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Conceptions of Informal Empire

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British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961–1968

Conceptions of Informal Empire

Helene von Bismarck

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To Julian

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Contents

<i>Series Editors' Preface</i>	ix
<i>Photographs</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xviii
<i>Maps</i>	xix
Introduction	1
1 Structural Foundations	6
1.1 Constitutional relations between Great Britain and the Persian Gulf States	6
1.2 The political residency and its responsibilities	16
1.3 Oil in the Persian Gulf	20
2 The Kuwait Crisis and Its Consequences	27
2.1 Instructions for the new political resident	27
2.2 Operation Vantage	30
2.3 The Arab League Security Force	34
2.4 A new intervention plan for Kuwait: Operation Sodabread	37
2.5 Redeployment to Bahrain	44
2.6 Consequences for Britain's Persian Gulf policy	49
3 The Limits to Anglo-American Cooperation	56
3.1 Preparations for discussions with the State Department	56
3.2 Resistance against a greater US presence in the Persian Gulf	61
3.3 The State Department's perspective	65
3.4 Luce's vision of a joint Anglo-American policy in the Arabian Peninsula	73
3.5 The Anglo-American discussions of April 1963	79
4 Improving Britain's Image: The Modernization Policy	85
4.1 The problem	85

4.2	The retrocession of jurisdiction in the protected states	90
4.3	Debating titles: Changing the nomenclature of Britain's representatives	95
4.4	Luce's despatch on modernization for the new Labour Government	101
4.5	Formal endorsement of the modernization policy	108
5	Excluding the Arab League: The Development Policy	113
5.1	The Arab League's plan to open an office in the Trucial States	113
5.2	The creation of the Trucial States Development Fund	119
5.3	The search for financial resources	126
5.4	The situation in the Gulf deteriorates	133
5.5	The deposing of Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah	148
5.6	The consequences of replacing Shaikh Saqr	153
6	An Obstacle to Modernization and Federation: Shaikh Shakhbut of Abu Dhabi	159
6.1	Shaikh Shakhbut's resistance to modernization	159
6.2	A ruler-in-waiting for Abu Dhabi: Shaikh Zayed	165
6.3	British plans for Shaikh Shakhbut's removal	170
6.4	The replacement of Shakhbut by Zayed in August 1966	181
7	The Prospect of Britain's Withdrawal	186
7.1	The decision to give up the Aden base	186
7.2	Attempts to preserve British prestige in the Persian Gulf	191
7.3	Planning for the area's long-term future	195
7.4	The decision to withdraw	209
	Conclusion	215
	<i>Appendix: List of Important Personalities</i>	222
	<i>Notes</i>	226
	<i>Bibliography</i>	260
	<i>Index</i>	265

Series Editors' Preface

British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961–1968: Conceptions of Informal Empire is the seventh book in the *Britain and the World* series, edited by the British Scholar Society and published by Palgrave Macmillan. From the sixteenth century onward, Britain's influence on the world became progressively profound and far-reaching, in time touching every continent and subject, from Africa to South America and archaeology to zoology. Although the histories of Britain and the world became increasingly intertwined, mainstream British history still neglects the world's influence upon domestic developments and British overseas history remains largely confined to the study of the British Empire. This series takes a broader approach to British history, seeking to investigate the full extent of the world's influence on Britain and Britain's influence on the world.

Helene von Bismarck's book examines British policy in the Persian Gulf between June 1961, when Britain granted independence to Kuwait, and January 1968, when Britain announced its intention to end its military presence in the Gulf by 1971. *British Policy in the Persian Gulf* is the study of a curious exception in the history of decolonization: at a time when Britain was rapidly winding up its empire, sometimes fighting wars in the process, Britain's position in the Gulf seemed as secure as ever and the idea of withdrawal was but a distant thought. The book argues that British policy during this time was shaped by a popular conception of 'informal empire' held by British officials in London and the Gulf: that Britain's rights, influence, and responsibilities in Eastern Arabia extended well beyond its treaty-based obligations; and that Kuwait and Oman, although independent, were in fact an integral part of Britain's diplomatic and security apparatus in the region. It uncovers a good deal of new and interesting material in the National Archives on the subject – most notably Britain's involvement in the depositions of Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah in 1965 and Shaikh Shakhbut

of Abu Dhabi in 1966 – offering a fresh perspective that will be of great interest to historians of the Gulf and the British Empire in the 1960s.

Editors, *Britain and the World*:

James Onley, *University of Exeter*

A. G. Hopkins, *University of Texas at Austin*

Gregory Barton, *The Australian National University*

Bryan Glass, *Texas State University*

Photographs



Sir William Luce talking to Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktoum of Dubai, c.1961–1966. Photo from Hugh Nicklin's collection.



From left to right: Shaikh Rashid bin Said Al-Maktoum of Dubai, James Craig, Shaikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al-Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Hugh Boustead, Shaikh Ahmad bin Rashid Al-Mualla of Umm al-Qaiwain, Shaikh Muhammad bin Hamad Al-Sharqi of Fujairah, Colonel Freddie De Butts, Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan Al-Qasimi of Sharjah, and Shaikh Rashid bin Humaid Al-Nuaimi of Ajman, c.1962–1964. Photo from Glencairn Balfour-Paul's collection.



H. R. H. The Duke of Edinburgh during a visit to the Gulf, with Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan Al-Qasimi of Sharjah, Glencairn Balfour-Paul, and Colonel Freddie De Butts 1965. Photo by P. C. Aitkens.



Hugh Boustead, political agent in Abu Dhabi, at his farewell parade 1965. Photo by P. C. Aitkens.



Bagpipers and drums in Manama, Bahrain, in 1966. Photo by P. C. Aitkens.



Jahili Fort in Al Ain, Abu Dhabi. Photo by P. C. Aitkens.



Sergeant Ali Batti being presented with his George Medal by Sir William Luce in 1963. Photo by P.C. Aitkens.



Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan on his wedding day in 1961. Photo by P. C. Aitkens.

P. C. Aitkens' photos can be found at <https://secure.flickr.com/groups/tos/>.

Hugh Nicklin's photos can be found at <http://trucialomanscouts.org/TOS/Welcome.html>.

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Portions of chapters 2 and 5 of this book originally appeared in the articles 'The Kuwait Crisis of 1961 and Its Consequences for Great Britain's Persian Gulf Policy', *British Scholar Journal*, Vol. 2, No.1 (2009) and "'A Watershed in Our Relations with the Trucial States". Great Britain's Policy to Prevent the Opening of an Arab League Office in the Persian Gulf in 1965', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (2011).

Writing a book is a solitary business, and it does not get easier when you do it in a language that is not your own. I am deeply grateful to William Roger Louis, Kiran K. Patel, James Onley, Jason Parker, Anne Neubauer, Katharina Droste zu Vischering, Bryan Glass, Pillarisetti Sudhir, Dane Kennedy, Marian Barber, Miriam Hauss Cunningham, and Philippa Levine for their invaluable support and advice offered at different stages of this project. I also thank Lindy Ayubi for the fantastic job she did of copy-editing, and the entire team at Palgrave Macmillan, especially my editor, Jennifer McCall. Special thanks are due to Jenny Balfour-Paul, Peter Aitkens, and Hugh Nicklin for allowing me to use their photo material. If there are any mistakes in this book, they are, of course, my own.

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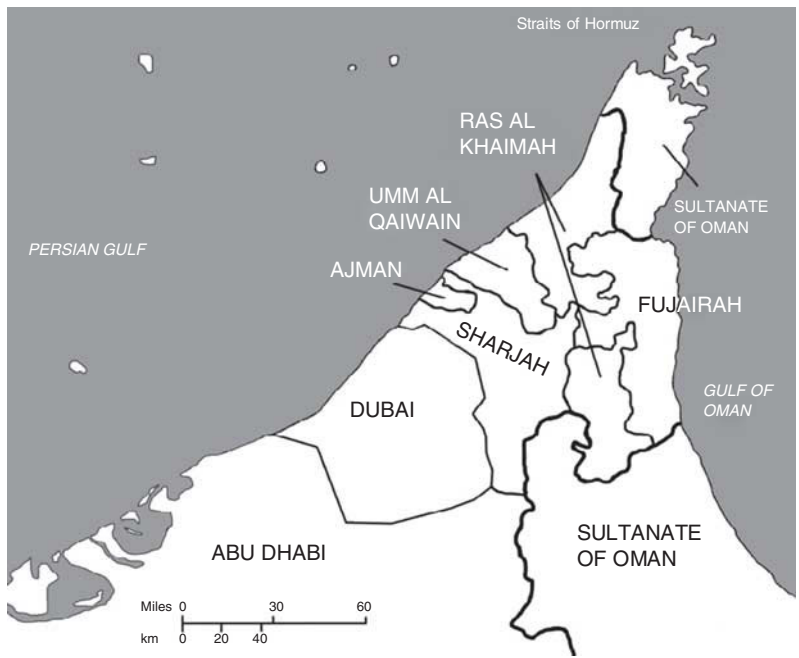
Abbreviations

ADMA	Abu Dhabi Marine Area Company
ADPC	Abu Dhabi Petroleum Company
AIOC	Anglo-Iranian Oil Company
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BP	British Petroleum
CAB	Cabinet Office
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COS	Chiefs of Staff
DEFE	Ministry of Defence
FO	Foreign Office
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
GCMG	Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
IPC	Iraqi Petroleum Company
KCMG	Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George
KFAED	Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development
KOC	Kuwait Oil Company
KSO	Kuwait State Office
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration (USA)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
QPC	Qatar Petroleum Company
PREM	Prime Minister's Office
RAF	Royal Air Force
RG	Record Group
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
T	Treasury
TSDO	Trucial States Development Office
TSDF	Trucial States Development Fund
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAR	United Arab Republic
UN	United Nations

Maps



Map of the Arabian Peninsula, ca. 1963



Map of the Trucial States, 1963