CHAPTER - II

SOCIAL STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION
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Genesis of Social Structural Transformation in Saudi Arabia

The history of the Middle East has been the history of the religious and political elites and changing patterns of tribal loyalties as well as their social and political consequences. Little attention has been paid to the study of masses and social ethos at the level of grass-root and popular tradition. Greater part of study is confined to the study of political, religious and intellectual currents and thus to the lives and activities of a tiny minority, the elite. But the aftermath of 1930 has witnessed great change at social level largely due to changed material as well as political conditions. The new material conditions illustrate the nature of life for most people in the contemporary period. The discoveries of the last sixty years in the areas of social and economic history have helped finally to illuminate the role of the masses and their true social conditions. For the first time, we are now able to look beyond the activities of those of wealth, leisure, religious activities and education to what ninety-five per cent of the population are doing with their time and energies.

This relatively new area of endeavour has come to be known as the “new social history” and its focus is radically different. It attempts to examine the changing ways of life and the standard of living of many through the vehicle of
social classes. In this sense the new social history could be described as sociology.

The focus of this chapter is almost exclusively on social and economic developments, omitting many of the great political and intellectual trends of the last so many decades. The chapter will look closely at the millions of Saudi’s who are engaged in traditional and conventional socio-economic activities and professions. In this sense, social history is more democratically oriented and far broader in compass than the elitist focus of the traditional discipline.

This does not mean, of course, that the elite can be neglected. In the context of Saudi Arabia their role is central in bringing change and transformation (with a direction) which cannot be looked down.

The social and political content of the process of class formation and emergence of new classes in Saudi Arabia is different from the European and others’ history of social change and social transformation. The socio-historical realities of Saudi Arabia is entirely different from other societies which differentiate its patterns of social transformation from the others.

The concomitant results of transformation or passage from one stage of socio-economic development to another is the emergence of new social classes, the elite, the aristocracy as well as the transformation of local elites into national elites with more consolidated material base. The movement of these elitist elements within society is a signal that Saudi Arabian society is about to undergo a great change.

The static, immutable, stratified, impoverished, fragmented and segmentary social structure of Saudi Arabian society is undergoing structural
change and transformation under the impact of the new socio-economic dynamics produced by the oil economy and government's various reformation as well as welfare policies. The government's policies of industrialization and modernization of agricultural sectors of its economy is breaking the centuries old social bases of its economy and producing various social classes which are the torch bearers of social change and transformation. The transformation of Saudi Arabian economy was necessitated by the oil economy. The colossal amount of revenues generated by the oil and its investments in industrialization, agricultural modernization, modern developments of transport system and communication system etc. has affected the societal structure and its values. These have entailed social change and mobility, spatial as well as occupational mobility, and have produced various social classes and new social and material bases for social differentiation and stratification.

The industrialization, technologization of modes of production and modernization programmes induced by the oil economy in Saudi Arabia which concomitantly has entailed structural change and transformation in the overall societal structure in Saudi Arabia society. In Europe the process of industrialization ruined the older and traditional classes in society - the aristocracy, the artisans, and the peasantry, but as a result of the same process of industrialization, urbanization and technological change, new social classes are emerging in Saudi Arabia which are more forward looking, dynamic, energetic, mobile and national in character than traditional social classes of the Arabian society.
The emergence of a highly centralized political authority was in itself a big event in the history of contemporary Arabia. This development paved the way for significant changes in all aspects of society. This laid the foundation for the development of modern social institutions like the bureaucracy, unified educational system, legal system, a national army at the disposal of the centralized authority etc. Which integrated the entire country under a single political and socio-legal system. This integration and encapsulation of the entire Arabian tribals into a single system further encouraged sedentarization and promoted and instilled new ideas of nationalism, loyalty and commitment. As a result, the idea of territorial nationalism emerged which was in itself a totally new phenomenon in the history of Arabia. This proved a highly homogenizing ideology which affected the entire aspects and gamuts of social system and people's life. This homogenizing ideology was a highly reformatory and reconstructive. This was a orthogenetic source of change. This orthogenetic force produced a new social dynamics of permutations and combinations which generated the forces of change and transformation.

Thus religious and political development brought drastic change in the people's vision and cognition. With the dismantling of the political autonomy of the institutions of sheikhs and clans, parochialism and provincialism started disappearing and paved the way for the development of modern nationalism among the masses which broadened the cognitive frontiers and horizons of the people. Due to these developments, the forces of fragmentation and segmentation received serious setback; which under the impact of Islamization and political centralization underwent further internal structural change. This
development produced new forces of social permutations and combinations which set in the process of structural change and transformation.

Another most important development which took place under the supervision of the ideologically committed Al Saud-Wahhabi regime was the establishment of modern educational and social institutions to carry forward the mission socio-economic reconstructions which gradually destroyed and de-legitimatized the political autonomy of tribalism. The new educational system were established to prepare the populace especially the youth to carry forward the mission of reconstruction and modernization.

The new educational system provided opportunities to the students to be socialized along the modern lines. This aspect of the socialization process was in itself a new development and a radical departure from the previous one which was based on only informal pattern. This modern development in education proved a catalyst leading to the emergence of a new national and cultural consciousness. The government's extensive scholarship programmes provided opportunities for students to avail the same kind of infra-structural facilities and to mix up with each other, to share each others' experiences and to develop a common and universal consciousness related to culture, values, loyalty and nationalism. The new educational order helped and provided all sorts of raw as well as finished materials in developing and forging new communitarian and national ideology. A new loyalty, commitment and sense of communities developed among the students. Earlier people were identified either through their lineage, clan, tribe, village and small settlements. the forging of a new identity, based on communitarian and collective identity by superseding the
previous one was a great boost in promoting social transformation in Saudi Arabia. Professor A. Mazrui asserted the significance of this catalyst: “It can therefore be seen that a process of cultural fusion-leading to an enlarged empathy... of a shared lifestyle - is a contribution toward the integrative process.”

Development in education along with the development and modernization in transport and modern communications revolutionized the national integration, cultural reformation and the collective identity formation process. This greatly broadened the cognitive frontiers of the people and curbed and neutralized all sorts of parochialism, segmentations, and social fragmentation.

In the history of Arabia the arid climatic conditions had also played no less role in dividing and isolating the people from each other. The prevailing state of geographical insulation had played big role in developing isolationism, parochialism, provincialism and compartmentalized mentality among the people. According to George Rentz, previously “isolated from one another, people thought of themselves as citizens of the Hijaz or of Najd rather than of a larger entity.” The *de facto* reversal of this situation came as a result of the unification of the country in the 1930s, but its *de jure* realization came on the heels of the great changes of the 1960s. As Tachau has pointed out:

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The resources which have become available to the whole provide a clear and immediate means and motive for avoiding the fragmentation into the older component parts which might leave some of these parts without sufficient resources for their own development or an increased standard of living.\(^3\)

After successfully accomplishing the tasks of the territorial, social, political and legal unification of the country, the new regime launched the programmes for the redressal of the social grievances through social reconstruction, development and modernization programmes. Saudi Arabia inherited a society whose general populace and its socio-physical environmental conditions was in very poor conditions. These were the impediments and bottlenecks in the way of modernization and social reconstruction.

The population density was one of the lowest in the world and was scattered all over the country and was leading a life of pre-ordained destiny. The Saudi Arabian population was broadly divided into the following categories. First, nomadic - Bedouins - pastoralists and agriculturalists; second, semi-nomadic, bedouins pastoralists and agriculturalists; third, sedentarized and agricultural based settlements; and fourth, urban and commercial settlements.

The entire population was highly fragmented on tribal and clan considerations and segmentary basis of social and lineage relationship were the order of the society. There was nothing like a single legitimate political force and ideology which could have integrated and united the entire population. The greater

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traditions of Islam, linguistic, racial and geographical homogeneity had developed consciousness of Arabness among the populace; but the prevalent socio-political and economic realities were the vital determining factors of social and political reality. Peoples from all these occupational and professional categories were completely embedded into tribal social and economic structural system, which did not undergo any structural and cultural change for a long period. Tribal warfare, ecological changes etc., sometimes brought changes but simply at the psychological and superficial level. It did not brought real structural and cultural change at all. Changes due to these did not affects the patterns of social structure and relationship. The changes were mainly patterns recurrence in nature. The changes were mainly cyclical or rhythmical in nature and patterns. Fundamental social, economic and political structure used to appear or disappear, but they functionally remained static, fused, stagnant and immobile. The social dynamics which have been responsible throughout the history for bringing out real structural and cultural change were absent in the pre-oil Arabia’s socio-economic and political structural values.

Country’s physical as well as social infrastructures were really in poor conditions. Their conditions were incompatible with the requirements of modern social development and modernization. General human resources conditions were very poor and were based on centuries old primitive values and traditions. The traditional social and economic structures did not produce social dynamics responsible for change and transformation.

Saudi Arabia was also lacking in modern social and economic institutions to carry forward the modernization and developmental strategies.
So government established many institutions to shoulder the responsibilities of modernization and development, which initiated the processes of social reconstruction and transformation. Many institutions building and reformation programmes were carried out to expedite the developmental and modernization programmes according to a well planned and orchestrated strategy. These institutions buildings moves and reformations were designed to accomplish the agenda of socio-economic transformation of Saudi Arabia from a traditionally bound primitive economic system and tribally structured social system to a modern industrial economy with well developed social base. The modern development and modernization moves generated by the oil revenues jolted the economic foundations of the Arabian Peninsular social structural system which concomitantly set in the process of social change and transformation.

Major reforms in the arena of social and political system was also initiated in the early period of 1960s to revitalize and make more dynamic the socio-political system of the country. These reformatory measures assigned pivotal roles to the government of Saudi Arabia in the matter of social development and transformation processes. In the direction of fundamental reforms Shah Faisal issued his ten-point programmes in November 1962 for the modernization of the country. The ten-point programmes were social legislations in nature which reformed many of the socio-political customes and eradicated many of the social evils which had inflicted the system since a long
time. The ten-point programmes called for many of the basic elements of modern government. 4

1. Promulgation of a “Basic Law” (or constitution) based on the Sharia and the Quran.

2. Regulation of local government.

3. Creation of a Supreme Judicial Council and a Ministry of Justice.


5. New emphasis on the spread of Islam.

6. Reorganization of the Committee for Public Morality.

7. Co-ordination of economic development programmes and efforts.

8. Social legislation to improve the standard of living of the average Saudi citizens.

9. Establishment of priority items in the economic development plan, such as industrialization programme.

10. Abolition of slavery.

Most of the social and economic provisions of the ten-point programme was systematically implemented. Ambitious developmental programmes in physical and social infrastructural developmental arena was launched and implemented successfully. To alleviate the human sufferings through proper developments and modernization of human resources government undertook massive programmes for developments of health sectors, education sectors and many other welfare measures which touched the lives of every person of the

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population. Programme to alleviate women sufferings were given special consideration and space.

These institutions building processes and socio-political reforms galvanised the process of social change and modernization. These policies and programmes provided enough impetus for the development and mobilization of the human potentiality through its proper development. It set in the process of integration of the common masses with the government’s developmental strategies. These measures increased the participation of the populace into the nation’s modern developmental activities. It influenced the socio-psychological cognition of the population and made them more receptive of the ideas of modernization and development.

The materialization of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia in early 1930s entailed many significant developments which are as follows: First, the Wahhabism as the socio-cultural and political ideology succeeded in integrating a vast area of Arabia territorially as well as politically into a single entity. It affected the entire gamut of political and socio-cultural system of the Arabian peninsula. It laid the foundation of a nation-state society. Social development and transformation under the supervision and guidance of a highly centralized and authoritarian ideological political regime started. Second, important development was the re-establishment of the pivotal role of Islam in the collective life and identity of Arabia. Islam again became the foundation of socio-political and cultural identity of the collectively and the most accepted source of legitimation. Third significant development was the creation of universal Islamic brotherhood based on the collective identity of Islam and
Fourth, development was the de-legitimatization of all kinds of fissiparous, sectarian, parochial and politically autonomous tribal entities and various other political and cultural denominations. This de-legitimatization of tribalism legitimatized the centralized Al Saud's religio-political regime and its ideological foundation, the Wahhabism. Fifth, most significant development was the creation and establishment of a nation-state with de-facto and de-jure territorial nationalism with well demarcated geographical boundary. This was a great departure from the dominant and mainstream history of Arabian socio-political thought. Al Saud abandoned irredentist adventures and hot pursuits. Although Wahhabism did not sanction it but it was done in the name of political pragmatism and exigency.

The establishment of the new state of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1930s also synchronized with the discovery of petroleum oil and other valuable natural minerals. This development proved instrumental in pushing forward the various nation-buildings and social reconstruction programmes of the new Saudi regime. It opened many new vistas for further development and national reconstructions programmes. The discovery of petromines and other valuable natural resources and its commercial and strategic significance entailed the following significant developments. First, it started rapidly increasing the government's coffers by bringing more and more revenues. For the first time state started receiving massive amount of revenues from the source other than the traditional sources of revenues like trade caravan, pilgrimage, booty etc. Second, this opening of new vistas for the source of revenues helped very much in integrating the state with the World's predominant economic system. This
integration facilitated the process of technology transfers to Saudi Arabia which revolutionized the development and modernization processes in the state. Third, Saudi Arabia’s political and strategic significance increased and it very soon became a powerful state to be reckoned with. Fourth, this helped the new state in accomplishing the myriad kinds of social development and reformation strategies for making the new state socially as well as economically strong and stable. The new state started the processes of dismantling the socio-economic foundation of previous tribal political, economic and cultural foundation. Fifth, oil revenues helped the new regime in consolidating its social base in the society by implementing various welfare programmes, social reformation programmes, land reform programmes, sedentarization programmes and many different kinds of rehabilitation programmes. The combined social effects of all these programmes were colossal in nature which helped very much in the realization of the objective of social amalgamation of the entire population by alleviating their social conditions. Sixth, the massive oil revenues boosted the security of the ensuring internal as well as external security over this vast land of the Arabian peninsula. Seven, with the help of massive oil revenues Saudi Arabia embarked itself on many physical as well as social reconstruction programmes. Saudi Arabia inherited a society where physical as well as social infra structures were in very poor conditions. The new regime started developing these two fundamental sectors to make the new state more consolidated, integrated and internally cohesive, socially as well as physically. The regime started the programmes of investing in man. These policies of development helped the new regime in transforming the tribal society into a new nation state society.
Land Reforms, Sedentarization and Social Transformation

In Saudi Arabia land reform, agricultural reform and land-distribution programmes was initiated in the early 1930s by king Abdul Aziz. This land-distributing programme is still going on in one or another form. Saudi Arabia's population and economy like many other Arabian peninsular countries was tribally dominated and basically agrarian in nature. When king Abdul Aziz launched the public-land distribution programme (the Hejrab) in the early 1930s the Bedouin population was the two third of its total population, most of them used to lead a life akin to the wandering tribes without any permanent dwelling place. Their nomadic way of life was considered by the king Abdul Aziz as the biggest internal threat and challenge to his rule. So he initiated the land distributing programmes in their favour. In exchange they were supposed to sell their camels, sheeps and goats and practise sedentary agriculture. Following the severe drought of 1960, the programme was expanded northward into Tabuk, al-ula and Wadi Sarhan. In addition to receiving already developed land free of charge, each settler was paid 150 Saudi riyals monthly and guaranteed free access to pumped irrigation water. This was followed in 1965 by a technically better-designed scheme, in which a thousand Bedouin households were settled in an area of 45,000 donums in Hard, Wadi Sahba. This land reform and distribution provided direct and primary source of income. These reformatory and distributive measures also partially succeeded in

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removing the institutional barriers inhibiting social progress. Its effect was felt widely and positively. These land distributing and agrarian reform programmes legitimatized and socialized the honourship of the permanent source of income and social base. It encouraged the nomadic Bedouins to first settle and then engage in a permanent type of occupation and profession. This development further encouraged sedentarization and fostered the culture and social conditions for vertical as well as horizontal mobility, diversification of economic activities and its social bases and occupational mobility. This laid the socio-economic foundation for the new kinds of social differentiation and stratification in the society.

To M. Riad El-Ghonemy, the sober reality is that this policy has contributed to increasing inequality and to inefficiency in production. Almost half the land and subsidy recipients were already wealthy men; merchants, government employees, influential tribal Sheikhs and even a few amirs. Public land distribution peaked at the start of the oil boom in 1973 when many beneficiaries were allotted more than one unit of land averaging 30 hectares each, free of charge. Due to lack of experience and proper expertise the land recipients became absentee rent-receivers, leaving unskilled migrant Yemeni and Egyptian workers to till the land as tenants. These arrangements though considered illegal by the government, have prevailed, particularly in the large Tabuk scheme. Still in an affluent society like Saudi Arabia, greedy land recipients continue to press for the raising of farm size from 20 to 50 hectares.

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and for farms to continue to be distributed free of charge, despite the king’s earlier approval of doubling the limit from 10 to 20 hectares.\(^7\)

The patronage client relationship and its historical sanctity in Arabia has accentuated and legitimatized the unequal land distributing policy of the government. Those who are well off and have been drawn into the patronage-client relationship have always been benefitted by the government’s policies. They have been the prime beneficiaries of the government’s patronage system and subsidy policies. These Government policies have always been aimed at getting socio-ideological legitimacy and recognition. Government’s policies of patronage and subsidy have been the biggest incentive and source for vertical and upward mobility for the better off and economic magnates segments of the Saudi Population.

They have joined the aristocracy and upper middle class. These policies of government have produced feudalism and its associated socially and economically structured hierarchicus relationship. This has produced a big class of land holders and economic magnates. They are having very close rapport with the upper strata of the society. The government’s policies of land reform and distribution programmes and cultivation of patron-client relationship have resulted into the emergence of a new kind of polarization in the society. Thus the old-established and economically egalitarian system of tribal communal land-holding mushaā and (dirah) was broken up into individual holdings for usufruct rights and private property (Khas) in settled agriculture.

These policies of government have facilitated the processes of emergence of myriad kinds of new social classes with new socio-economic foundation and orientation. New bases and criteria for class differentiation and stratification have emerged. These have produced new social and economic bases and criteria for defining and achieving social prestige, status and role.

Saudi Arabia inherited a vast area too arid to support permanent rural settlement. Pastoral nomadism had developed in response to these arid climatic conditions and had ecologically adjusted at a particular Technological level to sustain and exploit the natural resources for livelihood. As Johnson has defined pastoral nomadism as a livelihood form that is ecologically adjusted at a particular technological level to the utilization of marginal resources.\(^8\)

The most sociologically significant outcome of these land reforms, land distribution programmes, agricultural reform and modernisation, development of new irrigated agriculture etc., was introduction of change in these arid climatic conditions through the application of modern technology in pumping out the water from the ground water sources. A drastic change was also introduced in the technological level which had been evolved in response to these arid and climatic conditions which had also produced a particular kind of ecological environment and social milieu to sustain it. Due to these developments the process of sedentarization gained currency in Saudi Arabia which changed the landscape of the Saudi society. Sedentanzation introduced a fundamental change in the pastoral nomadism which tantamountly changed its relationship with other segments, namely the villager and the city dwellers of the Arabian peninsular.

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The nomadic communities of the Arab region had symbiotic economic relationship with the villagers and towns people. The profound transformation in the fundamentals of the economic bases due to modernization and technologization of agriculture brought tremendous change in their life. The economic relationship was profoundly affected. The nomadic communities of the Arabian peninsular region traded with the villagers and towns people to acquire certain food crops and artisanal goods. In exchange they sold their camels for use in settled agricultural works and for meat. They also raised revenues from transporting goods between urban centres across the most arid areas of the region. The terms of trade with settled communities varied over time. The nomads often acting as War lords relative to the settled community, sometimes extracting rent in various forms from oasis peoples and from settled cultivators in the lands which fell within their domain. But the developments in the twentieth century has totally ruptured these relationships. The economic collapse of nomadism is captured succinctly in the following quote by the famous British traveller Wilfred Thesiger:

Life in the desert ceased to be possible when the few, but entirely essentially commodities that the Bedu had hitherto been able to buy in exchange for the products of the desert, became to expensive for them to afford, and when no one any longer required the things which they produced.

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10 Ibid., p. 144.
In Saudi Arabia there were estimated to be still 3 million nomads on the eve of the second world war. Today they number only a few hundred thousand perhaps 300,000) and the Saudi government has continued to encourage nomads to settle in the new areas of irrigated agriculture. This policy of sedentarization by the Saudi government is aimed at switching over to the new social ecology of region conditioned by the modernization and technologization of the modes and relations of economic production. This new social ecology is the product of the social reforms, modernization of agricultural and irrigation system, development of more green pastures and reformed and property relationship etc.

The change in the foundation of nomadic socio-economic milieu due to reformation and application of modern technology in the developmental process have brought profound transformation in the tribal social life and relationship. The development of rural areas in Saudi Arabia seems to have been responsible not only for the emergence of some new types of agricultural activities, but also for the decline of other forms of rural livelihood, typified by the eclipse of nomadism. Earlier the phenomenon of the rise and fall of the nomadic population in respect to the sedentarized oasis and agricultural based population was a perennial recurrence and patterns. But never before in the history such a combined force to erode and undermine the nomadism had been ever applied. It is widely believed that the traditions and skills of nomadism are totally lost from the younger generations, due to acquiring of new skills, ideas and traditions under totally new sociological foundation and reality.

Only economic factor is not responsible for eroding the socio-cultural foundation of nomadism and its transformation. The emergence of a centralized and legitimate political authority and a national army at its disposal along with the changed social environment are equally responsible for changing and transforming the foundation of tribal socio-economic structure and tribal political web of authority. The entire tribal population of Saudi Arabia was incorporated and integrated into single socio-political and legal system. This process of integration and incorporation severely undermined the tribal autonomy, its social structure, its authority and its legitimacy. Adoption of uniform legal system and enactment and establishment of Siyadat al-qanun (Sovereignty of law; Arabic equivalent to the phrase "rule of law") based on Islamic Sharia, which literally covers all areas of religiously mandated and regulated behaviour of the Muslim community, profoundly changed and transformed their (tribal sheikhs) judicial functions and legitimacy. The dynamics of social change and transformation unleashed by the government's various policies of socio-economic development and modernization severely fossilized social foundation of their (tribal sheikhs) power structures.

The various developmental strategies opened new vistas of economic centres and facilitated for economic as well as social structural change and adjustments. These processes of socio-economic modernization and structural changes and adjustments unleashed new pull and push forces which induced tribal sedentarization as well as migration, which tantamountly further weakened and transformed the tribal web of authority.
Abdul Rahman H. Al said has written that traditional tribal modes of existence has drastically declined over the years and has argued that a decisive, perceptible and striking transformation has taken place in the Arabian peninsula. The massive and continuous migration, sedentarization and settlements of people from the desert to the urban and newly created and irrigated rural settlements and centres are going on. He has further written that three kinds of patterns of Bedouin settlements have been identified: nomadic Bedouins; the Semi-nomadic Bedouins; and the settled Bedouins.\textsuperscript{12} The first-classification includes nomadic tribes people who will "generally move around in a familiar territory", taking into consideration the state of pasture and the accessibility of a market. They live off the sale of sheep and goat-fat, dried-milk cakes, sheep, goat and camel hair, and their livestocks of camels, sheep, and goats. The semi nomadic Bedouins are half-settled communities that may eventually establish themselves in one place permanently or they may return to the nomadic life at any time. The third group of settled Bedouins lives, by and large, in huts or houses forming a village or hamlet. Some of the settled Bedouins work as agricultural labourers, others find employment in the cities, and some engaged in small-scale artisan manufacturing.

Industrialization was accompanied by urbanization and more commercial centres with modern settlement facilities. Which further developed new material conditions for inducing migration and sedentarization by the desert dwellers. These changed material and social conditions set in the processes of breaking

down of old tribal social structures and values. This promoted spatial as well as occupational mobility in the tribal Bedouins. This facilitated the process of emergence of alternative societal structural strata with different life style and values. This social structural transformation was further accelerated and got impetus with the development of the human resources. The diversification and expansion of modern economic infrastructures set in the processes of industrialization, urbanization and mushrooming of modern social institutions to manage the developmental process which greatly weakened the traditional tribal Bedouin social structures and values. The establishment of mega economic and commercial centres like ARAMCO (the Arabian-American Oil Company) affected the entire gamut of social structures, tribal power structures and social values. These processes really induced the process of social mobility, spatial mobility, occupational mobility and tribal migration by injecting modern social values and ethics among the masses. These developments further weakened the tribal social and power structures and set in the process of shifting of commercial as well as power pendulum towards the newly created urban and commercial zones and in the hands of newly emerged bureaucratic, technocratic, commercial, entrepreneurs ... etc., classes.

The newly emerged national economy dominated by petroleum economy, industrial economy, new service sectors, new urban-economic zones and commercial centres successfully absorbed and assimilated the tribal economy, which have produced new kinds of social opportunities and notions regarding social values and political authority. It brought social structural change in the socio-economic foundation of the traditional tribal societal
structure and produced alternative social structure and its socio-economic foundation. Abdul Rahman H. Al said observes that in a study commissioned by Aramco:

Even among Bedouins, we are told, the older tribal and sub-tribal allegiances are being replaced by the idea that the centre and not the tribal head or his subordinate is seen as the source of effective power and the place for submitting petitions and bringing requests. Wealth has loosened the connection between tribal leaders and the common man, and the rise of a wealthy central government has, together with this, promoted a more direct relationship between the people and the top.¹³

**Modernization and Social Structural Transformation:**

Given the history of a society the process of modernization and development takes different routes. In most of the post-colonial developing societies, colonialism has been modernizing force. Modernization first occurred in the west through the processes of commercialization and industrialization. Influence of trade and voyages on scientific spirit and application of advanced technologies has helped in the modernization of the western societies. In post-colonial developing societies, modernization has been ideal-typical and initiative of the west. Thus, the modernization process in such societies is also accompanied by westernization and industrialization. However, the process of

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westernization is not essentially found in those modernizing societies which did not undergo the colonial process. And in such society sometimes religion, traditional political elites and education have also been modernizing factors. Thus, modernization can be seen in isolation from westernization as also from the process of exclusively industrialization induced modernization. In the western countries, the process of modernization was caused by industrialization, whereas it causes the development of industrialization in other societies. In short, we have different models of modernization in different societies. David E. Apter has given the sacred-collectivity model of modernization suitable for the traditional, religiously-culturally conservatives and theocratic societies. In these societies, the structure of polity itself becomes channels for modernizing moves. It develops human potentiality without causing fundamental structural cultural change and disruption. This kind of polity promotes the tradition-structural bound ethical and moral system and preserves kinship, religious and traditional political ideal. This modernization model lays more emphasis on structural cultural homogeneity and the unity of the people. It rejects social and cultural plurality and diversity. It restricts free flow of ideas and concentrates on certain religious, political and economic objectives. This models claims a “higher” form of morality than that of secular liberation and secular collectivity models.

Modernization does not show a complete break from the past the tradition which is a historical concept. Modernization in Saudi Arabia does not necessarily move from sacred to secular in a linear form. There is place for secularization of the socio-political order in Saudi Arabia.
modernity are interlinked in fundamental ways, even in the context of modernization. The desire to modernize without losing tradition necessitates a search for a new moral synthesis in which the individual can be related to societal authority.

In Saudi Arabia, a system connecting Man, God and Society can be found. In Saudi Arabia modernization and developmental patterns are promoting modernization of tradition or traditionalization of modernity. In case of Saudi Arabia more prominently, the nature of social change unleashed by the forces of modernization is not a multi-dimensional phenomenon, encompassing all aspects of social, economic, political, cultural and psychological life, one aspect inseparably related to another. One of the consequences of this selective modernizing approach in Saudi Arabia is the outcome of the uneven development in the country which is breeding social tensions, inequality and increasing dependency on the outside world.

Modernization means above all the ability to learn, and modern learning process in the Middle Eastern countries have rapid and effective beyond all expectations. The ruling elites of the Middle Eastern countries learned in the 1950s and 1960s to take advantage of the international play of forces so as to assert their own political independence, and in the 1960s and 1970s to maximize the reforms from the underground oil resources in their own long range economic interests. In the 1970s and 1980s they are learning to transform the revenues flowing in from abroad into rapid economic development at home and effective investment overseas. Prior to 1973 relatively modest beginnings of economic development were achieved in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries.
But it was not until the major increase in oil prices after October 1973 and the subsequent increase in the national ownership of the oil industries, that substantial revenues became available and provided for the very large scale development. Since that Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries are going through an extensive and rapid change, transforming their traditional economies into modern ones. Standards of living have risen and welfare programmes have been introduced, including massive investments for improvements of infrastructures, providing housing, water, power supply and health care facilities and services, modernizing and expanding the educational system and even building heavy industries. Welfare measures and human resources development programmes are providing better nutrition, better health care, better housing, better education, better communication, better food production and importation and distribution centres to make a more efficient market and services sectors.

Modernization increases both human control and human dependence. The current phase of modernization in the Arab Oil countries is due to a rare constellation of outside forces that frequently offended middle Eastern countries on unprecedented interval of political independence and economic power. Yet inexorably those same forces in the late twentieth century propeting the same Middle Easterner and their children into even greater dependence on outside forces over which they have only partial control. Other forms of dependence are evident in the current process of domestic social and economic change. Will modernization in Saudi Arabia mean the building of a more educated, prosperous and cohesive Saudi society in the future? The Arab oil producing countries including Saudi Arabia have embarked on an unprecedented efforts to
achieve comprehensive development. One of the most significant outcome resulting from such development is the transformation of existing structures and institutions. Another significant objective and outcome of these ongoing comprehensive development activities in Saudi Arabia is the control of the Saudi oil fields and other valuable natural resources through the modernization and development of new professional middle classes, technocrats, skilled manpower, technologisation, managerial skill... etc. Through its modernization programmes, Saudi Arabia is developing its social, cultural and political environment and providing stability to its economy with idea, knowledge, skills, attitudes and institutions necessary for its efficient operation.

Saudi citizens and others in the gulf countries have achieved a first class, modern social and economic infra-structures. The efforts to develop human resources through good education, training and raising of health standards have been notably successful.

The Saudi political system has been attempting its best for large scale change in the desired direction and in its persuance exploits available resources and technologies to the fullest extent in centralized and co-ordinated way. The Saudi Arabian Political System and its predominantly oil based and rentier economy are playing pioneering roles in the transformation of the traditional social structure of Saudi Arabia. Social development is a process which cannot be explained without the help of economic development. Economists view is that as productivity increases and income rises, the economy and society change in various way. For them economic development is a continuing process. Economic development of the society alone cannot raise the living
standard of a society as whole. The processes of distributive justice are quite significant for ensuring a fairly balanced development of society. Social development here refers to the building of those social institutions which can ensure a proper channelization of the material product of society certainly implying some value themes publicity proclaimed by the state. State becomes the most essential and pivotal agency and instrument of social change, development and builder of social institutions and their network.

The various five years development plans have covered every aspects of the Kingdom's economy and society. These developmental plans aims at physical and social infrastructures to sustain the on going socio-economic modernization.

The model of modernization adopted by Saudi Arabia through planned socio-economic development strategy is an all-encompassing process of cultural and socio-economic change whereby Saudi Arabia like many other developing countries seek to acquire some of the characteristics common to industrially advanced countries. In the context of Saudi Arabia, this process was stimulated by the oil revolution which generated huge amount of foreign revenues and became instrumental in integrating Saudi Arabia with the World capitalistic-economic system. Due to weak indigenous socio-economic and cultural foundation of the society, the relationship developed into the dominance-dependence network. This awakened the elites of Saudi Arabia and they decided to liberate themselves from this dependency syndrome by developing their own indigenous productive base through modernization and uplifting the
physical and social infra-structure of the society and by raising the standards of
the human resources qualities of the general populace.

Saudi Arabia's five year development plans set in the process of
modernization and socio-economic change which gradually started accelerating
transformation of the economic base of the Arabian peninsular society. The
gradual transformation started in the Arabian primitive and subsistence kind of
society and economy.

The modernization programmes in Saudi Arabia have revolutionized the
following developments, which are introducing fundamental changes in the
socio-economic system of the country. According to Smelser arguments these
developments have revolutionized the social-structural transformation in the
developing countries. This modernization involves four sub-processes which
are as follows. 14

(1) Technological Development: the developing society moves from the
near exclusive application of simple and traditionalized knowledge and
techniques toward the greater application of scientific knowledge and
techniques borrowed primarily from the west.

(2) Agricultural Development: the developing society moves from
subsistence farming toward commercial farming, emphasizing the production of
cash crops, agricultural wage-labour, and a greater reliance on a cash economy
and markets for the sale of farm products and the purchase of manufactured
goods.

14 Paul I Magnarella. Tradition and change in a Turkish town. Pub., John
(3) Industrialization: The developing society progressively industrializes, placing greater emphasis on the use of inanimate forms of energy, such as oil and coal, to power machinery, and less emphasis on human and animal power and handicrafts.

(4) Urbanization: The developing society experiences population movements from rural communities to growing urban centres.

Once these processes are underway, they act as catalysts for changes throughout the culture and society. For example, the emergence of many social institutions, like the civil service bureaucracies, modern educational institutions etc. To sustain and to keep up with the demands of modernization.

In education there is a greater emphasis on expanding learning opportunities, increasing general literacy and producing an indigenous educated elite. In the kinship sphere, the traditional and reciprocal rights, duties, and obligation of kin become altered or, in the case of more distant kin ties, reduced or eliminated. In the stratificational sphere, better educational opportunities, geographical, and socio-economic mobility work to alter traditional class structures which rank people primarily on the basis of ascriptive criteria, factors over which they have little or no control, such as family connection, race, sex, religion, ethnicity, and age. The emerging patterns of social stratification places greater emphasis on achievement criteria, such as individual ability, skill, and accomplishment.

Permitting these processes and spheres of change are two further dimensions of modernization: Structural differentiation and integration. The structural differentiation is the process whereby existing roles and organizations become individually divided into two or more distinct and more specialized roles.
and organization, which perform the functions or their former unit more efficiently in the new historical setting.

Structural differentiation is the evolution from a multi-functional role structure to several more specialized structures. In illustration, we may cite typical examples. During a society’s transition from domestic to factory industry, the division of labour increases, and the economic activities previously lodged in the family move to the firm. As a formal educational system emerges, the training functions previously performed by the family and church are established in a more specialized unit, the school.

Structural differentiation creates an increasingly complex socio-economic system in which many people occupy new roles and pursue special interests. To prevent fragmentation new mechanisms of integration are needed to organize and co-ordinate specializing and diversifying roles and organizations and provide people with norms which establish new forms of social interaction. These new integrative mechanisms commonly appear in the form of nationalistic ideologies, religio-nationalistic ideologies, governmental structures, political parties, legal codes, labour and Trade Unions, and Associations. Smooth and stable development requires a balance between differentiation, which creates diversity, and effective integration, which organizes the newly differentiated structures on new bases. Lacking such a balance, a developing society is likely to experience social and political disruption. Modernization has been described as “a three-way tug-of-war among the forces of tradition, the forces of
differentiation, and the new forces of integration. The total process may be considered a dynamic system of tension-management.

This modernization and economic structural adjustment programmes was induced and initiated by oil revolution in 1960. This economic modernization programme has totally altered the economic foundation of Saudi Arabia. The pre-oil tribal economic mode and relations of production has been almost completely diminished and has been replaced by hi-tech and capital intensive industrialization. This industrialization programmes in Saudi Arabia has been accompanied by massive sedentanization waves, flourishment of new human settlements, urbanization, development of civil and industrial administration and bureaucratization of human relationship at the work place. The objective of the modernization and development programmes adopted by Saudi Arabia was not only to bring change and transformation in the economic sector and physical landscape of the country. The modernization and development programmes gave equal thrust on the human resources development which was really in very poor and backward conditions. The Saudi strategists were fully aware of the conditions of their population qualities and its significance and roles in the entire development and transformation process of the society. The Saudi regime was fully aware of the facts that in the absence of a well developed human resources, modernization programmes would not succeed and sustain anymore. So they decided to develop the entire gamuts of social aspects and bring it compatible with the requirements of modernization and industrialization. So they allotted too much thrust on the

human aspects of developments. It seems that Saudi regime has been always guided by the Howard Bowen Jones vision in the matter of infrastructural, either physical or social or both, development strategy, according to which the essence of infrastructural development is found in the Boy Scouts Motto - 'Be prepared'\textsuperscript{16} So the Saudi regime decided to develop infrastructural base of the society by keeping three main objectives into their consideration. First, to prepare the masses for carrying forward the modernization programmes effectively and energetically; second, to lessen the country's dependency on the outside skilled and technical manpower as well as technology; and third, to prepare the people for the post oil challenges.

**Emergence of Classes and Social Structural Transformation**

Modernization through planned economic and social developments which has profoundly transformed the social system by fundamentally altering the politico-economic foundations of the pre-oil Arabian tribal social system. This modernization move is further generating the social and cultural forces responsible for effecting great transformation in the Arabian social system. Modernization is producing various economic and social classes which are becoming vehicles of further change and social transformation. These developments and modernization programmes are producing new social stratification in Saudi Arabia under completely new politico-economic

conditions. Oil revolution, and comprehensive development and modernization programmes have destroyed the economic and cultural foundation of the older social stratification and class structure. Oil induced socio-economic development and modernization is producing real structural transformation in the social systems. New social classes and stratification are emerging. The development of oil economy, industrialization, urbanization, new social institutions are pushing forward the process of social transformation. These developments have produced the cultural forces of social permutations and combinations which are consequently and concomitantly giving birth to new social structures and classes which are different, structurally as well as functionally, from their predecessor traditional classes.

The emerging patterns of social stratification in Saudi Arabia can be broadly described and analyzed under the following categories:

1. The Upper Classes;
2. The middle classes and the new middle classes; and
3. The lower class.

The Upper Classes:

The Upper Classes consist of members of the Saudi dynasty and its collateral branches, the tribal mobility, the ulema, landlords and the military elite. The demographic explosion in the Al Saud dynasty and taking over of the non-political business by the royal princes and the prevalence of the patronage system in Saudi Arabia, has changed the upper class in Saudi Arabia qualitatively and quantitatively. This has expanded vertically as well as horizontally. This development has made this class heterogeneous and
diversified too. Many social and economic classes are existing within this class structure. But they share many things in common. Due to wealth and closeness to the corridor of power, they enjoy more or less similar lifestyle. The existence of various strata within this class has made it more heterogeneous and open to outside influence and change. Now ascription is not the sole basis of social status and prestige. Now achievement factor also matter in determining the social status of a person. Earlier birth was counted as the sole and supreme consideration for aristocracy, but now achievement is also gaining ground.

But the political power is still exclusively exercised by a small coterie of Al Saud dynasty. Although Al Saud members maintain some traditions of Sheikh’s majlis and invite various tribal mobilities to participate in the majlis deliberations on certain urgent issue but authority is being exercised exclusively by a small coterie of Al Saud dynasty. They mainly derive their political legitimacy from their tribal antecedent, their relationship with many others tribal leaders and, of course from their religion, Islam. Saudi Political system has conferred the title of Amir (King) and Imam al-wahhabiya plus Sheikh al-mashaelsh (Chief of the tribal chiefs) on the single person, that is on the king of the country, which have provided him a greater space of power autonomy and manoeuvrability.

Cultural elites, the ulema/clergies, especially the members of Al Sheikh’s dynasty enjoy certain privileges in the matter of choice and ruling, but they do not work independently; they work in cooperation with the Al Saud ruling coterie. They do exercise some independent authority and autonomy in the system. The dividing line between them and the Al Saud’s dynasty is very
narrow. Virtually they have become integral part of Al Saud dynasty through matrimonial relationship.

The political power remains concentrated in the hands of the Saudi dynasty. The Saudi upper class, constituted by the royal family, tribal sheikhs, the ulema, the sharia judges and the country's healthier merchant families, have ruled the country. They have benefitted economically from the system and have a definite stake in maintaining the Saudi family-controlled and directed status quo. In the modern history of Saudi Arabia, the elite has acted as an extension of the House of Al Saud. It has perceived its legitimacy as an integral part of the royal families. The upper class has been traditional in every aspects of its behaviour in the exercise of power, authority and influence, in its adherence to tribal customs, and in its confessions, interpretation, and in defence of the Islamic faith. Moreover it has perceived itself as the ordained guardian of the divine order of things in Arabia. Whatever conflict or tension has existed within the upper class over the years has always been over personalities, never over the raison d'etre or philosophy of the class itself.\(^\text{17}\)

**Middle class:**

The rapidly expanding middle class, a new stratum of the population is directly outcome of the ongoing modernisation and industrialisation processes in Saudi Arabia. This new class is playing a pivotal and challenging role in transforming and shaping the social system in Saudi Arabia. A middle class, a new middle class or a technocratic elite is a different and new social stratum which is developing in Saudi Arabia. The emergence of this class is attributed

\(^{17}\) Emile A. Nakhleh, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
to modern education, wealth, urban entrepreneurship, technocracy, managerial bureaucracy, civil bureaucracy and, of course, the armed services officer groups. Saudi Arabia's middle class exhibits general characteristics similar to other middle classes in the Middle East, and the nature, composition, training, background and demands of this class will have a significant impact on the future direction of Saudi Arabia's political community. It is hoped that the emergence and consolidation of this class, which is considered as the most effective vehicle of social change and backbone of any economy, would definitely challenge the socio-political status quo of the society and legitimacy of Saudi political system.

Oil revenues and the expanding modern educational base have created a new and diverse stratum of professionals, managers, administrators, adequately trained teachers, lawyers, army officers, pilots, skilled workers, electronics engineers and technicians, planners, corporate managers and system analysts. The common characteristics of this class is its occupational foundation. It perceives itself and is perceived by others in terms of the functions it performs in the building of a modern state.\(^{18}\)

The importance of this class and the corresponding power position in which it finds itself are vested in the necessity of the occupations of members of this class. The specialised training which members of this class have acquired to qualify for these occupations bestow upon them special privilege. Influences and prestige flows naturally from this privileged position and is based solely on the functions performed by them. It is an unprecedented phenomenon in a

traditional society like Saudi Arabia. Familial and other contacts, traditional prerequisites for acquiring an influential position, are less important conditions with the new middle class. Training, expertise and competence, and not family background or tribal extraction, are the sources of the new influence. This can be a shattering experience in a traditional society. Throngs almost unwittingly, into the massive complexities of modernisation. This linkage between power and employment underlies the "central conflict that marks the Middle East today."

The new middle class exercises its authority through the ministerial positions and other high bureaucratic offices, its members hold. Since no political parties exist in Saudi Arabia and since politics still remains the prerogative of the royal family the new middle class exercises its influence more in economic policy making than in the political sphere.

Another marked characteristic of the new middle class in Saudi Arabia is that it includes an increasing number of younger, foreign educated and well-travelled royal princes. These princes are the sons and nephews of the Saud brothers and uncles who have ruled Saudi Arabia for over a generation, and technically they belong to the royal family or the upper class. Yet their secular orientation, attitudes on modernization, perceptions of nation building in the country, national consciousness, advanced education and technical training have made them more attuned to the hopes and aspirations of the new middle class.

19 Emile A. Nakhleh, op.cit., p. 40.

20 Ibid., p. 40.
These princes find themselves in the unique position of being able to exercise influence through three channels simultaneously:

1. The royal family;
2. the formal bureaucracy; and
3. the new middle class.\textsuperscript{21}

Industrialization in Saudi Arabia is creating a new society based on certain specific skills. It is rewarding the new upper middle class generously, either in the form of profit for those who contributes capital or in the form of salaries for those who possesses managerial ability. Unlike agricultural society, industrial society rewards much larger proportion of the population. It expands the size of the professional element.

The transition of Arabian society is producing a multitude of changes. The standard of living is rising perceptibly; the population is shifting from the countryside to the city, and the process of social mobility is breaking up a static society and is creating the phenomenon of upward mobility for the majority.

The transformation of Arabian society is giving people the idea that change is a permanent. Due to industrialisation and modernization of the overall system, population movement off the land and into cities is becoming dynamic by growing commerce and industry which is in turn promoting social growth and initiative.

The emergence of a new middle class comprised mainly of professionals, intellectuals, technicians, the bureaucratic class, the bourgeoisie middle class,

\textsuperscript{21} Emile A. Nakhleh, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 41.
the clerical middle class, the traditional middle class, the peasant class, the nomadic class, the professional middle class and the industrial working classes.

As the new middle class grew, it became internally differentiated into upper and lower strata. The upper strata includes technocrats, bureaucrats, top professionals, intellectuals, etc.

The lower middle class includes government clerical personnel, grade school teachers and skilled industrial wage earners etc. The people from these classes (lower middle class) are mainly socialised, educated and trained according to traditional modes and patterns. Their exposure is limited and traditional in orientation.

**Lower Class:**

The lower class in Saudi Arabia has normally included the majority of the nomadic Bedouins, the unskilled workers and the land tenants in rural areas. Those nomadic Bedouins, Semi-nomadic herdsmen, unskilled and semi-skilled workers in government and private sectors also constitute this class. This class has hold no political power. But they are not isolated from the mainstream of state's cultural modernization programmes. The ongoing modernizing onslaught and Saudi government comprehensive welfare programmes have completely incorporated them into the national mainstream of socio economic and cultural system.

**Socio-Economic Modernization and Social Structural Transformation:**

Socio-economic modernization implies some typical forms of changes and transformation in the social structures of traditional Arabian tribal societies.
These changes in the system of social relationships are contributing to the growth and institutionalization of new roles and group structures based on concomitant norms of modernization. This process cumulatively leads to structural modernization of society. The ongoing social structural transformation is qualitatively different from the change which used to take place in the pre-oil traditional Arabian society. Earlier changes were cyclical or rhythmical in patterns. The phenomenon of pattern recurrence was the order of the social change. The social structure remained functionally same. But the current social structural transformation induced by oil led industrialization is taking place under totally different socio-economic and political milieu. The new dynamics of social change and transformation is changing the social structure functionally structural modernization introducing new roles and specialization in the entire aspects of social life.

The process of social structural transformation has been caused with the process of structural change and adjustment in the Saudi Arabian economic system due to industrialization and urbanisation. This process of on going social structural transformation is producing cataclymic changes, in the socio-economic and patriarchical social structure. The entire social segments of Saudi Arabian society have been drawn into the mainstream socio-economic developmental paradigm. This is generating structural change in the social as well as economic system. This transition from one stage to the other stage of economic and social activities has produced a big entrepreneurial class. Under changed political and economic circumstances, tribal chiefs, and other professional class and groups of peoples have been engaged in commerce and
industry, because industrialization, urbanization, village settlements and sedentarization have totally destroyed the older social and economic order. These developments signify change in the structure of relationships between and within groups, economic systems and systems of power. These changes imply the creation of fundamentally new role structures such as those of industrial labour, factory systems, financial and technological bureaucracies and modern market mechanism. These changes are not rhythmical but transformative. There is a built in mechanism of acceleration and progression in the process of change taking place now, because of the systems of science and technology as forces of innovation hitherto unknown in the Arabs history. Moreover, scientific and technological applications have revolutionized the process of production of goods and services and have rendered possible a progressive rate of economic growth. The oil induced industrialization has really marked the beginning of a series of advances in technology and a rise in per capita output rapid enough so that marked changes occurred within each generation and indeed during each decade. Thus economic growth has become an organic part of the process of social change and structural transformation.

The process through which structural changes appear in the social system is that of differentiation of roles. The differentiation of roles leads to structural differentiation. The model of structural differentiation is also an abstract theory of change. When one social role or organisation becomes archaic under changing historical circumstances, it differentiates by a definite and specific sequence of events into two or more roles or organisations which
functions more effectively in the new historical circumstances. This finally brings about structural change in the entire structural system. The new social units which emerged through differentiation are structurally distinct but functionally equivalent to the structure they have replaced. Of course, structural differentiation follows the process of functional specialisation. For instance traditional joint family not only functioned as an agency of procreation and recreation of new members of society but also performed duties in other spheres such as occupation, education, leisure, and recreation, etc., which have now been taken over by specialised agencies. The nuclear family in industrial societies which had differentiated from joint family is functionally specific and not diffused like its traditional counterpart. Another example of structural differentiation which followed functional specialisation may be that of production which by stages passed from households to form into finally to modern factories. Household productions in terms of roles was merged with a number of other roles. Monk in guides was more specialised but still not fully differentiated from kinship and religious roles. Division of labour in a modern society is, however, an example of a higher degree of functional speciality and specialisation. According to Durkheim it marks a change from the mechanical to organic type of solidarity or social structure of society.

Structural changes involve similar role differentiation in almost all aspects of social life. Growth in science and technology adds impetus to this process and finally accelerates the momentum as change. Change of the law of nature and is inevitable.

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With growth increasing pace of differentiation new structural forms come into being and older ones disappear. Modern factories, bureaucratically organised administration, army and modern networks of communication media involve role structures which were unknown in the past.

The contemporary processes of structural differentiation coincidentally, also contain elements of structural modernisation. This is because contemporary forms of structural differentiation are also organically reinforced by innovations in science and technology. These innovations promote modernisation along with the modern form of structures, such as factories, formal organisations of administration and communication etc. The modern values and the social relationships within these newly created structures promotes each other.

An important process which contributes to the growth of such structures is that of economic growth, of which industrialisation and urbanisation are to a certain extent natural concomitants. Political institutions based on legal constitutional legitimisation of authority embodied in representative bodies support the social structure of modernisation.

In relatively modernised societies of the west, the modern values and motives laid the foundations of modernisation. Cultural forces of modernisation were more attuned to the pace of structural differentiation and adaptation. In the Western countries the process of break-down in the traditional joint family system almost coincided with the emergence of modern factories, industrialisation and urbanisation. The changes touch the entire gamut of social structures and values and social ethos; means cultural aspects of societies also
underwent transformation. Modernisation was not beset to the same degree with problems of breakdown as in the new nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America (newly emerged societies from the colonial Yoke). In these societies, modernisation both in cultural and structural forms is exogenous to the system and constitutes a phenomenon of historical growth, mostly through colonial confederations. In this respect, Saudi Arabia is an exception. It has not experienced any kind of modern ideas through direct colonial encounter, related either with developmental aspects or governance aspects.

Under these (colonial) circumstances there is often a lag between the cultural and social structural forms of modernising influences in these societies. The ongoing socio-cultural processes in these societies do not satisfy or fulfil the total criterion of modernisation in the European context of meaning. Modern social structures in these societies, in terms of functions, might only partially serve the goals of modernisation, as in parts they might be reinforcing traditional role structures and forms of social obligations. So in any study regarding the structural changes in the third world countries including the Arab countries, one must pay particular attention for the ramification and inter-linkages of the social with regard to both reinforcing traditional role structures and forms of social obligations and the directions of adaptation.

The ongoing modernization of socio economic system of Saudi Arabia society is entailing not only new patterns of social stratification and new socio-economic classes but it is also entailing social structural change and transformation in both the structures, macro and micro of the society. One may
analyse the forms of these structural inter-linkages under the broad categories: the macro-structures and the micro-structures.

Macro-structures refer to those organised roles and relationships which are more extensive, more formal, and are organised or acclaimed to be organised on universalistic principles (rational legal norms and uniformity of legal system) and which have to do with the integration or regulation of the larger system of society and involve secondary and higher orders of relationships. Familiar examples of macro-structures are political and other types of elite, administration and bureaucracy (executive, legal, industrial and military), industrial workers and entrepreneurs and other urban and industrial groups and social classes. Political elites (members of Al Saud dynasty, Al Sheikh dynasty, tribal chiefs and mobilities) form part of Saudi political or outing structure and its process; similarly, cultural elites provide a networks for the communication of values and ideologies. Systems of administration, factory, industry, labour and entrepreneurship provide large-scale structures for social interaction which are necessary for the growth of a modern nation state as a viable economic and administrative configuration. Macro-structures taken together generate social consensus necessary for structural modernisation.

Oil led industrialisation and modernisation of Saudi Socio-economic system have given birth to the development of macro structures i.e., modern administrative system, civil as well as industrial bureaucracy, a national brugeosic class, various other social classes which are becoming the national character and compositions, modern social values generated and sustained by modern mass media networks, National Military and Saudi National Guard
etc., which are enveloping the entire socio-economic and political system. They are Pan-Saudi in character and orientation. They provide uniform and universal channels for carrying forward the national agenda of national reconstruction, modernisation development and national integration.

Family, community, clan and tribe are examples of the micro structures of the Arabian society. These micro structures are relatively autonomous institutions and provide a social space for primary relationships. Their organisation is less formal, the relationships are more effective and particularistic and as such their functions are focused mainly to the needs which are narrower yet primary in nature. The networks of relationships in these groups is also limited and the quality of relational bonds is diffused rather than specific. Relationships are governed by kinship, clan, lineage and tribal bonds which reinforce values which may be in apparent contrast with those of a modernised role-structure. But this is not necessary. Even in a modernised or relatively modernised society there is legitimate scope as well as need for such group structures. Some of the social roles performed by these micro-structures for instance those performed by family, cannot be substituted and constitute structural universals. Child-rearing, socialisation and provisions for institutionalised role of reproduction are basic needs of any society, traditional or modern.

The organisation of roles due to structural and cultural differentiation sometimes, especially in the Afro-oriental case reinforces the process of the structural or cultural modernisation without basically altering the essential nature of the functions they perform. This is one of the key qualities of
structural differentiation. Under this process of structural differentiation the
generalised nature of role-structures is rendered more and more specialised and
specific, and many of the former roles which were not essential to a particular
micro- or macro-structures are relegated to other specialised structures. This
happens without significantly offering the qualitative nature of the relationship
concerned. For instance, if the micro-structure is family, then its essential
effective quality in social relationships involving the basic sets of family roles
does not change, but many of the functions which were traditionally performed
by the family are radically reduced in a relatively modernised society.

However, the exact way in which the micro-structure in a traditional
society adapts to the pressures of modernisation might vary. From a structural
point of view change may not always be followed by differentiation of role
structures but also role accretion under certain situations. Nevertheless the role
accretion in an unusual and exceptional circumstances does not rule out the
normal process of role differentiation which social change involves. These
changes in micro-structures contribute to the process of structural
modernisation.

Modernisation has brought perceptible changes in the micro structures
of tribal patriarchal political system and in the village communities of the Saudi
Arabian social system. The dynamics of social change and transformation
unleashed by the forces of modernisation has completely destroyed the political
foundation and autonomy of tribal patriarchal political system. It has been
transformed into a national character.
Oil induced industrialization and modernization first promoted sedentarization which concomitantly resulted into the emergence of de-tribalization process which further weakened the tribal patriarchal political setup.

Modernization of agricultural sector and Saudi land reform and distribution system alleviated the socio-economic conditions of the village communities: but simultaneously modernisation also promoted spatial as well as occupational mobility among the village communities which fundamentally changed its occupational characters. Peoples migrated to the urban and semi urban areas and joined the industrial work force.

Both, in the realms of cultural traditions and in the social structure of Arabian society, changing have been taking place both from the endogenous (orthogenetic) and exogenous (heterogenetic) sources.

**Macro-Social Structure and Transformation**

The social and political history of pre-oil Arabia reveals the fundamental characteristics of Arabian tribal population which was highly fragmented, segmentary in character and Tribal patriarchy, clan, lineage and kingship system of social structures and relationship was in existence. Nevertheless, at the ideal or ideological level, a very rich and universal type of greater tradition has always enveloped the entire societal structural values, ethos and relationship. But during the post-Abbasid period, its practical effectiveness and values weakened to a greater extent due to revivalism of tribalism and patriarchal clan based political system. But the coming up of Saudi Arabia as a nation-state society
under the leadership of Al Saud Wahhabi dynasty synchronized with the discovery of petroleum oil in the 1930s, which brought fundamental changes in the society.

It established national political macro structure, the formation of oil-based macro-economic structure started which is organized on the government’s led industrialization and technologization, a strong public sector (middle path of economic system), urbanization and emergence of great economic magnates (merchants, capitalists, bourgeoisie, media tycoons..... etc.) and service sectors. The membership to them is largely based on achieved principles. But due to the prevalence of patronage system the ascriptive principles matter. Familiar examples of macro structures are political and other types of elite, administration and bureaucracy and entrepreneurs and other urban and industrial groups and social classes.

**The Elite and Social Structural Transformation:**

Elite structure of a society represents not only its basic values but also the extent to which these values find a concrete expression in the power structure and the decision making process of the society. It is believed that “the leadership of a society is a criterion of the values by which that society lives. The manner in which the leadership is chosen; the breadth of the social base from which it is recruited; the way in which it exercises the decision making power; the extent and nature of its accountability, these and other attributes are indications of the degree of shared power. Shared respect, shared well being and shared safety in a given society at a given time. By learning the nature of the
elite, we learn much about the nature of the society. The changes in elite structure, therefore, might also reveal the essential nature of social changes taking place in that society.

Elites represent the standards of value excellence in different domains of life through their roles which are either ascribed to them, as in the traditional society or have been achieved by them by meritorious performance, which is the norm of a relatively modernized society.

In fact, the structure of elites in a society also undergoes the process of differentiation with changes in the social system as a whole. This is especially true when a traditional society passes into the stages of modernization. Innovations in science and technology create value domains and spheres of skill which did not exist before and offer new opportunities of role excellence or elite role in the society. This leads to the growth in the number of elite groups, which to some extent breaks the exclusiveness of the traditional elites. To use the metaphor of lasswell, new pyramids of elites come into being.

As the elite-pyramids multiply a competition goes on between elites representative of one value domain with those who have control over another. This process is regulated and determined by the power structure of the society. It is in this context that political elites generally constitute the most important segment of the elite structure of any society, since they have direct access to the political power which is over-riding among all other forms of power.

Since the crucial factor in differentiation of elites is the growth in values and ramifications of power change in elite structure which has a significant association with the transformation of the traditional society.

A traditional society has more homogeneous structure of values. It offers fewer specializations and its “valued outcomes” are not only limited, but traditionally closed. Elites in such society are not highly differentiated into varieties or levels.

The social structure of traditional societies is authoritarian. Elites in such societies constitute closed group. Elite status is in most cases ascribed; it is ascribed on the basis of birth, kinship and age, its bases may be patrimonial, patriarchal or gerontocratic or charismatic, mostly they comprise landed aristocracy; only a section of them spilling over to other occupations such as trade and commerce or priestly callings. The world view of traditional elite is rooted in the search for the esoteric (secrete, inner) and abstract ideals and has scorn for manual technical type of work, which is considered plebeian, this leads to a lack of creativity and innovation in their thinking especially with regard to material and technological aspects of society. Elites in such societies are also psychologically constricted, aggressive and suffer from deep-rooted sense of status anxiety. Their capacity for empathy and psychic mobility is limited.

The social structure of elites in traditional tribal Arabia was based on the principles of tribal and religious values (the greater tradition of Islam, that is egalitarianism, non-hierarchies and monotheistic values of Islam). The tribal Sheikhs, Amirs, Imam and religious men had the important elite roles in the traditional society. The social and religious background of the elites in the
traditional Arabian tribal society referred a cultural and moral frame of reference to the elite structure.

The oil-induced industrialization and modernization programmes, which was set later on, created the material condition for the emergence of an entirely new structure of elites and thus new macro-social structures added to the larger social system.

An important trends of change in elite structure have appeared during the twentieth century are as follows. First, qualitative and quantitative changes in the elite structures and orientations have appeared in this century. Second, greater differentiation in the elite structure with significant increase in the number of persons belonging to the middle classes.

Increasing middle classes are strengthening the elite structure at various levels and leading rapid differentiation in its internal structure. The growth of new elites (middle and bourgeoisie classes) is a structural breaks from the closed and traditional patriarchal character of the traditional elites. They have emerged on the basis of their professional achievements and modern education. The role is not ascribed to them nor is it delegated to them by patriarchal patronage; in fact, sizeable section of the new elite is opposed to (feudalism) and want social and economic reform. Its internal composition is now different and its former exclusiveness has also gone. But since the majority of elite belong to the royal family (Al Saud), Al Sheikh family, and patronage system the elite structure could not be said to have been 'democratized' in the real sense.
The emergence of the new elites in Saudi Arabic does not follow the same types and structural changes as were characteristic of the European Social transformation after the industrial and French revolution.

Structurally, the new elites are from the middle classes, belong to various professional groups, and have primarily an urban base. Their social influence used to follow downward from the top of the social structure to which they belong. They constitute an integrative macro-structure of the Arabian society.

**Industrial and Urban Macro-Structures:**

An emerging entrepreneurial class or business elite, rising volume of industrial workers in factories, urban ward migration of population and expansion of cities are other forms of macro structural phenomena which may contribute to social structural transformation in Saudi Arabia. Those structures are together focal to the process of industrialization and economic growth. The extent to which there is an increase in these macro-structures within a traditional society may indicate the rate and quality of its social change.

Among these macro structures, the rise of a dynamic class of business elite has the key to the whole process as other macro-structures (the growth in factories, in migration and in the rate of urbanization) are to a considerable degree dependent upon the amount of entrepreneurial initiative and skill that exists in society. Business elite are the first order innovators in these realms of macro-structures. They are entrepreneurs par excellence; their risk taking ability sets a whole series of contingent entrepreneurial responses into motion; of these.
urban ward migration is one and the labourers commitment to the new industrial work in factory setting is another. Both these phenomena imply also a series of other forms of readaptation in behaviour and thought which are crucial to industrialization, economic growth and social transformation.

**Business Elite:**

The emergence of the new business elite and entrepreneurial class in Saudi Arabia started with the consolidation of the Al Saud's rule and exploration of oil economy and Saudi's integration with the World economic system. Their integration with the world's trade and commercial system exposed them to the vicissitudes of evolving technological and scientific innovations in economic enterprises. In the rise of the contemporary business elite, if the oil economy introduced a historical break in Arabia, the contact with technology and science introduced a cultural break from the past tradition.

Contrary to the common notion that Arabian tradition and history does not favour growth of enterprising business elite (the orientalist's proposition). It is equally true that traditional Arabia at many stages of its history had a flourishing class of such elite, who had expanded their operations beyond the shores of Arabia to South Asia, East Asia, Mediterranean, Levant etc.

**Industrial Workers and Urbanization**

The growth of factories and of industrial workers as a new class, has not only a causal relationship with social change and modernization (transformation) but also gives rise to a new level of macro-social structure in the society.
Factories offer a uniform rational setting for work style, division of labour, new social, physical and cultural environment and extensive associative organization which name an integrative role in the macro structure of society. The economic elites and the industrial workers have macro linkages with the entire economic system and society. The rise in the industrial work force may also indirectly represent the process of slow erosion of some form of traditional ties in a folk society and their replacement by new structures of social relationships.

In ideal typical sense, it might imply a change in social relationships which supersede role allocations on the basis of status and honour by those defined in terms of contractual obligations; status many not be ascribed to a person but be left open for him to achieve it by his performance; family and kin-groups might cease to be the units of production and may be superseded production through complex division of labour in factories which rationalize as well as de personalize the process of production. The cumulative result of all these changes is to slowly transform the society from "a static, acquired status ridden, traditional bound, primary group oriented, particularistic, fatalistic society into one that is rapidly changing, achieved status dominated, progressive, secondary group oriented, universalistic and aspiring".  

Industrialization does not proceed in the same fashion in every society. Its basic functions in all societies may remain the same but its forms undergo variations owing to the historicity of circumstances and the pre-existing structural characteristics from which industrialization has to proceed. Cultural

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specificity and social institutional background (especially in terms of social structure) produce patterns variations in social changes through modernization and industrialization. The pre-supposition of a universal pattern in industrialization takes only the quantitative factors of growth into account without anticipating the qualitative variations in the response patterns.

**Urbanization:**

Growth of cities or urbanization is another source of structural differentiation in a society. Older urban centres and cities had sociologically speaking a static and archaic character. Their functions were not integrated with cumulative industrial or economic advancement, cities were centres of conspicuous consumption and production of some luxury goods or other articles of consumption for the elite; lack of technological advancement in the fields of water supply, sanitation and defence placed a limit on the expansion of such cities. The demographic character of the pre-industrial or pre-oil cities in Arabia was static. They symbolized the basic features of the traditional social order. Their cultural activities were organized around the religious places and institutions, their economic activities were managed by guilds and the political activities originated from the ruler's majlis.

Growth of cities with modern industrial character and modern demographic features began to take place in Arabian peninsular society only after the oil revolution which has integrated the Arabs with world's capitalistic economic system through which they are getting the fruits of technological revolution, scientific research and values, modern health and sanitation ... industries and planning of social developments. The rate of urbanization in all
the oil producing Arabian peninsular countries including the Saudi Arabia is so fast that it has brought the 84-85 per cent of the total indigenous population within the industrial urban gambit of the country within forty five years of period.

Urbanization serves the goals of modernization through new structural innovations in the spheres of industry, transport and communications, leisure and recreation and the mode and pattern of social interaction. Urbanization also introduces break down in the functioning of traditional institutional patterns. The forms often continue to persist, but the functions undergo major re-adaptations. Oil induced industrialisation and modernisation programme which was set later on created the material conditions for the emergence of an entirely new structure of the new macro-social structures added to larger social system.