



STUDY GUIDE



JOINT CABINET CRISIS

Hamburg Model United Nations

'Speak Up, Stand Up - Be the Change'

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The Unification of Saudi Arabia, 1917

In 1917 the world is at stake. The Great War has brought with it new weaponry, the fallout and dissolutions of empires and the creation of modern states. In the Middle Eastern front the Ottoman Empire is facing local and Entente enemies at multiple lines. The pan-Islamism Abdul Hamid II and his successors had promoted, did not unite the Muslim world. Instead, Muslim populations revolt against the Sultan and ally with Great Britain and France to help them in their fight.

In the Arabian Peninsula, dominant tribal leaders take advantage of the fallout of Ottoman Empire to rebel and gain autonomy and power over vast territories. To the west the Kingdom of Hejaz occupies the Holy Cities; the center and north is under the Emirate of Jabal Shammar, the only Ottoman ally in the region while Riyadh and surrounding regions belong to Emirate of Nedj. However, the struggle of tribal and religious leaders to assure control over their territories and expand their influence, weakened and confirmed the various divisions in the peninsula.

Conflicting tribal and foreign interests, opposing Islamic doctrines and practices, and the fight for hegemony, took over as tensions in the peninsula escalated.

Letter of Welcome

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the entire crisis team I would like to welcome you to the Joint Crisis Cabinets Committee of Hamburg Model United Nations 2017!



My name is Eleni Kapousouz and it is my pleasure to serve as your Crisis Director in what will surely be a dynamic and very promising committee.

When studying history, I often find myself puzzled on the question of ‘What if’ and this is why I am truly excited by the prospect of producing and exploring alternate courses for the future of the Arabian Peninsula.

For four days, we will have the chance to experience modern diplomacy, tribal governance and religious differences and face their consequences through continuous and fast-paced crisis.

I am of course hoping that all of us will learn something more for this troubled to-date region than what we already know and who knows history might give us potential and help for resolution.

Get excited,

Best,

Eleni Kapousouz

Hi everyone!

I'm Perth, a second-year International Relations student at the University of Edinburgh, and I'll be one of your Deputy Directors for this crisis. Since arriving at university, I've fallen down the crisis rabbit hole and never looked back. Since last October, I have participated in 12 Crisis simulations in various roles, whether they be as a delegate, a chair or a backroom staffer. I look forward to meeting you all during the conference, which is bound to be an unforgettable experience. Our crisis is bound to be an engaging and dynamic one, and I wish the best of luck to you all in your preparations!

Perth Ophaswongse

Hello,

I'm Hamzah, a graduate in International Relations with Political Science from the



University of Birmingham and I currently work in academic

disability support. I'll be one of the Deputy Directors in this

crisis and I can't wait to work with Eleni and Perth again to

deliver a crisis on my favourite region: the Middle East. I

have participated in 22 conferences and I've directed 5 crisis

committees in the past. This topic is close to my heart as it

defines one of the most powerful and controversial Muslim

countries in the 20th and 21st centuries, which is why

returning to this point of history will make for an amazing

experience for all of us. I would advise you research this issue comprehensively and

you think creatively. Everyone, new or experienced, always has something to offer.

Hamzah Sheikh

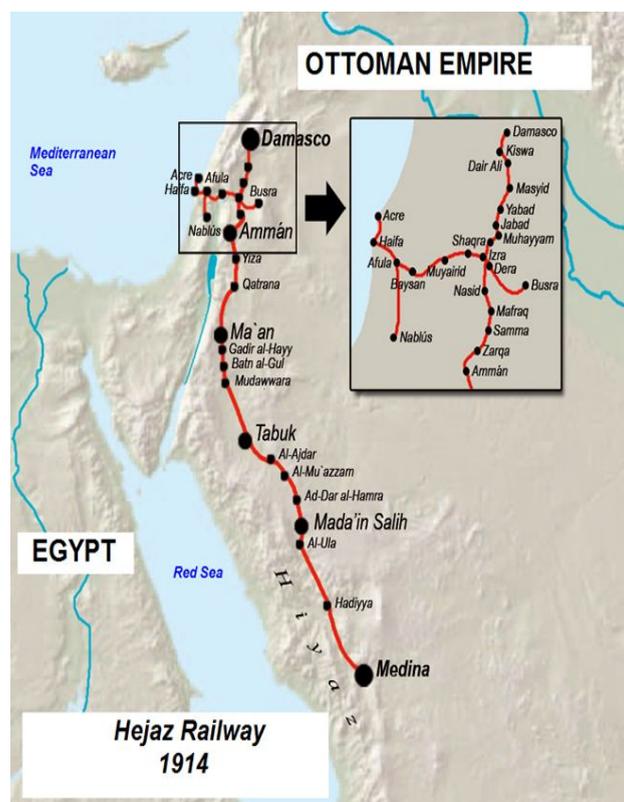
History of the Problem

The unification of Saudi Arabia was the long and tedious process of the three local powers to assert control over the Arabian Peninsula by conquering numerous warring factions and countless provinces and try to unite them under tribal or religious reasons.

In 1917, the Peninsula is divided religiously and tribally. The three local powers try to form deeper alliances with the players of the World War I and exact from there control, recognition and in some cases independence over vast territories in an effort to assure their survival after the end of the war.

The three primary actors of the excessive process were the Emirate of Nejd, the Emirate of Jabal Shammar and the Kingdom of Hejaz.

At the end of the year 1917, the Emirate of Jabal Shammar finds itself worrying of the Arab rebellion against the Ottomans, and the slow but continues push of Saudis into their territories. The Kingdom of Hejaz on the other hand is worried of the Rebellion against the Ottomans and is troubled by the constant liaisons and supply of weapons of the British to the Saudis while the latters are puzzled as well by the double game Great Britain is on and in constant research of new warriors to attack their neighbors.



The region: geography and populations

Being a region mostly covered in sand, Arabia has its own unique geography which presents a challenge to anyone trying to conquer it. Its sandy western coast provides no natural harbor in the Red Sea. Yet to its proximity to Africa and Suez Canal makes this strip of lowland strategic. Two of its biggest ports, Jeddah and Yanbu, also serves

as the first towns on the way to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. With British and French fleet having complete blockade in the Red Sea and Suez Canal, the inland Hejaz Railway becomes even more important for the Ottomans to connect Arabia with the rest of their Empire. The Northernmost port of Aqaba however, is still in Ottoman hands preventing an easy Entente march towards Palestine.

This western coast is protected by the strip of Hijaz and Asir mountain range, running



north to south across Arabia all the way to Yemen. This natural barrier separates them with the inner heartlands of Najd plateau - a vast rocky desert Plateau that gradually lowers until they reach the lowland oasis of Al-Hasa' in the east, guarding the Eastern

Arabia coasts between Kuwait and Qatar. Whereas to the Southeast the vast empty Rub Al-Khali desert lays barren and untouched. In such hostile area, oasis and water sources become such important checkpoints. Indeed, the Emirate of Nejd flourishes around the Oasis town of Riyadh and its lakes south of it. Whereas the Jabal Shammar found its refuge around the Oasis of Ha'il.

The entire region of the Arabian Peninsula is populated and governed in a tribal way in which tribes and clans were forming small groups of populations and can be divided into two large categories: those following the Bedouin life and those living in urban cities.

Throughout the centuries the peninsula was historically and traditionally home to nomads. Bedouins, the Arab nomads inhabiting desert areas across the region, still inhabited most of the desert areas which were mostly inaccessible and impossible to build cities. Bedouins traveled their whole life; they were rarely educated, but had extensive military training and agricultural expertise. They were powerful warriors as they had to defend themselves in the desert, and practiced their own medicine skills for themselves and their animals. Although, Bedouins travelled freely and covered vast areas, during the last years since the Great War started, they continued perusing this way of life but by staying within the control region of a certain Kingdom or Emirate.

However, the rise of Islam saw a development in this traditional way of living. From the early days of the expansion of Islam, warriors founded new cities such as Fustat –later Cairo- in 643 and Bagdad in 762, which changed dramatically the up-to then nomadic way of life and introduced local populations to the city life.

The cities were mostly founded in fertile areas near water- whether that may be oasis, rivers, or the sea. The same applied to a certain extent to the cities founded in the Arabian Peninsula. Its main urban centers were divided into three categories: the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, the main ports of Jeddah and Jizan and the oasis centers of Riyadh and Ha'il. Other big cities included the Yanbu port, an important stronghold for the transport of pilgrims, and Hasa, an oasis city which acts as an agricultural center. People came to live in the cities, were settled Bedouins or other Arab tribes and who had access to a lot more amenities and products at the time such as schools and luxury items.

This vast division between Bedouins and urban centers was also to be found in economy. Bedouins were mostly merchants. With their caravans they travelled across the region transporting goods and people such as pilgrims, messengers, travelers and explorers.

In urban cities, professional activity took many forms. In the Holy Cities, people gained money through pilgrims; in the south, where it is more fertile, populations were mostly occupied with agriculture of dates and other fruit and vegetable. The same applied to the oasis cities but in a smaller extent. The ports were home to merchants; the goods of Yemen, East Africa and sometimes India went to their final destinations through the Red Sea. Lastly, the ongoing Ottoman project for the Hejaz Railway was the primary job for a lot of people.

What one should not forget about the region and its populations is that in many cases, groups were living out of attacks to caravans, Bedouins and small cities which all were becoming booty.

The Emirate of Nejd

From the early era of the germinal appearance of Wahhabism in Arabia, the Emirate of Nedj altered various political forms, while the region of Nejd or Najd had all along borne a disputed territory, enclosing key cities, such as Al Jawf, Ha'il and Riyadh.

After being conquered by the first Saudi leader Muhammad ibn Saud in the 18th century, Nejd constituted the body of the First Saudi State (1744-1818), primarily based on the strict defense of Islam and on the Wahhabi doctrine. Not only did the dynasty contrive to extend its rule to the region of Hejaz, but also to incorporate the Muslim Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, and successfully inducted former in 1802. The taking of Mecca resulted in retaliation from the Ottoman Empire, and Muhammad Ali Pasha of Egypt, was tasked with recapturing it. This expedition led by his son, Ibrahim Pasha and his Ottoman forces conquered the center of Nejd with town after town being captured en route, eventually leading to his siege of the Saudi Capital of Diriyah. In the winter of 1818, Ibrahim Pasha emerged victorious and proceeded to systematically deconstruct Diriyah by sending numerous members of the Saudi family and Wahhabi scholars Istanbul where they were later executed.

In the aftermath, the second attempt of the Saudis to dominate in the Arabian Peninsula was made in 1824, establishing the Second Saudi State (1824-1891), also known as the Emirate of Nejd. Despite the efforts of the dynasty to preserve its dominance, the invasions of the House of Rashid under the lead of ibn Rashid, ruler

of the Emirate of Jabal Shammar, led to the capture of the capital of Riyadh in 1887 and the subsequent exile of the Saud family in Kuwait, until 1902.

Ensuing his return to Riyadh, the main claimant of the Saudi leadership, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn ‘Abd al-Rashman Al Saud reiterated the reign with the Third Saudi State. The re-conquest of Riyadh and the surrounding area of Nedj, as well as of the eastern province of Hasa signified the formation of the Emirate of Nedj and Hasa from 1902. Following the mandates of the revivalist Wahhabism, ibn Saud managed to maintain his power depending on the application of *sharia* across his territory and the support of the religious body of Wahhabi scholars, the *‘ulama*.

However, not all members of the tribes were successfully purged into the Wahhabi doctrine and the conflicts that emerged among them inside the Saudi territory in 1915 brought about the creation of two disputant sides; the Mutayr tribe under the authority of ibn Saud, on the one hand, and, the Ajman tribe in alliance with the Shammars, on the other. The aforementioned rivalry was escalated significantly in light of the outbreak of World War I in the Arabian Peninsula, as the Ajmans – always loyal to the Emirate of ibn Rashid – were incorporated to the pro-Ottoman forces of the region. In response to the Ajman practices, ibn Sa’ud and its supporters sought for assistance from the British Empire and the Allied Forces, which were striving to repulse the efforts of the Central Powers to intervene in Arabia.

Important actor in the territorial advances and military issues was the *Ikhwan*, a religious movement that made its first appearance among the Bedouin nomads in the early decades of the 20th century. Its supporters embraced the teachings of Wahabbism by establishing settled colonies across the Arabian Peninsula, called *hijrahs*, where they could dedicate themselves to a life accorded with the Wahhabism. The Ikhwan movement acquired its military form as a national guard no earlier than in 1912, when ibn Saud organized the Ikhwan nomads as a military body by exploiting their eagerness to battle non-Wahabbi Islam, in order to fight the anti-Saudi forces of the Emirate of Jabal Shammar.

The Emirate of Jabal Shammar

During the period of the Second Sa'udi State (1824-1891), a new political substance was established in 1846 named as the Emirate of Jabal Shammar, in the region of Nedj of Arabia. In continuation of the Rashidi tribal state in the northern province the Emirate was formed by the House of Rashid, the leaders of the Shammar tribe, according to the model of a tribal state, where tribal solidarity was the main source of power.

From as early as the moment of its formation, the Emirate of Jabal Shammar had been in a continuous strife with the the House of Saud over the predominance in the region. Following the capture of Riyadh in 1887, the second remarkable quarrel between the House of Rashid and the Saudis took place in the battle of al-Mulaydah in 1891, resulting in the total collapse of the Second Saudi State.

The Rashidis turned to the patronage of the Ottoman Empire as external allies so as for the latter to contribute to the Emirate's security. The subsequent arrival of Ottoman troops in Nedj marked the beginning of a long-lasting diplomatic dispute with the House of Sa'ud that lead to hostilities against the Sa'udi Emirate by the coalition of the Ottoman Empire with the Emirate of Jabal Shammar and the Hitaim and Harb tribes.

In response to the ongoing tension between the two Emirates, political negotiations for the establishment of truce between the two rival parties were initiated in the early 1900s. Notwithstanding, the failure of all diplomatic discussion became obvious with Ibn Saud leading the Emirate of Nejd into the Saudi-Rashidi War of 1903 – 1907, where both sides waged a full scale war over the region of Qassim and the consequent assassination of the Rashidi Emir 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Mut'ib during the quarrels.

Until the end of the decade, the period following the death of the emir was characterized by internal instability inside the Emirate and the fear of future attacks by external opponents. Howbeit, in an attempt to boost the political confidence of the Rashidis and the sovereignty of their state, the Ottomans appointed the emir ibn Rashid as the "Commander of the whole Nejd".

With the emergence of World War I 1914, the Emirate of Jabal Shammar, alongside the Ujman tribe of The Emirate of Nedj and Hasa, sided by the forces of the Axes,

gaining the support of the Ottoman and German militants so as to secure its territorial sovereignty. In 1917, the coalition created is striving to battle the attempts of the Saudis and Hejaz that were allied with the British Empire.

The Kingdom of Hejaz

For centuries, the western province of Hejaz or Hijaz in the Arabian Peninsula has been luring the interests of multiple external political powers due to its strategic position and the wealth generated from the oil reserves of the region. Concurrently, the Holy Cities of Islam, Mecca and Medina, which were located in Hejaz had more often than not constituted the target of several Muslim political substances throughout the years.

Specifically, in 1517 the Ottomans succeeded in invading and conquering the Hejaz territory and, thence, in incorporating the region to the so-called “Ottoman Arabia”. During the 19th century and under the Ottoman occupation, the religious differences between the Hannafi supporters of Islam of Hejaz and the believers of the revivalist Wahhabism of Nedj resulted in the Wahhabis’ raid on the land of Hejaz, which was halted with the intervention of the Egyptians on behalf of the Ottoman Empire in 1817.

Despite being imposed to the Ottoman rule, the province of Hejaz started developing its administrative autonomy from the mid-19th century under the predominance of the Sharif of Mecca. In 1908, the title of the Sharif and Emir of Mecca was passed to the then leader of the Hashimite tribe of Hejaz, Hussein ibn Ali al-Hashimi.

In response to the Ottoman suppression, Hussein turned to the British Empire and France for support in order to battle the Ottoman rulers and establish the independency of Hejaz. In 5 June 1916, Sharif Hussein supported by the British reinforcements put into practice its plan to liberate Hejaz as the Arab Revolt and conquered Medina. Following his victory, his sons besieged the key city of Ta’if and some of the most notable ports of the Red Sea, while they also forced off the Ottomans’ attempts to recapture these lands.

As a consequence of the above mentioned military successes, Hussein demanded the recognition of an independent state in Hejaz by the British. In 1916, the British Army

deployed a military mission in Hejaz that repulsed the Ottoman garrison from the cities of Ta'if and Mecca with the contribution of the British military officer and diplomat T.E. Lawrence. Simultaneously, the Kingdom of Hejaz joined forces with Transjordanian militants to conquer the coastal cities of Aqaba and Wejh.

Nonetheless, during the first months of 1917 the Ottoman rule was still securing its control over the city of Medina and the Hejaz Railway from Damascus to Medina served as the main route for military supplies that contributed to the reinforcement of the Ottoman dominance. In order to break the railway link, the son of Hussein, Faisal I bin Hussein bin Ali al-Hashimi, established the Arab Northern Army and his practices marked the beginning of the so-called "Railway War" in 1917.

Important People

Abdulaziz Ibn Saud

Born to the powerful House of Saud, Abdulaziz was the first son of the last Emir of the Second Saudi State, Abdul Rahman bin Faisal. After the conquest of the state by the Emirate of Jabal Shammar, Abdullaziz followed his family to Kuwait where they took refuge. As a young teenager, Abdulaziz followed the traditions of his family, and pursued a way of life in accordance with the Wahhabi doctrine. He was educated by Islamic scholars and had extensive military training.

At the age of 26, Abdulaziz regroups the males of the House of Saud to announce the plan to attack, recapture and recreate the state of his father. After conquering vast lands and the stronghold of Riyadd, Ibn Saud declares himself the Emir (later the Sultan) of the Third Saudi State. In the wake of the Great War, he turns to the British for aid and protection against the Ottomans. He founds Ikhawan, a tribal and Arab army loyal to him, and sees the World War I as an opportunity to expand his territories, Wahhabi ideology, control all over the Arabian Peninsula and consolidate power around him.

Saud Bin Abdulaziz al Rashid, Emir of Jabal Shammar

Born to the extensive governing family of the Emirate in 1897, Saud became Emir at just the age of 13. Unable to fulfil his duties due to his age, he spent his time learning ottoman, local dialects of Arabic and practicing military techniques. Fatima Al Zamil, his grandmother along with his other maternal relatives from the al Sabhan family and in accordance with the Shammar paternal side, ruled the Emirate until 1914. In the wake of the World War I, the young Saud takes over the rule of the Emirate. However, he has to face internal competitors who contest his accession to the throne, the Arab Revolt and his military and political alliance with the Ottomans.

Hussein bin Ali, Sharif of Mecca and King of Hejaz

The first self-declared King of Hejaz, was born to the Sharif of Mecca Ali ibn Muhammad, believed to be directly descending from the Prophet. As a kid and a young man, Hussein was known for his studious nature and fair dealings with Arab tribes around the Holy Cities and in the Nejd region. Having been born and educated in Istanbul, he enjoyed close relations with the Ottomans with whom he also shared the adherence to the same Sunni school of jurisprudence, Hannafi. However, the rise of Young Turks and nationalism prompted him to change sides and gradually engage in secret negotiations with the British. Agreed to join forces against the Ottomans, the King of Hejaz was promised an independent state. Nonetheless, his ultimate objective remains to place his family as the ruling power in all of Arabia and Mesopotamia.

Currently governing lands which the British recognize, has brought Hussein into direct conflict with Ibn Saud, with whom he is fighting mutually the Ottoman Empire. Being skeptical about Ibn Saud's good relations with the British, he believes that the latter will honor their agreement and hand him Arab provinces.

Tribal Affairs in the Arabian Peninsula

Many tribes in the Arabian Peninsula have long ancestry in Islamic history, where numerous forms of governance have seen the test of time, many predating the early Islamic era. Both tribal and family leadership are strong characteristics of the Arab people, hence the importance of tribes dominating others became relevant to

statesmanship and federal power through tribal cooperation. Two of the main tribes which have been the most influential in commanding most of the tribes in representing the revolt of Arabs against Ottoman leadership of the Islamic world; the Al Saud and the Al ash-Sheikh.

The Al Saud tribe maintains Al ash-Sheikh's authority in religious matters while the Al Saud are supported to control political matters. Both command their followers from where they originate, the Najd region. Al ash-Sheikh are the descendants of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab, where himself and Muhammad bin Saud made an

oath to each other to support each other's influence for a ruling class preaching a puritanical, simple version of Islam, distinctive from that of the Ottoman Empire. There was a strong source of pride for the Arab tribes in their rejection of Ottoman scholars' interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence and though in their attempt to 'purify' the faith as well as redirect leadership of the Middle East to the Arab heartland.



The first Saudi state was the Emirate of Diriyah (1734-1818) and the second was the Emirate of

Nejd (1824-1891). As the Al Saud had been exiled to the Emirate of Kuwait under the protection and convenient umbrella of the British, the Al Saud aspired to return the Nejd and Hejaz as a modern Kingdom under their control, which Ibn Saud gradually succeeded in doing since 1902 for the duration of the three following decades. Riyadh has historically been the capital for the Al Saud tribe, with the Nejd, Al-Hasa, Jebel

Shammar, Asir and Hejaz under their control. The Hejaz region is instrumental for religious symbolism of power and state guardianship as it establishes the Al Saud as the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques with the support from the descendants of the Al ash-Sheikh.

The Al ash-Sheikh were not the only ones who advocated Salafi ideals in supporting the Saudi state. Other Salafis who

acted as an organised movement comprised the Ikhwan movement who act as both a religious and social order, as well as a military for religious calling. The ‘Utaybii tribe is based in the Hejaz and Nejd regions and also have a strong influence within the Ikhwan movement as one of the most influential Sunni tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. Sultan bin Bajad bin Hameed Al-Otaibi is a devout Salafist who supports King Abdul-Aziz in capturing Hasa and ‘Asir regions alongside Mecca and Jeddah to produce the third Saudi state. The ‘Utayba have grown alongside the Ikhwan movement and maintain strong leadership in military and social affairs. Other tribes in other regions have a significance in the movement, such as the Mutayr tribe, who support Ibn Saud’s conquest against Kuwaiti defense forces as part of the Ikhwan movement. One of the most significant leaders of this tribe is Faisal bin Sultan al-Duwaish, based in the Nejd. Nonetheless, some tribes are hostile to the Saudi interests and create internal problems such as the Ajman, a tribe loyal to the Emirate of Jabal Shammar and hence to the Ottoman Empire.

In the Emirate of Jabal Shammar, political power was controlled by two tribes: the Rashidi Dynasty and the al-Sabhans. The Rashidi Dynasty was of the Shammar tribe which originated from Yemen and belonged to the ancient tribe of Tay’y. Their tribal history dates back to the powerful Kahlan Qahtani people; Arabs of the southern part of the peninsula, known for their commercial activities and powerful liaisons to Bedouins. In the early Islamic history, Qahtani supported Ali something that rendered them closer to Shia tribes later in history.

The al-Sabhan tribe on the other hand were Bedouins inside the Emirate's territories. Starting from the mid-19th century, powerful Sabhan tribesmen married their daughters with the Emirs of Jabal Shammar. In the beginning of the 20th century, these constant associations resulted in creating two different fractions inside the Emirate: the maternal al-Sabhan side and the paternal-Shammar. Both were powerful within the Emirate and played a key-role in decision making.

The Emirate was mainly populated by Bedouins who facilitated trade and commercial routes and whose tribal alliances were crucial from the Ottoman Empire.

In the Kingdom of Hejaz on the other hand, the ruling tribe was the Hachemite dynasty. Their power was legitimized through their descending from the prophet. Descending from the Hasanid tribe, they are members of the Quraysh, the tribe in which the Prophet was born. Through their line of descend, they are establishing tribal affairs with all the tribes descending from the Prophet in the region. The tribes inhabiting inside the Kingdom are also considered to be descending from Mohamed or belong to Bedouins tribes whose main activity is the trade and the pilgrims. One of the most powerful such tribes is the Juhaynah, Bedouins who were loyal warriors to the King. Their lucrative business with pilgrims allowed them to contribute financially to the Arab Revolt and sabotage Ottoman movements.

Big tribes such as Utaybah were divided not only among clans but also areas and alliances. Large number of Utaybah people remained loyal to the King while others adopted the doctrines of Wahhabism and became vital geopolitical allies to the Emirate of Nejd.

Geographical locations make a huge difference of the cultural relations and standing of their presence in the political struggle between tribes. In the vast dessert, there are numerous tribes who do not recognize any of the three powers or Ottoman Empire, act on their own, have warriors and a self-sufficient economy based on the caravans and oasis. The Hutaym, one of the biggest desert tribes has yet to assess loyalty to someone, while their tribal governance, religious doctrines and economy remain secret and unknown to most.

Geographically, the North and Central Saudi Arabia regions is home to the Subay' tribe, Qahtanite tribes are typically from the southern region, such as Banu Yam who are native to southern Najran region and are more tolerant to forms of Shiite Islam. Tribes such as the Shammar would also have a significant ancestral claim to leadership but still have competition, in this case with the Saudis, forcing the tribe to claim power elsewhere in the Arab world. Some tribes are a conglomerate or organised federation of numerous tribes, such as Al Dawasir which comprises of the Azdite, Adnanite and Hamdanite tribes, who are all traditionally associated with the Nejd region. The Dawasir were once the second largest influential tribe in Bahrain before emigrating to Dammam, third largest metropolitan area of the Arabian Peninsula at the time.

A selection of tribes claim their name to traditional lineage established by their tribes as ruling dynasties in the past, claiming different regions of the Arab Peninsula as part of a unique historical claim to their culture and lifestyle. The Zahran tribe had once originated from Yemen in ancient times and their descendants, the Azd 'Uman, were the ruling tribe in the early Ummayyad caliphate. The Ghamd are closely related to the Zahran as a neighbouring tribe, however they identify historically with southwestern Al-Bahah of the Hejaz region and also claim to have ancestry dominant in the early Islamic era. The Al-Ghamidis, like the Saudis, have strong attitudes to business and support trade in Riyadh and Jeddah.

The importance of tribes in this crisis can be summarised in three points: political control, religious motivations and ancestral pride. As the Arab tribes are well acquainted with each other with history of conflict and facing world powers at stage, they have a history of both conflict and cooperation when establishing authority in the region. Despite the Prophet Muhammad preaching for a faith that establishing all men as equal, the stature of tribal politics and the link between power and family seeks to command the Islamic world in its heartland with the core of Arab heritage inseparable from its culture.

Religious Affairs

History and Pillars of Islam

Founded in the VII century, Islam is founded in the Arabian Peninsula by Prophet Mohammed and faces numerous developments in the next centuries. In 610 C.E. Mohammed first reported revelations from Djabraïl archangel believed to be from God and which continued till the end of his life in 632.

Islam is founded around 5 pillars: the Chahada, the profession of faith in which Allah can be recognized as the one true God with Mohammed as his messenger, the Salat, the physical, mental and spiritual prayer observed five times a day in the direction of Mecca, the Zakat, the gift to alms or charity for the poor and needy, the Sawm, the fasting during the holy month of Ramadan and the Hadjdj, the pilgrimage to the Mecca every Muslim should conduct at least once in their life.

Mecca and Medina, the two cities the Prophet lived most of his life, situated in the Hejaz region constitute the holy cities of Islam while the holy book of Islam constituted by 114 chapters, or surahs is the Qur'an.

The death of Mohammed in 632 A.D. is the catalyst moment that would lead to the beginning of different schools and sects of Islam. The line of succession, not evoked by the Prophet, would create multiple tensions within the umma, the Islamic community.

At first Abū Bakr was chosen as the first caliph, the religious successors to the Prophet. But throughout the next caliphs, the line of succession created two distinct sides and eventually provoked the first fitna, a civil war within the Islamic community. A smaller faction supported 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet while the rest supported to keep a consensual line of succession in order to respect the Sunnah, the verbally transmitted traditions and customs of the Prophet. The two groups later came to be known as Shia, and Sunnis. Throughout the years, another sect and multiple doctrines were created.

Islam in the Arabic Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire in the 20th century

At the turn of the 20th century, the Arabian Peninsula is divided religiously. The south west Yemen (both British and Ottoman) follows the Shia Zaydi doctrine, the south east corner adheres to the Kharijites, a sect inside the Shia, while the rest of the lands adhere to different forms of Sunnism.

Sunnism is divided in four fiqh, the Islamic jurisprudence by which sharia, the divine law, is interpreted: The Hanbali, the Hanafi, the Maliki and the Shafi school of law. Different regions within the Ottoman Empire adhered to different schools of law.

The Ottoman Sultans and the populations in modern-day Turkey mostly followed the Hanafi school of law. The same applied to the overall region of Hejaz, with the Kingdom of Hejaz considering themselves as the orthodox Muslims adhering to Hanafi. The ally of the Ottoman Empire on the other hand followed the Hanbali school of law.

The Hanafi school was centered around reason and logic. It uses opinion, its legal doctrines are relatively moderate while it respects personal freedom. The Hanafi school of law was also the first one to create religious rules of business transactions. The Hanbali school on the other side is a more strict and focuses on the hadiths, the set of opinions, citations and decisions of the Prophet transmitted verbally, as well as on the individual reasoning.

However, the strictest and most conservative of all was Wahhabism followed by the Emirate of Nejd. Created by Muhammad ibn Abd-al Wahhab, Wahhabism is a doctrine which supports the absolute sovereignty of Allah. It proposes to purify the Islam and go back to the way of life of the first umma. Moreover, it considers apostates any Muslims who do not adhere to it and infidels all the Shias. At the time, its main goal would be to spread all over the Arabian Peninsula and avoid another prosecution by the Ottomans.

Nonetheless, the objective for the three local actors remained to assure their sovereignty and power as well as capture the Holy Cities, something that could further legitimize their governance and enable them to expand their influence across the Muslim world.

Power and Religion

The use and association of religion and politics was present from the birth of Islam. Mohammed was not only the Prophet and religious leader but also a military general and the political leader of the Islamic community. Hence, Islam became not only a religious force but also a political one.

In the tribal way of governance in the Arabian Peninsula, religion legitimized the political leaders. Ulemas, the Islamic Scholars, were present in all the councils and advised the tribesmen, charged with guiding the umma in the right path. They also advocated and legitimized their power through adherence to religion or by supporting their ascendance from Mohammad or his relatives. Therefore, their role was significant and their presence and advocacy more than crucial for the continuation of the tribe in power.

Although, all tribes in the peninsula followed this principal, it was mainly the Sultanate of Nejd that institutionalized the association of a specific dynasty with an Islamic doctrine and vice-versa.

The alliance of Ibn Saoud with al-Wahhab, later enabled him to conquer various areas with the help of the religious warrior group made by believers of Wahhabism. This alliance made possible the propagation of the Wahhabism belief as Ibn Saoud spread his control over the territories.

The same way of legitimation was applied by Houssein bin Ali, who in 1916 proclaimed himself 'Caliph of all Muslims', a term used to identify religious leaders. As leader of 'Arab Revolt', he called to fight the Ottoman Empire and another political form of Islam.

The Sultan Abdul Hamid II(reigned until 1908), profound supporter of Pan-Islamism, the idea that Muslims should be united against exteriors and mainly Europeans and particularly emphasized his role as caliph, the religious leader of the entire Muslim community.

His successor, the current Sultan Mehmed V not only supported that but went on to call for a jihad against the Entente forces during the Great War. His appeal to Muslim population largely failed.

Military Equipment and Power

By 1917, modern warfare as we now know it had begun to take shape. In Europe, the Great War had been raging for three bloody years, seeing millions of people killed by machine guns, artillery, and poison gas. Even the Middle East did not escape warfare on an industrialized scale. The Gallipoli Campaign brought trench warfare to the shores of the Ottoman Empire, while the British landings in Mesopotamia threatened the Persian oil fields. The tension in the Arabian Peninsula, however, has not yet escalated into full-scale conflict.

General Technological Advances

Smokeless powder, invented in 1884 by a Frenchman, drastically changed the nature of warfare. Prior to its invention, the firing of guns en-masse would discharge a thick cloud of white smoke, giving away a soldier's position at long range, and also obscuring the battlefield from up close. Now, guns could be fired with a much lower chance of visual detection. Moreover, this new propellant was three times as powerful as traditional gunpowder, allowing rifles to fire effectively up to 1,000 yards. Within four years, both Austria and Germany had introduced smokeless powder into their armed forces, with other countries soon to follow.

Rifles

Both sides by this time were equipped with modern bolt-action rifles, which had a cartridge capacity of between five to ten rounds, loaded into an internal "magazine". These could be inserted into the weapon individually, or in "charger clips" which would hold five to ten cartridges and could be used to load the weapon in a single move. With the introduction of these weapons, an infantryman could fire off around around seven rounds each minute, a massive increase from earlier single-shot rifles.

Another, older type of rifle that would have been used was the lever-action rifle, which used a "lever" to eject the spent casing. These forced the user to lower the rifle when operating the mechanism, which meant that it took longer to raise the weapon

back up and re-acquire the target. On the other hand, bolt action rifles allowed the user to operate the mechanism whilst still looking down the sights of their weapon.

Some muskets were also still in use. The “jezail” musket, recognised by its distinct curved stock and long barrel, first came into use in the 1700s. They were extremely slow to load, as each shot required the insertion of a measure of gunpowder into a barrel, followed by a small piece of cloth or other material called “wadding” to stop the powder from falling out, then the actual bullet, followed by more wadding. This understandably meant that even a skilled musketeer could only fire of 1-2 rounds at most each minute. Compared to early muskets, these were relatively accurate due to their long barrel, but without modern rifling (the grooves inside the barrel that made bullets spin and become more accurate), they could not compete with modern rifles.

Pistols

Pistols were also used on a widespread basis during the conflict. Ranking officers usually carried pistols instead of rifles, and their job was to command, rather to fight. Cavalrymen and their commanders would be accustomed to using pistols as an integral part of their equipment, however.

Machine Guns

Machine guns were present during this period. They could either be water-cooled or air-cooled. The former made it very heavy but easier to fire for longer periods of time, often using a crew of up to four to fire and reload and was transported by a wheeled carriage like an artillery piece. The latter other hand was considerably lighter (about half the weight) and only required a crew of two to fire, though had a lower rate of fire and overheated more easily.

The Kingdom of Hejaz

By 1917, the Hejaz was in full scale revolt against the Ottoman Empire. Their efforts against the Ottomans during this period gained them support from the British and French, who were fighting on the same side as part of the First World War. In

addition to sending over small arms and ammunition, the Hejaz also had British and French detachments fighting alongside them. Consisting of specialists, these included trained Egyptian artillery gunners, commonwealth personnel and even RAF planes and pilots. These were extremely useful in operations against the Ottomans, though remained outside the control of the Hejaz themselves.

The Hejaz drew from both Bedouins for their irregular raiding forces and city-dwellers for regular infantry units.

A significant proportion of the Hejaz troops were fighting the Ottomans as the Regular Arab Army, which was founded in 1916. These men were Arab soldiers and officers, formerly serving under the Ottoman Empire but through desertion or capture made it into the ranks of the Hejaz. As trained combat veterans, these men were effective in conventional battles and highly motivated, as they were fighting against the Ottoman Empire for their freedom.

The Hejaz had 30,000 troops, including 5,000 mounted troops. Most of these would be locked in conflict with the Ottomans.

The Hejaz fought with British weaponry. British rifles that could have been used included the Lee-Enfield, as well as its predecessors, the Lee-Metford, the Martini-Henry and the Henry-Enfield rifles which would have left service. The Lee-Enfield and Lee-Metford were the most recent, though the Henry-Enfield was also known to have been used. The Hejaz would have also been supplied with British machine guns like the Vickers gun.

The Emirate of Nejd

On the side of the Al Sauds of Nejd were the infamous Ikhwan, who were Bedouins that the Al Saud had collectivized into small, sedentary communities. There, they were taught farming, craftsmanship, trade, as well as converted into a strict form of Islam. Despite these efforts, the ex-nomads still continued their traditional raiding of other tribes and villages, now technically sanctioned by their religious leaders.

Notorious for their brutality, they executed every male prisoner and often killed women and children as well. They fought as mounted irregulars, riding camels and horses. Armed with lances, swords and outdated firearms, they fought in raids, utilising their mounts for mobility and speed.

In pitched battles against well-trained and equipped opponents, they often wavered due to their reliance on speed and surprise. Despite the advantages of being mounted, Ikhwan raiders were no match for prepared men fighting out of fortified positions, where infantry could use their modern firearms with better accuracy than men firing from horseback.

Of course, a significant part of the Al Saud army consisted of regulars on foot, fighting in a more modern fashion under an organised structure. Out of a total number of 35,000, 10,000 were Ikhwan raiders

Soldiers of the Nejd had less exposure to modern warfare than the Hejaz, who were actively fighting against the Ottomans and other Central Powers. However, from 1915 they had been supplied with modern rifles and machine guns, and were also permitted by the British to purchase military hardware for Bahrain.

The Ikhwan, as previously mentioned, fought mounted with lances and swords, meaning that they went up close and personal against their enemies. When raiding, they chose lightly or undefended targets such as villages, meaning that they were able to run down targets without fearing enemy gunfire. Some of them would have traditional muskets which could keep the enemy at range, but were hardly effective weapons.

The Emirate of Jabal Shammar

Since the beginning of the Arab Revolt, the Ottomans realized that they needed an Arab leader to counteract the Al Sauds and the Hejaz. However, relations between the Ottomans and the Emirate of Jabal Shammar had already existed since 1901, when

Kuwait, then occupied by the British, was invaded by the Shammar under a deal with the Ottomans. With Ottoman help, Jabal Shammar was fortified against their opponents.

Shammar's troops were supported by the Ottomans both financially and materially. The short distance between Shammar and Turkey meant that aid and reinforcements being sent from the Ottoman homeland took less time to arrive compared to British aid being sent to the Hejaz.

The Emirate of Jabal Shammar was estimated to have 20,000 troops, mostly on foot. However, this number also consisted of 5,000 mounted troops that rode camels or horses, able to undertake raiding operations. Though they had relatively fewer men, they also had the might of the Ottoman Empire backing them.

The Shammar were equipped by modern Ottoman weapons, originally supplied by the German manufacturer Mauser. As part of different agreements and treaties, the Ottoman Empire sent shipments of rifles and other small arms to help the Shammar fight against Arab rebels. Notably, they received German machine guns, which were a powerful addition to their arsenal.

Triple Entente

During this time, both France and Britain had forces in the region as part of their campaign against the Ottoman Empire. Armed with the latest European weaponry, they were an effective fighting force, though more suited to conventional warfare than the traditional raiding style of fighting that characterised much of the conflict. Despite their size, they were equipped with machine guns, mortars, artillery, armoured cars, and even a flight of 4 RAF planes.

The French had a military mission numbering 1,100 men, led by Colonel Edouard Bremond (Murphy, 2008), whereas the British had roughly 3,000. Most of the British

were actually Egyptians or Indians, though were well-trained and led by motivated officers.

Central Powers

The Ottoman Empire by this time was significantly weakened, though still a great power in its own right. Spanning most of the Middle East and Turkey, the Ottoman Empire had vast financial resources and were a capable fighting force. By this time, they had roughly 25,000 trained and well-equipped soldiers as well as over 300 artillery pieces (Murphy, 2008). Despite their training and modern equipment, Ottoman troops often had mediocre morale at best and nonexistent will to fight at worst. They relied upon conventional warfare tactics, which worked poorly against guerrilla warfare tactics employed by the Arabs against them.

Foreign Powers

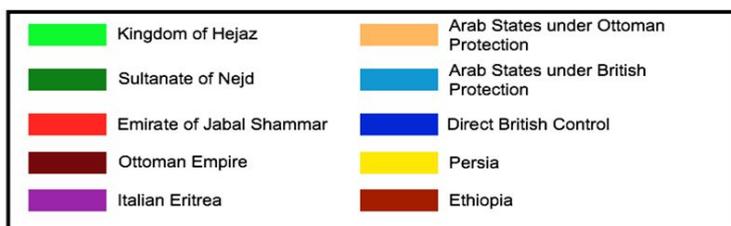
As Ottoman hold on the Middle East waned further with the times of the Great War, the scramble of power in the region was contested by outside interests as well. The most active were the British and the French, being the only Entente forces present.

While the bulk of *British* colonial forces might be stationed to the east in India, these forces have been engaged in Mesopotamia since the start of the War in 1914. Greater British influence in the area actually emerged from a fellow Arab nation to the west - Egypt. As a British protectorate, Egypt was a home base for the British operations, the most significant of which being the formation of the Arab Bureau in Cairo in 1916; an intelligence department dedicated to coordinating and disseminating information regarding the situation in the region. Dozens of agents operate under its command,

including the
infamous TE
Lawrence of
Arabia. Not
only does the
destruction of

Ottoman Empire become their primary mission, but also to defend the vital Suez Canal.

The *French*, on the other side, provided most of the Entente fighting forces in the theatre. Up to 4000 French Armenians volunteered to join the infamous French Foreign Legions and were deployed in the Middle East. The French military mission



in the area was even strengthened with the presence of French North African army.

With it comes the advantages of having local, fellow Muslim commanders such as Captain Muhammad Ould Ali.

Seeing the two forces operate in the area, the *Ottomans* were not idle either. Having just completed a railway connecting Damascus & the holy city of Medina in 1914, this provided them with easier transport of troops and supplies. Around 20,000 troops were stationed in Hejaz comprising of loyal Arabs. While the regional rulers saw the War as an opportunity to expand their influences, the common people did not think entirely the same. The Sultan in Istanbul also claimed the title of Caliph, or the guardian of the Muslim community *umma* - an identity most Arabs professed, legitimizing support for the Ottomans.

With such global players already active in Arabia, delegates should also take into account these factors in times of decision-making. Upsetting the balance of powers in a wrong, upstart way might turn these powers from allies into supporter of rivals which may ultimately spell doom. Not to mention there has been rumors that the Entente powers intend to carve the Middle East among themselves. And yet with smart maneuvering, these outside powers can be turned into a valuable ally to overpower everyone else in this crisis.

Questions that a Position Paper should answer

Every delegate will need to submit a Position Paper (PP) prior to the conference. The PP should address primary goals and intentions of the character. Some questions that might help you address those issues are listed below:

- What is your objective inside the cabinet and overall?
- To whom are you allied among your cabinet's members?
- With which foreign powers, in your opinion, should your cabinet seek to form alliances?

Suggestions for further research

The background guide provides a general overview of the topic, while each cabinet will be provided with a brief study guide specific to the respective cabinet and short character bios.

All in all, we recommend going from general overview to detailed sub-topics research in your preparations. Start with texts that offer a general perspective of the topic then move to topical works and questions.

For an overall overview, we would suggest the *A History of Saudi Arabia* (Al-Rasheed, M., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, relevant pages: 14-42), which constitutes one of the most recent works on the topic. Excellent choice for understanding the tribal history and the legitimation of power through religion and religious history of the region is the *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival* (Niblock, T., Abingdon, Routledge, 2006) while *The birth of Saudi Arabia: Britain and the rise of the House of Sa'ud* (Troeller, G., London, Frank Cass, 1973) provides valuable information on the role of Britain as well as military info.

For a topical research on the recent past prior to the starting point, you can consult *The Making of Saudi Arabia 1916-1936: From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State* (Kostiner, J., New York, Oxford University Press, 1993, pages 17-59 in the 2006 edition) while for military and the religious driven forces, you can refer to *The History of Saudi Arabia* (Vassiliev, A., London, Al Saqi Books, 1998).

If you would like more information on the populations, the climate and the geography we highly suggest the *World and Its People: The Arabian Peninsula, Middle East,*

Western Asia and Northern Africa (Cavendish Square Publishing; pages 74-108 in the 2007 edition).

We also suggest two of the first traveling books published before the actual unification took place which present valuable sources to understand the culture, religion and customs of the populations of the Arabian Peninsula: *The Penetration of Arabia: a Record of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula* (David George Hogarth, 1905) and the *Narrative of a Journey from Cairo to Medina and Mecca, by Suez, Arabia, Tawila, al-Jauf, Jublae, Hail and Negd in 1845* (Georg Wallin, 1854, Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol 24: pages 115-201).

We also propose some online sources such as The Encyclopedia of Islam Online and The Encyclopedia of the Qur'ân Online which offer a valuable insight on Islam, tribes and the history of the region. Also online, The Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures is a valuable source for the role of culture, customs and women inside the governance forms of each cabinet, particularly the Emirate of Jabal Shammar.

Most of the suggestions can usually be found on your university's library while online suggestions are accessible for free by most universities online portal.

Closing Remarks

We would finally like to thank you all for taking the time and energy to read the study guide and prepare for the committee. As the crisis team, we are very excited to plunge with you into the modern Arabic Peninsula, its history and customs. We are thrilled to be exploring along with you the course for the future of the region and we remind you to please be prepared for the conference.

Get into the mindset of the characters- what do they want, what are their goals, whom they ally to tribally, religiously, military and personally?

The starting point for the crisis, the end of 1917 is a troubled moment for the entire world. World War I is raging across the world. The primary challenges the Arabian Peninsula is facing and which you should keep in mind, are that as the Ottoman Empire is at risk of its dissolution, the Muslim world stays without a leader. The Arab identity, beginning to emerge, poses questions regarding the governance and its association to religion as well as division of the lands.

As you prepare for the conference, please be reminded that only business attire may be used throughout the conference. Feel free to accessorize it with your character's belongings and props but please do keep the general outfit part of the business attire.