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Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Social  
Welfare in Abu Dhabi, 1966-1972.**

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The Unwritten Social Contract: Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Social  
Welfare in Abu Dhabi, 1966-1972.

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## **Notes on Transliteration**

Throughout this dissertation, conventional English equivalents have been used for all personal and place names, as well as words critical to this study, such as sheikh. In addition, diacritics and macrons have been omitted so as to render this study more easily accessible to those unfamiliar with Arabic.

‘The Ruler who is entrusted with power to safeguard the interests of the people will be considered useless by them if he lived for himself and exploited the wealth of the country for his personal interests.’

- Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. Maitra, *Zayed: From challenges to union* (Abu Dhabi, 2007) 105.

## **Introduction**

Scheduled to open later this year, the Sheikh Zayed National Museum, located at the heart of the Saadiyat Island Cultural District in Abu Dhabi, provides yet another tribute to Sheikh Zayed, the Ruler of Abu Dhabi from 1966 to 2004. Standing alongside other state-of-the-art developments such as the Louvre and Guggenheim museums, the Sheikh Zayed National Museum plans to showcase the social and economic transformation of Abu Dhabi under the rule of Zayed. This objective is no easy task, for during Zayed's 38 years in power, Abu Dhabi was to be transformed from a scattering of primitive settlements to a modern, multicultural metropolis.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, this 'metamorphosis' has tended to be attributed predominantly to the individual efforts of Sheikh Zayed.<sup>3</sup> While architects are left to grapple with these challenges, what is perhaps an even harder task is explaining why, despite such profound changes accompanying state development, Zayed managed to retain Abu Dhabi's political structure and his position as Ruler. Contrary to the supposedly prophetic utterances of political scientists in the 1960s, asserting that the Gulf sheikhs were 'hopelessly out of step with modernisation', authoritarian rule in Abu Dhabi between 1966 and 1972 strengthened.<sup>4</sup> How was it that these esteemed scholars had it so wrong? How had Zayed managed to engineer social and economic change and yet, at the same time, political continuity? This dissertation will argue that Sheikh Zayed was able to do so through development that was considered beneficial to the local population. Despite its Eurocentric nature, the term 'development' will be taken in this paper simply to mean 'the reduction or amelioration of poverty and material want.'<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> V. Wake, 'Abu Dhabi: The City That Grew Out of a Desert', *Austrian Quarterly*, Vol. 82. No. 1 (2010) 32.

<sup>3</sup> "Interview with Dr. Jane Bristol-Rhys", Eastern Mangroves Promenade, 5 November 2015.

<sup>4</sup> J. Krane, *Dubai: The Story of the World's Fastest City* (New York, 2009) 56.

<sup>5</sup> J. Ferguson, *The anti-politics machine: "Development," depoliticization and bureaucratic power in Lesotho* (Cambridge, 1990) 15.

*Development: Instrument of Power*

Development as a way of entrenching state power is by no means a new concept. Over time and across a broad range of political regimes, development has emerged as one of a number of ways in which nation-states have consolidated their authority. In Abu Dhabi political authority remains a matter of the ruling family. Thus, if development was not used to obtain votes or upstage rivals, how then does one explain Zayed's emphasis on development, as opposed to other forms of social control such as repression? Oriented as might be expected by their loyalty to the government, official Emirati narratives emphasise Zayed's Islamic religious instruction, and love of his land and people, as the foundation stones for Zayed's development.<sup>6</sup> Contemporary British sources adopted a similar view of Zayed's motivations.<sup>7</sup> While these benevolent explanations justify to some degree Zayed's decision to develop Abu Dhabi, they fail to address the ability of development to muster popular support for the state and its Ruler. This absence in the historiography is also a result of the small number of historians who have acknowledged the political importance of development. Among those that have, notably Srirupa Roy, James Ferguson, and James C. Scott, there has been a proclivity to focus on development projects which have proved unsuccessful in mobilising public support for the state or individual in power. These historians' findings beg the question as to why development in these instances failed, but that instigated by Sheikh Zayed succeeded? This dissertation will conclude that, contrary to other state-initiated development programmes, which were implemented with 'little acknowledgement of the people or their social conditions', Zayed established institutions which were both beneficial to the indigenous population – the sector of society which holds political significance – and in line with Bedouin tradition.<sup>8</sup> As a result, Zayed was to gain the trust and support of the local population, colloquially referred to as 'Nationals' or 'locals'.

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<sup>6</sup> A. Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis: Memoirs of Abdul Hafeez Yarwar Khan Al Yousefi* (Abu Dhabi, 2015) 44-5.

<sup>7</sup> TNA: FO 371/148916, 'Note on the irrigation system in Buraimi' (27 March, 1960) 11.

<sup>8</sup> J. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998) 2.



This reciprocity underpinning Zayed's rule is essentially what is implied by the expression 'unwritten social contract', that is, the 'implicit agreement among the members of a society to cooperate for social benefits.'<sup>9</sup> So far the only person to have adequately addressed this political dynamic in Abu Dhabi is Christopher Davidson, a former assistant professor at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, and currently a reader in Middle East politics at Durham University. While Davidson must be credited for bringing this relationship between Zayed and Abu Dhabi locals to our attention, his conclusions are somewhat generic and self-evident. Nevertheless, in asserting that, 'in exchange for packages of oil-financed benefits, [...] the [Gulf monarchs] have managed to purchase the political acquiescence of their indigenous populations', Davidson serves as a useful starting point for further discussion.<sup>10</sup>

### *Chapter Structure*

The objective of this study is therefore to explain further the political continuity that emerged during Zayed's reign through a historical understanding of his development policies, with a particular focus on social welfare, between the years 1966 and 1972. In order to do so, this dissertation will be divided into five key sections. It will first begin with an analysis of Zayed's predecessor and elder brother, Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi from 1928 to 1966. In doing so, the reader will not only grasp the socio-economic context that Zayed inherited upon assuming leadership in 1966, but also gain insight into how Shakhbut's reign shaped the trajectory of Zayed's governance. This will then be followed by an analysis of the social welfare projects that were undertaken between 1966 and 1972. This end date has been chosen for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it coincides with the end of the National Five-Year Plan, instigated under Zayed, which comprises a key focus of this dissertation. Furthermore, in November 1971 the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a federation of seven states located along the Persian Gulf, including

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<sup>9</sup> 'Social Contract', *Oxford Dictionaries*. Oxford University Press, n.d. Web. 11 Mar. 2016.

<sup>10</sup> C. Davidson, *Power and Politics in the Persian Gulf Monarchies* (New York, 2011) 2.

Abu Dhabi, was founded. While the UAE, with Sheikh Zayed as its President, did much to ameliorate the lives of its citizens, it causes significant difficulties for the researcher to establish what was accomplished in Abu Dhabi during this period.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, in order to avoid the task of disentangling developments on an Emirati and federal level, 1972 has been chosen as the cut-off point. Nevertheless, while this date has helped ease investigation, it has caused other limitations, chiefly a shortage of sources, for most historical work conducted on Zayed's development projects has focused on his later years in power. From here, Chapter 2 will provide a general introduction to social welfare under Zayed and briefly outline the theoretical concept of the 'allocative state'. This paper's distinct focus on social welfare is a result of both available source material and the importance which Zayed ascribed to it. Numerous tales exist of how, during his early years, Zayed could be found on the hills of Al Ain, accompanied by friends, pointing to the barren land ahead declaring, 'Here we shall build the school, here the hospital and there the university.'<sup>12</sup> Whether these stories are apocryphal or not, what can be firmly established is that, upon becoming Ruler in 1966, Zayed instantly began developing Abu Dhabi's educational, medical and housing facilities. Nevertheless, this dissertation's emphasis on social welfare should not reduce the significance of Zayed's other acts, such as the establishment of cordial relations with neighbouring nations like Qatar, and the use of his marital relationships as a mechanism to form cohesive bonds between tribal families, in helping to sustain his rule.<sup>13</sup> For reasons of brevity, these factors will not be addressed in this paper. Rather they are mentioned here merely to serve as a reminder that the beneficial developments that Zayed implemented are only one, albeit a large, part of the whole story. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 will proceed to focus on education, housing and healthcare respectively between 1966 and 1972. Each chapter will provide an illustration of the developments, an examination of the motivations that

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<sup>11</sup> "United Arab Emirates's Constitution of 1971 with Amendments through 2004." *Constituteproject*. Constituteproject.org, n.d. Web. 20 Feb. 2016.

<sup>12</sup> H. Tammam, *Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan: The Leader and the March*. 2nd ed. (Abu Dhabi, 1983) 64.

<sup>13</sup> A. Rugh, *The Political Culture of Leadership in the United Arab Emirates* (New York, 2007) 82. Sheikh Zayed proceeded to have nine wives in total, who together bore at least thirty children, nineteen of which were boys.

underpinned them, and finally an analysis of public reception. It is of crucial importance to point out that, with regards to popular support, there is little evidence which proves conclusively that Nationals were satisfied with the changes introduced by Zayed: for instance, there were no Gallup polls conducted. Instead the proof of the pudding is essentially in the eating - the 'eating' in this case signifying the adoption of these developments by the local population.

### *Methodology*

This dissertation draws upon months of field research involving a wide range of techniques including participant observation, interviews and archival research. While this work retains a historical methodology, its findings have relevance across other disciplines including anthropology, geography and political science. During this period of research, various challenges emerged, above all the dependence on British sources. As numerous historians have identified, this period relies heavily upon the British Foreign Office records and memoirs of British political servants. However, as Andrea Rugh has rightly pointed out, regrettably there are few alternatives.<sup>14</sup> Arabic history during the twentieth century rested heavily upon oral tradition, in large part due to the small number of citizens able to read and write. As a result, scholars have had little choice but to depend upon British accounts. While these sources provide detailed records of events in the region and personal encounters with the rulers, scholars have noted that they are far from neutral catalogues of information. In fact, in some cases, as Dr. Jane Bristol Rhys has observed, their tone is 'bluntly pejorative and condescending.'<sup>15</sup> In order to counteract this over-reliance on British records, field research, including interviews with scholars and local Emiratis, has been carried out. The two interviews, one with a female professor of anthropology at Zayed University, and the other a member of the royal family, were both carried out in an informal manner. In fact,

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<sup>14</sup> Rugh, *Political Culture of Leadership*, x.

<sup>15</sup> J. Bristol-Rhys, "Emirati Historical Narratives", *History and Anthropology*, Vol. 20. No. 2 (2009) 111.

during the amicable interview with His Highness Sheikh Suroor bin Mohammed Al Nahyan, a relative of Sheikh Zayed, and his interpreter, Zaki Nusseibeh, I decided to dispense with the audio recording as it seemed unbecoming.<sup>16</sup> Finally, in travelling regularly to Abu Dhabi, I was able to gain direct access to the National Archives of Abu Dhabi and examine a range of newspaper articles, photographs and confidential government policy records.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, access to legal documents, such as the Emiri decrees, remained restricted. Notwithstanding these limitations, this dissertation will continue to provide an in-depth examination of social welfare development conducted under the aegis of Sheikh Zayed between 1966 and 1972.

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<sup>16</sup> Due to the personal nature of this study, the use of the personal pronoun 'I' is deemed appropriate here.

<sup>17</sup> I would like to offer my sincerest gratitude to the staff at the National Archives Abu Dhabi, University of Paris Sorbonne Abu Dhabi and New York University Abu Dhabi, without whose assistance and knowledge this dissertation would not have been possible.

## **Chapter 1: Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan, 1928-1966**

### *Stepping back into the Stone Age*

A historical assessment of Sheikh Zayed inevitably calls for a comparison with his predecessor, and elder brother, Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who ruled Abu Dhabi from 1928 to 1966. (See Appendix C) Contrary to the turbulent politics that had plagued the Al Nahyan family for decades, Shakhbut's 38-year rule was largely characterised by peace and order.<sup>18</sup> Despite his critical role in restoring political stability, scholars have focused largely on Shakhbut's final years, painting him as an ignorant ruler who failed to attend to his people's needs.<sup>19</sup> Scholars such as Dr. Jane Bristol-Rhys have accurately pointed out that this one-sided interpretation has emerged primarily as a result of a reliance on British sources. Rife with personal convictions and commercial interests, this documentation must be taken with a veritable pinch of salt. Nevertheless, these sources' portrayal of Abu Dhabi during the early 1960s remains of crucial significance to this study. For instance, Oliver Miles, the Acting Political Officer in Abu Dhabi in 1961, distinctly recalls that, upon arrival, 'there were no roads, no resident doctors, no electricity or water mains, only three or four houses made of hard materials.'<sup>20</sup> A similar illustration of the primitive nature of Abu Dhabi can be found in Mr. Abdul Hafeez Khan's, Zayed's first agricultural adviser in Al Ain, declaration that landing in Abu Dhabi in 1962, 'was like stepping back into the Stone Age.'<sup>21</sup> In spite of the modest infrastructure, through his astute tribal diplomacy and occasional use of force, Shakhbut successfully continued to rule Abu Dhabi.<sup>22</sup> A testament to his power and popularity can be found in his ability to remain Ruler during the economic collapse in the late 1920s and early 1930s – a result of the worldwide

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<sup>18</sup> Tammam, *Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan*, 44.

<sup>19</sup> U. Rabi, 'Oil Politics and Tribal Rulers in Eastern Arabia: The Reign of Shakhbut (1928-1966)', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33. No. 1 (2006) 37.

<sup>20</sup> National Center for Documentation & Research, *Memoirs of the Emirates* (Abu Dhabi, 2012) 123.

<sup>21</sup> Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis*, 11.

<sup>22</sup> Rabi, 'Oil Politics and Tribal Rulers in Eastern Arabia', 41-2.

recession and the introduction of the cheap Japanese pearl which deprived Abu Dhabi of its main source of income. However, this apparent stability was to come under pressure with the discovery of oil in the late 1950s.

### *Sheikh Jackpot*

Oil exploration in Abu Dhabi began on January 11, 1939, yet, it was not until 1958 that oil was first struck. Another four years would pass before oil was eventually exported in commercial quantities.<sup>23</sup> Following the export of oil in 1962, there was an enormous influx of wealth into the Ruler's coffers. By 1966 royalties alone - payments made by foreign companies to Shakhbut for the right to ongoing oil exploration and exportation - had reached \$84 million.<sup>24</sup> Abu Dhabians and the British had hoped that this newfound wealth would be used to haul Abu Dhabi into the modern era. However, with the notable exception of two desalination plants (one of which subsequently failed), a power station, and a fresh-water pipeline from Buraimi to Abu Dhabi, development under Shakhbut remained rudimentary.<sup>25</sup> By 1965, it is estimated that Shakhbut had spent only £1.75 million on development projects.<sup>26</sup> As Dr. Jayanti Maitra and Afra Al-Hajji have proposed, in order to understand Shakhbut's reluctance to develop, one must consider his philosophy of life.<sup>27</sup> Having lived through the economic recession of the 1920s and 1930s, Shakhbut maintained that oil revenues should be saved for the future in case a similar episode was to occur. Furthermore, bearing in mind the example of Western nations, Shakhbut was apprehensive that promoting development would undermine the power concentrated in the hands of the Al Nahyan family. Despite Shakhbut's logical reasoning, the Western press began to openly

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<sup>23</sup> Asquith of Bishopstone, 'Award of Lord Asquith of Bishopstone', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Vol. 1. Issue 2 (1952) 247.

<sup>24</sup> W. Ochsenwald, and S. Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*. 7th ed. (New York, 2011) 680.

<sup>25</sup> J. Maitra, and A. Al-Hajji, *Qasr Al Hosn: The History of Rulers of Abu Dhabi 1793-1966* (Abu Dhabi, 2001) 247-8; "Interview with Dr. Jane Bristol-Rhys", Personal Interview. Eastern Mangroves Promenade, Abu Dhabi. 5 Nov. 2015.

<sup>26</sup> The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies & Research, *With United Strength: H.H. Shaikh Zayid Bin Sultan Al Nahyan – The Leader and the Nation* (Abu Dhabi, 2005) 111.

<sup>27</sup> Maitra, and Al-Hajji, *Qasr Al Hosn*, 235.

criticise him and his reluctance to spend oil revenues.<sup>28</sup> For example, in 1966, *The Economist* published an article headed 'Sheikh Jackpot', which discussed Shakhbut's leading role in the lack of development in Abu Dhabi.<sup>29</sup> It is worth noting that up until this point the British had also failed to contribute to local development.<sup>30</sup> Aware of the improvements in living standards in neighbouring countries such as Kuwait, an increasing number of Abu Dhabi citizens emigrated, costing the sheikhdom several of its most crucial tribal families.<sup>31</sup> Finally, and most importantly, disapproval began to emerge from within the Al Nahyan family. This was no doubt exacerbated by Shakhbut's decision to cut back on the personal allowances granted to key Al Nahyan figures, including Zayed.<sup>32</sup> In failing to meet the expectations of the local population, the British and his family, Shakhbut lost vital support necessary to uphold his rule. Despite being cautious and refusing to spend money, he nevertheless paid the price in late 1966.

### *Abdication*

Around the same time that Shakhbut's popularity was undergoing a rapid decline, that of his younger brother, Sheikh Zayed, was rising steeply. In 1946, Zayed had been appointed by Shakhbut as Governor of Al Ain. Despite the minute funds he had been provided with, Zayed was to successfully reconstruct water supplies, establish a small school and resolve disputes with Saudi Arabia and Oman.<sup>33</sup> Zayed's progressive mindset and popularity brought him to the attention of the British and the Al Nahyan ruling family. In fact, as early as 1962 British political agents tried to convince the British Government to

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<sup>28</sup> Rabi, 'Oil Politics and Tribal Rulers in Eastern Arabia', 44-6.

<sup>29</sup> National Center for Documentation & Research, *Memoirs of the Emirates*, 300.

<sup>30</sup> The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies & Research, *With United Strength*, 97.

<sup>31</sup> P. Rivlin, Rev. of 'Abu Dhabi: Oil and Beyond' by Christopher M. Davidson, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 46. No. 2 (2010) 321.

<sup>32</sup> C. Davidson, *Abu Dhabi: Oil and Beyond* (London, 2009) 41.

<sup>33</sup> Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis*, 25; TNA: FO 371/126925, 'Report on the establishment of a school at Muwaiqih' (30 August, 1969) 20.

remove Shakhbut from power and instill Zayed as Ruler.<sup>34</sup> However, only on August 6, 1966, with the unanimous vote of the Al Nahyan family to depose Shakhbut, did Zayed assume the leadership. A guidance telegram dispatched that day by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office states that Shakhbut was discharged by the leading members of his family on the grounds of ‘the lamentable condition of the country, his misrule and mental instability.’<sup>35</sup> After 38 years in power, Shakhbut was transported out of Abu Dhabi, only to return in 1970 to a world very different from the one he had left behind.<sup>36</sup> Through this historical examination of Shakhbut’s reign, the importance of development in commanding public support has become clear. In addition, it has served to highlight the context in which Zayed came to power. As an article by *The Economist* explicitly stated, ‘He [Zayed] was installed in expectation of a more intelligent use of the country’s huge wealth.’<sup>37</sup> It will be the objective of the following chapters to illustrate how he fulfilled this very expectation.

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<sup>34</sup> H. Bismarck, *British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961-1968: Conceptions of Informal Empire* (Basingstoke, 2013) 159-85.

<sup>35</sup> Bismarck, *British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961-1968*, 159-85.

<sup>36</sup> Rugh, *Political Culture of Leadership*, 78.

<sup>37</sup> ‘The man who was worried by money’, *The Economist* (London), 13 Aug. 1966.



## **Chapter 2: Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Social Welfare**

One of Sheikh Zayed's first acts as Ruler was to distribute the oil money that had accumulated under Shakhbut's rule to destitute locals across Abu Dhabi and neighbouring emirates. This generous act continued for weeks, during which time Zayed doled out millions.<sup>38</sup> This public handout was to become one way in which Zayed distributed oil wealth during his reign; the other was indirectly through development projects. It will be the objective of the remaining chapters to conduct a thorough analysis of these projects, particularly those pertaining to education, healthcare and housing, in order to achieve a better understanding of how he used them to gain his people's political acquiescence.

### *The National Five-Year Plan, 1968-1972*

While state handouts did much to gain popular support, Zayed was aware that a longer-term and more comprehensive plan was required. This bore fruit on March 20, 1968 when Zayed enacted the Emiri Decree No. 1 of 1968, otherwise known as the National Five-Year Plan. Designed by Mahmud Hassan Juma'a, the Director of Co-ordination and Planning, the programme consisted of a budget of 295 million Bahrain dinars (B.D.) and a detailed outline for each sector.<sup>39</sup> (See Appendix D) The Plan was also to be supported by a public works programme in which an additional 200 million dinars would be spent on construction, and 4 million on installing water pumps and a sewerage system.<sup>40</sup> In its attempt to achieve rapid development in a short space of time, this scheme was similar to the multiple five-year plans instigated around the world during the 1950s and 1960s. However, in juxtaposition to these centralised economic development plans, which Scott notes, excluded the 'necessary role of local knowledge and know-how', Sheikh Zayed ensured his

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<sup>38</sup> G. Wilson, *Zayed: Man Who Built a Nation* (Abu Dhabi, 2013) 67.

<sup>39</sup> 'Abu Dhabi: Development and Progress', *The Times* (London), 3 Mar. 1969. The Bahraini dinar, imposed in 1966, remained in circulation until May 19, 1973, when it was then replaced by the UAE dirham.

<sup>40</sup> Davidson, *Abu Dhabi*, 51.

developments met local requirements and customs.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, attention must be paid not only to education, housing and healthcare developments as they unfolded under the National Five-Year Plan, but also to the way in which Zayed implemented them. For instance, following the establishment of various government departments in 1966 and 1967, Zayed assigned the most important posts to members of the Al Nahyan family.<sup>42</sup> A notable example was the Planning Council, founded in 1968, which was comprised of 17 members, all of whom were members of the ruling family or the upper echelons of Abu Dhabi citizenry.<sup>43</sup> In doing so, Zayed ensured the loyalty of his foremost citizens and, simultaneously, extended his control. This prominence of Nationals also applied to those who benefited from Zayed's development projects. Between 1966 and 1972, Zayed's social welfare policies were aimed primarily at Nationals, despite the influx of other ethnic groups. As Hazem Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani have suggested, this bias lies in the fact that expatriates, despite forming the core of the workforce in Abu Dhabi, 'remain alien to the body politic.'<sup>44</sup> Subsequently, by 1972 Nationals were entitled to free education and healthcare, and guaranteed free housing. This emphasis on the indigenous population contributed considerably to the success of Zayed's development programme.

### *Abu Dhabi: The Allocative State*

Scholars have presented various theories to explain the Gulf's authoritarian monarchies, the most prominent of which is the rentier state theory (RST). The RST is a political economic theory which divides nation-states into 'productive' and 'allocative' states. In their seminal work, *The Rentier State*, Beblawi and Luciani define allocative states as those whose revenue derives predominantly from oil and whose expenditure is a substantial share

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<sup>41</sup> Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> TNA: FCO 8/827, 'Letter from British Political Residency, Abu Dhabi to British Political Residency, Bahrain regarding development projects in Abu Dhabi' (1966) 8.

<sup>43</sup> J. Daniels, *Abu Dhabi: A portrait* (London, 1974) 61.

<sup>44</sup> H. Beblawi, and G. Luciani (eds.), *The Rentier State: Nation, State and Integration in the Arab World* (London, 1987) 59.

of GDP.<sup>45</sup> In many ways this theory explains the manner in which Zayed's regime functioned. Indeed, oil production laid the foundations for these large-scale developments. Between 1963 and 1968, oil revenues increased from B.D. 2.25 million to 80 million.<sup>46</sup> Contrary to other developing states, where development has largely been determined by donor agendas and discriminatory schemes such as the IMF's structural adjustment programmes, in Abu Dhabi, mass oil production meant Zayed was able to carry out development in a relatively autonomous manner through sovereign wealth funds. This oil wealth likewise permitted Zayed to abolish all taxes.<sup>47</sup> However, as a result of its economic determinism, what the rentier state theory fails to do is appreciate the human element to Sheikh Zayed's reign, which, as stated previously in this chapter, also contributed to his increasing authority. Therefore, rather than take this concept as a definitive model, this dissertation will instead consider it as 'one analytical tool that may be added to others' to better understand Zayed's rule.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Beblawi, and Luciani (eds.), *The Rentier State*, 70.

<sup>46</sup> 'Abu Dhabi', *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>47</sup> D. Commins, *The Gulf States: A Modern History* (London, 2012) 191.

<sup>48</sup> Beblawi, and Luciani (eds.), *The Rentier State*, 82.

### **Chapter 3: Father of a Nation: Sheikh Zayed and Education**

Upon assumption of power in 1966, Sheikh Zayed declared in an interview that, ‘We will provide everything for the people in time, but we must provide schools today.’<sup>49</sup> In light of the importance Zayed ascribed to education, it was to no one’s surprise that, under the National Five-Year Plan, education received top priority. Between 1968 and 1972, 12.1 million dinars was allocated towards education, in addition to the 0.5 million already appropriated under the Draft Budget of 1967.<sup>50</sup> That same year, Zayed had also established a Department of Education, and appointed Dr. Harold Spencer as Director. With the astonishing increase in funds in 1968, developments in the field of education grew far and wide. This amelioration of Abu Dhabi’s educational system first began with the construction of additional schools. When Zayed became Ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1966, there were only six schools, one of which was a girls’ primary school.<sup>51</sup> By 1971, this had increased to 26 schools, several of which had been built in more remote areas such as Dalma, thereby providing Bedouin children with greater opportunity to acquire education.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, Zayed considered the construction of additional schools to be insufficient on its own. In order to further guarantee an increase in school enrollment, various other provisions were stipulated, such as the ‘Ruler’s Award.’ This was essentially a grant paid by Zayed to each child who attended state school on a consistent basis.<sup>53</sup> In a report on education in Abu Dhabi in 1968, Dr. Spencer further acknowledged Zayed’s central role in ensuring education was free for all pupils in state schools and that such children were entitled to ‘a free meal every school day, and two uniforms every year.’<sup>54</sup> Dr. Spencer went on to add that Zayed had granted ‘considerable funds’ for the transportation of children to and from school every

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<sup>49</sup> Wilson, *Zayed*, 72.

<sup>50</sup> The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies & Research, *With United Strength*, 148-9.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Abu Dhabi’, *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>52</sup> A. Ziyad, *Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan: A Life of Achievement* (London, 1982) 29.

<sup>53</sup> TNA: FCO 8/876, ‘Report on Education in Abu Dhabi’ (24 March, 1968) 90.

<sup>54</sup> TNA: FCO 8/876, ‘Report on Education in Abu Dhabi’, 90.

day.’<sup>55</sup> In one case, Zayed had even arranged for a Land Rover to drive nine kilometres each day to pick up a shepherd boy so that he could attend primary school in Al Ain.<sup>56</sup> While personal motivations certainly play a part in explaining Dr. Spencer’s expressed loyalty towards Sheikh Zayed, this report also provides a clear illustration of Zayed’s personal involvement with these developments. However, the extreme lengths to which Zayed went, also begs the question as to why Zayed was so adamant that children from Abu Dhabi receive a full-time education. While Zayed was undeniably concerned about his peoples’ livelihoods, through education, he also aimed to create educated and loyal supporters who would help build his vision for Abu Dhabi. This was particularly the case for children, whom Zayed viewed as, ‘the pillar and starting point of the socio-economic development progress.’<sup>57</sup> In order to prepare them for their future roles, Sheikh Zayed likewise financed the transfer of students to Great Britain to improve their command of English.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, developments in education were not confined only to children. Between 1968 and 1972, technical and vocational programs, and courses aiming to combat adult illiteracy, were introduced.<sup>59</sup> Public libraries were also established in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain in 1971.<sup>60</sup> Through these measures, Zayed hoped to build up his nation and reduce Abu Dhabi’s dependence on foreign labour.

While Zayed’s aims for education can be established with some degree of certainty, the question as to whether or not the population absorbed, and approved of, these changes is a far more complicated matter. Nonetheless, certain glimpses of support for these developments can be found between 1966 and 1972. The first body of evidence that demonstrates the population’s approval of these reforms can be found in the increasing

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<sup>55</sup> TNA: FCO 8/876, ‘Report on Education in Abu Dhabi’, 90.

<sup>56</sup> TNA: FCO 8/876, ‘Report on Education in Abu Dhabi’, 90.

<sup>57</sup> Office of Deputy Prime Minister for Information Affairs, *Zayed the Man* (Abu Dhabi, 2005) 29.

<sup>58</sup> Maitra, *Zayed*, 122.

<sup>59</sup> J. Anthony, *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, politics, petroleum* (Washington, 1975) 139; TNA: FCO 8/1231, ‘Minutes from the Abu Dhabi Planning Board meeting’ (30 August, 1969) 20.

<sup>60</sup> Maitra, *Zayed*, 130.

number of children attending school. Between 1965 and 1971 the student population rose from 528 to 7,897.<sup>61</sup> In fact, student enrollment expanded at such a rapid rate that Dr. Spencer was obliged to transfer senior boys in the State primary schools to the new intermediate schools, so as to not overwhelm teaching resources.<sup>62</sup> Further proof that the local population approved of Zayed's developments can be found in parents' willingness to send their children to the newly constructed educational institutions. For example, in 1968, when two new girl schools were opened in Al Bateen and in Al Ain, parents responded quickly and enthusiastically to the state's request to send their daughters there.<sup>63</sup> Whilst the evidence presented so far has remained primarily focused on parents' reception, it also appears the case that children expressed loyalty towards Zayed for their newfound education. This appreciation can be found in the nickname they appropriated to Zayed – 'Baba Zayed', or 'Father Zayed'.<sup>64</sup> This association between progress in education and Sheikh Zayed was no doubt the result of Zayed's leading involvement in the projects and the implementation of signs such as that planted outside of the Al Khubairat Community School which read, 'This school stands on ground graciously donated by H.H. Zaid bin Sultan Al Nahiyah, Ruler of Abu Dhabi.' (See Appendix E) This use of signage served to entrench Zayed's authority in the landscape, as did the gesture of naming developments after the Ruler himself, most notably Zayed University, founded in 1968. Other examples include Zayed Port and Zayed Sports City. (See Appendix F) In establishing developments beneficial to the indigenous population and associating himself with them, Zayed came to be perceived as a compassionate Ruler who had his peoples' best interests at heart. This trusting relationship between Zayed and the local population, fostered through educational development, serves as tangible proof for development's ability to mobilise popular support and played a vital role in sustaining Zayed's position as Ruler.

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<sup>61</sup> Ziyad, *Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan*, 29.

<sup>62</sup> Maitra, *Zayed*, 121.

<sup>63</sup> Maitra, *Zayed*, 124.

<sup>64</sup> N. Rashid, *Sheikh Zayed: Life and Times, 1918-2004* (Dubai, 2001) 121.

## **Chapter 4: Architect of a Nation: Sheikh Zayed and Housing**

The next key area of development that this dissertation will focus on is housing. During his initial years in power, Sheikh Zayed worked strenuously to both improve the housing of Abu Dhabi's coastal and oases' inhabitants, who at the time resided in primitive dwellings known as Barasti huts, and also provide permanent housing for its nomadic Bedouin population.<sup>65</sup> Under the Draft Budget of 1967, 3.75 million dinars were allocated towards a housing program of 2,000 low-cost houses, to be offered free to Abu Dhabi citizens.<sup>66</sup> This was then furthered by the Five-Year Plan which appropriated another 15.8 million dinars to the construction of an additional 3,910 houses and 500 villas for government employees.<sup>67</sup> Distinctions between citizens with regards to the nature of their employment affected the type of housing provided. For instance, those with agricultural backgrounds were provided with a plot of farmland whereby they could continue to earn a living and contribute to their country's economy.<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, notwithstanding these variations, this was the first time that the majority of Nationals had owned a brick and concrete house equipped with air-conditioning, water and electricity.<sup>69</sup> This unprecedented development was a result of both humanitarian and political motivations. The official narrative tends to focus on the former, arguing that Zayed's compassion and Islamic religious instruction led him to believe that every person should have a house to live in.<sup>70</sup> Nonetheless, the political importance of housing development is equally deserving of scholarly attention. Through the settling of his nomadic population, otherwise known as sedentarisation, Zayed would be able to gain greater control over his citizens. In previous years tribes had been free to roam the emirates as they pleased and adjust their loyalties accordingly. However, by adopting Zayed's developments, they would essentially be

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<sup>65</sup> 'Abu Dhabi', *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>66</sup> The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies & Research, *With United Strength*, 148.

<sup>67</sup> 'Abu Dhabi', *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>68</sup> Davidson, *Abu Dhabi*, 52.

<sup>69</sup> Daniels, *Abu Dhabi*, 2.

<sup>70</sup> Ziyad, *Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan*, 41.

committing themselves to Abu Dhabi and Sheikh Zayed. In this way, Zayed would be not only the architect of multiple homes but also the architect of a nation. In light of the political significance of housing development, Zayed grew heavily involved in the construction of these properties, making sure they would satisfy his peoples' requirements, thereby increasing popular support for his rule. For instance, before embarking upon any new projects, Zayed would make sure to consult those citizens who were to be affected and any relevant experts. This modus operandi earned Zayed a great deal of respect among foreign firms and the local population.<sup>71</sup> In addition, Zayed was also determined to ensure that these housing projects upheld long-standing traditions for he believed it would ease the transition from a nomadic to sedentary lifestyle, thereby doing little to destabilize society and threaten the political status quo. As a result, housing units were designed with a focus on openness and tenants were permitted to keep their animals. In the case of Abu Dhabi's Bedouin population, residents were allowed to keep their camels nearby.<sup>72</sup> While the actual construction of these housing complexes was carried out by foreign companies, Zayed personally determined their location and oversaw their construction. Frequently Zayed would appear on a construction site to examine the progress for himself.<sup>73</sup> One housing project, in which Zayed took a particular interest, was the building of 'Madinat Zayed' or 'Zayed City' – another pertinent example of the use of development to inscribe one's authority on a landscape.<sup>74</sup> An additional way in which Zayed attempted to strengthen his association with these developments, and thereby be credited with their success, was through his personal distribution of the keys to the new homes.<sup>75</sup> Quite literally, Zayed handed these benefits to the local people: a key to his success.

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<sup>71</sup> "Interview with Sheikh Suroor bin Mohammed Al Nahyan", Personal Interview. Jumeirah at Etihad Towers, Abu Dhabi. 13 Dec. 2015.

<sup>72</sup> Anthony, *Arab States of the Lower Gulf*, 140.

<sup>73</sup> The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies & Research, *With United Strength*, 151.

<sup>74</sup> 'Abu Dhabi', *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>75</sup> Davidson, *Abu Dhabi*, 52.



By this point, Zayed's aims and actions concerning housing development have been clearly identified. What now remains is to determine whether the local population approved of, and appreciated, his strenuous efforts. Unfortunately, as stated in the introduction, there are no sources which recorded public opinion at the time. This renders it increasingly challenging to uncover public reception of Zayed's housing developments. Official narratives such as *Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan: The Leader and the March* by Hamdi Tammam, suggest that 'thousands moved from their huts and cottages to new, healthy and clean houses.'<sup>76</sup> However, this source's partiality and lack of precise statistics greatly reduces its value as proof for the successful adoption of Zayed's housing. A more valuable piece of evidence may be found in the immigration of almost 3,000 members of the Al Zaab tribe, in 1968, from Ras Al Khaimah to Abu Dhabi following Zayed's promise to provide them with plots of land. As Davidson remarks, this migration did much to elevate the status of Abu Dhabi and its Ruler.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, during his initial years, Zayed also witnessed the return of various tribes to Abu Dhabi, who had previously emigrated during Shakhbut's rule, as a result of these advantageous developments. While one may never obtain exact figures of those who benefited from Zayed's housing development, it remains, nonetheless, of considerable significance that the local population, in particular the Bedouin, were willing to alter their lifestyles drastically at the behest of Zayed. This willingness speaks volumes about the loyalty and hope that the people had already entrusted in Zayed to bring about development which would serve their interests.<sup>78</sup> However, one must also take into account that respect and loyalty for one's Ruler were characteristic of the tribal socio-political structure which had existed across the Persian Gulf for centuries.<sup>79</sup> Notwithstanding these traditional traits, Zayed's housing development did much to consolidate his authority. In

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<sup>76</sup> Tammam, *Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan*, 83.

<sup>77</sup> Davidson, *Abu Dhabi*, 53.

<sup>78</sup> Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis*, 44.

<sup>79</sup> Maitra, *Zayed*, 281.

granting free housing, while at the same time, honouring long-standing traditions, Zayed was able to earn the admiration, respect and loyalty of his people.

## **Chapter 5: Healer of a Nation: Sheikh Zayed and Healthcare**

The final sector which this dissertation will address is healthcare. As established in Chapter 1, public infrastructure in 1966 remained modest. This was particularly the case with regards to healthcare. Roderic Fenwick Owen, the court poet to Shakhbut, noted at the time that ‘Shakhbut was something of an amateur doctor’, relying heavily on iodine and prayer.<sup>80</sup> With the exception of his supporting of the opening of Abu Dhabi’s first modern medical facility, the Oasis Hospital in Al Ain, in 1960, Shakhbut paid little attention to improving healthcare standards across Abu Dhabi.<sup>81</sup> This scarcity of medicine and medical practitioners greatly frustrated Zayed. For instance, during his time as governor, a young girl was severely burnt in an accident. With there being no hospital closer than Sharjah, Zayed lent his own Land Rover to drive the girl there. Unfortunately, the girl died en route.<sup>82</sup> Experiences such as these remained imprinted in Zayed’s memory. Therefore, when he assumed leadership in 1966 and was provided with an abundance of wealth, a key focus of Zayed’s was to improve medical institutions and increase the availability of medicine and medical assistance. Contrary to developments in education and housing which were distinctly directed at Nationals, healthcare was made free for all Abu Dhabi residents. This would eventually be modified in 1982 when dwindling oil revenues compelled the government to charge non-citizens for all medical services aside from emergency and maternity care. This provision of free medical assistance to all, Zayed hoped, would encourage solidarity among Abu Dhabi’s citizens. In this way, therefore, developments in healthcare would not only help to heal people physically, but also alleviate social ills. Commencing with the Draft Budget of 1967, 3 million dinars were initially allocated towards medical care. A memorandum prepared by British official, Archie T. Lamb, later that year, notes that with this money, Zayed made arrangements to construct a 150-bed

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<sup>80</sup> R. Owen, *The Golden Bubble: Arabian Gulf Documentary* (London, 1957) 210.

<sup>81</sup> TNA: FO 371/185523, ‘Chronological Summary of Events in Abu Dhabi during 1965’ (1965) 18-19.

<sup>82</sup> Wilson, *Zayed*, 61.

hospital for Abu Dhabi, a 100-bed hospital for Al Ain and four clinics, with the assistance of the British firm of architects, Shingler Risdon.<sup>83</sup> Under the aegis of the newly appointed Director of Health, Dr. Philip Horniblow, a small 50-bed hospital was also established. Dr. Horniblow was likewise made responsible for the recruitment of all medical staff, to which he travelled to Pakistan and Beirut.<sup>84</sup> The Five-Year Plan later allocated an additional 6.5 million dinars for the construction of six hospitals, eleven infirmaries, three isolation clinics, and various dispensaries.<sup>85</sup> Provisions were also made for an increase in the number of medical staff. Moreover, Zayed was keenly aware that the introduction of a nutritious and well-balanced diet would likewise impact the health of his citizens and thus under the Plan, 13.4 million Bahrain dinars were allocated towards agriculture.<sup>86</sup> Seeds, insecticides and tools were dispensed to Bedouin farmers free of cost, and courses were provided to teach these farmers how to cultivate the new crops. This provided a stark contrast to previous years during which peoples' diets had mainly consisted of dates, fish and camel's milk.<sup>87</sup> Zayed also devoted funds to the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands Research Station on Saadiyat Island, which aimed to develop crop plants which would have a greater resilience to the harsh desert climate.<sup>88</sup> Money was also invested in the improvement of water supply. Dr. Horniblow recalls how they found six of the twenty wells in Al Ain to be contaminated with the chemical, fluoride.<sup>89</sup> Together the establishment of medical institutions, equipped with adequate medical supplies, the introduction of a healthier diet and the provision of a clean and safe water supply, meant that common diseases could be eradicated, illnesses cured and injuries healed.

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<sup>83</sup> TNA: FCO 8/869, 'Memorandum on Abu Dhabi' (1967) 171.

<sup>84</sup> TNA: FCO 8/869, 'Memorandum on Abu Dhabi' (1967) 171.

<sup>85</sup> 'Abu Dhabi', *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>86</sup> 'Abu Dhabi', *The Times*, 3 Mar. 1969.

<sup>87</sup> Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis*, 52-6.

<sup>88</sup> Davidson, *Abu Dhabi*, 51.

<sup>89</sup> National Center for Documentation & Research, *Memoirs of the Emirates*, 247.

Notwithstanding these achievements, in a work such as this which focuses on the ability of Zayed to successfully muster popular support through social welfare development, there is a tendency to overstate the ease with which he was able to do so. It is crucial to point out that Zayed and the relevant departments were faced with numerous challenges along the way. For instance, the first British surgeon that Dr. Horniblow hired turned out to be incompetent and had to be replaced. This urgent need for medical staff and subsequent failure to carry out adequate pre-employment screening was largely a result of the pace of the National Five-Year Plan. For Zayed speed was vital in bringing about the promised benefits to the people. As Abdul Al Yousefi, Zayed's Agricultural Adviser in Al Ain, exclaimed, the initial years of Zayed's rule were like 'pressing the fast forward button on a time machine.'<sup>90</sup> Despite being absolute Ruler, Zayed was never invincible. With his elder brother's reign in mind, Zayed was acutely aware of the political significance of development and the peoples' growing expectations. However such momentum caused complications, most notably shortages in construction materials. In his notes on his visit to Abu Dhabi in March 1967, Engineering Adviser, B.M.U. Bennell, confirmed that cement shortages were largely a result of the 'vast increase of the pace of construction work.'<sup>91</sup> Similarly, this pace resulted in Zayed expending more money than was available at the time. His bankers later confirmed that his personal account balance remained negative for months before fresh oil revenues replenished it.<sup>92</sup> This dependence upon oil wealth was to have unwelcome repercussions in 1969 when oil production fell considerably below expectations. By the end of 1969, the government's total debt was estimated at £30 million.<sup>93</sup> With fears of inflation emerging, Zayed adopted a more cautious approach towards development. Subsequently, several development projects were cancelled while others already under construction were abandoned. Nevertheless, with a rise in oil production the following year, the precarious

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<sup>90</sup> Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis*, 93.

<sup>91</sup> TNA: FCO 8/869, 'Notes on Visit to Abu Dhabi, 11 March - 15 March 1967' (1967) 158.

<sup>92</sup> Yousefi, *50 years in Al Ain Oasis*, 96.

<sup>93</sup> Maitra, *Zayed*, 229.

situation was resolved and development in the various fields, including healthcare, resumed. This renewed effort begs the question as to why Zayed was so determined to improve healthcare standards in Abu Dhabi. This paper will argue that his reasons were threefold. First and foremost, Zayed needed to ensure the optimum health of his citizens for these were the persons who would help him create the future he envisioned for Abu Dhabi. In 1974, he stated explicitly that ‘the welfare of citizens is our prior goal, [...] as the citizen who feels stable is the one who is more able to produce, build and work at full capacity.’<sup>94</sup> Another incentive for the construction of these medical institutions was that it would allow Zayed to reduce his citizens’ reliance on the outside world and encourage them to take pride in their nation and its Ruler. This was undoubtedly the objective underpinning Zayed’s insistence that he be admitted to Abu Dhabi hospital in the late 1960s when he cut his foot on coral, as opposed to being treated abroad as others had suggested.<sup>95</sup> A final cause for Zayed’s determination to improve healthcare in Abu Dhabi was that Zayed quite simply needed his supporters to stay alive. Implementing these beneficial developments in education and housing, which engendered public loyalty, would be futile if these supporters then suffered a premature death. As Zayed rightly discerned, ‘wealth without health is useless.’<sup>96</sup>

Extrapolating popular support for these developments is somewhat easier than for education and housing, due to a handful of reports on hospital attendance, patient history, and vaccination programmes that accumulated between 1966 and 1972. For instance, in his contribution to the *Memoirs of the Emirates*, Dr. Horniblow proudly states that Nationals had willingly participated in the successful mass vaccination programme against smallpox, launched during the late 1960s.<sup>97</sup> This ability to now overcome challenges, which had previously plagued peoples’ everyday lives, would have conjured up substantial public support for Zayed’s rule. As historian Arnold Toynbee explains, ‘Once deeds are admired,

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<sup>94</sup> Office of Deputy Prime Minister for Information Affairs, *Zayed the Man*, 57-8.

<sup>95</sup> National Center for Documentation & Research, *Memoirs of the Emirates*, 244.

<sup>96</sup> Wilson, *Zayed*, 61.

<sup>97</sup> National Center for Documentation & Research, *Memoirs of the Emirates*, 244-7.

people soon give the doer their trust and vest in him the reins of leadership.<sup>98</sup> That these deeds were admired was a result of the benefits that Zayed's developments bestowed on the people. This can best be proven in the need to construct a wall around Abu Dhabi hospital in order to stop the discharged patients from taking their bedding home. Dr. Horniblow recalls how these patients would tell him that, 'the bedding belonged to Sheikh Zayed, [...] he was their father and would want them to have it!'<sup>99</sup> Regardless of this dissertation's focus on the support that Zayed's social welfare developments triggered, between 1966 and 1972 resistance remains notably absent. Naturally one must consider the role of suppression here. With no trade unions, parties or grassroots organisations, Abu Dhabians had little means by which they could express their views or challenge Zayed's rule.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, despite this political suppression, the successful adoption of Zayed's developments would suggest that Nationals did not wish to challenge the political system. In a 2005 survey, a year after Sheikh Zayed passed away, the BBC found there to be little desire for democratic reform. Instead, comments such as 'Everybody is happy [...] and I don't think we should jeopardize that to be a democratic country,' proved to be the norm.<sup>101</sup> It is plausible that Abu Dhabi citizens held similar views in 1972. Provided with developments which conferred on them multiple benefits, the local population found little reason to criticise Zayed and his rule. Instead, as the Office of Deputy Prime Minister for Information Affairs asserted, by 1972 Sheikh Zayed had managed to 'establish a prosperous state' characterised by pride, solidarity and loyalty to its Ruler.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Tammam, *Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan*, 1-10.

<sup>99</sup> National Center for Documentation & Research, *Memoirs of the Emirates*, 243.

<sup>100</sup> Krane, *Dubai*, 58.

<sup>101</sup> J. Stokes, *Global Issues: The Muslim World* (New York, 2011) 115.

<sup>102</sup> Office of Deputy Prime Minister for Information Affairs, *Zayed the Man*, 9.

## **Conclusion**

Cruising down the Abu Dhabi Corniche, a stretch of road, lined with high-rise buildings, running parallel to the dazzling, white-sand Corniche beach, one arrives at a large poster of Sheikh Zayed in national dress, raising his right hand, as if to a crowd. In the background lies the UAE flag and below him a caption reads ‘www.OURFATHERZAYED.ae’ – a link to a website launched under the patronage of Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, paying tribute to his father and former Ruler.<sup>103</sup> (See Appendix G) In a similar manner to the Sheikh Zayed National Museum, this poster is a perfect illustration of the admiration people shared for Zayed and his achievements. What this dissertation set out to demonstrate was the way in which Zayed’s social welfare development engendered such respect among the local population for their Ruler. Over the course of the paper it has become clear that the translation of these developments into popular support for Zayed’s rule operated on two levels. Firstly, through initiatives such as the National Five-Year Plan, rooted in the immense wealth generated by oil production, Zayed was able to implement developments that were beneficial to the local population, such as free housing. So that these favorable developments would then be associated with his rule, Zayed became heavily involved in these projects. Furthermore, through the use of signage, Zayed was able to inscribe his authority on Abu Dhabi’s landscape and remind the people of whom they were to show their appreciation to. That this association was successful is confirmed in a speech by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, in 2012, in which he declared, ‘The name of Zayed will be always in our minds and in all corners of this country.’<sup>104</sup> The second way that Zayed’s developments led to a strengthening of his rule has less to do with the developments themselves and more to

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<sup>103</sup> ‘Our Father Zayed’, N.p., n.d. <http://www.OURFATHERZAYED.ae> Web. 1 Apr. 2016; ‘Our Father Zayed’ Campaign Pays Tribute to Late Sheikh Zayed’, *Abudhabi e-government*, Abu Dhabi Government, 2016. 2 Apr. 2016.

<sup>104</sup> ‘Today is Zayed Humanitarian Day’, *Emirates* 24/7 (Dubai), 27 Jul. 2013.



do with the way in which they were implemented. As established throughout the dissertation, Zayed placed great emphasis on prior consultation with his citizens and the preservation of long-standing traditions. In doing so, Zayed was the first Ruler of Abu Dhabi to understand the need not only for the emirate to be modernised but also to accomplish in such a way that befitted the local population. Returning to the works of Miller, Roy and Scott, this essay confirms what they briefly suggested in their studies – that development which is tailored to meet, and in this particular case exceed, the expectations of the local population tends to increase support for those in power. In doing so, this paper disproves Western development theory that increased wealth and development inevitably leads to greater democracy.<sup>105</sup> My aim here, however, has not been to formulate a new model of how development functions in the Gulf, but merely to present an idiosyncratic case. The task will be left to fellow historians to examine whether similar processes took place in other contexts and political regimes. Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum's prosperous rule in Dubai from 1958 to 1990 certainly suggests similarities. Whether this proves to be the case or not, what can be stated with certainty is that Zayed and his method of governance will undoubtedly continue to serve as inspiration, for both libertarian and authoritarian regimes alike, in years to come. As Sheikh Mohammed rightfully asserted on the eighth anniversary of Sheikh Zayed's death, 'His state and his nation will remain a pure model over time, and we will remain faithful to his march.'<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> J. Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and merchants in Kuwait and Qatar* (New York, 1990) 200.

<sup>106</sup> 'Today is Zayed Humanitarian Day', *Emirates* 24/7, 27 Jul. 2013.

## Appendix A

### *Dramatis Personae*

**Al Maktoum, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid** – Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai.

**Al Maktoum, Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed** – Ruler of Dubai from 1958 to 1990 and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates from 1979 to 1990.

**Al Nahyan, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan** – Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces. He is also the son of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

**Al Nahyan, Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan** – Ruler of Abu Dhabi from 1928 to 1966.

**Al Nahyan, Sheikh Suroor bin Mohammed** – Senior member of the Ruling family of Abu Dhabi and nephew of Sheikh Zayed. He has held many high-ranking positions such as former Chairman of the Presidential Court and former Minister of Justice.

**Al Nahyan, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan** – Ruler of Abu Dhabi from 1966 to 2004 and President of the United Arab Emirates from 1971 to 2004.

**Al Yousefi, Abdul Hadeez Yawar Khan** – Agricultural adviser to Sheikh Zayed.

**Bennell, B.M.U** – Engineering adviser from the Middle East Development Division at the British Embassy in Beirut.

**Horniblow, Dr. Philip** – Director of Health Services in Abu Dhabi.

**Juma'a, Mahmud Hassan** – Director of Co-ordination and Planning in Abu Dhabi.

**Lamb, Albert (Archie) Thomas** – Political Officer in Abu Dhabi from 1965 to 1968.

**Miles, Oliver** – Acting Political Officer in Abu Dhabi in 1961.

**Nusseibeh, Zaki** – Interpreter for the President of the United Arab Emirates since 1968.

**Owen, Roderic Fenwick** – Court poet to Sheikh Shakhbut.

**Spencer, Dr. Harold** – Director of Education in Abu Dhabi.

## Appendix B

### Geographical Locations

**Abu Dhabi** – capital of the United Arab Emirates and Abu Dhabi emirate. It is situated on the southeast coast of the Persian Gulf.

**Al Ain** – second largest city in Abu Dhabi. Al Ain lies on the border with Oman and is located approximately 160 kilometres east of the capital Abu Dhabi.

**Al Bateen** – neighborhood located in the western part of the main Abu Dhabi island.

**Al Khubairat** – neighbourhood located in the southeastern part of the main Abu Dhabi island.

**Beirut** – capital and largest city of Lebanon.

**Buraimi** – oasis town in Northern Oman. It lies on the border of the United Arab Emirates, adjacent to Al Ain.

**Corniche** – road located on the western side of the main Abu Dhabi island.

**Dalma** – island located 42 kilometres off the coast of Abu Dhabi.

**Dubai** – the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates. It is located north of Abu Dhabi and constitutes one of the seven emirates which form the United Arab Emirates.

**Kuwait** – country situated at the northern tip of the Persian Gulf. It shares borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

**Madinat Zayed** – large town situated in Al Gharbia, in the western region of Abu Dhabi. It was established in 1968 by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and lies 170 kilometres southeast of the capital Abu Dhabi.

**Oman** – country located south of the United Arab Emirates. It shares borders with Saudi Arabia, Yemen and the United Arab Emirates.

**Pakistan** – country in South Asia. It shares borders with India, Afghanistan, Iran and China.

**Persian Gulf** – a sea in Western Asia. It lies between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula. It is sometimes referred to as the ‘Arabian Gulf’ or ‘The Gulf.’

**Qatar** – country located northwest of the United Arab Emirates. It is surrounded by Saudi Arabia.

**Ras Al Khaimah** – emirate located north of Sharjah, bordering Oman. It constitutes one of the seven emirates which form the United Arab Emirates.

**Saudi Arabia** – country situated southwest of the Persian Gulf. It constitutes the main part of the Arabian Peninsula and shares borders with Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain,

Oman, Yemen and the United Arab Emirates.

**Saadiyat Island** – large island 500 metres off the coast of **Abu Dhabi** island. It is currently undergoing heavy commercial and residential construction. ‘Saadiyat’ in Arabic stands for ‘Happiness.’

**Sharjah** – capital of the emirate of Sharjah and third most populous city in the United Arab Emirates. It is located north of Dubai and constitutes one of the seven emirates which form the United Arab Emirates.

**United Arab Emirates** – federation of seven emirates, located on the southern part of the Persian Gulf. It is comprised of Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm Al Quwain. The United Arab Emirates shares borders with Oman to the east and Saudi Arabia to the south.

## Appendix C



**Source:** *Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and next to his brother Sheikh Khalid bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan with the police chief Cosby Stokes, in front of the British Political Agency's building - Abu Dhabi (1959).* 1959. Photograph. National Archives, Abu Dhabi.

**Front row, from left to right:** Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Sheikh Khalid bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan, police chief Cosby Stokes.

## Appendix D

*The National Five-Year Plan: Table of Plan Appropriations*

		PLAN APPROPRIATIONS (B.D.)				
1.	Education .. .. .					12,140,000
2.	Public Health .. .. .					6,510,000
3.	Agriculture .. .. .					13,389,000
4.	Industry .. .. .					59,340,000
5.	Communications .. .. .					71,030,000
6.	Municipalities .. .. .					50,310,000
7.	Housing .. .. .					15,800,000
8.	Labour .. .. .					2,755,000
9.	Tourism .. .. .					5,916,000
10.	Public Buildings .. .. .					9,720,000
11.	Loans and Investment .. .. .					49,000,000
						<b>295,910,000</b>

Source: 'Abu Dhabi: Development and Progress', *The Times* (London), 3 Mar. 1969.

## Appendix E



**Source:** *Al Khubairat School stands on land donated by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan, 1968.* 1968. Abu Dhabi. *Memoirs of the Emirates.* By National Center for Documentation & Research (Abu Dhabi, 2012). 270. Print.

## Appendix F



Source: Pughe, Ariana. "Zayed Sports City." 2015. JPEG file.



Source: Pughe, Ariana. "Zayed Port." 2015. JPEG file.



## Appendix G



**Source:** Pughe, Ariana. "Our Father Zayed." 2015. JPEG file.

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*Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and next to his brother Sheikh Khalid bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan with the police chief Cosby Stokes, in front of the British Political Agency's building - Abu Dhabi (1959).* 1959. Photograph. National Archives, Abu Dhabi.

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