'Treaty of Maritime Peace in Perpetuity'. This perpetual truce gave rise to the name adopted for the region as a whole (the Trucial Coast), the coast's name being changed from the Pirate Coast to the Trucial Coast in 1853. Lorimer says:<sup>(15)</sup>

*"It is in virtue of this treaty that the Shaikhs of the principalities are styled Trucial Shaikhs and that their country may appropriately be styled Trucial Oman."*

The states of the rulers who had signed the Perpetual Maritime Truce of 1853 became known as the Trucial States, a name which persisted until being renamed on Federation in 1971.

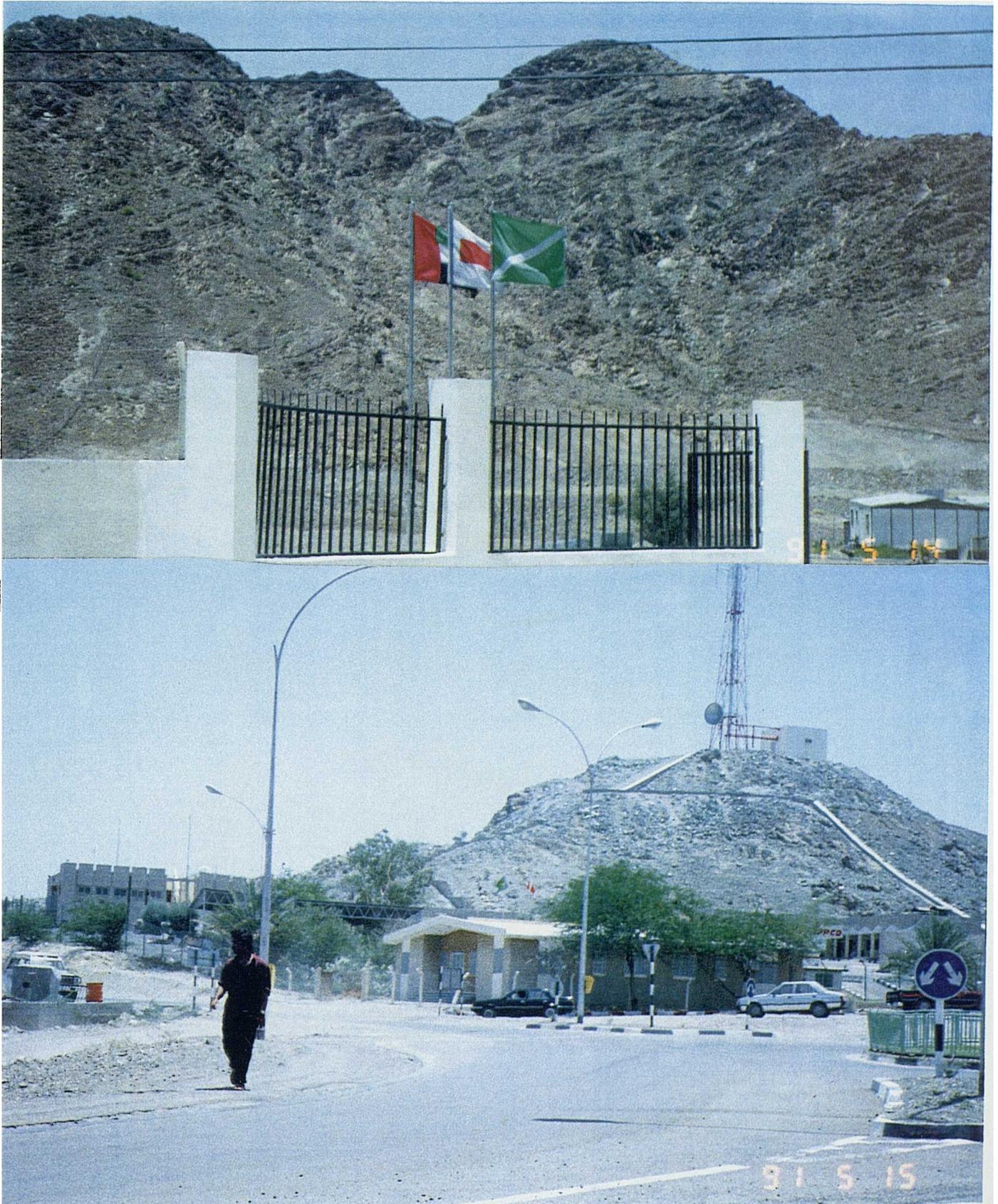
There is strong disagreement between various writers as to whether Great Britain's policies were to reduce the influence of the Qawasim whose maritime interests were directly opposed to Britain, and whether such a policy encouraged the growth of the Bani Yas, particularly in the south of the region in the Shaikhdoms of Abu Dhabi and of Dubai. This argument is mentioned by Rosemarie Zahlan:

*"The ascendancy of the Bani Yas in the twentieth century can thus be regarded both as a result of the treaty relations with Britain that curbed the sea power of the Qawasim, their main rivals and as the natural outcome of the evolution of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, coupled with the decline of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah."*<sup>(16)</sup>

One of the U.A.E. Minister's writes:

*"Sharjah, for example, had once been a vast Emirate, but it had been stripped by the British administration of some of its territories which had been added to other Emirates with the purpose of weakening Sharjah..."*<sup>(17)</sup>

**Figure 3.1:** *Masafi Sports Club, Ras al-Khaimah. The photograph shows that the club raised the federal flag of the U.A.E. with the local flag of Ras al-Khaimah (top). Dubai Police Station in Hatta raised the federal flag of the U.A.E. with the local flag of Dubai (bottom). Both flags are red and white.*



One of the main arguments against Zahlan is that the principal reason for the rise of the Bani Yas (Abu Dhabi and Dubai) was the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in these two Shaikhdoms, elevating their importance. Conversely, the oil companies failed to discover oil in Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah which consequently became less important.

Another reason for the decline of the Qawasim was the independence movement within the Qawasim. The second writer continues thus:

*"Moreover, the Emirate's ruling family had disintegrated, and accordingly it had been divided among the members. As a result, the Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah emerged and had been recognised as a distinct Emirate in 1921."<sup>(18)</sup>*

It can be concluded from the quotation that there are many reasons behind the weakening and the reduction of Qawasim territory, including the growth of Dubai as the major trading port on the Trucial Coast due to the stability of the political situation in the Shaikhdom. It could also be argued that the British administration removed some of Sharjah's territories as a result of the independence movement in the Qawasim federation.

In 1892, Britain had obtained new agreements with the Shaikhs to forbid them to have any involvement with anyone except the person appointed by the High British Government, and the Trucial Shaikhs bound themselves not to permit the residence within their territories of the agent of any other government and not to cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of their territories save to the British Government. Between February and May 1922 each Trucial Shaikh gave a written undertaking to Colonel A.P. Trevor, the Political Resident in the Gulf (1922-24) as stated in a letter dated 2 May 1922 from the Shaikh of Dubai to Colonel Trevor:

*"We agree, if oil is expected to be found in our territory, not to grant any concession in this connection to any one except to the person appointed by the High British Government".*

In addition to that letter, similar undertakings were given by the other Shaikhs:<sup>(19)</sup>

Chief of Sharjah	17 February 1922.
Chief of Ras al-Khaimah	22 February 1922.
Shaikh of Abu Dhabi	3 May 1922.
Shaikh of Ajman	4 May 1922.
Shaikh of Umm al-Qaiwain	8 May 1922.

It can be seen from the above information both that these agreements were concluded with each of the Trucial Shaikhs individually; and that the title Shaikh was accorded to the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, and Umm al-Quwain, whereas the rulers of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah were addressed as Chief, rather than Shaikh. The Shaikhdom of Fujairah had not yet emerged.

The British Government restriction on the Shaikhs' activities came to cover commercial as well as political and diplomatic matters, and at the end of the century the external relations of Trucial Oman were handled through the Government of British India, due to the fact that the Indian rupee was the local currency and Indian merchants were the largest foreign community.<sup>(20)</sup>

Sir Donald Hawley, may be correct in saying that the treaty of 1820 is more comprehensive than any other made with the Trucial rulers, in view of the fact that its most important result was the political realignment of the various states of the Trucial Coast, making distinctions between them, and granting the tribal chiefs an individual identity sufficiently distinct so as to permit the signing of treaties with each separately, and the appointment of an Agent to each. Whilst boundaries between these Shaikhdoms were never clear at that time, the idea of a boundary became important and the idea of identity of oneself as belonging to the loyalty of a specified ruler created something that had not previously been evident.

The treaty of 1820 is, therefore, more important than the others. It is clear that in the 72 years between the treaty of 1820 and 1892, British policy was to leave the internal structures untouched while at the same time taking responsibility for their external relationships. Britain established a political balance which stabilised relationships between the local rulers, and the political Agent's role was to maintain this situation as far as possible.

It would be unnecessary to list all the political officers who represented the British Government in the Trucial States, but it is worth identifying those who played key roles in the matter of boundaries.

#### **Political Officers (permanently resident)**

1948	P.D.Stobart
1951	A.J.Wilton
1952	M.S.Weir

On 20 May 1953, the post was raised to the status of a Political Agency.

#### **Political Agents for all the Trucial States (resident in Dubai)**

1954-55	C.M.Pirie Gordon, OBE
1955-58	J.P.Tripp
1958-61	D.F.Hawley, MBE

For all the states except Abu Dhabi

1961-64	A.J.M.Craig
1965-66	H.G.Balfour-Paul, CMG
1966-68	D.A.Roberts
1968-70	J.L.Bullard
1970-71	Julian. F. Walker

### **Abu Dhabi Political Officers**

1957-58	Hon. M. Buckmaster
1958-59	E.R. Worsnop
1959-61	E.F. Henderson
1961	O.R. Miles (acting)

### **Abu Dhabi Political Agents**

1961-65	Colonel Sir Hugh Boustead, CMG, OBE, DSO, MC
1965-68	A.T. Lamb, MBE, DFC
1968-71	C.J. Treadwell <sup>(21)</sup>

The last Political Agents in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, not mentioned in Hawley's book, were C.J. Treadwell in Abu Dhabi until 1971, and Julian Walker in Dubai until 1971, who was also one of the main negotiators for the formation of the federation.<sup>(22)</sup>

## **3.4 Geographical Background**

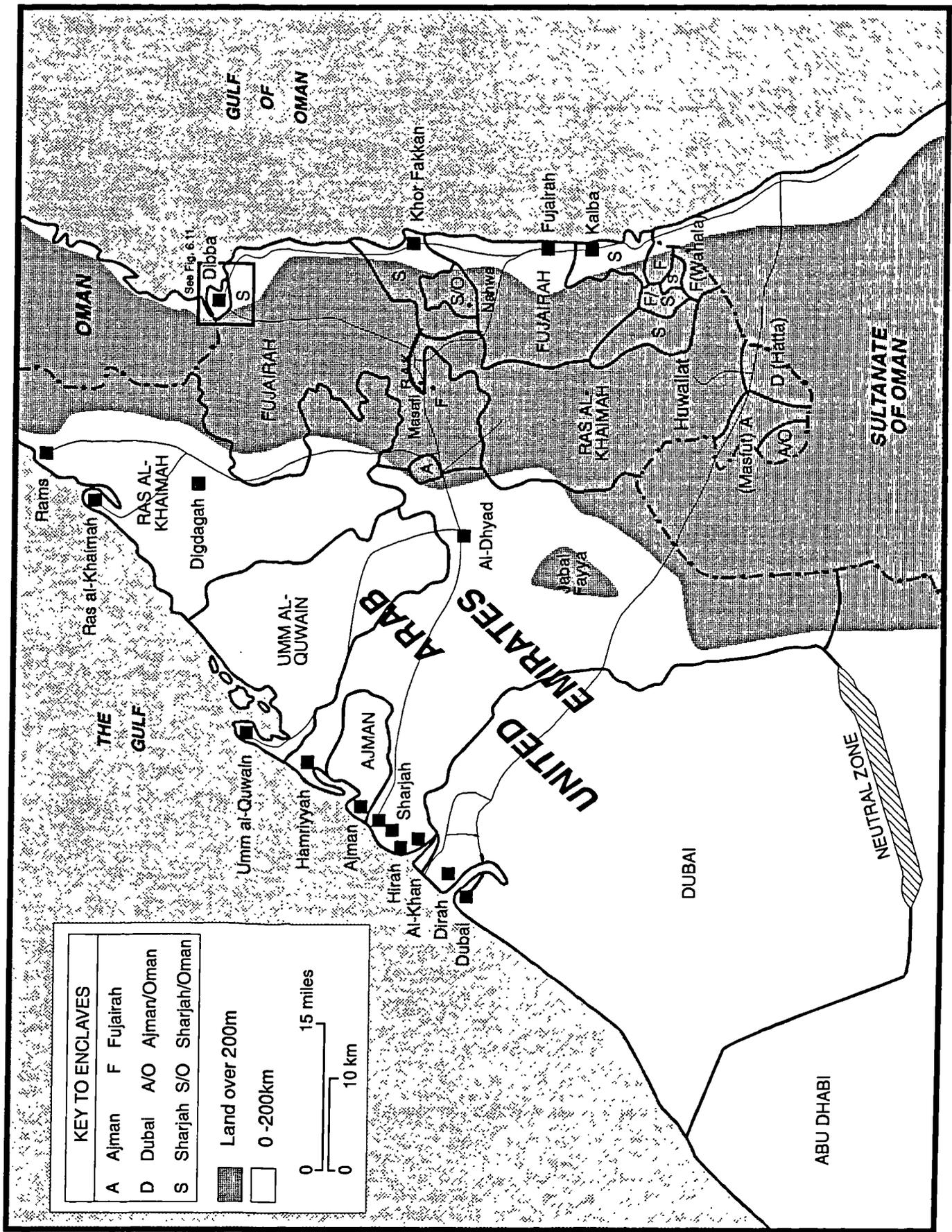
### **3.4.1 Climate**

The climate of the Emirates as a whole is characterised by scanty rainfall and high temperatures in summer (May to September) with average maximum temperature of 45°C and a high level of humidity at 90% on the coast, which is much higher than inland. Winter (October to April) is mild, with temperatures ranging from 17°C to 20°C. Annual rainfall occurs during the winter months and is very low, ranging between 100 mm and 200 mm.

### **3.4.2 Physical Geography of the United Arab Emirates:**

The U.A.E may be broadly divided into two contrasting regions: an eastern mountain region with a sub-montane zone of outwash plains, and a western desert region (see

**Figure 3.2** POLITICAL UNITS AND TOPOGRAPHY IN THE U.A.E.



SOURCE: Abdullah, M.M. The U.A.E., A Modern History (1978) with modifications by the author

Figure 3.2 and Figure 5.2). The latter may be divided into a coastal region, and an inland region of desert and upland plains. The coastal region is characterised by a *Sabkha* coast, with a number of islands along the west coast of Abu Dhabi, while Dubai's coasts have no islands. Along the coast from Abu Dhabi to Ras al-Khaimah there are number of lagoons, of which the important ones are, from south to north: Khur Ghanadha of Abu Dhabi, Khur Dubai of Dubai, Khur Al-Mamzar (see Chapter 7), Khur Al-Baidha of Umm al-Quwain, and Khur Khuwair in Ras al-Khaimah.

### 1. The Eastern Mountain Region:

This mountain region is called the Hajar, the most prominent physical feature of the whole area rising to more than 200 metres. The Hajar range is magnificent in its ruggedness, forming a physical barrier between the west and east coasts. The plain on the east coast side of the range is called the *Batinah*, meaning 'the stomach', and the plain to the west is called *Dhahirah*, meaning 'the back'. There are also many Wadis which provide good routes through the mountains between east and west, notably Wadi Ham and Wadi Sijji in Fujairah, Wadi Al-Qur in Ras al-Khaimah's southern-territory and Wadi Hatta in Dubai's enclave of Hatta. There are many oases in the U.A.E., the most populous of which are Al-Ain oasis in the eastern region of Abu Dhabi 150 km from Abu Dhabi city and 130 km from Dubai city, and Al-Dhaid oasis in Sharjah territory about 65 km from Sharjah city, and Falaj al-Mualla in Umm al-Quwain.

It is interesting to note that all the political outliers belonging to different Emirates lie within the eastern mountain region; none of them is within the western desert region. This suggests that most of the enclaves were created as a result of the independent movement within the Qawasim confederation which was split up into three Shaikhdoms, Ras al-Khaimah in 1921, Kalba, which was acknowledged to be independent in 1936 by the British government, and Fujairah, which was the last to

become independent in 1952. The Shaikh of Fujairah's main object was to put himself on the same status as other Trucial Shaikhs and have the freedom to deal with the British government as a free Shaikh<sup>(22b)</sup>. These enclaves tend to lie in remote and mountainous areas. The process of secession and re-absorption, active during the middle of the twentieth century in response to the scramble for oil revenues, is now largely ended. Whilst secessionist claims may be made from time to time, the foremost process within the U.A.E. is towards greater integration rather than fragmentation. For this reason the richer Emirates in general, and Abu Dhabi in particular, make significant financial contributions to ensure the continued cohesion of the federal state. Most of these enclaves, lying in narrow wadis between the mountains, have been cultivated as can be seen from Figure 3.2.

## **2. The Western Desert Region:**

The western desert region stretches from the coast on the Arabian Gulf inland to the Hajar range. For convenience, the 200 metre contour is used to define the limits of mountain and desert in Figure 3.2. The western region is largely desert and without dramatic features. Classified as salt marsh, the coastal *Sabkha* graduate inland into arrestingly beautiful dunes reaching a height of about 45 metres in the southern part of Al-Ain region and beyond in the Empty Quarter.<sup>(22c)</sup>

### **3.4.3 Political Geography**

**Abu Dhabi:** Abu Dhabi is the largest of the seven Emirates, stretching in the west from Khur al Udaid which lies east of the base of the Qatar peninsula, to Dubai in the north east. It is the most westerly of the Emirates, bordering Saudi Arabia. Abu Dhabi city is the capital of the United Arab Emirates. Abu Dhabi has witnessed more spectacular growth over the past two decades than any other town in the region and possibly more than any other town in the world.<sup>(23a)</sup> Most of the Emirate is arid desert and salt flats apart from the cultivated areas around the Al-Ain and Liwa oases. The

400 km coast of Abu Dhabi is without dramatic features. Although the sandy desert zone forms about two thirds of the total area of the U.A.E, Abu Dhabi seems to have more than its fair share of this somewhat desolate terrain. The coastal zone between Abu Dhabi and Khur al-Udaid consists of an extensive flat sandy plain between the coastal *sabkha* and inland dunes. Along the Emirate's southern border lies the edge of the great sandy desert, the Rub al-Khali (or Empty Quarter) (see Figure 3.3).

In the western part of Abu Dhabi are the largest of the coastal salt flats (Sabkhat Matti). Further east the coastline breaks into a series of islands, one of which is occupied by Abu Dhabi city, whose location enhances its role as the principal centre of offshore oil production. Towards Dubai, apart from the new harbour west of Dubai at Jabel Ali, the coast follows a flat and unbroken course until Dubai creek. The fairly wide coastal plain extends from the western border of Abu Dhabi to Ras al-Khaimah narrowing progressively from west to east. Here approaching Oman's Musandam Peninsula, the flat coastal plain gives way to cliffs, and rocky mountains reaching elevations of the order of a thousand metres form a looming backdrop.

The total area of Abu Dhabi is 67,350 km<sup>2</sup> which is 86.6 per cent of the total area of the U.A.E. (77,700 km<sup>2</sup>). Abu Dhabi comprises a single unit, as can be seen from Figure 3.3.

The population of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi was estimated in 1994 to be 870,694 - 41.8 per cent of the total population of the U.A.E.. In Al-Ain, which is the eastern region of Abu Dhabi and the main settlement city after Abu Dhabi, the population was estimated at 150,000 in 1994.<sup>(23b)</sup>

**Dubai:** Dubai lies on the Arabian Gulf coast around 160 km to the north east of Abu Dhabi, and is situated between Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. Since 1870, when it was ceded to the Ruler of Dubai by the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, the oasis village of Hatta in the Oman Mountains has been an enclave of Dubai (see Figure 3.3). Dubai is the

second largest Emirate, and the most active in trade and commerce. It has one of the best natural harbours in the Gulf, in the 16 km long Khur Dubai (Dubai Creek). Dubai's newest and largest industrial district was established in 1984 at Jabal Ali, 35 km to the south west of Dubai City, not far from the Abu Dhabi border. Jabal Ali is also a major commercial shipping port.

On the instruction of H.H. Shaikh Rashid bin Said al-Maktum, ruler of Dubai, John R. Harris prepared the first master plan for Dubai in 1959-60. During an interview in his office on 2 December 1992, Harris informed the researcher about the 1960 master plan's planning goals:

- Provision of a road system.
- Zoning of Dubai City into areas suitable for industry, commerce and public buildings.
- Selection of areas for new residential quarters.
- Selection of sites for school buildings, open spaces and local centres within the new residential units.
- Creation of a city centre in Dubai.

The city of Dubai is divided in two by its creek which is the main feature of the city. The modern, northern, part of the city is known as Deira. The traditional architecture of the houses with their wind-towers in the older, southern side town of Dubai attracts many visitors. The total area of Dubai is 3,900 km<sup>2</sup>, 5 per cent of the total area of the U.A.E.. The total population of the Emirate of Dubai is estimated at 545,746 in 1994.<sup>(23b)</sup> The only other town of any size is Hatta (about 111 km from Dubai City) which has about 2,500 inhabitants (see chapters 6 & 7). With the exception of the Dubai enclave of Hatta which is in a mountainous region, Dubai is semi-desert.

**Sharjah:** Sharjah ranks third among the U.A.E. Emirates in area, population and economic development. The total area of Sharjah is 2,600 km<sup>2</sup>. 3.3% of the total area of the U.A.E. Its population according to the 1994 estimate is 343,695<sup>(23b)</sup>, or 16.5% of the total population of the U.A.E. It is the only Emirate to have access to the sea on both sides of the Musandam peninsula and it is the only Emirate to have a common boundary with each of the six others.

The Emirate of Sharjah has five interesting territorial enclaves lying on the eastern coast on the Gulf of Oman, 100 km from Sharjah town: Khur Fakkan, Dibba Al-Husn, Kalba, Ain Al-Ghamur (which is uninhabited), and Nahwa in the Omani enclave of Madha. There are a number of oases, such as Dhaid, Mudam and Milaiha on the coastal plain.

- **Khur Fakkan:** *Khur Fakkan* in Arabic means ‘the creek of two jaws’, because the town lies on a curved creek embraced by mountains that look like two jaws. Khur Fakkan, like the other towns of the eastern area of the U.A.E. is linked with Sharjah by a highway running across the area between the Arabian Gulf coast and the Gulf of Oman. The total area of Khur Fakkan is 9 km<sup>2</sup>. The present (1994) population of Khur Fakkan is around 6,900.
- **Dibba Al-Husn:** The total area of this enclave of Sharjah is 3.4 km<sup>2</sup>. Residential and industrial areas occupy 44 per cent of Dibba Al-Husn (1.4 km<sup>2</sup>) and cultivated areas occupy 56 per cent (2 km<sup>2</sup>). The total population of Dibba Al-Husn in 1994 is 1,890.
- **Kalba:** Wadi al-Helu administratively falls under Kalba and the total population is 6,250. The total area of Kalba town is approximately 50 km<sup>2</sup>. Residential areas occupy 15 km<sup>2</sup> only of the town while cultivation areas occupy 12 km<sup>2</sup>. The rest of Kalba is semi-desert and salt marsh.



- The Enclave of Nahwa: The village of Nahwa lies toward the highest point of the Madha enclave of Oman. Nahwa occupies about 4 km<sup>2</sup>. There is no direct route from Sharjah to Nahwa. From Sharjah's enclave of Khur Fakkan the road turns onto a rocky road to Madha. Within Madha territory (Oman) another rocky road turns into the hills to reach Nahwa. (see Chapter 6).

**Ajman:** This smallest member of the U.A.E. covers 250 km<sup>2</sup>. Its landward border is entirely with Sharjah. There are two remote and completely landlocked enclaves: Manamah and Masfut. The main communication between the Emirate of Ajman and with its two enclaves is from Ajman city to Sharjah, then the road from Sharjah to Dhaid and from Dhaid to the first enclave of Ajman which is Manamah. Communication from Ajman to its enclave of Masfut, involves the main road from Ajman to Sharjah then to Dhaid oasis and then the road turns south to Masfut (see Figure 3.3). The total population of Manamah is 1,000 while the total population of Masfut is 680, mainly from Bedaiwat tribe.

The total population of Ajman is 83,320,<sup>(23b)</sup> according to the 1994 estimation, which is 4 per cent of the total population of the U.A.E. Like the other Emirates, the heartland of Ajman is focused on a coastal city.

**Umm al-Quwain:** The capital city of Umm al-Quwain is built on a creek. The Emirate itself occupies roughly 750 km<sup>2</sup> comprising only one territorial unit which is the main Emirate with no enclaves (Figure 3.3). The total population of Umm al-Quwain according to the 1994 estimation is 29,162, making it the smallest of the Emirates in terms of population: a mere 1.4 per cent of the total population of the U.A.E.. It extends 32 km inland, incorporating an important and productive agricultural belt at Falaj Al-Mualla, south-east of the city.

**Ras al-Khaimah:** The northernmost Emirate, Ras al-Khaimah lies at the foot of the northern reaches of the Hajar Mountains which divide the Musandam peninsula. This

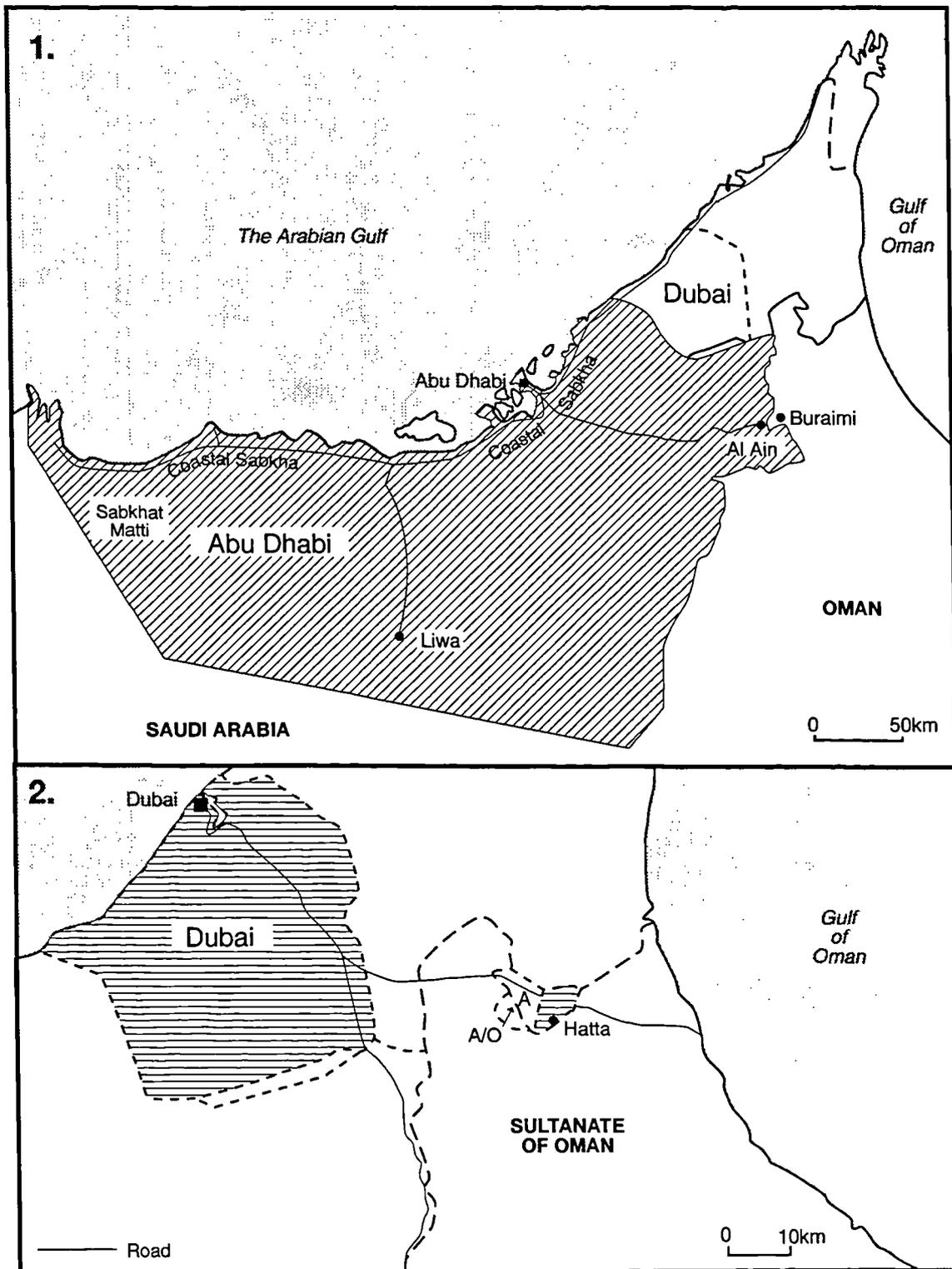
Emirate comprises two parts, the northern part where Ras al-Khaimah the capital city lies, built on a creek, and the southern part which extends to the Omani border at Aswad. The main settlement in this latter region is the village of Huwailat, with 800 inhabitants of the Dahaminah tribe. Ras al-Khaimah is the fourth largest of the Emirates covering an area of 1,700 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 2.3% of the area of the U.A.E., and with a total population of 141,644<sup>(23b)</sup> according to the 1994 estimation giving it 6.8 per cent of the total population of the U.A.E (fourth in population). Ras al-Khaimah is the main farming area of the Emirates with a favourable climate and fertile plains. The Hajar mountains to the east descend into surprisingly green vegetation.

**Fujairah:** Fujairah is the only Emirate which lies entirely on the Batinah coast of the Gulf of Oman. It has an area of 1,150 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 68,739<sup>(23b)</sup> (3.3 per cent of the U.A.E. population). Fujairah was until a decade ago almost cut off from the rest of the other Emirates by the barrier of the Hajar mountains which presented a considerable barrier to land travel between the Batinah coast on the Gulf of Oman and the Emirates to the west on the Arabian Gulf. Construction of a circular road from Masafi of Fujairah through Fujairah and Dibba al-Ghurfa was completed in 1972 (see Figure 3.3), and Fujairah is rapidly developing along similar lines to Emirates on the Gulf coast with its expanding port and impressive new Trade Centre.

Fujairah comprises five main settlements: Fujairah, the capital city, Dibba al-Ghurfa with 2,000 inhabitants, the enclave of Wahalah with just 39 inhabitants, Ahfarah 60 inhabitants, and the north section which includes the villages of Al-Bithnah about 640 inhabitants, Bidyyah 2,000 inhabitants, Masafi of Hafittat 1,200 inhabitants, and Sijji 1,780 inhabitants.

Geographically, Fujairah is different from the other Emirates, being partly mountainous with a fertile coastal plain; it has no true desert. On the other hand its territory is divided into two main separate segments by a wedge of Sharjah land (see Figure 3.3).

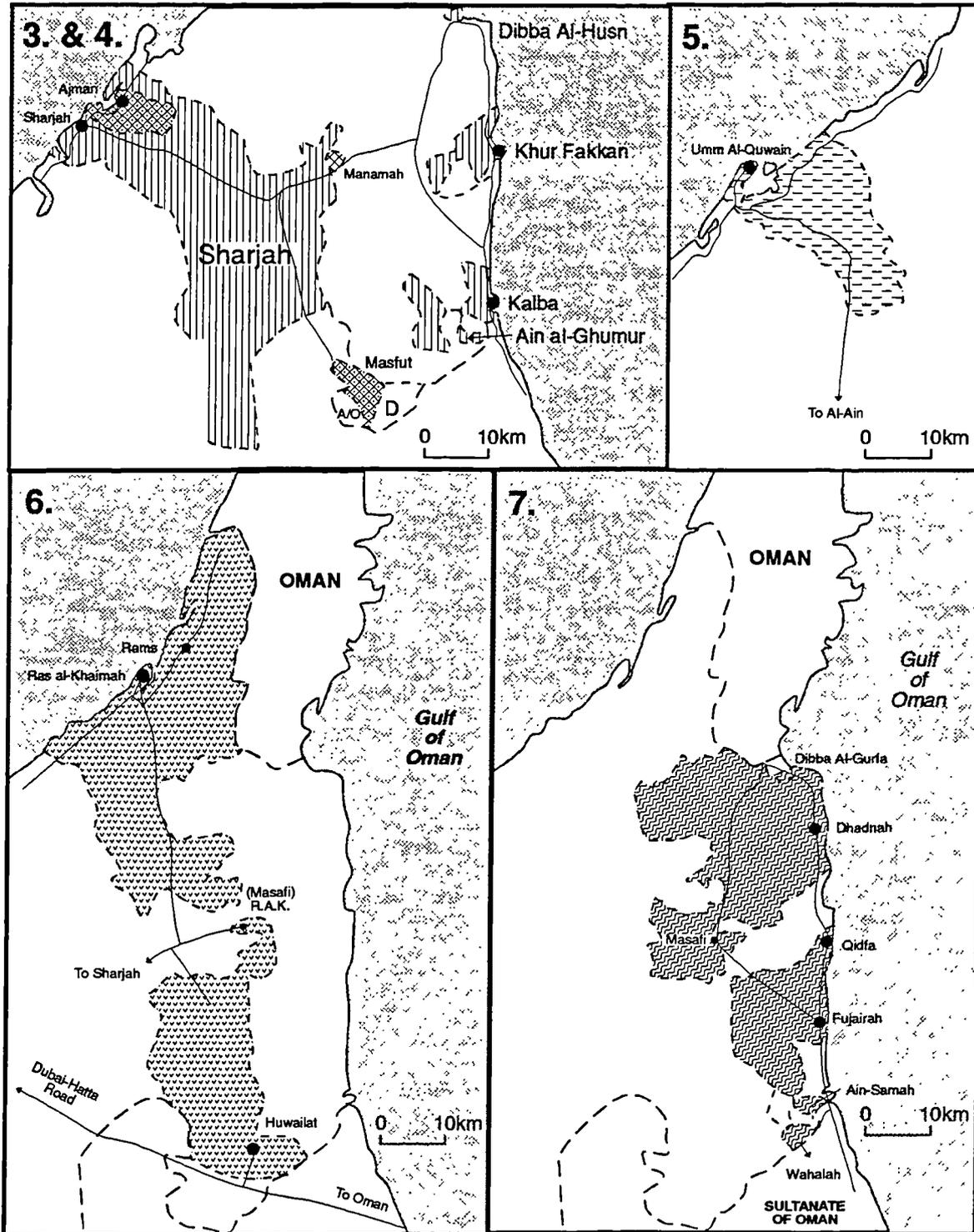
**Figure 3.3 LOCATION MAPS OF THE EMIRATES SHOWING ROAD LINKS**



**1. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi**

**2. The Emirate of Dubai**

**Figure 3.3 LOCATION MAPS OF THE EMIRATES SHOWING ROAD LINKS**



SOURCE: The Author

3. The Emirate of Sharjah
4. The Emirate of Ajman
5. The Emirate of Umm-Al-Quwain
6. The Emirate of Ras-Al-Khaimah
7. The Emirate of Fujairah

## **3.5 The Creation of Each Emirate**

### **3.5.1 Abu Dhabi**

Situated on an island, Abu Dhabi City was founded in 1761 by the al-bu-Falah, a leading Bani Yas tribe from Liwa, in occupation of the island when fresh water was discovered. The island is an elongated wedge-shape, tapering south east towards the mainland. The city is now joined to the mainland by al-Maqtah Bridge.

The ruling families of both Abu Dhabi and Dubai were of the Bani Yas tribe of the Liwa region south of Abu Dhabi, whereas the ruling families of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah were of the Qasimi tribe.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, under the leadership of Shaikh Zayed bin Khalifa (Shaikh Zayed the Great), who ruled from 1855 to 1909, Abu Dhabi grew to become one of the major land powers in south eastern Arabia. However, in 1869 the Qubaisaat tribe removed themselves to the Khur al-Udaid where they claimed independence from Abu Dhabi. The westward migration of Bani Yas tribes from the Liwa oasis was restricted by the poor quality of the desert territory, and therefore most migration was from Liwa to the coast, particularly to Dalma island the main pearling centre of the western coast.

In the quarter century since oil exports began, Abu Dhabi's oil revenues have been used to fund not only its own growth but also that of the other Emirates. Shaikh Zayed, ruler of Abu Dhabi since 1966, and President of the U.A.E. since 1971, has ensured that the good fortune enjoyed by his Emirate is shared with the others which are less fortunate.

Outside Abu Dhabi City, the main centre of population is Al-Ain oasis, close to the al-Buraimi border with Oman.

### **3.5.2 Dubai**

Dubai existed as a settlement in 1799. Although the General Treaty of Peace in 1820 was signed on behalf of its chief Hazza Bin Za'al, Dubai appears to have been a dependency of Abu Dhabi Shaikhdom until 1833, at which point some 800 men of Al bu Falasah section of the Bani Yas tribe quit the island of Abu Dhabi where they settled and moved to Dubai. They settled beside the Creek which divides the city into two parts: Dubai and Deira.<sup>(23c)</sup> This migration marks the beginning of Dubai as an independent Shaikhdom. An early local name associated with the town is al-Wasl.

The rise of Dubai was reinforced in 1904 when the steamship service from Bombay started on the Trucial coast. Afterwards an agreement was made with the Ruler of Dubai in 1937 to use Dubai Creek as a flying boat landing base on the route to India. The roots of Dubai's success are in four factors: a favourable geographical location, the political farsightedness of its rulers, the astuteness of its merchants, and the financial mentality of its people.

The British Political Agency of the Trucial States was transferred from Sharjah to Dubai in 1954.

### **3.5.3 Sharjah**

All the territory in the Trucial States east of Dubai, with the exception of the two small Shaikhdoms of Ajman and Umm al-Qawian was ruled over by the famous Qasimi, Sultan bin Saqr. Before his death in 1866 he divided up his territory between his four sons; one of them ruled over the whole area of Sharjah, while the other branches became virtually independent namely: Ras al-Khaimah, Kalba, and Dibba. Historically, Sharjah has been the headquarters of the Trucial Oman Scouts and the British military base in the area. Furthermore, the Royal Air Force arrived in 1942 and established a base in this Emirate.

### 3.5.4 Independent Kalba

In 1932, the British Government decided that it wanted civil and military air links between Egypt and India. The route passed over several countries including the Trucial Coast. A first stage was to involve the political resident in the Gulf. The head man at Kalba at that time, Sa'id bin Hamad al-Qasimi was unwilling to discuss the matter before consulting his fellow Qawasim, Sultan bin Saqr of Sharjah and Sultan bin Salim of Ras al-Khaimah. Later that same year, the political resident, Sir T. Fowle, suspecting that Sultan bin Salim the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah had dissuaded Sa'id from signing the agreement, told Sa'id in a letter that he "... would be well rewarded if an aeroplane was permitted to land at Kalba."<sup>(24a)</sup> Fowle was unable to make Sa'id flexible in this question. In May 1936 Mr. T. Hickinbotham, the political officer in Bahrain was on a visit to Kalba, at this time, Shaikh Sa'id stated that he would sign an agreement provided Kalba was independent of Sharjah. Fowle saw that Kalba should be recognised as independent from Sharjah to benefit from the opportunity of landing rights, and the importance of Kalba to imperial communications. Later, Shaikh Sa'id agreed to grant emergency landing facilities for Imperial Airways in Kalba, and received a letter from Hickinbotham regarding the newly independent state of Kalba.<sup>(24)</sup> This means that Kalba was recognized by the British Government as an independent Shaikhdom in 1936 but in 1951 the Kalba Shaikhdom was re-incorporated with Sharjah.<sup>(25)</sup> The main reason for the British Government decision against continued recognition of Kalba was because the ruling Shaikh was assassinated by a cousin, which left the Kalba branch of the family without an heir: it had become extinct.

### 3.5.5 Ajman

The ruler who signed the General Treaty of Peace in 1820 was Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid. The ruling family is of the Naim tribe, related to the Naim of al Buraimi oasis.

### 3.5.6 Umm al-Quwain

This Shaikhdom consists of the coastal town of that name and includes a small oasis called Falag al Ali. Lorimer mentioned that this Shaikhdom had not played a great part in the Trucial States history. At the time of the general treaty of peace, Abdulla bin Rashid was ruling the state and subscribed to the treaty in 1820. In 1853, he was able to accept on behalf of his Shaikhdom the perpetual treaty of peace, which means that the state existed at that time and was recognized by the British Government through these treaties. A later Shaikh, Shaikh Rashid, wrote to the British Political Resident in 1904 announcing his peaceful accession and accepting the existing treaties.

### 3.5.7 Ras al-Khaimah

An early local name associated with the town of Ras al-Khaimah is Julfar. The history of Ras al-Khaimah is bound up with the other Qasimi state, Sharjah. Lorimer always described Ras al-Khaimah as a region of Sharjah. For example, of Fashrah town in wadi Al-Qur, in the southern part of Ras al-Khaimah territory, Lorimer said: "*This place also is considered to pertain to the Ras al-Khaimah district of Sharjah*".<sup>(26)</sup> Furthermore, Sir Donald Hawley<sup>(27)</sup> stresses that the state is one of the Qasimi states and is ruled to the present day by the Qawasim family. Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed, who became Ruler in February 1948, succeeded in 1952 in bringing under his rule two villages, Jazirat al-Hamrah and Rams which were previously independent.

### 3.5.8 Fujairah

The history of Fujairah as an independent state started from 1866. To understand the history of this Emirate, the geographical description of the area needs to be given. Shamailiyah district is a tract of land bordering the Gulf of Oman and extending from Dibba in the north to Khur Kalba in the south and including Khur Fakkan and Fujairah.<sup>(28)</sup> The place has been defended chiefly by the Sharqiyyin and Naqbiyin tribes. This area was controlled by the Qawasim in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In 1952 Fujairah was recognized by the British Government as an independent Shaikhdom.

In 1955, several years after British recognition of Fujairah, when Julian Walker began to carry out his boundary delimitation survey, he obtained written undertakings from each of the rulers that they would accept British arbitration and decisions on the demarcation of their territories. Regarding Fujairah, however, neither the Ruler of Sharjah nor the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah would recognise even the existence of Fujairah, and therefore declined to accord the Political Agent in Dubai, C.M. Pirie Gordon, the power to delineate their boundaries with Fujairah State (see Appendix C):<sup>(29)</sup>

*"I, Saqr bin Sultan al-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah and its dependencies undertake on behalf of myself and my successors that we will not dispute any boundaries which the Political Agent for the Trucial States may lay down in the coastal areas excepting Fujairah which we consider part of Sharjah State."*

An amplification of this is offered in the following passage which is a quotation about the feelings of Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed Al-Qasemi, Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah regarding the independence of Fujairah:<sup>(30)</sup>

*"Saqr, who is not emotionally very stable or mature, proved very difficult, demanding that the whole territory be given to him; blaming H.M.G. for the fact that Fujairah existed at all; saying that he wanted no settlement and*

*would not require one as he could settle Fujairah himself if H.M.G. did not interfere; and warning Walker that on no account should H.M.G. oppress him by taking away his territory and giving it to someone else."*

However, the British administration carried out its task on boundary demarcation between Sharjah and Fujairah.

### **3.6 The Trucial States Council**

The Trucial States Council (TSC) was set up by the British Government in 1952 to bring together the Trucial States Rulers in order to encourage them to think about general problems affecting their states. It was one of the major developments which encouraged the establishment of a federal unit of seven Emirates. The council consists of the rulers of all seven Emirates:

- Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan al Nahayyan ruler of Abu Dhabi (1966- ).
- Shaikh Rashid Bin Said al Maktum ruler of Dubai (1958-90).
- Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohammed al Qasimi ruler of Sharjah (1965-72).
- Shaikh Rashid Bin Humaid al Naimi ruler of Ajman (1928-81).
- Shaikh Ahmed Bin Rashid al Mo'alla ruler of Umm al Quwain (1929-81).
- Shaikh Saqr Bin Mohammed al Qasimi ruler of Ras al Khaimah (1948- ).
- Shaikh Mohammed Bin Hamad al Sharqi ruler of Fujairah (1952-1974)

The first elected chairman of the council was Shaikh Saqr, ruler of Ras al Khaimah, who held office until October 1968 when Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohammed al Qasimi ruler of Sharjah was elected to succeed. The TSC was the first unifying body to be established within the territory, and consequently was the first serious attempt to bring some sort of unity to the area.<sup>(31)</sup> In 1965 Bryan Kendall was appointed acting director of the development office.

Whilst the TSC was nothing like as unified as the U.A.E., it would be wrong to ignore its role in drawing closer together these tiny political units as the precursor to the establishment of a federal state. The TSC was a major forum for these seven shaikdoms to exchange ideas and to find ways to tackle common problems.

The TSC met twice a year, with the rulers showing interest in co-operation on both administrative and economic levels, such as traffic regulation and other common issues. For three decades before the United Arab Emirates came into being, an important level of communication and deliberation among the ruling Shaikhs was established providing a modest yet important element of integrative nation building. A development fund was established in 1965 with capital contributions as follows:

- Her Majesty's Government: £1,000,000 (see Appendix D).
- His Highness the Ruler of Qatar: £250,000.
- His Highness the Ruler of Abu Dhabi: £100,000.
- His Highness the Ruler of Bahrain: £40,000.<sup>(32)</sup>

A report prepared by the TSC in 1969 included several projects, for instance:

1. **The inter-State services of the development office:**
  - a. Council headquarters.
  - b. Agricultural services based on Digdaga in Ras al Khaimah and an agricultural school.<sup>(33)</sup>
  - c. Technical education with trade and technical school at Dubai and Sharjah.<sup>(34)</sup>
  - d. Health services: Al-Maktum hospital was opened in 1950, and a number of clinics were established in the seven capital towns of the Shaikhdoms, and also at Kalba, Khur Fakkan, Buraimi and Dibba.

## 2 The capital program:

- a. Inter-State roads: The 13.5 km road from Dubai to Sharjah was the first major project financed by the development fund, the work being completed in 1966. The second road, from Sharjah to Ras al- Khaimah, was finished in 1968, and financed by the Saudi Arabian Government. Later, work moved to the east coast, to the mountain area of Wadi Ham, and a coastal route between Dibba and Khur Fakkan opened. Finally, a gift by H.H the Ruler of Abu Dhabi to Sharjah of a paved road from Sharjah to Al-Dhaid, (district of Sharjah) was completed in 1969.

The folded map attached to the thesis shows that the Dubai - Sharjah road, Sharjah - Ras al-Khaimah road and Sharjah - Dhaid road, paved in 1969, provide a tight linkage between the main capital towns of the Shaikhdoms. By improving physical communication, these roads for the first time supplied a fast transportation network between the seven Emirates, as a fundamental step towards consolidating the new federal state.

It can be concluded, therefore, that the TSC played a major role in creating the new federal state, and was one of the main factors which helped to integrate these seven Emirates. Sir William Luce <sup>(35)</sup> has written:

*"Regular meetings between the rulers themselves and between their representatives, however inconclusive, at least build up the habit of mutual consultation and discussion, out of which can grow co- operation; there has been a marked improvement in the personal relations between some of the rulers, which in turn has led to the settlement of boundary problems..."*<sup>(36)</sup>

Dr. A.M. Khalifa contends that the TSC was a major development along the road to a federation of the seven Emirates under British supervision and leadership.<sup>(37)</sup> Moreover, Sir Bernard Burrows, who was the first Foreign Service Officer to be Political Resident in the Gulf, also affirms the crucial role of the TSC:<sup>(38)</sup>

*"Shortly before my arrival in 1953 we had set up a Trucial Council consisting of the rulers of all the Trucial States which was designed to deal with matters of common interest and in particular to advise about the distribution of the technical and development aid which the British Government supplied. This council continued to operate during my time in the Gulf and subsequently formed the basis for the establishment after the British departure from the Gulf of the United Arab Emirates which exists today as a federation comprising all seven states."*

### **3.7 The Trucial Oman Scouts (TOS)**

A defence force, under the British Government's Foreign Office was created in 1951. Its headquarters were at the Royal Air Force base in Sharjah, with garrisons in the regions of Al-Ain, Masafi in Ras al-Khaimah and Al-Habhab in Fujairah.

According to Sir Bernard Burrows:

*"Apart from any efforts by the rulers, it seemed essential to establish a small local force under British command. The last recommendation was carried out not long afterwards with the formation of the Trucial Oman Levies (later Scouts). "* <sup>(39)</sup>

Another writer, who was a political Agent in the Trucial States resident in Dubai said:

*"The formation of the Trucial Oman Scouts brought peace between states previously at war."* <sup>(40)</sup>

It is generally agreed that the Trucial Oman Scouts were established for a number of reasons. Among the principal reasons were: to maintain peace and order throughout the sultanates, and to serve as an escort for the British Political Agent. The formation of the force reflected a desire for stability in the area as a primary step for internal boundaries demarcation before the oil companies began their operations, and also to protect the oil companies teams from hinterland attack. The Trucial Oman Scouts played a significant role in keeping a peace throughout the Trucial States, particularly when territorial disputes arose from the granting of oil concessions by

different rulers. For example, the principal boundary dispute after World War II was the Buraimi conflict.

In August 1952, a Saudi armed force headed by Amir Turki bin Ataishan arrived in Hamasah in Buraimi and claimed that Buraimi was independent of any government. The Trucial Oman Levies were called in, supported by the Royal Air Force. The result was negotiation between the two sides, adjudicated by an international tribunal. As a basis for a decision, tribal loyalties, past and present and their influence on the jurisdiction of Buraimi were considered. When negotiations broke down in the later part of 1955, the Trucial Oman Scouts were used successfully to dislodge the Saudi force from Hamasa.<sup>(41)</sup>

The force was also given the specific role of defending the Trucial States against external aggression, as well as maintaining internal security. The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas Home the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, announced in the House of Commons that prior to the end of 1971, before the U.A.E. was firmly established, the British Government was prepared to increase assistance in six ways. One of these was the handing over of the Trucial Oman Scouts, which was staffed mainly from Britain, in order to constitute the nucleus of a federal army, with Britain prepared to supply British officers and equipment. He told the House of Commons that the political structure for the Arab shore of the southern Gulf was now complete.<sup>(42)</sup>

## **3.8 The Tribes and Geography**

### **3.8.1 Introduction**

The tribe was the unit of political organization and the principal point of identity for both the settled and nomadic people in the Arabian Peninsula. The tribe has traditionally served as a cultural frame for individual tribesman and provided him

with a sense of identity and security in his environment. The political life of the area was influenced by tribal movements and conflicts.

It is important to distinguish between two terms: *dirah* and *haram*. The term *dirah* signifies an area or region in which a particular tribe roams. The term *haram* signifies part of the residential area of a nearby town or settlement. *Haram* (plural: *ahram*) means 'forbidden', which indicates that the area is out of bounds for anyone but members of that tribe. Much of the *haram* would be owned by members of the tribe, in particular: villages, oases and farming areas. However, it would be incorrect to conceive of the tribal situation as static. There are changes between tribes and within tribes. Occasionally, a section of a large tribe breaks away to become independent with its own leadership and its own *ahram*. Thus the al-bu-Falasa broke away from the Bani Yas in 1833, and settled in Dubai. The splits which take place mean that there are members of the same tribe in more than one area, each section loyal to a different authority, depending on location and Shaikh. This is why Julian Walker, in his 1954 survey, for example found the al-Mezari tribe settled in Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi, and why the internal boundaries shown on the Trucial States map were based on tribal loyalties.<sup>(43)</sup>

The relationship between tribes and boundaries is crucial. Political boundaries are defined by tribal loyalties to specific Shaikhs. Those loyalties are conditional and subject to change. Boundaries between the Trucial States and its neighbours, and boundaries between individual Trucial States, periodically shifted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries due to the boundaries being based on the *dirah* of the tribes. *Dirah* in Eastern Arabia were flexibly defined areas, changing in size according to tribal strength.

A good example of tribal loyalty that has been changed is the Bani Ka'ab tribe who in the nineteenth century were originally part of the Qawasim confederation which

is mentioned by Lorimer, but when Julian Walker studied the situation of the Trucial States tribes and boundaries, he found that the Bani Ka'ab gave their allegiance to the Sultan of Muscat.<sup>(44)</sup>

The historical development of the tribes, along with the tribal propensity to change and divide, greatly affects the political situation of the region, such as the formation of new tribes like that of Al Bu Shamis of the Buraimi region who recently broke away from their parent, the Nu'aym tribe.

Of equal importance in tribal matters is the distinction between the terms *bedu* and *haddar*. The term *bedu* carries the associated meaning of Bedouin, nomadic, rural, of the desert, whereas *haddar* indicates a civilized region, the settled population.<sup>(45)</sup>

Bedu tribes live in arid deserts and are frequently on the move in search of water and grazing. Haddar tribes live in settlements such as oases, villages and coastal towns, and involve themselves in location-specific activities, such as cultivation and fishing. Being people of fixed location, the political structures of Haddar tribes are easier to recognise than those of Bedu tribes. Visitors therefore find it easier to deal with Haddar communities than with Bedu communities.

Three key characteristics of tribalism can be identified. First, the history of tribes shows that tribes have been developed from the family, then the section, the clan, the tribe, and finally the tribal confederation. Secondly, tribal authority is assigned to the head of the tribe who is chosen by the tribal elders.

The loyalty of a tribesman was to the ruler as a person, not to the territory:<sup>(46)</sup>

*"The concept of territorial sovereignty in the western sense did not exist in Eastern Arabia. A ruler exercised jurisdiction over a territory by virtue of his jurisdiction over the tribes inhabiting it. They, in turn, owed loyalty to him and not to the Shaikhdom, amirate or sultanate in which they dwelt. Political allegiance to a territorial unit, such as is implicit in the European states system, is unknown to the Arabian tribesman. His loyalty is personal to his tribe, his Shaikh, or a leader of greater consequence, and not to any abstract image of the state."*

It is clear that the tribes owed allegiance to a ruler or a Shaikh. Through this allegiance, a ruler exercised sovereignty over a region in which tribesmen were regularly moving from place to place. In other words, the ruler's control over his territory was not directed by static officials, it was exercised through the tribes.

The important thing to be considered here is that the modern idea of territorial sovereignty did not exist in this region until the twentieth century, when the awarding of oil concessions necessitated the delineation of fixed boundaries.

The tribes in the Arabian Peninsula are divided into two principal political factions; the Hinawi, who migrated originally from Yemen in southern Arabia; and the Ghafiri.<sup>(47)</sup> Within and outside Greater Oman (the Trucial Coast, now the U.A.E., was also known as Trucial Oman), Arab tribesmen describe themselves from the early eighteenth century onwards as belonging to one faction or the other. A political conflict took place in 1817 over the rule between the bani Hinaa tribe and the bani Gafir tribe which resulted in the collapse of the Al-Ya'ariba state in Oman. This conflict left behind it a legacy of division between the Trucial States tribes. Opposition between the Ghafiri and the Hinawi was manifested on the Trucial Coast between the two main tribes, the Bani Yas and the Qawasim. The Bani Yas were Hinawi, and the Qawasim, Ghafiri.

**Table 3.1 The Hinawi and the Ghafiri Factions in the Trucial States<sup>(48)</sup>**

No	HINAWI	Location	GHAFIRI	Location
1	Bani Yas	Liwa, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al-Ain	Qawasim	Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Kalba, Khur Fakkan, Dibba
2	Manasir	Liwa, Al Dhafra, Al Ain	Na'im	Buraimi, Ajman
3	Za'ab	Al Jazirat Al-Hamra	Al-Bushamis	Himriyya, Oman
4	Al Hubus	Khat, Wadi al-Khaldi	Al-Ali	Umm al-Quwain, Falag al-Mu'alla
5	Sharqiyyin	Fujairah, Wadi Ham, Siji, Wahala	Khawatir	Ras al-Khaimah
6	Shuhuh	Rus al Jibal, Dibba, Kasab	Tenaij	Dhaid
7	Dhawahir	Al-Ain area	Ghafla	Dhaid
8	Awamir	Al-Khatm, Manadir al-Reyadh	Bani Qitab	Dhaid
9			Naqbiyyin	Dibba, Khur Fakkan
10			Bani Ka'ab	Mahadha

Source: Author.

On the accession to the Sultanate in 1741 of al-bu Sa'ed, two new political powers appeared on the Oman coast which became independent from al-bu-Sa'ed:

1. A maritime power formed of a tribal confederation headed by the Qawasim, the chief of the Ghafiri faction. Its power base was Ras al-Khaimah, and their control extended from the Al-Shemiliyya coast on the Gulf of Oman and on the north coast to Sharjah.
2. A land power set up by the Bani Yas confederation and headed by Al-bu Falah the chief of the Hinawi faction. Its headquarters was Al-Dhafrah and Abu Dhabi. Their control extended from Dubai to Qatar.

The characteristic distinction between the two tribes was that the Bani Yas tribe of Abu Dhabi and Dubai had not been involved widely in maritime activities because their geographical situation offers them alternative options. There were sea activities, such as fishing and pearling, but they had a large hinterland of desert behind them. They also had the Liwa oasis and the Buraimi oasis, both of which they used regularly,

moving between the coast, where they had a fishing settlement, and the date gardens of the oasis. The geographical factor affecting the Qawasim tribe, pushing them towards maritime activities, was the narrowness of their area, They concentrated their activities on the sea. In other words, the power of the Qawasim was based on their maritime activities, but the strength of the Bani Yas depended much upon their movement in the interior of the region such as the desert oases as well as the coastal areas.

Lorimer prepared an early census of population in the area in which he estimated the total number of Bedouins in Trucial Oman at about 8,000 souls (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2: Lorimer's Population Census of the Trucial Coast in 1905**

Principality	Settled inhabitants
Ajman	750
Dhabi (Abu)	11,000
Dibai	10,250
Qaiwain (Umm al-)	5,000
Sharjah	45,000
Total of T. Oman.	72,000

Source: Lorimer, Gazetteer....IIB, Geographical..p.1437.

In 1968, years after Lorimer had conducted his census, in order to see what had happened to tribal populations in the United Arab Emirates (Trucial States) since Lorimer's time, the Trucial States Council carried out its own census (Table 3.3)

**Table 3.3: Tribal Population in the Trucial States, 1968**

Emirate (see key)	ABD	DUB	SHRJ	AJM	UMMQ	RASK	FUJ	TOTAL
Bani Yas	4597	3913	1424	213	1	290	27	10465
al-Sharqjyyn	80	65	116	69	25	82	8372	8809
Shihuh-Habus	147	74	74	13	-	5845	244	6397
Al Ali	60	155	508	85	2862	1445	3	5118
al-Qassimi	101	108	3592	8	3	1055	14	4881
al-Manasir	3224	275	49	21	-	38	-	3607
Zaab	22	27	710	7	4	2455	-	3225
al-Dhawahir	2844	42	109	41	-	9	57	3102
Mazari	1287	271	293	17	38	1062	76	3044
al-bu Shamis	370	769	689	190	12	408	-	2438
Bani Kitab	617	156	1458	21	6	112	-	2370
al-Nuaym	325	171	219	616	25	968	10	2334
al-Nagbiyyin	16	-	1345	-	-	541	3	1905
al-Awamir	1721	69	37	7	19	34	5	1892
Others	2339	1769	2146	303	214	3597	327	10695
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>17750</b>	<b>7864</b>	<b>12769</b>	<b>1611</b>	<b>3209</b>	<b>17941</b>	<b>9138</b>	<b>70282</b>
Key	ABD: Abu Dhabi DUB: Dubai SHRJ: Sharjah AJM: Ajman UMMQ: Umm al-Quwain RASK: Ras al-Khaimah FUJ: Fujairah							

Source: 1968 Trucial States Census (unpublished). ABD:Abu Dhabi, DUB:Dubai, SHR:Sharjah, AJM:Ajman, UMMQ;Umm al-Quwain, RAK:Ras al-Khaimah, FUJ:Fujairah.

Table 3.3 shows that Abu Dhabi, as well as having the largest population, shares the distinction of the greatest number of tribal groups with Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah. The Bani Yas confederation has for a long time dominated Abu Dhabi: the ruling Al-Nahayyan family, also known as the Al-bu-Falah, is a small subsection of the Bani Yas; and the Al-Manasir, Al-Awamir and Al-Dhawahir are allied with Al-bu-Falah in dominating Abu Dhabi.

The ruling family of Dubai, the Al-Maktum, or Al-Bu-Falasa, are also a subsection of the main Bani Yas tribe, as are the ruling al-Qasimi families of Sharjah and Ras Al-Khaimah.

The principal difference between the traditional society of the area and present day society since federation, is that fixed territorial boundaries have now replaced the traditional, and more elastic, *dirah* of the major tribes. (The *dirah* is an area over which a tribal leader autonomously exercised authority.)

Tribal identity remains important in the Emirates, and some tribes play an essential role in deciding the structure of authority in the U.A.E.. This fact is well illustrated in the federal council or cabinet. The members of the cabinet (Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and some 15 other ministers) are all appointed by the President. The composition of the cabinet reflects the predominance of Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the federation. The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and the ministers of finance, defence, foreign affairs and the interior all are members of the ruling Al-Nahayyan family of Abu Dhabi and Al-Maktum family of Dubai.

### **3.9 The Establishment of the United Arab Emirates**

#### **3.9.1 Introduction**

Stretching back over more than two decades, the United Arab Emirates is the longest running and the most successful experiment to date in regional political integration in the Middle East. Six previously independent Shaikhdoms agreed to form a federal union on 2 December 1971. However, the federation of the Emirates was neither spontaneous nor sudden. The local rulers desired unity as a solution to the external surrounding dangers which threatened. The British Government supported the concept, and played an important role in the creation of the Federation. This support is well illustrated in Lord Home's autobiography in 1976. (Sir Alec Douglas Home was Foreign Secretary in Edward Heath's Government of the early 1970s):

*"We put into the minds of the Rulers that they should organize a Union of the Sheikhdoms, with its own security force, and said that we would be willing to supply the personnel and equipment which would ensure that it had a*

*favourable start. So it happened, and although the Union of the Sheikdoms is young, and there have been a few stresses and strains, the experiment has on the whole been successful.*"<sup>(49)</sup>

Julian Walker who demarcated the inter-Emirate boundaries between 1954-60 and who later became the British Political Agent in Dubai in 1970-71, explained the problem facing the area after the failure of the original nine Emirates federation which included Qatar and Bahrain:

*"Dubai and Abu Dhabi were about to be alone, but the others were too small and if they became independent alone they will not stay long. Fujairah might go to Oman, Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah would follow Saudi Arabia and Dubai is friendly with Iran, that might have created problems. The British role was to get the Council of the rulers to be strong enough to provide an umbrella for them."*<sup>(50)</sup>

As soon as the Conservative Government announced that policy on 1 March 1971, the Labour Opposition claimed credit for the federal initiative. Dennis Healey, Shadow Foreign Secretary, told Sir Alec in the House of Commons on 1 March 1971:

*"The Opposition share his desire for the establishment and success of a Union of Arab Emirates. Indeed, we launched it on its way."*<sup>(51)</sup>

The 1968 announcement of British intention to withdraw from the Gulf in 1971 led to two territorial disputes. The first of these was the longstanding border dispute between Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia at Al-Buraimi Oasis (the dispute was resolved in August 1974, see Chapter 4). The second was the Iranian occupation of several strategic islands in the Gulf which included the Greater and Lesser Tumbs and Abu Musa, and claiming that Iran would not recognize the United Arab Emirates until it had obtained control over all the islands. This point will be explained in detail later.

The first moves toward a federal union began in 1951-52 with the establishment for security purposes of the Trucial Oman Levies (later 'Trucial Oman Scouts'). Further, the British Government brought together all the Trucial States' Shaikhs in a federal

council under its supervision namely, the Trucial States Council. This council played an essential role in linking the Emirates together with a modern transportation network and numerous other major projects. As a 'protecting power' Britain was in a position to ask the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast to unite their tiny principalities into a Trucial Federation which would permit them to make more constructive use of their modest resources, offering Abu Dhabi the opportunity to share its wealth with the poorer Emirates.<sup>(52)</sup>

The desire to establish the United Arab Emirates was considerably strengthened in reaction first to the British Government's announcement of its intention to close its military bases east of Suez, and then the following year when withdrawal from the Gulf was confirmed. Reaction to the Labour Government's announcement came in the form of an agreement, on 18 February 1968, between Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayyan, ruler of Abu Dhabi and Shaikh Rashid bin Said al-Maktum, ruler of Dubai, both from the Bani Yas tribe. This agreement laid the foundation for the greater federation. The English version of the agreement is divided into three chapters.

**Chapter One:** 'The Establishment of a Federation for Arab Emirates'.

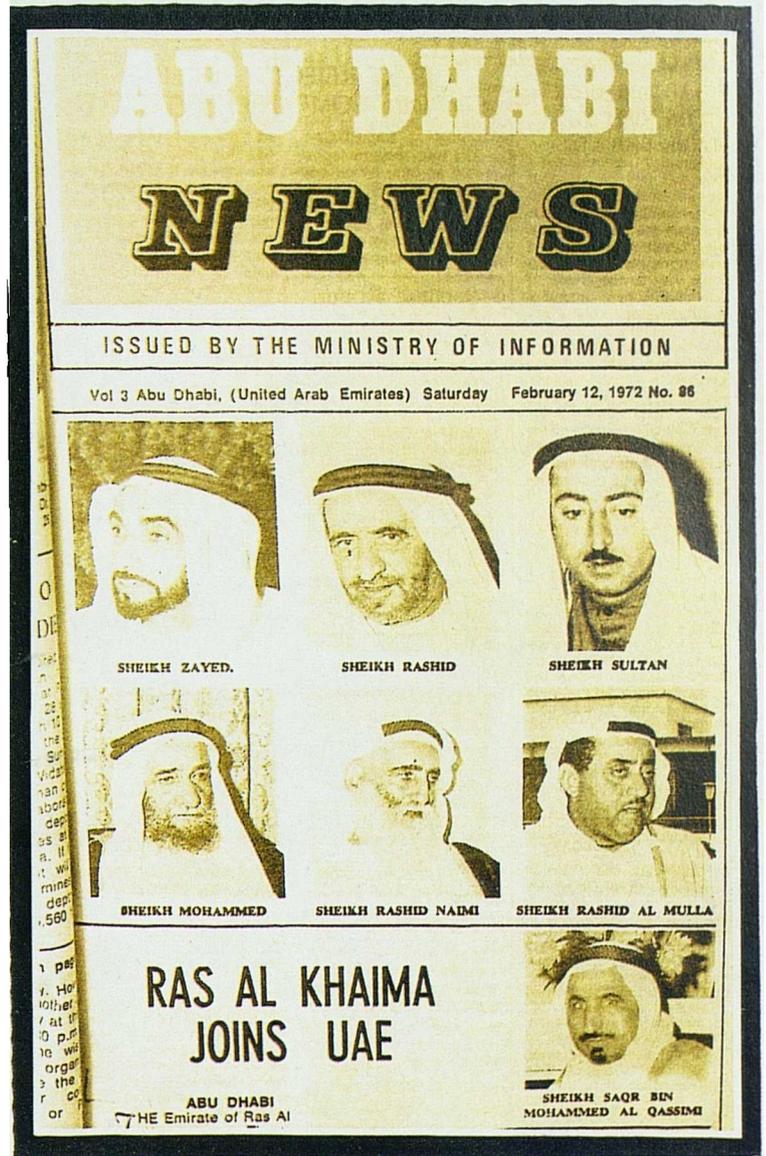
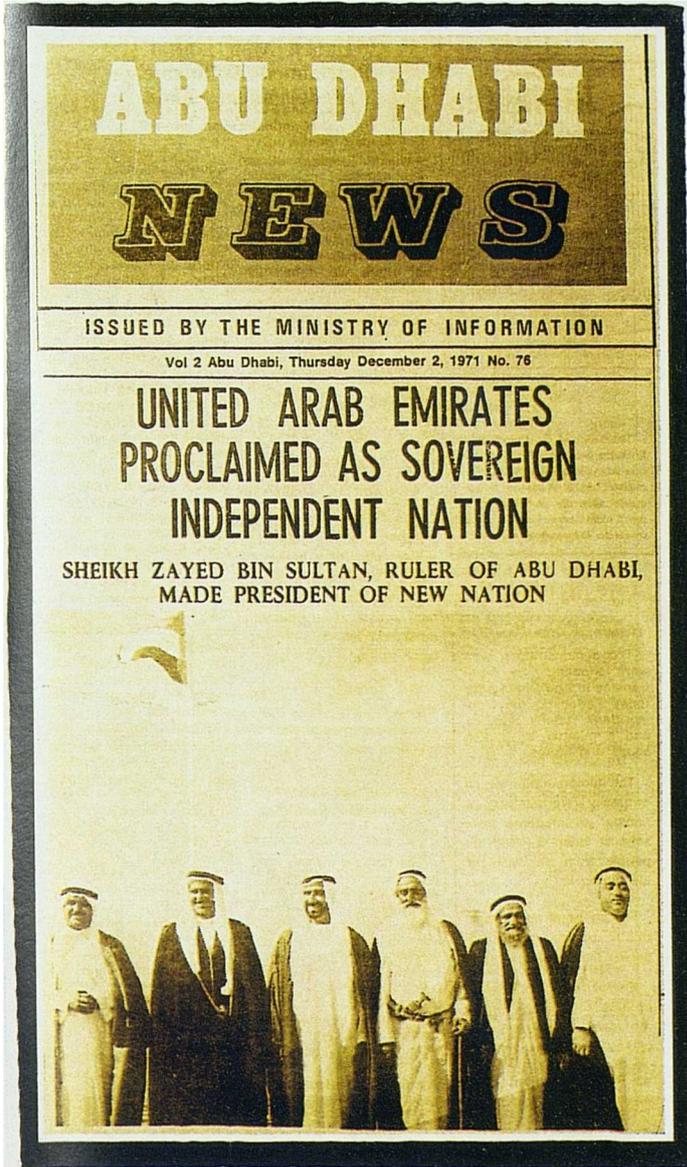
**Chapter Two:** deals with the authority of the Supreme Council.

**Chapter Three:** focusses on general rules.

The rulers of both Abu Dhabi and Dubai invited the Rulers of Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Quwain, Ras al Khaimah and Fujairah to discuss a larger federation. An invitation was also extended to Bahrain and Qatar to discuss the future of the region.<sup>(53)</sup>

One of the most important outcomes of the Abu Dhabi - Dubai agreement of 18 February 1968 was the establishment of a maritime boundary between the two Emirates, a settlement of which Dubai was particularly enthusiastic. Indeed, Dubai was able to enlarge the area surrounding its Fath oil field.

*Figure 3.4: The establishment of the Federation on 2 December 1971 by six Emirates, Ras al-Khaimah joins the Federation on 10 February 1972*



The accord declared:

*"As the actual territorial water limit between Dubai and Abu Dhabi Emirates starts at Ras Hussyan on the coast, and stretches in a straight line in a northwest direction across the sea passing to the west of the Fath wells which belong to Dubai Emirate; and as both parties wish to reconsider this limit for the benefit of the two states and their peoples; agreement has been reached between both parties on the following: First: this limit will be readjusted to annex to the Emirate of Dubai an area of the sea, lying west of the present limit parallel horizontally (large base) and equal to ten kilometres measured along the coast from the west starting from Ras Hussyan and along as its main symmetry (small base) to a length equal to the present mentioned limit in a manner to include this area west of the Fatah wells and stretching southwest to the coast." (54)*

The accord was signed in Simayh, a crossing point on the Abu Dhabi - Dubai border. This agreement was the first practical demonstration in the area that border problems could be solved by co-operation between the rulers. After the British announcement of withdrawal from the Gulf at the end of 1971, the 150-year-old treaty with Britain relating to the defence and foreign relations of the Trucial States was replaced on 2 December 1971 by a new treaty of friendship between Britain and the United Arab Emirates. The treaty was similar to the treaties concluded by Britain with Bahrain and Qatar. However, shortly before the new federal state was established, Iran occupied Abu Musa Island (Sharjah) and the Greater and Lesser Tumbs (Ras al-Khaimah). Official British reaction to the establishment of the United Arab Emirates was announced by Sir Alec Douglas Home in the House of Commons on 6 December 1971:

*"I am glad to tell the House that the United Arab Emirates was formed on Dec 2. The Ruler of Abu Dhabi was sworn in as President. H.M. Government had on the previous day terminated their special treaty relationship with the six Emirates who are members of the Union. As previously agreed with the Ruler, H.M. Government also terminated the special relationship with Ras al Khaimah, which had decided not to join the Union. Also on Dec.2 H.M. Government concluded with the Union a Treaty of Friendship, on the same lines as the treaties concluded recently with Bahrain and Qatar...." (55)*

From the above information it can be concluded that the formation of the United Arab Emirates was encouraged as much by regional factors as by local initiative and with the British Government's support.<sup>(56)</sup>

### **3.10 Ras al-Khaimah Joins the Federation**

The announcement of the establishment of the federation on 2 December 1971 was by six Emirates (see Figure 3.4). Ras al-Khaimah refused to join the federation for several reasons. First, according to Shaikh Zayed, the President of the U.A.E., the reason was that Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed Al-Qasimi, the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah opposed the idea that the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai should acquire veto powers, and insisted both on the formula of equal voting for all members and on the law of equal representation in the Federal National Council. Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed Al-Qasimi, the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah revealed these two demands in a broadcast on 22 July 1971.<sup>(57)</sup> In addition, it has been reported that, Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah (who has ruled the Shaikhdom since 1948), was and remains very proud of his tribe's history, and remembers the days of Qasimi greatness. He regarded himself as the representative of the Qawasim, the most senior family of the area, he believes. Moreover, his family had a history of brave opposition to the British, and for that reason alone he would not be treated as inferior to the rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, neither of whom had such a record of opposition.<sup>(58)</sup> Shaikh Saqr had been the first ruler of the Trucial Coast to chair the Trucial States Council, while the present President of the U.A.E. (the ruler of Abu Dhabi) and the Vice-President of the U.A.E. (the ruler of Dubai) were (merely) members of the Council. It was incongruous for him, therefore, to be under these two Shaikhs authority when he had formerly been in a superior position to them.<sup>(59)</sup>

Moreover, there was a chance that oil might be discovered in Ras al-Khaimah in commercial quantities. Shaikh Saqr stayed outside the federation waiting for

indications of oil in order to promote the Emirate to equal status with Abu Dhabi and Dubai. This possibility encouraged Shaikh Saqr to delay joining the federation.<sup>(60)</sup>

It is also reported that, in order to avoid angering Iran, the other Emirates refused Ras al-Khaimah permission to join the federation because of its refusal to sign an agreement with Iran about the Greater and Lesser Tumbs.

It became clear that Abu Dhabi was the dominant element within the Union because of its wealth and the size of its population. Saudi Arabia (which had a border dispute with Abu Dhabi) was the only state with an interest in weakening the federation led by Abu Dhabi.<sup>(61)</sup> For this reason, Ras al-Khaimah was encouraged by Saudi Arabia to pursue an independent course. Related to this was the fact that the two most powerful members of the federation, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, both had close ties with Iran.<sup>(62)</sup> In contrast, the origins of the spiritual bond between Ras al-Khaimah and Saudi Arabia go back as far as the first Saudi state and the Wahhabi alliance. Nowadays, only the ruling family in Ras al-Khaimah and a very tiny minority of the population still owe allegiance to Wahhabism.

Having determined that oil wealth was not imminent, on 10 February 1972 Ras al-Khaimah joined the federation as a seventh member of the union and was accorded six seats in the Federal Supreme Council (see Figure 3.4).<sup>(63)</sup>

### **3.11 Conclusion**

Historically, the Emirates might be classified as protectorates rather than colonies, because they came under the British Foreign Office, and not the Colonial Office. They were independent states under British protection.

The formation of the United Arab Emirates on 2 December 1971 was encouraged by many factors such as the history, geography, racial homogeneity, language, religion and culture shared by all the Trucial Coast peoples, as well as similarities in the

political and economic systems. A century and a half of British presence beginning in 1820 upto 1971 helped to bring a certain stability to the area, as well as in relation to neighbouring countries. Only in the 1950s and 1960s did the creation of a modern society begin. For example, we have seen that the first modern school was not opened until 1955 and health services in the desert and mountain areas, had not existed before that date. The basic road network was established in the 1960s by the Trucial States Council, before which journeys from the two largest population centres, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, on the Arabian Gulf to the smaller towns on the country's Gulf of Oman coast, such as Fujairah, were more easily achieved by sea than through the rocky defiles of the Hajar Mountains.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia also played essential roles through the years of negotiations prior to the establishment of the federation. When the flag of the new state was first raised on 2 December 1971, the six, and later seven, individual Emirates moved into a new period of their history, facing the future as one.

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- 23b. *Al-Khaleej*, Friday 11 March 1994, Sharjah, U.A.E.
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## **Chapter 4**

### **The Establishment of the U.A.E. Boundaries**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter addresses the historical background to the emergence of the Emirates' international boundaries.

The boundaries question in the Gulf area in general and in the Trucial States in particular emerged with the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in different areas between the two World Wars. It was the discovery of oil which made the inland areas of Arabia so important. Consequently, it is difficult to approach questions of boundaries between these Emirates without going back to historical records. The following section of this chapter, therefore, highlights the history of boundary demarcation in the Trucial States (later U.A.E.) because the demarcation of the boundaries between these Shaikhdoms, as well as those between the Trucial States and its neighbours, Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman, profoundly influenced the transformation of these seven tiny Shaikhdoms into the United Arab Emirates. This chapter also offers a rare description of the boundary between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia based on the unpublished 1974 agreement, and the original text of the 1974 agreement is attached as an appendix. The aim of this chapter is to highlight the international boundaries of the U.A.E. on which external framework hangs the internal boundaries of the Emirates, giving shape, size, and area to the state. The international boundaries of the U.A.E. mark the limits of protection and security.

#### **4.2 The history of boundary demarcation in the States**

The question to be addressed is why boundary lines have emerged in this part of the Arabian Peninsula in which the desert is the prevailing element. Immediately after

the First World War, Great Britain undertook to settle disputes between Emirates in the region, such as the 1920 Seeb settlement between Muscat and Oman which demarcated the boundaries on a tribal basis. The Al-Uqqair agreement in 1922 between Kuwait and Iraq and Najd was another example of British boundary-making. The idea of creating neutral zones emerged at this time in response to tribal needs, in which sovereignty was shared, and the tribes of the two sides could also share and utilize the grazing land. The principle of neutral zones can be equally applied to oil revenues when oil is discovered, such as in the Kuwait-Saudi Arabia Neutral Zone (1923-1965), the Saudi Arabia-Iraq Neutral Zone (1923-1981) and the Abu Dhabi-Dubai Neutral Zone (1969). Since the Trucial Oman Shaikhdom emerged with its well-known shape after the 1820 treaty, neither Britain nor the Shaikhdoms considered boundary delimitation a priority. In respect of the Shaikhdoms, their rulers were uninterested because the geographical concept of the boundary was undeveloped: the economic system of the desert land relies on grazing, and shepherds do not recognize boundaries, their movement depending on seasonal rainfall.<sup>(1)</sup> The desert environment is sometimes compared to the high seas. The free movement of the Bedouin in the desert had known no limits in the past. The land had little value other than for grazing. However, the shape of inter-emirate boundaries began to evolve after the signing of the 1820 treaty.<sup>(2)</sup> First, in the same year, Britain had concluded treaties with the rulers of the eight Emirates. This number was reduced to five in 1914. In 1952 Britain recognized Fujairah as a Shaikhdom independent of Sharjah. In the same year, Kalba became a dependency of Sharjah. Finally, the number of Shaikhdoms was raised to seven<sup>(3)</sup> (see Chapter 3).

Throughout that period, Britain recognized no boundaries between the Shaikhdoms. This gave a strong Shaikhdom the opportunity to expand its territory at the expense of its neighbour. Alternatively, new Trucial Shaikhdoms could emerge provided that they agreed to the treaties' conditions.<sup>(4)</sup> Under the Exclusive (Agreement) Treaty of

1892, the Shaikhs of the coast undertook not to cede, sell, or mortgage any part of their territory to any party but to the British government (see Chapter 3). These treaties were, however, not concerned with the delimitation of political boundaries between Shaikhdoms, not least because the British government recognised that to demarcate these boundaries would be problematic, and would offer little gain. Concern for inter-Emirate boundary demarcation began after the emergence of Ottoman competition in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>(5)</sup> This is clear from the agreement which was signed on 20 July 1913 between Britain and the Ottoman empire.<sup>(6)</sup> Britain's concern for internal boundaries between the Shaikhdoms began in earnest when oil companies became interested in winning concessions to search for oil in the Shaikhdoms in the 1930s.

#### 4.2.1 The Discovery of Oil

The beginning of oil exploration prompted the Shaikhs to recognise the advantages of demarcating where their Shaikhdom began and ended.<sup>(7)</sup> The British authorities did not initially become involved in the question of boundaries. However, after 1937, the British geological teams began a survey in the interior. It was then that the British were obliged to settle the vexed question of several tribal loyalties.<sup>(8)</sup>

The first attempt to define the boundaries of the Shaikhdoms was in fact made by J.G. Lorimer at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was collecting information for his *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia* with the co-operation of Hinter, who drew the map for this book in 1917. Lorimer's definition was approximate and he acknowledges that: "Inland, [its] frontiers are more difficult to define".<sup>(9)</sup>

After that, in 1937, the first sketch map showing the boundaries of the Trucial Shaikhdoms was drawn by Captain Hickenbotham, the Political Agent in the Gulf. To draw his map, he depended on tribal loyalties because the geographical information

of the interior, and the deficiency of an accurate physical map were the main problems which faced the British authority in demarcating the boundaries.

When oil exploration concessions were being sought in 1935 and 1936 by D'Arcy Exploration Company Ltd (a subsidiary of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company) to search for oil in all the states of the Trucial Coast,<sup>(10)</sup> the boundary demarcation emerged as a very significant matter and each Shaikh began to claim a larger territory for his Shaikhdom regardless of whether it was inhabited. An enlarged area clearly means a greater possibility of finding out oil. Thus the Shaikh's income would increase from granting concessions for oil exploration, and potentially also from oil production. Each Shaikh tried to encroach on the boundary of his neighbours and to extend his territory. The territory of each Shaikhdom was not clear for petroleum concessions, which needed to know the extent of the Shaikhdom, and its hinterland, that each Shaikh effectively controlled. In wanting to explore the hinterland, access was needed there. C.M. Pirie-Gordon's letter (he was British Resident in Bahrain in 1952, Political Agent in Dubai 1953-5) to the Foreign Office in London explained the situation thus:

*"The oil company suggested that the boundaries should be defined inland from the coast for a distance greater than the 25-30 kilometres originally envisaged - in fact, as far as the approximate dividing line between Oman and the Trucial Coast Shaikhdoms. They (the oil company) also want the Ras al-Khaimah : Umm al-Qaiwain and Sharjah : Dubai boundaries demarcated, and say they may later ask for the Dubai : Abu Dhabi boundary to be carried beyond al Ashush."<sup>(11)</sup> (See Appendix E1 and E2).*

When Christopher Pirie-Gordon became Political Agent in Dubai in 1953, he arbitrated over the Shaikhdoms' boundaries and the rulers agreed that they would not dispute the results of his arbitration.<sup>(12)</sup> Pirie-Gordon started the arbitration work by touring the boundary between the two Shaikhdoms of Umm al-Quwain and Ras al-Khaimah, but he was so disillusioned by his first day's experience in the field that

he decided to delegate the boundary work to his assistant in the Political Agency, Julian Walker.<sup>(13)</sup> According to Julian Walker, the pressure to demarcate the boundaries between the Trucial Shaikhdoms was due to oil:

*"Oil prospecting on the Trucial Coast made the local oil company, Petroleum Development Trucial Coast (PDTC), keen that the boundaries between the various Shaikhdoms there should be defined."*<sup>(14)</sup>

The rulers themselves were anxious to encourage exploration by the oil company in the hopes that it could foreshadow the end of the poverty which had affected the area after the collapse of the pearl trade.<sup>(15)</sup>

It seems clear that the major reason behind the emergence of the boundaries between these Shaikhdoms was the discovery of oil and then the treaties and the independence movements within the Bani Yas tribe (1833, the independence of Dubai from Abu Dhabi) the independence movements within the Qawasim (Ras al-Khaimah, Kalba, Himriyya, Fujairah, from 1891-1971).

Thus, it was important to know the extent of each Shaikhdom and the hinterland area that each Shaikh controlled. The oil companies also needed to be granted access either by the rulers (Shaikhs) who controlled the area or by direct authority of the local tribes who inhabited the hinterland. In 1937, land which had little value other than to the handful of people in the area, began to have greater value in the eyes of the rulers to the extent that the Shaikhs became aware of every square inch of land.<sup>(16)</sup>

To each Shaikh, boundary delimitation became an important issue in 1935 with the arrival of oil concessions. These were described by Captain Hickenbotham, the Political Agent in Bahrain on 10 July 1937:

*"Petroleum Concessions Limited quite naturally are anxious to know exactly for what amount of territory they are buying concessions and at the same time the Trucial Shaikh is anxious, especially in the event of oil being discovered, to claim as much territory as he possibly can. The present boundaries between*

*the states are not demarcated with any accuracy and I am doubtful if any of the Trucial Shaikhs themselves can accurately describe where their territorial boundaries run...The advent of oil has made these [barren] areas potentially as rich as areas where there is water and grazing and now the individual Shaikhs are anxious to claim as much land, however barren, as they possibly can. This will give rise to boundary disputes between the Shaikhs, even along boundaries which are fairly clearly defined...some of the Shaikhs have been gradually losing control and what was considered an integral part of the Shaikhdom ten years or more ago has now become separated and under the ruler of the Shaikh of one of the nomadic tribes."<sup>(17)</sup>*

In 1937 the British Political Agent in Sharjah was asked to establish the territories of the Shaikhs along the coast. The granting of concessions to oil companies by the Shaikhs made fixing boundaries of the various Shaikhdoms essential. The ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Shakhbut bin Sultan was the first Shaikh of the Trucial Coast to recognise the significance of the territorial limits. He therefore, defined and proclaimed his boundary with Dubai.<sup>(18)</sup> Conflicts arose between the Shaikhs in certain areas. Indeed, these disagreements led to some clashes for example between Dubai and Abu Dhabi which both claimed Jabal Ali and Khur Genadha, a dispute which lasted from 1945 until 1948.

The oil companies began their operations immediately after the World War II. Security and stability became essential in the Emirates, and the British Foreign Office therefore began to consider how to resolve boundary disputes between the Shaikhdoms. Thus, Julian Walker was sent to demarcate and to map between the Emirates themselves, and between the Emirates and Oman. Walker travelled the desert and mountainous parts from 1954 to 1955 trying to determine which Shaikh ruled which bit of land. Making use of information supplied by Julian Walker, the Research Department of the Foreign Office prepared the first official map of the internal boundaries in the Trucial States in February 1963. It is important to note that there was another person who was involved in the Trucial States (U.A.E.) boundary demarcation especially with its neighbour, the Sultanate of Oman. The Honorable

Lord Martin Buckmaster spent four years in the field, surveying the Abu Dhabi-Saudi Arabia border and the boundary between Ras al-Khaimah and Oman.<sup>(19)</sup>

It is arguable that what the two men did was to record the situation as they found it, reflecting tribal loyalties to different Shaikhs. They did not attempt to impose boundaries and because of that, the map of the U.A.E. finished up looking like a jig-saw puzzle.<sup>(20)</sup>

Another writer Sir Donald Hawley<sup>(21)</sup> had the view that:

*"Previously, there had been no boundaries between the states, as boundaries in the European sense were unknown anywhere in Arabia."*<sup>(22)</sup>

Julian Walker has commented:

*"The concepts of nation states, of territorial sovereignty, and of fixed linear frontiers are western ones, which have been imposed on the traditional society of the Arabian Peninsula"*.<sup>(23)</sup>

Such views were held by government officers and Her Majesty's Government representative in the region. It is interesting to ask to what extent the Shaikhs of the Trucial States recognised boundaries. The answer lies in historical documents and some official letters. For instance, Shaikh Sa'ed bin Maktum O.B.E., the ruler of Dubai, sent a letter dated 12 January 1949 to Mr P.D. Stobart the Political Agent of the Trucial Coast describing Dubai's boundary with her neighbour Abu Dhabi:

*"...We do not have any documents or papers which deal with boundaries... besides the conflict in respect of boundaries was not expected to take records and to keep it"*.<sup>(24)</sup> (See Appendix F).

Several maps published by the Foreign Office show the Trucial States with their capitals as sea ports. The boundary lines between the Shaikhdoms were not shown, which means that the internal boundary between the various Shaikhdoms emerged only after the discovery of the oil.

Walker began his work in March 1955 and continued until 1960 but at irregular periods. He produced a report and recommendations which were accepted in London by all the Shaikhdom Rulers with only one exception. The ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Shakhbut, refused to accept the arbitrations made by the British.<sup>(25)</sup> What made the boundary questions in the United Arab Emirates extraordinarily complicated was that the boundaries of the Emirates with each other include not only the seven Emirates but also their several territories and enclaves.

#### **4.2.2 Conclusion**

Internal boundaries between the Emirates resulted from a political tribal conception, and feelings of loyalty which concentrated around the Emirates after the collapse of two tribal confederations. First, the Qawasim federation at the beginning of the twentieth century: Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr, who ruled Sharjah from 1803-66, extended his sovereignty to the Gulf of Oman, where he controlled Kalba and Fujairah - Sharjah was then a relatively large state which included Sharjah town, Ras al-Khaimah, the inland oasis of Dhaid, and the islands of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs. Secondly, the collapse of the Bani Yas confederation in 1833, when the Al Bu Falasah section of the Bani Yas tribe established themselves in Dubai and began to build up their little town as a trading centre.

In addition, the 1820 treaty gave every small Emirate its independent political identity. Merchants had been financially supporting the Shaikhs without any income. The merchants were bankrupted by the collapse of the pearl trade, on which they depended for their living. When oil was discovered, many Gulf Shaikhdoms and the Shaikhs became wealthy once more. Hand in hand with this new wealth was the need to delimit internal boundaries.

## 4.3. The Classification of the U.A.E. Boundaries

### 4.3.1 Introduction

Boundaries appear on maps as thin lines. On the ground they mark the limit of the State's sovereignty. It is useful to distinguish frontiers from boundaries: a boundary is a defined line of separation; a frontier is a zone of contact. Located at the interfaces between adjacent state territories, international boundaries have a special significance in determining the limits of sovereignty.<sup>(26)</sup>

The term 'boundary' denotes a line drawn on the map. A 'frontier' is a regia zone, with width as well as length. The width of the zone may need to be defined, and may vary from place to place along the frontier. Frontiers were more common features of the political landscape centuries ago. However, by the beginning of this century frontiers had largely disappeared and were replaced by boundary lines.<sup>(27)</sup> Territorial disputes in the United Arab Emirates can be divided into four types:

1. Inter-Emirate border (border within the union members).
2. Enclave.
3. Boundaries between the U.A.E. and its neighbours.
4. The maritime boundaries of the U.A.E. and the islands.

The foregoing classification should not be held too rigidly because occasionally more than two parties are involved in one dispute. For example: a dispute about Madha village was considered to be between Oman and Sharjah, and as an enclave within the U.A.E. territory. A dispute on Abu Musa island was between Iran, the Emirate of Sharjah, and an oil company working under the authority of the Emirate of Umm al-Quwain.

### 4.3.2 Natural and Artificial Boundaries

The classic and the oldest classification of boundaries often uses two basic categories, 'natural boundaries' and 'artificial boundaries.' Lines which follow geographical features such as mountains, rivers, lakes, creeks or bays, coastlines, seas, and marsh or salt marsh have been utilised in creating 'geographical boundaries.' Such naturally defined boundaries were useful in the early days of boundary establishment, because they were generally known and could be recognized. However, major difficulties between states have arisen, particularly with rivers because although they appear to be useful boundary features, rivers tend to shift their course. The new course demands a redefinition of the boundary, which tends to cause friction.<sup>(28)</sup> However, the position of uncertainty over boundaries in many parts of east Arabia is largely connected with the absence of natural boundaries.

Boundaries which do not follow any geographical feature, and which are marked on the ground by monuments or pillars or any landmark placed by human beings, are known as 'artificial boundaries.' It will be shown below that in the U.A.E. both natural and artificial boundaries can be found. In Chapter 6, a full description of the boundary lines of each Emirate with its neighbours is given. From this description, it can be concluded that although there are boundaries which refer to prominent physical features such as the fact that the Dubai-Sharjah boundary starts with the first point from the coast at Khur al-Mamzar (Khur means lagoon) which is a physical boundary point<sup>(29)</sup> dividing Dubai from Sharjah, further inland the boundary lines are artificial. About 70 pillars driven into the ground mark the border points. The last border point between Dubai and Sharjah at Jabal Nezwa, whilst marked with a pillar, can be said to be a physical feature since Jabal Nezwa refers to the mountain of Nezwa (see Chapter 6).

The same can be said about the international boundaries between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia. On the coast, Ras Khumais is marked as within the U.A.E. territory and west of Ras Khumais including Khur Duwaih in are within Saudi territory, marked by a natural boundary. On the other side, the southern boundary between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia, the line starts at a point on the Gulf coast to the east of Khur Duwaih and commences in a south easterly direction to Ras Al-Mihradh, then to Al-Ribadh and on to Umm al-Zummul, where the borders of Saudi Arabia, the U.A.E. and the Sultanate of Oman converge (see the U.A.E-Saudi boundary section in this chapter). This boundary line does not follow any physical features because in that part of eastern Arabia the deserts present no physical features. In the absence of naturally marked boundary sites, the boundary line is demarcated as an artificial boundary.

It can be concluded that in certain parts of the U.A.E. some boundary lines follow physical features, and are therefore physiographic boundaries, but in other parts they are marked by pillars and signboards on the ground, not following any natural feature. The U.A.E. thus has both "natural" and artificial boundaries.

#### **4.4 The International Boundaries of the U.A.E.**

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries several important factors directly contributed to the evolution of boundaries in the Arabian Peninsula: the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in western Arabia; the growth of Arab nationalism; and the concern of Britain and France to protect their strategic interests such as communications and oil supplies.<sup>(30)</sup> The international boundaries of the United Arab Emirates form the external frame of the state which gives the shape, size and the area of the state.

The concept of nation states, of territorial sovereignty, and of fixed linear frontiers are western ones, which have been imposed on the traditional society of the Arabian peninsula, although alien to the tribes of the region.

There were several other factors which complicated the boundary demarcation such as tribal movements and tribal loyalties, the collection of *zakat* (on crops) and official letters between Shaikhs about territorial matters. The federal boundaries of the United Arab Emirates divide into two main parts.

#### **4.4.1 The U.A.E-Oman Boundary**

Geographically this section may be divided into six parts according to the six federal units of the U.A.E. which are bounded by Omani territory. They are: Oman boundary with Abu Dhabi; Oman boundary with Dubai; Oman boundary with Ajman; Oman boundary with Sharjah; the Omani enclave, Wadi Madhah (see Chapter 6); and the Omani outlier Raus al-Jibal, the Musandam Peninsula, bordering the Emirate of Ras Al-Khaimah.

##### **a. Abu Dhabi**

This boundary results from a survey of the frontier between the State of Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Oman, and is based on information supplied by Julian Walker. His description of the frontier line is as follows: the line runs from a point north of Shaab al Ghaf westwards through the Sabkah Thuwaimah leaving Naqa al Hauz in Abu Dhabi and then to the north of Husn Siqqiya. It continues in straight lines westwards to Jizaat Daali which is a wooded area to Ghaf Sanuta, a small group of large trees. Hiyaira is a small wooded area and then to the top of the highest dune in the Muhanna group.

From Muhanna the border runs south eastwards leaving Raqaat Yaariba in Abu Dhabi to a point between Raqaat Al Aradh and Sih Gnaiyyir where it turns south passing west of Raqaat as Salli to the summit of Naqa Sulaima.

The frontier continues southwards to the dunes of Ramlat Saham and thence to a point in the sand just north of Shantut (in Muscat). From this point it runs in a straight

line to a large sand dune 15 miles west of Tawi Al Augan and on to the eastern end of the dune range of Urq al Rahail. Thence the border runs to a point half way between the dunes of Mdairum and Raqaiyat and continues southward in straight lines running east of Ghadda bul Abbas to a point west of khur Umm al Aush and straight on to al Ghuwaifah in Sih Awaiyya. From there it continues through astro point Sih al Haira and through the centre of the eastern kharimat Gharaidha to the narrow part of western Sih Salil east of the Sabkha.

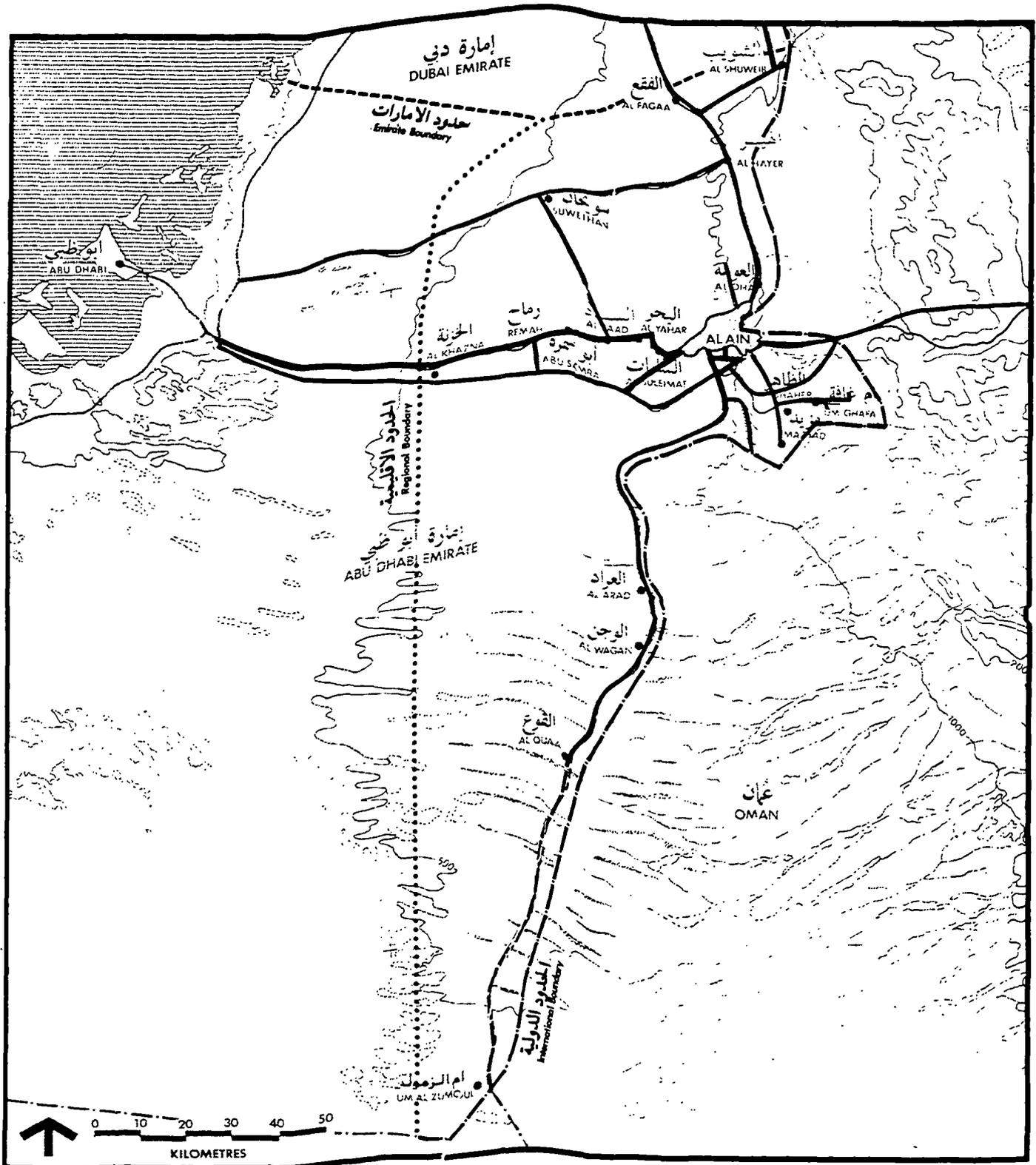
The border then runs straight to a point just east of astro point, Naqa Naif it continues southward following the low sand ridges to Nabgha al Hussainiyaht and on between Raddat al Hadh to the west and Diaithir to the east to the summit of Naqa Zahar passing to the west of khur Manahil. From Naqa Zahar the frontier should run in a straight line in the direction of Umm al Zamul stopping just short of the wells<sup>(31)</sup> (see Figure 4.1).

**b. The Oman border with Dubai and Ajman:**

Dubai has one part separated from it, namely Hatta.<sup>(32)</sup> It is a classic exclave. There is an historical tradition story that the Sultan of Muscat offered the Ruler of Dubai a choice of the Musandam Peninsula or the Wadi Hatta and the Ruler chose the latter.<sup>(33)</sup> This historical fact may be true because numerous elders of Hatta still talk about this story.<sup>(34)</sup> Lorimer records the transfer of the wadi Hatta after 1870 from Saiyid Turki, the Sultan of Oman to the Shaikh of Dubai.

**Migrating Border Villages:** Two maps were produced by GEOprojects of London in 1983 (scale 1:1,320,000), one for the United Arab Emirates and the other for the Sultanate of Oman. Close examination of the map of the border between the Emirates and Oman, particularly regarding Hatta of Dubai and Masfut of Ajman, shows different locations for the villages of Masfut, the enclave of the Emirate of Ajman and Hatta, the enclave of the Emirate of Dubai. On the Oman map, wadis Hatta and

Figure 4.1 Map of Oman-Abu Dhabi East Region Boundaries

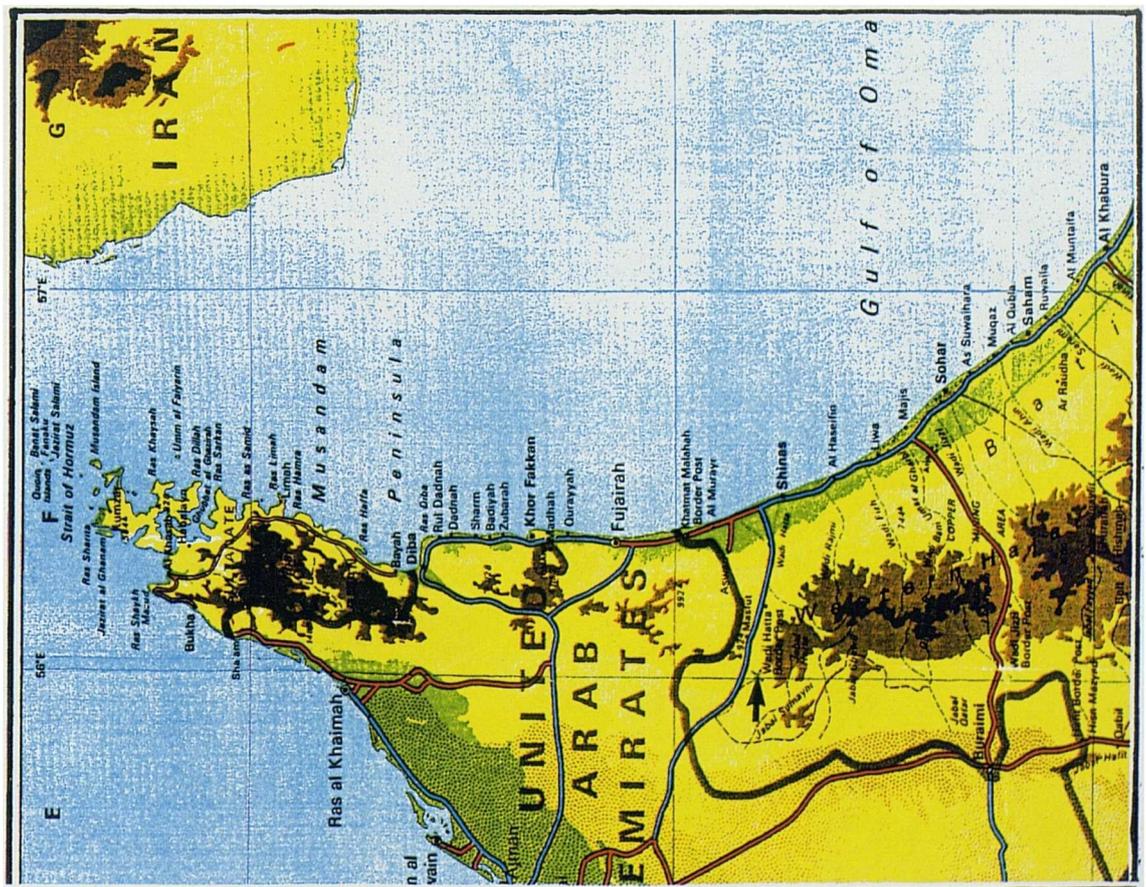
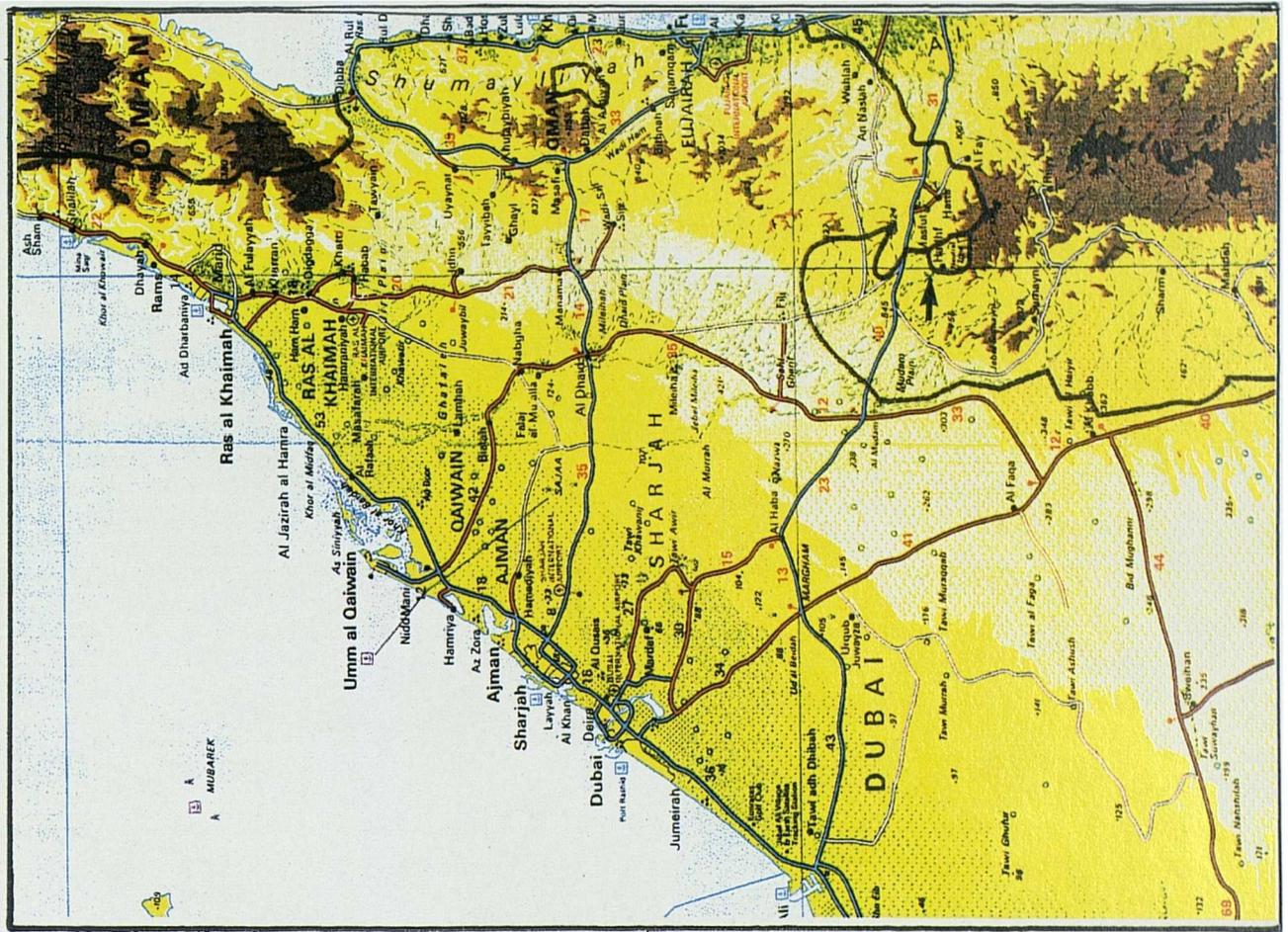


SOURCE: Master Plan for the region of Al-Ain, Shankland Cox (1986)

Masfut are both outside United Arab Emirate territories, and are located south of the international boundary of the country in Omani territory. On the United Arab Emirates map, published by the same company, the two villages are shown within Emirates territory. It might be thought that the villages are in dispute and that each national version of the maps is to please the customer, but this seems unlikely because the villages are enclaves of Ajman (Masfut) and Dubai (Hatta). The boundary here follows the same alignment in both maps. The reason for the apparent migration of these villages has been partly explained in a letter to the researcher from GEOprojects. The reasons given are that the U.A.E. map is dated 1992 and has been intermittently revised to its present degree of accuracy, whereas the Oman map is a 1983 publication and is somewhat out of date. At the time of the publication, the boundaries on the Oman map were taken from the best sources available to the company, which were not very detailed and quite small. More recently, with the cooperation of the National Survey Authority in Oman, GEOprojects have been provided with maps depicting the boundary in much greater detail. It is through the use of such sources that the U.A.E. map shows the situation accurately. The company explain that the costly process of keeping maps up to date has to be balanced against actual map sales, and only recently has the Oman map entered into the revision programme. A major revision is planned for the near future<sup>(35a)</sup>. The villages of Hatta and Masfut which border Omani territory are discussed fully in Chapter 6, based on field work by the researcher in the border area between the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman.

Another feature from the Geo-Project map, in connection with the Emirates-Oman boundary, is the village of Hadf. It lies on the south side of the western side of wadi Hatta. This wadi is classified in many maps as a Neutral Zone between Ajman (U.A.E.) and Oman. Whilst it is clearly shown on the Emirates map as a neutral zone, it has disappeared from the Oman map (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 The GEOproject Map and the migrating border villages of Hatta and Masfut within Omani Territory.



### c. The Oman border with Sharjah

Wadi Madha (the Madha enclave) belongs to Oman, but is located in the north-east of the Emirates surrounded by Emirates lands. It occupies an area of 75 km<sup>2</sup>, and has a population of about 2,500. According to Julian Walker's report of 1955, Muscat claims the whole wadi and it was beyond his competence to define frontiers there. He noted at the time that Sharjah controls the two villages at the head of the wadi, Nahawa and Shis, and these are marked accordingly on the 1962 map (see folded Foreign Office map of the internal boundaries of the Trucial States).<sup>(35)</sup> However, in an interview with the researcher, he admitted an error in the location of Nahawa on the 1962 map. In fact, Nahawa should be located within the Omani enclave, not outside it. This dispute will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

#### 4.4.2 The Oman border with Ras al-Khaimah

The second Omani outlier within the U.A.E. territory land is the Musandam Peninsula or *Ruus al-Jebaal* which means heads of the mountains. This Omani outlier is separated from the main Oman body by the Shaikhdoms of Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah and Sharjah.

#### 4.4.3 Geography of Musandam

This peninsula is one of the significant features of eastern Arabia and overlooks the Strait of Hormuz. Lorimer said: "it may be considered to mark the entrance of the Persian Gulf and to divide that sea from the Gulf of Oman."<sup>(36)</sup> Until a decade ago it was largely isolated from the rest of Arabia, including the Omani mainland itself, not least because it is poor in natural resources. The economy of Musandam peninsula mostly depends on the neighbouring United Arab Emirates, although its people still hold strong allegiance to Sultan Qaboos of Oman.<sup>(37)</sup> Formerly however, the al-Qawasim rule was consolidated along the Gulf coast north of Dubai and into the

Musandam Peninsula in the early nineteenth century.<sup>(38)</sup> The Qawasim rulers and the Sultan of Oman carried on a long struggle to impose their authority on the whole region. Qawasim strength prevailed during the last part of the 18th century establishing some communities on Qishm and Lingah on the Iranian coast of the Gulf.<sup>(39)</sup> Geographically, the Shihuh area in the Musandam Peninsula is divided into two zones:

1. The zone of limestone mountain-range, with wadis directed towards the coast and filled with limestone debris.
2. The narrow coastal zone, whose extent is interrupted by mountains.<sup>(40)</sup>

#### **4.4.4 The Conflict between the U.A.E. and Oman**

In 1977 a dispute between Ras al-Khaimah and Oman in the Ras Musandam began on a ten mile coastal strip as far as the village of Rums. The area takes in an important industrial complex, including a cement plant and a fish-processing plant at the port of Khur Khuwair.<sup>(41)</sup>

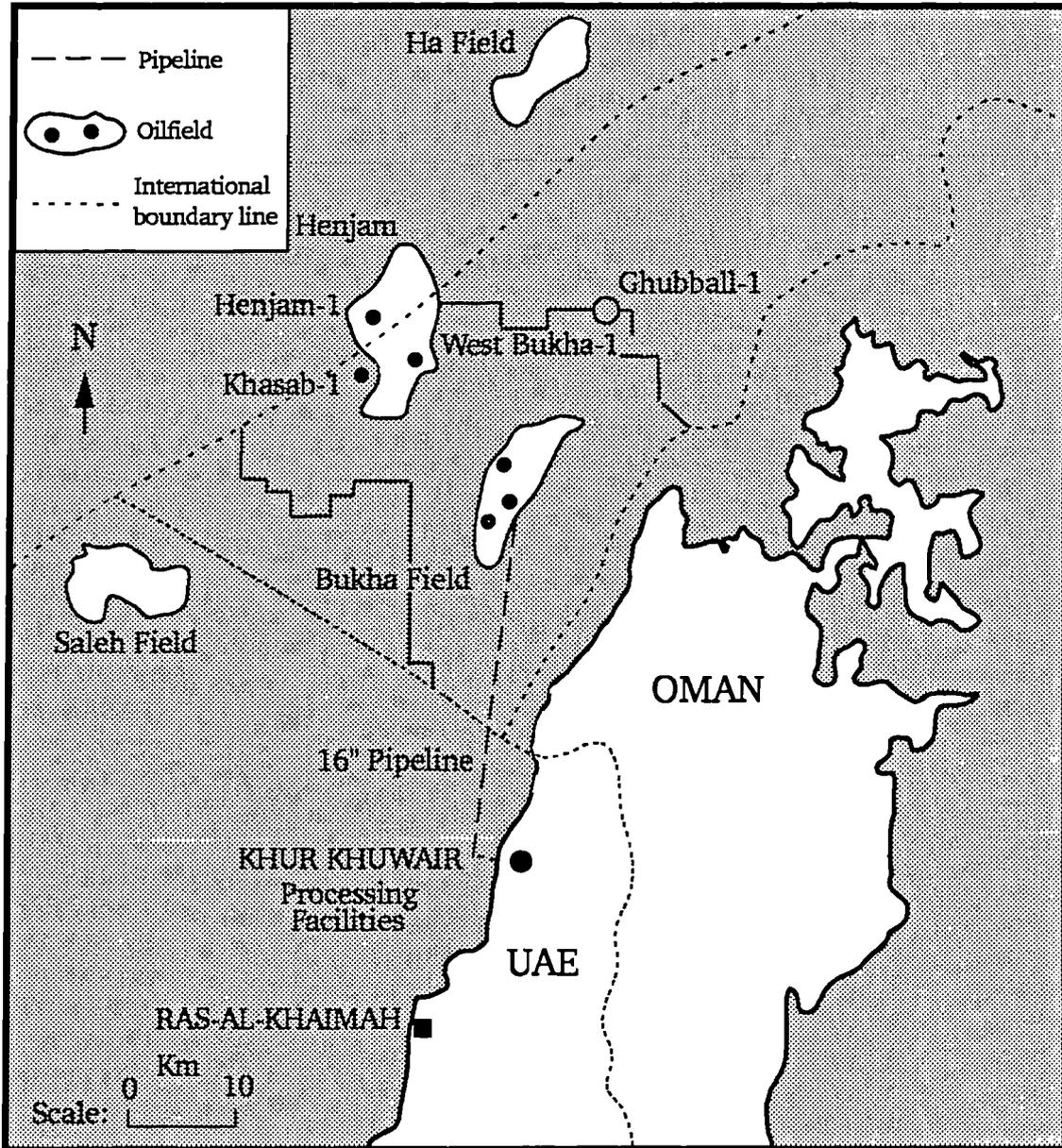
According to Robert Litwak, ideas of a *Greater Oman* have been circulated periodically by Oman in the past, to include large parts of the U.A.E. territories and to establish a direct territorial link with Ras Musandam, the vital enclave on the tip of the peninsula which controls the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>(42)</sup> The boundary dispute between the two parties re-emerged as a source of friction in 1977-78 after differences over the demarcation of their continental shelf boundary. It followed the start of oil exploration in the waters adjacent to a disputed area between the villages of Dawra and Rams in Ras al-Khaimah.<sup>(43)</sup> It was reported that at the beginning of December 1977 Sultan Qaboos sent a note to the U.A.E. President, Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan, complaining that Ras al-Khaimah was drilling for oil in an area which Oman considered part of its territory.<sup>(44)</sup>

The Omani reaction, on 12 December the same year, was to send a warship to warn an oil rig off the disputed area that it was operating in Omani waters.<sup>(45)</sup> Unconfirmed reports from the U.A.E. and Oman, quoted by the *Financial Times* on 5 December 1977 said that the troops of both countries had moved to the disputed area of Ras al-Khaimah.<sup>(46)</sup>

According to Cordesman, the armed confrontation between Ras al-Khaimah and Oman ended like a "comic opera" when the large number of Omanis in the Ras al-Khaimah forces refused to fight Oman's forces.<sup>(47)</sup> It should be pointed out that the U.A.E. army, estimated at 25,000 men is comprised of some 85 per cent of Omanis and Baluchis who have relatives in Oman and they have natural loyalties to Oman as their original home and the place where they were born.<sup>(48)</sup> It was reported that Kuwait, as it had always done before the establishment of the federation, agreed to help Ras al-Khaimah to establish an oil refinery at Khur Khuwair in northern Ras al-Khaimah, the disputed area with Oman. The refinery's output was expected to be about 100,000 barrels a day, of which about half would be absorbed by Ras al-Khaimah and the rest exported.<sup>(49)</sup> The Omanis claimed that an agreement had long existed that neither party would undertake development in the disputed area without the consent of the other. The Omani complaint was that Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah has gone ahead with development of the area without obtaining such consent (Figure 4.3).<sup>(50)</sup>

The situation worsened, and tensions between the U.A.E. (Ras al-Khaimah) and Oman rose. Celebration of the national day of the U.A.E., to mark the sixth anniversary of the U.A.E. on 2 December 1977, was cancelled because troops had been moved north from Abu Dhabi to Ras al-Khaimah.<sup>(51)</sup>

Figure 4.3 Map of oil pipeline from Bukha Oilfield (Oman) to Khur Khuwair (United Arab Emirates).



Source: MEES

#### 4.4.5 The End of the conflict

His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan, the U.A.E. President, accompanied by the Foreign Minister, Ahmed Khalifa al-Suwaidi, flew to Oman for a one day visit on 29 December 1977 and held talks with Sultan Qaboos.<sup>(52)</sup> A public speech on the border dispute was given by Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah on 12 March 1978. In an interview with the Abu Dhabi daily newspaper *Al Wahda*, he stressed that the dispute was "one between borders" and said: "this type of dispute is not new to the Arab world because colonialism had planted mines along the borders it drew up." He continued that he had "documents which set matters to rights" and the issue was now in the hands of the U.A.E. President.<sup>(53)</sup>

The next step in the resolution of the dispute was the establishment of three delegations to visit Oman and to debate the border issue with Sultan Qaboos. However, the Sultan refused to meet the second delegation which was led by the Crown Prince of Ajman (the present ruler of Ajman).<sup>(54)</sup> It was reported that Qaboos had told the delegation that the disputed territory was populated by the Shihuh tribe and had been administered by Oman for centuries. Furthermore, he accused Shaikh Saqr the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah of starting to encroach on the territory in 1951 when he occupied the village of Rams which was now 16 km inside Ras al-Khaimah.<sup>(55)</sup> In December 1979 it was announced that the dispute had been resolved between Oman and Ras al-Khaimah, and that an aerial survey was taking place, but details have not yet been released.<sup>(56)</sup> Furthermore, another official announcement was given by H.H. Shaikh Rashed bin Said Al-Maktum, the Vice President of the U.A.E., Ruler of Dubai, that an agreement had been concluded between the two countries and the boundary disputes with Oman resolved.<sup>(57)</sup>

#### 4.4.6 Conclusion

It seems that the end of the boundary conflict between Ras al-Khaimah and Oman was settled to the advantage of Oman. The ability of Oman to follow its claim over the Musandam border area has been conditioned by the complex interplay between the internal and external political environments in which it must operate.<sup>(58)</sup>

In 1978 the Omani government tried to pressure the U.A.E. federal government on the Musandam border issue and the Omanis again took some actions which indicated that it might revive the Buraimi question. In January, the same year Oman put into circulation a memorial coin bearing a picture of the Sultan's old palace at the Buraimi oasis.<sup>(59)</sup> Furthermore, it was reported that in the same year Oman had assembled some 300 mechanized vehicles in the vicinity of Buraimi.<sup>(60)</sup> The U.A.E. was considering two major steps to preserve the security of oil supply in the countries around the Gulf and the balance of forces was increased. The first step was to build a military airport in the Emirate of Fujairah just south of Omani-held Ras Musandam Peninsula. Construction of a military airport would also represent a major move by the Gulf state to increase protection of the Strait of Hormuz.

The second step was the construction of a 150-mile pipeline, from Abu Dhabi (the major oil producing Emirate) to Fujairah which lies on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Oman, in order to divert oil flow easily to the east coast in the event of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz for any reason.<sup>(61)</sup> The federal government has tried its best to maintain stability and security in the region especially with its neighbours. Between 1966 and 1974 Abu Dhabi provided Oman with several hundred million dollars in direct assistance and gave the Sultan of Oman millions more to help secure the Habus and the Shihuh tribal loyalty in Oman's Musandam region and in Dibba.<sup>(62)</sup> The U.A.E. has provided aid to Oman as a means of securing its borders ever since.<sup>(63)</sup>

There have been disputes with Oman involving oil exploration by Ras al-Khaimah in the north, the border of the Musandam enclave with Fujairah, at Dibba in the north-east, and the boundary with Al-Ain, at Buraimi in the west.<sup>(64)</sup>

In December 1979 the Omani Foreign Affairs Under-Secretary, Yousef al-Alawi, said to the semi-official Abu Dhabi daily *Al-ittihad* that the dispute between Oman and the U.A.E. had been settled.<sup>(65)</sup>

The boundaries between the U.A.E. (Ras al-Khaimah) and the Sultanate of Oman in the Musandam Peninsula were defined to the southwest by an approximate line between Dibba on the Gulf of Oman and the headland of Al-Qir, north of Sha'am on the Gulf.<sup>(66)</sup> The mountainous character of Musandam explains the name of Ru'us al-jibal ('heads of the mountains') which is the proper name of the main body of the peninsula.<sup>(67)</sup>

The relationship between Oman and Ras al-Khaimah improved as a result of the agreement signed in July 1991. Natural gas produced at Oman's offshore Bukha field northern territorial waters of Oman will be delivered to Ras al-Khaimah onshore gas treatment facility at Khur Khuwair in Ras al-Khaimah for processing and marketing via a 35 km, 16 inch subsea pipeline.<sup>(68)</sup> The deliveries were scheduled to start towards the end of 1993. Ras al-Khaimah extracts small volumes of gas from the Saleh field (located in Ras al-Khaimah territorial waters), but this is nearly depleted<sup>(69)</sup> (Figure 4.3). In 1960, Julian Walker followed Lorimer's decision about the coastal extremities of the boundary of Mu'scati Rus al-Jibal.<sup>(70)</sup> However, the details of the inland boundary he had established by his own investigation are as follows:

As Dibba al-Hisn is inhabited by Hanbali Shihuh, loyal to the Shaikh of Sharjah, and Dibba al-Bayah by Shafil Shihuh loyal to the Sultan of Muscat, the line follows the watercourse which divides the two villages (international boundary between the U.A.E., Dibba al-Hisn of Sharjah and Dibba al-Bayah of Sultanate of Oman). It then turns west along the route

from Dibba, via Khatt to Ras al-Khaimah, which is regarded as the boundary between the country of the Shihuh to the north and that of the Sharqiyyin to the south (internal boundary between Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah). At the point where the route reaches the *dirah* of the Habus the line leaves it and turns north.

The Habus live in the southwestern part of the mountains of Rus al-Jibal. Leaving the Habus to the west, therefore, the line continues directly northward, traversing the slopes above Rams, Khur Khuwair, Ghalilah, and Sha'am, then turns west, enclosing in the angle a group of the Dhahuriyin, to reach the Gulf at the headland of al-Qir. Rams is inhabited by the Tinaij tribe, who are Ghafiri and Hanbali, loyal to Qawasim. Khur Khuwair, Ghalilah, and Sha'am are inhabited by Shihuh who are also Hanbali and pay allegiance to the Qawasim. However, these coastal connections do not extend north of al-Qir: beyond this point the Shihuh are Hinawi and Shafii. Thus, the lines turn abruptly westward to leave these Shihuh under the sovereignty of Muscat<sup>(71)</sup>.

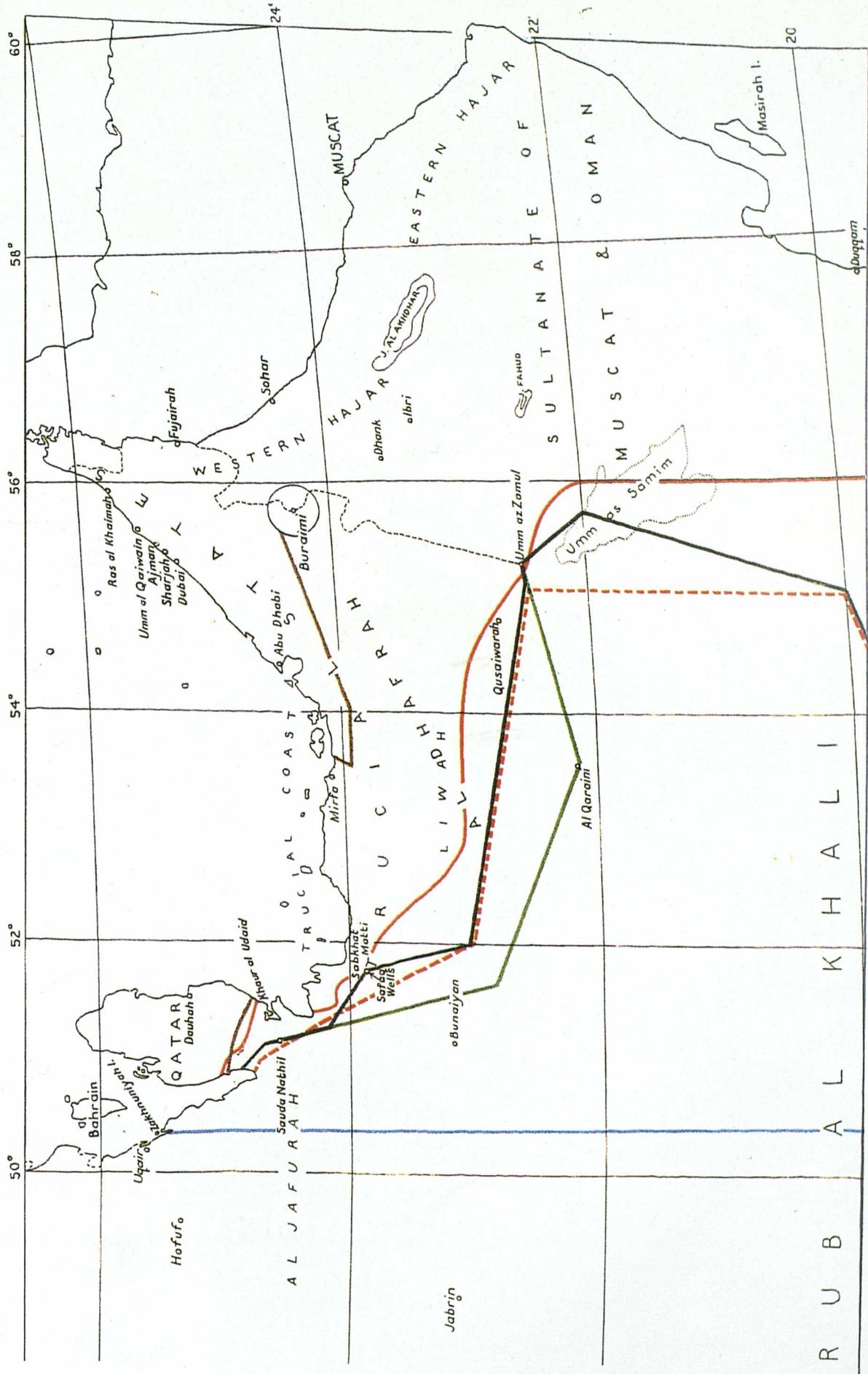
Figure 4.4 shows the northern boundary of Ras al-Khaimah with Oman on the Ras al-Shaam. Lorimer stated: "It (Sha'am) is the northernmost village in the Ras al-Khaimah district of Sharjah."<sup>(72)</sup>

Ras al-Shaam is the obvious geographical boundary. Walker mentioned in his report of boundary settlement in the Trucial States of 1955 that Oman tried to claim Shaam in 1950 and that the Shihuh of Bakha agreed Shaam to be under the administration of the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah. Walker concluded his report of Shaam that Rams is undisputed Ras al-Khaimah territory.<sup>(73)</sup>

#### **4.5. The U.A.E.-Saudi Arabia border and the Buraimi dispute**

It is impossible here to give a comprehensive account of the entire Emirates-Saudi border but it is possible to highlight some aspects of the issue.

Figure 4.4 The Foreign Office Map of 1955.



RESEARCH DEPT., F.O., May 1955  
 Revised and corrected July 1962

#### 4.5.1 Abu Dhabi-Saudi border

According to a map prepared by the research department of the British Foreign Office in May 1955, and corrected in July 1962, the Blue and the Violet Lines were proposed by Britain as the only legal frontiers defining the land boundaries of her protectorate states in the Arabian Peninsula with Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Figure 4.4). As shown, the Blue Line of the Anglo-Ottoman Convention of July 1929 was the Ottoman Sanjak of Nejd.<sup>(74)</sup>

However, during the intermittent Anglo-Saudi negotiations of 1934-1955, two further lines were proposed: one by Saudi Arabia called the Red (Hamza)<sup>(75)</sup> Line of 1935 and the other, proposed by Britain, called the Riyadh or Ryan Line of 1935 as shown on Figure 4.4 which ran in a straight line from meridian 52 degrees east. This frontier was offered to Ibn Saud by Sir A. Ryan at Riyadh on 25 November 1935. In 1949 the Saudi Arabian Government put forward a claim to a further area of over two-thirds of Abu Dhabi territory as can also be seen from the map. (The brown line represents the 1949 claim by Ibn Saud, King of Saudi Arabia.) In 1952 Abu Dhabi put forward a claim to its frontier with Saudi Arabia.

In 1949, Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia claimed 80% of Abu Dhabi territory (see Figures 4.4 and 4.5), in which most of the major inshore and offshore oil fields are located. It should be acknowledged that, without the help and support of the British Government to protect the territories of the Trucial States, and in particular the territory of Abu Dhabi which stretched from al-Buraimi in the east to Khur al-Udaid in the west, this land would now belong to Saudi Arabia. Without these oil fields, Abu Dhabi and the U.A.E. would be poor, under-developed Emirates.

In 1949, ARAMCO, a U.S. oil company with the Saudi oil exploration concession, began sending survey parties into Abu Dhabi territory, reaching as far as Khur Ghanadha near the border with Dubai, and implicitly reducing Abu Dhabi Shaikhdom



to a mere 20% of its land area. At this juncture, Edward Henderson (representative of the Iraq Petroleum Company which held the oil exploration concession for Abu Dhabi) and Pat Stobart (British Political Officer) drove out to meet the ARAMCO survey party and warned them to leave Abu Dhabi territory, taking all their equipment with them (Figure 4.5).<sup>(75a)</sup> The British defended the Emirate of Abu Dhabi against Saudi expansionist designs, and acted to the benefit of the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi. It was therefore with surprise and dismay that many of the Rulers of the Emirates greeted the British announcement of withdrawal from the Gulf, finding themselves confronted with the full responsibility of protecting themselves from the dangerous ambitions of Iran and Saudi Arabia. If the new found wealth from oil was to be directed into economic and social development programmes, then security and stability were essential. In addition to the unresolved al-Buraimi dispute and Iran's claim to Bahrain, the Rulers also faced disputes between the Emirates: Dubai - Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah - Fujairah, Sharjah - Fujairah. Some Rulers did not welcome the withdrawal of the British. The Ruler of Abu Dhabi offered to bear the cost, drawn from oil revenues, of the British military presence in the area, estimated at an annual £12 million. Shaikh Rashid bin Said al- Maktum, Ruler of Dubai, was the first of the Gulf state Rulers to state openly his support for a continuing British military presence in the area. During an interview reported in *The Times*, 14 July 1970, under the headline "Dubai asks Britain to stay", in answer to the question of whether he wanted British troops to remain in the Gulf, Shaikh Rashid said:<sup>(75b)</sup>

*"Who asked them to leave? ... Abu Dhabi and Bahrain, and in fact the whole coast, people and rulers, would all support the retention of British forces in the Gulf, even though they may not give a direct answer out of respect for the general Arab view."*

*The Times* of Monday 11 March 1957, included an article entitled 'British Aid for Trucial Coast of Oman' with a small map of the area. However, the frontier shown in *The Times* map meets the coast at Khur al-Duwaihen, leaving the Udaid peninsula to

Figure 4.6 The Times map of Trucial Oman of 1957.

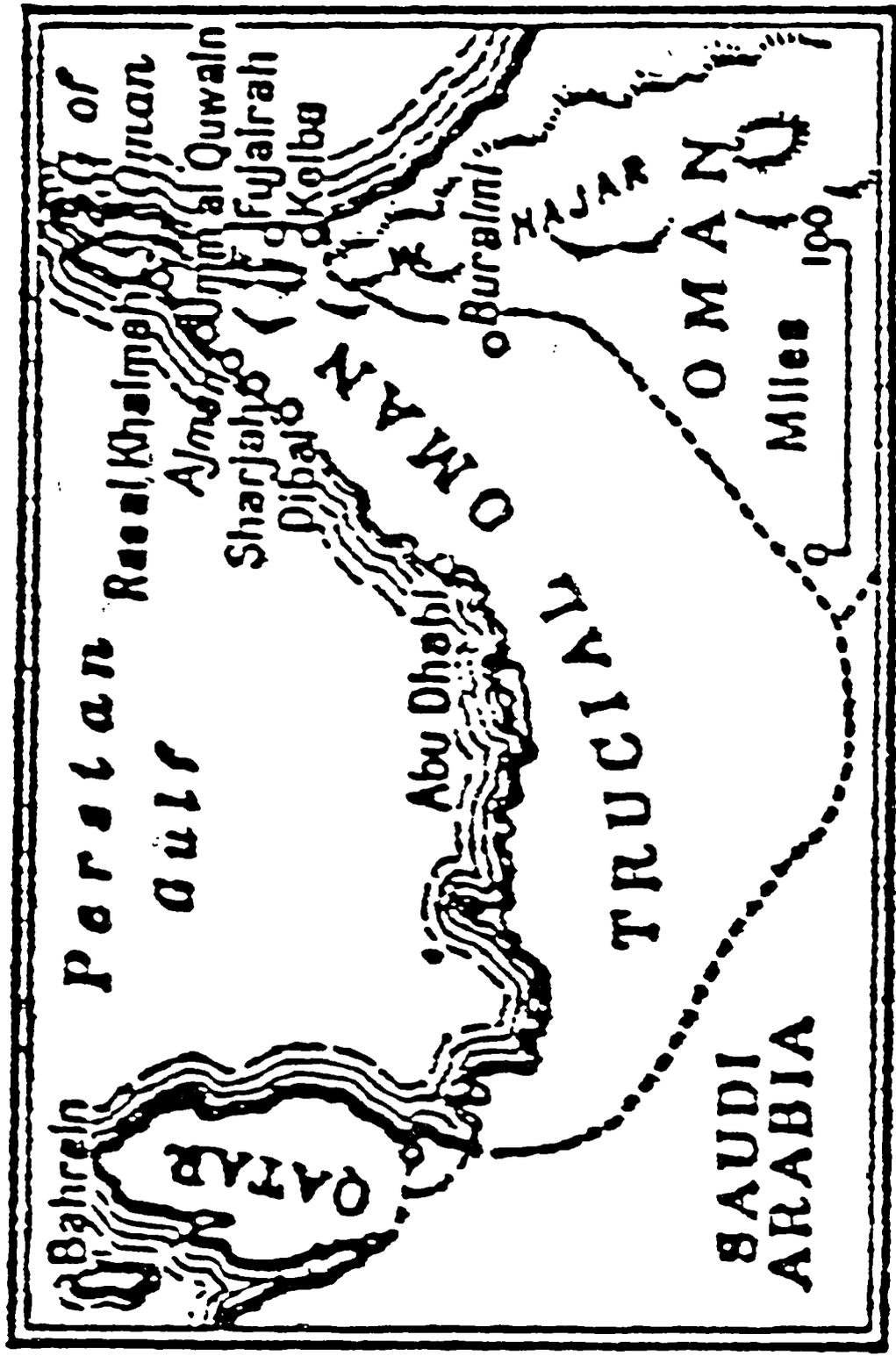


Figure 4.7 An accurate map, drawn by the British Foreign Office.

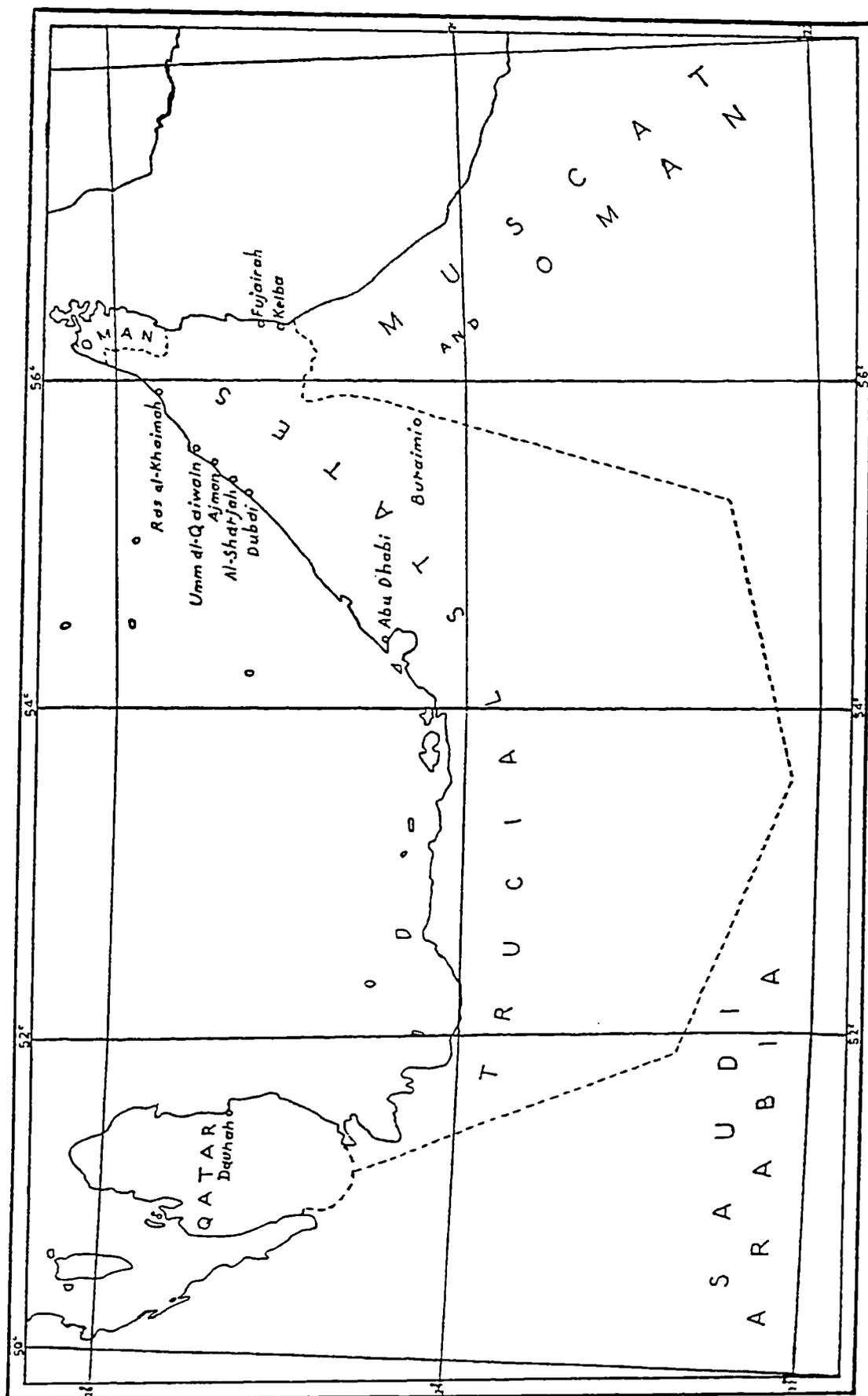
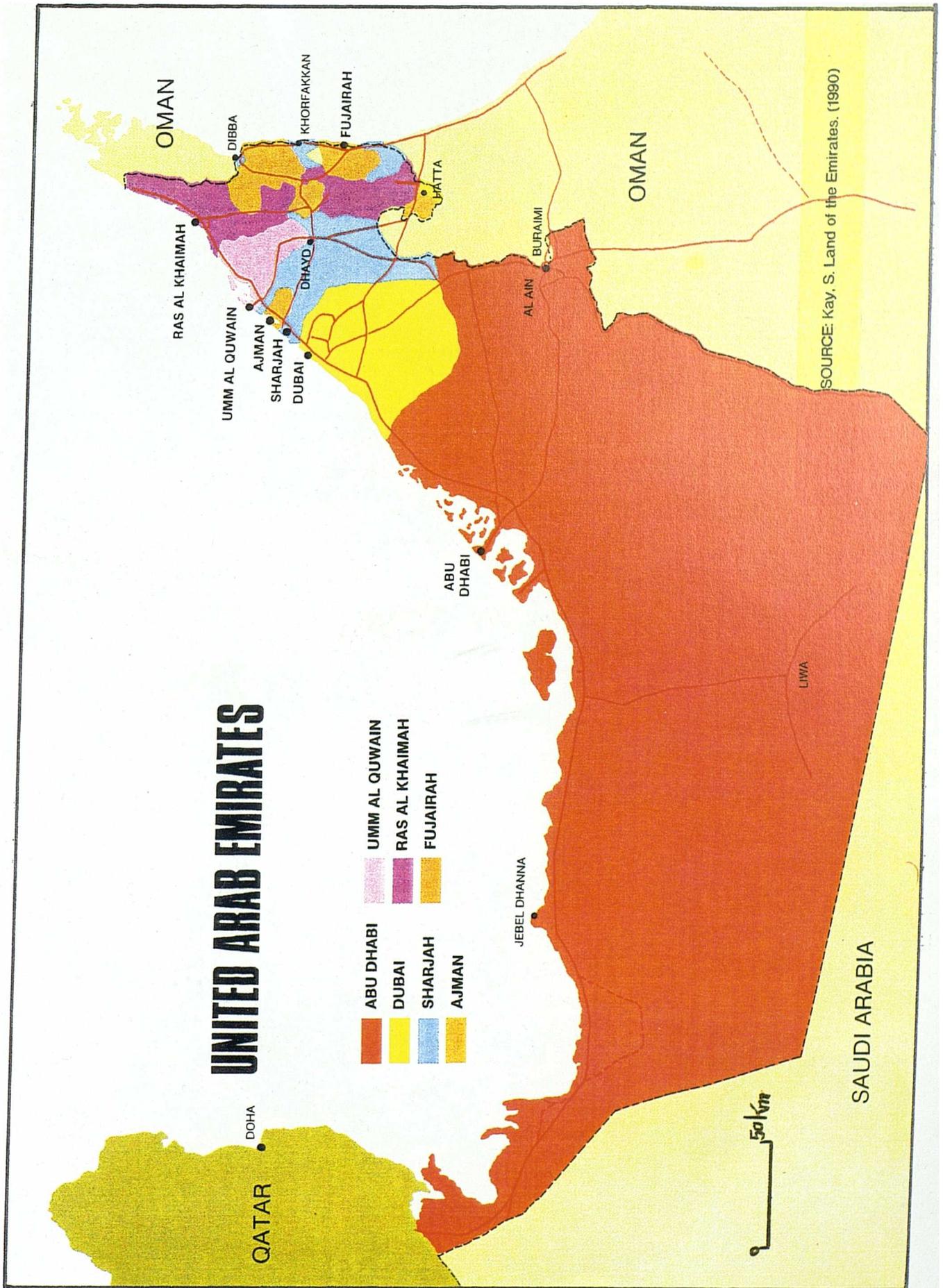


Figure 4.8 Map of the United Arab Emirates showing the boundaries with Saudi Arabia before the 1974 agreement.



Saudi Arabia. This was not accurate, as can be seen in Figure 4.6.<sup>(76)</sup> The Foreign Office sent a letter suggesting that *The Times* redraw the map to show the frontier so as to fit the modified Riyadh line.<sup>(77)</sup> Furthermore, the Foreign Office later produced an accurate map according to the British view as the official version of the Trucial States boundary (U.A.E.)<sup>(78)</sup> (Figure 4.7).

It can be seen from the foregoing that some maps published in the press cannot be considered authoritative on international boundaries. Ideally, an accurate map which shows the correct boundary line should be published by an official department such as the Research Department at the Foreign Office, to prevent speculative cartography in the press (Figure 4.8).

### **Introduction to Buraimi**

Historically, the story of the boundaries conflict began in 1952 when the Saudi Arabian Government sent a small armed unit to occupy the villages of Buraimi and Hamasa which at that time were under the administration of the Sultan of Muscat. The other villages of the oasis were under the administration of the ruler of Abu Dhabi (see Figure 4.9). Indeed before that time, in April 1935, the Government of Saudi Arabia claimed most of the Rub'al Khali (the Empty Quarter), and the Khur al-Udaid on the Abu Dhabi - Qatar boundary.<sup>(79)</sup> The most important factor affecting delimitation of Saudi Arabia's boundary with the United Arab Emirates was the oil interests during the 1930s. The point to emphasise is that after the United Arab Emirates was established in 1971, the Saudi Arabian government did not attempt to establish relations with the new federal government but preferred to maintain its relations with each Emirate individually. The Saudi Government was showing the federal government that it would not recognize the union until the boundary dispute with Abu Dhabi was settled. Saudi Arabia's claims to large territories in Abu Dhabi was always rejected by Shaikh Zayid.<sup>(80)</sup> In other words, the Saudi intention to establish diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates was conditional on a



settlement of the border dispute.<sup>(81)</sup> Indeed, King Faisal made it clear that "while his territorial demands upon Abu Dhabi remained unsatisfied he would not recognize the existence or legitimacy of the U.A.E."<sup>(82)</sup> When Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi agreed to hold talks on the territorial issue in 1970, the British government proposed a new deal which would give Saudi Arabia territory upto the Qatar-Abu Dhabi road but not the coast itself. Thereafter, the British government suggested that a neutral zone should be formed across the 23rd parallel to a point 20 km north on the Abu Dhabi side and 10 km south on the Saudi side. The proposal was accepted by Shaikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi but rejected by the Saudis.<sup>(83)</sup> Saudi Arabia asserted claims to Khur al-Udaid, part of Abu Dhabi since 1871 when Shaikh Zayed bin Khalifa fought the Ottomans for it.<sup>(84)</sup> Another step along the road to settlement of the dispute was the creation of a committee by order of Shaikh Zayed in July 1977. The committee was under the direction of the Federal Foreign Minister to study the nation's boundaries with Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Iran. The committee believed that the permanent settlement of these outstanding issues would promote a sense of national identity and contribute to the resolution of the internal boundary disputes of the United Arab Emirates.<sup>(85)</sup>

In July 1974 Prince Fahad (the present king of Saudi Arabia) paid an official visit to Abu Dhabi. An agreement was concluded to define the boundaries of the two countries. Afterwards, Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan, the President of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Abu Dhabi visited Saudi Arabia. On 21 August 1974 diplomatic relations were established between Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, and Riyadh the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In the same month the agreement was concluded, fixing the boundary of the two countries.<sup>(86)</sup> Shaikh Zayed, as federal President and ruler of Abu Dhabi, applied a technique to resolve his boundaries difficulties with Saudi Arabia. The technique was 'Arab solutions' for the federation's problems.<sup>(87)</sup>

Shaikh Zayed had agreed to the Saudi claims and the following conversation provides an interesting memoir on the question quoted:

**Faisal:** *"The whole thing to us is a matter of dignity and honor. The British evicted us by force and we won't forget that. Our 1970 proposal for Saudi Arabia's eastern border is quite reasonable."*

**Zayed:** *"No, your Majesty. Your eastern boundary should be like this (taking a pencil and drawing a line in the middle of the Gulf from Shatt al-Arab to the Strait of Hormuz)."*

**Faisal:** *"Now we have a solution."<sup>(88)</sup>*

At the time of signing, King Faisal had declared there was no frontier between the two states and he had gone on to say to Shaikh Zayed: "We consider your border in the heart of the Kingdom." Shaikh Zayed replied: "We consider your border to be at the end of the Emirates."<sup>(89)</sup> Subsequently there has been much comment and speculation on the agreement. According to Cordesman, the question was raised again in 1977 by the Saudi government that Saudi Arabia 'forced Abu Dhabi to move its border 20 miles further east on the Gulf coast, although it paid Abu Dhabi's ruler, Shaikh Zayed, some 33 million dollars in personal compensation'.<sup>(90)</sup> In an alternative version, it was reported that the 20 mile corridor had been established in the 1974 agreement, and that the sum paid to Shaikh Zayed amounting to 34.5 million dollars was a cheque handed over to Abu Dhabi's government for the completion of the Abu Dhabi-Qatar road through the Saudi corridor.<sup>(91)</sup>

Furthermore, it was reported that the Saudi government would not annex the corridor since the water at Khur al-Udaid was too shallow for shipping.<sup>(92)</sup> Moreover, it was reported by diplomats in Abu Dhabi that the Saudi payment was the result of months of negotiation over the sensitive border issue; clearly the Saudi contribution was towards the cost of building the 25 km stretch of road between Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The new border point between Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi named

Ras Khumays is shown in Figure 4.7. In addition it was reported that a team from the Saudi Ports Authority had been examining the possibility of building a port at Ras Khumays near the Qatar and Abu Dhabi borders.<sup>(93)</sup>

#### **4.5.2 Maps before and after 1974**

In many books, journals and periodicals, the old style boundaries of the U.A.E. are still printed inaccurately on maps such as shown in Figure 4.8. Several published maps now show the new United Arab Emirates boundaries with Saudi Arabia, whilst others still show the previous boundaries such as the following map which was published by the Cartographic and Map section in the Foreign and the Commonwealth Office in November 1980 (Figure 4.10). It is interesting to note from this map which shows the internal border lines and the international borders of the U.A.E. with its neighbours that whilst the western border line was the pre-1974 agreement, the Khur al-Duwaihen is included in U.A.E. territory.<sup>(94)</sup>

Whilst some maps show the new boundaries modification between the two countries after the 1974 agreement, in others the western border point of Abu Dhabi begins from Ras Khumays east of Khur al-Udaid. Figure 4.11 shows the U.A.E. boundary lines both before and after the 1974 agreement. This map is published by the Petroleum Economist and based on data supplied by Petroconsultants in Switzerland.<sup>(95)</sup>

It is interesting to compare the official map published by the U.A.E. government with that from the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources in 1976, printed by Hunting Geology and Geophysics Ltd, in England (Figure 4.12), because the latest map is the only map published by a U.A.E. government department which shows the accurate boundary according to the 1974 agreement, otherwise no other government department has published a map of the U.A.E. and the international boundaries of the U.A.E. shown accurately according to the 1974 agreements. The following figures

Figure 4.10 Map drawn by Cartographic and Map Section of the British Foreign Office, 1980s, showing the inshore and the offshore boundaries of the United Arab Emirates.

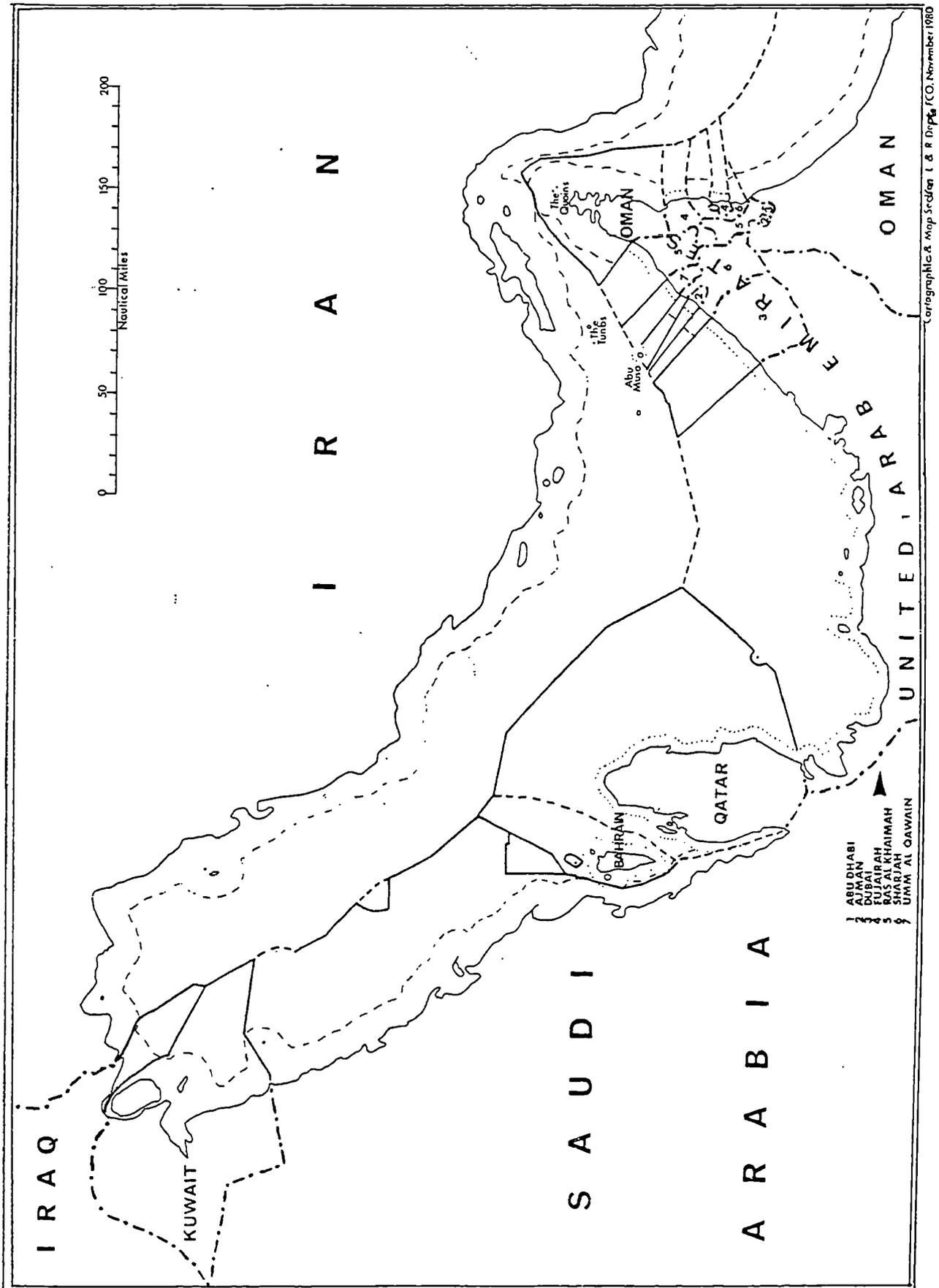




Figure 4.12 The United Arab Emirates map of the Ministry of Petroleum (1976).

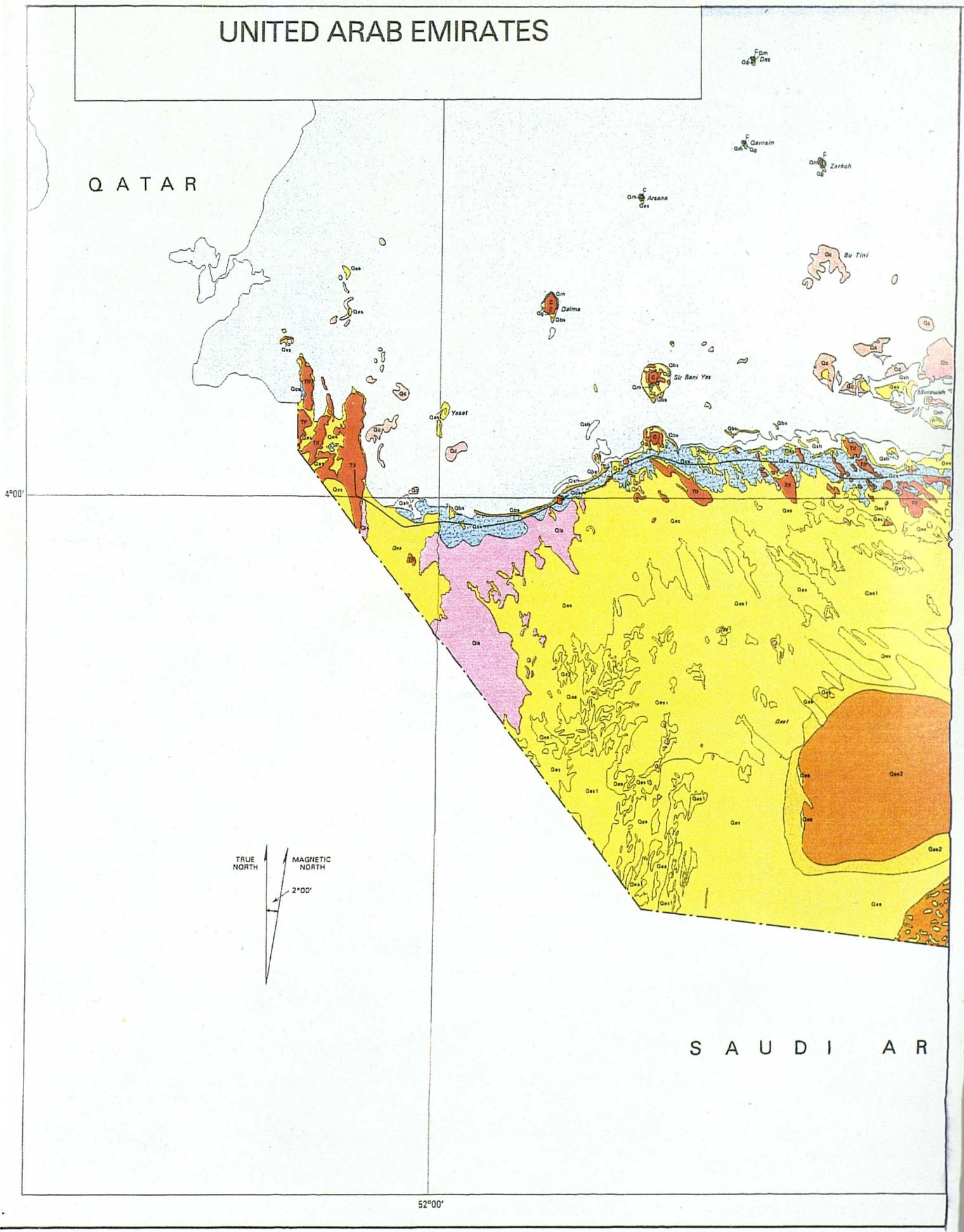


Figure 4.13 Map of the United Arab Emirates published for Dubai Municipality showing the international boundaries with Saudi Arabia according to the 1974 Agreement.

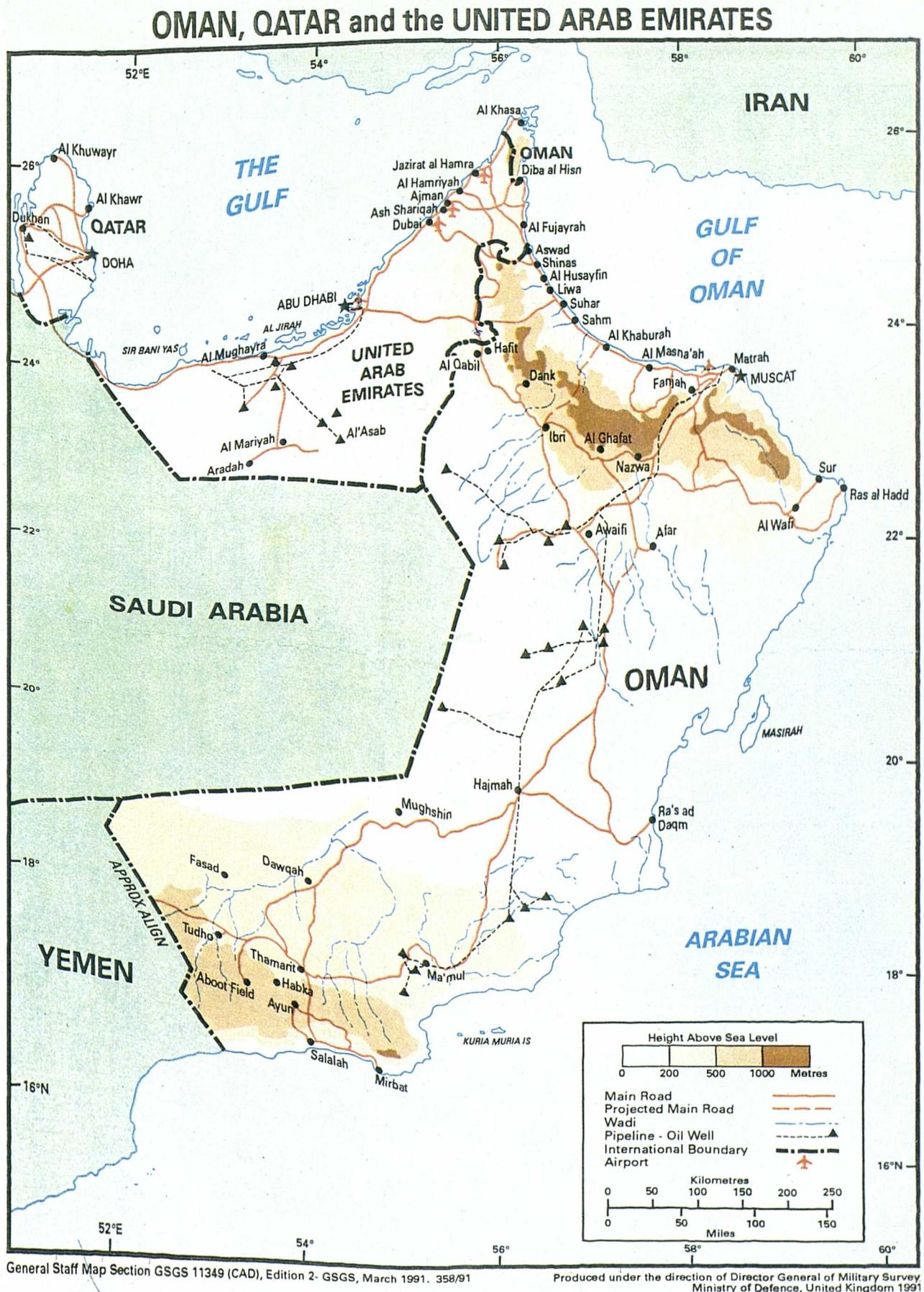
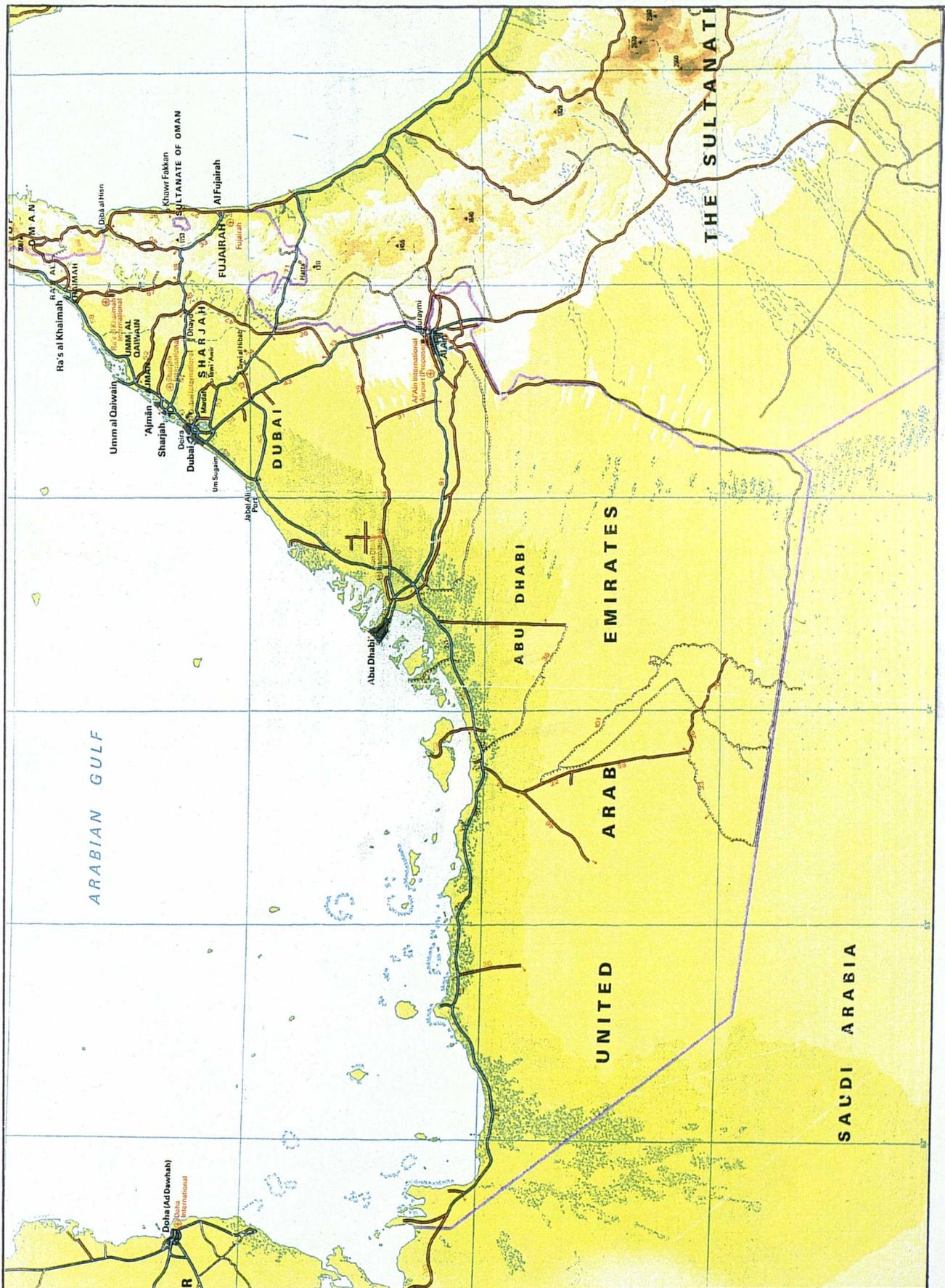


Figure 4.14 Map of the United Arab Emirates, produced by the Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom, 1991, showing the international boundaries of the 1974 Agreement.



(Figures 4.13 and 4.14) show the accurate international boundaries of the U.A.E. with Saudi Arabia published for Dubai Municipality (Figure 4.13), and by the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, 1991 (Figure 4.14).

### **The 1974 Agreement between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia**

This agreement has not yet been made public, and none of it has been published by either side since the date of signing in 1974. The importance of this agreement is the resolution of three of the most difficult and controversial disputes: the Al-Buraimi oasis; the area of Khur al-Udaid at the base of the Qatar Peninsula; and the rich Zararah oilfield in the southern part of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, all of which were claimed by Saudi Arabia. The 1974 agreement resolved the longest standing boundary dispute between the Kingdom and the Shaikhdom. By this agreement, mutual diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level were established in August 1974,<sup>(96)</sup> three years after the establishment of the federation in 1971.

In this thesis the Articles of the agreement are examined with clarity for the first time. A copy of the 1974 agreement is attached as an appendix. The agreement can be summarized as follows: Six of the nine villages of the Buraimi oasis namely:

*Al-Ain, Al-Jimi, Al-Hili, Al-Qattarah, Al-Mutarid, and Al-Muwaigi were recognized by Saudi Arabia as falling under the sovereignty of Abu Dhabi, (all the six villages are within Al-Ain the eastern district of Abu Dhabi) while the other three villages of Sa'ara, Hamasa, Buraimi belonged to Oman. The revised border of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia starts at a point on the Gulf coast to the east of Duwaih.*

The agreement of 1974 stipulated in Article 1, that the land boundary which divides the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia should be determined according to the agreement's articles, starting from point A on the Arabian Gulf. The geographical co-ordinates are given as follows:

latitude 24° 14'58" North

longitude 51° 35'26" East.

Then a straight line extends in a southerly direction to point B and its geographical location of which is:

latitude 24° 07'24" North.

longitude 51° 35'26" East.

After that it extends from this point directing towards the South East to point C of which the geographical location is:

latitude 37° 56'09" North.

longitude 52° 34'52" East.

From this point it extends in a straight line towards the south east to point D to which the geographical location is:

latitude 22° 37'41" North.

longitude 55° 08'11" East.

The boundary extends from this point in a straight line tending to the north east, leaving Umm al-Zumul to the east, to point E the geographical location of which is:

latitude 22° 42'02" North.

longitude 55° 12'10" East.

After this, the boundary extends from point E in straight lines to connect points with the following locations:

point	latitude North	longitude East
F	23° 32' 11"	55° 30' 00"
G	24° 00' 00"	55° 34' 10"
H	24° 01' 00"	55° 51' 00"
I	24° 13' 00"	55° 54' 00"
J	24° 11' 50"	55° 50' 00"

Source: The U.A.E. Agreement with Saudi Arabia in 1974. See Appendix A and B.

From point J the boundary extends to point K the geographical location of which is 24°13'45" North, 55°45' East, and from point K the boundary extends to point L the geographical location of which is 24°19' North and 55°50' East. Three villages are left are situated east of point K in Saudi territory. From point L the boundary extends to the point which meets the boundaries of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman, to be agreed between three states. The final sentence of Article 2 of the agreement stipulates: "All these points have been signed by the two high sides or parties."<sup>(97)</sup> The Sabkhat Matti Zone was granted to Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, all the points which are mentioned above were drawn tentatively on the 1:500,000 map which the two sides signed.

#### **4.5.3 The Zarara oil field question**

The Zarara oil field is situated immediately south of Liwa oasis of Abu Dhabi (south of Abu Dhabi border). It was in dispute due to its location, to be shared between Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. In the opinion of John Duke Anthony, the Zarara oil field would be divided between the two states but this opinion is questionable. Less contentious is the fact that Saudi Arabia would obtain an outlet to the Gulf through Abu Dhabi in the Khur al-Udaid.<sup>(98)</sup>

The *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula* reported two stories relating to the 1974 agreement. One said that the Zarara oil field (as it is known within Abu Dhabi's territories, whereas it is called the Sha'ybah oil field in Saudi territories) would be exploited jointly, regardless of the new geographical land arrangement which would put most of the oil field beneath Saudi territory.

The second report, quoted in *MEES*, suggested that, according to the 1974 agreement, Saudi Arabia would acquire most if not all the oil-bearing areas where oil is to be found even if it had not yet been produced. Furthermore, it was reported that Saudi Arabia would get, according to the agreement, a strip of land in the southern boundary

area south of parallel 23° (which area includes the Zarara oil field). See Figure 4.11. Experts believed that the new boundaries between the two countries would keep 90 percent of the Zarara oilfield in Saudi territory. More than that, the report describes the oilfield of Zarara as part of a widely expanding oil area to the Saudi side named Sha'ybah. Aramco has drilled seven wells in this area. The oil reserves of these wells is estimated to be around 1,828 million barrels.<sup>(99)</sup> Ali M. Khalifa<sup>(100)</sup> states that the agreement called for the oil field to be within the Saudi Arabia territory. This is in fact the case according to the 1974 agreement. Article 3 stipulates that the Zararah oil field is totally under Saudi Arabian jurisdiction, and Article 3 continues by stating that no right is granted to the U.A.E. over the part of Zararah oilfield (known as Shaybah in Saudi Arabia) which lies within Abu Dhabi's territory north of the boundary line between Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, or any company working with Saudi permission, is allowed to explore and exploit the hydrocarbon reserves in that part of the Zararah (Shaybah) oilfield, and any operations shall be by agreement between the two parties in respect of the means of exploitation.<sup>(101)</sup>

It has been reported that the Zararah oil fields were discovered in the 1960s. Since that time, and after the two wells were drilled by the Abu Dhabi petroleum company, there has been no further drilling on the Abu Dhabi side of the border, although there has been some very secretive activity by Aramco<sup>(102)</sup> on the Saudi side. In addition, it seems that the explanation for the lack of activity within Abu Dhabi may be because the state has conceded the field to the Saudis, as part of the price of settling the Al-Buraimi dispute.<sup>(103)</sup>

From Abu Dhabi's point of view any drilling activity in the south even if not on the Shay'bah structure would be a sensitive matter. On the other side there is a hesitation about developing the field over the pipeline route. Whereas the pipe, as mentioned in the report could go through the small corridor of territory between Abu Dhabi and

Qatar which Saudi Arabia acquired in 1974.<sup>(104)</sup> Moreover, it was reported that the Zarara oilfield was given to Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi gave up part of its western territory for Saudi recognition of the United Arab Emirates and Abu Dhabi's rights to most of the disputed fields in the southwest and the Buraimi Oasis.<sup>(105)</sup>

According to Peck<sup>(106)</sup> the position is unclear whether the 1974 agreement stipulated that the exploration of the Zarara oilfield is to be owned jointly by Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia or to be owned by one country.<sup>(107)</sup> According to the original 1974 agreement text it stipulated in Article 3 that the Zarara oil field belonged to Saudi Arabia which supports Khalifa's view<sup>(108)</sup>.

Another important aspect of the U.A.E. - Saudi boundary is the maritime boundary. According to Hessah Al-Saif<sup>(109)</sup> Saudi Arabia granted an agreement which permitted territorial waters not to extend beyond three nautical miles. Article 5 of the 1974 Agreement, which is about islands, granted Saudi rights to Al-Huwaissat island, which is the only island belonging to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia recognized U.A.E. sovereignty of the rest of the islands lying opposite its coast in the Gulf.

Furthermore, the same article stipulates that the U.A.E. consented to Saudi Arabia constructing any installations which she desired on the islands of Qaffay and Meka'asib.<sup>(110)</sup> The distance which separates these islands from the U.A.E. islands is small, and too tight to fulfil the 12 nautical mile limit: a median line will not give the island a complete 12 nautical mile territorial sea. The last sentence of the Article stipulates: "the area joining them with the high seas will be shared between the parties in respect of the freedom of navigation."<sup>(111)</sup>

It can be seen from figures above that the maritime boundary line from west of Ras Khumays runs to join the Abu Dhabi - Qatar offshore boundary of 1969, and leaves Huwaissat to Saudi Arabia whilst the rest of the islands which lie on the east side of the line belong to Abu Dhabi. In case the agreement is published, some modification

should take place of the maritime boundary between the United Arab Emirates and Qatar in Khur al-Udaid, as Khur al-Udaid came under the Saudi government authority as can be seen in (Figure 4.14). Many Saudi writers state that oil did not play a role in the conclusion of the final boundary agreement.<sup>(112)</sup> However, this argument may be incorrect. Saudi Arabia achieved its demands in gaining *Sabkat Maati* located south of Khur al-Udaid, on the western side of Abu Dhabi, which is rich in oil, and also Khur al-Udaid which the Saudi ports Authority prepared for building a port at Ras Khumays.<sup>(113)</sup> A recently published document reports that the oil experts in the Gulf confirmed that the Saudi Government decided to invest \$9,000,000,000 in utilizing one of its oilfields located on the border with the U.A.E.. They added that the mentioned oilfield is Sha'ybah, which lies in the Empty Quarter, in the south east of Saudi Arabia; that oilfield development will commence in 1994; and that production may reach 500,000 barrels a day by the end of this century. This oilfield was discovered several years ago but has not been exploited because of the boundary dispute between the two countries.<sup>(114)</sup>

#### **4.5.4 Saudi Aims with Respect to Khur al-Udaid<sup>(115)</sup>**

The question to be raised here is in what ways Saudi Arabia will utilize the maritime outlet which it acquired under the 1974 agreement which made significant changes to the Kingdom's border with Abu Dhabi. One possibility is that the Saudis wanted Khur al-Udaid for oil terminals. Another reason may be for internal security. Were the eastern part of the Kingdom at risk for any reason, for example were the Shi'ites (the minority branch of Islam) to stir up a revolution in the Eastern Province, then the corridor to the sea would play a role in seeking outside help. However, it is also possible that Saudi Arabia wanted Khur al-Udaid because of the Saudis "aspiration to be the predominant power in the region."<sup>(116)</sup> It seems clear that what the Saudis got from Abu Dhabi territories according to the 1974 agreement fulfilled an ambition

which had its roots historically in the al-Buraimi oasis dispute. Shaikh Zayed, the U.A.E. President, served for twenty years as the Abu Dhabi ruler's representative in the Buraimi Oasis from where Abu Dhabi derives its drinking water. On the other hand, for King Faysal the dispute over Buraimi had a special meaning which is a reminder of past Wahhabi glories and a pride of honour. However, King Faysal remembered when the Trucial Oman Scouts and the Royal Air Force evicted the Saudi force from Buraimi in 1955.<sup>(117)</sup> Saudi Arabia lost Al-Buraimi oasis in 1955, but won Khur al-Udaid in 1974. Saudi Arabia lost the position of dividing Oman from Abu Dhabi in al-Buraimi in the 1950s being forced to leave the area by the Trucial Oman Scouts. After 1974 they isolated Qatar from Abu Dhabi, and won a window to the sea, 15-20 miles in width: Khur al-Udaid, at the southern end of the Qatari Peninsula, annexed to Saudi Arabia.

It is arguable that the Saudi government wished to dominate the region after the British withdrawal from the Gulf. This explains its desire to forge an outlet to the Gulf, in order to put the Emirates under its control. After 1974, relations between Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. improved and developed into the area of internal security.

On 29 October 1976 the Saudi Minister of Interior visited all seven member Emirates of the U.A.E., and a security agreement between the two countries was concluded<sup>(119)</sup> on 21 February 1982, and published in Abu Dhabi on 27 January 1983. Part one deals with the border issue between the two countries. The first article states that the two sides agreed to organize regular meetings between officials of their border posts in adjacent areas on their border to co-ordinate information and co-operation. The second article prohibits border patrols from crossing the border of the countries for a distance of more than 20 km to arrest those who were being pursued, and that the latter should be handed to the state on whose territory the pursuit began. Article 3 of

the agreement focuses on methods of extraditing fugitives, and methods of transport to the nearest post in the State on whose territory the pursuit began. The security agreement contains eleven Articles but the important ones relevant to the boundaries administration between the two countries have been mentioned above.<sup>(120)</sup>

#### 4.5.5 Comments concerning the 1974 agreement

Many authors have commented on the 1974 agreement without a full understanding of its provisions. Many interpretations were inaccurate because the terms of the agreement were not given formal public announcement. It is still fully confidential, and is considered officially to be a national secret. Only in 1990 were versions of the boundary shown on published maps.

For example, J.B. Kelly wrote:

*"Occasional exchanges over the issue took place between Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi between 1972 and 1974, and then in August of the latter year a compromise was apparently reached between them. What exactly was contained in the agreement signed on 21 August 1974 is not certain, for the details of the agreement were never made public by either side. It would seem, however, that Zayid gave the Saudis nearly everything they wanted - a corridor to the sea, west of the Sabkhat Matti, separating Qatar from Abu Dhabi and affording Saudi Arabia an outlet to the lower Gulf; a goodly slice of the western part of his Shaikhdom; and, in the south, the bulk of the Zarrara oilfield."<sup>(121)</sup>*

John Duke Anthony believes that outstanding disputes were resolved peacefully between them in the 1974 agreement:<sup>(122)</sup>

*"According to the formula, the two states acknowledged in principle that Abu Dhabi sovereignty would be recognized over six of the villages in the Buraymi Oasis region previously claimed by Saudi Arabia; that the rich Zararah (Shaybah) oilfield previously in dispute would be divided between them, and that Saudi Arabia would obtain an outlet to the Gulf through Abu Dhabi in the Khawr al-Udayd area."<sup>(123)</sup>*

Another writer, Mohammed Morsy Abdullah, the director of the Documentation and Research Centre of Abu Dhabi, wrote the following on the 1974 agreement:

*"Finally in 1975 a frontier agreement was signed by both heads of state, which put a satisfactory end to the problem."*<sup>(124)</sup>

Recently, in a new book, John C. Wilkinson (1991) describes the Abu Dhabi-Qatar boundaries as follows:

*"It is difficult to know what has changed since. The map of the U.A.E. boundary published in 1973 by the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs in Abu Dhabi still very firmly showed it as the Riyadh Line. Negotiations, however, were in progress and, according to Kelly (1980, pp.210-11), a boundary agreement was signed in August 1974 which gave Saudi an outlet on the sea west of the Sabkhat Matti and a good slice of mainland territory, plus a sliver to the south of the Liwa. Saudi Arabia, in exchange, recognized the U.A.E. and Abu Dhabi's rights in the Buraimi oasis."*<sup>(125)</sup>

Sir Bernard Burrows who was the first Foreign Service Officer to be Political Resident in the Gulf, in his book dealt with the agreement as follows:

*"It is gratifying to discover that in 1974-5 the Buraimi question was finally brought to a friendly conclusion between the states concerned by the cession by Abu Dhabi to Saudi Arabia of a small area of sea coast east of Qatar in return for Saudi acceptance of the status quo at Buraimi and the relinquishment of their claim to it."*

It is interesting that he also claimed that the Saudis were using subversive methods to extend their influence such as supplying arms and money to tribal leaders to win their loyalty.<sup>(126a)</sup>

It can be concluded from the quotations above that these authors were unable to obtain a copy of the agreement, although all of them were aware of its existence. None of them knew what it contained. Due to the U.A.E. becoming recognized by Saudi Arabia at the end of 1974 and the exchange of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the four authors concluded that the dispute between Abu Dhabi and Saudi

Arabia was settled. However, Kelly seems to have been somewhat better informed on the issue:<sup>(126b)</sup>

*"A new agreement was apparently reached in the early summer of 1977, although again its details were not disclosed. However, an oil-concessions map put out by the U.A.E. Ministry of Petroleum in June 1977, without any accompanying statement or explanation, depicted the Abu Dhabi - Saudi Arabia frontier as starting on the coast some twenty miles west of the Sabkat Matti and following a course very similar to that of the original Saudi claim (the Red Line) of 1935."*

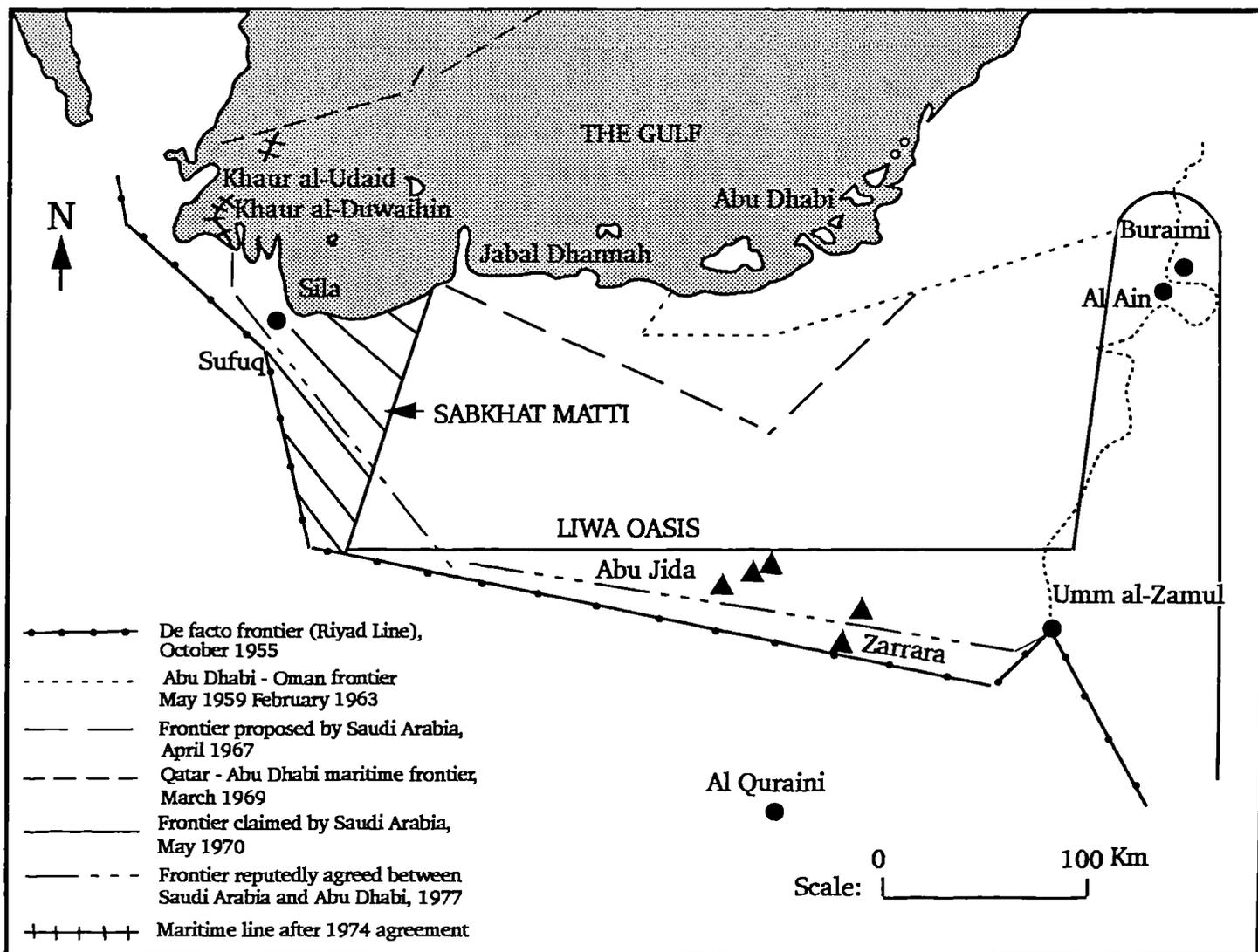
Not only, therefore, was the issue raised again in 1977, and therefore was not finally settled in 1974, but also the absence of information surrounding the 1977 agreement, Kelly having to base his assumptions on an oil concessions map, suggests that the matter may not be finally resolved even now (Figure 4.15).

#### **4.5.6 Geographical description of the U.A.E-Saudi boundaries**

The modified border starts at a point on the Gulf coast to the east of Duwaih in opposite to Ghaghah island and runs in a southeasterly direction to Ras al-Mihradh, then to al-Ribadh and on to Umm al-Zumul, where the borders of Saudi Arabia, the U.A.E. and Oman converge. Thus, the western Abu Dhabi border was to the east of Khur al-Duwaih in, or for the description to be more accurate, the western border point of Abu Dhabi is to the west of Ras Khumays.<sup>(127)</sup>

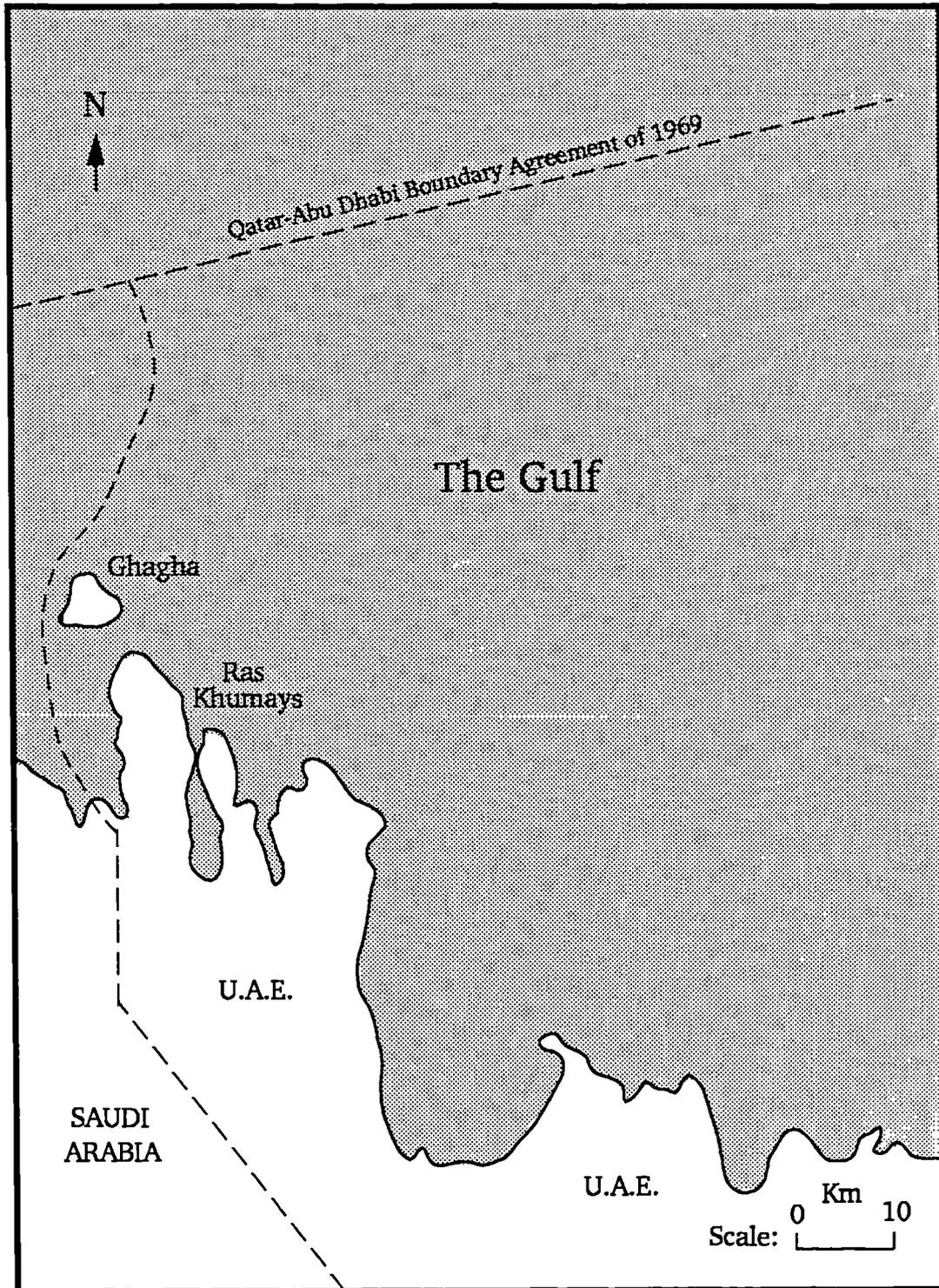
However, the Saudis, in return, got an outlet to the sea, 110 km in length and approximately 30 km in width, encompassing Ras Khumays and Khur al-Udaid at the southern end of the Qatari Peninsula<sup>(128)</sup> (see Figure 4.16). However, in July 1977, His Highness Shaikh Zayed, the U.A.E. president, issued a decree establishing a committee under the direction of the Federal Foreign Minister to study and delineate the federal state borders with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman and Iran. The reason behind Shaikh Zayed's action was to assert the boundary demarcation between the U.A.E.

Figure 4.15 Map of the Saudi Arabia-Abu Dhabi Frontier, 1955-1974.



Source: Kelly, supplemented by the Author

Figure 4.16 Land and maritime boundary between U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia agreed in 1974.



Source: Author

with its neighbours which might "foster a sense of national identity and perhaps, by their precedent, contribute to the resolution of the U.A.E.'s internal border disputes".<sup>(129)</sup>

#### **4.6 The Maritime Boundaries of the U.A.E.**

The international land boundaries of the U.A.E. with its neighbours have been discussed. This section examines the offshore boundaries of the U.A.E. with its neighbours, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Iran.

The United Kingdom advised the Trucial States Shaikhs to affirm their rights to the continental shelf in 1949. Therefore, the rulers of Abu Dhabi (10 June 1949), Dubai (14 June 1949), Sharjah (16 June 1949), Ras al-Khaimah (17 June 1949), Ajman (20 June 1949), and Umm al-Quwain (sometime in June 1949) issued decrees proclaiming their exclusive rights to their adjacent continental shelves.<sup>(130)</sup>

According to the U.A.E. Constitution, Article 2 stipulates:

*"The Union shall exercise sovereignty in matters assigned to it in accordance with this Constitution over all territory and territorial waters lying within the international boundaries of the member Emirates".<sup>(131)</sup>*

It is clear from the above article that the power to define territorial waters is conferred on the federal state.

#### **The New Federal Law on Territorial Waters**

In late April 1993 the Iranian Parliament passed a law extending the limits of the country's territorial waters to 12 nautical miles, and asserting its sovereignty over the Gulf of Oman and certain Gulf islands. Although it did not specify which islands, it is clear that three disputed islands (Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb) are included.<sup>(132)</sup>

U.A.E. reaction to the Iranian gambit was as follows. In July 1993, the U.A.E. government approved a federal law which sets the width of the country's territorial waters at 12 nautical miles, that of a contiguous zone at 24 nautical miles, and an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 300 nautical miles. The new law, which is to be submitted to the U.A.E. President, Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayan for final approval, will allow the U.A.E. to abide by the United Nations 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea. The new federal law will replace the laws on territorial waters promulgated by the individual governments of the Emirates in the federation, but at the same time confirms that the U.A.E. will continue to recognize the agreements on oil and economic interests concluded between the individual Emirates and their neighbours before the federation was established in December 1971. The law also stipulates that in instances of disputes, the median line between the countries concerned may be regarded as the boundary.<sup>(133)</sup>

An agreement for settlement of the continental shelf boundary between Abu Dhabi (U.A.E.) and Qatar was signed on 20 March 1969 by both Abu Dhabi and Qatar. The agreement also resolved disputes about sovereignty on some islands; and on sharing revenue from the Bunduq marine oilfields.<sup>(134)</sup> Several islands which lie off the western side of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi were in dispute with Qatar: Halul, Das, Shirauh, Dayyinah, Arzanah, Dalma, Sir Bani Yas, Yasat, Ghaghah, al-Qaffay, al-Mihaymat, Makasib and al-Ashat. Historically, the question of dispute over islands started on Halul<sup>(135)</sup> the largest of these islands. According to Sir Rupert Hay, "Halul, which in the past has usually been regarded as belonging to Abu Dhabi, is also claimed by Qatar".<sup>(136)</sup> Consequently, the British Government chose, with the approval of the two Shaikhdoms, two British experts, Charles Goult former British political Agent in Bahrain, and Professor J.N.D. Anderson, Professor of Islamic Law at the University of London to examine the two Shaikhdoms' claims. They concluded that Halul should belong to Qatar, and the smaller islands to Abu Dhabi. The question

of two of the islands over which the claims of both sides were judged to be equal were left undecided.<sup>(137)</sup>

The ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan, signed an agreement with the ruler of Qatar on 20 March 1969, on the division of the Gulf continental shelf waters and on sharing revenue from al-Bunduq marine oilfield.<sup>(139)</sup> In addition to the same subject, under the same agreement between Qatar and Abu Dhabi (U.A.E.), it was concluded that the island of Dayyinah is part of the territory of Abu Dhabi, which conforms with Lorimer's opinion: "Dayyinah belongs to the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi."<sup>(140)</sup> According to the same agreement, it was agreed that the islands of al-Ashat and Shirauh are part of the territory of Qatar.<sup>(141)</sup>

In March 1962, the ruler of Qatar issued a decree that declared his concurrence with the decision regarding the establishment of Qatari right of ownership over the island of Halul, noting that the British Government had approved the extension of Qatar's sovereignty to this island.<sup>(138)</sup> The relevant article in the Abu Dhabi-Qatari agreement can be summarised as follows: The continental shelf boundary extends for a distance of 115 nautical miles and the boundary line consists of straight line segments joining four terminal points (A, B, C, D), except for a fifteen nautical mile arc around the island of Dayyinah which places the island in Abu Dhabi territory and marks its three mile territorial sea.<sup>(142)</sup> Point A, the seaward extent of the boundary line is the trisection point which is equidistant from the mainland of Abu Dhabi, Iran, and Qatar. Point D is equidistant from the coast of both Saudi Arabia and Qatar.<sup>(143)</sup> However, it is important to note that the continental shelf boundary line between Qatar and Abu Dhabi was not delimited according to the strict application of the equidistance principle.<sup>(144)</sup> That is, point C is the intersection of lines B and D, and not a point equidistant from Abu Dhabi and Qatar.<sup>(145)</sup> Point B was designated to coincide with the location of the offshore field (Haqle al-Bunduq) and was selected independently

of any consideration of equidistance principle.<sup>(146)</sup> According to the agreement both countries have equal rights of ownership over the al-Bunduq oilfield.<sup>(147)</sup> Furthermore both countries have to consult with each other in respect to its exploitation.<sup>(148)</sup> The 1969 agreement stipulated that the development of the al-Bunduq field shall be carried out by one concessionaire, ADMA (Abu Dhabi Marine Areas Ltd) and that the total revenues, profits, and benefits from the field are to be equally shared between the government of the two countries, Abu Dhabi and Qatar.<sup>(149)</sup>

## 4.7 The Islands Crisis

### 4.7.1 Introduction

The announcement of British withdrawal from the Gulf also led to another territorial dispute besides the Buraimi Oasis, over the three islands: Abu Musa, and the Greater and the Lesser Tunbs (*Tunb al Koubra* and *Tunb el Soughra*). The islands were disputed between Iran on one side, and Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah on the other side. The dispute emerged as a serious issue only in the period of the British withdrawal from the region, even though the islands had been the subject of a number of negotiations between Britain and Iran in the 1920s and 1930s, and the island has been the subject of a long standing dispute between Iran and Sharjah.<sup>(150)</sup> It was reported from Iran on 17 February 1971 that Iran's policy in the Gulf was based on "indisputable ownership of the islands".<sup>(151)</sup> In an interview for *The Times* on 11 May 1971, the Shah of Iran said that Iran was in a position to play a decisive part in creating the new federation, but if the islands dispute was not resolved to Iran's satisfaction, "Iranian obstruction could equally block its formation".<sup>(152)</sup>

Shaikh Zayed, President-Elect of the new U.A.E. federation, talked to French Television in November 1971:<sup>(153)</sup>

*"Border disputes are an international problem present in more than one region and in more than one country. In my view, lack of mutual understanding between Iran and the Gulf is nothing new. Previously, there was an Iranian claim for Bahrain before the emergence of the problem of the islands. That problem has been resolved and is over. We hope that the lack of mutual understanding over the islands will end as the situations regarding the previous problem of Bahrain ended, in a friendly manner and on a basis of friendship, neighbourliness and religion."*

On 4 December 1971, Iran recognized the establishment of the U.A.E. federation.<sup>(154)</sup>

On 30 November 1971 Iranian forces occupied Abu Musa island and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs. The occupation occurred on the day before the federation came into being. The occupation of the two Tumb islands were reported as one of the reasons why Ras al-Khaimah refused to join the federation on 2 December 1971. Shaikh Saqr al-Qasemi, the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah placed as the condition for joining the federation, the liberation of the islands. Ras al-Khaimah's ruler, Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, asked the other Emirates for strong action against Iran. To understand the response, the history and geography of the islands needs also to be understood.

The occupation of the islands by Iran created some serious problems to the proposed federation which was ready to emerge. First, the announcement of the establishment of the federation was delayed because Iran put the return of the three islands to it as a price of its recognition of the federation. Additionally, it led to many internal problems, such as the Shaikhdom of Ras al-Khaimah refusing to join the federation on 2 December 1971 unless all the Emirates boycotted Iran culturally and economically.<sup>(155)</sup>

The major problem was the assassination of Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammed al-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah, on 25 January 1972 by his cousin Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan al-Qasimi, in response to the agreement which he signed with the government of Iran in order to end the dispute of Abu Musa.<sup>(156)</sup> Shaikh Khalid, ruler of Sharjah, signed the

agreement with Iran to protect his people from involvement in a war with Iran, but as a result lost his own life. He was prepared to sign the agreement with Iran on Abu Musa island whereas Shaikh Saqr al-Qasemi was unwilling for this to happen on account of Iran's occupation of the two islands. Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan, ruler from 1951, and an Arab nationalist, was deposed in June 1965, and has since lived in exile in Cairo. Having planned a counter-coup, he succeeded in attacking the palace on 24 January 1972, and on entry murdered the Shaikh for his co-operation with Iran. He hoped to regain his former position.<sup>(157)</sup> Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan told his interrogators in Abu Dhabi that he had first planned to launch a coup against Shaikh Khalid after the British forces had left the Gulf region, but had abandoned the project before they went. When Shaikh Khalid agreed with Iran to partition Abu Musa Island, however he determined once more to attempt to achieve it.<sup>(158)</sup>

Thereafter, it was announced on 25 January 1972 that Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed, the U.A.E. Education Minister and a younger brother of Shaikh Khalid had been elected as Ruler of Sharjah.<sup>(159)</sup>

#### **4.7.2 The Geography of Abu Musa Island**

The island occupies a strategic position at the mouth of the Gulf, 69 km from the Iranian coast and 56 km from Sharjah. It is about 9 km long and 5 km wide, with an area of 20 km<sup>2</sup>. The highest part of the island is its centre where it reaches 100 metres. Its length is about 5 km and its width is 9 km. It is surrounded by comparatively deep water and offers a good deep-water anchorage. A reasonable supply of drinking water is available.<sup>(160)</sup> Abu Musa has about 800 inhabitants. They are of U.A.E. nationality. There are schools for boys and girls built by the federal government of the U.A.E. as well as a police station and a hospital which are all located on the Sharjah part of the island. Iran declined to demarcate the 4 km long boundary across the island separating the Iranian strategic points in the north from the southern part of the island, including Abu Musa Village, controlled by Sharjah.<sup>(160a)</sup>

### 4.7.3 The Geography of The Greater and The Lesser Tunbs

The Greater Tunb is situated 59 km south-west of Qishm island and 78 km north-west of Al-Hamrah island, which belongs to Ras al-Khaimah. It is located to the north-east of Abu Musa island, 50 km from it. Its area is 9 km<sup>2</sup>, and its highest point is 165 feet. The island has about 700 Arab inhabitants, most of whom are fishermen. There are two schools, a police station, a health centre and a lighthouse.<sup>(161)</sup>

The Lesser Tunb lies about 13 km from The Greater Tunb. The island is uninhabited.

Whilst the two Tunbs are *de jure* under the jurisdiction of Ras al-Khaimah, they are *de facto* under the jurisdiction of Iran.

### 4.7.4 Historical Background of the Islands

According to Lorimer:

*"The maritime possessions of Sharjah are the islands of Bu Musa and Sir Bu Na'air, which are associated with the district of Sharjah proper; and the island of Tunb, and probably that of Nabiyn Tunb, which are attached to the Ras-al-Khaimah District."*<sup>(162)</sup>

Further, also according to Lorimer:

*Tunb, in English formerly 'Tomb', an island in the Persian Gulf, lying 17 miles south of the south-west point of Qishm island and 46 miles north-west of Jazirat-al-Hamra, which is the nearest point on the coast of Trucial Oman. Tunb belongs to the Shaikh of Sharjah, and is connected with the Ras-al-Khaimah District of his principality"*<sup>(163)</sup>

Sir Rupert Hay, who served in Bahrain as Political Resident for the Gulf from 1953 to 1958, referred to the Abu Musa island as part of the Shaikhdom of Sharjah and said: *"The island of Bu Musa and Sir bu Na'ir, about 45 and 65 miles from Sharjah respectively, are included in the Shaikhdom"*<sup>(164)</sup> He also referred to the fact that a brother of the Ruler of Sharjah sometimes resides on it as Governor, which reflects

that the island at that period was clearly under Sharjah rule. In describing the Shaikhdom of Ras al-Khaimah he refers to the two islands, by saying that:

*"The islands of Tamb and Nabiyu, or Little Tamb, are under the rule of Ras al-Khaimah, from which they are about 60 miles distant."*<sup>(165)</sup>

According to the recent (1991) publication *The Shah and I*, it was reported that the Court Minister of the Shah of Iran asked the British Ambassador in 1969 about the island of Abu Musa. The Ambassador replied: "It lies below the median line." The Court Minister retorted: "We are sufficiently powerful to disregard the line."<sup>(166)</sup> It can be concluded from this brief exchange that Iran may have recognised Sharjah's case for sovereignty over the island, but it was a matter of military power in the region who was able to dominate any part in the Gulf.

Although Iran recognized the U.A.E. on the same day, her occupation of the islands, especially the two Tunbs, created a dangerous situation for the newly-born federation.

The British government appointed Sir William Luce as special representative of the British Foreign Secretary to deal with the withdrawal decision from the Gulf, and to resolve the dispute in order to guarantee stability and security after the period of withdrawal.

Although Sir William Luce solved the dispute between Iran and Sharjah successfully with regard to Abu Musa, he failed to conclude a similar agreement over the Tunbs with Ras al-Khaimah. Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasimi, Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah refused to enter into any negotiation with Iran. Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah revealed that Sir William Luce proposed that Ras al-Khaimah should cede sovereignty over the Tunbs in return for annual payment of \$1.6 million by Iran.<sup>(167)</sup> Shaikh Saqr rejected the suggestion, saying: "We rejected this offer and told Luce we would never give up our land, nor were we ready to enter into deals to sell our islands."<sup>(168)</sup>

On 6 December 1971 the matter of the conflict of the Tunbs, which were being occupied by Iran, was raised in the House of Commons. A Member of Parliament asked Sir Alec Douglas Home, the British Foreign Secretary:

*"Why, if he could buy off Sharjah with \$8 million and an agreement on an oilfield, could Sir William Luce not have had something similar to settle the claims of Shaikh Zaqur over Abu Musa?"*

The Foreign Secretary replied:

*"I understand that the landing on the Tunbs was unopposed and peaceful, but there was an incident later, and that a policeman and three Iranians were shot. Sir William Luce tried very hard to get a successful arrangement with Ras al Khaimah as he got from Sharjah, but the Ruler of Ras al Khaimah felt he could not make an agreement. I wish it had been possible. We did all we could."<sup>(169)</sup>*

In order to understand the geographical value of the island it is instructive to examine Iran's aims concerning the island.

#### **4.7.5 Why the islands were important to Iran**

The Iranian government's claim to Abu Musa and the Tunbs was based on various arguments. The Shah claimed that Bahrain belonged to Iran, but changed his mind when he realized that his claim to Bahrain would seriously jeopardize the stability of the Gulf. Saving face was an important factor in encouraging the Shah to occupy the islands. According to one British official:

*"Advisors to the Iranian Government told us that the Shah did not want the Islands for military or strategic reasons, despite his statements and much official propaganda to that effect. Rather, he needed to take them in order to enhance his image as a forceful and decisive monarch. At the time of the Bahrayn settlement, we failed to grasp the extent to which the Shah's prestige had fallen in the eyes of the Iranian people due to his having 'given in' on that question. He had to do something forceful to regain it, and in occupying the Islands he did."<sup>(170)</sup>*

It may be concluded that the Shah of Iran used the occupation of the islands as the price of withdrawing his claim to Bahrain.<sup>(172)</sup> Iran's occupation of Abu Musa may also have been motivated by a desire to extend its waters to the edge of the southern Gulf and gain offshore areas with significant offshore oil potential.<sup>(171)</sup>

The strategic location of the island in the mouth of the Gulf could make it useful as a base for attacking an enemy. This was what happened during the Iran-Iraq war: the Iranian navy used Abu Musa as a base for speedboat attacks on shipping and oil installations<sup>(173)</sup> (see Figure 4.17).

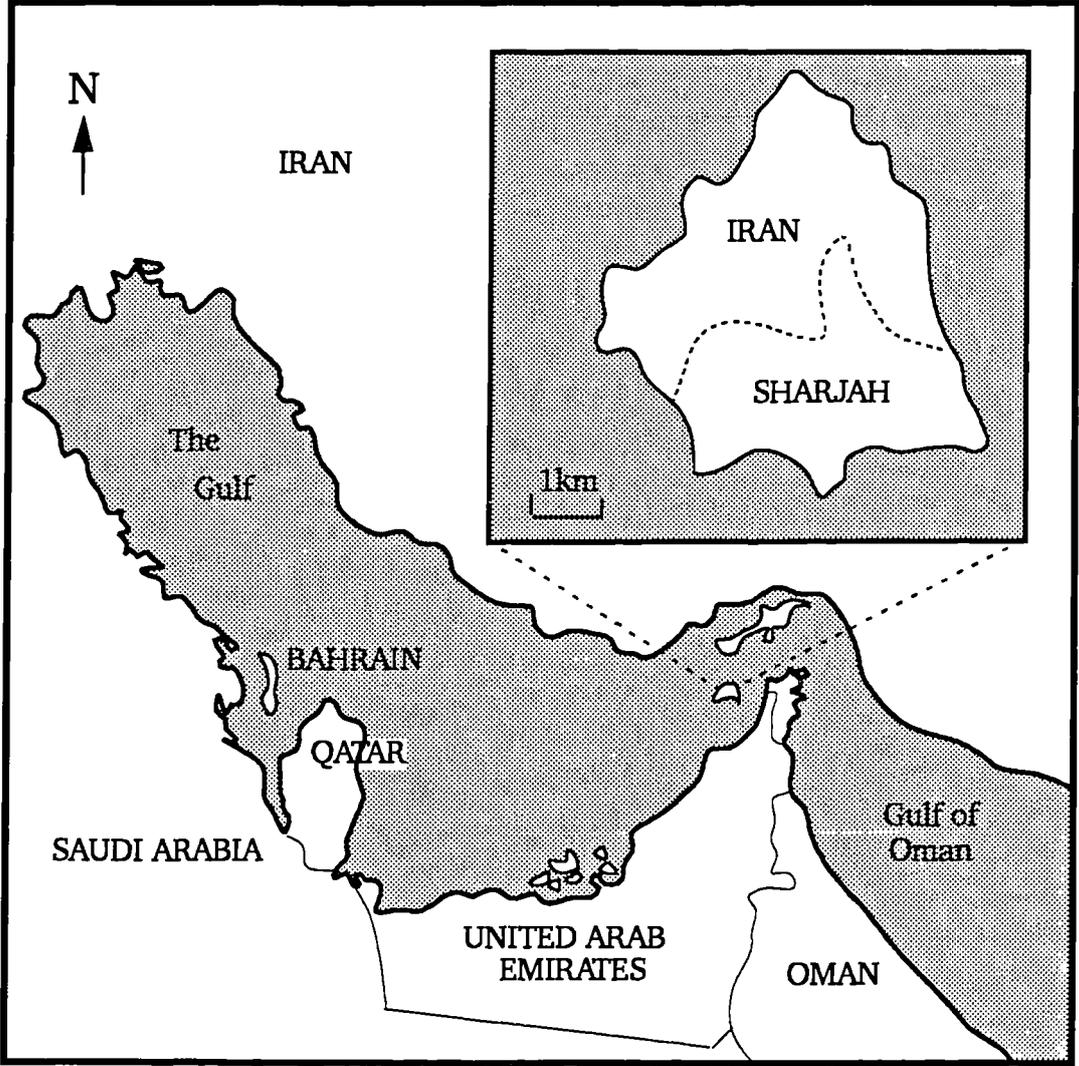
The economic sensitivity and strategic location of these islands which oversee the western mouth of the Strait of Hormuz, were brought into perspective when in 1973 it was shown that an average of one oil tanker every fourteen minutes passed through the Strait of Hormuz past the islands, and that about 17 million barrels of oil left the Arabian Gulf through this narrow strait daily.<sup>(174)</sup>

## **4.8 The Maritime boundary between Iran and the U.A.E.**

### **4.8.1 Iran-Dubai Agreement of 13 August 1975**

The U.A.E.-Iran boundary line extends for a distance of 39.25 nautical miles.<sup>(175)</sup> The agreed boundary line delimits only some parts of the continental shelf between these two states, namely the area between Iran and the offshore limits of the Emirate of Dubai. The U.A.E. (six Emirates) offshore boundary is still unsettled with Iran. This is due to the two states' dispute over Abu Musa and the two Tunb islands.<sup>(176)</sup> Figure 4.10, which was drawn in 1980 by the Cartographic and Map Section of the British Foreign Office, shows that the only line which is marked by an unbroken line is the maritime line between Dubai and Iran. The maritime line of the other five Emirates namely Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, and Ras al-Khaimah is marked with dotted lines.<sup>(177)</sup> Dubai and Iran defined their continental shelf boundary on 13 August 1975.

Figure 4.17 Map of Abu Musa Island showing the boundaries between the territory of Sharjah (U.A.E.) and the territory of Iran on the island.



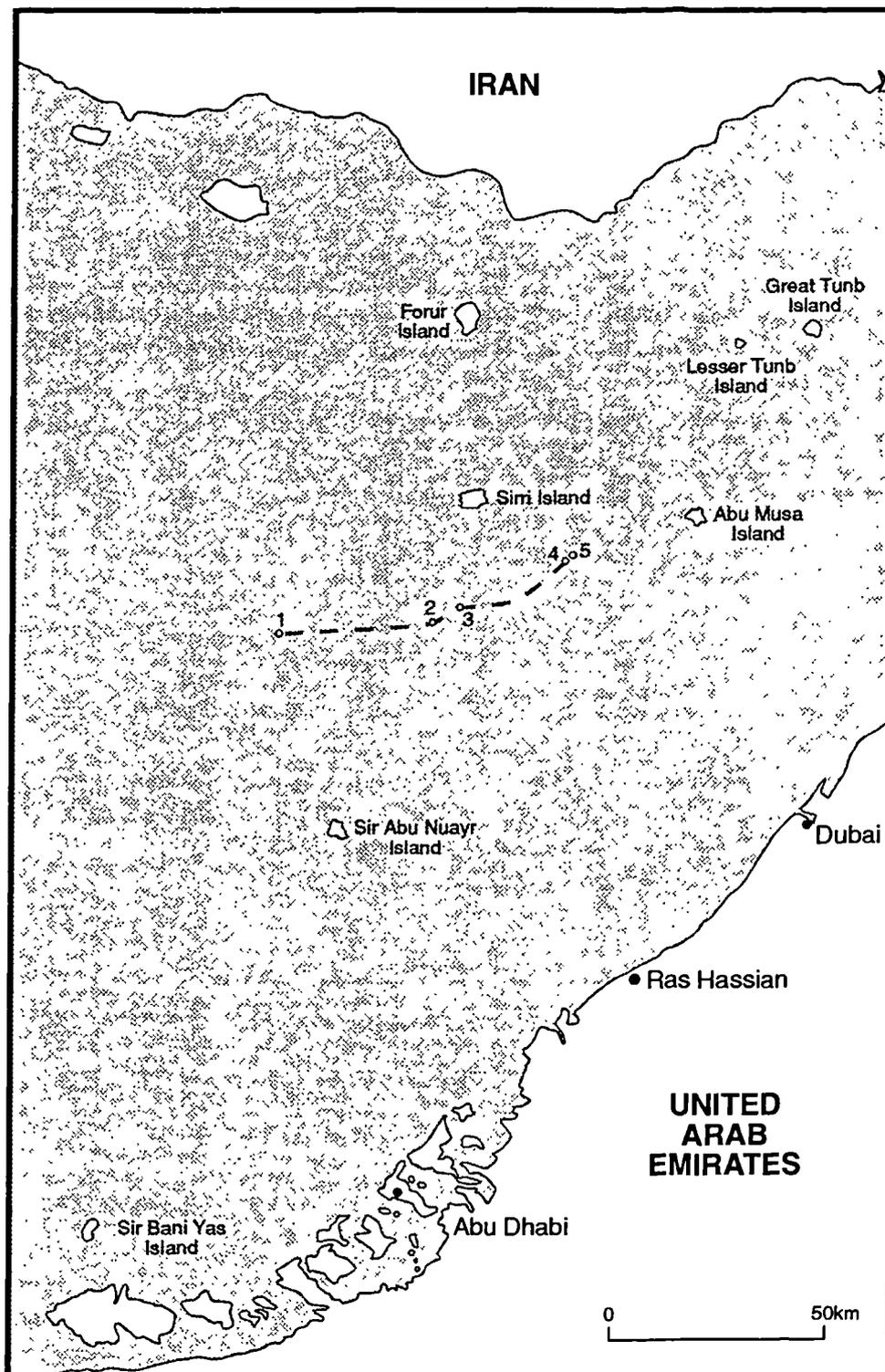
Source: Al-Hayat, 13th May 1992.

This maritime boundary as demarcated consists of straight lines and five connecting fixed points. Point 1 of the agreement coincides with the lateral offshore boundary line between Dubai and Abu Dhabi as agreed in 1968 (see Chapter 6). While point 5 marks the other end of the agreed boundary, it seems to coincide with what Dubai in 1964 claimed to constitute its lateral offshore boundary line with Sharjah. The maritime boundaries between the various members of the union of the U.A.E. are not international boundaries, and the present agreement between the U.A.E. and Iran defines only the shelf boundary between Dubai and Iran<sup>(178)</sup> (see Figure 4.18).

**Four Points:** One can look at U.A.E. international maritime boundaries from four different angles. The first one is the maritime border which lies northeasterly of the U.A.E. on the East Coast and starts from Dibba al-Husn (Sharjah) on the Gulf of Oman. Moving south of Dibba until it reaches Katma-Melaha on the same coast (a border point between the U.A.E. and Oman) the second maritime line of the U.A.E. rises from that place. The third line lies northwesterly of the U.A.E. from Al-Gair village, on the west coast of the U.A.E., whereas, the line as shown in Figure 6.9 is marked with an unbroken line, which means that the maritime boundary between the U.A.E. and the Sultanate of Oman has been defined before the 1980s. Until 1977-78, the Omani continental shelf boundaries with the U.A.E. (both the Emirates of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah) remained undefined.<sup>(179)</sup>

From Ras-al-Khumays, which is the western boundary point of the U.A.E. with Saudi Arabia (see Figure 4.15), the maritime boundary line starts as a curved shape to the west of Ghagha island (which belongs to Abu Dhabi) until it reached the 1969 Qatari-Abu Dhabi maritime line which is taken as the fourth angle and the last maritime boundary line of the U.A.E..

Figure 4.18 Iran-United Arab Emirates (Dubai) continental shelf boundary agreed in 1975.



SOURCE: EL-HAKIM, A. *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea* (1979), with Authors modification.

#### 4.8.2 The 1992 Crisis

Subsequent to Sharjah and Iran reaching an agreement in 1971, a new conflict blew up over Abu Musa island in 1992. The Islamic Republic of Iran, different from the regime of the Shah, pushed the dispute further and further until it reached a dangerous level through two incidents which occurred in April 1992. It was reported that early in April 1992, Iran moved to take exclusive control of Abu Musa island, which it had controlled jointly with the U.A.E. (Sharjah) for the past 20 years. What appears to have happened on Abu Musa is that Iran had evicted without notice hundreds of workers from the island, effecting the Iranian takeover of the island. The Iranian authorities closed the only school and police station on the U.A.E. side of the island. Iranian officials refused to negotiate with the federal government of the U.A.E. over the dispute, claiming that its quarrel is with Sharjah and not with the federation itself, considering that the conflict was between her and Sharjah as an individual Emirate and that the 1971 agreement was with Sharjah before the U.A.E. was established, not with the federal government.<sup>(180)</sup> In reaction to the Iranian view, in early May 1992 the U.A.E. Supreme Council reached an important decision to assume federal responsibility for the international commitments of each individual Emirate. The U.A.E. thus asserted its federal responsibility for the existing commitments and treaty obligations of the individual Emirates and undertook to negotiate with Iran on behalf of Sharjah.<sup>(181)</sup>

The second significant incident occurred in August 1992 when Iran effectively annexed Abu Musa. The dispute came to a head when Iranian Police officers turned back a passenger ferry from Abu Musa having held it in port for three days.<sup>(182)</sup> The group were mainly Arab teachers and their families who were contracted by the U.A.E. authorities, and included U.A.E. citizens. This was the first interference with civilian traffic there since the 1971 agreement.<sup>(183)</sup>

### 4.8.3 Comments on the Abu Musa Incident

In response to Iranian efforts to test U.A.E. and Gulf Co-Operation Council solidarity, the U.A.E. federal government has moved to unite the federation and strengthen its ties with Oman. In early May an exchange of ambassadors was announced by the U.A.E. government and the Sultanate of Oman. These developments may open the way for closer co-operation between the federation and the Sultanate on a number of issues. According to some western military experts in the Middle East, if Iran is permitted to swallow Abu Musa, it may not be long before its ambitions turn to other chunks of territory in the region.<sup>(184)</sup> According to the *Al-Majalah*, strategic reasoning was not behind the recent aggression. The new target was perhaps to disengage from the last article of the 1971 agreement whereby revenues from oil produced from the island and its territorial waters will be divided equally between Iran and Sharjah. The oil which is shared is from the Mubarak oilfield produces about 40 thousand barrels a day. It was reported that Iran is dissatisfied with the share of oil revenues which it receives from Sharjah's offshore fields and its action in cancelling the residence permits of workers on the island was calculated to force a reopening of negotiations on this issue.<sup>(185)</sup> Iran takes 50 per cent of the field's revenue, Sharjah 30 per cent and the two Emirates Ajman and Umm al-Quwain (both of whom have claims to surrounding territorial waters) 10 per cent each.<sup>(186)</sup> The oil is already a significant income for the Emirate of Sharjah, but more exploration could take place on the island, or around it, which could give Iran a chance to increase the amount of oil revenue it already gets from the area.<sup>(187)</sup>

The first public reaction by the U.A.E. Government on the dispute over Abu Musa was from the Foreign Ministry of the U.A.E. which issued a strong statement on 2 September 1992:

*"What the Iranian officials have done and are doing on the island of Abu Musa is not compatible with relations between the state of the U.A.E. and the Islamic Republic of Iran and reflects negatively on the co-operation between the two countries."*<sup>(188)</sup>

It is worth noting that the original agreement signed on 29 November 1971 as a Memorandum of Understanding between Sharjah and Iran was as follows:

1. The inhabitants of Abu Musa were to remain subject to the laws and legislation of Sharjah, but Iranian forces were to occupy an agreed part of the island (see Figure 4.17).
2. Revenues from oil produced from the island and territorial waters, within 12 nautical miles, were to be divided equally between Iran and Sharjah.
3. The Iranian Government was to grant aid amounting to \$1.5 million annually to Sharjah for a period of nine years, or until Sharjah's oil revenues reached \$3 million annually.
4. The agreement did not affect Sharjah's claims to sovereignty over the island. The Sharjah flag was to continue to fly over the police station, and Sharjah was to continue to administer all parts of the island not occupied by Iranian forces.
5. Iranian forces were to arrive shortly in the agreed area of Abu Musa.
6. The Buttes Gas and Oil Company was to undertake exploration for oil on the island and in its territorial waters. <sup>(189)(190)</sup>

### **Conclusion on the 1992 Crises on Abu Musa island**

The dispute between the United Arab Emirates and Iran over the Gulf islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs remain unresolved. In an interview with *Al-Wasat* published in London in September 1993, Ambassador Saif Said Sa'ed, Foreign Ministry Acting Under Secretary (the head of the U.A.E. committee for negotiation on Abu Musa island dispute), said:

*"We lost the island as a whole, Iran evacuated the U.A.E. citizens from the island and established a military base on the island ... It seems that the policy of expansion of Shah Iran and the Islamic revolution are applying the same policy."<sup>(191)</sup>*

In a interview, published in London in *Al-Wasat* magazine, Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, ruler of Ras al- Khaimah said:

*"The U.A.E. will continue to resist peacefully and with patience Iran's occupation of the islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunbs...The Foreign Ministry and the higher authority in our country deal with the crisis in a good and objective manner. Our word is one and firm, the islands are occupied U.A.E. territories and they should be returned to their legitimate owners. The situation could be escalated through Iran's insistence to stay in the islands as an occupation force. In this case there will be no alternative but to refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice...Our fellow citizens and good memories are there in these islands. About 200 families were made homeless and were forced to leave Greater Tunb."*

Shaikh Saqr added:

*"The Iranians should reconsider occupation of lands of others by force... We are neighbours and shared a long history created by geographical and cultural elements and dialogue and understanding should prevail as the only way to break doubts."<sup>(192)</sup>*

Iran has appointed Hassan Rezai as the new Governor of Abu Musa Island, and the U.A.E. has not objected to his appointment. However, were the U.A.E. to take the case to the International Court of Justice, or to the United Nations Security Council, there would be international support for the U.A.E. against Iran.

## **4.9 Conclusion**

From all the above discussion it can be concluded that there are major differences between the map of the U.A.E. boundaries published before 1973 and some new maps of the U.A.E. published after 1974. According to the Gazetteer, Lorimer mentioned 'Khore Aladeid', a creek on the coast of Abu Dhabi which lies about 180 miles west

from the town of Abu Dhabi. He continued that the boundary of Qatar is a short distance to the north of the creek. In addition, the Gazetteer stated that Al-Udaid was uninhabited and not visited by Bedouins of the interior, other than by fishermen from Abu Dhabi who spend some months there. Lorimer states that the Al-Qubaisat section of the Bani Yas tribe from Abu Dhabi occupied Al-Odaid village at various times and there were four wells which were less than a mile from the place, and a fort with two towers.<sup>(193)</sup> Lorimer also mentioned that Trucial Oman extends to the Gulf of Oman from Khor Kalba to Dibah, and from Sha'am to Khor al-Udaid, the places named being all included in it. He reported that the boundary between these two points is the sea, whilst inland its boundaries are more difficult to define. On the northern part, Trucial Oman it is bounded by a line which runs from a spot between Dibah and Bai'ah on the east coast to Ras Sha'am on the west coast so it divides from the Ruus al-Jibal area of Oman to the north.<sup>(194)</sup>

Sir Gilbert Laithwaite of the India Office's political department points out that both sides, Qatar and Abu Dhabi recognized "the Abu Dhabi claim to the district of Aqal ..... which contains both the Khor-al-Odeid and the Khor adh-Dhuwaihin"<sup>(195)</sup> which adds to the previous fact that Khor al-Udaid should undoubtedly be Abu Dhabi territory. From such historical evidence it can be seen that the part which was acquired by the Saudi Government (according to the 1974 agreement became Saudi territory), was undoubtedly Abu Dhabi territory, but was lost from the largest Emirate of the United Arab Emirates.

The United Arab Emirates and Qatar now no longer have a common boundary on the mainland. This would not have been possible without an offshore boundary connecting the new boundary line after the 1974 agreement. This is why Saudi Arabia agreed to Abu Dhabi's claims on islands other than Al-Huwaisat which came under Saudi control. This could be one of the reasons why the full text remained unpublished for so long, but which now appears in this thesis.

It is important to recognise that other boundary disputes could loom into sight in future in any part of the Arabian Peninsula, on land or offshore, between any two members of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), similar to the latest dispute between Qatar and Bahrain over the Fasht Dibal island and Hawar island, or the recent conflict between Saudi Arabia and Qatar on Al-Khofus border point.<sup>(196)</sup> The Gulf Co-operation Council has proved that it is unable to do anything about this dispute. Furthermore, the GCC countries face a political problem and they have two choices. They can either accept the boundary lines drawn up by the British authorities and accept the countries concerned as their political boundaries; or they can refuse to accept them, falling back on the old tribal system of recognizing no borders and accepting no lines in the sand.

The final section of this chapter is concerned with the international boundaries of the United Arab Emirates including its history. The main subject of the next chapter will be concerned with the emergence of inter-state boundaries and to focus on the period which saw the development of the internal boundaries remaining to the present day. It is interesting that throughout the history of the Trucial States (later U.A.E.) boundaries have been frequently changed. Some Shaikhdoms have been eliminated, and others emerged. There were six Shaikhdoms in 1835, five in 1914, six again by 1919, seven by 1937, and during 1952 one Shaikhdom was eliminated (Kalba), and another appeared (Fujairah). Today the Emirates are seven, all of which belong to one federation, and fly one flag. There are however some boundary disputes between these Emirates which are still active. This will be the focus of Chapter 6.

The geo-political map of the United Arab Emirates illustrates how the boundary arrangement among the union members of the state is complicated. With the exceptions of Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain, the other five members of the federal state have numerous enclaves in the hinterland. This is an unusual pattern in any

political map. The internal boundary history is crucial to understanding this map, and therefore this fact will be highlighted and explained in more detail in the following chapter.

## Endnotes

1. Al-Fil, M. R., 'Mushkilat al-Hudud baina Imarat al-Khalij al-Arabi' (Border Disputes among Gulf Emirates) *The Gulf and The Arabian Peninsula Journal*, No.8, 1976, p.28.
2. By means of this treaty the Shaikhdoms of the Arab Gulf became virtual British protectorates in all matters of international concern, but without British military occupation.
3. Al-Fil, M.R., 'Mushkilat al-Hudud Bayn Imarat al-Khalij al-Arabi'. *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*. No.8, 1976, p.34. Also see 'Political Geography of Trucial Oman and Qatar' by Alexander Melamid in *The Geographical Review*, Vol.XVIII, 1953, p.197.
4. Melamid, A., 'Political Geography of Trucial Oman and Qatar' in *The Geographical Review*, Vol.XVIII, 1953, p.197.
5. Walker, J., "The Boundaries of the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman," Lecture given at Durham University, Durham, Second International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) Conference, 21 July 1991.
6. Qasim, J.Z., "Al Kalig al Arabi, derasa letarik al-Emarat al- Arabia" *The Arabian Gulf, a study of Arab Emirates history*, 1973. Dar el-fikr el-arabi, Cairo.
7. Hay, Sir R., "The Persian Gulf States And Their Boundary Problems" *Geographical Journal*, Vol.CXX, 1954, p.435.
8. An example of how tribal loyalties changed was the Bani Ka'b who were considered members of the Qawasim federation were found by Lorimer with a minority which transferred its loyalties to Muscat. The whole tribe was regarded as subject to the Sultan of Muscat in Julian Walker's time (Assistant Political Agent, Dubai 1953-5) as mentioned by Morsy, A., *The United Arab Emirates, A Modern History*, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p.291.
9. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia*, Vol.IIB, *Geographical and Statistical*, Gregg Internationa., 1970, p.1428.
10. Hawley, Sir D., *The Trucial States*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1970, p.209.
11. FO 371/ 1016/195, Letter from C.M. Pirie-Gordon, Esq., O.B.E, the Political Residence in Bahrain to the Foreign Office in London in 25 July 1952. (See Appendix no: ).
12. Lecture given by Julian Walker in the second IBRU Conference, 21 July 1991, University of Durham.
13. Lecture given by Julian Walker, the second IBRU Conference, 21 July 1991, University of Durham.
14. Lecture given by Julian Walker, the second IBRU Conference, 21 July 1991, University of Durham.
15. Lecture given by Julian Walker, the second IBRU Conference, 21 July 1991, University of Durham.
16. Zahlan, R.S., *The Origins of the United Arab Emirates*, Macmillan, London, 1978, p.191.
17. Abdullah, M.M., *The United Arab Emirates: A Modern History*, Croom Helm, London 1978, pp.291-292.
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19. The writer interviewed the Honorable Lord Martin Buckmaster at House of Lords in London on 16 January 1991.
20. Bulloch, J., *The Gulf: A Portrait of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the UAE*, Century, London, 1984, p.196.
21. Sir Donald Hawley was a member of the British Diplomatic service, who spent three years (1958-61) as the British Political Agent in the Trucial States.
22. Hawley, Sir D., *The Trucial States*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1970, p.289.
23. Julian Walker drew the inter-emirates boundaries and the boundaries with Sultanate of Oman in the 1950s. "The Boundaries of the UAE and Oman", Lecture given at Durham University, Durham, 21 July 1991.
24. FO 371/190393 Letter from Shaikh Sa'ed bin Maktum al-Hasher O.B.E to Mr P.D.Stobart, Political Agent, Trucial States, 12 January 1949.
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26. Muir, R., *Modern Political Geography*, Macmillan, London, 1975, p.119.
27. Prescott, J.R.V., *Political Frontiers And Boundaries*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1987, p.1.
28. Glassner, M.I., *Political Geography*, Wiley, New York, 1993, pp.78-79.
29. Julian Walker confirmed that Khur al-Mamzar is the example of a clear natural boundary point between two Emirates within the Trucial States. The researcher interviewed Julian Walker in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in London on 9 July 1991.
30. Prescott, J.R.V., *Political Frontiers and Boundaries*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1987, p.262.
31. \_\_\_\_\_. Results of the Survey of the Frontier between the state of Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, carried out by 13 Field Survey Squadron, March/April 1964 and based on information supplied by Julian Walker. F.O.
32. The full geographical survey and the field work result of Hatta will be explained in Chapter 6. Hatta is dealt with here from an historical point of view.
33. Julian Walker (FO 371/114648).p.83, Report on Boundary Settlement in the Trucial States in March 1955.
34. The researcher interviewed many elders of the village of Hatta on 20 April 1991.
- 35a. Letter to the researcher from Mrs M. Spence, Chief Cartographic Editor, GEOprojects (UK) Ltd., dated 4 August 1994.
35. FO 371/114648, Report prepared by Julian Walker on the Trucial States Boundaries Settlements in March 1955, p.60.
36. Lorimer, J.G., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia*, IIB, Geographical and Statistical, Gregg International, 1970, p.1284.
37. *Middle East Economic Digest*, Vol.25, 3 April 1981, p.24.
38. Peck, M.C., *The United Arab Emirates A Venture in Unity*, Croom Helm, London, 1986, p.28.
39. Costa, P.M., *Musandam: Architecture and Material Culture of a Little Known Region of Oman*, IMMEL, London, 1991, p.52.
40. *The Geographical Journal*, Vol.138, The Royal Geographical Society, London, 1972, p.3.

41. *ARR*, 1-13 December 1977, p. 1007. See Will D. Swearingen, "Source of conflict over oil in the Persian Gulf", *Middle East Journal*, Vol.35, No.3 (Summer 1981), p.321.
42. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf: sources of inter-state conflict*, Gower for International Institute for Strategic Studies, Britain, 1981, p.59.
43. Litwak, op. cit., pp.60, 71.
44. *ARR*, 1-13 December 1977, p.992.
45. *ARR*, 1-13 December 1977, p.1007.
46. Ibid.
47. Cordesman, op. cit., p.418.
48. Plascov Avi *Security in the Persian Gulf: Modernization, Political Development and Stability*, Gower for International Institute for Strategic Studies, England, 1982, p.101.
49. *ARR*, 1-15 May 1978, p.342.
50. *ARR*, 1-14 February 1978, p.98.
51. *ARR*, 1-31 December 1977, p.1008.
52. *ARR*, 1-31 December 1977, p.992.
53. *ARR*, 1-15 March 1978, p.176.
54. *ARR*, 1-15 April 1978, p.251.
55. *ARR*, 1-15 April 1978, p.252.
56. Swearingen, W.D., 'Source of conflict over oil in the Persian/Arabian Gulf', *Middle East Journal*, Vol.35, No.3 (Summer 1981) p.322.
57. "Majmooah Ktotab wa Tasarih Saheb al-Summow, Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktum", *Collection of Speeches and Statements of H.H. Shaikh Rashed bin Said al-Maktum*, Ministry of Information and Cultural, UAE, pp.64-65. (Arabic)
58. Litwak, op. cit., p.61.
59. Litwak, op. cit., p.61.
60. Ibid, p.61.
61. *Financial Times*, 24 October 1979.
62. Cordesman, op. cit., p.418.
63. Cordesman, op. cit., p.419.
64. *MEED*, Oman Special Report, September 1978, p.50.
65. *MEED*, 21 December 1979, p.46.
66. Abdullah, M.M., *The United Arab Emirates: A Modern History*, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p.296.
67. Costa, P.M., *Musandam: Architecture and Material Culture of a Little Known Region of Oman*, IMMEL, London, 1991, p.25.
68. *MEED*, 15 June 1992, p.A12-A13.
69. The United Arab Emirates, Quarterly Review, *Middle East Economics*, July 1993, p.10.
70. Abdullah, op. cit., p.298.
71. Abdullah, op. cit., p.298.

72. Lorimer, *The Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p.1684.
73. Julian Walker, (FO 371/114648), p.41.
74. Wilkinson, J.C., *Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert*, Tauris, London, 1991, p.61.
75. Fuad Hamzah, was the Saudi Arabian Deputy Foreign Minister. He proposed a frontier between Abu Dhabi and the Kingdom that began at a point about 16 miles south of Khaur al-Udaid, ran southwards for about 10 miles then east-south-east in a curve until it met longitude 56 degrees E at its junction with latitude 22 degrees N. From there it ran down longitude 56 degrees E to its junction with latitude 19 degrees N, then turned south-westwards until it reached longitude 52 degrees E at its junction with latitude 17 degrees N and followed latitude 17 degrees N.
- 75a. Interview with Edward Henderson on 27 August 1990 in Documentation Centre in Abu Dhabi. In 1971, Henderson was appointed as the first British Ambassador to the State of Qatar.
76. *The Times*, 11 March 1957.
77. F.O 371/ 126932. Letter from the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office to the British Residency in Bahrain, 15 March 1957.
78. F.O 371/ 126932.
79. Hawley, Sir D., *The Trucial States*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1970, p.188.
80. His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan is the president of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Abu Dhabi.
81. Taryam, A.O., *The Establishment of the United Arab Emirates 1950-85*, Croom Helm, London, 1987, p.219.
82. Kelly, J.B., *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, 1980, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, p.210.
83. ----- *Financial Times*, 26 May 1971, p.9.
84. Al-Fill *The Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula Journal* (Mushkilat al-Hudud), pp.42-3.
85. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf*, Vol.2, Gower, 1981, p.54.
86. Hamadi, A.M., 'Saudi Arabia's Territorial Limits: A Study in Law and Politics', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University, U.S.A., 1981, p.79.
87. Kelly, J.B., *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1980, p.210.
88. Khalifa, A.M., *The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation* Croom Helm, London, 1979, p.204.
89. Al-Alkim, H.H., *The Foreign Policy of the United Arab Emirates* Saqi, London, 1989, pp.126-127.
90. Cordesman, A.H., *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability*. Westview, 1984, p.416.
91. *Middle East Economic Digest*, 5 August 1977.
92. 'Saudi window in the Gulf?', *Middle East Economic Digest* Vol.24, No.31, 1 August 1980. p.31.
93. Ibid.
94. However, the researcher asked Julian Walker what is the reason that made the Cartographic and Map section of the Foreign Office to print such map while the U.A.E. boundary with its western neighbour has been changed. Walker replied that, because the 1974 agreement is still confidential and would not be made public, there is no change on the map. Interview on 9 July 1992, in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London.
95. Opec Oil Report, *Petroleum Economist*, London, 1977.

96. *Arab Report & Record*, 16-31 August 1974, p.357.
97. ----- The 21 August agreement between the United Arab Emirates and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1974 (Arabic). See Appendix.
98. Anthony, J.D., *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum*, The Middle East Institute Washington, D.C. 1975, pp.148-149.
99. *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*, No.1, 1975, pp.180-181.
100. Ali Mohammed Khalifa, working in the Ministry of Defence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, prepared a book on the United Arab Emirates, *United Arab Emirates, Unity in Fragmentation*, 1979.
101. The Original Text of the 1974 Agreement between the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia, Article 3.
102. ARAMCO, is an abbreviation of the Arabian American Oil Company.
103. ----- *Financial Times Survey* (The United Arab Emirates), 26 October 1982, p.v.
104. ----- *The Financial Times Survey* (The United Arab Emirates), 26 October 1982, p.5.
105. Cordesman, A.H., *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability* (1984), Westview, Boulder U.S.A., p.416.
106. Malcolm C. Peck is a program officer with visitors program service of Meridian House International in Washington, D.C. He was the State Department's analyst for Arabian Peninsula affairs and director of programmes at the Middle East Institute.
107. Peck, M.C., *The United Arab Emirates, A Venture in Unity*, Croom Helm, London, 1986, p.(n) 58.
108. According to the 1974 agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, Article 3 stipulates: "All the hydrocarbon components are available in (Shaibba-Zararah) oilfield are owned by the Saudi Arabia Kingdom".
109. Al-Saif, S.H., '(Al-Miyyah al-eqlimiyyah fil-Mamlaka al-arabiyya al-saudiyya) The Territorial Waters of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.' Unpublished Ph.D thesis, School of Education, Saudi Arabia, 1990. (Arabic)
110. The U.A.E. - Saudi Arabia agreement in 1974, Article 5.
111. The 1974 Agreement,
112. According to the thesis prepared by Abdulkarim M. Hamadi, 'Saudi Arabia's Territorial Limits: A Study in Law and Politics', Ph.D. thesis, University of Indiana, U.S.A., 1981: "The oil factor proved a minor issue in the conflict". See p.80 in 'Saudi Arabia's Territorial Limits: A study in Law and politics', Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1981.  
  
According to Dr. Hissa Al-Saif's dissertation, this agreement authorised Saudi Arabia to defend the region from any invasion, in addition to which Saudi Arabia has a large population and strong economy factors and these factors may contribute to decrease any dispute that could arise between Qatar and the United Arab Emirates because this border area is rich in oil. A conflict could emerge for any other reason.
113. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf. Sources of inter- state conflict*, Vol:2, Gower, London, 1981, p.51.
114. The Emirates, *A Daily Digest of News on the U.A.E.*, Ministry of Information, No.791, 22 October 1992, p.5.
115. Khur al-Udaid is an inlet in the southern shore of the Arabian Gulf a short distance north of latitude 24° 30'N and west of longitude 51° 30'E. The Khur, or inlet, consists of a winding channel 8 miles long running inland in a southwesterly direction and opening into a lagoon six miles long from north to south and four miles broad.

116. Al-Alkim, H., *The Foreign Policy of the United Arab Emirates*, Saqi, London, 1989, p.114.
117. 'The Union of Arab Amirates', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.XXVI, The Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., U.S.A., 1972, p.280.
118. Khalifa A.M., *The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation*. Croom Helm, London, 1979, p.204n. Also see *MEED*, 1 August 1980, p.31.
119. *Arab Report and Record*, 16-31 October 1976, p. 637.
120. BBC, SWB, ME/7246/A/1, 1.2.1983.
121. Kelly, J.B., *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1980, p.210.
122. Anthony, J.D., *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum*, The Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1975, p.148.
123. Anthony, J.D., *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum*, The Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1975, pp.148-149.
124. Abdullah, M.M., *The United Arab Emirates, a Modern History*, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p.212.
125. Wilkinson, J.C., *Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert*, Tauris, London, 1991, p.342.
- 126a. Burrows, Bernard, *Footnotes in the Sand, The Gulf in Transition 1953-1958*, Michael Russell, United Kingdom, 1990, p.102.
- 126b. Kelly, *Arabia, The Gulf and The West*, p.211.
127. Interview with Julian Walker, on Thursday 9 July 1992, Foreign Office, London, United Kingdom.
128. *MEED*, Vol.XXIV, No.21, 1 August 1980, p.31.
129. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf: Sources of Inter- State Conflict*, Vol.2, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Gower, 1981, p.54.
130. Amin, S.H., *International and Legal Problems of the Gulf*, Middle East and North Africa Studies Press Limited, London, 1981, p.156.
131. Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates, Article 2.
132. The Economist Intelligence Unit, *United Arab Emirates*, Country Report, 2nd quarter 1993, p.4.
133. *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, London, Wednesday 7 July 1993.
134. *ARR*, 16-31 March 1969, p.115.
135. Halul is the largest of the islands and lies about 61 miles east-north-east of Doha, capital of Qatar.
136. Hay, Sir R., *The Persian Gulf States*, The Middle East Institute, Washington D.C., 1959, p.118.
137. Albaharna, H.M., *The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States* Manchester University Press. Manchester, 1968, pp.303-304.
138. Albaharna mentioned in page 304, that the decree issued by the Ruler of Qatar was published in the Government's Official Gazette, No.2, Shawwal 27/1381-2 April 1962.
139. *ARR*, 16-31 March 1969, p.115.
140. Lorimer, J.G., *The Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia Vol:II Geographical and Statistical*, Superintendent, Government Printing, India, Calcutta, 1908, p.361.
141. El-Hakim, A., *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1979, p.97.

142. El-Hakim, A., *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1979, p.97.
143. Amin, S.H., *International And Legal Problems of the Gulf*, Middle East and North Africa Studies Press Limited, London, 1981, p.108.
144. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf: sources of inter- state conflict*, Gower for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981, p.67.
145. Amin, S.H., *International and Legal Problems of the Gulf*, Middle East and North Africa Studies Press Limited, London, 1981, p. 108.
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147. Ibid.
148. Amin, p.108.
149. El-Hakim, p.98. Also see Litwak, p.67.
150. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf; Sources of Inter-state Conflict*, Gower for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981, p.56.
151. *ARR*, 15-28 February 1971, p.106.
152. *The Times*, 11 May 1971.
153. -----, *LEADERSHIP, Collection of Speeches, Stances, Meetings and Instructions of H.H. Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al- Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, from 1971 to 1987*, Book and Publishing Establishment, Lebanon. p.261.
154. *Arab Report & Record*, 1-15 December 1971, p.622.
155. *Arab Report & Record*, 1-15 December 1971, p.623.
156. *Arab Report & Record*, 16-31 January 1972, p.39.
157. Zahlan, R.S., *The Making of the Modern Gulf States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, The United Arab Emirates And Oman*, Unwin Hyman, London, 1989, p.100. Also see *Arab Report & Record*, 16-31 January 1972, p.39.
158. *Arab Report & Record*, 16-31 January 1972, p.40.
159. *Arab Report & Record*, 16-31 January 1972, p.40.
160. Al Fill, M.R., 'Mushkilat al-Hudud baina Imarat al- Khalig' (Border disputes among Gulf Emirates). *The Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula Journal*, October 1976, p.53. Also see Abdulla Al-ashaal, 'Qadiat al-hudud fil khalij al-arabi', (Territorial case in the Arabian Gulf), Cairo, Centre of Political and Strategic Studies, 1978, p.90.
- 160a. Anderson, E., *An Atlas of World Political Flashpoints: A Source Book of Geopolitical Crisis*, Pinter Reference, London, 1993, p.3.
161. Al-ashaal Qadhiat al-hudud fil Khalij al-arabi, "Territorial case in the Arabian Gulf", Centre of Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, 1978, p.90.
162. Lorimer, J.G., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia IIB, Geographical and Statistical*, Gregg International, England, 1970, p.1758.
163. Lorimer, J.G., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia, IIB Geographical and Statistical*, Gregg International, England, 1970, pp. 1908-1909.
164. Hay, Sir R., *The Persian Gulf States*, The Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C. 1959, pp.123-124.
165. Ibid., p.126.

166. Alam, A., *The Shah and I, The Confidential Diary of Iran's Royal Court, 1969-1977*. Tauris, London, 1991, p.34.
167. Al-Alkim, H.H., *The Foreign Policy of the United Arab Emirates*, Saqi Books, London, 1989, p.142.
168. *ARR*, 1-15 November 1971, p.574.
169. Hansard, House of Commons, Vol.827, 6 December 1971, p.949.
170. Anthony, J.D., *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum*. The Middle East Institute, Washington D.C., 1975, p.28.
171. Cordesman, A.H., *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability*, Mansell, London, 1984, p.417.
172. Kelly, J.B., *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1980, p.87.
173. *The Times*, 2 September 1992.
174. El-Hakim, A., *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1979, p.15.
175. Amin, S.H., *International and Legal Problems of the Gulf*, Middle East and North Africa Studies Press Limited, London, 1981, p.170.
176. Amin, S.H., *International And Legal Problems of the Gulf*, Middle East and North Africa Studies Press Limited, London, 1981, p.158.
177. Fujairah is only the emirate which has no common maritime line with Iran and that is because it is located on the east coast on the Oman Gulf.
178. El-Hakim, A., *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1979, p.103.
179. Litwak, R., *Security in the Persian Gulf: sources of inter- state conflict*, Gower for International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981, p.71.
180. The Economic Intelligence Unit, *United Arab Emirates*, Country Profile, No:3, London, 1992, p.6.
181. The Economist Intelligence Unit, *United Arab Emirates*, Country Profile, London, 1993-94, p.4.
182. *The Times*, 2 September 1992.
183. *MEED*, 7 September 1992, p.A8.
184. *The Times*, 2 September 1992.
185. The Economic Intelligence Unit, *United Arab Emirates*, Country Profile, No.3, London, 1992, p.6.
186. The Economic Intelligence Unit, *United Arab Emirates*, Country Profile, London. 1991-1992, p.19.
187. *Al-Majjalla*, London, No.657, 9-15 September 1992, pp.29-30 (Arabic).
188. *Al-Bayyan*, 3 September 1992.
189. *Middle East Economic Survey*, Vol.35:29, 20 April 1992, p.A8. The terms of the agreement are published in El-Hakim op. cit., p.208; Taryam, op. cit., p.183; and Keesing's *Contemporary Archives*, 1971, p.25010, and for the arabic text see: Al-Hayat, 13 May 1992, London, pp.1-4.
190. For further discussion on the question of the Tumbs and Abu Musa islands see Al-Baharna, H.M., *The Arabian Gulf States*, op.cit., pp.339-48. Also see El-Hakim, *The Middle Eastern States and the Law of the Sea*, pp.122-130.
191. *Al-Wasat*, London, 20 September 1993, p.21. (Arabic)
192. *Al-Wasat*, London, 20 September 1993, pp.20-21. (Arabic)
193. Lorimer, J.G., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia*, Vol.II B *Geographical and Statistical*, Gregg International, England, 1970, p.1367.

194. Lorimer, J.G., *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia*, Vol.II B *Geographical and Statistical*, Gregg International, England, 1970, p.1428.
195. Wilkinson, J.C., *Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert*, Tauris, London, 1991, p.176.
196. See *The Times*, 2 October 1992; and see also *The Independent*, 2 October 1992.

## Chapter 5

### Julian Walker's Map of Internal Boundaries

#### 5.1 Introduction

For many years, the internal boundary lines of the Trucial States (U.A.E.) were not shown on the maps of most geographical books because there was little reason to do so. Until oil was discovered, the Political Agents in the region were not involved in such issues, and gave the internal boundary demarcation between these states little thought. The earliest boundary description was officially recorded in Lorimer's Gazetteer (Lorimer, J.C., 1908-1915, Gazetteer Volume II [Geographical, 1908], Volume I [Historical and Genealogical, 1915], London, reprinted 1970). However, no boundaries are shown on the map which was prepared by Hunter in 1917 for the 1908 Gazetteer.<sup>(1a)</sup>

Indeed, the people did not recognize the boundary line in its modern sense. To support this idea, Julian Walker, who was involved in the boundary demarcation of the Trucial States, said: *"The concepts of nation states, of territorial sovereignty, and of fixed linear frontiers are western ones, which have been imposed on the traditional society of the Arabian Peninsula."*<sup>(1)</sup> When in 1954 the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast felt the need for clearly defined borders, they were involved by the British Agent's assistant of that period, Julian Walker, on behalf of the British Government, in this process of definition.

##### 5.1.1 Enclaves and exclaves

All but two of the seven Emirates lack territorial homogeneity. Only Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain consist of one integral unit (see Table 1.1. in Chapter 1 and also Chapter 6). The other five Emirates have at least one enclave of territory entirely surrounded by territory over which they have no jurisdiction. The existence of

multiple enclaves makes internal boundary issues in the U.A.E. not only highly complex, but currently unique. The boundary between one Emirate and the enclave of another Emirate is neither an international boundary (which in many parts of the world would imply different ethnicity, different religion, different language, or at least a different tax regime and therefore excise duties), nor a purely administrative boundary. Whilst the two sides of the boundary are part of one country, each Emirate enjoys high degree of autonomy, as in most federal states.

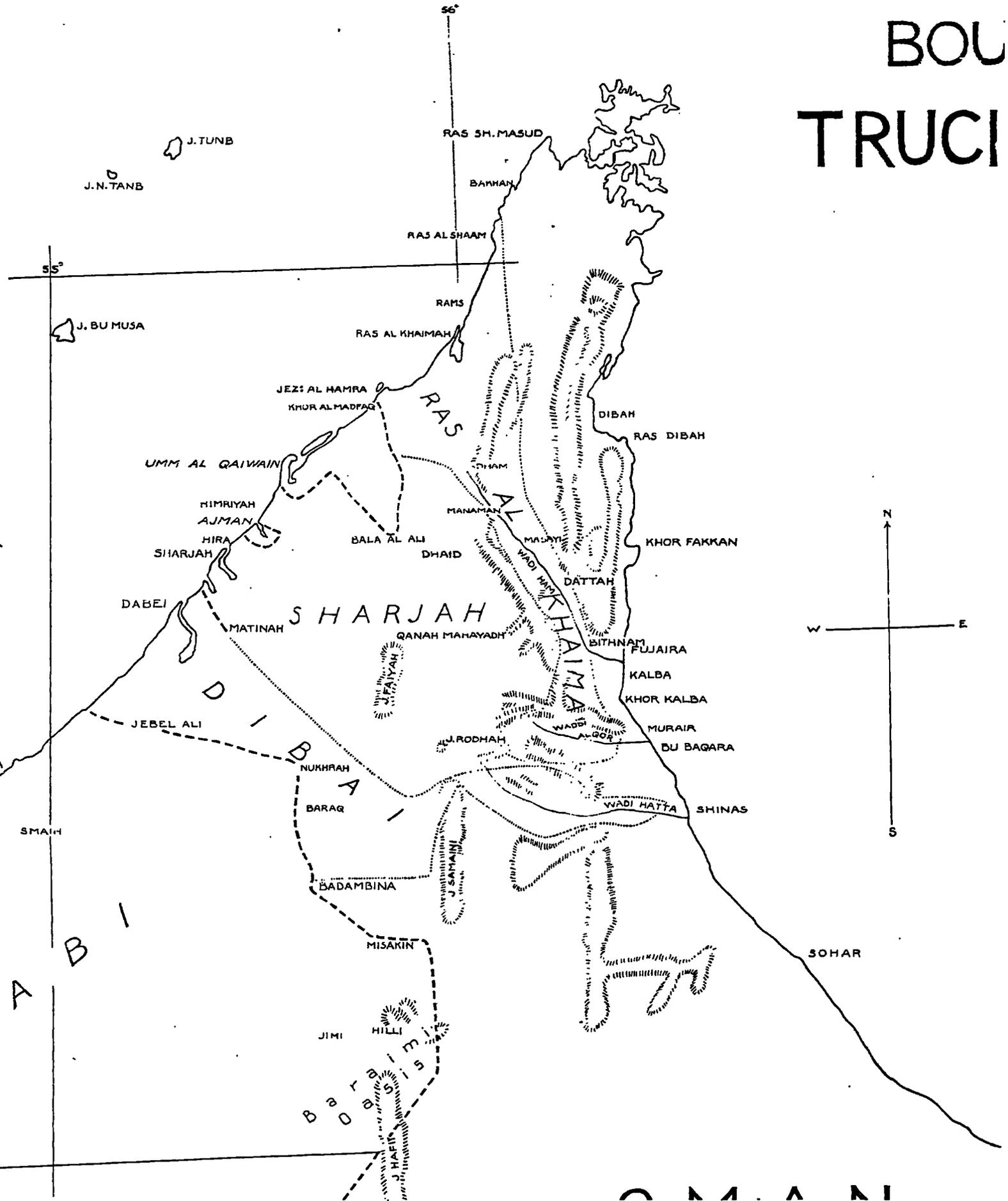
In addition to these internal divisions, there are three exclaves of Oman separated from the main part of Oman by U.A.E. territory: the northern tip of the Musandam Peninsula, Wadi Madha (located within Khur Fakkan, the enclave of Sharjah), and Walaya Mahadha.

## **5.2 Previous boundary delimitation**

As mentioned above, inter-state boundaries emerged in the 1930s. The first map showing internal boundaries of the Trucial States (U.A.E.) was drawn after reports on the territories claimed by four of the Rulers had reached London as result of a survey by the Political Agent in Bahrain, Captain Hickenbotham.<sup>(2)</sup> On the basis of this information, Captain Hickenbotham prepared a Memorandum on "*Trucial Coast Boundaries*". The map was entitled "*Boundaries of the Trucial Sheikhdoms 1937*", and this sketch with known tribal loyalties was redrawn by Colonel Galloway, with the help of Jasim Kazmawi, the Residency Agent in 1946 in Sharjah. It was the first map of the internal boundaries of the Trucial States. At the bottom of the map is printed "Research Department, Foreign Office March 1953", which suggests that printing the map was originally a low priority, but that by 1953, had become a much higher priority.

The internal boundaries of the 1953 map are shown in Figure 5.1. Those boundaries marked with bold dashes are those which were well-recognised. Boundaries marked

Figure 5.1 Internal boundaries in the Trucial Sheikdoms in 1937, Map drawn by Captain Hickinbotham, Political Agent in Bahrain in 1937.



with dotted lines were those about which Hickinbotham was less certain.<sup>(3)</sup> From Figure 5.1 it can be concluded that in 1937 the boundary between the Dubai Shaikhdom and that of its eastern neighbour, the Shaikhdom of Sharjah, was certain from the coast to Aud al-Matinah and so was marked with bold dashes. From Aud al-Matinah the line was marked with a dotted line, meaning that the rest of the border line was not certain. However, it is pertinent to note that in controlling the border as marked on the map, Shaikh Said bin Maktum of Dubai, Shaikh Sultan of Sharjah, and Shaikh Sultan bin Salim of Ras al-Khaimah were far from assiduous. The dotted line to the east of Ras al-Khaimah marked the eastern edge of its territory from Ras Shaam south of Bukkah to Hasat al-Basrah, and then south leaving Adhin and the Wadi al-Qur (plus some of the Wadi Ham) to Ras al-Khaimah. The territory to the east of the line would not have been Sultanate of Oman territory but a jumble of lands belonging to the Shihuh. However, Fujairah was not currently recognized by the British Government as an independent Shaikhdom, neither were the east coast settlements of Dibba, Kalba, Khur Fakkan which were under Ahmad bin Khalifa.<sup>(4)</sup> Fujairah had to wait fifty years for British recognition, from the time of the Battle of Bithnah in 1902 when it won its independence from the Qawasim until 1952.

It can be further concluded from the map that, during this period, only three Emirates had clear boundaries with their neighbours (their border lines being marked with bold dashed lines): the Emirate of Abu Dhabi with its eastern neighbour Oman, (the two villages of al-Buraimi Oasis, Jimi and Hilli both were within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi territories), the Emirate of Ajman, and the Emirate of Umm al-Quwain. The other boundaries are marked with dotted lines.

The 1937 map (Figure 5.1) shows that the largest Emirates in size in 1937 were Abu Dhabi and Sharjah (Fujairah then belonged to Sharjah). Dubai was a tiny territory because Shaikh Said bin Maktum, the Ruler of Dubai, had little control over the bedu

tribes.<sup>(5)</sup> However, Wadi Hatta (the enclave of the Emirate of Dubai on the border with Oman) was included with Dubai territory. As can be seen from Figure 5.1, the boundary line included the city of Dubai on the coast with its hinterland, and Hatta in the Hajarin Mountains west of Jabal Sumaini. Another conclusion to be drawn from the 1937 map is that the border line between Abu Dhabi and Dubai is marked with a bold dashed line running from Jabal Ali which is to where Shaikh Shakbut claimed his territory.<sup>(6)</sup>

Dibba on the 1937 map is shown as a complete unit. The situation changed later on. In Julian Walker's map of 1963 Dibba is divided between three states: Dibba al-Bayya to the Sultanate of Oman; the middle, Dibba al-Husn, to Sharjah; and the third, Dibba al-Gurfa, to the Emirate of Fujairah.

In February 1963, Julian Walker supplied the Research Department of the Foreign Office with sketch maps and information. From this, a new map was drawn. The new map showed considerable differences in the Trucial States boundaries from the 1937 map. This was the first Trucial State internal boundary map, and it remains the basis for establishing the internal boundaries of the Emirates. The desire for political independence was a major issue among certain members of the Qawasim federation, and is an important factor in understanding the changing of boundary lines between the Emirates from 1937 to 1963<sup>(7)</sup>. This period saw the independence of Fujairah from the Qawasim federation recognized by the British government in 1952. Kalba, which was an independent Shaikhdom in 1936 however, was re-incorporated with Sharjah in 1952. Hemriyyah also tried to break away from the Qawasim and become independent, but failed <sup>(8)</sup> (see Chapter 3).

These movements towards independence within the Qawasim federation affected the boundary demarcation. The internal boundary of the U.A.E. is a reflection of these movements and explains why the enclaves emerged in the 1963 map whose aims are examined in the following section.

### 5.3 Aims of the 1963 map

One of the important goals of the 1963 map which fixed the internal boundaries of the Trucial States (U.A.E.) concerned the oil concessions and the desire to establish which territory belongs to which Shaikhdom. In other words, the establishment of precise and clearly defined boundaries between the Emirates had become necessary in the 1950's when some recognition of the potential oil resources of the area was possible. Once the Rulers began to grant concessions to the oil companies, demarcation of the boundaries between the Emirates became essential.<sup>(9)</sup>

A second goal was to address the security needs of the exploration teams of the oil companies in the interior of the area, and in particular to show the oil company teams whose land they were exploring.

The difficulties of delimitation were illustrated in a paragraph published by *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 August 1954:

*"For a long time the Foreign Office has been patiently trying to get them agreed, but the lines on the map remain tentatively dotted. No Ruler will make concessions when the pencil hovers over an area which he thinks might be the very spot to yield a millionaire's revenue.....Certain areas of the desert could then be marked as disputed, with the understanding that if oil were ever found there the revenue would be equally shared."*<sup>(7)</sup>

### 5.4 Background to the 1955 survey

In 1945, the Foreign Office in London replaced the India Office in responsibility for Trucial States affairs, and consequently had to deal with the boundary problems in the area.

In 1954, the Foreign Office detailed Julian Walker to map the frontiers between the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman and the Trucial States, as well as the inter-state boundaries of the Trucial States. Walker was Assistant Political Agent in Dubai from

1953-55, and was to be the last Political Agent in Dubai from 1970-71. Early in 1955, he began to carry out a delimitation enquiry and survey, and in May of that year presented a 116 page boundary report in which he was able to recommend a final decision in 20 out of the 36 areas he had surveyed. In seven areas he was able to reach only a more limited form of agreement, and in nine cases he found it impossible to make any recommendation.<sup>(10)</sup>

Before Walker started his work in 1955, Sir Rupert Hay described boundary problems in the Trucial States in the following terms:

*"The boundary questions in Trucial Oman are extraordinarily complicated. Firstly we have the boundaries of the Shaikhdoms with each other. Political officers have been endeavouring to fix them for several years..."<sup>(11)</sup>*

It is also clear that before Walker arrived, many political agents had had some dealings with border demarcation, including P.D. Stobart (Political Agent from 1949-51), A.J. Wilton<sup>(12)</sup> (Political Agent from 1951-52), and C.M. Pirie-Gordon (Political Agent in Dubai from 1953-55) who started the arbitration work by touring the boundary between the two Shaikhdoms of Umm al-Quwain and Ras al-Khaimah. He was so disillusioned by his first day's experience in the field (April 1954), that he decided that it would not be possible for him to carry out the work necessary for boundary arbitration and abandoned it in preference for his normal office work. In his place, he delegated the boundary work to his assistant in the Political Agency, Julian Walker.<sup>(13)</sup>

## **5.5 Difficulties faced by Walker in his boundaries demarcation**

During the survey Walker encountered many obstacles. What maps of the area existed were far from accurate, and for some areas there were no maps at all. Thus, he had to make his own maps and he started by climbing mountains to sketch the countryside around about. A useful book about surveying was a key text for him: *Hints for*

*Travellers*, published by the Royal Geographical Society (first published in 1854 and revised in 1865, 1871 and 1937).

According to his report of 1955, the question of sovereignty was another obstacle. The European concept of sovereignty was unknown in the Trucial States, except perhaps in the Ruler's control over his own 'capital city'.<sup>(14)</sup> Furthermore, there were problems of access. In some areas the Landrover simply could not be driven, especially in the mountains. He was tempted, therefore, to press on in the easiest terrain, for as he said: "*A fifteen mile frontier in barren desert looked far more impressive than two miles in valueless rugged mountain territory, which was less likely to contain an oil-field*"<sup>(15)</sup> The geographical features of the U.A.E. (see Figure 5.2) are such that the eastern region is mountainous but the western region is sandy desert. Worse, in the mountainous areas flash floods occur the runoff rushing from the mountains down narrow ravines making surveying additionally hazardous.

Yet another obstacle was the heat of summer, which overtook Walker and his small team and made travel more difficult. Accordingly, he was trying to hurry to finish his survey in the cooler months. The most pressing difficulty was the requirement for speed and progress.

An interesting problem resulted from Walker using elderly bedu who held a repository of historical information in their memories. Whilst Walker benefitted considerably from their local knowledge, he found great difficulty in placing the information in time. To the bedu, everything in the past, whether fifty years before or a few weeks earlier, was stated to have happened *ams* (yesterday). To get round this, he would ask them to dig in their memory to recollect contemporary events in order to date the event in which he was interested, and record evidence of people who had been involved.<sup>(16)</sup>

*Figure 5.2 A satellite photograph of the northern Emirates .*



## 5.6 Principles

In his efforts to demarcate the internal boundaries between Shaikhdoms, Walker applied a number of principles as a basis for boundary dispute settlement. He gleaned details of the background to the dispute from files held by the Political Agency in Dubai, and by the Political Residency in Bahrain, and also from Lorimer's invaluable *Gazeteer*.<sup>(17)</sup>

According to the report Walker submitted in March 1955 on Trucial States frontier settlement, the following principles to establish ownership of a territory were taken as the basis for internal boundary settlement, listed in approximate order of importance:

1. Control of several years' standing in an area, and tribal recognition of that control.
2. The collection of *zakat* (on crops).
3. The allegiance of tribesmen settled in the area.
4. Historical evidence: divided into 5 subjects as follows:
  - a. agreements.
  - b. *zakat*.
  - c. settlement of disputes.
  - d. past occupation.
  - e. development and use of territory.
5. Ownership of property.<sup>(18)</sup>

### 5.6.1 Control of several years' standing in an area, and tribal recognition of that control

Khur Fakkan is the main enclave of Sharjah on the Gulf of Oman. Walker used the principle of long-term control over an area in concluding:<sup>(19)</sup>

*"Sharjah should be awarded the whole area as delineated by Khalid Bin Ahmed ... Sharjah's claims to the Khur al Fakkan area, as stated by Khalid bin Ahmed in 1937 appear not to be seriously disputed by anyone."*

### 5.6.2 The collection of *zakat* (on crops).

The payment of *zakat* is the third pillar of Islam, and is a tithe of 2.5%. *Zakat* was a tax on the agricultural produce of the country. In the Trucial States there were two main divisions of *zakat*: on dates (or other crops) and on livestock. The former was more common, and was normally collected annually by the *Wali* (the Shaikh's representative in each town). Importantly for Walker, *zakat* on dates and other crops had stronger connections with the land than *zakat* on cattle and other livestock. For this reason, and also because few Shaikhs collected *zakat* on cattle and other livestock, it was not taken into account in the boundary settlements.<sup>(20)</sup>

Walker was told by tribesmen that receipt of *zakat* by a Shaikh implied that the Shaikh was the owner of the land on which the *zakat* was paid. *Zakat* is bound up with the land in as much as the tribes paid tax on palms and other crops to a Ruler. Thus land *zakat* establishes current sovereignty over any area. If the tribal subjects of one Shaikh move to another Shaikh's territory, the tribes still pay *zakat* on their non-moveables (such as wheat crops and date palms) to the first Shaikh. If they transfer their *zakat* payment to the second Shaikh, they are admitting that they have changed allegiance.

An example of a Trucial States boundary dispute settlement based on *zakat*, is that between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah concerning the village of al-Mahariza Masafi. In his March 1955 boundary settlement report, Walker concluded:<sup>(21)</sup>

*"The best logical basis for settlement in a fairly well populated area such as these mountains is the collection of zakat especially on non-moveables such as wheat and dates. Because of this, I favour Ras al-Khaimah's claim to sovereignty over the whole of this area."*

It became clear that, because the inhabitants of Masafi village were paying *zakat* to the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah, Walker awarded this village to Ras al-Khaimah.

### **5.6.3 Tribal allegiance**

Another principle used by Walker, listed third above, is tribal allegiance. This is sometimes complicated, and has several disadvantages. Some tribes, such as the Mazari, divided their allegiance between Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah and Abu Dhabi. Another characteristic of tribal allegiance was tribal flight. This occurred both long before and subsequent to the establishment of the federation: in 1835, the Qubaisat tribe, a branch of Bani Yas, migrated to Khur al-Udaid; in the 1960s, the al-Zaab tribe left Jazirat al-Hamra (the Red Island) just off the Ras al-Khaimah coast in a mass migration to Abu Dhabi when they disputed with Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasimi, the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah over the distribution of the Emirate's income.<sup>(22)</sup> The al-Zaab tribe now have better relations with Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayyan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi and the President of the U.A.E.. They settled in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi where one of Abu Dhabi's districts is named by them, al-Zaab.

Walker examined tribal loyalties, and within his survey he marked each well and palm tree, and he listened to old men's views on grazing rights and water ownership:

*"There were local historians on the Coast who had details to contribute, and there were elderly bedu whose memories of incidents might be as clear as if they had happened yesterday."<sup>(23)</sup>*

Then he pencilled in a boundary before finally holding detailed negotiations with the Rulers concerned.<sup>(24), (25)</sup>

One of the ways in which Walker was influenced by the social life of the people in the Trucial States, and by the system of tribal loyalties, was settlement of Ras al-Khaimah's claim to Wadi al-Qur. Walker concluded:<sup>(26)</sup>

*"On the evidence, I consider that the whole area should be awarded to Ras al-Khaimah ... The local tribesmen, Dahaminah, Beni Kaab and Biduwat, all recognise that the area is under de facto control of Ras al-Khaimah, as do the neighbouring authorities - Juma bin Saliman, Wali of Hajarain, and Sheikhan bin Said, Wali of Masfut."*

Walker used historical evidence as a second basis for awarding Wadi al-Qur to Ras al-Khaimah:<sup>(27)</sup>

*"The Sultan wrote letters to the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah and carried out negotiations with him between 1938 and 1946, which indicated that he regarded the responsibility for the area as being Ras al-Khaimah's."*

#### **5.6.4 Historical evidence**

There are further examples of Walker's use of historical evidence. For example, Wadi al-Hilu belongs to Sharjah today, and lies very close to Wadi al-Qur. From his examination of historical records, Walker concluded: *"The whole of this area should be awarded to Sharjah."* Under the 1914 (1332 AH) Qawasim Agreement, Wadi al-Hilu was awarded to Sharjah.

Walker also interviewed some tribal leaders:<sup>(28)</sup>

*"At the present time the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah, the Dahamina of the Wadis Qur and Manai, and representatives of the Beni Kaab, admit that the wadi is the territory of Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan who keeps a Wali at Hassa."*

Another example of Walker's use of historical evidence in boundary dispute settlement concerns Kalba and Khur Kalba. Basing his conclusion on historical records, Walker argued that:<sup>(29)</sup>

*"The area should be awarded to Sharjah ... This area was claimed by Khalid bin Ahmed, late Regent of Kalba, in his statement of 1937. There is no dispute over the district as a whole, and the Ruler of Fujairah recognises that it belongs to Sharjah."*

Following the completion of Walker's field survey, J.P. Tripp, the Political Agent in Dubai, sent official letters during 1956 and 1957 to the Trucial Coast Shaikhs informing them of their Shaikhdom's boundaries.<sup>(30)</sup>

Some of the rulers were far from pleased with the settlement and asked for further investigations. The most serious problems regarding boundaries were between Abu Dhabi and Dubai; Sharjah and Dubai; Fujairah and Sharjah; Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah and the Oman-Trucial States boundaries (see Chapter 6).

The Foreign Office sent the Right Honorable Lord Martin Buckmaster between 1963 and 1967 to find a solution to the unsettled areas. He made some recommendations, the most important of which concerned the Wadi Madha and Umm al-Zamul which helped to solve the dispute between Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Muscat.<sup>(31)</sup> In 1964, Walker prepared a second report on the boundaries question in which he sought to justify the solutions proposed in his report of March 1955.<sup>(32)</sup>

Many commentators believe that, during the period of British occupation of the region, from 1820-1971, in order to protect its interests Britain adopted a 'divide and rule' policy. Other commentators retort that the British were responsible only for the external affairs of the area. Whilst the second argument is undoubtedly technically correct, there were clearly some exceptions when British political officers interfered in Trucial States' internal affairs. For instance, when disputes occurred (1960) between the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah and the Shaikh of Fujairah, the Political Agent in Dubai asked for the Trucial Oman Scouts to be stationed in the disputed area in Masafi village.<sup>(33)</sup>

In attempting to demonstrate the 'divide and rule' policy, Khalifah writes:

*"The British official would drive to isolated villages and tribal encampments and then ask the elders there to which one of the seven rulers, in addition to the sultan of Oman, they owed allegiance. A consensus on this matter would prompt Walker to simply encircle such a village or encampment, utilizing whatever landmarks were available. He would then submit to British authorities his recommendations as to which of the states this piece of land should belong."<sup>(34)</sup>*

However, the records also show that at the meeting of the Trucial States Council in 1954, i.e. before Walker's survey, the Rulers of the six Emirates, requested by way of a resolution to the Political Agent, Mr C.M. Pirie-Gordon, discussed the determination of their respective boundaries.<sup>(35)</sup>

It is inappropriate to blame all the problems of the region on British diplomacy because division and splits are a tribal characteristic.<sup>(36)</sup> Tribes such as the Mazari are distributed over more than one Emirate: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras al-Khaimah and some in the Sultanate of Oman. This affected demarcation of boundaries. The Na'im tribe lived in Buraimi, Ajman, Sharjah as well as in Al-Ain, making demarcation of the internal boundary very complicated, resulting in the emergence of enclaves (see Chapter 6).

Another problem involved recognition, or not, by the British Government of specific Emirates. Britain never recognized Jazirat al-Hamra and Rams which both signed the original Truce of 1820, and stopped recognising Kalba. Instead, these Shaikhdoms were annexed to the Emirates of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah. Although the aim was not to create enclaves, tribal loyalties inevitably resulted in the emergence of enclaves.

The internal boundary demarcation and the report and the recommendations prepared by Walker were accepted in London and were agreed in advance by all the Rulers concerned who agreed not to dispute the results of the arbitration with one temporary exception.<sup>(37)</sup> This fact can be seen clearly in letters which were sent by J.P.

Tripp, the Political Agent, Trucial States, in Dubai, to the rulers of the Trucial Shaikhdoms, informing them of their boundaries between the Trucial States and the Sultanate of Muscat. The letter to Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah, ended with J.P. Tripp's words:

*"As Mr. Walker has discussed the reasons for these decisions with you, I trust that you will accept them as promised in your letter."*<sup>(38)</sup>

As mentioned above, the 1963 map is still the official map to be used in the U.A.E. for boundary recognition, and this map was drawn according to sketch maps and information supplied by Walker. However, before Walker conducted his boundary demarcation from 1954 until 1960, Sir Rupert Hay described the situation of the boundary in the Trucial States in the following terms:

*"...The points where the boundaries meet the coast can be fixed with a reasonable degree of accuracy, but in the deserts of the interior there are very few data to work on. In the mountains at the eastern end of the Trucial Coast the territories of Muscat, Ras al Khaimah, Sharjah and Fujairah are hopelessly intermingled, and even Dubai and Ajman own villages."*<sup>(39)</sup>

It can be concluded from this report that before Walker's time, to attempt to delimit the boundaries of the region, the situation itself was complicated by many factors such as tribal loyalty, the independence movement within the Qawasim federation, and historical facts. When Walker faced these problems in his survey, the end result was the political boundary lines and several internal and external enclaves within other territories, which, to those who wish to see it that way, suggests a policy of 'divide and rule'. However, Walker's 1955 report to the Foreign Office in London said nothing about the tactic of isolating villages, even though he reported every simple step and action that he took, such as that he borrowed alidades, plane tables, range finders, clinometers and other instruments from the Directorate of Overseas Survey. Furthermore, if he had been deliberately following such a policy, then that kind of

tactic would surely have appeared within his several reports which have subsequently been released by the Public Record Office.

At the International Boundaries Research Unit Conference, at Durham in 1991, Walker explained how the demarcation of the internal boundaries of the Trucial States was affected by tribal loyalties. He was answering a question about why a village such as Dibba, the population of which is less than three thousand, became divided between the Emirates of Fujairah and Sharjah and the Sultanate of Oman. He replied that when he asked the inhabitants who lived there about their loyalties he found that there were three groups with three different loyalties: one loyal to the Sultanate of Oman (Dibba al-Bayya), the second group loyal to the Qawasim (Dibba al-Husn), and the third group loyal to the Sharqeyyin tribe (Dibba al-Gurfa).<sup>(40)</sup>

From the foregoing, it can be inferred that tribal loyalties were not immutable, and from time to time such a change could involve the transfer of an entire *dirah* from one state to another. According to Walker's 1955 report, it was clear that when he was describing the location of any area, in most cases he was referring to Lorimer's description of the location. He was also referring to records and documents going back to 1937 (Bahrain file) and 1946 (Sharjah file) looking at the area at the time it was under each Shaikh's control. Furthermore, when he prepared his survey he himself asked the Shaikhs who claimed the area and he recorded their views but his personal decision always came at the end of the report and headed by the word "Conclusion."

An example serves to illustrate the point. Area number 19 in Walker's report was Wadi Shauka. First, he referred to Sharjah's Foreign Office file kept in the Residency dated 19.10.1951, and then he referred to Lorimer's report: "*Lorimer reports Shauka as being in the Ras al Khaimah district*".<sup>(42)</sup> Walker concluded with his decision, which, in respect of Wadi Shauka, was: "*This area should be awarded to Ras al Khaimah, the*

*frontier between that Shaikhdome and Sharjah lying at the foothills just to the east of Al Khari. There should be no objection to an announcement of this decision".<sup>(43)</sup>*

### **5.6.5 The application of more than one principle**

In the area of Hatta and Masfut, Walker applied more than one principle for settling the boundary, confirming Hatta to be an enclave of Dubai and Masfut an enclave of Ajman.

First, he examined the historical facts in Lorimer's Gazeteer. Second, he examined tribal control over the area:

*"Dubai's claim to the area is based on de facto control through a Wali, Juma bin Salimin, living at Hajarain and collecting zakat from the villages of the district. This claim is recognised by local tribesmen and authorities (Walis of Masfut and Wadi Qor, Beni Kaab and Biduwat).<sup>(41)</sup>*

It can be concluded from the text that the collection of *zakat* was a third principle applied by Walker to award Hatta to Dubai.

### **5.6.6 Neutral Zones**

Walker used neutral zones in cases where he could not reach any solution both due to lack of evidence regarding on which side certain land belonged, and also in cases where the two parties had strong titles: *"The Ruler of Ajman and the Shaikh of the Bani Kaab both had strong titles, as in the Wadi Hadf, it was necessary to create a neutral zone".<sup>(44)</sup>* (See Chapter 6)

## **5.7 Analysis of Walker's map of 1963**

Walker drew 32 detailed sketch maps, at a scale of 1 cm to 1 km, of the boundaries of the Trucial States. From those sketch maps, and from information supplied by Walker, the Foreign Office drew two maps, one for Al-Ain and Buraimi Oasis north to the Abu Dhabi-Dubai boundary, and the other for the northern Emirates. Enclaves

of the south east coast represented recognition of tribal allegiances. Looking at the map of the political boundaries of the Trucial States, it may be seen that there are boundaries between the Sultanate of Oman and with every Emirate in the south east of the map: Muscat borders Sharjah, Dubai, Ajman, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah and Abu Dhabi. There is also Wadi Madha, the Omani enclave within U.A.E. territory. The only Emirate without a boundary with the Sultanate of Oman is the Emirate of Umm al-Quwain (see Table 7.1).

There are two kinds of enclave in the U.A.E., international enclaves (between a U.A.E. Emirate and Oman) and internal enclaves, which are enclaves of any Emirate lying within the territory of another Emirate.

## **5.8 Analysis**

The emergence of the internal boundaries between the Emirates sprang from the tribal political idea and the loyalties of tribesmen to the Ruler himself. A second factor was the collapse of the two strong federations, the Bani Yas and the Qawasim. The 1820 treaty between Great Britain and the Shaikhdoms gave each small Emirate a politically independent character. In the 1930s, the oil companies wanted each Emirate to have its own boundary line so that thereafter the concessions would not interlock each Emirate with its neighbours.

### **5.8.1 Population and the area**

Historically, the free movement of tribesmen in the desert area had known no limits. The situation formally changed after the discovery of oil. At the beginning of the 1960s, each Emirate became bounded by lines, and became involved in border agreements with its neighbours. However, the boundary lines had little impact on transportation links between the Emirates, in a country with few highways (see Chapter 7).

The question to be raised here is, since 1960 when Walker completed his survey on boundary settlements, to what extent tribal groups still have power? In terms of the ordinary citizen, tribal identity is still important enough to be presented in official offices such as government ministries, local administration councils, and above all, there is a space on the Passport to print to which tribe the passport holder belongs. Furthermore, in Fujairah the greater number of inhabitants are still tribal, in the sense that few inhabit cities.

At government level, Abu Dhabi and Dubai are ruled by al-Bu Falah and al-Bu Falasa respectively, both of which are branches of the Bani Yas. The Bani Yas, which includes the Al-Nahayyan family, are the most important tribe and have for a many years exercised control over the following areas: Abu Dhabi, Liwa, Al-Ain and other villages in the Buraimi Oasis, where they have held long close relationships with the Al-Dhawahir. Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah are still dominated by the Qawasim. Al-Sharqiyyin have dominated the Emirate of Fujairah since 1952 when it was recognized by the British Government, and became independent of the Qawasim. The Emirate of Ajman is ruled by the Nuaim family who originally came from Al-Buraimi. Umm al-Quwain is dominated by the Al-Ali tribe.<sup>(45)</sup>

### **5.8.2 Boundary lines and lengths**

The 1963 map shows external as well as internal boundary lines. The external border lines show three incursions by the Sultanate of Oman into the territories of the Trucial States. The northern incursions, or enclaves, located are called Musandam Peninsula, the central enclaves are called Wadi Madha, and the southern enclave is called Mahadah, and is surrounded by Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah and (Masfut) Ajman territories. The lengths of the external boundary lines are as follows: the total length of the international borders is 1,163 km (723 mi). The border with the Sultanate of Oman runs 513 km (319 mi), that with Saudi Arabia 586 km (364 mi), and with Qatar

64 km (40 mi). There has been no border with Qatar since the 1974 agreement.<sup>(46)</sup> According to different sources mentioned, the total length of international borders is 1010 km with two neighbours: the border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia runs 470 km (around 47% of total U.A.E. land boundaries), and that with Oman 540 km (around 53% of total land boundaries of the U.A.E.).<sup>(47)</sup> Figures measured by the researcher with assistance of the cartographer of the Geography Department, University of Durham, from a map of Dubai produced for the Dubai Municipality Survey Department with a scale of 1:1,500,000 (100 kms) suggest the U.A.E. boundary length with Saudi Arabia is 450 km, that with Oman is 540 km and the total international boundaries of the U.A.E. is 990 km.

**Table 5.1** *The internal boundary length of each Emirate*

No.	Emirate	Internal Border Length
1.	Abu Dhabi	735 km
2.	Dubai	185 km
3.	Sharjah	370 km
4.	Ajman	35 km
5.	Umm al-Quwain	72 km
6.	Ras al-Khaimah	142 km
7.	Fujairah	145 km
Total		1684 km

Source: *The Physical Geography of the U.A.E.*, Al-Qarah Lilgamih, Dubai, 1991 (Arabic) pp. 16-17.

Although the total area of the Emirate of Dubai is 3,900 km<sup>2</sup>, and the total area of the Emirate of Sharjah is 2,600 km<sup>2</sup>, Table 5.1 shows that the internal boundary length of Sharjah is greater than that of Dubai because the territory of Sharjah is distributed throughout the U.A.E., on the western coast of the U.A.E. as well as on the eastern coast. Moreover Dubai has just one enclave belonging to it namely Wadi Hatta, but Sharjah has several enclaves and it borders with all the six member of the U.A.E., including some parts of the Sultanate of Oman. (See Chapters 6 and 7)

Ajman, the smallest member of the U.A.E. at 400 km<sup>2</sup>, has two enclaves belonging to it namely, Manama and Masfut. The internal boundary of the U.A.E. is best described as a jigsaw puzzle due to all the Emirates except Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain having enclaves in the territory of others, claims on neighbours, or shared neutral zones.

## 5.9 Conclusion

It may be said in conclusion that the British Foreign Office which replaced the Indian Government in handling British interests in the area adopted a new policy of involvement in the internal affairs of the Trucial States after 1947. In 1952, Britain recognized the independence of Fujairah but considered Kalba to be part of Sharjah. This step was followed by a demarcation of the inter-state boundaries. This chapter has shown that the demarcation of the internal boundaries of the Trucial States was based on a variety of different factors, including historical evidence of tribal loyalty, and the paying of *zakat*. From these, the overlapping and the complication of the internal boundary of the U.A.E. arose. The 1963 map is still the official map in current use in the U.A.E.. It probably represents a very fair allocation of territories between the Shaikhdoms.

The demarcation of the inter-state boundaries of the Trucial States paved the way for the next step which was the federation. In *Footnotes in the Sand*, Sir Bernard Burrows said: "*As regards the Trucial States the despatch said that I should determine the boundaries between these states and there was an ultimate objective of achieving some measure of federation between them.*"<sup>(48)</sup>

For a greater understanding of the internal boundaries of the U.A.E., and in order to focus more sharply on the detail, the next chapter presents case studies of selected disputes on boundaries in the U.A.E..

## Endnotes

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5. Letter from Julian Walker, 1 August 1992.
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  27. FO 371/114648, Report prepared by Julian Walker on the Trucial States boundary settlement, March 1955.
  28. FO 371/114648, Report prepared by Julian Walker on the Trucial States boundary settlement, March 1955.
  29. FO 371/114648, Report prepared by Julian Walker on the Trucial States boundary settlement, March 1955.
  30. "I have the honor to refer to your undertaking to accept the decision of the Political Agent in frontier arbitration between yourselves and other Trucial Coast Rulers in certain sections of your territory. Mr. Walker has examined all the available evidence concerning your territorial claims on my behalf and on the basis of his report I have come to the following decisions....". FO-371/120604 . A letter dated 2 April 1956 from J.P. Tripp, the Political Agent in Dubai, to Shaikh Said bin Maktum, C.B.E., the Ruler of Dubai, and Shaikh Rashid bin Said, Regent of Dubai.
  31. The researcher interviewed the R.H. Lord Martin Buckmaster at the House of Lords on 16 January 1991.
  32. The Dubai-Sharjah Boundary Arbitration, February 1980, p.34.
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- However, the writer asked Julian Walker what the exception was. He answered: the exception was Shaikh Shakbut of Abu Dhabi. Interview with Julian Walker at the Foreign Office, London, 1992. Also, Lecture given by Julian Walker at Durham University, 19 July 1991.
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# Chapter 6

## Case Studies of Selected Disputes

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses selected disputes which have emerged from time to time between the Emirates before and after the establishment of the federation, most notably the dispute between Abu Dhabi and Dubai which was finally resolved by the 1968 agreement. This agreement was a precondition for the 1971 federation. Boundary disputes surfaced actively after independence, and the problems arising from them, from time to time, threatened the foundation of the Union. Some of these problems resulted in armed clashes and the deaths of a number of nationals, such the clash in 1972 between Kalba (the eastern region of Sharjah) and Fujairah, over a disputed area. A serious incident followed the shooting down, by a Sharjah boundary guard, of a helicopter carrying a son of Shaikh Rashid, ruler of Dubai from 1958-1990. The chapter also focuses on the enclaves, which are an unusual but not unique feature in the boundary problems of the world: one Emirate laying claim to a village separated from it by the border line of another Emirate. The partition of Dibba in 1955 separated into three parts, is also discussed. The chapter will also deal with Hatta and Masfut. Although these two villages are close to the Omani border, they actually belong to Dubai and Ajman and are encircled by Omani territories. Whilst not all of these territorial anomalies are actively disputed, they give rise to persistent administrative problems.

### 6.2 Abu Dhabi and Dubai internal boundary

Before examining the internal boundary between the two Emirates, it is advisable here to look at the historic role of the Trucial coast in the creation of Dubai.

**Table 6.1** *Boundary Disputes in the U.A.E: Types of Dispute, The Methods and the Outcomes of the Settlement*

No.	Dispute	Method of Settlement	Outcome
1. +	Abu Dhabi and Qatar over Halul, Dayyinah islands - 20 March 1969	Bi-lateral agreement	Halul, al-Ashat and Shirauh awarded to Qatar. Dayyinah awarded to Abu Dhabi. Both sides have equal rights of ownership over al-Bunduq oil field and all revenues from the field are equally shared
2. *	Dubai and Sharjah boundary dispute - April 1985	Arbitration	Al-Mamzar peninsula was awarded to Dubai in return Sharjah was awarded a long tract of land. The final outcome reduced border tension and enhanced development.
3. *	Sharjah and Fujairah enclave dispute - 1983	Arbitration	The federal government purchased the orchard and granted both parties equal rights to utilise its well.
4. +	Ras al-Khaimah and Oman border dispute - December 1979	Bilateral agreement	Abu Dhabi threatened to stop economic aid to Ras al-Khaimah unless it settled the dispute with Oman. The 1991 agreement between R.A.K and Oman for oil delivery from Bukha field of Oman to R.A.K for processing at Khur Khuwair. Delivery began at the end of 1993.
5. +	Al-Buraimi Oasis dispute - 1800 to 21 August 1974	Arbitration	Saudi Arabia got an outlet to the Gulf (Khur al-Udaid and Khur Duwaihen) and the oil field. In return Saudi Arabia recognized the federation of the U.A.E. in 1974 and the six villages of Abu Dhabi in Al-Ain.
6. *	Dubai and Abu Dhabi dispute - Offshore: 18 February 1968; Land boundary: Neutral zone in 1969	Mediation	The Agreement solved both their territorial and offshore boundaries by creating a neutral zone out of the disputed area near Tawi al- Faqqa and conceded Dubai's sovereignty over the disputed Fath offshore oilfield. Moreover any revenues from any further oil found at that location would be shared equally.
7. +	Sharjah and Iran dispute over Abu Musa - 30 November 1971	Unresolved	Iran occupied Abu Musa. In return joint administration by Sharjah and Iran over the island in 1971. In 1992 Iran annexed the southern part belonging to Sharjah
8. +	Ras al-Khaimah and Iran dispute over the Greater and Lesser Tunbs - 30 November 1971	Unresolved	Iran occupied the islands by force.
9. *	Ras Al-Khaimah and Fujairah boundary dispute from 1993-	Unresolved	Demarcation is in progress by Mr J. Walker.
10. *	Umm al-Quwaim and Ras Al-Khaimah boundary dispute - 29 May 1994	Mediation	Officially announced in Abu Dhabi of the agreement not been published or released.
* Internal + External			

Source: The Author.

### 6.2.1 Brief Historical Introduction

As mentioned above (Chapter 3), in 1833 about 800 members of the Al Bu Falasa subsection of the Bani Yas tribe withdrew from Abu Dhabi after a dispute with its Ruler over the murder of Shaikh Tahnun by his brother the ruler Shaikh Khalifah bin Shakhbut.<sup>(1)</sup> The Al Bu Falasa established themselves as the ruling family. This migration marks the beginning of Dubai as an independent Shaikhdom. The community was ruled by Maktum bin Buti from 1833 until his death in 1852; all subsequent rulers have descended from Maktum who has given his name to the ruling family. Dubai was free from Wahhabi influence which greatly affected other parts of Arabia in the nineteenth century.

The Qawasim was a tribal confederation which inhabited both shores of the Gulf for many centuries. The Qawasim had established their authority over Trucial Oman north of Dubai by the eighteenth century, and today provide the ruling families for both Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah. The Qawasim were encouraged by the Wahhabi religious movement. In 1800 certain tribes of the Ghafiri faction, including the Qawasim, adopted the religious beliefs of the Wahhabies. The Hinawi faction however, including the Bani Yas (Al-Bu Falah, the ruling family of Abu Dhabi, and Al Bu Falasa, the ruling family of Dubai) resisted the Wahhabies. The Qawasim, historically, were rivals of the Bani Yas. Another reason may be that the Al-Maktum family, the ruling family of Dubai, always operated a liberal, open door policy in order to encourage trade. Sir Donald Hawley believed that the policy of Shaikh Maktum bin Hasher, who became ruler of Dubai in 1894, was liberal and enlightened and his outlook resulted in the rapid growth of Dubai.<sup>(2)</sup> It can be concluded that Dubai was for a long time challenging the maritime importance of Sharjah and by the end of the nineteenth century had become the principal port on the coast and the main trade centre not only on the Trucial Coast itself but also in the Gulf region.

## **6.2.2 The beginning of the boundary dispute**

Shaikh Shakbut, Ruler of Abu Dhabi, was the first of the Trucial Shaikhs to grasp the significance of territorial limits after the discovery of oil. Accordingly, he suggested that geologists of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company search for artesian wells in his territories.<sup>(3)</sup>

## **6.2.3 The Abu Dhabi-Dubai agreement in 1937**

Lorimer placed the Abu Dhabi-Dubai boundary on the coast at Khor Ghanadah, which favoured Dubai. Abu Dhabi, on the other hand, claimed a point on the coast at the latitude of Jabal Ali. The first negotiations in the early period to resolve the problem of boundaries peacefully occurred between Abu Dhabi and Dubai at the end of 1936. Shaikh Said bin Maktum of Dubai and Shaikh Shakbut of Abu Dhabi failed to arrive at a resolution of the boundary question, so both Shaikhs agreed to refer their matter to arbitration. Ahmed bin Khalaf bin Utaibah and Ahmed bin Hilal from Abu Dhabi acted as mediators between the two Shaikhs. Having deliberated, they informed Shaikh Said that Shaikh Shakbut accepted their proposal which was that Hasat Umm al-Jibajib, 10 miles southwest of Jabal Ali, should be the point of demarcation. Shaikh Said informed his kinsmen, the Al Bu Falasa, of the mediators' proposal. The Al Bu Falasa agreed what the proposal stipulated in general, however, they requested that the boundary line should run from Bandar Hasyan which is three miles southwest of Abu Dhabi point, Hasat Umm al-Jibaib. The explanation for the Dubai modification was that they needed the jetty at Hasyan for their pearling boats.

A verbal agreement was reached, establishing that the area west of a line running from Bandar Hasyan southwards should be Abu Dhabi country and that the area east of this line should belong to Dubai.<sup>(4)</sup>

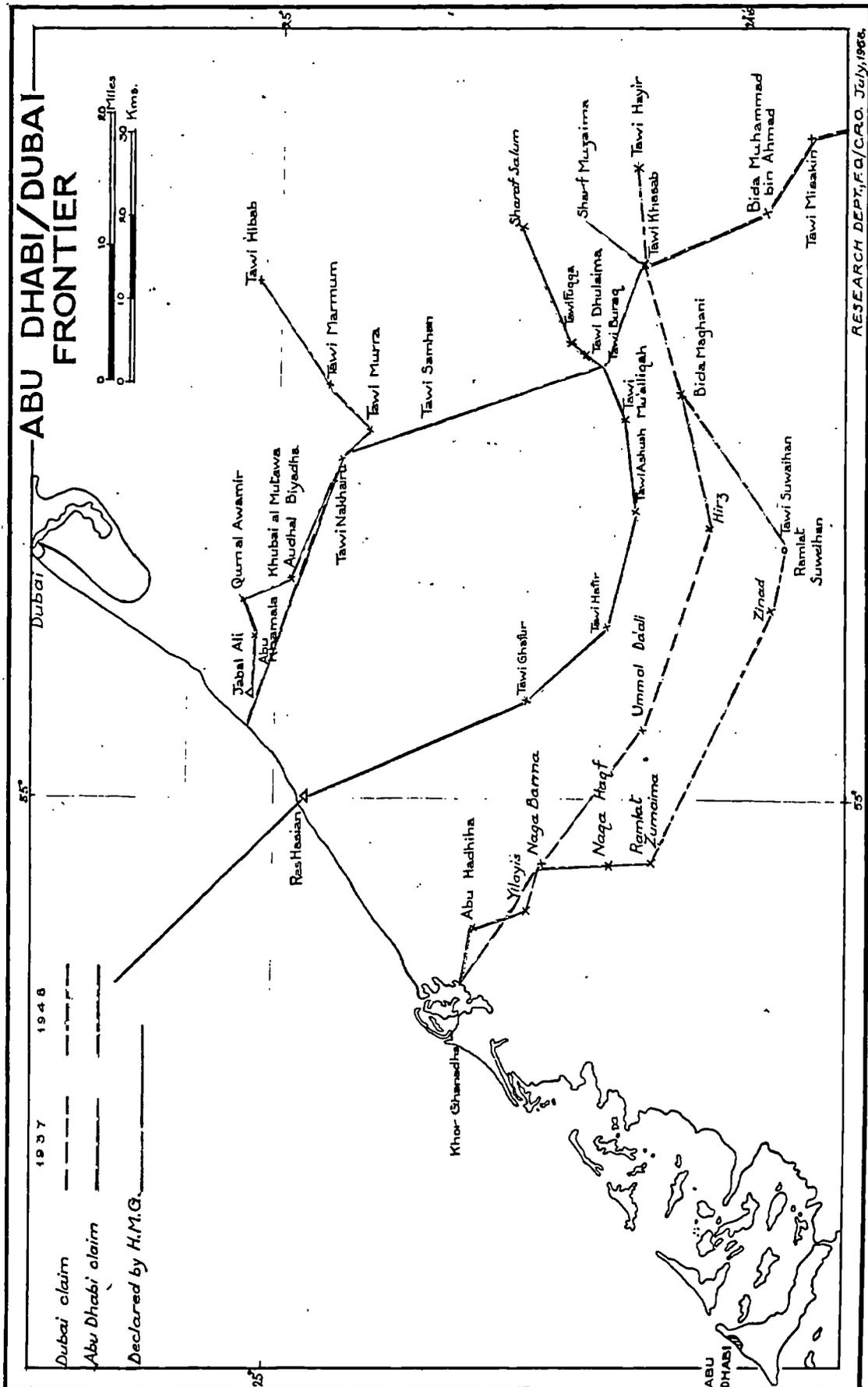
Despite the 1937 agreement between Abu Dhabi and Dubai regarding their common boundaries, a war took place between them in 1945 when Abu Dhabi occupied Khur Ghanadha, located about 40 miles south west of Dubai. Both sides resorted to their traditional desert alliances. Al Bu Falah received support from the Awamir, Manasir and Ahbab (a minor group living in Oman Al-Ain and Qatar), whilst the Dubai group was supported by the Bani Qitab. Throughout the war, tribal raiding was common.<sup>(5)</sup> The war, which continued until the middle of 1948, was the last big land war between the Trucial States. Both rulers were aware of the potential importance of every square inch of land, and therefore Shaikh Shakhbut of Abu Dhabi claimed Jabal Ali, about twenty five miles north of Khur Ghanadha, whilst Shaikh Said bin Maktum, the Ruler of Dubai claimed Khur Ghanadah as the coastal boundary between the two Shaikhdoms.<sup>(6)</sup> An agreement reached over the land boundary between Abu Dhabi and Dubai in 1965 through British mediation said that the offshore boundary should extend north from the boundary on the mainland. Dubai claimed that this meant geographical north; Abu Dhabi claimed that it implied an extension into the Gulf of the existing onshore boundary. However it is interesting to note that Britain ruled in favour of Dubai's interpretation. Dubai's future as an oil producer was threatened when Abu Dhabi's claim to the area was repeated in 1967 (Figure 6.1).<sup>(7)</sup>

In 1966 following the discovery of oil in the area of the Fateh wells, Shaikh Shakhbut questioned the validity of the 1965 agreement and laid claim to the area.<sup>(8)</sup>

#### **6.2.4 The Abu Dhabi-Dubai agreement of 1968**

On 18 February 1968 the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan, (current President of the U.A.E.) and the Ruler of Dubai, and Shaikh Rashid Bin Said Al-Maktum signed an agreement to settle an outstanding off-shore boundary dispute and on the same day they signed the agreement to form a federation between the two parties.<sup>(9)</sup> The agreement resolved both the territorial and offshore

Figure 6.1 Map of the Abu Dhabi-Dubai boundary from 1937-1948.



boundaries of the two Emirates by creating a neutral zone in the contested area (see Figure 1.1). The 1968 agreement stipulated that the revenues from any future oil found in that location would be shared equally.<sup>(10)</sup> According to the agreement the Fatah oilfield was recognised as belonging to Dubai.<sup>(11)</sup> The accord stipulated:

*"As the actual territorial water limit between Dubai and Abu Dhabi Emirates starts at Ras Hussyan on the coast, and stretches in a straight line in a northwest direction across the sea passing to the west of the Fatah wells which belong to Dubai Emirate; and as both parties wish to reconsider this limit for the benefit of the two states and their peoples; agreement has been reached between both parties on the following: First: this limit will be readjusted to annex to the Emirate of Dubai an area of the sea, lying west of the present limit parallel horizontally (large base) and equal to ten kilometres measured along the coast from the west starting from Ras Hussyan and along as its main symmetry (small base) to a length equal to the present mentioned limit in a manner to include this area west of the Fatah wells and stretching southwest to the coast."<sup>(12)</sup>*

Therefore, it can be concluded that the 1968 agreement between Abu Dhabi and Dubai provided the first practical demonstration in the area of a resolution of border problems. Moreover, the agreement was the main step to paving the way for the federation agreement between the two Emirates. Finally, it should be noted that although oil was first discovered in the Fatah field in 1966, production had been suspended because of the dispute between Abu Dhabi and Dubai over the area in which the Fatah field is located. The 1968 agreement to resolve the border dispute recognized the Fatah field as belonging to Dubai. Thereafter, the Fatah field was Dubai's only oil resource which provided the financial basis for largescale development projects which would not have been possible without oil revenues.<sup>(13)</sup> In other words, one of the main advantages of the 1968 agreement to resolve the border dispute between Abu Dhabi and Dubai was the recognition of the Fatah oilfield as belonging to Dubai which is the main factor behind Dubai's development, especially in the commercial and industrial fields.

Sir Julian Bullard commented<sup>(14)</sup> that the agreement moved the border several kilometres to the west which resulted in a large increase in Dubai's offshore oil revenues.<sup>(15)</sup>

Furthermore, it is significant to note that since the establishment of the federation on 2 December 1971, the provisional capital is Abu Dhabi. According to the U.A.E. Provisional Constitution, the permanent capital, to be named 'Al Karama', is to be built on a neutral site on the border between Abu Dhabi and Dubai.<sup>(16)</sup> However nothing has been done to implement the above article and Abu Dhabi remains the capital of the U.A.E..

### **6.2.5 The Abu Dhabi-Dubai Boundary Description**

Whilst the boundary lines between the two Emirates changed at the coast, as described in the section above, inland the border remained largely unchanged.

According to Walker's report of the boundary settlement, the boundary line between the two Emirates ran as follows: from Hasian on the coast to Tawi Ghafur,<sup>(17)</sup> thence to Tawi Hafir, thence to Tawi al Eshush. Only the boundary between Hasian and Tawi al Eshush is demarcated. Tawi Ghafur and Tawi Hafir both lie on the Dubai side of the line as defined.<sup>(18)</sup>

After 1954 several comments were made by the Political Agent about wells located on the border area between Dubai and Al-Ain, (the eastern region of Abu Dhabi Shaikhdom). After the survey they concluded as follows:

**Tawi Ashush:** The tribes that they found around the well were al bu Mahair, Sebayis, al bu Amin and al bu Rahmah of the Manasir, all subjects of Dubai.

**Tawi al Murr:** The tribe who live here are the Dhawahir of Hilli subject to the Ruler of Abu Dhabi. However, five houses were found here of the Dubai tribe.

**Tawi Nakhrah:** Whilst it is written in cement that this well was constructed by the Ruler of Dubai, Shaikh Zayed the Ruler of Abu Dhabi claimed that half the well is owned by the Dhawahir, and half by the Bani Yas of Dubai to the north.

**Tawi al Faqa:** This well was constructed in cement by Shaikh Rashid the Ruler of Dubai. <sup>(19)</sup> However, the well is located within the neutral zone, according to the 1968 agreement between the two Shaikhdoms. Two police stations have been established, one on each side. Abu Dhabi and Dubai have each to control the road and the road traffic from Dubai to Al-Ain (see Chapter 7). These wells can be seen from Figure 6.1 which shows on the one hand that Dubai's claims start from the coast (Khur Ghanadha) until the line reaches Tawi Hayer which is within Al-Ain region (Abu Dhabi Eastern District), and the boundary line which is claimed by Dubai is coloured in green. Whilst on the other hand, the Abu Dhabi claims extended to Jabal Ali (about 20 km from Dubai) to Tawi Misakin in the south, and the boundary line is coloured red. Both sides having thus raised their claims to include as many as possible of these water wells, the final decision emerged from the British Government which proposed a new line in 1952, shown in Figure 6.1 (see Appendix G). The British line is marked in blue, and starts from Ras Hasian on the coast, and runs south to Tawi Ghafur. Then the border line passes Tawi Hafir, and Tawi Ashush, Tawi Mualliqah, Tawi Dhulaima, Tawi Faqqa and finally at the end of the line is Sharaf Salum. Nevertheless, after the 1969 agreement was signed, the area from Tawi Al-Ashush to Tawi Faqqa became a neutral zone.

### **6.3 Dubai and Sharjah Internal Boundary**

The boundary disputes between Dubai and Sharjah were serious territorial disputes. The Dubai-Sharjah boundary dispute goes back to 1953 when Dubai made a claim regarding boundaries with Sharjah (Figure 6.2).<sup>(20)</sup> The rulers of both Dubai and



Sharjah accepted the decision of the Political Agent, Peter Tripp, in 1955, after field investigations carried out by Julian Walker. The decision was that:

*"the boundary point on the coast between Dubai and Sharjah is a line running between Abu Hail and Al-Mamzer to Nahada Amair leaving al bu Hail to Dubai and al Mamzer to Sharjah. This line starts at right angles from the coast and passes halfway between the houses of Hilal bin Humaid and Khalifa bin Hasan near Birka well. And thence to Hadib az zanah. From Hadib az zanah the line shall run southeastwards to Arqub Arqub leaving Aud Bilalid to Sharjah. From Arqub Arqub the line passes north to the Ghafat Thamr, south of Arqub Naub, and north of Bida'at to Chilan. From Chilan the boundary continues through Naqdat az zamul to Tawi Bil Khabis, which is divided between Sharjah and Dubai, and then turns south leaving Jiza'at bin Taabat to Dubai and passing between Arafj and Arqub Dhabian, the later being in Dubai territory. The frontier then passes through Mirial, Khobal and Qawasir, and to the west of Tawi Maghram and Bedira Maghram leaving Sih Atham to Dubai. Then it continues south to Al Alam and passes between Bada Hilal which is in Dubai territory, and Bada Zigag, Muwaihi Daij which is in Sharjah territory leaving Rummaiyyah to Dubai and dividing Arqub Salama between Sharjah and Dubai."* <sup>(21)</sup>

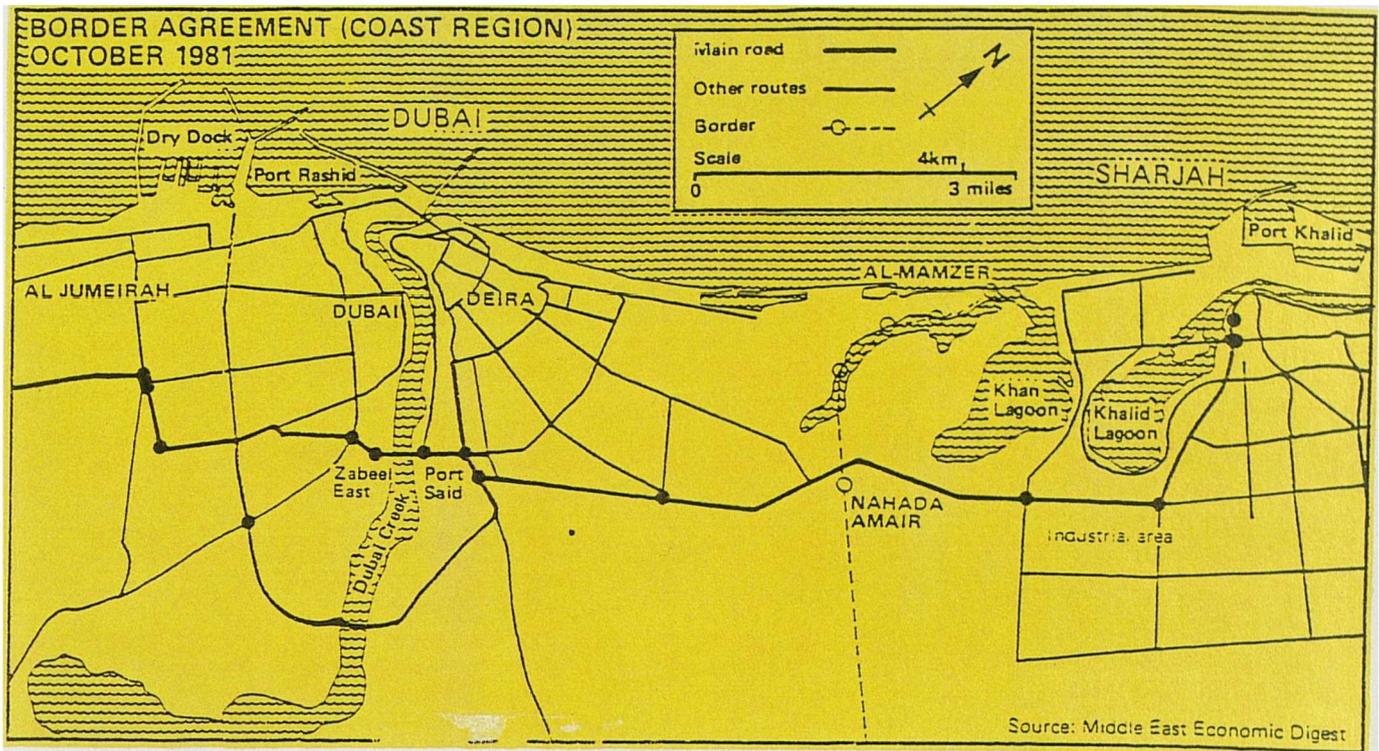
However, the boundary demarcation was sometimes uncertain:

*"As last minute evidence from both sides has made the position of Tawis Khawanij Bida'at and Tai uncertain, I am making no award of these wells yet. The temporary limit of Dubai territory in this area will therefore run just to the south of Khawanij, and the temporary limit of Sharjah territory will run just north of Tai."* <sup>(22)</sup>

*"Sharjah's temporary limit shall run just north of Tawi Bil Khabis to the east of Tawi Nezwa to Tawi Mahdatha, Rafadah, Khobie and Suweihat. From Suweihat the temporary limit will run to Khawaiser and by way of Batha Yidiya to Tawi Yidaiya. From Tawi Yideiya it will go to Tawi Fatimah and Tawi Husn. From there the limit will run to the north of Khawalid and Miraiyil to Jebal Raudha."* <sup>(23)</sup>

The area which is mentioned above was inhabited by the Bani Qitab tribes who were subject to the Ruler of Sharjah (see Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3 Dubai and Sharjah boundary dispute settlement in 1981, and one of the 72 pillars which marked the boundary line of Dubai-Sharjah.



*"Dubai's temporary limit shall run just south of Tawi Bil Khabis to the east of Tawi Lehush and the west of Tawi Hibab, and then to Tawi Murraqab and Fawa."*<sup>(24)</sup>

The areas mentioned above were inhabited by the Bani Yas tribes who were loyal to the ruler of Dubai.

### **6.3.1 Dispute between Dubai and Sharjah before federation**

In 1969 it was reported that clashes between Dubai and Sharjah took place after an attack on installations in Dubai by an armed group from the Bani Qitab tribe of Sharjah.<sup>(25)</sup>

### **6.3.2 Development of the Dispute after Federation**

The first conflict between the two Emirates after the establishment of the federation came on 21 August 1973 over an artesian well originally drilled by Dubai but sited on Sharjah's side of the border which led to an armed clash.<sup>(26)</sup> The U.A.E. Defence Minister, Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktum and a number of Dubai soldiers flew over the well in a helicopter and fired on Sharjah civilians to prevent them from drawing water from it. Sharjah forces retaliated and the helicopter was shot down. Shaikh Mohammed, of Dubai's ruling family, had a miraculous escape.<sup>(27)</sup> The dispute between the two Emirates was renewed in 1974 when Dubai began work on a corniche from the entrance to Dubai Creek up to Abu Hail and tried to expand the corniche further into the disputed area. Sharjah protested to the Federal Government. At every protest work would stop for a period, and would resume once things had quietened down. The dispute deteriorated more and more until it reached a high level of clashes in 1975 when Sharjah began the construction of a shopping and business complex in the disputed area. The schemes included a Dh 30 million (£6 million) residential and shopping centre in which the French car manufacturer Renault had an interest.<sup>(28)</sup> This dispute was complicated further by the fact that the commercial elites of Dubai

perceived the schemes as a bid by their counterparts in Sharjah to lure away business firms that were already located in, or were contemplating moving to, Dubai.<sup>(29)</sup> This boundary dispute was a principal reason behind the leadership crisis, when Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayyan, the President of the U.A.E. threatened to resign as President of the Union if the dispute was not settled peacefully.<sup>(30)</sup>

### 6.3.3 The Dispute Settlement

In October 1976 it was reported that the Ruler of Dubai, Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktum, and the Ruler of Sharjah, Shaikh Sultan al-Qasimi, "had agreed an important principle to be announced soon, regarding the settlement of the border differences between the two Emirates."<sup>(31)</sup> The issue was placed before the Supreme Council of the U.A.E. at a meeting convened on 6 November 1976. After considering the issue the Council agreed to refer it to an international arbitration committee composed of members from Britain and France.<sup>(32)</sup> The tribunal consisted of two legal experts from the United Kingdom and one from France. The Dubai government was represented at the hearing by Fox and Gibbons and the Sharjah government by Clifford Chance.<sup>(33)</sup> On 30 October 1981 the international tribunal submitted its proposal. The settlement lengthens Dubai's coastline by 3.5 km, but inland the new border cuts back across the old boundary in favour of Sharjah. According to this proposal Sharjah was awarded a long, thin strip just south of its industrial zone. Further inland the border was largely unchanged (see Figure 6.3). The Court's decision after considering all the evidence and the arguments of the Parties was:

*"In accordance with the rules of international law applicable in the matter as between the Parties and for the reasons set out above, the land and the maritime boundary between the Emirates of Dubai and the Emirate of Sharjah.*

*On the land, as far as it can be described in words, the Court decides by two votes to one that the boundary commences at the coastal terminus point A, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 280° 18' 80"*

North and 33° 43' 03" East; thence, following the low water line of the Al Mamzer Peninsula, to point 1, Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 280° 12' 50" North and 33° 42' 40" East; thence by a straight line to point 2, the universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 280° 01' 00" North and 33° 35' 85" East; thence by a straight line to point 3, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 279° 88' 20" North and 33° 39' 65" East; thence by a straight line to Nahada Amair, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 279° 85' 35" North and 33° 51' 50" East.

The Court further Decides unanimously that the boundary proceeds in a straight line from Nahada Amair to Arqub Rakan, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 279° 44' 65" North and 34° 77' 00" East.

The Court further Decides unanimously that the boundary proceeds from Arqub Rakan to Chilah, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 279° 06' 55" North and 35° 27' 00" East, leaving Arqub Alam (Nauf) entirely within Sharjah, and Tawi Bida'at within Dubai; from Chilah to Naqdat az Zamul, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 278° 80' 00" North and 35° 96' 25" East, leaving Tawi Tai entirely within Sharjah; from Chilah thence to Tawi bil Khabis, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 278° 84' 25" North and 36° 14' 75" East, which is divided between Sharjah and Dubai.

From Tawi bil Khabis, the boundary turns south to Mirial, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 277° 23' 80" North and 36° 40' 00" East, leaving Arafi entirely within Sharjah and Jiza'at bin Ta'aba and Arqub Dhabian within Dubai;

from Mirial to Khobai, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 276° 88' 75" North and 36° 14' 00" East; and thence to Qawasir, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 276° 22' 10" North and 36° 14' 50" East;

thence continuing southwards, so as to leave Tawi Mghram and Bedirat Mghram entirely within Sharjah, and Sih Atham and Bada Hilal within Dubai, to Al Alam, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 274° 87' 95" North and 36° 31' 40" East;

and thence by a straight line to Arqub Salama, the Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates of which are 273° 55' 80" North and 36° 76' 40" East, so as to leave Bada Zigag and Muwaihi Daij entirely within Sharjah, and Rummayyah within Dubai."<sup>(34)</sup>

The new border agreement lifted restraints which halted building programmes in the disputed areas since 1976. It allowed Sharjah to develop its industrial zone and Dubai city was able to expand to the northeast<sup>(35)</sup> (see Chapter 7). Moreover, the United States Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) Dubai subsidiary was able to start drilling near the Sharjah border, knowing Dubai was still its client.<sup>(36)</sup> Also unaffected by the settlement is Sharjah's ownership of the significant hydrocarbon reserves discovered north of the border by Amco Sharjah.<sup>(37)</sup> There is a proposed project for establishing a tourist zone on Al-Khan area in the Emirate of Sharjah. This project is funded by the government of Dubai<sup>(38)</sup> (see Chapter 7).

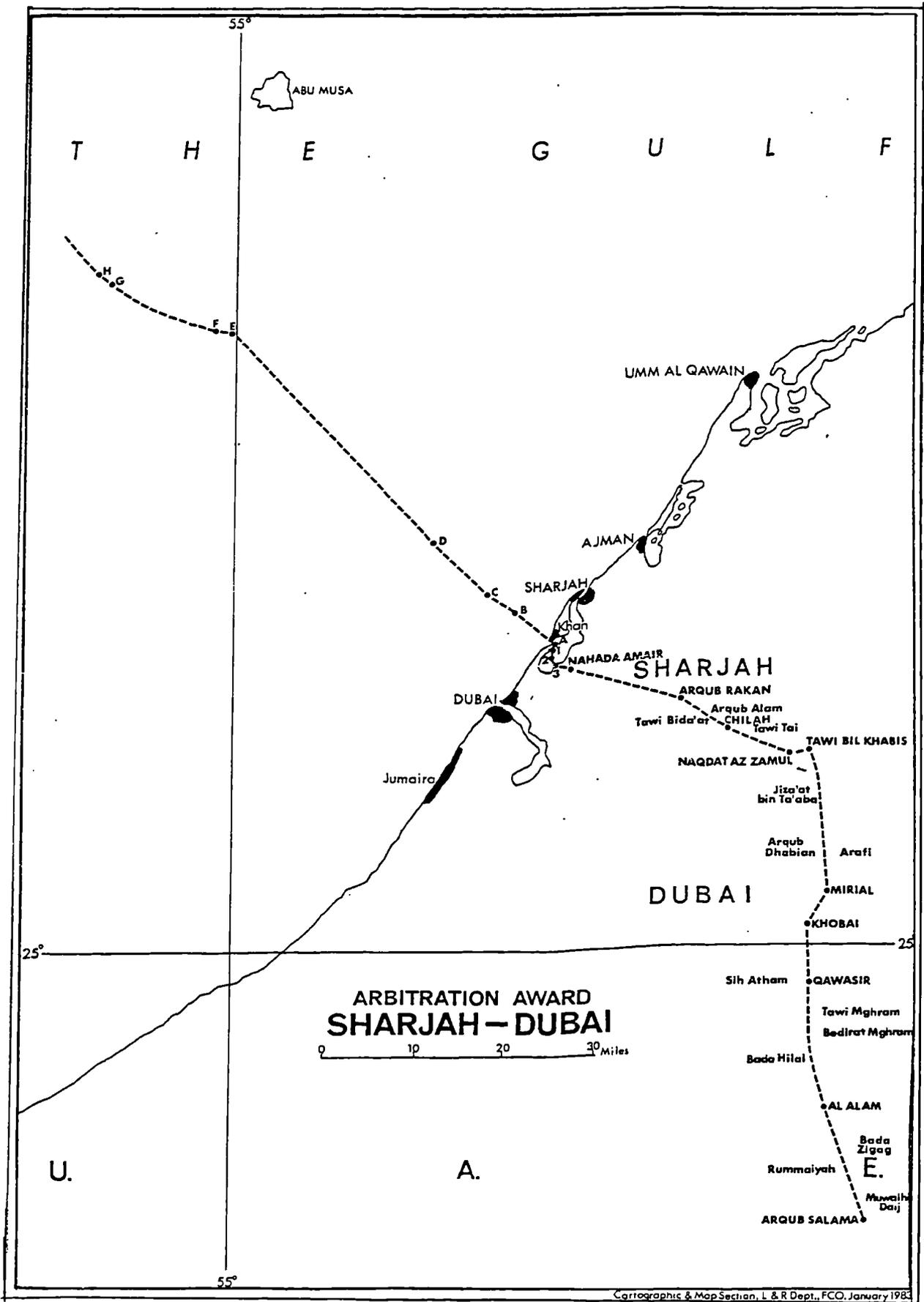
Figure 6.4 shows the border points, inland according to the 1981 Arbitration between the two Emirates, while Figure 6.5 shows two of the border pillars from 72 pillars along the boundary line between the two Emirates marked by numbers.

Much of the tribunal's work was to decide on the validity of Walker's demarcation of the boundary between Dubai and Sharjah. Essentially, the Walker-Tripp line was accepted by the tribunal as an "approximation" of tribal influence, and showed to whom a tribe owed closest affiliation.<sup>(39)</sup>

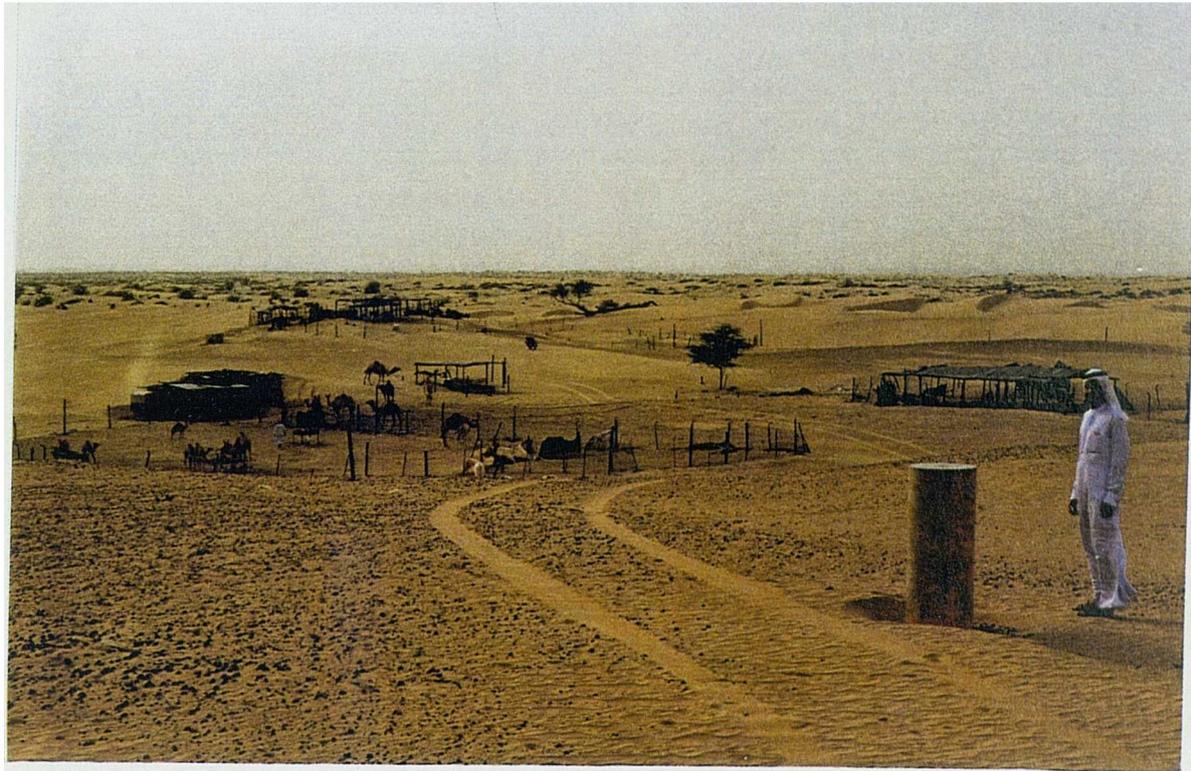
The tribunal found that the Bani Qitab tribe had closer ties with Sharjah than with Dubai. Consequently, a large tract of land forming the traditional homeland of the bani Qitab tribe was confirmed as belonging to Sharjah. On the other hand, a decisive factor in awarding the Al-Mamzer Peninsula to Dubai was that the tribunal looked at what each side had been doing in the disputed area and found that Dubai had exercised greater control over the coastal area than Sharjah.<sup>(40)</sup>

A principal reason for the delay in resolving the boundary dispute between the Emirate of Dubai and the Emirate of Sharjah until 1985 was that there was little political stability in Sharjah, first because of the removal in 1965 of Shaikh Saqr bin

Figure 6.4 Map of the Dubai-Sharjah boundaries settlement in 1981 (inshore and offshore), drawn by Cartographic and Map section, Foreign Office, January 1983.



*Figure 6.5 The researcher standing beside one of the pillars in the desert (top), and beside the last pillar number 72 at the head of Jabal Nazwa (bottom)*



Sultan (ruler of Sharjah from 1951-65), and then in 1972 the assassination of Shaikh Khalid bin Mohhamed (ruler of Sharjah from 1965-72) by Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan.

What paved the way for a final settlement was that Shaikh Maktum bin Rashid, son of the Ruler of Dubai, took full charge of the Emirate's affairs and high-level decision-making as a result of his father's illness. Contacts were made between the two Emirates, not least because the two rulers were from a younger generation, and they believed it possible to resolve disputes between the two Emirates for the benefit of the Union.

The Dubai-Sharjah border dispute arrived at a final settlement in April 1985 when Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed al-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah, and Shaikh Maktum bin Rashid, Crown Prince of Dubai, signed a boundary demarcation agreement.<sup>(41)</sup> The settlement removed one of the longest-running disputes between the Emirates. What had shocked the Union from the top was the threat by the President to resign. Shaikh Zayed had taken a personal interest in this border dispute. This is underlined by the fact that it has been reported that Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayyan (current U.A.E. President), threatened to decline re-election as President when his term expired in December 1976, having been elected in 1971. The reasoning behind his decision, was that he was disappointed and dissatisfied with the attitude of his fellow rulers in tackling federal problems. He added:

*"Would you believe that I have just spent a week among the Emirates trying to settle insignificant boundary disputes between them? I will not continue as President...the problem is the spirit in which my brother rulers are tackling the problems which face the federation."<sup>(42)</sup>*

On the other hand, the settlement of the Dubai-Sharjah boundary dispute led to co-operation between these two Emirates especially at economic levels. After resolving the dispute, a master plan for major projects was undertaken by the governments of the two Emirates (see Chapter 7).

## 6.4 The Valley of Hatta and Dubai's Claims

### 6.4.1 The Geographical Location

Wadi Hatta is the main geographical feature of the southeastern region of the U.A.E., with Wadi Al-Qur of Ras al-Khaimah. These two wadis pass through the mountains and connect al-Batinah in Oman with the inland plains of Ghrif and Mudam.

The mountain enclave of Hatta is 130 km east of Dubai. The road to it crosses a long stretch of Omani territory. The road also crosses the territories of the Emirate of Sharjah and Ajman. Leaving Dubai's territory, the road crosses Sharjah's territory in the Al-Medam area, then the Wilayat Mahadah appears and the border marks and the signboard are fixed in the ground saying "Welcome to Oman." (see Figure 6.6 and Chapter 7.)

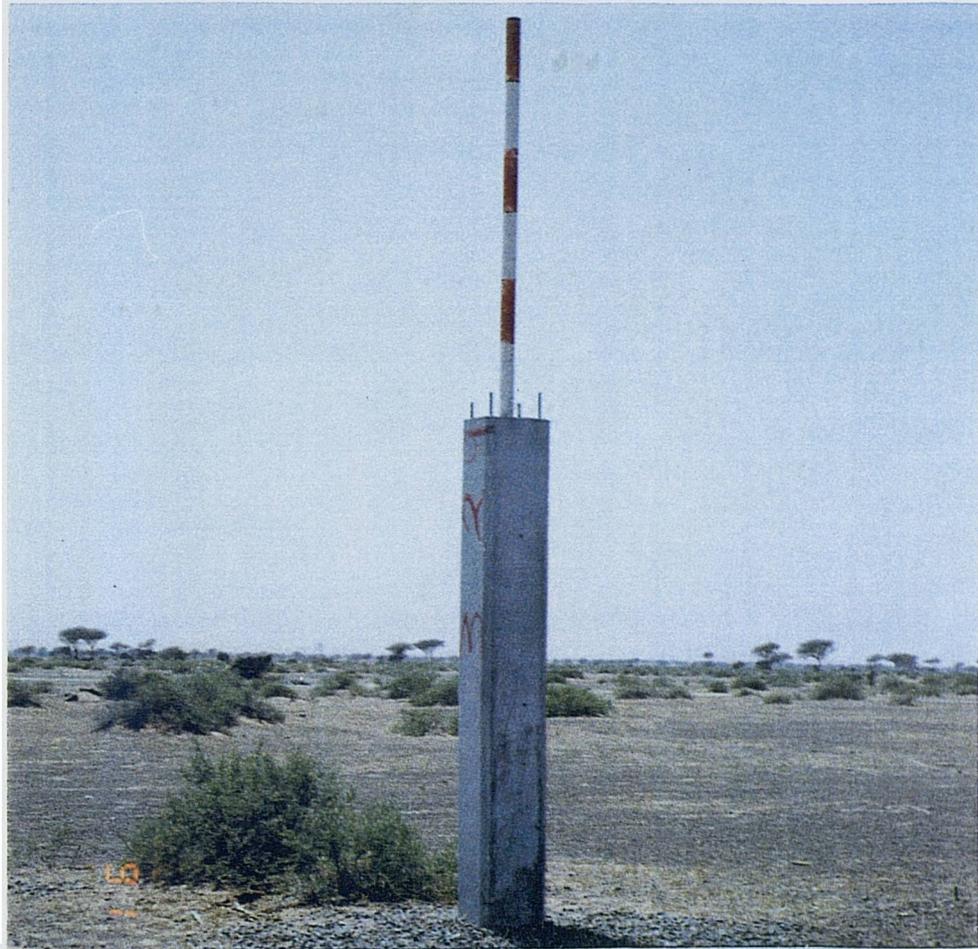
### 6.4.2 Historical Background

In the late nineteenth century, according to one report, the Sultan of Muscat offered the Ruler of Dubai a choice between the Mussandam Peninsula and Wadi Hatta. The ruler of Dubai chose the latter.<sup>(43)</sup> Lorimer records the transfer of the Wadi Hatta as follows:

*"At a later period (after 1870) in the reign of Saiyid Turki, the Sultan of Oman, in view of his own inability to defend Hajarain against the Naim of Buraimi, acquiesced in its virtual transfer to the Shaikh of Dubai."<sup>(44)</sup>*

Morsy Abdullah confirms this, saying that in the earlier part of the nineteenth century the two villages of Hijrain and Masfut were inhabited by the Bidaiwat tribe. In recognition of the help given to him in 1871 by the Shaikhs of Dubai and Buraimi, Sultan Turki gave Hijrain to Shaikh Hasher bin Maktum, and Masfut to the Shaikh of Buraimi. After that the people of Masfut appealed to Shaikh Said bin Maktum during the 1930s when they faced the problem of other Bedouins raiding settled places

*Figure 6.6* Boundary mark of Wilayat Mahadhah of Oman on the Dubai-Hatta Road (top), the welcoming signboard of Wilayat Mahadhah on Dubai-Hatta Road (bottom).



near their own areas and Shaikh Said advised them to ask Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid of Ajman instead, since he was related to the Shaikh of Buraimi. Shaikh Rashid of Ajman went there himself and took over the area.<sup>(45)</sup> Dubai's claim to the area was recognised by local tribesmen, and the authorities (Walis) of Masfut and Wadi Al-Qur. Khalfan bin Gharib of the Bani Kaab (a tribe inhabiting Walayah Mahadhah near Hatta, but loyal to Sultan of Muscat) confirmed to Julian Walker that Dubai owned all the villages of the Wadi Wayayah up to a point just short of Oman's boundary post at Wayayah settlement. He also said that Gima village in the Wadi Gima belonged to Shaikh Rashid bin Said al-Maktum, the Ruler of Dubai.<sup>(46)</sup> Therefore, by the very nature of the case, Hatta in the Wadi Hajrain became Dubai's enclave and Masfut became an enclave of Ajman (see Figure 6.7).

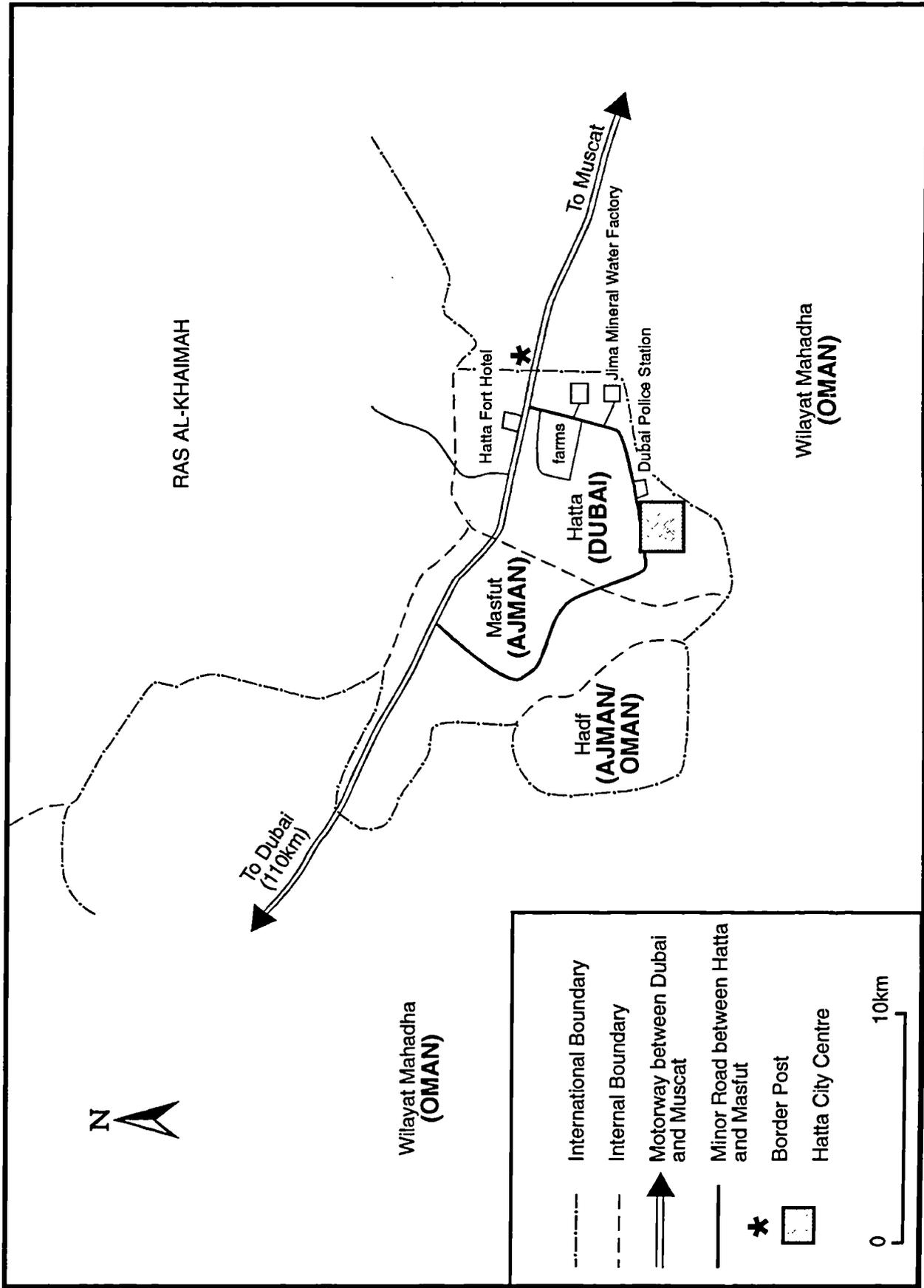
In May 1959, Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktum, ruler of Dubai, signed a boundary agreement with Sultan Said bin Taimur, the Sultan of Muscat and Oman. The maps that Julian Walker drew, which were approved by the British Government, regard the agreement as valid and binding on the parties and they recognise the boundaries laid down in the agreement.<sup>(47)</sup> (see Appendix H and I: one copy of the Agreement is in English, another copy is in Arabic).

### **6.4.3 Boundary description**

The boundary line of Hatta runs as follows: from Jabal Mussaya<sup>(48)</sup> to Jabal Hajarain and thence eastward crossing the Wadi Qima to the east of the village of that name and thence to the base of Jabal Gimha which belongs to Dubai. Then the border crosses the wadi mouths at Hasat al Ghara, al-Akhabab and Lawshaht and across Wadi Wayaya just to the west of Oman's border post. From there the line meets and follows the watershed of the range between the Wadis Qur and Hatta, and at Jabal Ghallas turn south to Jabal Mussaya.<sup>(49)</sup> Before reaching the Omani border post it is possible to see the border marked by two pillars one fixed on top of the mountain and the

Figure 6.7

LOCATION OF THE DUBAI ENCLAVE OF HATTA



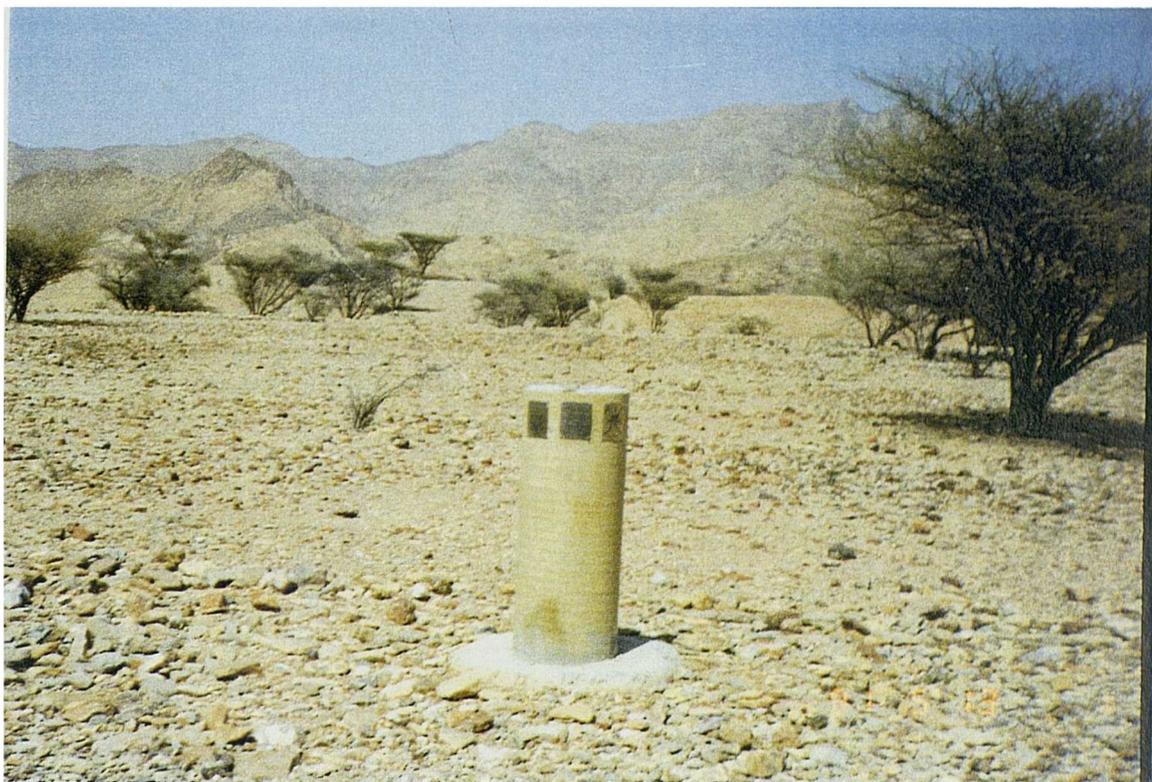
Source: Fieldwork

other fixed to the lower ground on the main highway from Hatta to Oman, which shows the symbols of both the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman (see Figure 6.8).

There is an Omani border post (customs-immigration) between Hatta of Dubai and the village of Wayaya of Oman. Dubai has not built a border post, and appears to have no plans to do so. Dubai has, in fact, a very good relationship with Oman especially in trade and housing developments. For instance, the government of Dubai funded all the road projects linking Dubai City to Shinas in Omani territory on the east coast. The reason for this largesse was Shaikh Rashid's plan to create a "bolt-hole" exit for his Emirate on the Gulf of Oman in case of emergency or political crisis which could occur in the mouth of the Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>(50)</sup> Another reason may be that Dubai's government was always trying to preserve its close relations with Oman, and not building a border point allows Omani citizens to feel unrestrained about crossing the border. A further reason may be to encourage Omani merchants to import goods from Dubai using this road, into the interior of Oman in order to facilitate transportation. U.A.E. nationals (i.e. holding a U.A.E. passport) wanting to travel to Oman through this border post, receive a passport stamp from the Omani immigration officer, once on entry and once on exit. Several times a month, soldiers from Dubai's army travel through Oman to Dubai's villages there. In contrast, there is no U.A.E. passport stamp to show that the traveller entered Dubai territory (U.A.E.).

From there the line meets and follows the watershed of the range between the Wady Al-Qur and Wadi Hatta, and at Jabal Ghallas turns south to Jabal Mussaya.<sup>(51)</sup>

*Figure 6.8 Dubai-Oman border point between Hatta of Dubai and Wagahah of Oman and the symbols of the two States printed on the pillar.*



## 6.5 Madha Village and Omani Claims

The political map of the U.A.E. shows an enclave of the Sultanate of Oman within the U.A.E. The enclave is generally shown in the same colour as the main body of Oman and known as Wadi Madha. On 2 November 1956 Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan, Ruler of Sharjah, sent a letter to the Political Agent, Trucial States, Dubai, arguing that Wadi Madha was in the possession of the Qawasim during the nineteenth century and was only occupied by the Shihuh in contravention of the Sultan's orders. Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan, the ruler of Sharjah, confirmed that Muscat collected *zakat* by force from the inhabitants, which the inhabitants of the Wadi opposed. On 2 November 1956 he asked the British Government to secure a just, fair and peaceful settlement of this dispute. He indicated his willingness however to submit to the British Government evidence to prove his rights to the Wadi (see Appendix J).<sup>(52)</sup>

The Sultan of Muscat and Oman, Sultan Said bin Taimur, wrote to the British Consul-General in Muscat, confirming that when he succeeded his father in 1932, he found Wadi Madha part of the Sultanate and he confirmed that the inhabitants of the Wadi were under his jurisdiction and Sovereignty. The Sultan said:

*"We shall continue to exercise our long-established sovereignty over Wadi Madha as we have been exercising same since 1932."*<sup>(53)</sup> (See Appendix K)

When Julian Walker started his investigation in 1954, he found Sharjah controlling the two villages at the head of the Wadi Nahawa and Shis, from which *zakat* had been paid for several years. The ruler of Fujairah confirmed this fact.<sup>(54)</sup> (See Appendix L).

### 6.5.1 The Geographical Location

Wadi Madhah is a small enclosed valley in the eastern region of the U.A.E., running northeastwards from the Hijir mountains (Hijir means rock) towards the bay of Khur Fakkan.

### 6.5.2 The Inhabitants

The Bani Sa'd tribe inhabit the two main villages of Ghunah and Madhah. Hinawi and Shafii tribes which shows that they were unaffected by the Qawasim.<sup>(55)</sup> The inhabitants are quite isolated and it can be seen that they are not affected by the Qawasim from the type of dress they wear which is the same as Omani people who live in towns and villages of Oman. The tribesmen of Madhah wear the traditional Omani dress turban on the head and a dagger on the body. They talk in the same Omani accent, which is different from the inhabitants of Khur Fakkan of Sharjah and Qidfa of Fujairah, the two nearest villages of the U.A.E. to Madhah. Furthermore, the Bani Sa'd tribe have not altered their loyalties regarding the Sultan of Muscat. According to Julian Walker's report during the demarcation period, he found that Muscat claims the whole Wadi, and so does Sharjah.

When Walker surveyed the area he drew a line around the enclave claimed by Muscat, making it clear that this is an unsettled frontier which he claimed to be beyond his competence to define.<sup>(56)</sup> Furthermore, Walker avoided doing any work on the Wadi Madha since his investigation was largely on the internal boundaries of the Trucial States. The Sultanate of Oman claimed the villages Madha, Ghuna and Hajar Bani Hamid, whilst the Qawasim apparently controlled Nahawa and Shis.<sup>(57)</sup> However, the Ruler of Fujairah confirmed to Walker that the inhabitants of Nahawa and Shis, the two villages located at the head of the wadi, had been paying *zakat* for several years to the Shaikh of Sharjah, and therefore fell under the control of the Ruler of Sharjah.<sup>(58)</sup>

Thus it is not surprising that no settlements were reached by Walker on this particular wadi. The Foreign office later sent Lord Martin Buckmaster who entered the Wadi and made investigations there in 1967.<sup>(59)</sup> However, the Buckmaster investigations did not result in a settlement between Sharjah and Muscat either<sup>(60)</sup> (Figure 6.9).

*Figure 6.9 The signboard of Madha Police Station in Wadi Madha.*



Finally in 1969 an agreement was reached between the Sultanate of Muscat, Sharjah and Fujairah and the boundaries were fixed.<sup>(61)</sup> The two villages of Nahawa and Shis located at the top of the mountains beside the Wadi Madhah were given to Sharjah, whilst the whole of Wadi Madhah went to the Sultanate of Oman (see Figure 6.10).

The Omani government regards Wadi Madhah as an administrative division of Wilayat Sohar and established a Police Station there in the early of 1980s for security and order. This means that the wadi is at the present time Omani territory located within U.A.E. territory.

## **6.6 Masfut Village and Ajman's Claims**

It may be useful to begin by focusing on the geographical location, and the historical background of the village of Masfut.

### **6.6.1 The Geographical Location**

Although Ajman is the smallest of the Emirates, with an area of only 259 km<sup>2</sup>, and its main territory is entirely surrounded by that of Sharjah, it does nevertheless have small enclaves in the mountains. Ajman's mountain villages are Manama, gardens belonging to the ruler of Ajman at the foot of the mountains near Dhaid, and Masfut, close beside Dubai's enclave of Hatta.

### **6.6.2 Historical Background**

Ajman's claim to this area is based on the fact that the Ruler took the village under his protection in 1947. However, before that period it was recorded that the inhabitants of Masfut who had been the subjects of the Shaikh of Buraimi, appealed to the Shaikh of Ajman for protection against the Bani Kaab tribesmen, due to the fact that the Shaikh of the Bidaiwat tribe of Masfut was too weak to defend Masfut. Shaikh Rashid of Ajman launched an expedition to Masfut, and built a tower there.

**Figure 6.10** The boundaries and enclaves in the United Arab Emirates, drawn by the Cartographic Section, Research Department, Foreign Office in February 1978.



Shaikh Saqr of Buraimi was not satisfied however and tried to secure the return of his village through the mediation of the Ruler of Dubai and Sharjah. His efforts failed, and the Ruler of Ajman declared that he would never withdraw from Masfut. Furthermore, the Ruler of Ajman claimed that Masfut was the property of his grandfather which had been ceded to him by the Sultan of Muscat.<sup>(62)</sup> Lorimer records that:

*"These villages, Hajarain and Masfut, both inhabited by the Biduwat, seem to have belonged originally - as the lower part of the Wadi does still belong to the Sultanate of Oman, but about 1870 in the reign of Saiyid Azzan bin Qais, an irreconcilable quarrel taking place between the two, the people of Masfut placed themselves under the protection of the Beni Kaab and the Naim of Buraimi."<sup>(63)</sup>*

When mentioning Hajarain, Lorimer means the village of Hajarain in the wadi Hatta. The people of Dubai always call it Hatta, taking its name from the wadi in which the village is located, in the Oman Mountains which was ceded to the ruler of Dubai by the Sultan of Muscat and Oman in the 1870s.

### **6.6.3 Masfut Boundaries**

It was reported that the Sultan Said bin Taimur, Sultan of Muscat and Oman, and Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid Al-Naimi, Ruler of Ajman agreed the boundaries in 1959 between the tribes of the Sultanate (the Bani Kaab) and the Shaikhdom of Ajman according to the maps drawn by Julian Walker. The boundaries are two separate lines: The first line starts from the top of Jabal Umm an Nasur which divides the people of Hajarain (Hatta of Dubai) and Masfut and the Bani Kaab, and goes west to a point to the south of the head of Wadi Ghalfa, which belongs to Masfut of Ajman. The line stops at the head of the Wadi Ghalfa. The second line starts from the summit of Jabal Mezaira to the north of al Mishkal and goes west to the western end of Jabal Mizaira, and then westwards by Wadi Khrus, which is the wadi which flows between Khtaim

ar Rahman and Al Jazir. After that the line goes north-west to As Subaigka and Al Milaina, and these two places await boundary adjustments. From Milaiha the line goes east to the head of the Wadi Sawamia and thence to the summit of Jabal Abu Faraj which is the dividing point between the Bani Kaab (Mahadha of Sultanate of Oman) and the Biduwat of Masfut.<sup>(64)</sup> (See Appendix M and N for English and Arabic versions of the Agreement).

### **The Dispute regarding the village of Masafi**

The village of Masafi is located north of Dhaid on the main Dhaid-Dibba motorway. At the village of Masafi the road divides. One arm turns left to the north through wadi Ham towards the plain and the sea at Dibba, the northernmost point of the U.A.E's east coast. The second arm sweeps south-east through another great valley to the coastal plain and the town of Fujairah. The village of Masafi is the starting point of the two arms which run north east towards Dibba and Fujairah on the Gulf of Oman (see Figure 3.2).

The village of Masafi south of the Qaryat Hafaitat of Ras al-Khaimah is inhabited by Sharqiyin tribe of the Hafaitat. According to Julian Walker, the inhabitants were paying *zakat* to the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah but hold that they are loyal to Shaikh Mohammed al-Sharqi of Fujairah which make the situation very difficult to define. Shaikh Saqr al-Qasemi of Ras al-Khaimah appointed a Wali as his representative in the village in 1954. On the other side, as reported by Julian Walker, Shaikh Mohammed al-Sharqi of Fujairah kept 30 guards in the village to protect his gardens.<sup>(65)</sup> In conclusion, Walker recommend:

*"There appears to be no necessity for a declaration of frontiers there at present, and that any decisions made should be kept on the files."*<sup>(66)</sup>

Armed clashes blew up between Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah over the area of Masafi and its surroundings, and gun-fire was exchanged in 1972.

The village is still in dispute between the two Emirates which the Hotel of Shaikh Hamad al-Sharqi, the ruler of Fujairah remain uncompleted because Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah ordered a halt to building works (see Chapter 7). The boundary dispute between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah remains unsettled due to the present ruler of Ras al-Khaimah, Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, (ruling Ras al-Khaimah since 1948) who is still very proud of his family history and who believes that the Emirate of Fujairah was part of the Qawasim territories broken away from the Qawasim by the British, and recognized as an independent state in 1952. A member of the ruling family of the Ras al-Khaimah Qasemi said:

*"I do not think the boundary dispute between Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah will be resolved any day due to the way of thinking of the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah who is applying a central control for himself on the Emirate affairs and no one else in the Emirate has any authority to advise him or to give any suggestion in any matter, just the ruler himself."<sup>(67)</sup>*

Another description of the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah's attitude is given in a letter dated 21 June 1957 from D.M.H. Riches, on the staff of the Eastern Arabia Department in the Foreign Office to the Political Agent:

*"There has been no trouble save over Ras al Khaimah-Fujairah, about which the Ruler of Ras al Khaimah has protested vigorously to the Political Resident and remains sulky and even possibly meditating trouble. This particular settlement has the added disadvantages that Ras al Khaimah did not specifically agree to accept a boundary, dictated by us, with Fujairah;...."<sup>(68)</sup>*  
(See Appendix O).

In 1974, the federal government of the U.A.E. established a military base at the village belonging to the Union Defence Force.

## **6.7 The Problem of the Dibba Partition**

### **6.7.1 The Geographical Location**

Sharjah's only other east coast enclave is at Dibba, immediately to the south of the Omani border and at the foot of the huge range of the Musandam mountains. Dibba is an ancient town, and was once the most important in the region. Today it is divided into three districts, with Fujairah controlling the southern district, Sharjah ruling the central district, and Oman the northern district of Bayah.

In 1955, Julian Walker was involved in demarcating the internal boundaries of the Trucial States. After his investigations on Dibba there was clearly a disputed area between Sharjah, Fujairah and the Sultanate of Oman. Walker finally came to a decision that it was to be divided into three parts:

- a. Dibba al-Bayah, in the north, inhabited by the Shafi'i Shihuh tribe loyal to the Sultan of Muscat.
- b. Dibba al-Husn, in the middle, inhabited by Hanbali (Wahhabi) Shihuh, loyal to the Shaikh of Sharjah.
- c. Dibba al-Gurfah, inhabited by the Sharqiyyin tribe, loyal to the Shaikh of Fujairah (see Figure 6.11).

### **6.7.2 Dibba al-Husn**

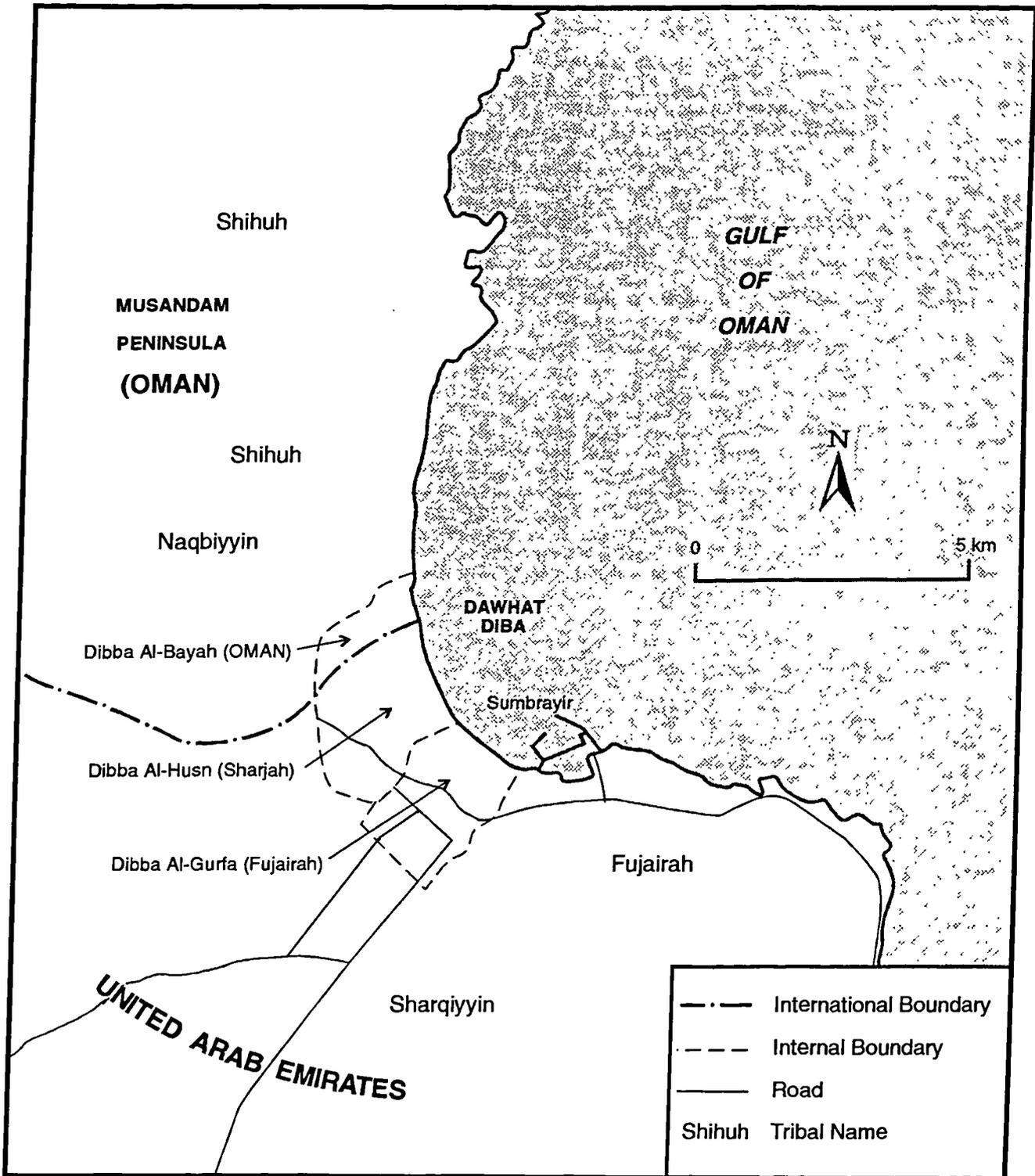
Sharjah town, the capital, is located on the west side of the Musandam Peninsula, while three separate enclaves, Dibba al-Husn, Khur Fakkan and Kalba, are located on the east side on the Gulf of Oman.

#### **6.7.2.1 Historical Background**

It was reported that Dibba had historically always been part of the territory of the ruler of Sharjah. On 9 May 1952, the same year as the independence of Fujairah, Saqr

Figure 6.11

THE THREEFOLD DIVISION OF DIBBA IN 1965,  
BETWEEN SHARJAH, FUJAIRAH AND OMAN.



Source: Foreign Office Map with Authors modifications

bin Abdullah, the Wali of Dibba, made an agreement with Saqr bin Sultan, the Ruler of Sharjah, declaring:

*"I, Saqr bin Abdullah al Qasimi, admit that Dibba and its dependencies including villages and territories is a part of Sharjah state. I have agreed to act as Wali on behalf of Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan, not to disobey his orders and to follow all his advice. I have permitted whoever may wish to witness this document."* <sup>(69)</sup>

According to Julian Walker's report, the Rulers of Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah both regarded Dibba al-Husn as belonging to Sharjah and all the tribes who are subject to them confirmed this. <sup>(70)</sup>

#### **6.7.2.2 The Boundary Description of Dibba al-Husn**

Before describing the boundary line of Dibba al-Husn, it may be useful to look at Lorimer's description of Trucial Oman in about 1905:

*"Trucial Oman extends in the Gulf of 'Oman from Khor Kalba to Dibah, and in the Persian Gulf from Sha'am to Khor-al-'Odaid, the places named being all included in it; in other words its boundary between these two sets of points is the sea. Inland, its frontiers are more difficult to define; but it covers a considerable portion of the interior of the 'Oman Promontory. On one side there it is bounded by a line of uncertain course which runs from a spot between the contiguous villages of Dibah and Bai'ah on the east coast to Ras Sha'am on the west coast, and so divides it from the Ruus-al-Jibal district of the 'Oman Sultanate to the north."* <sup>(71)</sup>

It can be concluded from Lorimer's description that there was just one Dibba during that period which belonged to Sharjah because he specified the village of Dibba as one "contiguous" to Bai'ah village (referring to Dibba al-Bayyah). Dibba al-Gurfa had not yet emerged because Fujairah itself, which today controls Dibba al-Gurfa, had not yet appeared on any geographical map of Trucial Oman. Since the 1960s, Dibba al-Husn has had two boundary lines: one is considered an international boundary line with Oman; the other line which runs south of the village is considered an internal boundary line.

#### ***6.7.2.2.1 Dibba al-Husn boundary with Oman***

The boundary of Husn Dibba with Dibba al-Bayya (Omani Dibba) lies at the point where the Wadi to the north of the town reaches the sea. The boundary, after following the Wadi through the cultivated area, strikes towards the mountains following their edge leaving the Sih and the Wadi Fai to Dibba.

#### ***6.7.2.2.2 Dibba al-Husn Boundary with Fujairah***

##### *Introduction*

Fujairah's northern territory includes a section of the port of Dibba and an adjacent stretch of land. Fujairah, with its share in Dibba, owns a part of one of the most historic towns in the land. A major battle was fought there in 633 AD, in which the Muslim forces were sent from Mecca, shortly after the death of the Holy Prophet, to fight the rebellion against the Calipha in Mecca.

The marble factory on the Masafi to Dibba road belongs to the Emirate of Fujairah.

The southern boundary of Husn Dibba lies at the boundary (a path) between the villages of Husn Dibba and Sumbrair which belongs to the Sharqiyyin of Fujairah.<sup>(72)</sup>

Then the boundary continues to the north of Ghurfah and Asashat, and follows the southern mountain edge westwards to Ayeina. It was decided by Walker that the boundary between the two Emirates in the Dibba area lay at Soor Shamis.

It was also reported that the boundary between Sumbrair of Fujairah and Dibba al-Husn was marked on the ground. This fact was confirmed by Julian Walker.<sup>(73)</sup> It was reported that the total population of Dibba al-Gurfa according to the 1985 census was 24,218.<sup>(74)</sup>

### 6.7.2.3 The 1972 Dispute Between Sharjah and Fujairah

#### 6.7.2.3.1 Introduction

The Emirate of Fujairah emerged in 1952 and acquired its formal status when the British government recognized Fujairah's independence.<sup>(75)</sup> However, the rulers of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah opposed the emergence of Fujairah on the grounds that the territory of Fujairah belongs to the Qawasim.<sup>(76)</sup> The Foreign Office replaced the India government after 1947 in handling British interests in the region and adopted a new policy of involvement in the internal affairs of the Trucial States. According to Sir Bernard Burrows, who was the first Foreign Service Officer to be Political Resident in the Gulf, in the mid-50s, in response to the question as to why he was there, said:

*"When in 1947 the British Government of India ceased to exist, responsibility for the administration of British interest in the Gulf was assumed by the Foreign Office."<sup>(77)</sup>*

In 1955, the British authorities began to demarcate the internal boundary between the Trucial States (Emirates) after procuring written undertakings from all the individual rulers that they would accept the British decisions on the demarcation of their territories. In the case of the ruler of Sharjah, the undertaking read as follows:

*"I, Saqr bin Sultan Al-Qasimi, ruler of Sharjah and its dependencies, undertake on behalf of myself and my successors that we will not dispute any boundaries which the Political Agent for the Trucial States may lay down in the Coastal area, excepting Fujairah which we consider as part of Sharjah state."<sup>(78)</sup>(See Appendix C)*

In Julian Walker's map, the Sharqiyyen tribe are shown as concentrated upon two separate areas, divided from one another by a strip stretching westwards into the interior from Luliyya town, Zubarah town, and Khur Fakkan on the coast. Fujairah is the homeland of the Sharqiyyen tribe and they occupy all the coastal ports of the

Shimailiyah district except for Zubarah, Luliyah and Khur Fakkan in the north and Kalba and Sur in the south.<sup>(79)</sup>

#### ***6.7.2.3.2 The 1972 Conflict***

Less than one year after the establishment of the U.A.E., in 1972 a "bizarre episode culminated in the outbreak of border fighting between Fujairah and Sharjah."<sup>(80)</sup> It was reported on 9 June that 22 people had been killed,<sup>(81)</sup> and a dozen seriously wounded, in fighting between Fujairah and Sharjah tribesmen in the eastern region of the U.A.E.. The Emirate of Sharjah owns three enclaves: Kalba, Khur Fakkan and Husn Dibba. The beginning of the dispute was when the late Shaikh Muhammed al-Sharqi, the Ruler of Fujairah announced, without the prior consent of Sharjah, that he was to present Shaikh Zayed, the President of the U.A.E. and the Ruler of Abu Dhabi with a garden in his Emirate's territory as a gift.<sup>(82)</sup>

However this decision was immediately contested by Sharjah which claimed that, as the well that watered this garden had been used for years by Sharjian tribesmen, therefore, Fujairah had no right to give away the garden and its well, without prior consultation with Sharjah. Hence, fighting broke out between the two sides and continued until order was restored by the Union Defence Force supported by units of Abu Dhabi troops in the disputed area.<sup>(83)</sup> On 12 June 1972 the U.A.E. President, Shaikh Zayed sent for the Ruler of Sharjah, Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed al-Qasimi, and the Ruler of Fujairah, Shaikh Mohammed al-Sharqi and discussed the implications of the tribal clash with them. Furthermore, the U.A.E. Ministry of interior issued a statement:

*"On 9 June a long-standing dispute between Sharqi and Naqbi tribesmen over the ownership of a piece of agricultural land....unfortunately became aggravated to a point at which there was fighting for two days. Union troops intervened and restored stability and order. Certain news agencies and radios have exaggerated the incident and the number of casualties."<sup>(84)</sup>*

Moreover, the Ministry declared:

*"Four people were killed and a limited number were wounded, most of them slightly. The Union authorities undertake to settle this dispute for good."*<sup>(85)</sup>

#### **6.7.2.4 The settlement of the 1972 dispute**

It was announced on 15 June 1972 that a committee headed by the U.A.E. Prime Minister, Shaikh Maktoum bin Rashid had been formed to investigate the reasons for the fighting and to take measures to prevent any future incidents.<sup>(86)</sup>

On 17 July 1972 it was announced in Abu Dhabi that a final settlement had been reached in the dispute over land between Sharjah and Fujairah.<sup>(87)</sup> Finally, the federal government tried to resolve the issue by purchasing title to the orchard and granting Sharjah and Fujairah equal rights to utilization of its well.<sup>(88)</sup> Also it was reported that in October 1972 the Council of Ministers appointed a Committee comprising the Minister of Health, Minister of State for Gulf Affairs, and Minister of State for Financial Affairs to visit Dibba area to mediate in the Sharjah-Fujairah dispute.<sup>(89)</sup> The rulers of Sharjah and Fujairah finally signed an agreement in 1983 which resulted in the settlement of the border dispute between them.<sup>(90)</sup> However the agreement's details are confidential, and it has been impossible to acquire a copy of the treaty.

#### **6.7.3 The 1992 Crisis**

A more recent incident occurred in November 1992, between the Shihuh tribes who live in Dibba al-Husn of Sharjah with their relatives on the other side, Dibba al-Bayah of Oman. According to responsible sources, some tribesmen became involved in a clash in the boundary area between Dibba al-Husn of Sharjah and Dibba al-Bayah of Oman, where that tribe are living on both sides of the U.A.E-Oman boundary. The result of the clash was that one man from Dibba al-Husn was killed, from the Bu gazeen tribe. Seven others were injured.<sup>(91)</sup> The dispute was sparked when some

workers of the road company, who were paving a road in Dibba al-Bayya of Oman, entered an area which was very close to Dibba al-Husn of Sharjah, and then clashed with tribesmen who inhabit the land near the border area.<sup>(92)</sup> Emirates sources announced that the boundary clash with Oman was a dispute between the tribes living on both sides of the border.<sup>(93)</sup> It is interesting to note that the Shihuh tribe who live in this area are divided into three parts, one group belong to the Sultanate of Oman who inhabit Dibba al-Bayah, another group who inhabit Dibba al-Gurfa, and are therefore tribes of Fujairah. A third group inhabits Dibba al-Husn and consider that they belong to Sharjah.

#### **6.7.4 Conclusion**

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that boundary disputes in the U.A.E. were connected with tribal conflict which goes back to agreements and treaties between Britain and these shaikhdoms. For the above case of boundary disputes between Sharjah and Fujairah it is necessary to recognise that Fujairah had been part of the Al-Qawasim federation and only later won independence from the Qawasim, and recognition by the British government as a new Shaikhdom in 1952. Each Emirate claimed land belonging to the other Emirate, and each side based its claims on historical facts and tribal loyalties. However Sharjah has stronger claims than Fujairah due to the fact that Fujairah was once part of the Qawasim federation (until 1952) which ruled from Sharjah the capital of the Qawasim. Sharjah never recognised the independence of Fujairah, even after British recognition in 1952. The situation changed after 1952, affecting boundary demarcation in the U.A.E..

## 6.8 The Hadf Village

Hadf Village is located on the south side of the western entrance to Wadi Hatta, opposite Jabal Raudha. Maps show that this village is jointly administered between the Sultanate of Oman and the Emirate of Ajman.

### 6.8.1 Historical Background

Although it is inhabited by the Bani Kaab, subject to the Sultan of Oman, the inhabitants were paying *zakat* to the Wali of Masfut who was appointed by Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid of Ajman. During Julian Walker's survey in 1954, Shaikh Ali of Ajman told him that about thirty years ago the Naim tribe owned Hadf, but that the Bani Kaab had since bought all the palms from them. This story was confirmed by Shaikh Abdullah bin Salim of the Bani Kaab.<sup>(94)</sup>

### 6.8.2 The Dispute Settlement

After Julian Walker finished his survey, he decided to leave open the question of the Ajman and Oman's claims to Hadf. Therefore, on any map which shows the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. there are two letters "AO" which refers to Ajman and Oman (see Figure 6.9). Julian Walker recommended that Ajman should be granted a minimum boundary running down the centre of the Wadi from Lisheikhera to Ghuzlanat. From Ghuzlanat the boundary would run towards the mountains and should include Jabal Thafda (if not part or all of Jabal Gsaifa and Hadf). Then the boundary should meet the line of the Wadi at Jabal Mussaya and cut straight across the Wadi to the mountains between Wadi Hatta and Wadi Qur. It should reach the watershed of those mountains in the neighbourhood of Jabal Ghallas and continue westwards along that watershed by way of Jabal Bu Faraj to Jabal Milaiha, and thence return to Lisheikhera. Finally he concluded that the Masfut boundary settlement could be announced to the Ruler of Ajman. However, the question of his southern boundary

with the Bani Kaab, which is Hadf, was not decided.<sup>(95)</sup> Therefore the area at the present time is still disputed between Ajman (U.A.E.), and the Sultanate of Oman.

## **6.9 The Emirate of Ajman Boundary**

Smallest of the Emirates, Ajman can be described geographically as an enclave surrounded by the territory of Sharjah (see Figure 6.12). It has remained politically independent for two hundred years.

### **6.9.1 Geographical Introduction**

Ajman Town lies just 8 km to the north of Sharjah. Ajman is the smallest of the U.A.E.'s Emirates with an area of 259 km<sup>2</sup>. Like most of the northern Emirates, it is a coastal town. Its landward border is entirely with Sharjah.

### **6.9.2 Ajman and Sharjah's claims on Zora and Bu Athm**

#### **6.9.2.1 The claims on Zora**

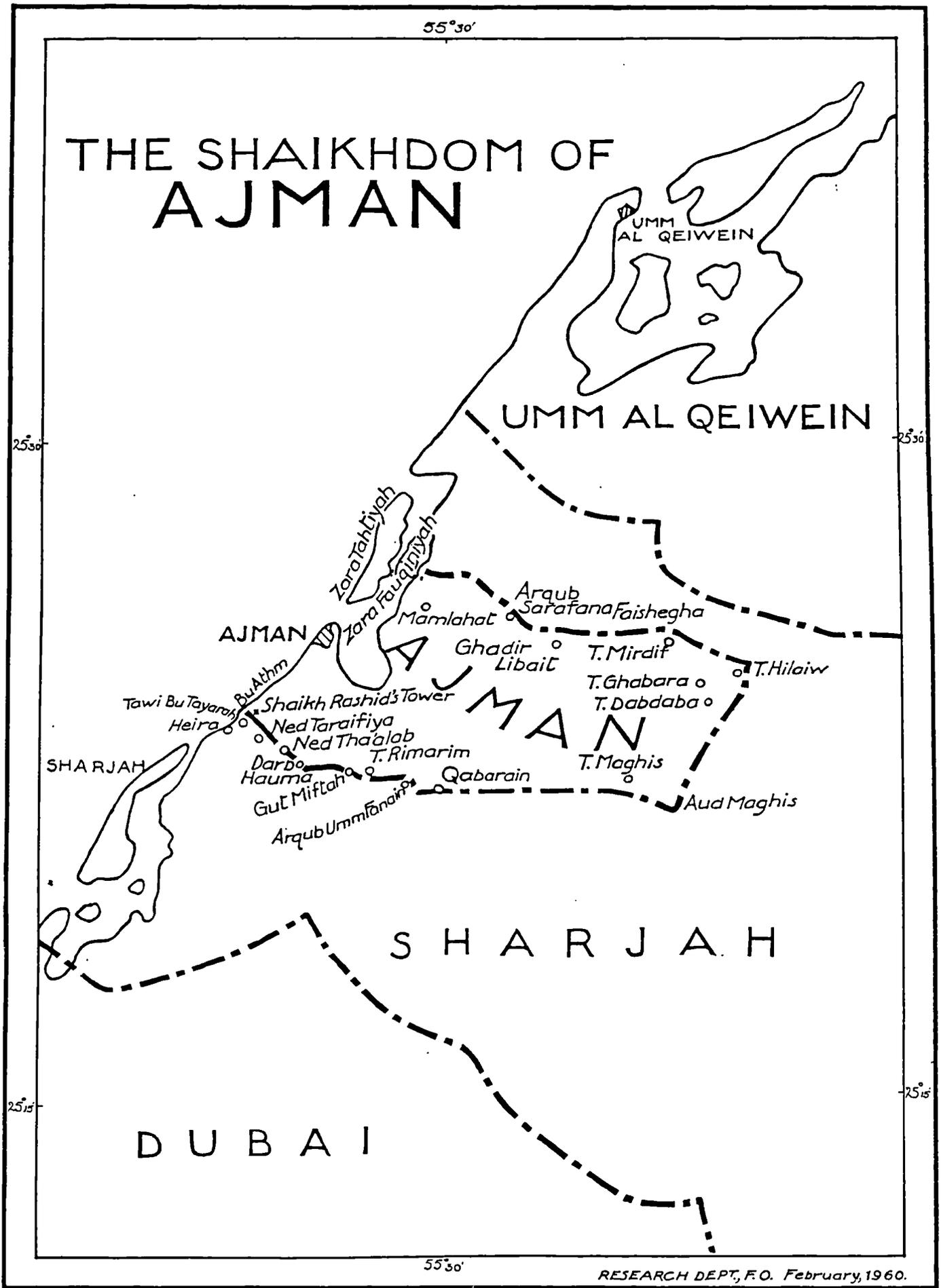
It was reported that Sharjah claims the whole of Zora arguing that her boundary with Ajman is at the entrance to Ajman creek. On the other hand, Ajman claimed the western part of Zora with a boundary cutting the island at Khur Ghanatil. The island-like area of Zora, is about two miles wide by five miles long, and has been regarded as having great strategic importance for the past two hundred years, due to its use as a base for offensives against the mainland tribes.

#### **6.9.2.2 The Boundary Description of Ajman**

Ajman's boundary was defined in 1956, when Julian Walker examined the evidence concerning the boundary of this Shaikhdom.

The boundary on the coast between the Emirate of Ajman and that of Sharjah is at Bu Athm. It continues as a line running from a point on the coast near the circle of

Figure 6.12 Boundaries of the Emirate of Ajman



white small hills about halfway between the Shaikh of Ajman's tower and Bu Tayarah well, passing through the circle of small hills and thence southwards through the centre of Ned bu Athm, passing midway between Ned al Taraifiya and the Abud Palms. However on the coast, the boundary between Ajman and Sharjah in Zora was a compromise settlement. The boundary line starts on the coast opposite the point from Zora Fauqiniyah (upper), to the mainland.<sup>(96)</sup> (See Figure 6.12).

The boundary line inland runs from Bu Athm southeast to Darb al Qabarain a distance of about two miles. From Darb al Qabrain the line runs east to Al Muwaihat, about one mile and then to Tallah about one mile and then to Maghis. From Maghis the line runs north east to Tawi al-Hilaiw which is about two miles from Maghis. From Al-Hilaiw, the line runs north-west to Tawi Mirdif which is about half a mile from Al-Hilaiw and thence to al-Zaura al Fauqaniyah and al-Zaura al Tahtiyah (bottom) on the Khur of Ajman about one mile from Ajman town towards the east.<sup>(97)</sup> The Foreign Office Map of Ajman (Figure 6.12) does not, however, show the boundary line dividing Zora al-Tahtiyah into two parts, the eastern one of Sharjah, and the western one belonging to Ajman.

## **6.10 The Boundaries of Umm al-Quwain**

### **6.10.1 The Geographical Location**

Umm al-Quwain consists mainly of a town of that name, situated on a small coastal strip about 30 km long and extending inland about 50 km. It lies some 34 km north of Ajman, separated from it by a stretch of Sharjah territory which includes the creek and village of Hamriyah, and then a long undisturbed sandy beach. The road from the main Ras al-Khaimah highway runs north-westwards through the new suburbs for some 10 km before approaching the original settlement on the promontory. This promontory was once well secured: a line of three strong towers linked by a wall still

stands across its entrance. At the outskirts of the town stands the old fort which is currently used as a police station.

### **6.10.2 Boundary description of Umm al-Quwain**

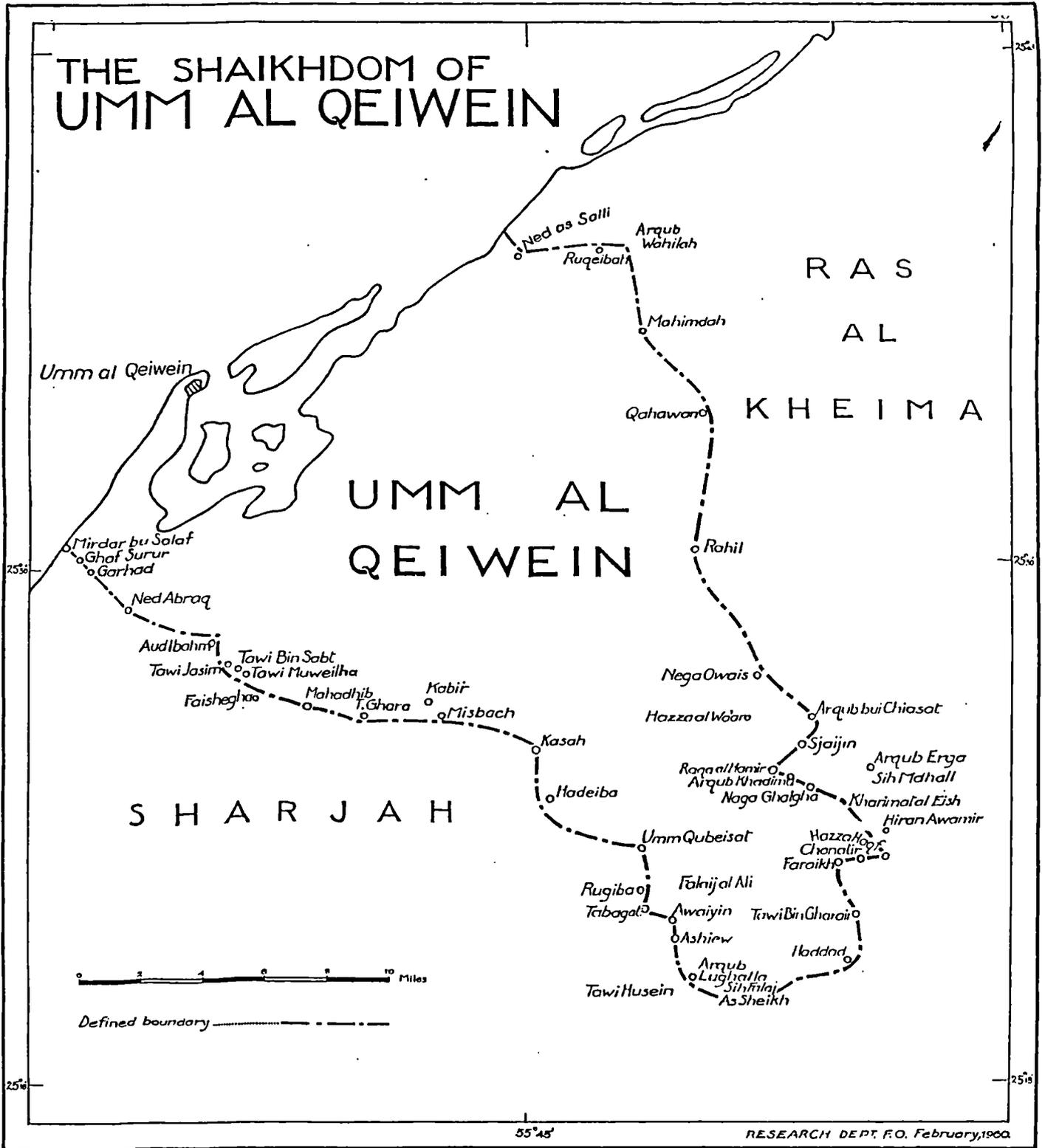
Umm al-Quwain has two shared boundary lines, an eastern one with Ras al-Khaimah, and a western one with Sharjah. Umm al-Quwain has no enclaves within other Emirate territories.

#### **6.10.2.1 Umm al-Quwain boundary with Ras al-Khaimah**

The line starts on the coast north-eastwards to Jazirat al-Hamra which belongs to Ras al-Khaimah, between Nad as Salli about half a mile north of Khur al-Madfaq which is west-south-west of Ras al-Khaimah. From Nad as-Salli the line runs south to the Zaab mosque and thence east to Ruqeibah, leaving the latter to Umm al-Quwain. From Ruqeibah the line continues south and passes between Wahilah and Wahalah, (water wells) the latter falling to Ras al-Khaimah. From that point the line runs south-east to Mahimdah and to Qahawan which is awarded to Umm al-Quwain. Further to the south, Rahil is divided equally between the two emirates and the boundary passes just to the east of Hazza al-Wa'ar and continues south-westwards towards Raqa al-Hamir.<sup>(98)</sup> Although these boundary points between Umm al-Quwain and Ras al-Khaimah were demarcated by Julian Walker in 1955, they conformed with the Ruler of Umm al-Quwain's claims of his state boundary in 1937<sup>(99)</sup> (See Figure 6.13).

The boundary has been disputed. However, an agreement defining the border between Ras al-Khaimah and Umm al-Quwain was signed on 29 May 1994 by the Rulers and Crown Princes of the two Emirates, His Highness Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi and His Highness Shaikh Rashid bin Ahmed al-Mualla.

Figure 6.13 Boundaries of the Emirate of Umm al-Quwain



According to an official statement issued through the Emirates' News Agency, WAM, the two Rulers expressed their thanks to President His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayyan, and His Highness Shaikh Maktum bin Rashid al-Maktum, Vice President and Prime Minister, and to Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktum, Defence Minister, for the efforts they had exerted to make the agreement possible.<sup>(100)</sup>

The long standing boundary dispute, which was the first to be dealt with by the Political Agent in Dubai in April 1954, Mr Christopher Pirie-Gordon, who failed, was settled after a one-year survey demarcation on the ground by Julian Walker from early 1993 to February 1994.<sup>(101)</sup>

#### **6.10.2.2 Umm al-Quwain Boundary with Sharjah**

The boundary starts on the coast as a line running at right angles from the coast through the site of the Mirdar bu Salaf well and thence inland to Ghaf Surur, Garhad, and to the peak of Nad Abra, thence to Aud Iba, which is Sharjah territory. The line then runs to the south of the Tawi Jasim, bin Sabt, Muweilha, and Sirra leaving Faishegha in Sharjah territory. The boundary continues to Mahadhib and south of Ghara, and the two wells, Kabir and Misbach are within Umm al-Quwain's territory. Then the boundary line continues from Kasah, runs south of Hadeiba to Umm Qubeisat, north of Rugiba to Tabagat, Awaiyin, Ashiew, and then north east of Banan, Marragh, and Tawi Husain which belongs to Sharjah. Thence the line runs from Lughalla which is in Umm al-Quwain territory, to the north of Jiza'at Khubaiyat which belongs to Sharjah. From that point the boundary continues through the middle of Sih Falaj to the northern edge of Argub Murraqabat which belongs to Sharjah. Thence the line continues north east leaving Tawi Murraqabat to Sharjah and Haddad to Umm al-Quwain, to Tawi bin Ghurair. The final section passes through Tawi bin Ghurair, Faraikh and Chanatir to Hazza Haqf. (See Figure 6.13).

Figure 6.13 shows that whilst some water wells (*tawis*) are located within the territory of Umm al-Quwain, the border bisects other *tawis* leaving them divided between Umm al-Quwain and Ras al-Khaimah on the eastern boundary, and between Umm al-Quwain and Sharjah on the western boundary. Julian Walker used the water wells in this part of the U.A.E. as boundary markers, a practice previously adopted by the Bedouin who inhabited these areas.

## 6.11 Conclusion

Until the 1960s it was uncertain what territory belonged to which Emirate as no extensive or comprehensive maps of the area had ever been prepared. The boundaries between the various Emirates were determined by tribal loyalties and their territorial claims were not defined until the first oil discoveries were made. British Foreign Office officials then spent several years drawing the boundaries of the Trucial States, as they then were, and an official map was finally produced in 1962. The differing allegiances that this showed are clearly indicated by the way that five of the seven Emirates have enclaves within others and some of them have enclaves close to the Omani border. Oman also has an enclave within the enclave of Sharjah (discussed in Chapter 7).

When Julian Walker finished his work in the Trucial States in the 1960s as an official boundary demarcator, he left unresolved some disputed areas, and other areas with an open decision which meant no settlement was reached during his survey. Some of these disputes have subsequently been resolved by the Shaikhs themselves as seen in Abu Dhabi-Dubai agreement. The most important dispute resolved by the federal government of the U.A.E., was the Dubai-Sharjah boundary settlement in the 1980s. In the early days of the federation there was also the settlement of the Sharjah-Fujairah boundary. However, some situations remain unresolved to the present time, such as the village of Hadf which is disputed between Ajman (U.A.E.) and the Sultanate of Oman.

Having established where the internal boundary lines are, it is interesting to consider how they affect communications in the U.A.E., and the extent to which they have impacted on traditional lifestyles. These points will be discussed in Chapter 7.

## Endnotes

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22. FO 371/ 120604. Letter dated 4 July 1956 from J.P. Tripp, the Political Agent in Dubai, to Shaikh Rashid bin Said, Regent of Dubai, and Shaikh Said bin Maktum, C.B.E., Ruler of Dubai.

23. FO 371/ 120604 Letter dated 3 July 1956 from J.P. Tripp, the Political Agent in Dubai, to Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan, Ruler of Sharjah.
24. FO 371/ 120604. Letter dated 4 July 1956 from J.P. Tripp, the Political Agent in Dubai, to Shaikh Rashid Bin Said, Regent of Dubai.
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48. *Jabal* is an Arabic word which means 'mountain.'
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50. Interview with an official in one of the Dubai Government's Departments, March 1992.

51. FO 371/ 114648, Julian Walker report on Trucial States boundary settlement, March 1955.
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94. FO 371/ 114648.
95. Ibid.
96. FO 371/ 120604, Letter from J.P. Tripp, the Political Agent, Trucial States, to Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid al-Naimi, Ruler of Ajman, 5 April 1956.
97. FO 371/ 114648.
98. FO 371/ 114648.
99. FO 371/ 114648, Note on the boundary claimed by Shaikh Ahmed bin Rashid, Ruler of Umm al-Quwain, dated 4 August 1937.
100. *The Emirates*, published by the Ministry of Information and Culture, Abu Dhabi, 30 May 1994. See also *Al-Sharq Al-Awasat*, London, 31 May 1994.
101. Telephone interview with Julian Walker on 7 June 1994.

# Chapter 7

## The Effect of the Boundaries on Human Geography

### 7.1 Introduction

It is important to consider the effects federal borders might be expected to have, and the extent to which these federal borders are modern, administrative creations, and the extent to which they reflect traditional, tribal borders.

Before examining the effect of boundary disputes on the transportation system, life-style and some of the projects planned by the government for the benefit of the inhabitants in many areas, it may be useful to identify which Emirates share borders. Table 7.1 identifies with which other Emirates the boundaries of each Emirate are shared.

*Table 7.1 Internal and External Boundaries Shared by each Emirate.*

No.	Emirate	Boundary Shared	
		Federal	International
1.	Abu Dhabi	Dubai, Sharjah	Oman, Saudi Arabia
2.	Dubai	Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras al Khaimah	Oman
3.	Sharjah	Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Umm al-Quwain, Ajman, Ras al Khaimah, Fujairah	Oman
4.	Ajman	Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah	Oman
5.	Umm al Quwain	Sharjah, Ras al Khaimah	
6.	Ras al Khaimah	Umm al Quwain, Fujairah, Dubai, Ajman	Oman
7.	Fujairah	Ras al Khaimah, Sharjah, Ajman	Oman

Source: The Author.

#### 7.1.1 International Boundaries of each Emirate

Table 7.1 shows that six of the seven U.A.E. Emirates share a border with Oman. The exception is Umm al-Quwain, which consists of a single territorial unit and no enclaves (see Table 1.1). The Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Fujairah and Ras

al-Khaimah each have a long border with Oman. Dubai and Ajman each share a border with Oman, not as a result of their main cities, but because of Dubai's enclave of Hatta, and of Ajman's enclave of Masfut (see Figure 1.1).

Abu Dhabi alone now shares a border with Saudi Arabia.

### **7.1.2 Internal Boundaries of each Emirate**

From Table 7.1 it can be seen that two Emirates share borders with just two other Emirates, namely Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain. These two Emirates consist of a single territorial unit: Abu Dhabi has a shared border with Dubai and Sharjah; and the Emirate of Umm al-Quwain has a shared border with Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah. Whilst the Emirate of Fujairah also has a shared border with two Emirates, namely Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah, it differs from Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain because it comprises three territorial units. Three Emirates have a shared border with four others: Dubai, Ajman, and Ras al-Khaimah. The Emirate of Sharjah shares borders with all six other Emirates. From Dibba al-Husn at the northeastern extremity of the U.A.E. on Oman's border, to Khatma Malaha near Kalba on the eastern coast in the south of the U.A.E., Sharjah is made up of several territorial units. Thus, the map of the U.A.E. and especially the northern part, looks like a jig-saw puzzle.<sup>(1)</sup>

Although the people of the U.A.E. were constitutionally united into one state as a result of federation on 2 December 1971, there remain territorial problems in some parts of the region, particularly in the border area between the U.A.E. and the Sultanate of Oman. In some cases, boundary disputes within the U.A.E. have been effectively settled by joint projects which have been planned for the development of a disputed area between the two sides. Other cases are still in dispute. However, despite funding from the federal government, some projects still get stopped in mid-stream because the Shaikh does not want to sign an agreement with his

neighbour. The result is that federal money is spent uselessly, and the local inhabitants are the losers. For example, Ras al-Khaimah has not, even to the present day, settled border disputes with the Emirate of Fujairah.

## 7.2 Boundaries and Resources

The three oil-producing Emirates are Abu Dhabi, Dubai and to a lesser extent Sharjah. The other four Emirates, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, Ras al- Khaimah and Fujairah, are not oil producers and most of the boundary disputes are associated with them.

**Table 7.2: Oil Production ('000 b/d) in the U.A.E., 1991-1993**

Emirate	1991	1992	1993
Abu Dhabi	1,980	1,895	1,880
Dubai	434	402	390
Sharjah	40	40	40
Total	2,454	2,297	2,310

Source: *Country Profile: U.A.E., 1993/94*, The Economist Intelligence Unit, London, p.17.

The section below provides a classic case study of how the settling of a long-standing dispute in 1985 between two Emirates was a major factor in developing the formerly disputed area to the mutual benefit of both sides.

### 7.2.1 The development of Khur Al-Mamzar between Dubai and Sharjah

#### 7.2.1.1 Introduction

The first modern school (for boys only) opened in Sharjah in 1953.<sup>(2)</sup> Pupils would commute daily from Dubai to attend the school in Sharjah. From a safe event of small consequence, however, crossing the border later became a highly charged activity.

About a dozen kilometres of *sabkha* (salt marsh) separate Dubai and Sharjah. This area remained undeveloped from the birth of the federation in 1971 until 1985. As can be seen from the aerial photograph (Figure 7.1), a wide zone of land was without

*Figure 7.1 Aerial photograph of the Khur Al-Mamzar and the boundary zone between Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah from the coast*



buildings, due to the boundary dispute between the two Emirates which was active until the two Emirates achieved a settlement in 1985 (see Chapter 6).

Long ago, there were two neighbouring villages on the coast between Dubai and Sharjah, separated from each other by Al Khan creek. On the Dubai side of the creek was Abu Hail, which has now disappeared. Pieces of old pottery revealing the former site of the village can still be found in the sandy promontory to the north. In 1846, the Shaikh of Sharjah built a number of towers at nearby Hamriya to check the expansion of Dubai Shaikhdom<sup>(3)</sup>. The district immediately to the north of Dubai's district of Deira (now part of Dubai City's commercial heart) still bears the name of Hamriya.<sup>(4)</sup> In contrast to the disappearance of the Dubai village of Abu Hail, the Sharjah village of Al Khan stands unchanged from pre-oil days at the mouth of the creek. On either side of it the high rise buildings of Dubai and Sharjah have created a modern urban landscape.

Figure 7.2 shows three lagoons: Al Khan lagoon lies to the east and Al Mamzar lagoon lies to the west. Al Mamzar lagoon is politically divided in two: Al Mamzar Northern lagoon to the east belongs to Sharjah, whilst the western part, called Al Mamzar lagoon of Dubai, belongs to the Emirate of Dubai. The entrance to lagoons from the Arabian Gulf can be seen at the top of the figure.

#### **7.2.1.2 The Project from Al Khan District to the Dubai-Sharjah Border**

The long-running boundary dispute between the Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah was settled in April 1985 (see Chapter 6), from which time the relationship between the two Emirates improved. The Al-Mamzar project is an illustration of practical co-operation between the two Emirates after they settled their boundary dispute.

The Al Khan project will be the most prominent feature of Sharjah in the year 2000. The first phase of a multi-million Dirham scheme has been officially initiated by

Figure 7.2 Sketch map of Al-Mamzar lagoon drawn by Sir William Halcrow Consultants, London in 1992.

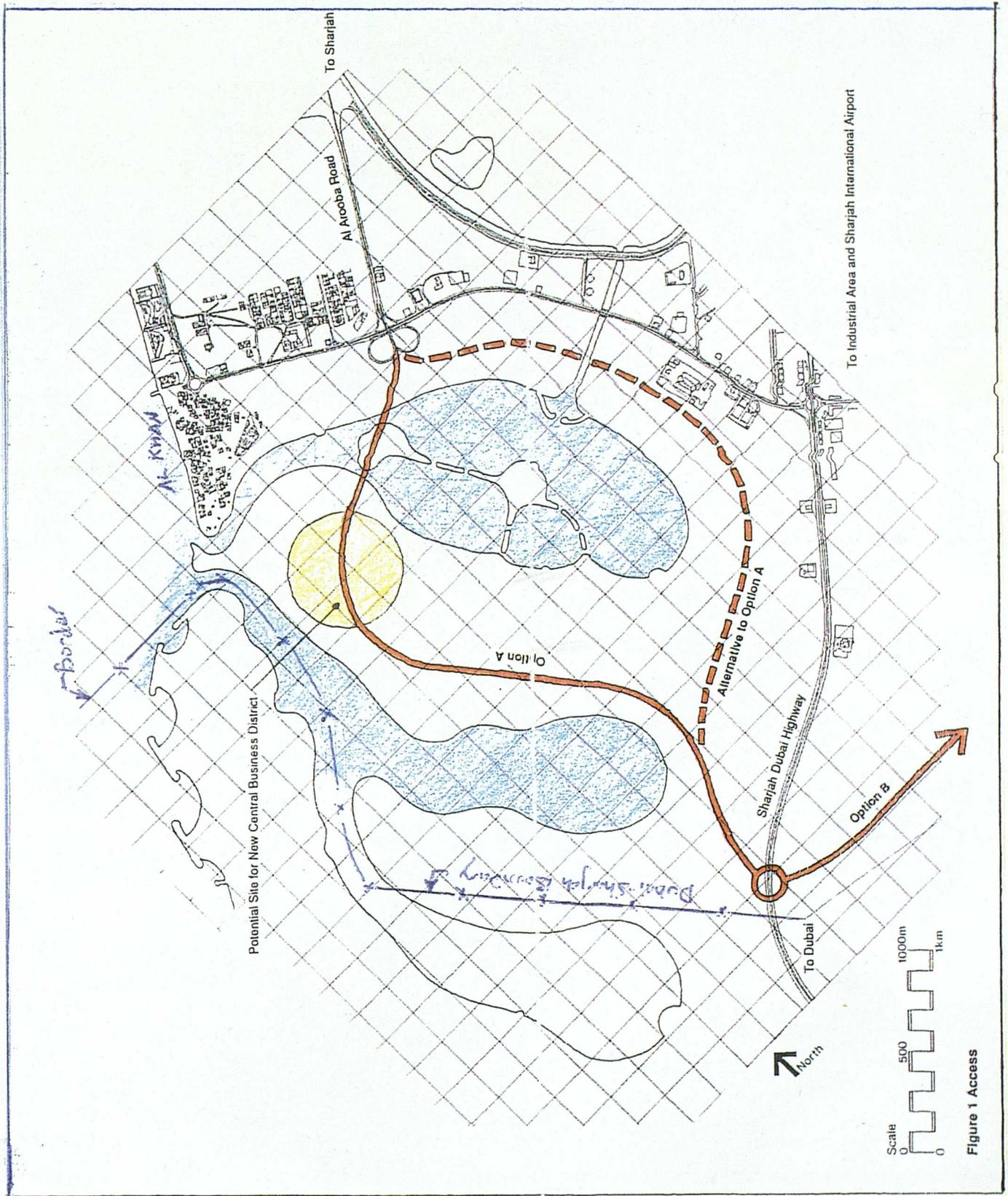


Figure 1 Access

Sharjah Municipality at an estimated cost of Dh 32.75 million. The project involves dredging in the Al Khan lagoon and the entire project will involve the development of the area along the Sharjah-Dubai road which extends over 8 km<sup>2</sup>.

The planning zone will stretch from Al Khan district to the border between Dubai and Sharjah.<sup>(5)</sup> The project will include residential, commercial and recreational facilities. Once this project is completed, it will make up an estimated 25 per cent of the entire area of the city of Sharjah.<sup>(6)</sup>

This project is complementary to the Al Mamzar projects undertaken by Dubai Municipality involving the dredging of two lagoons Al Mamzar of Dubai and Al Mamzar of Sharjah; the Al Mamzar eastern lagoon is located inside Sharjah's boundaries.<sup>(7)</sup>

From Figures 7.3 and 7.4 it can be seen that the contractors are building a long divide in the entrance of the mouth of both Khurs the Al Mamzar of Sharjah and Al Mamzar of Dubai, and this artificial partition of boulders will serve as the maritime boundary there between the Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah. The same figure shows that the southern area is Dubai's territory and the northern area is Sharjah's territory. The Khur Al Mamzar of Dubai master plans prepared by Sir William Halcrow Consultants, include design and supervision of a 5 hectares beach park including buildings and landscaping, at a cost of Dh 72 million. Dh 1 million will be spent in the preparation of a master plan for the development of approx 500 hectares of land.<sup>(8)</sup>

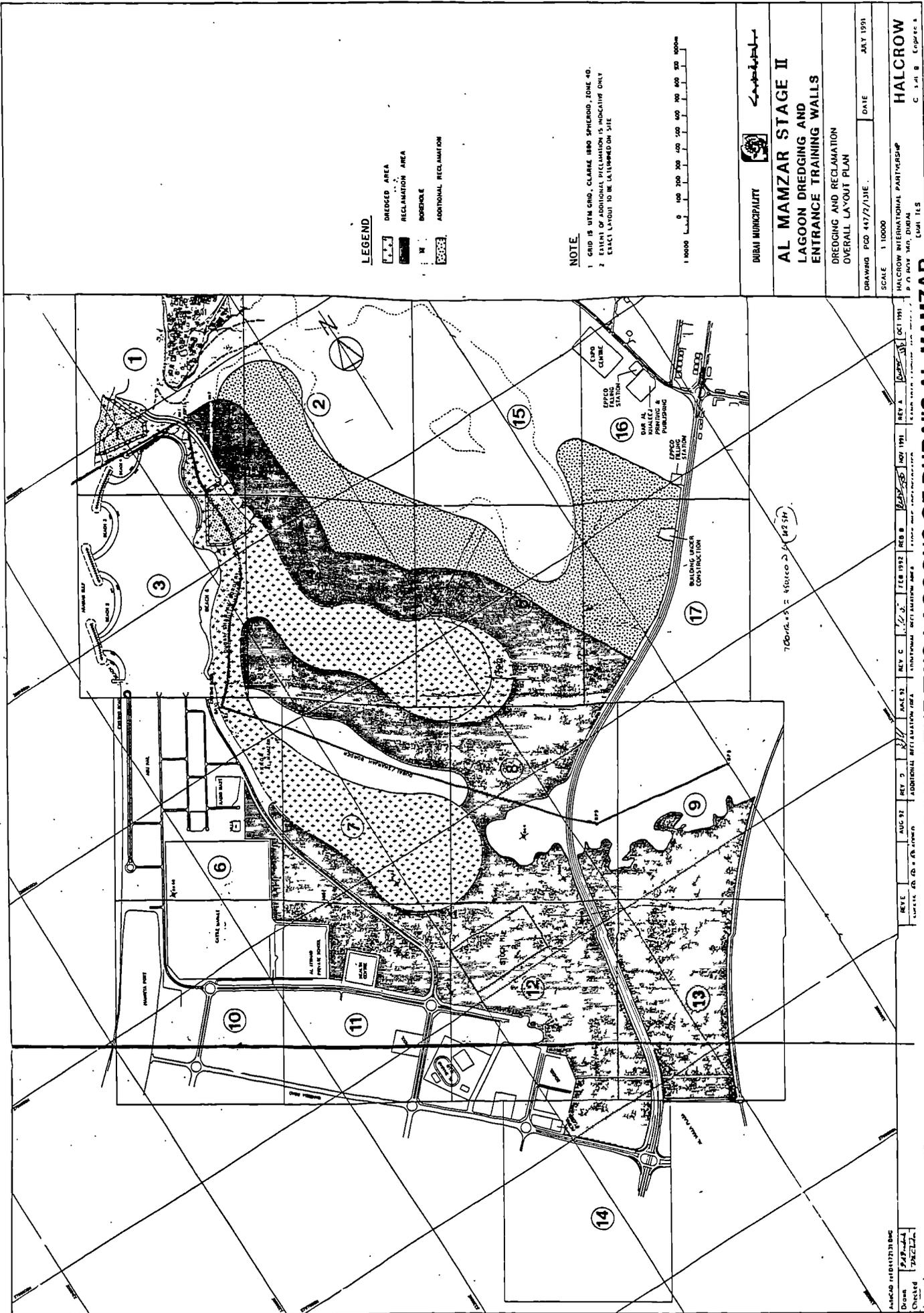
Both projects will result in the development of the area between the two Emirates. According to the director of Sharjah Municipality the first phase is dredging Al Khan lagoon for a distance of 5.5 km. The second phase will extend over a period of seven years and will incorporate the construction of luxurious residential building complexes, multi-purpose office building, business districts, commercial centres, parks and green landscapes, recreational facilities and leisure areas (see Figure 7.5).

*Figure 7.3 The artificial maritime boundary between the Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah in the entrance of the Al-Mamzar lagoon.*



*Figure 7.4 The old village of Al-Khan of Sharjah on the northern side of the artificial maritime boundary in the Khur Al-Mamzar*





**Figure 7.5 PLAN OF DEVELOPMENTS AROUND THE TWO LAGOONS OF DUBAI'S AL-MAMZAR LAGOON AND SHARJAH'S AL-MAMZAR LAGOON. DUBAI'S DEVELOPMENTS WERE OFFICIALLY ORDERED IN APRIL 1994 BY THE RII FR OF DUBAI.**

The project also includes the construction of a canal which will connect the Al Khan lagoon with the existing Khalid lagoon. The canal will be 800 metres long and 40 metres wide, and is intended to facilitate the natural cleansing of Khalid lagoon. According to the head of the Planning Department of Sharjah Municipality, the Al Khan area was chosen for this project because of its strategic location between Dubai and Sharjah.<sup>(9)</sup> The Al Khan lagoon project was not being undertaken in competition with Al Mamzar lagoon project of the Emirate of Dubai. However, Engineer Sev Ferrari of Halcrow International has stated that the two projects are being carried out in harmony (and in the same geographical location), and they will be carefully integrated to achieve peaceful collaboration.<sup>(10)</sup>

### **7.3 The Effect of Boundaries on Transportation**

The main factor in linking the cities, towns and villages in the U.A.E. is road transportation. However, disputed boundaries affect roads serving the U.A.E..

#### **7.3.1 Dubai to Al-Ain Road**

Dubai is located on the west coast of the U.A.E., and Al-Ain is the eastern province of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, located beside the U.A.E-Oman border. However, Al-Ain is nearer to Dubai than to Abu Dhabi. The road from Dubai to Al-Ain used to be poor in quality. When the U.A.E. University was established at Al-Ain in 1977, many University students were killed in traffic accidents while travelling from different parts of the country using the Al-Ain to Dubai road.

There was a heavy political agenda behind Abu Dhabi's reluctance to put this road in good condition. Abu Dhabian merchants wanted to prevent the development of this road in order to ensure that the people who inhabited Al-Ain would buy goods from Abu Dhabi, using the Al-Ain to Abu Dhabi road, rather than from Dubai, using the Al- Ain to Dubai road. The Abu Dhabi traders became angry in 1985 when the

federal government paved the new road from Abu Dhabi to Dubai which made the transport of goods from Dubai (the major trading centre in the Gulf) to Abu Dhabi much easier, strengthening the competitive position of Dubai's traders in the face of Abu Dhabi's traders.<sup>(11)</sup> Another example of competition between the two Emirates took place a few months before federation. Abu Dhabi merchants pressurized their ruler to levy a 10 per cent surcharge on all items not imported directly into Abu Dhabi. This move was designed to displace the leading position of Dubai in supplying the Emirate's local market. Shaikh Zayed, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, subsequently rescinded the tariffs in accordance with provisions of Article 11 of the Federal Constitution calling for the abolition of all customs duties on trade among the union members.<sup>(12)</sup> This retraction occurred after the establishment of the federation. Its effect was clearly favourable to the Emirate of Dubai. Abu Dhabi's merchants were far from pleased with this move.

### **7.3.1.1 Introduction**

Al-Ain is the eastern province of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The Al-Nahhayan family owned farms in Al-Ain, and the ruler of Abu Dhabi appointed his brother as his representative in this region. Al-Ain itself is the chief town of the Abu Dhabi Emirate, part of the large oasis known historically as Al-Buraimi and which is now divided between Abu Dhabi (U.A.E.) and Oman (see Chapters 2 and 4).

At the time of federation the importance of Al-Ain derived from the U.A.E. University, situated in the city centre. As the only university in the U.A.E., students from the other Emirates have to travel in order to attend. The city is linked by many roads with Abu Dhabi, but the most important road link is the Al-Ain to Dubai road.

### 7.3.1.2 Border post on the road

Before discussing the impact of internal boundaries on the road, it is important to recognise the neutral zone between Dubai and Al-Ain located between Tawi Al-Faqqa to Tawi Al-Ashush. This neutral zone is 18 km long and 1 km wide.<sup>(13)</sup> The Abu Dhabi-Dubai border had been a source of friction between the two Emirates for many years before federation. The issue was finally settled in 1968 by the creation of a neutral zone. Al-Faqqa village is divided between the Emirates of Dubai and Al-Ain. Both Emirates established a police station on the border line to control the road and vehicle movements between Dubai and Al-Ain. Regarding the design of the road and its quality, the plan was prepared by the same consultant for both Dubai and Al-Ain. The plan was that the road was to have looked the same on both sides of the village. Figure 7.6 shows, however, that at the Al-Faqqa police station on the Dubai side the road is divided into three lanes, and after the police station, the road is divided into two lanes, where it enters the Al-Ain district of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (Figure 7.7).

Another symbolic feature of the effect of different federal administrations on the Dubai to Al-Ain road is the road signs. From the Dubai trade centre to Al-Faqqa border point, all the signboards within Dubai's territory are painted green; after Al-Faqqa all the signboards are painted blue until the road reaches Al-Ain city centre. Such symbols serve to emphasise territorial distinctions between the Emirates (Figure 7.8).

*Figure 7.6 The Dubai-Al-Ain road and Al-Faqa Police Station on the Dubai side.*

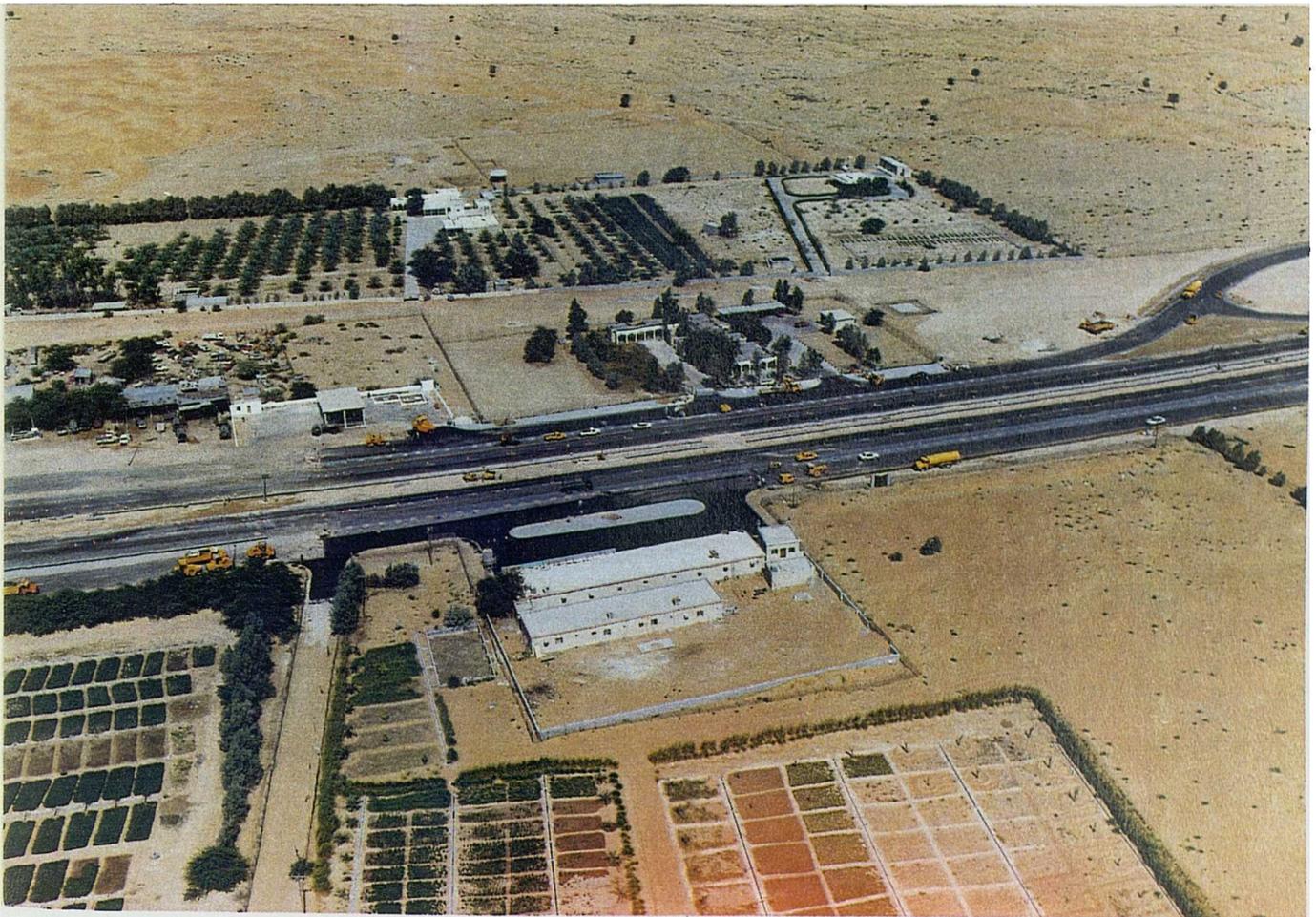
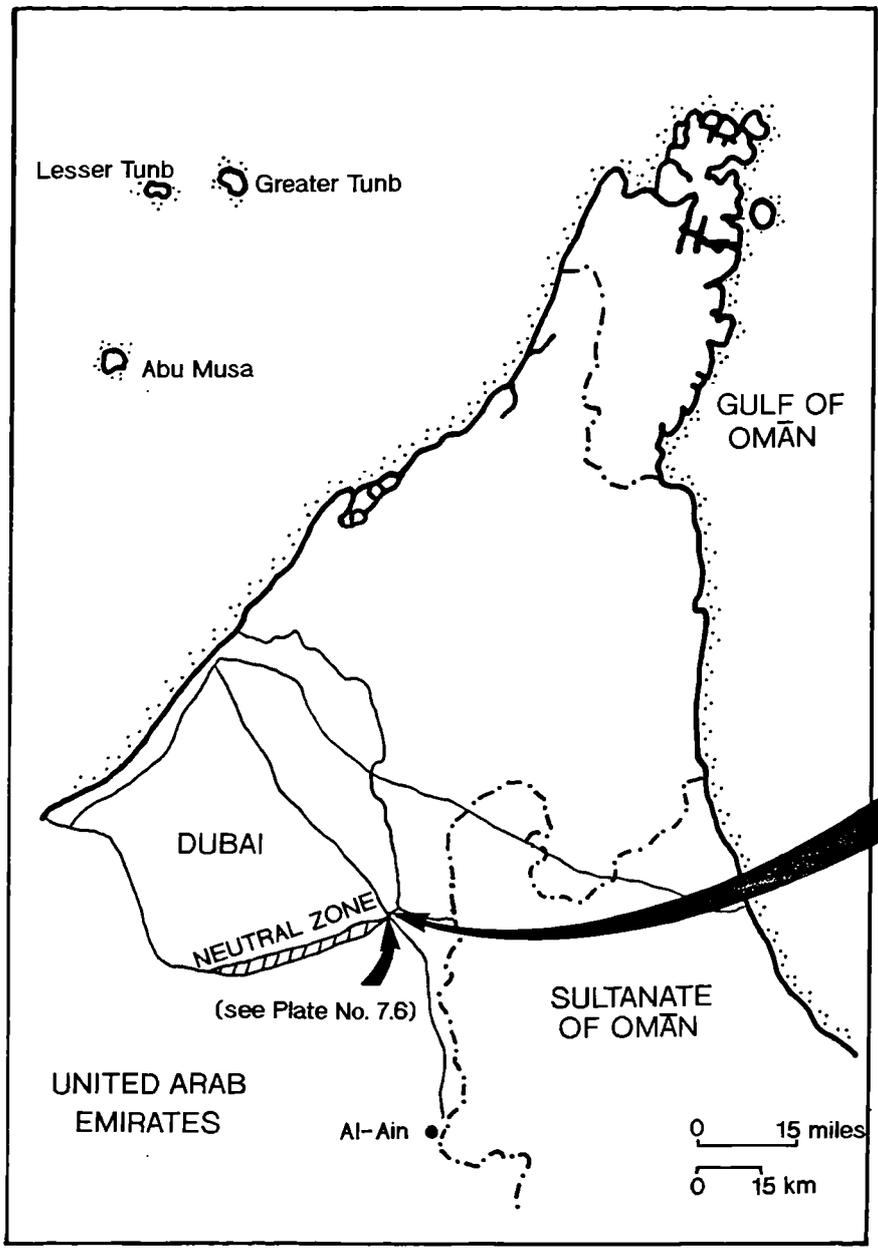
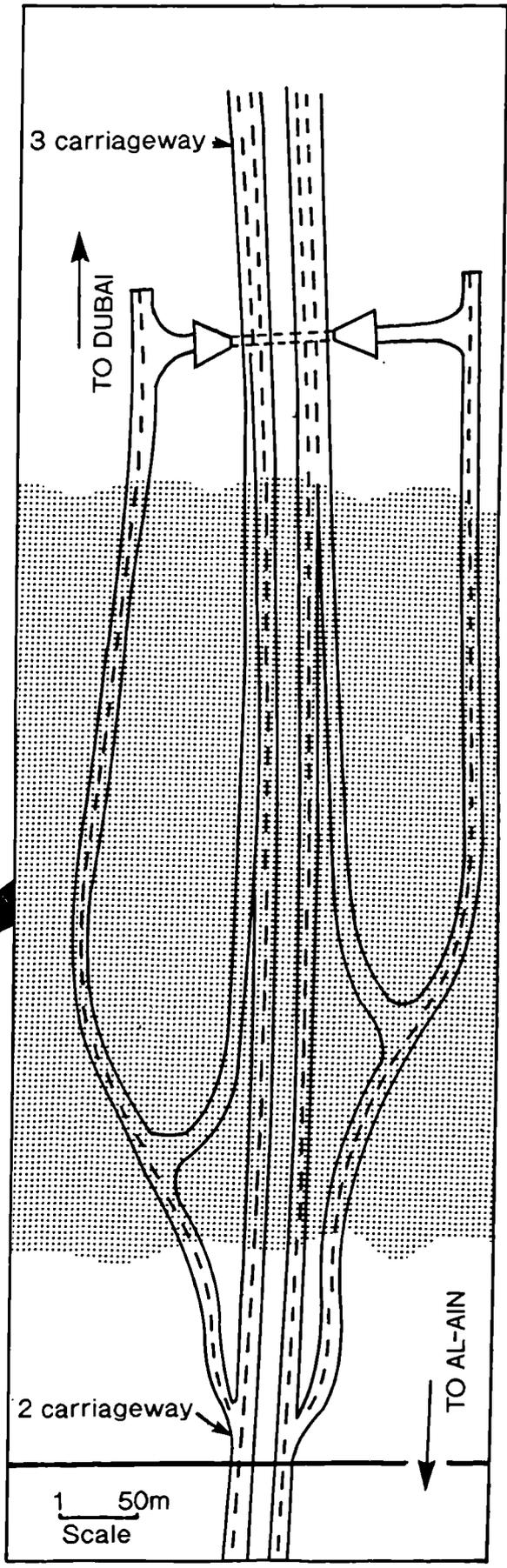


Figure 7.7 Sketch plan of the Dubai-Al-Ain road on the Al-Faqqā border point.



SOURCE: Fieldwork



*Figure 7.8 The green signboard of the Dubai-Al-ain road in Dubai's territory (top) and the blue signboard on the same road in Al-Ain territory after crossing Al-Faqqa border point (bottom).*



### 7.3.3 Dubai to Hatta Road

The mountain enclave of Hatta, 130 km east of Dubai, forms part of Dubai Emirate. However the mountains around the village of Hatta belong to the northern part of the Oman range called the Hajar Mountains (*hajar* means rock) (see Chapter 6).

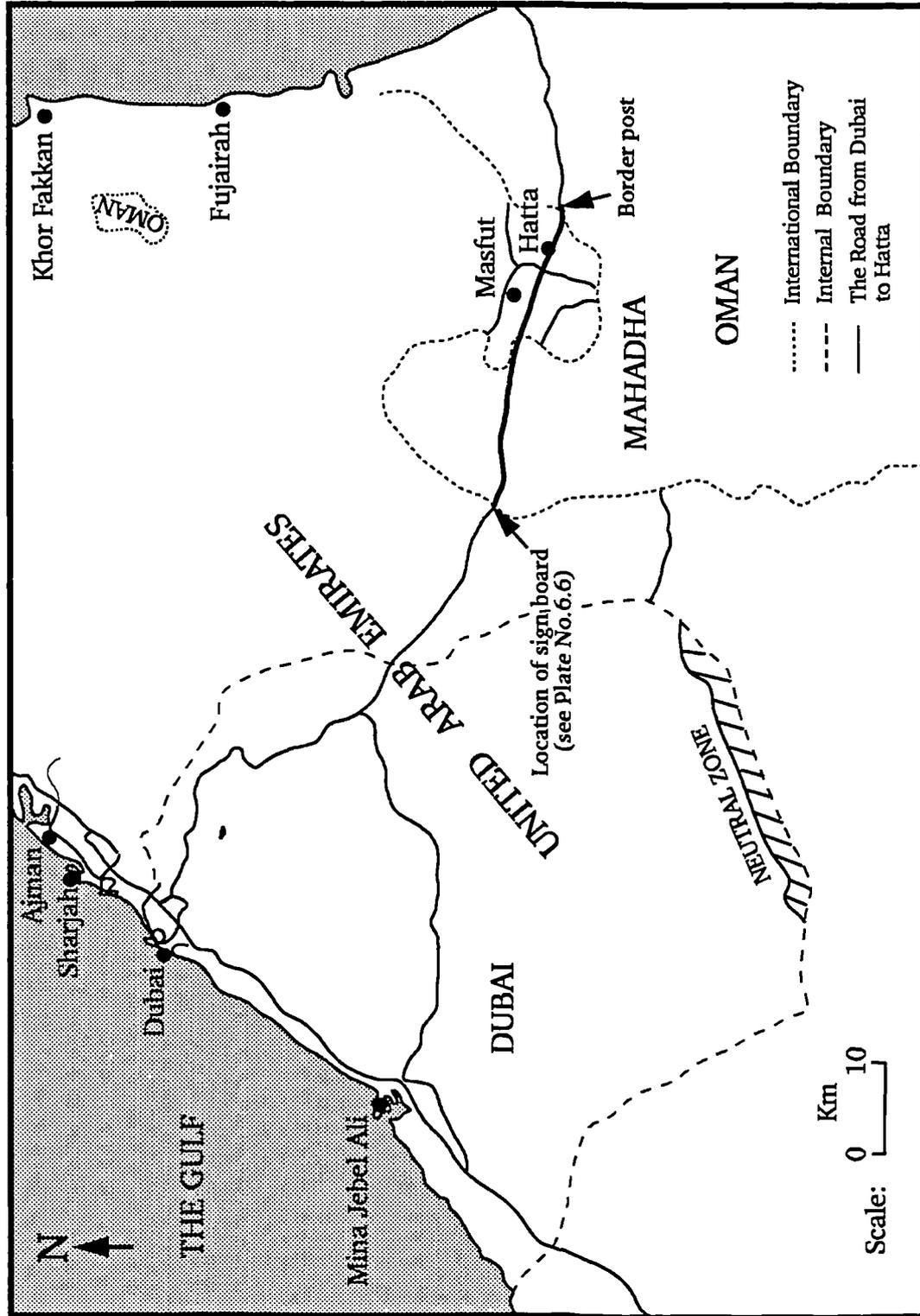
From Dubai to its Hatta enclave, the road crosses many political boundaries, internal and external (see Figure 7.9). From Dubai there is Al-Hibab village roundabout where there is a police station which belongs to Dubai Police Force. The road continues to Al-Medam roundabout in Sharjah, with a Sharjah police station. The road then crosses a long stretch of Oman territory called Welayah Mahadha, A large signboard beside the road announces "Welcome to Oman" (Figure 7.10), indicating that this is Omani land. Within the Omani territory the Omani government built two big camps: one belonging to the Ministry of the Interior to control the road; the other is the residential house of the Wali of Mahadha (the Sultan's representative in this state).<sup>(14)</sup>

As the road leaves Omani territory, another signboard announces "Goodbye, Sultanate of Oman". The road enters the territory of the emirate of Ajman, where there is a police station belonging to Ajman. Finally, the town of Hatta appears. In the town centre there are several government departments which belong to Dubai. Beyond Hatta, the road continues to Al-Wagaga village where there is an Omani border control station built and financed by the Ruler of Dubai.<sup>(15)</sup> From the Al-Wagaga border post to Welayah Shinas (Oman) on the Gulf of Oman the road is also financed by the Ruler of Dubai.

Another project financed by the Ruler of Dubai is the road from Dubai to Al-Aqr costing Dh.380 million (£63 million), and from Al-Aqr to Seeb, the entrance of Muscat, costing Dh.680 million (£113 million). The work was completed in 1984.<sup>(16)</sup>

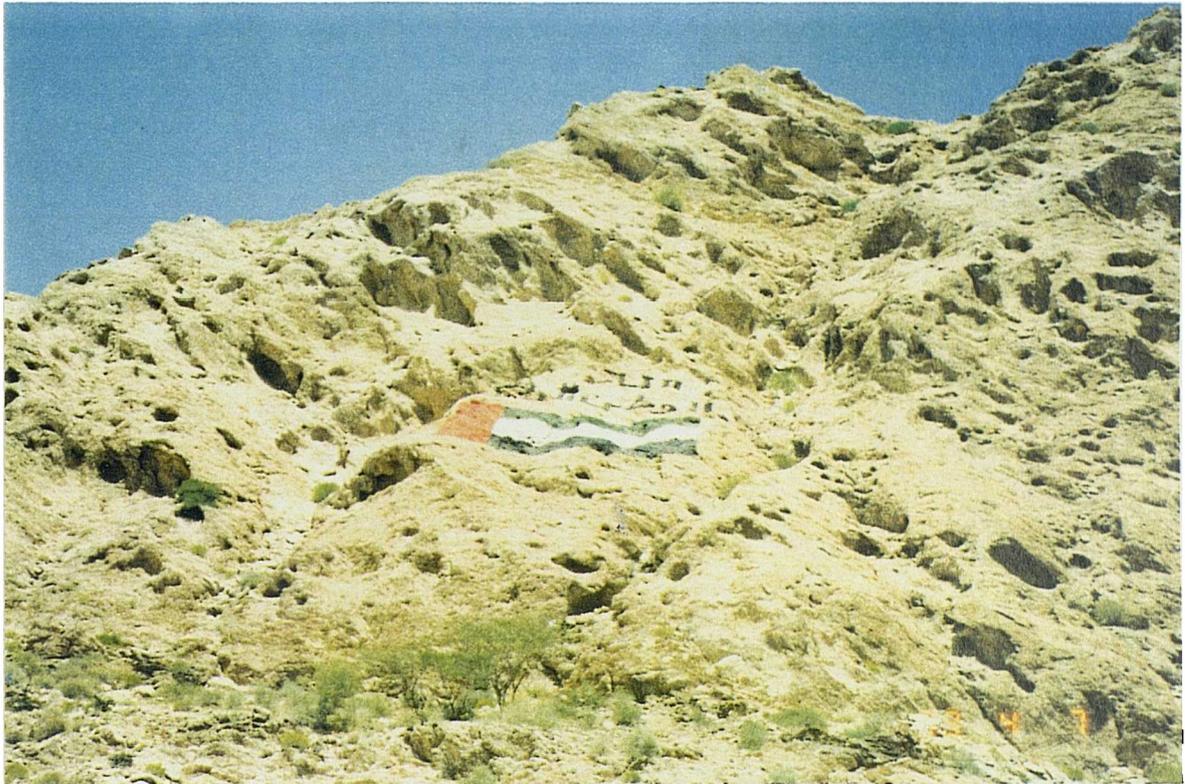
Figure: 7.9

The Dubai - Hatta Road



Source: Fieldwork

*Figure 7.10 The federal flag of the United Arab Emirates drawn on the mountain by the Al-Mezairih village people of the Emirate of Ajman after crossing the boundary point of Wilayat Mahadhah of the Sultanate of Oman on the Dubai-Hatta road.*



It is worth considering why the Ruler of Dubai was prepared to finance the Dubai to Hatta road as far as the Omani capital, Muscat. The answer may be that he was taking care of any potential emergency situation by building the road from Dubai's enclave Hatta to Muscat on the Gulf of Oman as an alternative route to his Emirate possibly as a strategic escape route. The road can also be used by allied military forces to reach the Emirate of Dubai within 4 or 5 hours, instead of having to round the Straits of Hormuz would clearly take far longer.<sup>(17)</sup> Another motive was probably commercial, paving the way for Omani traders to buy goods from the Dubai market and transporting them to Muscat.

According to an official in the U.A.E., during the Gulf crisis in 1991, when the Iraqis invaded Kuwait, the Omani government established a checkpoint on the Dubai to Hatta road at the entrance of the Walayat Mahadha. Travellers' passports were checked. U.A.E. citizens were allowed to travel on this road to the enclaves of Hatta (Dubai) and Masfut (Ajman). Travellers not holding U.A.E. passports were turned back to the U.A.E.. The official also confirmed that the federal government paid the Omani Sultan a huge amount of money to remove this checkpoint from the road linking the enclaves of Hatta (Dubai), Masfut (Ajman) and Wadi al-Qur (Ras al-Khaimah) with the main U.A.E. territory.

#### **7.3.4 Khur Fakkan to Al-Jaradiyya Road**

There is a small plot named Al-Jaradiyya located south of Khur Fakkan,<sup>(18)</sup> some 2 km<sup>2</sup> in area on the main paved road which links the east coast from Khur Fakkan to Kalba. The plot remains undeveloped because it belongs to the Sultanate of Oman and two families from Al-Shuhuh are living there who are loyal to the Sultanate of Oman.

In 1978, the U.A.E. federal government was contracting a road to link the town of Kalba (Sharjah), through the Emirate of Fujairah, with Dibba on the east coast. The road would have gone through the Omani territory, which was less than one kilometre

in length. The road had to be stopped at the beginning of the Omani kilometre and restarted at the end of the Omani area. The Omani government, in a bid to protect its sovereignty, refused permission to the U.A.E. federal government to undertake the construction work even though the area was geographically situated in the middle of U.A.E. territory and miles from Oman, and despite the fact that the land was of little significance to the U.A.E. but it is of great significance to Oman, and which directly lies on the south eastern enclave of Madha. The road has, however, recently been completed and the one kilometre stretch paved.<sup>(19)</sup>

### **7.3.5 From Fujairah to its Enclaves in Oman**

One of the border posts between the U.A.E. and the Sultanate of Oman is Khatmat Milaha on the Gulf of Oman and to the north of this point is the town of Kalba, one of Sharjah's enclave's in the eastern region. To the south of this point is Walaya Mahadha of Oman. However, further to the south is U.A.E. territory again. A track turns back into the mountains leading to Fujairah's villages of Wadi Mai and Wahalla, and eventually by a tortuous route, back onto the main Dubai to Oman road at Hatta.

### **7.3.6 The Western Coast Road from Abu Dhabi to Ras al-Khaimah**

As has been mentioned before, six Emirates are located on the western coast of the U.A.E., whilst the seventh is located on the eastern coast on the Gulf of Oman. A long stretch of desert coastline separates the cities of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, some 160 kilometres apart. The road linking the two Emirates is now the busiest in the land, for these two neighbouring Emirates are the main centres of population and economic activity in the U.A.E..

Saih Shuaib was a border post between the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, that is, between the capital of the federation, Abu Dhabi, and the northern Emirates. Before 1971, there used to be a customs checking point and passport control. The

border post was removed after federation in 1971, and today only a small watch room remains. Beyond Saih Shuaib, Jebel Ali Port (Dubai) is only a few kilometres distant. The road continues to Dubai city centre.

From Dubai to the Emirate of Sharjah, 12 km of *sabkha* (salt marsh) is crossed by a modern highway called Al-Ittehad (Union Road). Border pillars are planted to the right of the road in the area which divides the two Emirates, called Nahada Amir (see Figure 7.1). From Sharjah, the route continues to Ajman along the coast where the city of Ajman lies about 8 km to the north. After reaching Ajman the road crosses into Sharjah's territory again which includes the creek and the village of Hamriyah. The effect of being totally surrounded by the territory of Sharjah, effectively makes the Emirate of Ajman into an enclave.

The Emirate of Umm al-Quwain lies some 34 km north of Ajman. From Umm al-Quwain city to the main Ras al-Khaimah highway the road runs north-westwards, through the new suburbs, for some 10 km before approaching the original settlement on the promontory. At the beginning of the village stands the old fort, currently used by the police. The road north from Umm al-Quwain enters the Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah at the Wadi Batha and a pair of bridges carry the traffic over this wadi which runs inland to Falaj al Mualla (Umm al-Quwain). Some kilometres north of the wadi a pair of preserved watch-towers dominate the landscape from the heights of a line of dunes to the east of the road. These were the inland defence of the village of Jazirat al Hamra on the coast of Ras al-Khaimah.

In summary, the main highway from Abu Dhabi, the capital of the federation, to Ras al-Khaimah enters five other Emirates, cutting across internal boundary lines. The only Emirate left out is Fujairah which lies on the east coast of the U.A.E. on the Gulf of Oman. In crossing these Emirate territories, the highway cuts across internal boundary lines between the Emirates, even though these lines are artificial creations,

for all territorial boundaries are in some measure artificial.<sup>(20)</sup> This highway has the potential to reduce the relevance of the internal boundary between the union members because many of the regular travellers from the northern Emirates (Ras al-Khaimah, Umm al-Quwain, Ajman and Sharjah) are government employees, working for example in the Air Force, in oil company headquarters, and in the government Ministries situated in the federal capital of the U.A.E., Abu Dhabi. They travel daily along this main highway, ignoring border points: the traveller feels that the journey is all within one state.

#### **7.4 Traditional ways of life**

The U.A.E. is broadly divided into two geographical regions:

1. The Hajar mountains, the mountainous backbone of the Northern Emirates, to the east and the north east, without oil deposits.
2. The desert region, to the west and south west, with oil deposits.

Subsequent to federation, the oil companies located their headquarters in the main cities of the country. All the government departments based themselves in the federal capital, Abu Dhabi, and the commercial capital, Dubai. Many of the villagers therefore emigrated to the main cities on the western coast of the country. In other words, there was a tribal emigration within the Emirates from the east coast (the mountainous region) to the west coast where the six Emirates are located.<sup>(21)</sup> The minority of people who stayed in their old villages to spend the rest of their life working their farms in the wadis, became too old to move and leave their villages in which they were born.

## **7.4.1 The Enclaves of Hatta and Masfut**

### **7.4.1.1 The enclave of Hatta**

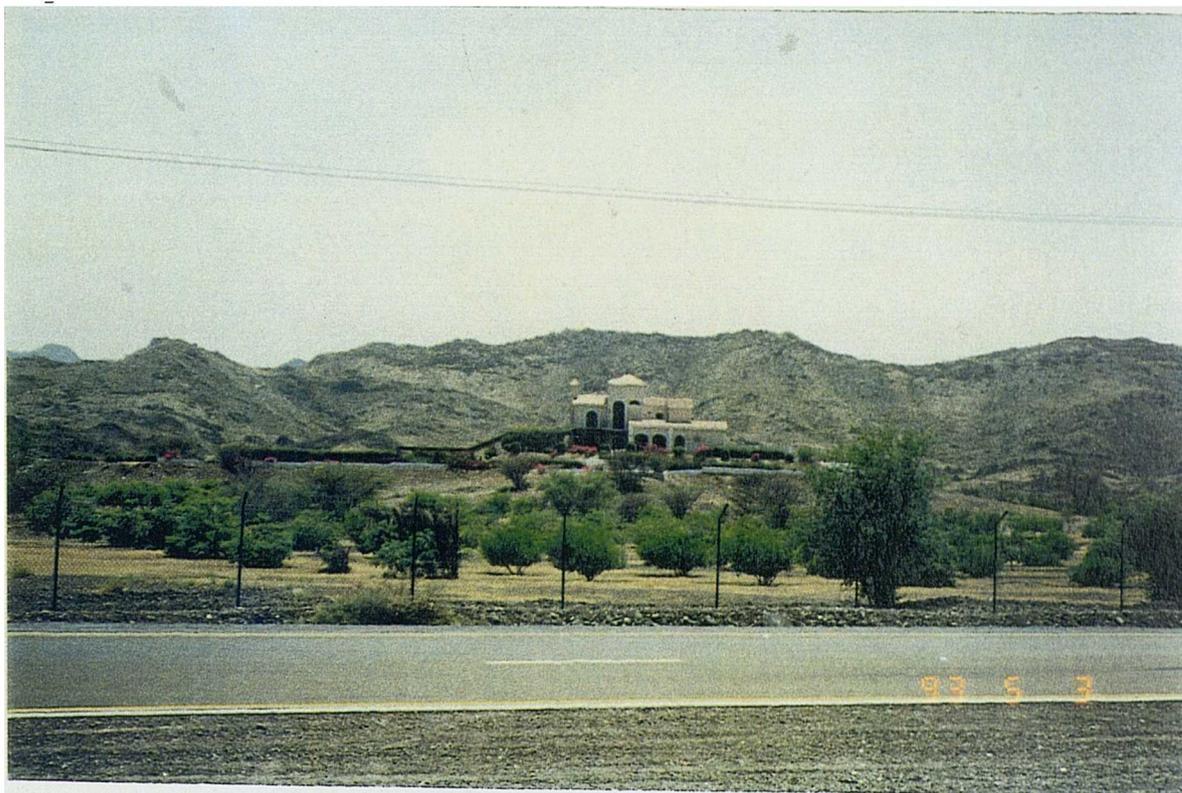
As was mentioned above in Chapter 6, the enclave of Hatta is 130 km east of the Emirate of Dubai of which it is a part. It is the major settlement in that area. The oasis of Hatta has been developed by the government of Dubai with many new villas (Figures 7.11 and 7.12) and an attractive Hatta Fort Hotel in a garden which is becoming a tourist attraction. The government has constructed asphalted streets, clinics, mosques and shops, and supplies water and electricity. The people of Hatta enjoy full communication with the Emirate of Dubai, with the Dubai Municipality, Dubai Police, and Dubai telecommunication facilities. Merchants from Dubai own many gardens with luxury villas built at the foot of a rocky hill and many gardens in Hatta are using new technology water irrigation systems (see Figure 7.13). The gardens are, however, only for temporary residence, usually confined to the holiday season, when some Dubai families visit the Hatta oasis for their holiday.

### **7.4.1.2 The Ajman enclaves of Masfut and Manama**

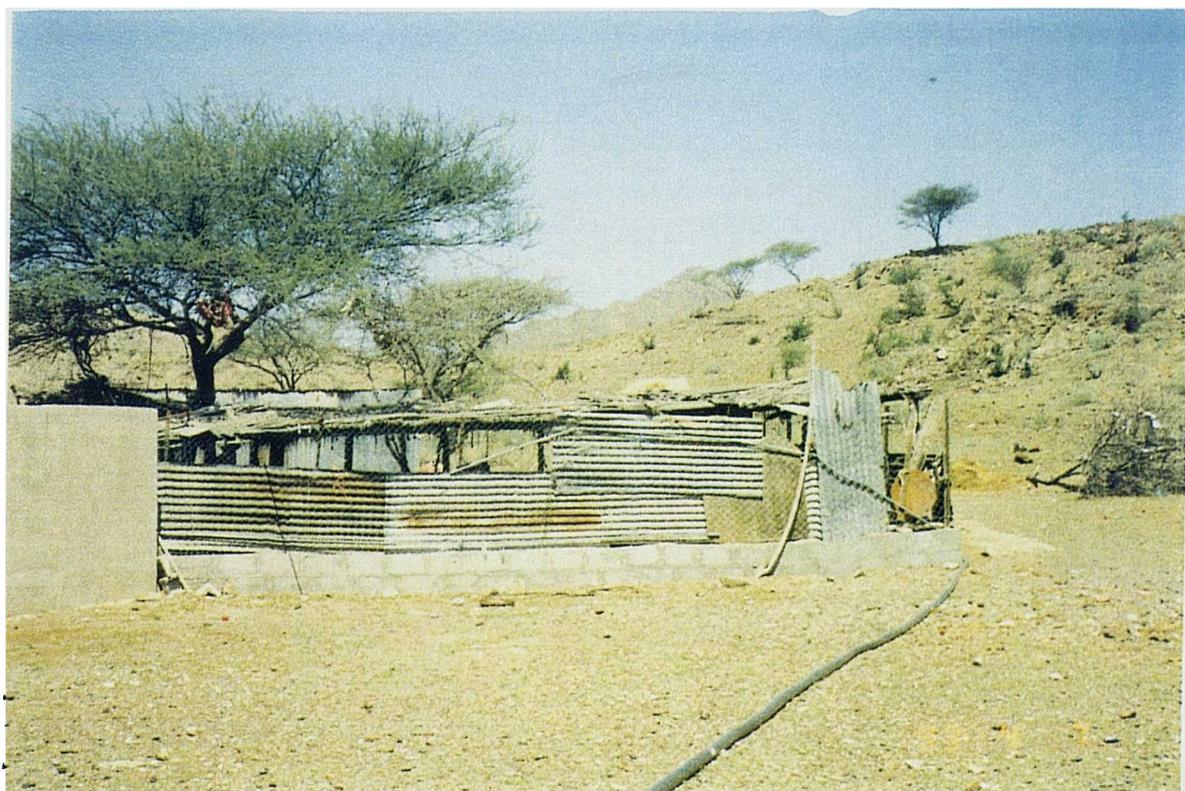
Although Ajman is the smallest of the Emirates, with an area of only 259 km<sup>2</sup>, and its main territory is completely surrounded by that of Sharjah (see Figure 1.1), it does nevertheless have two small enclaves in the mountains: Manama in the centre of the U.A.E. territory, and Masfut in the south eastern region, close to the Omani border.

Masfut borders Hatta, both of which are now linked by asphalt roads to the main Dubai to Hatta highway. A wadi runs through the middle of the village. A group of villagers called Bedaiwat inhabit Masfut, and own farms and palm gardens there. There is a big difference between the development of the enclaves of Hatta and Masfut, for the gardens in the latter are poor with ordinary houses, and the irrigation system is still traditional.

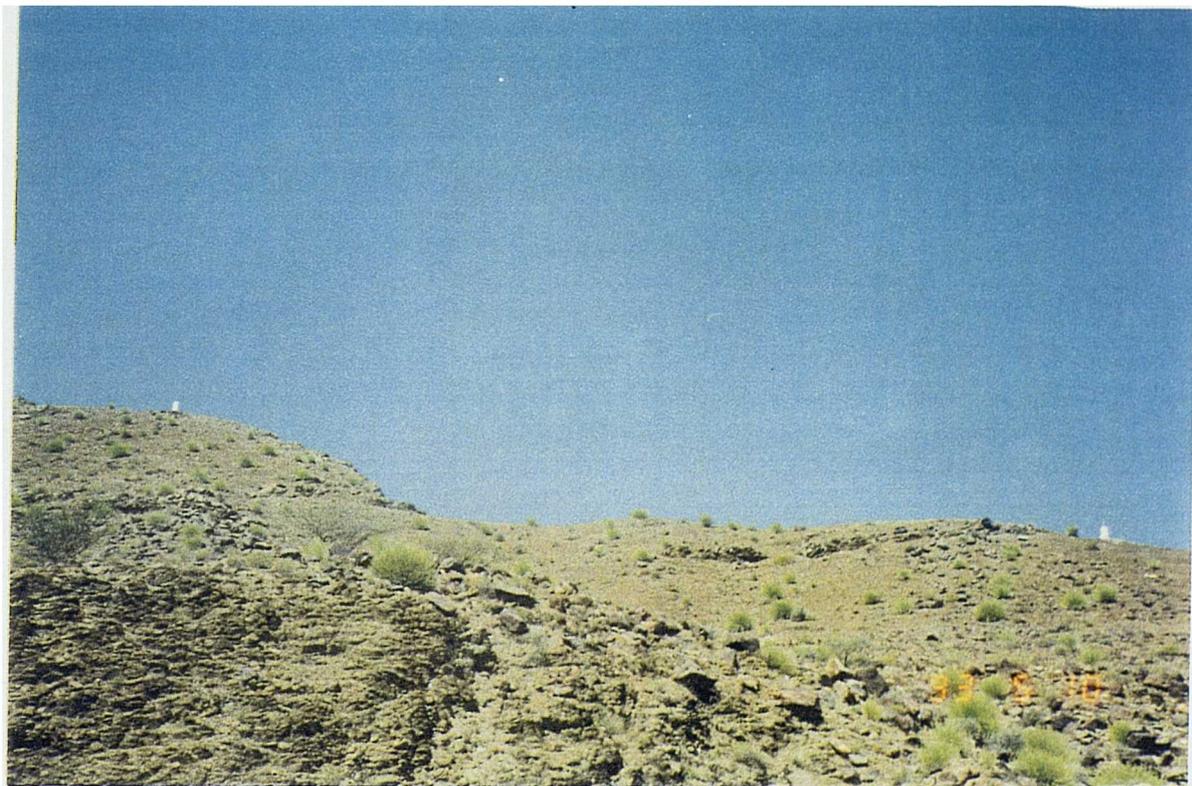
*Figure 7.11 View of a luxury villa built in a farm in Hatta Village (Dubai's enclave) (top), and a view of the National Bank of Dubai, Hatta branch (bottom).*



*Figure 7.12 Private villa built on a farm belonging to a family of Dubai in Hatta village (top) and another house built in Masfut village, the Enclave of Ajman near Hatta (bottom).*



*Figure 7.13 Old water irrigation system (Al-falag) in Nahwa, the Enclave of Sharjah at the head of the Wadi Madha, of the Sultanate of Oman (top) and the two white pillars marks the border of the village of Nahwa of Sharjah (bottom).*



#### 7.4.2 Enclave within an enclave

Wadi Madha is an Omani enclave located in the northeast of the U.A.E. south of Khur Fakkan of Sharjah. It has no outlet to the sea. Geographically Wadi Madha is a drainage basin lying within the Hajar mountains (see Figure 7.14). The inhabitants of this Wadi are called Madhaniyyen (named after the Wadi) and Shuhuh, of the Bani Sa'ad tribe, who are the inhabitants of the village of Ghuna; and Bani Hamid who inhabit the village of the same name, Hajar Bani Hamid, and Madha (which gives its name to the Omani Walayah of Madha) and Hajar Bani Hamid. <sup>(22)</sup>

The inhabitants of Madha live relatively isolated, and do not want to be affected by their neighbours, the Qawasim. They remain loyal to the Sultanate of Oman. <sup>(23)</sup>

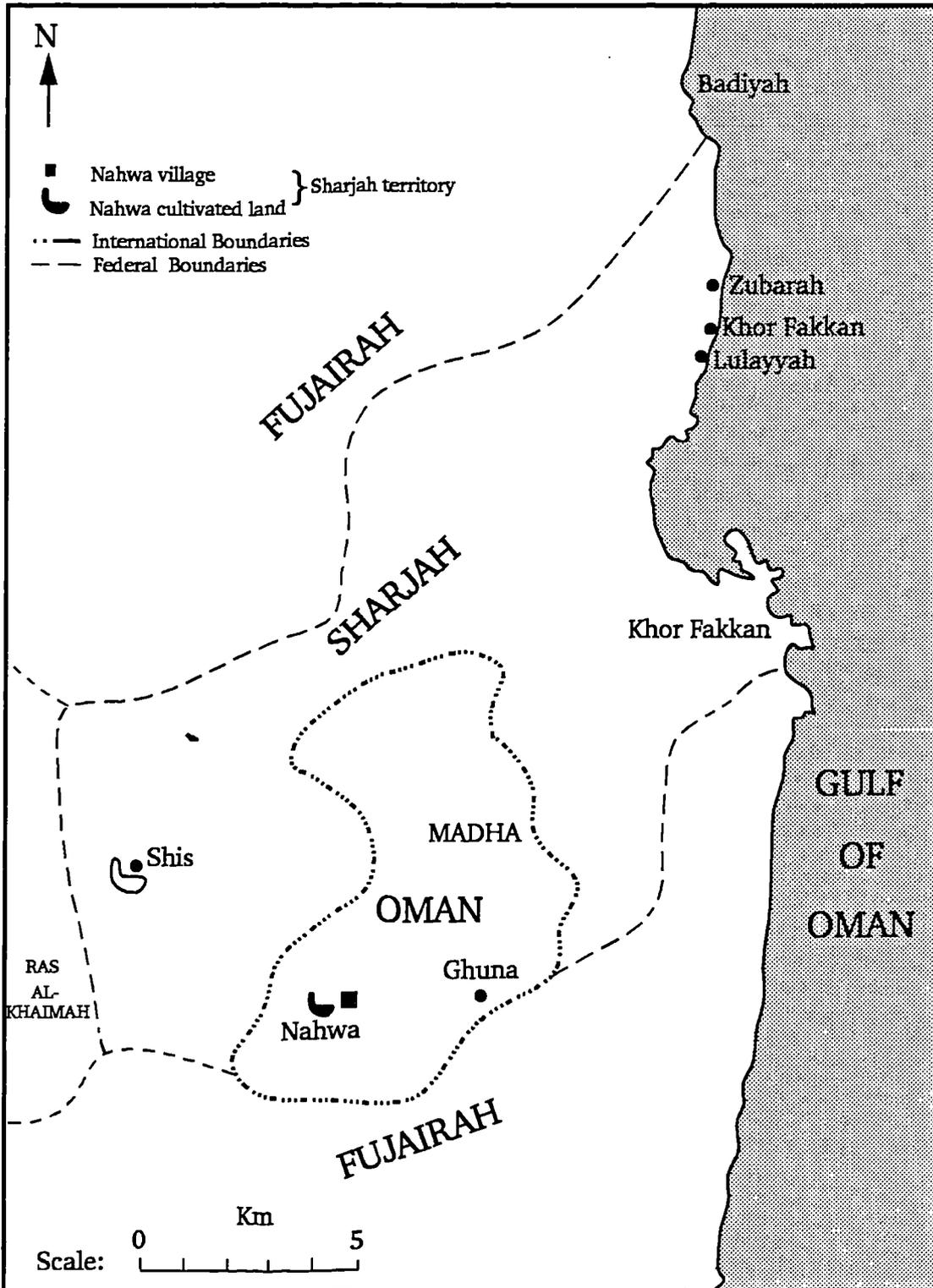
A curious feature of the political geography of the U.A.E. is that there is another enclave within Oman's Madha enclave, belonging to the Emirate of Sharjah.

This Sharjah enclave is located in the mountains, within the Omani enclave of Madha. Its villages of Shis and Nahwa (the total area of each village is about 1 km<sup>2</sup>)<sup>(24)</sup> can only be reached by taking a four wheel drive vehicle and heading inland through Madha (see Figure 7.15). Just before the end of the Omani track, deep down in a wadi, this track stops at the fringe of a village surrounded by terraced palm groves and gardens. The wadi ends in deep rock pools just below the village and there is an interesting falaj system, running from the pools, and also emerging from the rocks above the village and crossing through it (see Figure 7.13).

According to Julian Walker's 1955 report, the two villages of Shis and Nahwa belonged to Sharjah:

*"Sharjah is in de facto control of the two villages at the head of the wadi, Nahawa and Shis, from which she has been taking zakat for several years. The Ruler of Fujairah confirms this."* <sup>(25)</sup>

Figure: 7.14 The Omani Enclave of Madha  
 Showing the Nahwa Enclave Belonging to Sharjah



Source: Fieldwork

*Figure 7.15 The main road (rocky road) to the village of Nawha at the top of Wadi Madha*



In fact there was quite a strong dispute over the Wadi, involving some deaths in 1956 and 1957.<sup>(26)</sup> The British Foreign Office sent Lord Martin Buckmaster to carry out further investigations between 1963 and 1967, to resolve unresolved areas. Wadi Madha was included in Buckmaster's program.<sup>(27)</sup> However, his investigation did not result in an immediate settlement between Sharjah and Muscat.<sup>(28)</sup> Only in 1969 was an agreement finally reached between the Sultanate of Muscat and Sharjah fixing the boundaries.<sup>(29)</sup> Figure 7.13 shows the boundary which divides the territory between the two villages of Nahwa and Shis of Sharjah on the one hand, and the Omani territory of Wadi Madha on the other. The border is marked with two white pillars on the top of the mountain (Figure 7.13).

There are several significant contrasts between the lifestyles of the inhabitants of the two villages of Shis and Nahwa at the top of the wadi Madha, and the people of Khur Fakkan which belongs to the Emirate of Sharjah. First, they get their electricity supply from an independent electrical generator installed at the entrance of the village of Nahwa. It is a small generator, because there are not more than 12 houses in the village of Nahwa. Second, the village has an *Ameer*, or Shaikh who is appointed by the ruler of Sharjah as his representative in this enclave. At present he is Khalfan Al-Ha'aj, whose name is written on his house wall (see Figure 7.16) with some words in Arabic which mean: *I Love Sharjah*. Third, the people of the villages of Nahwa and Shis are agriculturalists and they own gardens, depending on the falaj system. The younger generation of Nahwa and Shis villages are employed in U.A.E. government departments in Khur Fakkan town, which is their nearest U.A.E. territory. To reach their work, they have to travel along the Omani track until they reach the asphalt road of the centre of the Walayat Madha of Oman and from that point to Khur Fakkan of Sharjah or to the town of Qidfa or Murbah of the Emirate of Fujairah.

*Figure 7.16 The main electric generator which supplies electricity to the village of Nahwa (above), and the house of Amir (Shaikh) Khalfan Al-Haaj, the representative of the Ruler of Sharjah in the village of Nawha. His name is printed on his house (below).*



However, it was reported recently that His Highness Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qasemi, the ruler of Sharjah and its dependencies (enclaves or territorial units which belongs to Sharjah), ordered the building of Low Cost Housing such as that financed by the government in some parts of Sharjah's other enclaves: the villages of Wadi al-Helu, Nahwa, Shis, and Dibba al-Husn which are situated in the eastern region of the Emirate of Sharjah.<sup>(30)</sup> It may be concluded from this that the Emirate of Sharjah wants to strengthen its position in these villages which are separated from it by the territories of other Emirates and in the case of the two villages of Shis and Nahwa which are separated from it by Omani territory. It is probably the case that if the inhabitants of these villages do not receive facilities from the government at least equal to the inhabitants of the cities, then the villages will be abandoned. Empty villages could lead to a difficult political situation, because it is harder to justify the maintenance of sovereignty over barren land when initial claim to that sovereignty was based on the political loyalties of the inhabitants.

## **7.5 Boundaries and Local Government**

This section examines the effect of boundary disputes on several projects which have been undertaken by the local municipalities, and financed by the local government of each Emirate, and some projects undertaken by the federal government and designed by the Ministry of Housing and Public Works. Some of these projects have been halted or even cancelled because of boundary problems.

### **7.5.1 The Dispute on the Hotel in Masafi Village**

The village of Masafi in the middle of the Hajar Mountains range is an important place for Fujairah and there are some gardens there. Masafi is connected to Fujairah by the Wadi Hamm,<sup>(31)</sup> whose population of 1,000 was a cause of frequent conflict between Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah (see Chapter 6). In 1969, the Ruler of Fujairah,

signed an agreement with Al-Jasmi Contracting Company to build an hotel in the village of Masafi. When the building was nearly finished, the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah ordered the work to be stopped, claiming that the building was being built on his territory. The building remains unfinished in 1994 (Figure 7.17).

An inhabitant living on the Masafi side of the building reported that the building is still in dispute between the two Emirates. He said that Ras al-Khaimah claims its territory to extend as far as the road. It was reported that armed clashes occurred between Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah in 1972 over Masafi village and its surroundings, and gun-fire was exchanged.<sup>(32)</sup> A settlement has still not been reached. Boundary disputes between the Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah and the Emirate of Fujairah remain unresolved (see Chapter 8).

### 7.5.2 Wadi Al-Qur Dam

Wadi Al-Qur is the southernmost part of Ras al-Khaimah territory (180 km south-east of Ras al-Khaimah). In former times it was an important route through wadi Al-Qur to the Gulf of Oman, however the lower reaches are blocked by an Omani border post. The middle reaches of the wadi Qur can now be easily reached by an asphalt road from Hatta, the enclave of Dubai (see Figure 7.18).

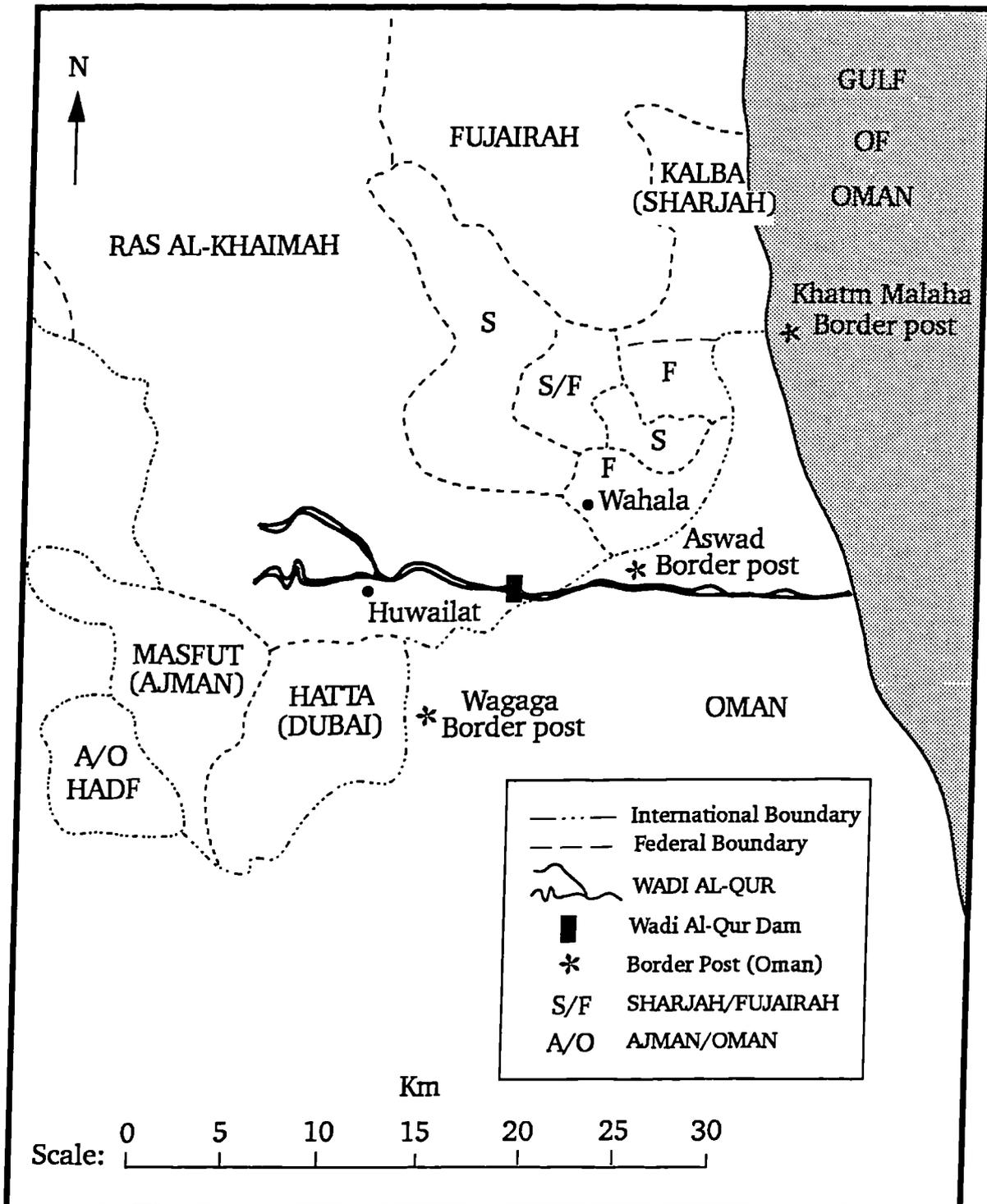
In 1988 the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries planed to construct new dams in the mountainous areas of the Emirates in 1988. One of the locations was in the Wadi Al-Qur. The dam at this wadi cost Dh.31 million.<sup>(33)</sup> It is 23 metres high and 250 metres long. The Al-Mulla contractor company started the work but when it reached its mid-stages, one of the Ministry of Agriculture officials pointed out:

*"Since Omani territory was very close to the dam's downstream, water could not be allowed to pass underneath it. Hence it is the only one which has a 'positive cutoff', meaning that its clay core is impermeable."*<sup>(34)</sup>

*Figure 7.17 The hotel of the Shaikh of Fujairah in the village of Masafi which is the project stopped by the Ruler of Ras Al-Khaimah*



Figure: 7.18 The Location of the Al-Qur Dam in Southern Ras Al-Khaimah Territory Close to the Oman Border



Source: Fieldwork

The Omanis objected to the U.A.E. government and after fruitless negotiations between the two parties, work stopped at the site in 1991 and has not restarted<sup>(35)</sup> (Figures 7.19 and 7.20). One of the villagers who owns a farm on the Omani side in Aswad town of Omani territory, said:

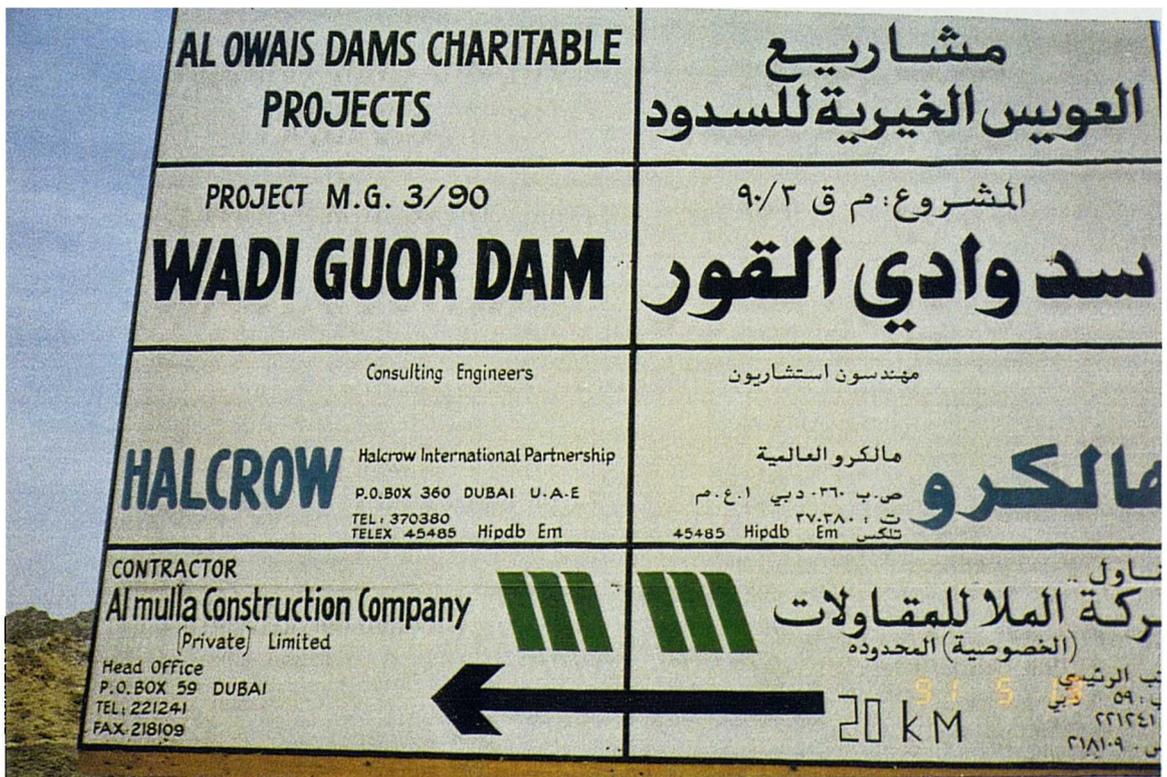
*"We are happy that the work has been stopped because we will not benefit from this dam and the benefit is going just to one side which is the farms of Huwailat of Ras al-Khaimah and the level of the under ground water in our territory will drop down and the taste of the water will become salty, we would like it to go back to normal, after the rainfall the wadi is flowing until it reaches our area".<sup>(36)</sup>*

### **7.5.3 Disputes over Motel and Police Station**

Another example of a halted federal project is the Masfut Motel in Masfut on the main Hatta-Masfut road. This project was planned by Ajman Municipality and financed by the Ruler of the Emirate of Ajman. However, the project was stopped by the Dubai government in 1982 under the pretence that this motel was built on Hatta territory of Dubai. The building still exists but in poor condition<sup>(37)</sup> (see Figure 7.21).

The same can be said for the Masfut police station which was built close to the motel. This project which was financed by the federal Ministry of Housing and Public Works, consists of a residential section, offices and a mosque. The project has been stopped by Dubai on the pretence that this station which was planned to be for Masfut village of Ajman was built on Hatta territory of Dubai. The unfinished building still exists on the right side of the main Hatta-Masfut road (see Figure 7.22).

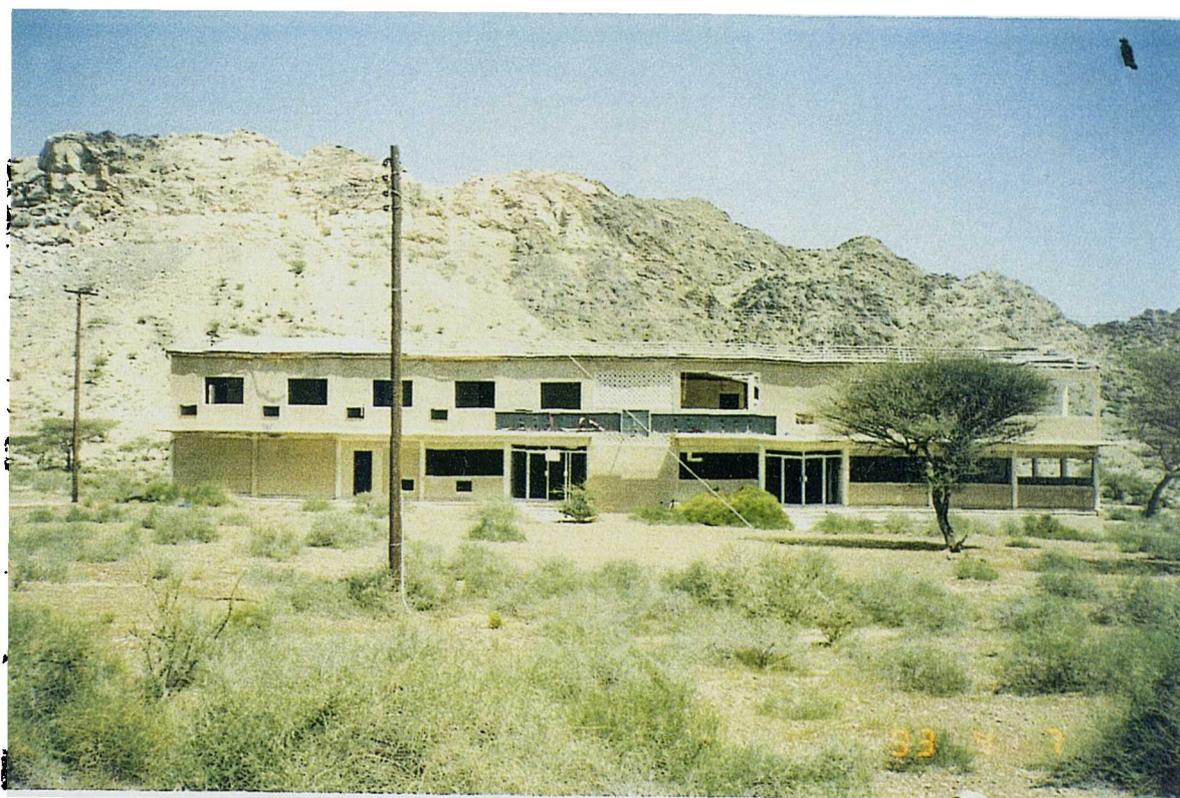
Figure 7.19 The signboard of the Al-Qur Dam construction shows the names of the construction company, Al-Mulla, and the consultant company, Halcrow. The board was removed in 1992.



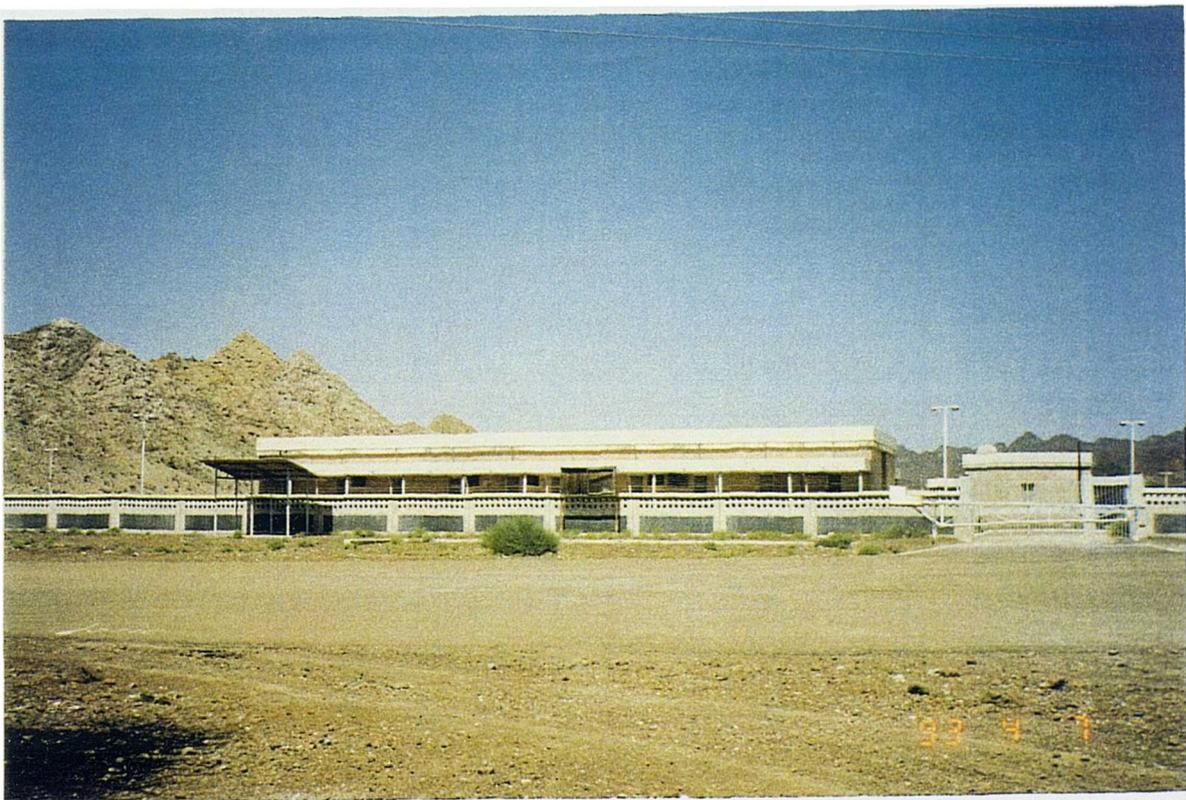
*Figure 7.20 View of Wadi Al-Qur dam in the village of Huwailat of Ras al-Khaimah. The project was stopped by the Federal Government due to Omani intervention (top). The bottom shows a view of the cement foundation of the Al-Qur Dam.*



*Figure 7.21 The motel of the Ruler of Ajman in its enclave of Masfut.*



*Figure 7.22 The police station of Ajman in Masfut built by the Federal Government. The project was discontinued (top and bottom).*



#### **7.5.4 Dispute over the Petrol Station in 1992**

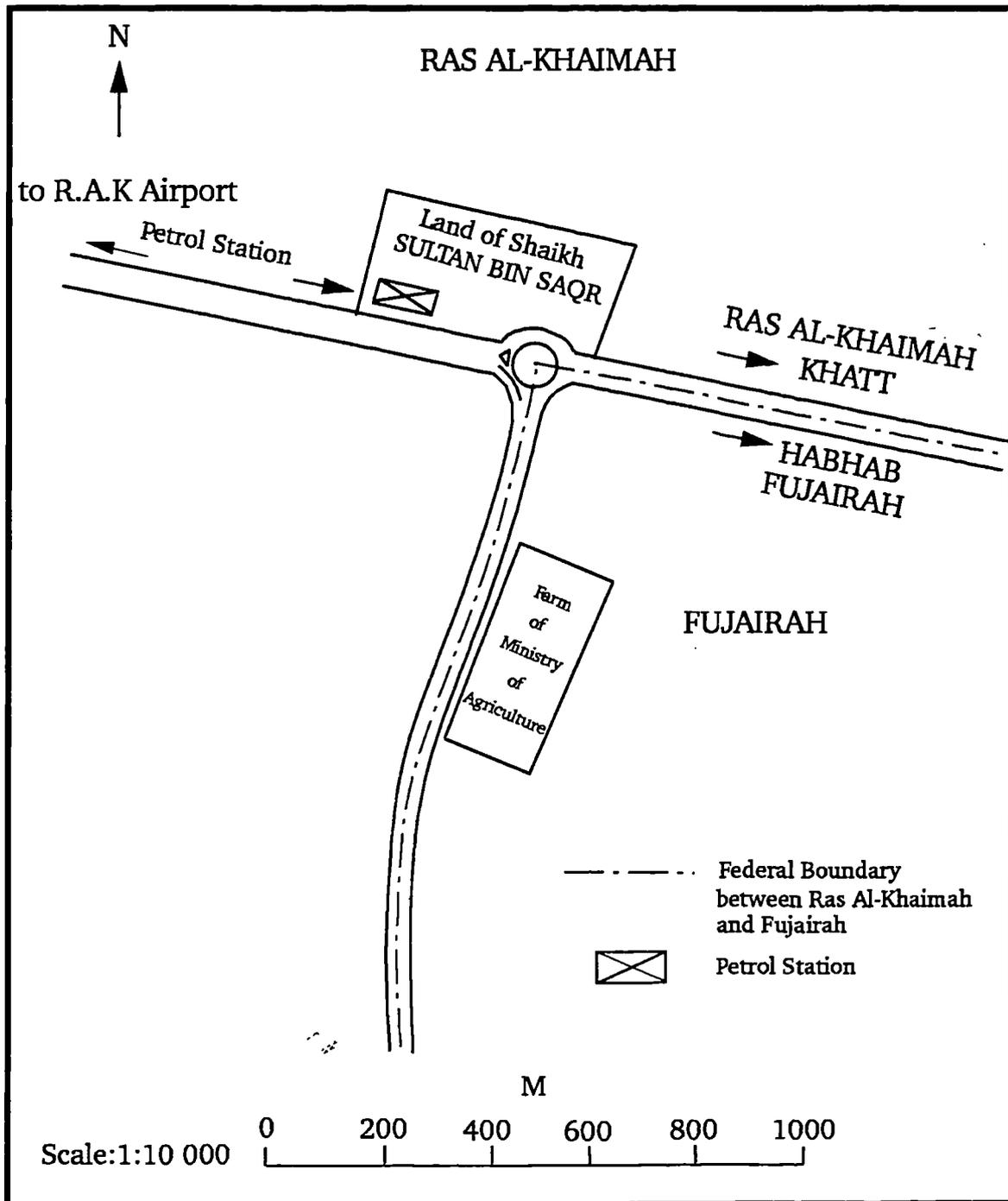
One of the recent projects which was disputed was the work on the petrol station which was being built by ADNOC oil Company,<sup>(38)</sup> in Al-Khat village on the Ras al-Khaimah Airport road (Figure 7.23),<sup>(39)</sup> formerly a romantic little place at the foot of rocky cliffs. Here sweet water springs flow from the foot of the mountains filling rock pools and nurturing palm groves and old watch towers brood over the springs from the rocks above. The petrol station project started in the early part of 1992 for Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, who is the second son of the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah<sup>(40)</sup> (see Figure 7.24).

The Ras al-Khaimah Airport road to the village of Khat has on its right side the village of Habhab belonging to the Emirate of Fujairah. However, the boundary disputes between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah are not settled yet. The Masafi building was being built and financed by the Ruler of Fujairah but the work stopped in 1969 when the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah claimed the area as his territory. The Ruler of Fujairah accordingly stopped the work on this petrol station in late 1992, and the situation there is the same today.

### **7.6 Conclusion**

The political map of the U.A.E., showing internal boundaries between Emirates with their enclaves and territorial units, looks like a jig-saw puzzle. To reach some parts of some Emirates, it is necessary to leave the Emirate, cross the territory of one or more other Emirates, and only then re-enter the territory of the first Emirate. The Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain alone are made up of a single territorial unit: all the others are made up of several territorial units.

Figure: 7.23 The Location of the Petrol Station on the Disputed Area Between Khatt of Ras Al-Khaimah and Habhab of Fujairah



Source: Fieldwork

*Figure 7.24 The petrol station of Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr, Ruler of Ras Al-Khaimah (top). This project was not continued because of the intervention of the Ruler of Fujairah. A similar design of a complete petrol station in another part of the Emirates (bottom).*



However, in most places much of the time, the boundaries between Emirates are barely perceived. Only when the boundary becomes the subject of a dispute does the boundary itself impact on the lives of individuals.

History demonstrates that boundary disputes can be solved, and agreements can be signed by any two (or more) Emirates which are in dispute, provided that there is the political will to achieve this. Equally, the settlement of boundary disputes eases political relations between former adversaries. There remain unsettled boundary disputes in the U.A.E.. This chapter has given examples of planned projects which have been shelved or not been completed, simply because of the absence of agreement between Emirates in dispute. The problem underlying the dispute between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah over the location of some projects was that these two Emirates did not settle their boundary disputes, such as the dispute over the village of Masafi. Similarly between the Emirates of Dubai and Ajman over their enclaves of Hatta and Masfut.

It is clear that boundaries and jurisdictional disputes among member Emirates have affected the developing infrastructure of the federation although the extent of this must not be exaggerated. The effect of boundary conflicts on the federation was expressed by His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayyan, President of the U.A.E., when, dissatisfied with the attitude of his fellow-rulers, he asked:

*"Would you believe that I have just spent a week among the Emirates trying to settle insignificant boundary disputes?"* <sup>(41)</sup>

In 1976, in a speech relating to internal boundaries disputes and their effect on the development of the country, the U.A.E. President said:

*"I spent nearly a week in the northern Emirates in an attempt to settle some border disputes of minor consequence, yet they are a source of conflict among the member-states. ... I can say, with both bitterness and sorrow, that their disputes often involve a few tens of metres, and do you believe that we have not been able to build a hospital on a piece of real estate because two*

*Emirates claim sovereignty over it? Abu Dhabi, for one, had territorial disputes with neighbouring countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman, but they were resolved through understanding, flexibility and brotherly discussions."* <sup>(42)</sup>

It can be concluded from the above that the federal government of the U.A.E. is trying its best to solve border disputes between the Emirate members. In some cases, the federal government has failed because of intransigence on the part of some Emirates' Shaikhs. The need for flexibility in resolving border disputes should be emphasised, as well as the need for political will to reach a solution. Without solutions, development projects may be delayed indefinitely. With agreements, projects can be used in confidence-building.

It was shown how the tense situation between the Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah improved simply because they came to an agreement in 1985 and settled their long standing boundary dispute. Since then, there has been co-operation between them in various fields both financial and political. Boundary agreements benefit the parties concerned. The border settlement between Dubai and the Sultanate of Oman is a good example of an external boundary agreement over the Dubai enclave of Hatta, which is surrounded by Omani territories. The result of an agreeable settlement was the road extension, built and financed entirely by the government of Dubai, from Dubai to Seeb, the entrance to Muscat, Oman's capital.

As it is people who travel, be they merchants from Dubai, students studying at Al-Ain, or relatives visiting family in an Emirate enclave, it is ordinary people who benefit from the settlement of boundary disputes. People also benefit from the establishment of social services (such as hospitals and police stations) and commercial services (such as shopping and office complexes). When boundary disputes obtrude, it is ordinary people who lose out. For the people of the U.A.E., the boundaries between the Emirates reflect past and current political loyalties, and represent administratives

divisions. However, the U.A.E. internal boundaries do not identify for individuals areas of inclusion and exclusion, which is more the case with the U.A.E. external boundaries. Oil wealth has brought mobility to the people of the U.A.E., reflected in the migration to the east coast. The people want mobility: passenger and commercial transport, commerce and social fluidity, facilitated by boundary settlements. Boundary disputes obstruct these processes, and therefore represent an out-dated agenda.

## Endnotes

1. Bulloch, J., *The Gulf*, Century Publishing, London, 1984, p.196.
2. The researcher interviewed His Excellency Essa Saleh Al-Gurg, C.B.E, the U.A.E. Ambassador to the United Kingdom, and who was a close advisor to Shaikh Rashid bin Said al-Maktum, ruler of Dubai (1958-1990), in 5 March 1993 in Dubai.
3. FO 371/ 114648, Area No.32. Al Bu Hail, Julian Walker 1955 report on boundaries settlement in the Trucial States.1955.
4. Dubai Creek bisects Dubai Emirate: to the north is Deira, and to the south is Dubai.
5. *Khaleej Times*, 18 November 1992.
6. Interview with His Highness Shaikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al-Qasemi, member of the supreme council of the U.A.E. and Ruler of Sharjah, 22 October 1992, Durham.
7. Interview with Engineer Mansoor Al-Dabal, Projects Department, Dubai Municipality, 12 May 1993.
8. Report prepared by Sir William Halcrow Consultants, 17 September 1991, sent to the researcher at Durham by Mr Stewart, Halcrow Office, Middle East Branch.
9. *Khaleej Times*, 18 November 1992.
10. *Khaleej Times*, 18 November 1992.
11. Tba Tba'i, Adil, *al-Nidham al-Itihady fi al-Imarat: Dirasa Muqamah (The Federal System in the Emirates: A Comparative Study)*, Matba'at al-Gahrah, Cairo, 1978, p.352.
12. Anthony, J.D., *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum*. The Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1975, pp.134-135.
13. Glassner, M.I., *Political Geography*, Wiley, New York, 1993, p.115.
14. The Sultanate of Oman consists of 59 Wilayah, or states, in each of which there is a Wali who is the Sultan's representative, appointed by the Sultan.
15. The Al-Wagaga border post built and financed by the Ruler of Dubai at a cost of Dh.17 million, opened in 1978. The building contains Customs, Immigration and Police Posts. Report prepared by Sir William Halcrow Consultants, London, 1991.
16. Report prepared by Sir William Halcrow Consultants, London, 17 September 1991.

17. Interview with Nevil Allen, OBE, in Dubai, in 1992. Mr Allen was director of Sir William Halcrow Consultants in Dubai from the mid 1950s and he was a close adviser to the Ruler of Dubai, Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al Maktum (from 1958-1985). Also another interview with Duncan Watkins, Director of the Planning Section, Dubai Municipality.
18. Khur Fakkan is an enclave of the Emirate of Sharjah located on the east coast (i.e. the Gulf of Oman) and separated from the main city of Sharjah, which is located on the west coast (i.e. the Arabian Gulf), by territory of the Emirate of Fujairah.
19. Interview with an official of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, on 4 May 1993 in Dubai.
20. Wilkinson, J., 'Britain's role in boundary drawing in Arabia', in *The Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States*, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, 1991, p.2.
21. The Emirate of Fujairah is the only U.A.E. Emirate on the Gulf of Oman. It has neither deserts nor oil.
22. Ministry of Interior, Sultanate of Oman, *Al-Murshid al-aam lil-Welayyat wal-Qabayel fi, Sultanat Oman, (The General Guide to States and Tribes in the Sultanate of Oman)*, Muscat, 1982, p.70. (Arabic).
23. On 10 May 1993, in Wadi Madha, the researcher interviewed a Wadi Madhah inhabitant, and asked him whether he gives his loyalty to the U.A.E. Shaikhs or to the Sultan of Oman. He answered that he is of Omani nationality, and he presented his Passport from his pocket to show the researcher a proof of his opinion.
24. *Sharjah in Fifteen Years Time 1974-1988*, Al Bayan Commercial Printing Press, p.66.
25. FO 371/ 114648, Report on boundaries settlement in the Trucial States prepared by Julian Walker in 1955.
26. Letter from Julian Walker, Foreign Commonwealth Office, London, to the researcher at Durham, 4 December 1992.
27. The researcher interviewed Lord Martin Buckmaster at the House of Lords in London on Wednesday 16 January 1991.
28. Letter from Julian Walker, Foreign Commonwealth Office, London to the researcher at Durham, 4 December 1992.
29. Abdulla, M.M., *The United Arab Emirates, A Modern History*, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p.299.
30. *The Daily Al-Bayan*, Thursday 27 May 1993.
31. Hawley, Sir D., *The Trucial States*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1970, p.350.
32. Taryam, A.O., *The Establishment of the United Arab Emirates 1950-85*, Croom Helm, London, 1987, p.228.
33. *Khaleej Times*, 23 September 1991.  
The dam at wadi Qur cost Dh.31 million (£5,166,666) (exchange rate: Dh.6 U.A.E. = £1)
34. *Khaleej Times*, 23 September 1991.
35. Interview with Mr. M. Stewart, O.B.E, the General Manager of Sir William Halcrow Consultant, Middle East Office, Dubai, 15 July 1993.
36. The researcher interviewed an Omani farmer who lives in Omani territory at the back of Rafak village of Ras al-Khaimah, which is behind the dam structure on 3 May 1993.
37. Interview with Dr. Saif bin Abood, one of the leading inhabitants of the village of Masfut on 3 April 1993.

38. ADNOC, is the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company owned by the government of Abu Dhabi and many fuelling stations built in many parts in the northern Emirates, except the Emirate of Dubai which has its own oil distribution company: Epco.
39. Lorimer lists Khat as part of Ras al-Khaimah when he says: "*The inland boundary of Ruus al jebel between Dibba and Ras Shaam has not been determined; but the route which runs from Dibba by Khat to Ras al Khaimah town is regarded as the (political) boundary between the country of the Shihuh on the north and that of the Sharqiyin and other tribes on the south.*" Lorimer, Vol.2, p.1604.  
  
Furthermore, when Julian Walker finished his survey in the 1960s in his report about the village of Khat he concluded: "*The inhabitants of Khat do not include Sharqiyin and the Ruler of Fujairah supports Ras al Khaimah's claim to Khat. From Lorimer's declaration that the Khat springs are overlooked by a tower (al Salamah) built by the Shaikh of Sharjah, it may be deduced that the town has been Qawasim territory for many years.*" F.O.371/ 114648, Area No.4. Julian Walker Report on boundaries settlement in the Trucial States, March 1955.
40. Interview with Mr Abdul Rahman Al-Awadi, Assistant Under Secretary of the Ministry of Electricity and Water, Dubai, 21 March 1993.
41. *ARR*, 1-15 August 1976, p.495.
42. Quoted in al-Fil, M.R., 'Mushkilat al-Hudud Baina Imarat al-Khalij al-Arabi' (Boundary Problems among Emirates of the Arabian Gulf), *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*, Vol.2, No.8, October 1976, p.36.

## Chapter 8

### Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 8.1 Summary

It is not surprising that the British withdrawal from the Gulf threw not only inter-Emirate boundaries into question, but also the international boundaries between the Emirates and their neighbours. Chapter 4 showed how the dispute over Abu Musa Island was raised again in 1992, and how the Buraimi dispute between the U.A.E. (Abu Dhabi) and Saudi Arabia also represented a threat to the survival of the U.A.E.. Saudi Arabia withheld its recognition of the newly established federation until 1974 when the two parties were able to arrive at an agreement over their dispute. This agreement involved the exchange of territory (part of southern and western Abu Dhabi) for political recognition.

Since the establishment of the federation, the U.A.E. has been threatened by external powers on a number of occasions: by Saudi Arabia in 1971, and by Iran in 1971 and 1992. The Union has also had to face internal threats which have blown up over boundary disputes. The coming of age of the state has been a process of learning from history that it is better to stand united than to fall divided. The international world of geo-politics is unforgiving, and the people and rulers of the Emirates do well to move together towards greater unity.

Historically, boundaries between these small Emirates did not exist as boundaries in the European sense, and were unknown in Arabia.<sup>(1)</sup> When the rulers began to scent money for oil, granting oil exploration concessions to British companies concentrated their minds wonderfully on demarcation of boundaries between the Emirates. The emergence of these small Shaikhdoms (later Emirates) and their enclaves dates back to 1820, when the British government concluded treaties with eight Emirates. In 1914

this number was reduced to five, and finally raised to seven.<sup>(2)</sup> By these treaties the British government recognized these Shaikhdoms as political units, and each unit had its territory to be delimited. These changes resulted in the reduction or enlargement of the size of some Emirates (see Chapter 5). Moreover, Chapter 3 highlighted the history of the Shaikhdoms as a principal reason for the emergence of internal boundaries: in the Qawasim section many towns became centres of movement towards independence, particularly Ras al-Khaimah in 1921, Kalba in 1936 and Fujairah in 1952. In other words, the issue of independence is a key pointer towards understanding the shifting internal boundaries in the Trucial States (later the U.A.E.).

When oil was discovered in 1937, the oil companies wanted to negotiate concessions and needed to know the extent of the territory effectively controlled by each Shaikh. It was not clear how much hinterland was then under the control of each Shaikhdom (see Chapter 3). Inter-Emirate boundary demarcation became essential to shape the territory of each Emirate and to what extent the oil company could explore. Boundary demarcation was placed in abeyance by the Second World War. However, by 1954-55, the British had begun to demarcate the boundaries, having first obtained written undertakings from all the individual rulers that they would accept and observe the British decision made following Julian Walker's investigations.

We have seen how the political map of the U.A.E. reflects complicated territorial distribution, for instance that the village of Dibba is divided into three parts:

1. Dibba al-Husn of Sharjah.
2. Dibba al-Gurfa of Fujairah.
3. Dibba al-Bayah of Oman.

Kalba and Khur Fakkan are Sharjah's enclaves on the east coast stretch into Fujairah's territory. The villages of Manama and Masfut are Ajman's enclaves. Masafi village is

disputed between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. Wadi Madha is an Omani enclave within U.A.E. territory. The village of Nahwa is Sharjah's enclave within Oman's Madha enclave: an enclave within enclave. Hatta is Dubai's enclave on Oman's border. The Musandam Peninsula is Oman's enclave and divided from Oman by Sharjah (Dibba al-Husn), Fujairah, and Ras al-Khaimah's territories. Citizens of the five Emirates with enclaves cannot reach certain areas belonging to their respective Emirates without crossing the territory of one or other Emirate. To reach Hatta (Dubai's enclave on the Omani border) from Dubai City, citizens of Dubai have to cross the territory of Sharjah, then Welayat Mahadha of the Sultanate of Oman, then Masfut of Ajman before finally arriving at Hatta (see Chapter 7).

Many commentators urge the removal of internal boundaries between Emirates. One commentator said: "... *the best resolution of internal frontier problems in the U.A.E. is to have no frontiers at all.*"<sup>(3)</sup>

His Excellency Taryam Umran Al-Kaleej, editor-in-chief (second President of the National Assembly since the federation establishment in 1971) asked the rulers to sit together and from the map of the Emirates "... scratch off all the lines and marks, to be one nation ..." <sup>(4)</sup>

However, this simple idea may not be so helpful. For, unless all the rulers were willing to relinquish their powers and responsibilities, the geographical features of each Emirate would overlap into the others. This would cause new problems. For instance, were the government of the Emirate of Dubai to want to build a military base in its enclave of Hatta, which borders the village of Masfut of Ajman and some villages of the Sultanate of Oman, without the boundaries being marked by lines on maps and by pillars and signboards on the ground, the project could not be carried out. Projects can be brought into effect only where the area has a clear boundary line and it is agreed by the other Emirates which border that area, or share the same village or

wadi, such as Tawi al-Faqqā which is shared between the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (Al-Ain) and the Emirate of Dubai: these two Emirates have each built their own police stations on land respectively belonging to each. Another example is Tawi Nazwa (Nazwa water well) which is the last border point between the Emirate of Dubai and the Emirate of Sharjah. At the head of the Nazwa mountain stands a highly conspicuous pillar to indicate the territory of each Emirate. Projects can be carried out there without dispute.

A further objection to the removal of the internal boundaries would be the frustration of the ruler's authority. The political system of the U.A.E. relies on internal boundary demarcation showing the extent of rule by, or dominant influence of, an individual Emirate. To support this idea Shaikh Rashid Bin Said al-Maktum, Vice President of the U.A.E., Prime minister, and ruler of Dubai (from 1958-1990) told a Kuwaiti newspaper:

*"A unitary state means no borders, therefore no Rulers. It means elections, it means putting finance, revenue and decision- making in the hands of a central Government...."*<sup>(5)</sup>

That was Shaikh Rashid's reaction to the historic Joint Memorandum which was drawn up by two Assembly members and two Cabinet Ministers. The Emirate of Dubai has in fact settled all its boundary disputes: with Abu Dhabi (inshore, 1968; offshore, 1969), with Iran (1974) and more recently with Sharjah (1985).

Two main articles of the Memorandum stipulate stronger federal control over individual Emirates, and that boundaries between them should be abolished.<sup>(6)</sup> Shaikh Rashid, however, was accurate in identifying that full unity of the seven Emirates, abolishing the inter-Emirate boundaries which show the limit of each Emirate's territory, points to loss in position of the rulers. In the context of Arabian Peninsula society, this would be hard for a ruler to accept.

Taking the argument a stage further, problems would arise in the circumstance of secession. Were the internal boundaries abolished and then two or three Emirates wished to secede from the U.A.E., it is unclear how the shape of the new state would be drawn. This kind of development would be certain to lead to conflict, precipitating potential disaster. Something akin to this almost happened in 1978. Shaikh Rashid of Dubai threatened to break away from the U.A.E. and to establish a separate union between the Emirates of Dubai, Ras al-Khaimah and Umm al-Quwain.<sup>(7)</sup> This plan was, however, unanimously opposed by the big regional and western powers concerned. Shaikh Rashid's plan to form a separate union was also discussed in June 1978 at a meeting with the British ambassador to the U.A.E., David Roberts, when the Ruler asked whether the United Kingdom would recognize a breakaway union of Dubai and the other two Emirates.<sup>(8)</sup> The British view relayed to Rashid from Whitehall, was strongly supported by the United States, Saudi Arabia and Iran. The U.K. urged Rashid to heal Dubai's rift with Abu Dhabi. He was advised that any move to break up the U.A.E. could "*put the whole future of Shaikhly rule in the Gulf in doubt*".<sup>(9)</sup> This rift between Dubai and Abu Dhabi was the most serious upset since the federation was formed. In such a case, were a new union to be formed from the U.A.E., how could the boundary of the new state be drawn, especially since there is a large gap between the first member, Dubai and the second, Umm al-Quwain, with the territories of the Emirates of Sharjah and Ajman between them?

It is paradoxical that at the same time as there are calls for the removal of internal boundaries between the seven Emirates, tribalism as a characteristic of the region in the past is becoming stronger by the day, and the status of a person or a family depends increasingly on which tribe he belongs to. In other words, there are calls to cancel the internal boundaries between the Emirates while there are internal boundaries between the families and groups within individual Emirates. Instead of removing internal boundaries, it would benefit the U.A.E. considerably were tribal preferment

in government employment and promotion removed in favour of appointing the person best qualified for the job.

Before the establishment of the federation, each Emirate, large or small was a formally separate political entity with its own flag, passport and geographical boundaries. Subsequent to federation, there is now only one passport, one flag and one external international framework for the federation consisting of the external international boundaries of the U.A.E.. This framework is the line of protection for the seven individual Emirates.

The internal boundaries should be taken as a defining factor for identifying the territories of each Emirate. The most important function of the geographical boundaries within the U.A.E. is to specify the enclaves of each Emirate, especially where some of these enclaves are situated in Omani territory, and conversely where some Omani enclaves are located within the U.A.E. territory. In such cases, it would be impossible to abolish these lines, for scratching them out would lead to many problems, and possibly armed conflict. Claims to new territories can occur between the Emirates, and with the neighbouring Sultanate of Oman, which shares borders with six of the seven Emirates.<sup>(12)</sup> (see Table 7.1)

Were the federal government of the U.A.E. to abandon the internal boundaries between the territories of the Emirates, the first thing to be considered is that this process could lead to the disappearance of some Emirates territories and to the expansion of other Emirates at the expense of other Emirates territories. In other words, abolishing the internal boundaries as a measure of an Emirate's form or shape will lead to the policy of expansion by the other Emirates and by the Sultanate of Oman. Because the unclear boundary lines which form the shape of each Emirate will encourage other Emirate to annex some parts of the territory of other Emirate or may encourage Sultanate of Oman for example to annex very small villages which

bordered its territory. The U.A.E. faces an historic choice: either the borders drawn up by the British are accepted by the Emirates as their political boundaries, or they totally reject them, falling back on the old tribal system recognizing no borders and accepting no imaginary lines drawn on sand. If this second option were ever taken up, the entire political map of the U.A.E. would have to be redrawn.

It can be concluded from the above that to resolve each boundary dispute, marking each boundary with lines on maps along with the signatures and approval of the parties concerned, is better than the simplistic removal of all internal boundaries.

## **8.2 Conclusion**

Internal boundaries in the U.A.E. create administrative and developmental difficulties. The problem is worse for the Emirates constituted of more than one unit (all except Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Quwain). The Emirate of Sharjah probably has more problems of government and administration than any other Emirate because whilst the main city of Sharjah is on the west side of the Musandam Peninsula on the Arabian Gulf, three separate enclaves, Dibba Al-Husn, Khur-Fakkan and Kalba are located on the east coast on the Gulf of Oman. Sharjah is the one U.A.E. Emirate which has borders with all the others, as well as with the Sultanate of Oman.

The U.A.E. federal government has played a positive and successful role in the resolution of several boundary disputes left over from pre-federal days. Although some cases of border disputes remain either unresolved (e.g. the internal boundary between Ras Al-Khaimah and Fujairah), or just recently resolved (e.g. the internal boundary between Umm Al-Quwain and Ras Al-Khaimah, which was resolved in early 1994 and the boundary agreement signed between the two Emirates on 29 May 1994), the U.A.E. has largely successfully coped with these problems, and solutions to many major disputes have been reached. The boundary dispute between Dubai

and Sharjah is an example. In 1978, the boundary dispute between Abu Dhabi and Sharjah over the Al-Gharif plain was resolved, the agreement being signed late the same year.<sup>(10)</sup>

On its National Day (2 December), the United Arab Emirates celebrates the anniversary of its foundation (2 December 1971) when a new page in the history of the area was turned. The past 22 anniversaries have witnessed the gradual emergence and development of the U.A.E.. As political perimeters with administrative, not political, meaning, the internal boundaries within the Emirates have little significance for the citizens who find themselves within a unified state, living in one territory, under a single flag, of a single nationality and facing a shared future.

On the other hand the internal boundaries are of deep significance to the Rulers (Shaikhs), some of whom who imagined that if they individually stood firm they would get what they wanted, refusing to accept the proposal of adopting Walker's inter-Emirate boundary demarcation.

Day by day the younger generation of the U.A.E. are understanding more fully the meaning of the federation and warming to it. Also the youth of various parts of the U.A.E. are participating in sports activities to a high level representing the U.A.E. The U.A.E. University which was established in 1977 is also playing a major role in promoting closer union between the Emirates, as the students from various parts of the U.A.E. introduce each other in the U.A.E. University campus.

### **8.3 Recommendations**

1. There needs to be a Federal Boundary Commission the status of which would be equivalent to that of the Federal Supreme Court. Funding for this Commission would be drawn from federal resources, and the Commission would meet in federal government accommodation. The work of the Commission

would be both reactive and pro-active: helping Emirates to resolve disputes, and working systematically to finalise all internal and international land and maritime boundaries.

The cost of preparing aerial photographs, field surveys, documents and conventional maps would fall under the Commission's budget head, and the costs of negotiations in the case of disputes should be paid by the parties involved in the dispute. If the two parties reach a fair and final resolution after successful negotiation, the federal government could pay the costs of a team of observers; and by providing border patrols, especially on the border points with Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman.

Agreement on borders is desirable in order to remove the possibility of border disputes in the future. The same applies to issues such as land ownership, planning permission and infrastructure. Accordingly, each Emirate should make it a priority to clarify its boundary lines by establishing a committee with a membership of professionals and experts such as lawyers, geographers, surveyors and historians. The final reports would be sent to the Supreme Council for approval. Parties to border disputes should conclude an agreement and jointly sign it. A cartographic company should be contacted to translate onto maps and the ground what the agreement's articles stipulate.

This latter procedure was carried out bilaterally in April 1985 between the Emirates of Dubai and Sharjah. Furthermore, in 1983 an agreement was signed between the rulers of Sharjah and Fujairah which resolved the boundary problem between the two Emirates. A similar agreement was reached between Sharjah and Ajman in 1983.

The Emirates either side of a boundary should give thought to what agreement is likely to support both the government and the U.A.E. citizen, with loyalty

being owed to one flag and to one president. Inter-Emirate boundaries should not be permitted to interfere with the social, economic and infrastructural development of the U.A.E., with highways linking together all the Emirates and roads linking the towns. This factor has had a positive effect both in bringing together citizens from different regions, and by helping to extend some services to mountainous and desert regions. In other words the highways network cuts across the inter-Emirate boundary lines, linking the east region with the west and the north with the south.

The remaining boundary disputes within the U.A.E. should be resolved so that the people may live peacefully within one union under one flag. Each Emirate should recognise its boundary lines and observe its boundary agreement signed with its neighbours for the sake of the preservation of the mother nation of each Emirate, the United Arab Emirates. It is better to have boundaries than to be without them, for without them there would be no peace.

Negotiation to resolve border disputes should be dealt with by younger Shaikhs not the older Shaikhs for many reasons:

- a. The younger Shaikhs are educated and are eager to embrace new ideas, whereas the older generation Shaikhs are too rigid and narrow in their perspective.
- b. The new generation Shaikhs realize that, in order to establish services such as schools, hospitals and parks in disputed areas, they need first to be able to resolve boundary disputes. Local inhabitants cannot benefit from federal projects in disputed areas.
- c. The older generation Shaikhs are extremely reluctant to accept ideas or solutions which are for the benefit of their territories' inhabitants. The

most traditional Shaikhs are Shaikh Mohammed Al-Sharqi of Fujairah and the present Ruler of Ras al- Khaimah, Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasemi.<sup>(11)</sup>

This explains why some disputes between Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah remain unresolved, as in the case of the dispute over Masafi village. Although Shaikh Hamad of Fujairah is from the younger generation, Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah is from the old generation (he has ruled Ras al-Khaimah since 1948 to the present day).

In contrast, all the boundary disputes between the Emirates of Sharjah and Fujairah were resolved in an agreement signed in 1983, due to the understanding reached between the two rulers of the younger generation. They co-operated together for the benefit of their people. The same thing can be said about the resolution of the long-standing boundary dispute between Dubai and Sharjah in 1985, due to the understanding of Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed al-Qasemi, ruler of Sharjah and Shaikh Maktum bin Rashid Al Maktum, Crown Prince of Dubai (present Vice President of the U.A.E. and ruler of Dubai from 1990).

2. Article 9 of the Provisional Constitution of the U.A.E. should be enacted without further delay. This stipulates:

*"The Capital of the Union shall be established in an area allotted to the Union by the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai on the borders between them and it shall be given the name 'Al- Karama'."*<sup>(14)</sup>

The federal government should pay the expenses of technical studies and planning for the construction of the capital. If the result of the study was positive then construction work should begin as soon as possible and the provisional headquarters of the Union in Abu Dhabi should be transferred to the new capital.

Alongside the development of a new capital, there also needs to be a relaxation of the expectation that members of the Federal Consultative Council will do and say only as required by the ruler of their respective Emirates. Progress and development can be sustained only through the creative tensions that arise from diversity and plurality.

3. The boundaries between Emirates have traditionally represented social boundaries between tribal units. If the U.A.E. is to move into the future as a federation, these social boundaries need to be weakened. For example, there should be a special co- operation in the wedding system in the Emirates to facilitate inter-marriage between men and women of different Emirates. This needs support from government departments so that, for instance, a man from the Emirate of Fujairah can more easily marry a woman from Ras al-Khaimah. Mixed weddings may have several advantages:

- a. They draw together the people of the U.A.E..
- b. They support the loyalty to the federation and make the relationship between the families of more than one Emirate with tied contact, so that future children have relatives from two Emirates and not just one.
- c. Where there is a disputed area between any two towns or villages involved in mixed marriages, the federal government will step in to ensure that fighting does not break out between the villagers or the tribes who live within the territories of the two Emirates. Indeed, the good practice among many younger Shaikhs is to marry women from other Emirates. For example, the wife of the present ruler of Fujairah is of the ruling family of Dubai, and the wife of the present ruler of Ajman is of the ruling family of Abu Dhabi.

4. By occupying much of the U.A.E's east coast, the Emirate of Fujairah is in a key strategic location. Facing the open waters of the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean, rather than the landlocked Arabian Gulf, Fujairah is outside the strategic bottleneck of the Straits of Hormuz. In addition, it is close to the major international shipping routes, yet with easy access to the rest of the Arabian Peninsula by road, by air from its recently opened international airport, or by shipping lines from its modern port. It would not seem inappropriate, therefore, were the U.A.E. federal government and the Gulf Co-operation Council (G.C.C.) to research the possibility of extending the oil pipelines from the state of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the state of Qatar, along with the pipelines from the oilfields of the U.A.E., and linking together to cross through the territory of Fujairah to the Gulf of Oman.

What is proposed is an alternative oil and goods transport route, avoiding than the Straits of Hormuz, through the territory of Fujairah. There is plenty of space as its coasts extend along the Gulf of Oman for a distance of 90 kilometres.<sup>(13)</sup>

This location gives the Emirate a very special strategic importance. However this recommendation may need close co- operation from G.C.C. members and it needs carefully researched attention.

It may be concluded that the political map of this area is unique in the political geography of the world. Within each Shaikhdom or Emirate there are fragmented parts of territories distributed here and there. With the partial exceptions of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, each of the Shaikhdoms are tiny entities in area, in population and in natural resources. Federation in 1971 came as an appropriate method for resolving this situation, despite some negativism regarding the boundaries which the U.A.E. inherited from a history dating back to 1820. The preservation of the internal boundaries of the U.A.E. is unavoidable as they serve the unity and political stability

of the U.A.E. as a country because these internal boundaries give each Emirate their official identifying geographical shape, and with the Sultanate of Oman (we have seen that the territories of the Sultanate of Oman take the form of pockets in the midst of the U.A.E. Also we have seen that Omani territory lies between Khur Fakkan of Sharjah and Fujairah (Wadi Madha), while Omani boundary lines intersect with those of Abu Dhabi at Al-Ain and Buraimi, with Sharjah and Fujairah at Dibba, and with Ajman and Dubai at Masfut and Hatta).

When boundary lines of each Emirate are undisputed with other Emirates it means that the political stability of the U.A.E. as a country is preserved and if any boundary dispute should occur between any two Emirates due to unagreed settlement, this kind of conflict is a source of trouble which might lead to the disintegration of the union.

The federal government should play an active role in solving any border dispute which could occur at any time.

These positive steps may effectively contribute to the strengthening of the federal structure, and make boundary disputes between the members of the Union a thing of the past.

## Endnotes

1. Lecture given by Julian Walker at Durham University on 21 July 1991. See also: Sir Donald Hawley, *The Trucial States*, p.289.
2. Al-Fill, M.R., "Mushkilat al-Hudud Bayna Imarat al-Khalij al-Arabi", (Boundary Problems Among Emirates of the Arabian Gulf), *Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies*, issue no.8, 1976, p.34.
3. Khalifa, Ali Mohammed, *The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation*, Croom Helm. London, England, 1979, p.103.
4. *Al Khaleej*, "Hudud, Hudud, Hudud", (Boundaries, Boundaries, Boundaries), 25 May 1980. Sharjah, U.A.E..
5. *The Middle East*, June 1980, p.31.
6. *The Middle East*, June 1980, p.31.
7. *MEED*, 7 July 1978, p.3.
8. *MEED*, 7 July 1978, p.3.
9. Ibid.
10. Interview with His Highness Shaikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qasemi Ruler of Sharjah on 22 October 1992 in Durham, England.
11. Interview with Julian Walker at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Thursday 9 July 1992. Also, Interview with two U.A.E. Government officials in Dubai and Fujairah. 12 February and 15 February 1993.
12. The Sultanate of Oman has shared borders with the emirates of Abu Dubai, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. The exception is the emirate of Umm al-Quwain.
13. *Annual Statistical Abstract*, Ministry of Planning, U.A.E., sixteenth edition, 1991, p.13. (Arabic and English).
14. *The Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Emirates*, Ministry of Information, United Arab Emirates, p.3.

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# **Appendix A**

**English Version of 21 August 1974 Agreement between the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

**His Excellency Brother Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nhayyan President  
of the United Arab Emirates. Date 3 Shaban 1394 H  
(corresponding to 21 August 1974).**

Your Royal Highness,

I am pleased to refer to chapter three of article five of the boundary agreement signed between the two states on the 3rd of Shaban 1394 H (corresponding to the 21st of August 1974).

I would also like to point out to your excellency that the understanding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding the mutual sovereignty over the whole area which links, according to this agreement, the coastal waters of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the international waters does not include the potent natural resources which lay underneath the water surface and the sea bed. Such resources shall remain under the ownership of the United Arab Emirates alone and be excluded from the mutual sovereignty.

Thus, if the understanding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding this issue matches that of the United Arab Emirates, I recommend that this letter, together with your excellency's response to it, be considered an agreement to determine that issue, and be annexed to the above mentioned agreement.

please accept my best, truthful and respected regards,

Faisal bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud

King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**His Majesty King Faisal Bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, King of the  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Date 3 Shaban 1394 H,  
(corresponding to 21 August 1974)**

I am pleased to refer to your Majesty's letter dated the 3rd. of Shaban 1394 H (corresponding to the 21st of August 1974) which reads as follows: " Your excellency Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nhayyan, President of the United Arab Emirates,

Your excellency,

I am pleased to refer to chapter 3 of article 5 of the boundary agreement signed between the two states on the 3rd. of Shaban 1394 H (corresponding to the 21st of August 1974). I would also like to point out to your excellency that the understanding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding the mutual sovereignty over the whole area which links according to this agreement the coastal waters of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the international waters does not include the potent natural resources which lay underneath the water surface and sea-bed.

Such resources shall remain under the ownership of the United Arab Emirates alone and be excluded from the mutual sovereignty. Thus, if the understanding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding this issue matches that of the United Arab Emirates, I recommend that this letter, together with your excellency's response, be considered an agreement to determine that issue, and be annexed to the above mentioned agreement".

I am pleased to inform your Majesty that the understanding of the United Arab Emirates regarding the right of ownership of the natural resources mentioned in your Majesty's letter matches that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Please accept my best, truthful and respected regards.

Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nhayyan

President of United Arab Emirates

His Majesty King Faisal Bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and His Excellency Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nhayyan, President of the United Arab Emirates , in accordance with the principles of the Islamic tolerant law which is followed by the Islamic nation, and proceeding from the spirit of Islamic solidarity which overshadows the Arab Peninsula, and on the basis of the peoples and the established relations of neighbourhood between the two states, and urged by the wish of the governments of the two states to determine the land and sea borders between them once and for all under the auspicious of Islamic and Arabic brotherhood, the two parties agree on the following:

**Article 1:**

The land borders between the state of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates shall be the line which will be determined in accordance with the items of this agreement.

## Article 2:

1. The land borders between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the state of the United Arab Emirates shall start from point A on the coast of the Arabian Gulf, situated on the Latitude line  $24^{\circ} 14' 58''$  North, and on the longitude line  $51^{\circ} 35' 26''$  East.
2. The land borders shall extend from point A in a straight line to point B which lies on the latitude line  $24^{\circ} 07' 24''$  North, and on the longitude line  $51^{\circ} 35' 26''$  East.
3. The land borders shall extend from point B in a straight North-East line until point C which lies on the latitude line  $22^{\circ} 56' 09''$  North, and on the longitude line  $52^{\circ} 34' 52''$  East.
4. The land borders shall extend from point C in a straight Northern-Eastern line until point D which lies on the latitude line  $22^{\circ} 37' 41''$  North, and on the longitude line  $55^{\circ} 08' 11''$  East.
5. The land borders shall extend from point D in a straight Northern-Eastern line, leaving Umm Al-Zumul east of point E which lies on the latitude line  $22^{\circ} 42' 02''$  North, and on the longitude line  $55^{\circ} 12' 10''$  East.
6. The land borders shall extend from point E in a straight line that reaches the following points which geographically lie on:

Point	Latitude line-North	Longitude line-east
F	$23^{\circ} 32' 11''$	$55^{\circ} 30' 00''$
G	$24^{\circ} 00' 00''$	$55^{\circ} 34' 10''$
H	$24^{\circ} 01' 00''$	$55^{\circ} 51' 00''$
I	$24^{\circ} 13' 00''$	$55^{\circ} 54' 00''$
J	$24^{\circ} 11' 50''$	$55^{\circ} 50' 00''$

7. The land borders shall extend from point J to point K which geographically lies approximately on the latitude line  $24^{\circ} 13' 45''$  North and on the longitude line  $55^{\circ} 45'$  East.
8. The land borders shall extend from point K to point L which geographically lies approximately on latitude line  $24^{\circ} 19'$  North on the latitude line  $55^{\circ} 50'$  East.
9. The land borders shall extend from point L to the meeting point of the borders between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman, which will be agreed upon between the three states.

All the above-mentioned points are initially posted on a 1:500,000 map, attached to this agreement and signed by the two contracting parties of dignitaries.

## Article 3:

1. Hydro-Carbonic material located in Al-Shayba-Zararah field shall be owned by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

2. The United Arab Emirates shall agree and observe its obligation of not to carry out any search, drill for, invest or to profit from the Hydro-Carbonic material, or give permission to do so, in the part of Shayba-Zararah field which lies north of the border line.
3. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, or any company or establishment working under its name, shall be authorised to carry out search and drilling operations and invest and profit from the Hydro-Carbonate material in that part of Al-Shayba-Zararah field which lies north of the border line. Any agreement regarding the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's carrying out of such operations shall be agreed upon at a later time.

#### **Article 4:**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates shall observe their obligation of stopping any drilling and investing or granting permission to do so the hydro-carbonate material in that part of their regions in which the hydro-carbonate field primarily extends inside the region of the other state.

#### **Article 5:**

1. The United Arab Emirates shall recognise the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia over Huwaisat island, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall recognise the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over all islands which lie opposite to its coasts on the Arabian Gulf.
2. The United Arab Emirates shall agree to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's establishment of any general purpose installations wished by the Kingdom on the islands of Qafay and Makasib.
3. Representatives of the two contracting parties shall determine, in the shortest time possible, the Sea borders between the region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and that of the United Arab Emirates, and between the islands that are under the sovereignty of each state on just basis which secures a free and direct link between the regional waters that belongs to that part of the region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which lies adjacent to the region of the United Arab Emirates and the regional waters which belongs to Huwaisat island mentioned in the above paragraph, in a way that secures the possibility of navigation between the deep international waters and that part of the region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia mentioned above.

Each contracting party shall have the mutual sovereignty over the whole area which links - according to this chapter - between the regional water which belongs to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the international waters.

#### **Article 6:**

A specialised international company, selected by the two states, shall assume the responsibility of surveying and determining the locations of the points and the border lines on the ground as explicated in article two above, and shall prepare a map, showing the land borders between the two countries and the date which accompany such a map, which will become, after being signed by the two contracting parties of

dignitaries, the official map that shows the required borders and shall be attached to this agreement.

**Article 7:**

A joint technical committee, consisting of 3 members from each state, shall be organised in order to prepare the specification for the required tasks of the company mentioned above and to post the points and border lines between the two countries in accordance with the items of this agreement and to supervise the execution of the these tasks and to study its results.

**Article 8:**

Each state shall keep a copy of the two produced copies of this agreement.

**Article 9:**

This agreement shall become effective at the time of signing it.

**Article 10:**

This agreement is written in Jeddah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the 3rd of Shaban 1394 H, corresponding to the 21st of August 1974.

First Party  
Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan,  
President of the United Arab Emirates.

Second Party  
King Faisal Bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud,  
King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## **Appendix B**

**Arabic Version of 21 August 1974 Agreement between the United Arab  
Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

حضرة صاحب السمو الاخ الشيخ زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان

رئيس دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة

يا صاحب السمو

بسررتي أن اشير إلى الفقرة ( ٣ ) من المادة الخامسة من إتفاقية تعيين الحدود بين بلدنا

الموقعة بتاريخ ٣ شعبان ١٣٩٤ هجربة الموافق ٢١ اغسطس ١٩٧٤ ميلاديه .

وأود أن أعرب لسموكم أن مفهوم المملكة العربية السعودية للسيادة المشتركة على كامل المنطقة

التي توصل - طبقاً لحكم هذه الفقرة - بين المياة الاقليمية الخاصة بالمملكة العربية السعودية والبحر

العام لا يشمل تلك الثروات الطبيعية الكامنة في قاع البحر وما تحت القاع حيث تظل تلك الثروات مملوكة

لدولة الامارات العربية المتحدة بصفة منفردة وذلك استثناء من حقوق السيادة المشتركة .

فإذا كان مفهوم المملكة العربية السعودية في هذا الشأن يتفق مع مفهوم دولة الإمارات العربية

المتحدة فأني أرى ان يعتبر كتابي هذا وجواب سموكم عليه بمثابة اتفاق لتقرير ذلك ويصبح ملحقاً

بالإتفاقية المشار اليها اعلاه .

وتفضلوا يا صاحب السمو بقبول اوفر تحياتنا واصدق تقديرنا .،،،



فيصل بن عبدالمعز آل سعود  
ملك المملكة العربية السعودية

جدة في ٢ شعبان ١٣٩٤ هجربة .  
الموافق ٢١ اغسطس ١٩٧٤ ميلاديه .

حضرة صاحب الجلالة الملك فيصل بن عبد العزيز آل سعود

ملك المملكة العربية السعودية

صاحب الجلالة هـ

يسرني أن أشير إلى كتاب جلالتم الوؤرخ ٣ شعبان ١٣٩٤ الموافق ٢١ أغسطس ١٩٧٤ والذي نمده،  
حضرة صاحب السمو الأخ الشيخ زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان هـ، رئيس دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة .  
صاحب السمو .

يسرني أن أشير إلى الفقرة (٣) من المادة الخامسة من إتفاقية تعيين الحدود بين بلدنا الموقعة  
بتاريخ ٣ شعبان ١٣٩٤ هـ الموافق ٢١ أغسطس ١٩٧٤ ميلادية . وأود أن أعرب لسموكم أن مفهوم المملكة  
العربية السعودية للسيادة المشتركة هل كامل المنطقة التي توصل - طبقا لحكم هذه الفترة - بين الهيبساه  
الاقليمية الخاصة بالملكة العربية السعودية والبحر العام لا يشمل تلك الثروات الطبيعية الكامنة في ناع البحر  
وما تحته القاع حيث تظل تلك الثروات ملكة لدولة الامارات العربية المتحدة بصفة منفردة وذلك استثناء من  
حقوق السيادة المشتركة . . فإذا كان مفهوم المملكة العربية السعودية في هذا الشأن يتفق مع مفهوم دولة  
الإمارات العربية المتحدة فأني أرى أن يعتبر كتابي هذا وجواب سموكم عليه بمثابة اتفاق لتقرير ذلك ويصبح  
ملحقاً بالاتفاقية المشار إليها أعلاه . ونفضلو بما صاحب السمو بهيول أوفر تحياتنا وأصدق تفديرتنا  
في ٣ شعبان ١٣٩٤ هـ ، الموافق ٢١ أغسطس ١٩٧٤ ميلادية .

فصل بن عبد العزيز آل سعود هـ ملك المملكة العربية السعودية

يسرني إخبار جلالتم بأن مفهوم دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة بشأن ملكية الثروات الطبيعية المنار  
في كتاب جلالتم يتفق ومفهوم المملكة العربية السعودية .  
ونفضلو بما صاحب الجلالة بقبول أوفر تحياتنا وأصدق تفديرتنا هـ .

زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان

زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان

رئيس دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة

٣ شعبان ١٣٩٤ هـ

٢١ أغسطس ١٩٧٤ م

ان حضرة صاحب الجلالة الملك فيصل بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود  
ملك السلطنة العربية السعودية

وحضرة صاحب السمو الشيخ زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان  
رئيس دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة

عملاً بمبادئ الشريعة المسماة التي تدين بها الأمة الاسلامية وانطلاقاً من روح التضامن  
الاسلامي التي تظلل الجزيرة العربية واستناداً إلى روابط المودة بينهما ، وأواصر الاخاء بين شعبيهما  
النفين ، وعلاقة الجوار القائمة بين بلديهما .

ونظراً لرغبة كل من الدولتين في تعيين الحدود البرية والبحرية بين اقليهما بصفة نهائية  
في ظل الاخوة الاسلامية وروح الإخاء العربي .

نتد اتفق الطرفان التماندان الساميان على ما يأتي :

#### المادة الاولى

يكون خط الحدود البرية الذي يفصل بين إقليم السلطنة العربية السعودية وإقليم دولة الامارات العربية  
المتحدة هو الخط الذي يتحدد طبقاً لأحكام هذه الاتفاقية .

#### المادة الثانية

تبدأ الحدود البرية بين السلطنة العربية السعودية ودولة الامارات العربية المتحدة من النقطة ( أ ) على  
ساحل الخليج العربي موقعها الجغرافي التقريبي ،

خط العرض	٥٨°	١٤'	٢٤°	شمالاً
خط الطول	٢٦	٣٥	٥١	شرقاً

وتستد من هذه النقطة بخط مستقيم يتجه جنوباً إلى نقطة ( ب ) موقعها الجغرافي ،

خط العرض	٢٤°	٠٧'	٢٤°	شمالاً
خط الطول	٢٦	٣٥	٥١	شرقاً

.../...



توافق دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة تلتزم بعدم القيام بأية عمليات بحث أو تنقيب عن المواد الهايدروكربونية أو استثمارها أو استغلالها ، أو الإذن بذلك ، في ذلك الجزء من حقل ( الشيبه - زراره ) الذي يقع شمال خط الحدود .

يجوز للملكة العربية السعودية أو ولاية شركة أو مؤسسة تعمل بإذن منها ، القيام بعمليات البحث والتنقيب واستثمار واستغلال المواد الهايدروكربونية في ذلك الجزء من حقل ( الشيبه - زراره ) الذي يقع شمال خط الحدود ، ويتم فيما بعد اتفاق الدولتين على طريقة قيام الملكة العربية السعودية بتلك العمليات

#### المادة الرابعة

كل من الملكة العربية السعودية ودولة الامارات العربية المتحدة بالاتفاق عن القيام بأية عمليات بحث أو استغلال للمواد الهايدروكربونية أو الإذن بذلك ، في ذلك الجزء من اقليمها الذي تمتد -عقول المواد الهايدروكربونية الواقعة بمساحة رئيسية في اقليم الدولة الاخرى .

#### المادة الخامسة

تعترف دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة بسيادة الملكة العربية السعودية على جزيرة حريمصات . وتعترف الملكة العربية السعودية بسيادة دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة على جميع الجزر الاخرى القابلة لساحلها في الخليج العربي .  
توافق دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة على أن تنشئ الملكة العربية السعودية على جزيرتي القباي وبكاسب أية منشآت عامة توفيق في إقامتها عليهما .

يقم ممثلوا الطرفين المتعاقدين الساميين في أقرب وقت ممكن بتعيين الحدود البحرية بين كل من إقليم الملكة العربية السعودية وإقليم دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة وبين كل من الجزر الخاضعة لسيادة كل منهما وذلك على أساس المدالة التي تحقق للمياه الإقليمية الخاصة بذلك الجزء من إقليم الملكة العربية السعودية الجاور لإقليم دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة والمياه الإقليمية الخاصة بجزيرة حريمصات المذكورة في الفقرة ( ١ ) أعلاه اتصالاً حراً مباشراً بالبحر المسام وبحيث يراعى في تحقيق ذلك الصلاحية للملاحة العميقة بين البحر العام وذلك الجزء المشار اليه أعلاه من إقليم الملكة العربية السعودية ، ويكون لكل من الطرفين المتعاقدين الساميين

الميادة المشتركة على كامل المنطقة التي تتوصل - طبقاً لحكم هذه الفقرة - بين المياه الاقليمية  
الخاصة بالملكة العربية السعودية والبحر العام .

#### المادة السادسة

تتولى إحدى الشركات العالمية المختصة التي يختارها البلدان القيام بمسح وتحديد نقط وخطوط الحدود  
الموضحة في المادة الثانية أعلاه على الطبيعة واعداد خريطة بالحدود البرية بين البلدين ، وما يتعلق  
بذلك من بيانات أخرى لتكون تلك الخريطة ، بعد توقيع ممثلي الطرفين المتعاقدين الساميين عليها ، هي  
الخريطة الرسمية المبينة للحدود المطلوبة ، وتلحق بهذه الإتفاقية كجزء مكمّل لها .

#### المادة السابعة

تشكل لجنة فنية مشتركة مكونة من ثلاثة أعضاء من كل من البلدين للقيام باعداد مواصفات الأعمال المطلوبة  
من الشركة المذكورة أعلاه ، وبيان نقط وخطوط الحدود بين البلدين وفقاً لأحكام هذه الإتفاقية والقيام  
بالإشراف على تنفيذ تلك الأعمال ورئاسة نتائجه .

#### المادة الثامنة

حررت هذه الاتفاقية من نسختين باللغة العربية تحتفظ كل دولة بنسخة منها .

#### المادة التاسعة

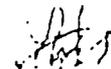
تصبح هذه الاتفاقية نافذة المفعول فور التوقيع عليها .

#### المادة العاشرة

حررت هذه الاتفاقية في مدينة جدة بالملكة العربية السعودية في اليوم الثالث من شهر شعبان  
علم ١٢٦٤ هجرية . الموافق لليوم العادي والعشرين من شهر أغسطس عام ١٩٢٤ ميلادية .



فيصل بن عبدالمنزى آل سعود  
ملك المملكة العربية السعودية



زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان  
رئيس دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة

## **Appendix C**

**FO371/114648**

**Trucial Shaikhs' undertakings to accept the Arbitration of the  
Political Agent dated 4 January 1955.**

APPENDIX ITrucial Shaikhs' undertakings to accept  
the Arbitration of the Political Agent(1) Ras al Khaimah

9th Jamad al Awal - 4th January 1955 - from the  
Ruler of Ras al Khaimah to the Political Agent, Dubai:

"After compliments,

I have received your esteemed letter regarding  
boundaries, and I have the pleasure to inform you  
that I agree to the arbitration between us, the  
Ruler of Sharjah and the Ruler of Umm al Qaiwain.  
I will accept your decision in this and I highly  
appreciate your efforts which are in the interest  
of all.

SAQR BIN MOHAMMED  
Signed and sealed"

1087/55

(2) Umm al Qawain

"I undertake on behalf of myself and all my  
successors as Rulers that I and they will not  
dispute any boundaries on the coast which the  
Political Agent for the Trucial States may lay  
down as those of the State of Umm al Qawain.

Dated this Thursday the 13th of January 1955  
corresponding to 10th Jamad al Awal 1374 H

Signed: AHMED BIN RASHID AL MUALLA"

1087/55

(3) Ajman

"I undertake on behalf of myself and all my  
successors as Rulers that I and they will not  
dispute any boundary lines which the Political  
Agent for the Trucial States may lay down as those  
of the State of Ajman

Dated this day Monday the 10th January 1955,  
corresponding to the 15th Jamad al Awal 1374 H

Signed: RASHID BIN HUHAID  
Ruler of Ajman"

1087/55

(4) Sharjah

(a) "I, Saqr bin Sultan al Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah  
and its dependencies undertake on behalf of myself  
and my successors that we will not dispute any  
boundaries which the Political Agent for the  
Trucial States may lay down in the coastal area,  
excepting Fujairah which we consider as part of  
Sharjah State

Dated on the night of Monday 15th Jamad al  
Awal 1374 H"

/(b)

Appendix I

- 2 -

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- (b) "C. M. Pirie Gordon, Esq.,  
Political Agent, Trucial States,  
Dubai.

After compliments,

1087/54

With much pleasure I received your letter of 8th November 1954 enclosing a note about boundary arbitration between us and other Shaikhdoms. I agree to your arbitration on the boundary between us and the Government of Ras al Khaimah.

Usual ending,

SAQR BIN SULTAN  
Ruler of Sharjah and its  
dependencies"

0253/12/52

- (c) "In accordance with the current conversations between us concerning the frontiers in dispute between us and the Ruler of Dubai, and your request for authority to settle the matter as you see fit, we are sorry that as yet we have reached no solution of the matter of the frontiers. Therefore we did authorise Her Majesty's Government to settle the matter . . . .

Signed: SAQR BIN SULTAN

Dated 5 7. 1371"

- (5) Dubai

- (a) Translation of letter dated 18th March 1955 from the Ruler of Dubai to the Political Agent, Dubai:

"After compliments,

I, on behalf of myself and my successors, as Rulers of Dubai, undertake that we shall not object to any decision which you decide in the matter of frontiers between us and the Shaikhdom of Sharjah on the coastal side

Sealed: SAID BIN MAKTUM"

- (b) Translation of a letter dated the 10th Ramadan 1367 corresponding to the 17th July, 1948, from Shaikh Said bin Maktum, O.B.E., Ruler of Dubai, to C. J. Pelly, O.B.E., Political Agent, Bahrain:

"After compliments,

0256/7/48

With regard to H.M.G.'s suggestion that I should signify my agreement to their arbitration to delineate my boundary with Abu Dhabi, I write to inform you that I agree to H.M.G.'s suggestion as I know that they will administer Justice and equity. I bind myself and my successors to accept their award in this arbitration which should be carried out by you, the Political Officer, Trucial Coast and His Excellency the Political Resident.

Usual ending"

(1.3)

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## **Appendix D**

**FO371/126932**

**Document showing British Aid for the Trucial Coast Shaikhdoms.**

MARKET GARDENS AND SCHOOLS

From Our Special Correspondent

This article was written during a recent visit to the area.

Forming part of Arabia's south-eastern approaches is a territory known collectively as the Trucial Coast of Oman. It stretches from the base of the Qatar peninsula eastwards along the heel of the Persian Gulf as far as Ras al Khaimah and across to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea through a corridor over the rugged sheer mountains sometimes known as the Western Hajar. Inland, the borders with Saudi Arabia sweep westward from the Buraimi Oasis to the juncture of Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

The name Trucial Coast is a western innovation dating back to the late nineteenth century when the British Government made treaties with the rulers of the various states along that coast line. Under those treaties, which still operate, the British Government undertook to protect the states and handle all matters



relating to their foreign affairs, leaving the rulers with absolute internal control, but bound to prevent piracy and the slave trade and to abstain from hostile acts at sea.

To-day the Trucial Coast is made up of seven states, Dibai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Kelba, Umm al Quwain, Ajman, Ras al Khaimah, and Fujairah. All are very jealous of their independence, and border disputes are constant. At least three times a year the rulers meet in what is known as the Trucial Council. At present these meetings are very informal and indecisive, but it is hoped that from them will emerge one day the federation of the Trucial Coast states.

Except for extreme eastern parts at Ras al Khaimah, the territory is for the most part desolate, arid, and flat. Moving sand dunes are common in the interior, while the coast line is made into a maze of treacherous swamps by innumerable creeks which meander far inland with the high tides. Road travel in any part of this territory is hazardous, and is undertaken only by the sturdiest of four-wheel drive vehicles.

Economically the area is poor. Life is a perpetual struggle for existence, and there is much undernourishment. In Dibai, the largest and by comparison the most flourishing of the settlements of the Trucial Coast, an average of only 10 sheep are slaughtered daily for sale. The town has an estimated population of 20,000. The people live mainly on rice, fish, and dates. Salty brackish water is drunk from open wells and outbreaks of epidemics of such diseases as smallpox are not uncommon.

LITTLE EMPLOYMENT

Apart from a little fishing, boat building, and seasonal date harvesting, there is no occupation in this area to provide employment. With news of wealth and work farther north in the Gulf, the Omanis of the Trucial Coast began to leave their homes in search of their fortunes. Now about half of the territory's estimated 80,000 people are believed to have left for such places as Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait. In one respect this is a good thing, for the men abroad live cheaply and send money to their families at home. On the other hand, this mass migration, which one hopes is only temporary, has cracked the whole structure of the Beduin mode of life. The coastal towns are gradually becoming more crowded, dirtier, and more disease ridden, while the healthier open spaces of the desert inland are being abandoned.

At Dibai an aged, ragged boatman, reflecting on his country's plight, lifted his face skyward and with a sigh said: "Allah is generous; one day they will find oil and we shall all be rich." One wonders whether this old man's hope, which is shared by almost all the Omanis of this coast, will ever come true. For several years now the search

for oil has gone on. One dry well after another has been abandoned. A bore is being drilled near Abu Dhabi, and in Sharjah a seismic survey is being done. Land concessions for oil prospecting have been acquired from all the rulers. Several off-shore concessions have also been acquired and preparations are being made to drill in the waters around Das Island. In return the rulers are receiving yearly concession fees—not exorbitant by Persian Gulf standards—and in the meantime the people simply wait.

In an attempt to infuse a more progressive and active spirit and generally to improve conditions, the British Government have introduced a Trucial Coast Development Plan. Originally devised as a five-year project, it was estimated to cost £500,000. The territory, being neither a colony nor a protectorate, comes under the Foreign Office. Because of this the circumstances of the scheme are unique.

AGRICULTURAL SCHEME

Perhaps the most courageous feature of the plan is the pilot agricultural scheme at Ras al Khaimah. There, at the foot of the massive range of mountains that run along the southern coast of Arabia, an attempt is being made to prove that the red soil washed down from the mountains is arable. The water level is only about 25ft. down and the proving plots are now producing vegetables of a remarkably high grade. Interest in the scheme is keen, and praise for the products is generous. Response, however, has so far been poor. Only one farmer has come to the plain to join the young Englishman in charge of the scheme. The next step is the setting up of an agricultural training school.

A primary school has been built in Sharjah and it is intended to build a technical school there to serve the whole territory, as well as a further eight primary schools elsewhere. Dispensers are being trained to serve in clinics. Two dispensaries have already been set up, one in Buraimi, and one at Ras al Khaimah, and three more are to be opened soon.

A considerable amount of money has also been spent on the Buraimi Oases, from which Saudi Arabian forces were ousted about 18 months ago. When it was reoccupied it was found that the water channels, known as *Faluj*, which connect villages and gardens to the main spring-heads, often several miles away, had been neglected. The channels have now been repaired and the provision of water pumps is being considered.

SLAVERY SURVIVES

Buraimi, most of which falls within the territory of the ruler of Abu Dhabi, is to-day quiet and peaceful. The nearest Saudi forces are several hundred miles away, and with the removal of Saudi influence the slave trade route through Buraimi has fallen into disuse.

Slavery, as distinct from the slave trade, is still known in the Trucial Coast states. The right of manumission of slaves is still exercised by the British Political Agent, after a slave is seen clutching the Union Jack flag pole and after he or she has stated a reasonable cause for manumission. Usually the grievance is ill treatment or a threat of sale by the master. After manumission the slave invariably returns to the master's house.

To protect the frontiers of this remote territory from any further intrusion, the Trucial Coast Scouts, who played a prominent part in the Buraimi operation, are being maintained. The force to-day is of battalion strength and is made up of volunteers, mainly Beduin, from all the seven states. The commanding officer is Lieutenant-Colonel Eric F. Johnson, O.B.E., M.C. All his 22 officers are British, seconded to the force from the British Army. It is controlled and paid for by the British Government, but has the full support of the rulers, and, judging by the eagerness of the volunteers, the majority of the people as well.

The remoteness of the Trucial Coast has not insulated it from Middle East policies. Cairo radio propaganda is listened to, but enthusiasm is weak. These people are true friends who look towards Britain for help, guidance, and protection.

24/11/1956  
 FO 371/126932  
 XC 189156  
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## **Appendix E1**

**FO 371/98365**

**Letter from Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) Ltd. to the Foreign Office, London dated 18 July 1952 shows the factor behind boundary demarcation in the Trucial States as the discovery of oil.**



## **Appendix E2**

**FO 1016/195**

**Letter from D.N. Lane, British Residency Bahrain dated 25 July 1952 to the Eastern Arabian Department Foreign Office, shows the main reason behind boundaries demarcation in the Trucial States, the discovery of oil.**

Reference:-

Fo 1016/195

XC 190393

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(EA 1081/5)

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FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

25th July, 1952.

My dear Christopher;

1081/28/51

Sarell, in his letter to Sir Rupert Hay, No. EA 1089/2 of the 12th December, indicated that, unless major difficulties arose, we did not wish the details of the definition of the boundaries between the Trucial Shaikhdoms to be referred to us. The oil company, however, have asked us if it has yet been possible to define any of these boundaries, and we should therefore be grateful if you could let us have some information on what progress has so far been made.

2. The Company also tell us that they intend to carry out further operations in the near future, probably in the territory parallel to the mountains running north to south, approximately through Jebel Faiyah. They have suggested that the boundaries should be defined inland from the coast for a distance greater than the 25-30 kilometres originally envisaged - in fact, as far as "the approximate dividing line between Oman and the Trucial Coast Shaikhdoms". They also want the Ras al Khaimah - Umm al Qaiwain and Sharjah-Dubai boundaries demarcated, and say they may later ask for the Dubai-Abu Dhabi boundary to be carried beyond al Ashush.

3. The first of these suggestions, at least in the extreme form proposed, would seem quite out of the question at the moment, and there may also be objections to the others. But on the whole we are inclined to agree with the Company that it is better to define boundaries at this stage than to wait until drilling sites have been selected in territory which may be disputed. We should therefore be grateful if you could also let us have your views on their latest suggestions.

Yours etc.

David

(D. N. Lane)

Minutes

C.M. Pirie-Gordon, Esq., O.B.E.,  
Bahrain.

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## **Appendix F**

**FO371/1016**

**Letter from Shaikh Said bin Maktum, Ruler of Dubai to Mr B.D,  
Stobbart, Political Officer in Trucial Oman dated 12 January 1949  
(Arabic).**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إلى حضرة الأيخام الأكرم المستر في دي ستوبارت الضابط السياسي في ساحل عمان

الحش  
موسى

بعد التحية والإحترام  
اشارة الى كتابكم عدد ١٠٧٣ المؤرخ ١٦ ديسمبر ١٩٤٨ الموافق ١٥ صفر ١٣٦٨ في خصوص ما طلبه منكم  
سعادة معتمدا للدولة البريطانية بان تقدم لكم بيانا وافيا عن حدودنا مع ابوظبي ورغبة ما طلب  
سعادته تقدم لكم التفاصيل التالية  
من البحر نتدي حدودنا من خور غناضه جنوبا الى برقا الحضيبة ومنها الى اليلاليس  
وتم الى نكا بنا والى نكا الحقف و تم الى رمل الزيمه ومنها الى شمطوط وغاف الزناد و تم الى طوي  
سويجان . وبعد نذ ينحرف الخط شرقا الى بدع المغني ومنه الى طوي الخسوب ومن الخسوب  
الى الهير . ان هذه هي الحدود التي ندعي بها الفاصلة بين بلادنا وابوظبي  
وانبائنا لما ندعيه نذكر الاسباب التالية  
• أولا . فيما يخص حدودنا من البحر لقد سبق ان قدمنا لكم ادلة وثبات كافية التي امكنا  
الحصول عليها والمنظمت في كتبنا المؤرخة

١٤ ربيع الأول ١٣٦٥ الموافق ١٧ فبراير ١٩٤٦

٢١ ربيع الأول ١٣٦٥ الموافق ٢٤ فبراير ١٩٤٦

٢ جماد الأول ١٣٦٥ الموافق ٦ ابريل ١٩٤٦

• ثانيا . من جهة حدودنا من ناحية البر لقد كان رعايانا ولايزالون يطرقون هذه الأماكن  
للسقي والرعي والسكنى ولاغراض أخرى ولم يهجم اوبعارضهم احد من الحكام الآخرين  
• ثالثا . لقد جفنا باقفسنا طوي بدع المغني ولم يعارضنا احد اوبهجم علينا بذلك  
• رابعا . لم تحدث حوادث في هذه المناطق مما يجعل لغيرنا الحق بها  
• خامسا . ان مخاطبتنا مع حاكم ابوظبي في السابق بشأن الحدود لم يكن دليلا على طلبنا شيئا  
لاستحقاقه مند بل كنا نتفاوض معه لننال مند اراضي اوسع من الحدود التي ندعي بها الآن  
اذ جرى البحث بيننا وبينه آنذاك على ان يعطينا اراضي تمتد الى السورب الواقعة ضمن

منطقته وقد اوعدنا الوسيط آنذاك الشيخ محمد بن احمد بن هلال على ان يحصل لنا  
مطلوبنا وبعدئذ اتانا بكتاب من حاكم ابوظبي ولكن لما قرأناه وجدناه مخالف  
جري الكلام عنه فأعدناه اليه . ولازلنا مصيرين على ادعائنا بالحدود  
المشروحة اعلاه

سادسا . لا توجد لدينا مستندات او اوراق بشأن الحدود لأن لم تجري العادة  
عندنا في تحرير مستندات او اوراق ولا سيما في الازمنة الماضية حيث كانت الشفقة  
موجودة بين الناس ويعتمد بعضهم على بعض وكان تحرير المستندات أمرا غير ضروري  
مستغربا . وفضلا عن ذلك لم يكن من المتوقع حصول نزاع بشأن الحدود حتى يحتاط  
الانسان بذلك . وان اغلب معاملات اهل الساحل كانت شفهيًا وقليل من كان  
يحفظ بالسجلات والمستندات بعد الانتهاء من عرضها .  
واننا لنترب من جنابكم في ان تراجعوا كتبنا المشار اليها اعلاه وهناك تعلمون الحقيقة .  
هذا وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام ودمتم .

حرره في ١٢ ربيع الأول ١٢٦٨ الموافق ١٢ جنوري ١٩٤٩

## **Appendix G**

**FO371/1016**

**Letter from John Wilton, Political Agent, Trucial States dated 30  
March 1952 to the British Residency, Bahrian.**

Reference:-

FO 1016/195

XC 190393

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1062/12/52

Restricted.



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0256/11/52.



Political Agency  
Trucial States,  
Sharjah.  
30th March, 1952.

Dear Martin,

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Please refer to my letter 0256/9/52  
of 12th March.

2. I have arranged with Henderson of  
Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) to go  
out next Thursday, April 3rd, to put concrete  
plinths at the starting point of the Dubai  
Abu Dhabi boundary on the coast at Hasian, and  
at the point where the boundary crosses the  
coastal road. The other points are wells,  
which cannot move far, and would not move  
at all without the Shaikh affected drawing  
our attention to the matter, and it is laid  
down which side of them the boundary runs,  
so they should create no problem in future.

Yours sincerely

Good. A.J.W.

John.

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Alin etc. (A.J. Wilton)

C.M. Le Quesne Esq.,  
British Residency,  
Bahrain.

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## **Appendix H**

**FO371/157030**

**Boundary agreement between Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktum,  
Ruler of Dubai and Sultain Said bin Taimur in May 1959  
on Hatta enclave bordering Oman (English version).**

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Reference:-	1	2	3	4	5	6
F0371/157030						
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MUSCAT 24 C  
BT 108216/1961

In the Name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful

The Sultan Said bin Taimur, Sultan of Muscat and Oman, and Shaikh Rashid bin Said bin Maktum al Falasi, Ruler of Dubai and its dependencies have agreed over the frontiers of the Sultanate tribes (and they are Bani Kaab and Washahat) and the State of Dubai as follows, according to the maps that Mr. Julian Walker has drawn:

The line starts from Jebal Umm Nasur and goes north east by the watershed between the Wadis which flow south towards Wadi Sa'aban Shia, Wadi al Qahfi and al Fai (Al Faj) which belong to the Bani Kaab; and the Wadis which flow north to Hatta and Qima and belong to the Bi Biduwat of Hajarain and Dubai, to Alam Hasat al Qara which divides the territory of the Bani Kaab from that of Dubai.

From Alam Hasat al Qara the line goes to ~~Q~~ Qurun al Asfar and Jebal Bidi al Jimh which is the dividing point between the Bani Kaab, and the Biduwat of Hajarain and the Washahat. From Jebal Bidi al Jimh the line goes between Mushabba and Suhaila and thence due north to the centre of the chain of mountains which lies between the Wadi Hatta and the Wadi Qor leaving Suhaila Sagha and Sarakh to Dubai and Mushabba to the Washahat.

Signed: Said bin Taimur

~~xxxxxx~~

4th Dhul Qada 1378

Signed: Rashid bin Said

bin Maktum

10th Dhul Qada

1378

# **Appendix I**

**FO371/157030**

**Boundary agreement between Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktum,  
Ruler of Dubai and Sultain Said bin Taimur in May 1959  
on Hatta enclave bordering Oman (Arabic version).**

Reference:-		PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Fo 371/157030		XC 332					
		1	2				
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"MUSCAT 2+C"

MUSCAT - DU  
BT 10/2/67

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

لقد انفقا السلطان سعيد بن تيمر سلطان مسقط وعمان والشين  
راشد بن سعيد بن مكتوم الفلاسي حاكم دبي وتوايحيا بشأن حدود  
قبائل السلطنة ( وهم بني كعب والوشاحات ) وقطر دبي كما  
بيدي وعلى حسب الخرائط التي رسمها مستر جوليين واكر :

الخط بيندي من جبل ام النسر وينتجه شرقا شمالا باختلاف  
السيول الجارى بين الوديان التي تنتجه جنوبا نحو وادي سابان والشيء  
وادي الشقي والشي ( الفج ) وهذه الوديان تابعة لبني كعب . اما  
الوديان التي تجرى شمالا الى حتى والقيمه فهي تابعة لبدووات الحجرين  
ودبي الى علم حصاة البقارة الفاصلة ما بين احرام بني كعب ودبي .  
من علم حصاة البقارة ينتجه الخط الى قرون الاصفر . وجبل بدى الجمه  
الذى هو فاصلا ما بين بني كعب وبدووات الحجرين والوشاحات ومن جبل  
بندى الجمه هذا ينتجه الخط ما بين السهيلة وشيخ واما شمالا الى  
الوسط في سلسلة الجبال التي ما بين وادي حتى وادي القور ، سهيلا  
وسنا وسراخ تابعة لدبي وشيخ للوشاحات .

دولة مكتوم  
لادى بن تيمر

١٠ ذ القعدة ١٣٧٨

محمد بن تيمر

٤ أكتوبر ١٩٥٨

١٩٥٨

## **Appendix J**

**FO 371/126932**

**Letter from Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan, Ruler of Sharjah to the Political Agent, Trucial States, Dubai dated 2 November 1956, claiming Wadi Madha as belonging to the Qawasim.**



# **Appendix K**

**FO 371/126932**

**Letter from Said bin Taimur, Sultan of Oman to Major F.C.L. Chauncy, O.B.E., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Muscat claiming Wadi Madha as Oman's territory.**

Reference:-

F0371	126932	XC182156	1	2
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THE PALACE, MUSCAT  
December 20, 1956

My dear Friend,

Please refer to your letter No. 5114/58 dated the 15th December 1956.

In reply to your above-mentioned letter we wish to point out that when we succeeded our father in February 1932 we found Wadi Madha part of our Sultanate and its inhabitants are our subjects and up to this day they have been under our jurisdiction and Sovereignty like any other part of our domain therefore we cannot entertain the claim made by the present Shaikh of Sharjah (who succeeded to the Shaikhdom in 1950) or recognise any right in that Wadi.

We shall continue to exercise our long established sovereignty over Wadi Madha as our predecessors did and as we have been exercising same since 1932.

We regret to say that we have nothing further to say in the matter as the whole affair of the Shaikh's claim of the Wadi and the inhabitants thereof is beyond our knowledge.

Your sincere friend,

SAID BIN TAIMUR.

Major F.C.L. Chauncy, O.D.E.,  
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General,  
Muscat.

## **Appendix L**

**FO 371/114648**

**Julian Walker's report of March 1955, Internal Boundaries  
Settlement in the Trucial States, confirming that Nahwa and Shis  
villages in the Wadi Madha are under Sharjah's control.**

Reference:-

F0371/114648 XC182050

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~~63~~  
60

AREA NO. 12: WADI MADHA

- (a) Muscat claims the whole wadi and is at present in de facto possession of Madha, Ghuna and Hajarain
- (b) Fujairah claims the Jaraidiya
- (c) Sharjah claims the whole wadi

As Muscat claims the whole area it is beyond my competence to define frontiers there. The points and events of the dispute are fully covered by files in the Dubai Agency (10813/54, 10813/55).

Sharjah is in de facto control of the two villages at the head of the wadi, Nahawa and Shis, from which she has been taking zakat for several years. The Ruler of Fujairah confirms this.

## **Appendix M**

**FO371/14934**

**Boundary agreement between Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid, Ruler of Ajman, and Sultan Said bin Taimur in 1961 on Masfut enclave bordering Oman (English version).**

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE		1	2	3	4	5	6
Reference:							
	F0371/14934						
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In the name of God the Generous and Merciful

The Sultan Said bin Taimur, Sultan of Muscat and Oman, and Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid al Naimi Ruler of Ajman have agreed over the frontiers as follows between the tribes of the Sultanate (The Bani Kaab) and the state of Ajman according to the maps drawn by Mr. Julian Walker. The Frontiers are two separate lines:-

The first line starts from the top of Jabal Umm an Nasur which divides the people of Hajarain and Masfut and the Bani Kaab, and goes west to a point to the south of the head of Wadi Ghalfa, this Wadi belonging to Masfut. The line stops at the head of the above mentioned Wadi Ghalfa.

The second line starts from the summit of Jabal Mizaira to the north of Al Mishkal and goes west to the western end of Jabal Mizaira, and then westwards by Wadi Khurus, which is the Wadi which flows between Khtaim ar Rahman and Al Jazir. After that the line goes north-west to As Subaigka and Al Milaina, and these two places await frontier adjustment. From Milaina the line goes east to the head of Wadi Saqamia and thence to the summit of Jabal Abu Faraj which is the dividing point between the Bani Kaab and the Biduwat of Masfut.

sgd/-

Said bin Taimur  
4 Dhul Qa'da 1378

sgd/-

Rashid bin Humaid  
19 Dhul Qada.

## **Appendix N**

**FO371/14934**

**Boundary agreement between Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid, Ruler of Ajman, and Sultan Said bin Taimur in 1961 on Masfut enclave bordering Oman (Arabic version).**

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE		1	2	3	4	5	6
Reference:							
F0371/14034		x270					
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E/V/D

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ .

لقد اتفقنا السلطان سعيد بن تيمور سلطان مسقط وصان والشيخ راشد بن حميد النعيمي حاكم عجمان وتوا بمعا بشان حدود قباثل السلطنة (وهي بيني كعب) وتيطر عجمان كما يلي وعلم حسب الخسرا خط السبي رسمها مستر جولدين واكره وهذه الخطوط المساوق ملبها هي في خطين منفصلين:

الخط الاول يبتدىء من راس جبل ام النسيور الفا صل ما بين اهل الحجرين وسفوط بيني كعب ويتجه غربا الى راس وادي فلنفا من الجنوب وهذا الوادي هو تبا بما لسفوط وينتهي الخط عند راس وادي فلنفا المدكور .

الخط الثاني يبتدىء من قمة جبل الميزرع الذي هو شميا لى الشكل ويتجه غربا الى راس جبل الميزرع الغربي ثم غربا بواى الخروس وهو الوادي الفا صل ما بين الجزيرة وخطيم الرغمة وبعد ذلك يتجه شميا لا غربا الى الصيغا واللمحا وهذان المحلان يحيطان بالحدود بينهما (اي الصيغا واللمحا) ومن اللمحا يتجه الخيط شرقا الى راس وادي السواميا ومنه الى راس جبل ابو نراى وهو الفا صل ما بين كعب وبدوات مسفوطه

راشد بن حميد النعيمي  
١٨٠٠ والتمعه ١٣٣٨

سعيد بن تيمور  
٤ القعه ١٣٣٨

## **Appendix O**

**FO 371/126932**

**Letter from D.M.H. Riches dated 21 June 1957 to Mr Harold Beeley,  
Assistant Undersecretary, Foreign Office, London.**

EA 1086/5(A)

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TRUCIAL STATES BOUNDARIES

[Flag A] You will be interested in Bahrain despatch No. 71 of May 24 in EA 1086 and related papers.

2. Practically all the inter-Trucial States boundaries (but not those near the frontier of Muscat or between the States and Muscat) have now been determined and notified to the Rulers concerned.

3. There has been no trouble save over Ras al Khaimah - Fujairah, about which the Ruler of Ras al Khaimah has protested vigorously to the Political Resident and remains sulky and even possibly meditating trouble. This particular settlement has the added disadvantages that Ras al Khaimah did not specifically agree to accept a boundary dictated by us, ~~over~~ Fujairah; and contains a (potential) oil sharing arrangement which might conceivably be used against us in the event of a renewed arbitration over Buraimi (see Mr. Simpson's minute of May 3 in -/1).

[Flag B]

4. Nevertheless I am convinced that the action taken was correct and we should continue to put through every boundary settlement, attribution of islands, etc. to the limit of our capacity. It is a melancholy reflection that we could have settled all these questions without difficulty before the Second World War but did not do so.

5. I should like to send the attached draft despatch to Bahrain.

*D. M. H. Riches*

(D. M. H. Riches)  
June 21, 1957

Mr. Beeley

H3 24/6

*Handwritten initials*

## **Appendix P**

**FO371/140135**

**Letter from M.G.G. Man, Acting Political Resident, Bahrain, to  
Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktum, ruler of Dubai, 13 August 1959.**

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE					
Reference: F0371/140135					
XC332					
1	2	3	4	5	6
1			2		
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دار القيم السياسي  
البحرين  
١٣ أغسطس ١٩٥٩

British Residency,  
Bahrain.  
August 13, 1959.

حضرة الامام المكرم الشيخ  
راشد بن سعيد حاكم  
دبي المحترم

His Excellency  
Shaikh Rashid bin Said,  
Ruler of Dubai.

بمد تقديم التحية وفائق الاحترام:

Creetings and respects.

اتشرف ان اشير  
ان الاتفاقية الخاصة بالحدود التي  
وقعت في شهر مايو من هذه  
السنة بينكم وبين سلطان مسقط  
وعمان والتي سلمت اليكم نسخة  
منها من قبل السفير جولييان واكرر  
في يوم توقيعكم عليها وبما ان  
هذه الاتفاقية تمت بموافقة  
حكومة صاحبة الجلالة وبموافقة  
الاطراف المعنية بالامر موافقة تامة  
وبارادتهم الحرة، اتشرف بان  
اخباركم ان حكومة صاحبة الجلالة  
تعتبر هذه الاتفاقية قانونية  
يرتبط بها جميع الاطراف وانها  
تعتبر بالحدود المخططة  
فيها.

I have the honor to refer  
to the frontier agreement signed  
in May of this year between  
yourself and the Sultan of Muscat  
and Oman, a copy of which was  
given to you by Mr. Julian Walker  
on the day of your signing, and  
to state that, since this agreement  
has been entered into with the  
full approval of Her Majesty's  
Government and by the parties of  
their own free will, Her Majesty's  
Government regard it as valid and  
binding on the parties and  
recognise the frontiers laid down  
in it.

ختاما تفضلوا  
بقبول فائق التحية والاحترام.

Please accept, Your  
Excellency, the assurance of my  
high consideration.

(موركان • مان)  
القائم بأعمال القيم السياسي

(Mr. J. G. Horn)  
Acting Political Resident



