CHAPTER III

MAJOR CLASS IN KUWAIT

CLASS STRUCTURE IN KUWAIT

A systematic and analytical discussion on the history of Kuwait has already been attempted in the preceding chapters. It would appear from those discussions that pre-oil Kuwait by dint of its strategic geographical location, enjoyed a position of great significance in sea trade in the entire Indian Ocean region. The economy of Kuwait, therefore, derived its basic strength from sea trade.

Around the fall of the seventeenth century Kuwait came to be inhabited by a few Arab tribes coming from the central terrains of the Arab land. And, following the emergence of Kuwait into an important trade center more and more people were attracted to it to settle. People from India and Persia in particular made their way in bulk into Kuwait leaving the society in there but a truly complex.


conglomerate of various racial and ethnic identities. Problems of social adjustment and acculturation which inevitably arose with the quick and unrestricted influx of peoples of varying socio-cultural bearings, are still persistent, though in lesser magnitude. Despite the gradual prevelance of a unifying sense of socio-national identity amongst the people, differences of race, sect and clan are still conspicuous enough to be witnessed. 'Social stratification among the various tribes was predominant. The tribes that bred camels were considered the noblest, while the tribes that bred sheep and goats were considered to be of low status.'

Farming and manual labour were looked down upon by the prestige-wielding tribes as something most deplorable, and consequently, tribal and other social groups associated with the said occupations formed the lower rungs of the


society. Not quite unlike most of the Asiatic societies which had a predominantly feudal outlook, the Kuwaiti society too was actually fragmented into different social categories, each socially distinct from one another. Such was the extent of social distinction in the Kuwaiti society that even to this day when processes of modernization have made considerable impact on the economic, social and cultural life of the Kuwaitis, tribal inter-marriage is a taboo. The otherwise precedent merger of ethnic identities which is a necessary condition for tribal mobility and social cohesion could not become a possibility mainly because though the economic structure of the Kuwaiti society has considerably changed, the political system remains, more or less the same.

A group's social identity could be best maintained if it sticks dogmatically to its traditional occupation and

43. Ibid., pp. iv-4.
imposes occupational mobility as a taboo. Social distance that guards one group against establishing virtual forms of interaction with the other, comes to be a vital factor in maintaining prestige of groups. When social prestige is directly and indispensably linked with the appropriation of economic benefits, it is but difficult to break the established hierarchy of prestige in which is arranged the various component groups of a society.

The economy and social structure are too closely interlinked. One is always reflected in the other. It is the socio-historical forces at work whose interplay and continuity engender and influence classes. If the western societies have pervasive and full-fledged classes, it is mainly because they have modern economies characterized by highest level of industrialization. The transitional character of the Asiatic societies hanging between tradition and modernity is impeding the formation and growth of classes owing precisely to the fact that they (Asiatic

societies) are but only partially and not fully industrialized. This explains why there is a confused overlapping between traditional organizations (caste and communities) and modern classes.

Shamlan Y Alessa in his book 'The Manpower Problem in Kuwait' notes that 'tribal and family loyalties were reflected in the administration of Kuwait prior to its independence, when major posts were held by members of the ruling family and by other members of the merchant class. Class overlapping in the case of the Kuwaiti society was almost non-existent for the simple fact that unlike most of the Asiatic societies thriving in the alluvial belt, Kuwait had but a weak agrarian system hence a relatively meagre rural network that could hardly bind lords, peasants and landless agricultural labour in the exploitative relationship of master and slave. Since its origin as a country with a prime place in sea trade, Kuwait has been a monarchy ruled by the members of the Alsabah family of the historical Utubi tribe.

46. M.W.Khouja and P.G. Sadler.
47. Shamlan Y Alessa, 'The Manpower Problem in Kuwait' p.3.
The political elite comprising the king, ministers, council members, advisers and governers, most of whom coming from the Royal family itself and only rarely from the non-ruling classes, formed the upper most class of the Kuwaiti society. Though numerically less preponderant, this class obviously by dint of controlling the veils of power, wielded highest social prestige.

Ranking next to the ruling class on the scale of prestige was the merchant class which was relatively bigger in size and controlled the economy of the country. This class monopolized sea-trade, owned ships and dhows, and traded in almost everything that was exported and imported from and into the country. Khouja and Sadler note that 'often but not always, shipowner and merchant were the same person. Since sea trade was the backbone of Kuwait's economy and the major source of the country's revenue, the merchant class enjoyed high political patronage. The relationships between the ruling class and the merchant community were thus cordial and of great significance. This affluent

48. Ibid., p. 3.
49. Khouja and Sadler, p. 3.
class of merchants by dint of its dominant position and role, at times, acted as pressure group and influenced decision-making and actively interfered in the political affairs of the country. The extent of its say in the country's politics can be assessed by the fact that around 1921 it (the merchant class) attempted to reform the autocratic system of rule.

**SOURCES OF ECONOMIC OF KUWAIT:**

Kuwait is situated at the North-west corner of the Arabian Gulf. It is a small state of Arabia. It is spread over 17,280 sq. kilometer bounded by Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the West and south, excluding the Natural zone and it is full of sand and desert mainly.

Kuwait devides the natural zone with India, Arabia and the area is jointly controlled by the two countries of the zone.

---

50.  
52. State of Kuwait the Oil of Kuwait (in Arabic), Ministry of Finance and Oil, 1970, p.11.
With the geographical location Kuwait stands the natural bay. This is the reason that assisted Kuwait to become a major trade country in the Gulf area prior to bring to light of oil, viz, discovery of oil.

The population of Kuwait as Arab comes into being mainly from Najd region of Arabia.

THE ECONOMY OF KUWAIT:

Due to the shortage of resources (apart from) and its geographical location forced its population to support heavily on sea as the great means of living and trade, pearl-diving and boat making throne in the Gulf area prior to the finding of oil.

Trade:- The geographical location of Kuwait which was favourable at that time assisted the population to become the most important traders in the Gulf region. In 1831 a British employee of Indian civil service, Hosimer, who made long journeys in Persian Gulf put the portion of Kuwait in the Gulf trade in imports and in exports at $ 500,000 and $ 100,000 respectively.

53. Al-Ebraheem, op. cit., p. 100.
According to the Council General in the Persian Gulf and acting political president at the time, Lewis Pelly, reported:

"Here is a clean, active town with a broad and open main bazar and numerous solid stone dwelling houses stretching along this stand, and containing 20,000 inhabitants, all reacting Arabian and Persians Merchants from all quarters by the equity of its rule and by the freedom of its trade."

Kuwait remained basically a very poor country where as trade in Kuwait was in progress before the discovery of oil. The average income of the people was not much to fulfil their needs and untrained labourer lived hand to mouth.

Pearl Diving:

There was only one most important item for export the Kuwait had before oil and it was the pearl. Maximum number of Kuwait population dealt in pearl living.

Boat Building:

Prior to the oil, in addition to the trade and pearl diving there was one thing more which gave the fame to Kuwait,

was boat building in the Gulf. More than ten types of boat made in Kuwait and among them Arab dhow became familiar.

Throughout the pre-oil era Kuwait was characterized by those qualities most common to under developed countries, a lowest per capita income, low annual rate of saving, almost zero rate of growth and unemployment on happening at certain seasons.

AGRICULTURE:

Only the agriculture of Kuwait is inadequate for its economical main support. In the Arabian peninsula being one of the countries consisting of the a great extent undulating (of wary surface) desert faces the baffling problem of water shortage. The land in Kuwait which is suitable for cultivation is 3% only consignmently, the bulk of food grain has to be imported. The total area suitable for agriculture is 17000 dunums, of which 6000 dunums are in use for growing vegetables, orchards and timber are spread over an area of 1000 dunums.

OIL:

It stands of no doubt, it is the oil which makes all possible and that has financially helped Kuwaiti phenomenal development in past 30 years that gives the nation with its world-wide coat.

As far as our knowledge goes it is not astonishing after all that country with more oil per head population than any other should be attached with deriving the absolute maximum from what is equivalent to its sole natural resources.

INDUSTRIES:

The following industries have been traditionally preserve of the exporting nations.

Down Stream Industry, Petrochemical, and Maritime transport etc.

The above industries are valuable for the same cause as those given for LGP, they represent diversification of the industry, technical advances and jobs and golden chances for getting away from the position of being residential distributor of crude oil.
MAJOR CLASSES IN KUWAIT:

In the Gulf stakes, the traditional class composition in its extreme form and the Arab world at large can be sought back to antiquity. In the near past no basic change seemed to be in the composition of classes and groups even upto the discovery of oil. Classes existed in a rudimentary form and in parallel structures with the recognized religious communities. There was the hierarchy of social status in addition to the government by priests based on wealth. The tribe functioned like baradari in that situation and an individual was recognised accordingly their financial condition, the tribes. In nineteenth century in Arabia, Social, political and economical advancements initiated the original emergence of classes alongwith the family and tribe. Before finding of oil the distribution and disorganization of egalitarian tribal system was followed by the rise of class system.

Pre-oil era in Kuwait society was made of two major classes - the upper and the lower and a minor middle class.

57. See M.G. Rumaili, Bahrain, Social and Political Change since the First World War (Durham), 1976.
upto the end of the first world war. The towns were characterized mainly by two class system, on one hand, small number of rich people and a large number of artisans, small shop-keepers and workers. On the other hand the life of opulence was full of ease and luxury while the second or working class put forth itself working many hours in a day then they hardly earned money to fulfill their unavoidable needs as food etc.

Another important change in Kuwait society has been in the term of social composition. Kuwait society was a simple and traditional one before the discovery of oil, wherein clan and tribal attachment was very strong. It consists of two classes.

I. The upper class of merchant society and ruling families.

II. The working class of pearl divers, carpenters, boat makers and fishermen.

Maximum number of IIInd class i.e. working class was poor, because they were unlearned or uneducated and dependents on the merchants for work. They were overburdened
and under paid. Prior to the discovery of oil the lower class in Kuwait was in majority. Besides them there was one class more and it was minor middle class. This class was consisted of small merchants, theologians and traders and tribal Sheikhs were also counted in middle class people.

The categories of classes, their composition and pattern of hierarchy of groups can be inferred in respect to pre-oil class structure in Kuwait are as under:

I. Upper Class:
   (a) Ruling Party.
   (b) Big merchant families.

II. Middle Class:
   (a) Small merchants and traders.
   (b) Tribal Sheikhs.
   (c) and Theologians.

III. Lower Class or Working Class:
   (a) Pearl divers.
   (b) Carpenters
   (c) Boat makers
   (d) Farmers and Fishermen
   (e) Nomadic and Settled Beduins.
1. **UPPER CLASS:**

Generally the upper class was of two family groups (i) Royal family and (ii) Big Business family. The Business family had influence over social, economic, and other life aspects. Royal families had commercial high status and perfect political power and business families held the economic power. In pursuance of laudatory interest of survival and inter dependent. Both the above mentioned families constituted an alliance at all levels. Big Business families often sent gifts and money to the ruling tribal party and financed / Sheikhs/ through taxes and loans among the biggest money lenders. In return, the business families found benefits like security and monopoly rights for carrying on their business activities. These families were called for consultation on important affairs of state as political, economic and social etc. Thus Royal and business families were on good term with one another and had maintained a close reciprocal relationship and were bound with unwritten obligations to each other.

The other families of Kuwait like ruling family, Al Sabah family and merchant family etc. belong to these
Prior to independency of Kuwait tribal and family loyalties were reflected in administration of Kuwait. Key posts were in possession of the men of ruling family and merchant class.

The merchant class tried best to establish the autocracy system of rules. Their limited victory could be found back to 1921 when they wanted from new Amir, Sheikh Ahmad Al Jaber Al-Sabah (1921-50), the formation of a consultative council. On acceptance of merchants demands they elected twelve members who were responsible and representatives of famous Kuwait families. Unlikely the council could not continue to be operative till long owing to internal dispute among its members. Afterwards Kuwait went on to be run as it had been in past.

58. A.M. Aba Hakima, History of Kuwait (in Arabic), Kuwait Government Press, p.102; See also Y.Al Somat, Al Kalej Al Arabi Dirasat Fi Esal Al Lokan (The Arabian Gulf, a study of Population of Kuwait).


60. Ibid.
The tribesmen in 1710 found a ruined castle near the Gulf and got settled there. The settlers received the castles for the purpose of protecting the old trade. The ruling family Al-Sabah and others had a strong and exclusive hold over the different trades. The present business and other commercial institutions are still held by the descendants of the ruling families. Their major trade at that time involved fishing and pearling using around 800 boats. These boats were similar to the wooden dhows which are still in use even today. As a result of greater trading activity the then community prospered during 1776.

The extraction of wealth from the sea in the form of fish turned Kuwaities into Gulf's leading merchants. The merchants were shipowers also and acted as financier in voyages. On later times the form and trade patterns so changed that the merchants explored the possibilities of establishing link with several mark at areas of their interests, resulting in the establishment of agencies in the

main parts of the Indian Ocean. Such agencies and establish­ments were headed by royal family members. These members were responsible to control the wholesaling activities. The agencies had the facilities to receive and store the cargoes to avoid the crashing down of prices in the market during unfavourable market conditions to avoid loses. Purchase of articles were made on seeing the advantageous market trends. Thus materials were stored in godowns and when need be it were shipped to their destinations.

Kuwaiti merchants also got involved in Agricultural practice. e.g. date plantation and various crops. They used to finance the growers for the development of such commercial areas which later on emerged as prominent area of such trade, Basara was one such centre.

Actively and gainfully involved in trade practises the Kuwaiti merchant class emerged as trading dynasties. The merchant class with their intricate network of relationship were lucky to establish successfully such vast trading area which almost covered the entire middle East region and the
greater part of the Indian Ocean. It would be no exaggerations to say that the merchant families actually were responsible for shaping up of the country. It helped the country in quicking the social and political leadership as well as also provided the particular brand of mental adroitness and financial astuteness recognised today.

In the aforesaid trade it required a bond of mental trust and faith amongst the owners, captains and the merchant community. The trading community had to depend on the rulers of Kuwait to maintain coordial conditions conducive for the development of their trade activities. In return the trading community enriched the revenue of their rulers.

Aglut in trade activities was foreseen by the Sheikh of Kuwait which provoked him to impede his efforts to increase his country's income by indulging in competitive bidding up of terms of rival's offer. This situation arose by negative growth of pearling industry as a result of unproductive years. His embarrassment worsened further by the blockade of trade with the interior of Ibn Saud. The
country's economic conditions further worsened due to stock market crash of 1929. The country became so entangled in her deteriorating economy that it could not even think of breaking the trade blockade through political means. Furthermore Britain was also not of much help politically to pull out the Gulf out of her economic frustrations, though Britain's insistence on the "nationality clause and APOC appeared favourable to bring the matters under control as long as Gulf (through E.G.S.) remained inactive. The relationships with all other parties were also cordial, but this was not enough to be of much value in Sheikhs efforts to have a grip over the economy.

The lives of the people residing near the prosperous ports, and trading centres went very well. The families used to live in quarters provided with a courtyard. The housewives along with their children, unmarried female relations and female servants would perform their daily routine work with utmost satisfaction and pleasure. Most quarters had another courtyard adjacent to the quarters where the head of the family used to entertain his friends. The place
meant for the head of the family used to have a separate coffee room attached to it. Benches were also used to be placed outside the main doors to enjoy the nature.

The area of the main business activity was located in the market area. The long covered streets of the market were lined with shops of various kinds running to the customs. The sea front was harboured by workshops having skilled craftsmen, carpet shops, gold-dealers, pearl merchants etc. The wholesale dealers in rice coffee, tea sugar and a variety of similar goods built warehouses.

II. Minor Middle Class Before Oil Discovery:

A significant class in between the two classes was recognised which comprised of small groups of traders and small merchants, theologians and tribal sheikhs. Owing to their small number in comparison to the other classes, the insignificant roles played by then they became socially negligible. It is because of this fact that no real middle class existed.

This pattern of class patterns exhibited by Kuwaiti society can be attributed mainly to two reasons. Firstly, there existed extremities of economic differentiation at two different levels viz between the town dwellers and the desert bedouins. Secondly to the prevalence of small farmers peasants and theologians.

The small, though significant middle class which existed in between the two classes described above represented by tribal chiefs who formed a "social elite" within their own tribes. Their interests were confined only to their tribes. They could simply establish business type relationship with royal and big business families. Small traders while paying tributes to the tribal sheikhs were engaged in base level business activities in the town while the theologians confined themselves to the services of royal families only.

The magnificent Naif Palace was surrounded by 15 feet high walls and was used by the Sheikhs for keeping army as well as various arms and weapons which contained 64.

---

64. For a comparison of classes in Iraq before oil discovery and the 195 revolution, see Hauna Batata, the old social class and the revolution of Iraq New Jersey, 1978.
chiefly rifles. Now a days the complex is utilized for keeping convicts of serious crimes undergoing imprisonments or sentenced to death are hanged. The extreme penalty is imposed for brutal killings but usually clemency is bestowed upon the criminals and death sentence is sometimes also commuted.

The busy market square was situated past the fort opposite and facing the Naif gate, traders and merchants conducted their business with the towns people and they dealt in goods like camels and sheep. Carvans were sometimes also looted. A separate area to the north of square was meant for bedouins which catered their needs. The market remained crowded with women clad in their traditional black and veiled costumes and men who over-numbered women. Women generally found their way towards the market street which catered the needs of women folks especially clothes, lengths and Jewellery.

**LOWER CLASS:**

The lower class constituted groups of workers craftsmen, agricultural farmers/peasants, settled and nomadic bedouins, slaves. Lower class people had to lead a hard
life and these people were quite unaware of the luxuries and comforts of life. They were entirely dependent over the ruling class for their survival. This class of people was exploited by tribal sheikhs by being obedient and subservient. They suffered extreme poverty, political and economic dependency, social backwardness. They had to work many hours of labour for seven days a week and in return whatever they earned was harry enough to make both ends meet.

Even before the discovery of oil Kuwait dealt in various kinds of trades which flourished well yet it remained a poor country. The average income of an unskilled labourer was so low that he had to lead the hardest life.

During the pre-oil era, majority of the Kuwaiti population was involved in pearl-diving business and eventually pearl was the major export item. Though no exact number of persons involved in pearling industry is recorded, yet some historians put the figure between 10,000 to 15,000.

The number of sailors and divers involved is

65. Ibid., p. 463.
thought to be somewhere around 20,000. A Kuwaiti historian in 1920 estimated the number of such persons to be 25,000 men.

The pearl-diving activity did not go all the year round, instead the peak activity was confined to a particular season i.e. from May till September. During this period pearls were hauled out of the sea in maximum quantity. The pearl collection was operated on the following lines:

1. The Nakhuda (Captain of the Ship) owned and operated the ship.

2. The divers were hired as labourers who lived on the ships and searched for the oysters containing pearl.

3. The Shiyabs were the other kind of labourers who were unable to dive but used to lower the divers on to the bottom of the sea and would pull them out of the water.

4. Raidifs were yet another type of labourers who would assist the Shiyabs in their job.

Since the divers and the crew were hired on temporary basis therefore on the approach of favourable season the
Captain of the ship would chose the crew and divers each time. Captains used to loan away money to the divers before the start of the season so that the divers could finance their families during the five month's absence. This was why the divers were indebted to the Captains even before the start of the season and with this sense of indebtedness the crew and divers would work diligently and faithfully.

The diverse were not paid any money as salary instead they received money for their labour after the sale of pearl. Some of them had to be content without money if they were unable to search any pearl. Most of the money which they received was used to repay the debt to the Captain. The profit was divided as following:

Naukhuda: One fifth of the profit after deduction of expense food 5 (shares)
Divers ------------------ 3 shares
Shiyabs ------------------ 2 shares
Radaif ------------------ 1 share

---

There were instances of divers who were unable to find any parl and were indebted to the captains had to return in the following season in order to repay their debt of the old season and the debt for the new season added to it. If a diver was unfortunate to repay his debt and died or fell ill, his brother or son had to work for the captain in order to repay his brother's or father's debt to the captain. J.R. Wellsted who travelled in the Persian Gulf during nineteenth century, observed the above condition similar to slavery.

The common mode of proceedings of the persons involved in pearl hauling can be ascertained as:

Five divers and five siyabs or pullers who would agree together to indulge in pearl-hauling and take a boat or for the purpose, then the financier or the capitalist would finance them by providing two hundred and fifty crowns so as to enable their families to meet their expenses for the period of the absences of their earning members of the

families who were away towards the seas. For the reason the division would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total value Acquired</th>
<th>Curman Crown</th>
<th>£1000</th>
<th>90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, 250 crowns advanced, generally in food and cloth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>250</th>
<th>660</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Thirdly, 100 per cent on 25 Crowns advances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>250</th>
<th>410</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Forthly, 5 grovns from each fisherman paid as text to the Sheikh or Chief of the Island.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>50</th>
<th>360</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

balance to be divided among the ten fishermen, leaving thirty six German Crowns to each.

The merchants would not pay the labourers in terms of wages or salaries but the profit so gained was shared by the crew as follows:

1. The Nakhuda (Captains) 3 shares.
2. The Ghowas (divers) 3 shares.
3. The Siyabs (Pullupman) 2 shares.
4. The Radaif (Assistant to Sizaba) 1 share.

---

70. Izzuddin, op.cit., p. 5.
THE WORKER'S LIVING CONDITIONS

Pearling was not at all an easy job rather difficult and risky. The divers always risked their lives against the dangers of the seas in the form of killer sharks and sawfish. Divers would devote their entire day from dawn to the dusk in search of pearls except for their meals and prayers. They dive down into the depth of seas only to appear over the surface of water for breathing or deposit the collected oysters. They were underfed or poorly fed and hence symptoms of malnutrition were visible among them resulting in the poor health and getting ill very often. Diving is considered to be very detrimental to health and without doubt it shortens the life of those who much practice it. According to some researchers the lives of divers were so hard and fatiguing that they could seldom reach the old age and would die much earlier.

It is not, as if the divers embraced their profession pleasantly but they had no other option or means of earning.

Though this profession involved a very tough task yet they continued the job to earn a living for their families. Kuwait earned an income but of pearl Trading an amount of 2.3 millions of rupees annually or 1,688,888.

Apart from pearl trading during the pre-oil era, Kuwait earned the name in boat building which specialized in at that time into almost 10 different types of boats. The Arab dhows are one of the famous most boats. The boats were made of different dimensions and capacity varying from deep sea dhow named Baggala, which used as cargo vessels for the transport of Iraqi dates to India and East Africa. The smaller boats known as Belem were mainly used in shallow waters for the purpose pearl hauling.

Usually timbers obtained from India were used for building a boat. A boat builder after getting the required timber would hire skilled persons like, carpenters, apprentices and labourers etc. and a boat was built on order.

73. Al Fara, Al Taumaya Al Iqtiyasiya age Dowlat Al Kuwait University (Economic Development in Kuwait), Kuwait University, 1974, p.69.
A carpenter who worked from morning till evening would have to be contented be receiving Rs.3 in return of his labour as wage, the coolies would get one rupee or even less.

The kind of wood selected and the size of boat for the purpose of boat building were actually the deciding factors of the cost of the boat. In 1937-9 when Villiers travelled in the Gulf, he worked out the cost of the boat used by him as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of timber</td>
<td>Rs. 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter, contract price for Labour</td>
<td>Rs. 2800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sails</td>
<td>Rs. 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masts</td>
<td>Rs. 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long boat</td>
<td>Rs. 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crear: including capstan, compass, pinnacle, water tanks, five box, four anchors and necessary raping stiffs and blocks caulking and paying stuffs including fish oil for inside and outside coasts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gig</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12,160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75. Villiers, op.cit., pp. 39, 89.
The cost of a large sized boat appears to be relating low as compared to the smaller ones. It is due to mainly two reasons. Firstly due to cheap labour and/expensive wood used in boat building. The rate of boat building by 1939 rose to two to three boats for deep waters a month and a proportional increase also took place for the boats involved in coastal trades. Although the exact number of skilled and unskilled persons engaged in boat building is not known but according to some authors the figure runs upto 300.

There appeared a paucity of skilled labourer in Kuwait, therefore required number of skilled persons were procured from Bahrain Island. These skilled persons coming from Bahrain were actually Arabs of the Shia sect of Muslims and hence historians mistook the origin of such person to be Persia while according to some others the labourers were to believed/be Arabs who got converted to Shia sect. Bahraini immigrants served as the agents for the import of skilled

76. Fana, op.cit., p. 68.
77. A Villers some aspects of the Arab Dhow Trade, Middle East Journal Vol.29, October 1948, p.399.
labourers who were involved in this trade traditionally.

The Kuwaiti society prior to the oil discovery in 1938 resembled very much with those of Traditional Arabian countries. In the Kuwaiti society, the tribal and extended family relationship was predominant. Because of this predominance if prevented the social integration to spread in the society. There was a general practice in Kuwait of marrying the daughters of the uncle with the utter desire of keeping the land and property confined to kinship groups only. By this practice there were other motives also involved such as to avoid paying full bride wealth. Moreover political gains and holds were also obtained through such a practice as a person would obtain the support of his brother and brothers, son and would thus strengthen himself.

The features which characterised Kuwait before the oil era were quite similar to those of under developed countries in having a low per capita income, quite low annual savings and rate growth and great unemployment problems because of want of opportunities.

79. Ibid.
80. Al Kuwaiti, op.cit., p. 36.
DISINTEGRATION OF OLD CLASSES

Due to the impact of various exogenous and endogenous factors a series of changes took place which triggered of a process of disintegration of old traditional class structure in Kuwait. The process already started during nineteenth century. Several internal political and economic changes took place in Kuwait as a result of Ottoman political dominence and British role as colonial power in Kuwait. These changes were actually responsible to bring about changes in traditional class structure of Kuwait chiefly during the first quarter of the 20th century.

The discovery of oil in Kuwait geared up the process of social change and acted as a catalyst to the anticipated changes as a result of Economic, political, social, educational developments. The oil find played key role in shaping of modern Kuwait and in the disintegration of the old traditional class structure and eventually in the emergence of new class. During the process of this change the tribes have suffered a great deal in their importance as being social

political and economic unit and their significance in the above areas has also declined. It is because of the fact that in the present system/Government is not dependent on the tribes for its survival and moreover it has to administer its population on the basis of localities than on the basis of tribal divisions.

The process of change in the class structure provided the a basis for/establishment of a reciprocal relationship with other aspects of social change. As a result there appeared a change in the nature of classes which either proceeded or followed by change in the society at large.

**MAJOR CLASSES IN KUWAIT AFTER OIL ERA**

Newer and newer oil reserves explored in Kuwait added much to her economy. Due to these oil resources, it almost changed the entire scenario of the Kuwaiti society. Its impact on the socio-economic and geo-political aspect was so great that in a very short period, Kuwait emerged as an important country on the map of the world whose presence was felt the world over.
New classes among the Kuwaiti society emerged due to the impact of oil on its economy. In sociological sense the formation and emergence of various classes is still continuing in the Kuwaiti society, yet the establishment of classes has not matured as against the different established societies of the developed and developing countries.

This situation of Kuwaiti society needs critical analysis, through understanding, careful observation and reasonable explanations as well, of all the dimension of the society. For the purpose our basic aim would be to critically analyse the nature of different classes of Kuwaiti society which emerged after the oil reserve finds. Prior to it, in the last four decades, the Kuwaiti society was classified into simply, upper, middle and lower classes. The analysis of the society into such classes does not under­mine the roles of the royal families or tribes which still retain their importance and enjoy the status in the Gulf States. However, we are actually concerned with the changing facets of the class compositions links of the society, which ultimately brings us nearer to the classes as against the families and the tribes. Thus we see a gradual and
systematic replacement of the old categories of group and communities which include the family and tribe as well, due to the multidimensional development in the post oil era in Kuwait. The emergence of classes, group etc in the post oil era can be classified as follows:

I. **Upper Class**

(i) Royal Families

(ii) Big businessmen

II. **Middle Class**

(i) Small merchants and traders

(ii) Teachers, Doctors and Engineers

(iii) Civil servants.

III. **Lower Class**

(i) Oil Prolitrait

(ii) Settled Nomadic Bedouins

(iii) Workers in other jobs.

I. **UPPER CLASS**

The present upper class section of the Kuwaiti society as its component is quite different from that of the upper class of the pre-oil era and has been inducted into the post
oil era society, which consists of chiefly, I-Royal families, II-Big business families. The present royal families traditionally enjoy the ruling status which have undergone various changes in the post oil era. This ruling class of the royal families in the post oil era were compelled to change and their dependence on other segments of the upper classes increased so as to maintain their identity. According to the changed situation. They had to look for the support of the other segments of the upper class and broaden their base of support accordingly. To broaden the scope of support from the upper class, the royal families had to explore various specific means and ways. This aim was achieved by developing bonds of reciprocal relationship with big business families, by inducting into the power structure of the intelligentsia of new elites resulting into the efficient functioning of the present system of Government, and finally a variety of business activities were geared to cope with the changing situation. The ruling class felt the need of the situation to strengthen
the economy and therefore they did not leave any stone untuned to achieve the aim. Due to their sincere and untiring efforts to strengthen the economy they reaped the fruits in the shape of flourished economy which surpassed the economic condition of the pre-oil era of Kuwait. Presently these families are actively involved in business sphere large or small, collaborating with inland or overseas business concerns. Because of their active involvement in business the position of investments and shares is quite significant. This way they have quite fast grip and hold on a variety of business which were earlier held by exclusively big business families. This would be quite pertinent to note that the royal families have although entered in the business world yet no professional rivalary or antagonism is seen between the two groups of classes viz. the royal families versus big business families. If we try to explore the reasons we shall find that such an ugly situation could not arise because of the pouring in of huge oil money into the country and because of the presence of large number of immigrants apart from the local population, the supply and demands condition of domestic
consumptions in the market is very good. The big businessmen have also their investments abroad in different business ventures. This situation enabled the royal families to share powers with segments of upper class. A direct alien impact of royal family on the upper class segments during the process brought about changes and put them ahead of other cross sections of the society. A significant share of non-royal families in the Government administration and other field is seen. The induction of non-royal family members into the council of ministers higher institution and organizations and their participation in greater number brought about the significant changes as desired by the royal families. The induction and participation of non-royal members in the Government machinery as well as other institutions was done on the basis of their educational and family background. The impact of such activities as the participation of non-royal members as Government functionaries and in other activities brought about desired result which is evident from the fact that the royal families today enjoy greater power with the merchant class, elected member of the Government bodies and the
new elites. If we glance over the 1963 first election result, we find that in the sixteen member council of ministers four seats were shared by non-royal members, although National Assembly of Kuwait was dissolved in 1964. Yet participation of non-royal members in the power structure remained unhampered. The non-royal who are commoners were coupled together in the power structure coming from two entirely different streams e.g. from big business families and new elites. Gradually in the changing circumstances of the Kuwaiti society it is observed that the decision making body on policy matters does not necessarily consist of only royal members, but the non-royal members also have their say in such bodies, as it is evident from the ministerial positions in the Government. However, the ministerial positions which require technical expertise are shared by technical professional who handle and look after such matters are chiefly drawn from non-royal members the commoners. The ministers and portfolios which involve huge budgets and security matters are handled by royal members.

The big business families by virtue of enjoying the upper class family status and sound economic conditions during
the pre-oil era were of great help and to the royal families in matters of financial assistance thus they were able to establish close friendship amongst the kings and Amirs of Kuwait. After the oil exploration which came as a great boon and blessing to the Kuwaiti population resulting in the appearance of new groups of big business families, whose social status was not high during pre-oil era. Such groups of families can be included in the rich or economically sound class but can never enjoy the status of upper class families. Such group gathered huge money by virtue of capitalistic enterprises which was not possible during pre-oil era except after the oil boom. They have to pay Zakat in the Islamic system of Government but the amount paid towards Zakat is insignificant compared to their balloning wealth. The huge sums of money are kept in banks by big businessmen which circulates in the National economy and ultimately fetches them interest. Thus the money multiples and apart from this they run various monetary agencies/private banks other types of financial institution, consequently their wealth grows multidimensionally. The Kuwaiti
Entrepreneurs deal with the Government and multinational corporations in the frame of international reference. Their activities do not fall in the categories of entrepreneurs as understood in the modern capitalistic sense. They are neither traditional merchants. Such activities helped them to expand and improve the economic conditions of their families at large scale during the post oil era. This way we can say that the played major role in the political, economic and social areas of their country.

Another component of the upper class which consists of educated professionals and the bureaucratic elites appeared only during the post oil era of Kuwaiti society. These people fall in the category of upper class and stand at the upper position of the ladder of lower class. This class of new elites emerged primarily by virtue of their qualifications and achievements. Some of them rose to this class by being connected with rich family or having high standard family back grounds. The new elite members can

---

be characterized owing to their embracing the western culture. They are not socially on top and therefore are politically dependent and passive. They usually received education in European countries and American Universities. These group of elite people are playing significant role in the functioning of modern political, economic, educational and administrative system of the country. They are seen in every field in contrast to the big business families. The new elite group has not become an independent component of the society. Therefore the interests of this component of society gets protection in disguise from the royal families by being accommodated in various Government positions. In other words the group is dependent over the royal families and may be called as "dependent elite" component of the society and in return are responsible to strengthen the legitimacy of the royal families by way of their functioning and duties towards the Government.

All the above three different social classes played a key role in shaping up of the modern society in Kuwait. The
present shape and size of society did not result abruptly but it took considerable time to bring about significant changes. There is no doubt that the post oil era has been a major factor in bringing about the various changes at a faster rate than it would have been expected in the absence of oil exploration. The upper class society got influenced by the western culture and ultimately embraced it to some extent because of being now in a position to be exposed to European and American culture.

Keeping in view of the changing circumstances, this class of society was clever enough to foresee its future and therefore this class managed to send their children for studies to western countries - they adapted western languages and during the process they almost lost their identity by using western dresses and leading a luxuriant life similar to those of westerners. Because of adapting the western culture this rich and native upper class was in a advantageous position in coming in close contact with the westerners. They had quite sound financial means by
virtue of which they were able to acquire the western civilization and ultimately fell prey to the lures of the west. Acquisition of western culture picked up fast in this class and ultimately other native social classes were lured to follow their footstep and thus they also tried to adapt the western way of luxury and living within their limitations.

Kuwait seems to be lucky in the matters of economy. This is further elaborated by seeing that this country is poor Geographically but its per capita income is the highest the world over. The so called financial heart of the country is a desert city from where oil keeps flowing steadily which is continuous adding as oil revenue or wealth to the nation. During the year 1971-72 oil revenue reached to an overtime high figure of 388 million £ which seems to be an economic miracle of Kuwait. An almost similar situation for Kuwait is also true as for other countries where the distribution of wealth is not equal, though the wealth has benefitted almost every cross section of the Kuwaiti society. The Kuwaiti merchants
and traders were quite shrewd and clever in their profession and therefore were capable of making comfortable living. Because of these qualities this merchant and trader's class exploited the maximum of the opportunities of the oil era to accumulate wealth and their account swelled up. Kuwait exploited gainfully the experiences of merchants and traders in return this class also got its due share of income. Kuwait also did very well in business matters with other countries by different contracting firms. Now Kuwait has a wealthy middle class comprising both the Kuwaiti and foreigners. This class is quite large in composition with the other.

Private properties are facing threat of being engulfed by ever increasing demand to see up offices, shops and modern residential areas unless they are protected by Sheikh or other influential persons. The post oil era has created such a situation of tussle between the haves and have nots.
NEW MIDDLE CLASS:

Prior to the oil era no such class existed. Post oil era saw the dawn of a new class known as new middle class. The emergence of this new class of society in Kuwait was due to the discovery and utilization of oil as against the middle classes of U.S.A. and Europe where this class emerged due to rapid industrialization. Teachers, Engineers, Doctors, Shop-owners and civil employees constitute the new middle class of the modern Kuwaiti society.

Halpner 62 has distinguished the middle classes of Middle East countries and other societies in the following words:

The Middle East society entered into the modern administrative age without even waiting to let the machine age mature. This machine age was rather skipped over. The salaried new middle class people are thus utilising their power in creating a revolutionary task which is undertaken without any final commitment to any relevant system of institutions - instead of defending their order and property.

The middle class status of the Kuwaiti society is the consequence of the acquisition of educational and other technical skills apart from their affiliation with families and tribes. This class being very conscientious signifies itself with the working class and forms the skeleton of many social, political and economic changes relating to the working class. Furthermore various Arabian Nationalist parties do also get support and strength from their group for example this group is the main supporter of the Arab Baath, Socialist Party of the Arab Nationalist Movement.

If look at the nature of the middle class of Kuwait, it appears to be progressive. There are certain reasons which can be attributed to the progressiveness of this group. The fact that they are more qualified than the administrators and managers and they are deprived of the opportunity to be chosen for these jobs—which instills into them, the venue for struggle. One can not ignore the importance of the middle or working class because of their

supermacy in educational and other skilled experiences. It is due to the above fact that they were able to occupy at least five berths of important ministerial portfolios in the present Kuwaiti cabinet.

The emergence of the new class (NMC) in the post oil era in Kuwait during the process of change taking place in the traditional class structure of the pre oil era seems to be the most significant development. This class during the pre oil era could not have its presence felt. It is therefore believed that no such middle class existed in the Gulf States in the pre oil era.

The emergence of a new middle class (NMC) in Kuwait after the oil boom appears impressive as a result of the changing circumstances due to oil. This class actually emanated from the pre oil era but remained dormant as regards to its role, behaviour and function till the oil discovery and the assumption that no real middle class ever existed during the period of the pre oil era in Gulf states sound logical. The circumstances which lead to the fast

---

85. Ibid., p. 53.
emergence of this new middle class in the post oil era is noteworthy. The process of modernization undergone by Kuwait after the oil actually provided the congenial atmosphere for the emergence of this new middle class. The modernization process opened up new vistas for the ambitions of Kuwait and thus providing avenues in professional and technical fields requiring technical and professional expertise, skilled and semi-skilled labourers for developmental process. To put it in the words of Patai, the emergence of the new middle class is the outcome of westernization in the sense that most individuals who belong to this class are conscious of it and are engaged in occupations that emerged as a result of westernization.

The modernization of Kuwait and the westernization of culture of Kuwaiti society ran parallel and as a result of the traditional sector of population gradually grew more conspicuous to adapt culture of their Western counterpart. The new middle class have been playing significant role and impressed upon the expanding activities in politics.

86. Patai, M.Z., p. 280 see also Halpern, n.6.
general economy, society, culture, education and ideology. Although this limited NMC has enriched Kuwait in various yet it could not establish an independent status as class in modern Kuwait. This new middle class has not yet matured and is still in the process of evolution. The crystallization of this new middle class in recent decades was the result of political patronage which it continuously enjoyed from the royal family. Apart from the political patronage of the ruling family of Kuwait another factor which helped this class was in fact the socialization pattern of the NMC itself.

It is quite interesting to note that the NMC never emerged as a homogenous social or economic class and therefore it is heterogenous in character as members of this class come from different walks of life, families and backgrounds.

If we have a look at the origin and evolution of NMC we find that it constituted/traders and merchants, bureaucrats, techno-crats, professionals intelelgentia, landlords, and skilled labours. The members of this class
can further be classified into two groups. The first
group emerged as middle class by way of achieving educa-
tion, the another group attained the middle class status
because it originated from small business families. There-
fore the NMC in fact finds its origin in the traditional
upper as well as lower classes. The present day upper
crest of the new middle class members are the real des-
cendants of the pre oil traditional big business families.
Those big business families could not keep themselves up
in modern Kuwait i.e. in post oil era due to economic
competitions while the lower strata of the new middle
class descended from the lower class of pre oil era. It
survived and got merged in the NMC of modern Kuwait because
it exhibited greater economic mobility as a result of oil
affluence and modern education. In modern Kuwait the NMC
is represented by a new group of young university graduates
who captured different position and respectable jobs in
private as well as public sectors.

Exceeding the group of merchants and traders, the
NMC forms the salaried class. The small businessmen of
NMC lack the zeal and ambitions in this trades or otherwise they would have expanded their business to become multimillionare yet they are comparatively rich and are content with what they have. The constitution of the country is based on Islamic norms, therefore these businessmen have to pay quite large sums of Zakat and in the absence of any political support or power they do not enjoy high social status as compared to other sections of the society in similar situations. The NMC, though numerically small acted as a driving force towards the social modernization of Kuwait during post oil era. The members of new middle class were wise enough to have felt the impact of change at the very initial stage in family role, relations between sexes, education and employment which the modernization process was going to produce. This class brought such changes in itself by adapting the customs and conventions, attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle which were quite different from its traditional characters. The new middle class because of possessing greater economic mobility flexible class character, wisdom and adaptability according to the changing society emerged
as a dynamic, more articulate and competitive class/all fields as compared to their counterpart classes. This class also possessed the inherent quality which pushed it towards transformation of the traditional society.

In view of their roles, the NMC have become more conscious towards their national duties. This sense infused into them greater responsibility vision and a broader outlook towards Nation. This is evident from the fact that the civic and National spirit was first borne by the NMC in the Gulf states. In the absence of such a consciousness their own existence as class would be jeopardised because it is dependant for survival on the National identity and the regime's security. The NMC as a class has been responsible to bring about social changes, thus playing a decisive role on other classes too. The NMC in Kuwait by being responsible and conscious groups has been more vocal than NMC of any Gulf country. Chiefly because the NMC of Saudi Arabia constitutes such diverse groups who are still very much conscious of retaining their traditional identity. Since they are comparatively conservative
in nature. Therefore the pace of social change has been slow. This one reason — the conservativeness has become an obstacle in their way of social change. The secularization of religious life is seen at its minimum. The religious views seems to dominate in every aspect of the NMC's life.

The specific studies carried out on the NMC of Kuwait revealed that its development initiated in late 1940 and it grew as part of the economic modernization of Kuwait. The economic developmental process in the modernization of Kuwait threw open new employment and job opportunities for such people of Kuwait who were able and ambitious of acquiring skills and education suited to a particular job which led Kuwaitis to move into a new social class. It is evident that the new middle class of Kuwait although could manage to hold middle level position in Government and various business already during 1950s yet it was unable to enjoy its share in political power as the upper class did. The NMC gained impetus by the return of Educated Kuwaitis from abroad during 1960s and
got their due share in the higher levels of Government. The NMC in Kuwait according to Willian Rough consisted of merchants, traders, landlords, lawyers, religious scholars, teachers etc. The majority of the members of the new middle class were always found to be eager and ambitions to change and enhance their class status and to move on to the economic ladder to raise their family standards. The ambition to change their social status and raise living standards was actually derived from the families growing economy. They strived for a change towards bettering their lives and ultimately reaped the fruits of their strive. A study of the Educational backgrounds of 189 top Kuwait civil servants was conducted during 1969 and the data so obtained gave fascinating revelations. The group was found to constitute 45 persons having high educational qualifications of western origin, rightest number of persons who counted 111 were moderately educated possessing modern secondary qualifications and a minor group of 31 was found to be having only traditional educational qualifications. Analysing the data it is found that in the Kuwaiti bureaucracy, the modern
educated graduates particularly having western type of education dominate over other educated or traditionally educated groups. A gradual evolution is found in the new middle class of Kuwait. The growth of the NMC rendered it to be internally differentiated into two distinct strata viz. The upper and lower strata within the NMC itself. The upper and lower strata within the NMC is distinguished on the basis of their economic status and living standards. Thus professionals Doctors, Engineers and businessmen are distinguished as the upper strata of the NMC as against the clerks, school teachers, skilled industrial workers who forms the lower strata within the NMC. There is seen a tussle for jobs between the secular and traditionally educated middle class of Kuwait and amongst the members of the NMC itself. In this scuffle for securing the jobs, the traditionally educated people of middle class are left behind and their rival the NMC succeed in getting the job and process of social change seem operative here.

By virtue of being highly responsive and conscious, the NMC responded positively towards the contemporary social

87. Ibid., p. 13.
changes, but changes of extreme nature were always dis­
couraged in NMC through institutional means in Kuwait, so
as to inhibit NMC from emerging as a political force and to
avoid thus so called threat to the existing regime. The
upper class made its able efforts in this direction and
therefore the NMC was seriously handicapped to emerge as a
strong political force, affecting the autonomy of NMC and
the likelihood of initiative for any political movement or
whatsoever from this class. For political reasons or other­
wise the NMC has been made dependent on the prevailing system
of Government so on so their roles heavily curtailed. The
interests of NMC clash with the continuity of the system.
The outcome of the sort of expendency which the NMC is
undergoing bears implications which is reflected in general
lack of influence in the intelligentia in these societies.
One must seek justification for the important roles which
the intelligentia has opted in Kuwait. It is in fact the
type of total dependency on the system in which the NMC has
been trapped. In the absence of any institutional platform,
it sounds unreasonable on the part of NMC to come out of
such an intriguing situation. The NMC can not even think
of liberating itself from total dependency due to lack of mass support from any quarter and any step in this direction is most likely to result in total failure. The NMC as a class have limited options with the Kuwaiti society and their status is just like a 'serving class' of people whose members compete within their own class to rise up in the system with individual supports of political regimes.

Looking upon the distribution pattern of labour force it appears that fairly a large number of the force is involved in relatively small occupational sector.

The administrative and the managerial jobs are mainly held by Kuwaitis whose number almost doubled during the years 1970-1975 as against the previous record for the same period of time. This formed part of the policy of the Government of Kuwait to replace persons for such Governmental positions by qualified Kuwaiti personnel. In the service sector the figures are not so impressive as the number of Kuwaitis increased by 9,684 only against the increase of non-Kuwaitis by 10,879. The increase in the number of such qualified personnel in service sector was
caused by the Government policy towards Kuwaitization resulting in an increased demand and need for teachers, doctors and Engineers in the service sector.

**Civil Servants:**

According to the table No. 5.1, of the total number of persons employed in civil service nearly 25 per cent of them are illiterate. These appears no doubt in the fact that it has resulted in the negative performance and productivity of the entire civil service, so as no unmarried and illiterate employees caused a deceive in total man hour output. In such a situation, the qualified and efficient civil servants find it hard to cope up with the conditions consequently rendering them to perform their jobs and duties inadequately due to illiterate lower level employees. Almost total absence of middle level qualified and educated manpower, the civil service administration is seriously handicapped and an efficient system could not be evolved.

It is relevant and noteworthy that the efficacy in administrative and civil service system can not simply be achieved by only increasing the number of persons; It much
# Table No. 2.7

## Teachers, Doctors and Engineers in Kuwait

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Kuwaiti</th>
<th>Non-Kuwaiti</th>
<th>% Kuwaiti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>8,885</td>
<td>2,210</td>
<td>6,675</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>9,485</td>
<td>3,052</td>
<td>6,433</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Engineers</td>
<td>3,464</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3,136</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3,431</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>3,114</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Doctors</td>
<td>1,764</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>1,539</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1,489</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>1,306</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Ministry of Planning, Bureau of Census, the population census 1975, Government Printing, 2 Vols., Table 50.

depends rather on the social system in which civil service operates. It is actually the social environment which either makes the administrative machinery more productive or otherwise.
The study of the social system and the environment reveals that the educated Kuwaiti persons are quite capable of adapting and adjusting themselves in the jobs than the lesser educated men. The same is also true for the persons involved in supervisory and administrative positions in the Government compared to the clerical and manual workers.

TABLE NO. 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Kuwaiti No.</th>
<th>Kuwaiti %</th>
<th>Non-Kuwaiti No.</th>
<th>Non-Kuwaiti %</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>11,265</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>9,982</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read &amp; Write</td>
<td>14,642</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>34,459</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>3,778</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6,452</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>6,217</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>9,518</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>6,067</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>16,539</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below University Level</td>
<td>1,761</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3,444</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First University Degree</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>14,974</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduates</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1,083</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46,769</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>116,451</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE:- Ministry of Planning, Annual Statistical Abstract 1979, Table 129, p.137.

88. M.A.Qali, Occupational adjustment among workers in Kuwait (Arabic), Faculty of Arts and Education Bulletin, Kuwait University, No.5 June 1974, p.158.
LOWER CLASS:

The lower class in modern Kuwait or so to say during the post oil period consists generally of industrial workers, lower rent employees, settled and nomadic bedouins. The industrial worker while dwell in the cities, the settled and nomadic bedouins made the deserts their abode. The settled bedouins involved in agricultural practices chose to live in villages. The present day lower class also felt the impact of social change in Kuwait and during this process of change it gave rise to three of its prominent features. Firstly, the form and the composition of the emerging lower class was quite different from the features of the traditional lower class, qualitatively and quantitatively both. In the post oil period, while on one hand there emerged a fairly large group of workers, a significant group of pre oil period - the slaves disappeared in post oil era. Secondly the economic conditions of the lower class changed entirely and they became more prosperous who now dominate among the lower class of Kuwaiti society in having raised their standard of life.

89. The"termoil proletariat" is also used for the workers in the oil and non oil sectors.
Further more they now possess more money and wealth than is needed by them. Thirdly the changes which occurred in the lower class structure did not correspond to other change like, those of economic, political cultural changes underwent independently regardless and irrespective of each other among the members of this lower class.

The discovery of oil saw the dawn of 'oil prolitariat' class, very distinct in Kuwait and got established as the process of industrialization took place of the country. This new oil prolitariat group got concentrated near oil installations industries related to construction, means of communication and small as well as large trade because of their close association and dependencing for economic reasons with differently of industries. The workers of oil prolitariat class chiefly are composed of (1) artisans - craftsmen gave up their traditional jobs due to gradual withdrawal of manual techniques as a result of gradual mechanization of industries. (ii) The bedouins strated migrating to the cities in order to earn their fortune. The number of native labourers was earlier satisfactorily proportional in the "oil prolitariat" but it
decreased on the arrival of foreign labour force caused by the expansions of oil installation and activities. The influx of labourers from foreign countries compelled the bedouins to return to the deserts and the craftsmen and artisans saw a deteriorating economic condition arising out of the labour influx and therefore they shifted to yet lower grade employment and small business. Some of them modernized their traditional occupations such as fishing.

The industrialization process in Kuwait not only brought about changes in Economic and social standards but also brought considerable changes in the working conditions of the workers as well as in workers attitudes towards the masters or employers. The traditional relationship between the workers and the employers have rather been gradually replaced by an impersonal relationship in which various regulation laws and rules have found their due importance and became operative quite effectively. The workers and employer's relationship bound by several laws and rules created such a situation in which an awareness and consciousness was caused in the workers towards their rights which
resulted in numerous strikes. There operated certain forces against them which always inhibited this class from emerging as a distinctive working class in the Maxian sense or a united political force. Mainly three factors were responsible for the suppression of any upsurge by the working class. Firstly, the ruling class formulated and adopted such repressive policies against the working class which never went along with the interests of the working class. Workers did not shed their traditional attitudes and were generally found changing to it even in the changing society. They often loved to live with their own tribesmen and sometimes migrated to desert villages to enjoy their old traditional customs with a sense of belonging. The nature and the attitude of this class of people did not change much. The primitive loyalties and their old religious beliefs were sometimes reinforced due to certain challenging situations emerging out of the modernization process of Kuwait. They are cut off from the urban culture even though they were concentrated in the urban areas for economic reasons.

The lower level employers of this class are chiefly the descendants of the two groups of artisans and craftsmen
in the towns and settled and nomadic bedouins in the villages and the deserts. They are the people of lowest rung of life's ladder working as Government or non-Government servants. In return of their service whatever wages they earned as salary was sufficient for their needs and expenditure though it was fairly low as compared to other employees, yet stood high in comparison to them income during pre oil era. Their children received education and opted for white collar jobs in private or public sectors.

The settled bedouins engaged in Agricultural practice lived in villages of Kuwait, but they are in a small minority. Their number was never significantly high because of lesser cultivable and Agricultural land and prevailing unfavourable climatic conditions of the area. During the recent decades the Government is emphasising upon the farmers to engage themselves in agriculture more actively. For this reason Government is also providing land to the peasant alongwith huge subsidies. The Government also developed a planned agriculture which resulted in the higher yields and ultimately higher incomes. Thus enhancing
social status of bedouins engaged in farming due to the enhancement of their social status a very significant change in the relationship between landlords-tribal chiefs and the peasants was felt. This economic also brought about gradual decay of the traditional social structure of the peasants in villages which ultimately generated social, political, educational, and cultural transformations as well.

The discovery of oil and modernization process in Kuwait affected in raising the social status of desert bedouins, settled or nomadic, though differently. The bedouins retained their identity with many traditional traits even after a social change took place in this distinct class structure of bedouins. They could also not get free away from their strongly commitment to their chiefs and nomadic life style and that's why still belong to the lower positions in the society.

The following characteristics may be seen in the lives of bedouins; a lower per capita income in contrast to the average national income, primarily they rely in raising
the livestocks for their basic income source; and they
are totally dependent on climate and weather to keep their
flock and **livestocks**. They have to face a baffling situation
by the industrialization of Kuwait as lands are depleting fast by urbanization process, over grazing so on so they are unable to get positions in educational and other services and continuing migratory trends, all these have affected and inversely a decrease by 2 per cent annually in the nomadic population. They could not also keep pace with the fast changes and therefore the economic and social gap between bedouins and the sedentary population is widening day by day.

A general lack of interest and enthuthaism was felt in the desert bedouins of Kuwait settled down in urban areas as against any other developing country. Although in the wake of oil discovery bedouins were initially interested and prepared for a change but later on they held back from urban life as they found it to taxing and demanding. They simply shuttle between the **deserts** and the cities to carry out their lives. No nomadic settlements
are seen in the cities. This is because of the fact that the bedouins do not have features which would enable them to settle in the cities. Moreover, the ruling regimes purposefully kept them away from urban areas. Throughout by granting as lures to them various subsidies, easy loans and a number of other facilities in the desert villages so that bedouins never felt the urge to shift to urban areas. They already lead a comfortable life in the deserts enjoying such facilities as already granted to them by the ruling regimes as observed by a bedouin leader who dealt in bedouins tents in Kuwait.

Although drastic changes have occurred in Kuwait towards modernization and the citizens are enjoying all the luxuries of life yet bedouins do prefer leading an autere life living in desert tents in traditional way in the absence of water, electricity and modern amenities and luxuries.

A project undertaken by Kuwaiti Government for bedouins settlement for accommodating, 1000 bedouin families

failed for one reason or the other instead the project was turned over to a foreign company for benefits of the Government.

The main source of livelihood of nomadic bedouins in the deserts are such activities like raising of live­stocks particularly sheep, camel and goats. They used to sell out their produce and make quite handsome, profit out of their livestocks. The bedouins receive grants or sub­sidies according to the strength of their livestock, many of the bedouins were wise enough to have accumulated through these grants and subsides millions of. They do not look upon the upper middle class people for comparison, rather take into account the pre oil economic conditions of bedouins. Wealth aquired by them is more than their needs and draw out every moment of pleasure to enjoy in the desert because of their economic well being and prosperity. Their main source of enjoyments are hunting, poetry recital or flowing eagle falcons in the deep deserts. Although they have furnished their tents with modern luxu­ries yet they are not a much changed people. They seldom visit cities. The visits to the cities are made only with
of the purpose /buying essential commodities or to sell their produce only. Some bedouins who are fond of wrestling visit the cities to a witness a wrestling match. Literacy was at all absent or very uncommon amongst the bedouin families but the youngsters received a formal education than their parents had. Ninety five per cent of bedouins sent their children to schools, mostly to learn religious teachings.

Slavery has become a thing of the past in Kuwait and at present has been totally abolished and traditional slaves had been emancipated from their masters for ever and therefore, slaves a class do not exist today. As the information goes in this regard, the children of slaves attend schools and on completion of their education they opt for white collar jobs either in private sector or with the Government. Many of the slave's sons and daughter have risen high in the bureaucratic ladder.