

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND OF SAUDI ARABIA

In this chapter, the writer will explain about the background of Saudi Arabia, it included the monarchy system of the state and the wahhabism.

A. The Historical Background of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is known as a homeland country of Islam and birth place of Prophet Muhammad SAW. The city of Hijaz was the city that Prophet Muhammad SAW introduced about Islam for the first time and Madinah was the center of islamic world in the era of Muhammad SAW and the al-Khulafa'u al-Rasyidun (Haif, 2015). in order to explain about the historical of establishment the state of Saudi Arabia, it should be noted that in general, there are three phases of "Saudi state", namely; the first phase (1744-1818), second (1824-1891) and third (1932-present).

In the first phase, Saudi state originated from the Saud Dynasty which was pioneered since the 18th century, in the central part of the Arabian peninsula precisely in the Najd area. The Saudi dynasty itself was founded by a ruler in Dir'iyah named Amir Muhammad bin Sa'ud (Yani, 2007). Ijjsj

The majority of the population of Saudi followed the teachings of Islam. However, in the era of 18th century, the religious decline of the Arab community was increasingly prevalent, mosques were largely abandoned because people were more focused on their talismans, the amulets were for antidotes and calamities. At that time, the people of Arabia tended to study religion with a fakir and dervish and regarded

them as saints. This were certainly very contrary to the teachings of Islam taught by Prophet Muhammad.

The situation of Saudi state which is increasingly distant with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah made Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab began advocating a return to the original form of Islam. At first, Abdul Wahhab was not accepted even persecuted by the local community, however, he sought protection in the city of Diriyah which was controlled by Muhammad bin Saud and he turned out to accept the thoughts of Abdul Wahhab (Arabia, 2010).

Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab and Muhammad bin Saud formed an agreement to implement and teach the true teachings of Islam to the Arab community. In that spirit, Muhammad bin Saud founded the First Saudi State and then got the position of king. He was under the spiritual guidance of bin Abdul Wahhab. In 1788, the Saudi State ruled over the entire central plateau known as Najd. In the early 19th century, the rule was extended to much of the Arabian Peninsula, including Mecca and Medina. However, In 1818, the Ottomans sent their expeditionary forces. The Ottoman army that commanded by Ibrahim, the son of Mohammed Ali Pasha, governor of Egypt, invaded the area of Diriyah. Ottoman troops destroyed most part of the city with field weapons and made it unusable permanently by damaging wells and removing date trees.

In the year of 1824-1891, the Al-Saud family had regained political control over central Arabia. Saudi ruler, Turki bin Abdullah Al-Saud moved his capital to Riyadh, about 20 miles south of Diriyah, and founded the Second Saudi State. During the 11 years of his rule, Turki managed to reclaim a large portion of the lost land to the Ottomans. When he expanded his power, he took steps to ensure that his people enjoyed their rights, and he saw their welfare. However, in this second phase, the Saudi State was destroyed in 1865 by an Ottoman campaign aimed at expanding its Middle Eastern

empire to the Arabian Peninsula. The Ottoman army captured parts of the Saudi State, which was ruled by Faisal's son Abdulrahman. With Ottoman support, the Al-Rashid family of Hail made a joint effort to overthrow the Saudi State. This finally caused the Saudi second phase to end (Arabia R. E., 2010).

It began with the success of taking Riyadh in 1902 by forces led by Abdulaziz, better known as "Ibn Saud". It became every monumental phase because in this phase, the modern state began. After establishing Riyadh as his headquarters, Abdulaziz captured all the Hejaz, including Mecca and Medina, from 1924 to 1925. In the process, he combined rival tribes into one nation. On September 23, 1932, the country was named the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an Islamic country with Arabic as the national language and a state based on the Qur'an and Sunnah as its constitution. This phase is the last phase and stick out until now (Arabia, 2010).

1. The Wahhabism: An Overview

Wahhabism is the dominant Islamic tradition or doctrine on the Arabian peninsula. (Cline, 2018) It represents an ultra-conservative, orthodox interpretation of Islam that is characterized by belief in adherence to absolute monotheism (tawhid), renounces bida (religious innovation) and supports a literalist interpretation and implementation of sharia (Islamic canonical law) (Mark Juergensmeyer, 2012) .

The Wahhabism Movement was founded by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhâb in Diriyah in 1744 AD which aimed to correct mistakes and errors in Islamic teachings and also abolished all superstitious activities to return to True and pure of Islam that embodied in the al-quran and sunnah and also practiced in the time of the prophet,

friends of prophet and tabiin, until the 3rd century Hijri. In his thinking, he followed the ideology of the Hanbali school and his thoughts were influenced by the figure of Ibn Taimiyah (Mark Juergensmeyer, 2012).

The condition of the people who have deviated from the true teachings of Islam is what seems to encourage Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhâb to improve it through his thoughts and teachings. Therefore, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab focused on this issue. He argues that ;

- 1) what is permissible and must be worshiped is only God, and those who worship besides God have become idolaters, and may be killed;
- 2) most Muslims are no longer true monotheists because they ask help is no longer to God, but to the shaykhs or guardian and from magical powers. Such Muslims have also become idolaters;
- 3) mentioning the name of the prophet, shaykh or angel as an intermediary in prayer is also shirk;
- 4) asking for intercession other than God is also shirk;
- 5) vow to other than God also shirk;
- 6) obtaining knowledge other than the Qur'an, hadith, and kias (analogy) is kufr; 7) not believing in the kada and the level of God is also kufr; and
- 8) the interpretation of the Qur'an with takwil (free interpretation) is Kufr (Mangasing, 2008).

In addition, there were thoughts of Muhammad Ibn Abd Al Wahab which had an influence on the development of renewal thinking in the 19th century, namely:

- 1) Only the Qur'an and hadith are the original sources of Islamic teachings
- 2) Taklid to ulama is not justified
- 3) The door to ijihad is open (Kurniawan, 2008)

The acceptance of Wahhabism was rapidly developing in the territory of Saudi Arabia at that time, especially during the time of Muhammad ibn Saud and his son, especially because the religious understanding was also adopted by the king so that the Wahhabism quickly developed. Wahabbi developments in Saudi state peaked since the 19th until the 20th century. But the understanding was almost extinguished, but Ibn Sa'ud was able to revive his enthusiasm by establishing an organization of brothers. With the presence of ibn Saud and his family in the Wahhabi, making it as a religious ideology, it made his followers continue to develop this understanding, and included it in a rational version of reformative Islam (Haif, 2015).

However, In the spread of Wahhabi, Al-Wahhab used violence and saw people who did not follow his teachings as Bid'ah people who had to be fought in accordance with the principles of amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar. It causing a lot of debate.

2. Wahhabism perspectives on gender and women

Wahhabism is the only form of religion that can be openly taught or practiced in Saudi Arabia. Its not only influence or spread the thoughts and teachings in Saudi Arabia, but also concern on in physical conformity in dress, in public deportment, and in public prayer. Most significantly, the Wahhabi legacy was manifested in the social ethos that presumed government responsibility for the collective

morality of society, from the behavior of individuals, to businesses, to the government itself (Arabia L. o., 1992).

Gender segregation and discrimination against women are a central part of the Saudi Wahhabi moral vision. Women need male's guardian or known as Saudi Arabia's guardianship system in their action, it first appears from the father, if the woman marries, then it would be in husband. Women are required to wear black abaya (loose fitting robes) and the niqab (face veil) in public. Educational and employment opportunities are limited. Women are prohibited from practicing law, studying architecture, engineering, biology, chemistry and political science and from participating in political and religious affairs and are not allowed to drive (Inayah Rohmaniyah, 2012). It is because, Wahhabis believe from their interpretation from the Quran and Hadith that women should take care of family and stay at home. Therefore, there is no need to have higher level education, drive a car, wear abaya and etc.

The way of Wahhabism to interpret the arguments in their teachings on segregation of gender and women is to quote verses from the Qur'an and also Hadith. One of the verses that are regularly mentioned related to the topic of honesty is Q. 24: 30–31, which states: "I believe that they cast their eyes [...] and said to the women who believed, that they threw under their eyes them." This verse, some authors state, shows that unmarried and unrelated Muslim men and women may not look at each other. The reason is that this can create feelings and lead to adultery, a big sin. And also, they believe that mixing gender encourages men and women to see each other and go straight to this Qur'anic prohibition. This is clearly further strengthened by verses such as Q. 33: 33, which tell the Prophet's wives to 'remain in your homes'. Although the authors who cite this verse admit that they were first agreed upon by Islamic scholars who also apply to modern women, which means that women can only go out if they really have to (Wagemakers, January).

The segregation of men and women gives an example of how the way Wahhabis to return to pure Islam. It also ensure that the community of the faithful will enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. the Saudis have a committee which is divided into two; namely for commanding right (al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf) and forbidding wrong (al-nahy 'anal-munkar). The existence of these committees aims to mark the character of Islam. Many Saudi shipping officers monitor people who are not in accordance with Wahhabism teachings, as if women do not wear abaya, women do not use their headscarves, sellers who do not close their shops during prayer times and others.

B. Discrimination against women in Saudi Arabia before Crown Prince Salman Administration

Discrimination means distinguishing between people, treating a person unfairly and other actions that tend to be negative and disadvantage people or a group. In the term of civil rights law, unlawful discrimination refers to unfair or unequal treatment of an individual (or group) based on certain characteristics, including:

The Equality Act 2010 highlights 9 protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Race
4. Disability
5. Religion
6. Pregnancy and maternity
7. Sexual orientation
8. Gender reassignment
9. Marriage and civil partnership (EOC).

As we can see, Gender become one of discrimination which is still faced in this world. in gender issues, there are systematic differences in material well-being, but it should be noted that, in each country the level of inequality varies and can change over time. In conclusion, gender inequality is a characteristics of most societies, with males on average better positioned in social, economic, and political hierarchies (UNDP, 2013).

In Saudi Arabia, there are a large separation between men and women because of the existence of the wahhabism that play important role in the formulation of many rights (News M. W., 2013). The limited presence of women shows that Saudi Arabia adheres to Islamic law. Based on survey which conducted by Al-Rasheed, he surveyed a number of Saudi fatwas about women in the 1980s, the results of which said that the interpretation of Islam was used to limit the existence of women in the public sphere. The scholars also emphasized that women were unable to serve positions in the country or public offices (Kareem, 2013).

In the field of education, actually there are still some female graduates but according to statistics there are about 30% of women in Saudi Arabia are still illiterate and also there is no sport education in girls school because of the prohibition of social norms that prohibit women from doing physical activities in the public (Mobaraki, 2010).

In the field of social issues, As the author have said previously, women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia could not drive by herself. The women in Saudi Arabia needs male relatives to drive the women. In consequences, its hard to for women to accept work in location that far from homes and families (Mobaraki, 2010). Other than that the women can not go outside without abaya or a head-to-toe-cloak, cannot receive an equal inheritanc, go to the movies or sports and other actions which is not in accordance with sharia law (Coker, 2018).

In 2014, woman in Saudi Arabia got arrested at the border of with the United Arab Emirates because of driving. Loujain al-Hathloul, a campaigner for women to have the right to drive in Saudi, she was trying to drive from United Arab Emirates to Saudi Arabia. For the result, She detained for about 73 days and the car have been confiscated (Jackson, 2014).

In fact, There is no formal law forbidding women to drive in Saudi Arabia, women in Saudi Arabia can not have driving license because the state does not issued it. That matter, because of religious edicts that prohibitive. Over the years authorities have arrested women who roam into the driver's seat. However, there were some women who have opposed this informal ban, film themselves behind the wheel and post clips online (Ziv, 2014).

The other case of discrimination against women was arrested because of attending football match. It also happened in 2014, when woman attended football match and she was dressing as look like as a man. In Saudi Arabia, football stadium are only for men. However, there was an exception for foreign women that an Australian female supporter of Western Sydney Wanderers football club was permitted to attend a match at Riyadh's main stadium (Cohen, 2014).

C. Political System in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia or known as The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (المملكة العربية السعودية *al-Mamlakah `Arabīyah as-Sa`ūdīyah*) is a state who adheres to the government system of royal or monarchy. This is confirmed in Article 5 paragraph (1) an-Nizham al-Asasi lil Hukmi in 1412 H, that "The Saudi Arabian Government System is in the form of a monarchy / kingdom". Like the British state that runs a monarchical system of government with some adjustments, so does Saudi

Arabia which runs a monarchical system of government with some adjustments decided based on state conditions itself.

Monarchy is a form of government held by one person in the public interest. Monarchy can also be interpreted as a system of government led by a king or the emperor as the highest authority and policy making was in the hands of the king. Saudi Arabia uses an absolute monarchy system, a form of government of a country headed by a king, queen, martyr, or emperor whose power is unlimited. (Ratna, 2016)

By adhering to a system of absolute monarchy government means absolute sovereignty is in the hands of the king. The king also holds the power of head of state and head of government. Authority the highest is almost in every aspect of government that ends in the king. All laws are authorized either by royal decree or by ministerial decree, which must be approved by the king. In his capacity as prime minister, the king appointed all cabinet ministers, senior government officials, and provincial governors. In his capacity as Commander of the armed forces, the king appointed all military officers in the rank of lieutenant colonel. He also appointed all ambassadors of Saudi Arabia and other foreign envoys. All foreign diplomats in the country are accredited to the king. In addition, the king acts as the final court of appeal and has the power of forgiveness. Although in Article 44 the Basic Law of Saudi Arabia has affirmed that state power includes legal power, executive power and organizational power, where all these powers work together to fulfill their obligations according to laws and regulations, the king is still the main source of all that power. Thus it appears that the king's power is unlimited (Haif, 2015).

Basically, Saudi Arabia does not have a formal constitution. Even though Saudi Arabia does not yet have a written constitution, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has stated that "the basic rules contained in the Qur'an are regarded as the Constitution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This is

emphasize on Article 7 an-Nizham al-Asasi lil Hukmi in 1412 H that "The power of the regime comes from the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet that governs all things and all state laws". Even based on Article 6, citizens promised to be loyal to the king based on the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet, including compulsory hear and obey, both in poor condition and in prosperity, joy and sorrow (Ochsenwald, 2009).

In other words, the Qur'an and as-Sunnah are the written basic laws of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. (Azahry, 2003) In the view of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Qur'an is the main source of sharia. Because sharia does not specifically discuss the implementation of government affairs, it made King Abdul Aziz made many regulations relating to the functions of the government.

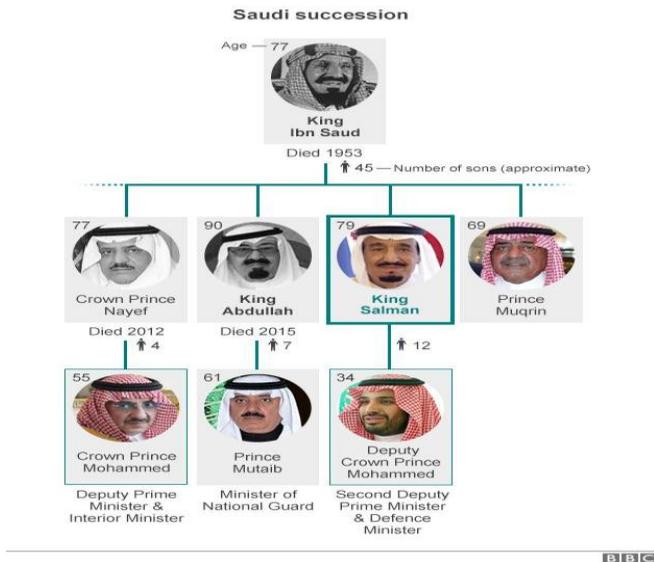
In the term of executives, there is a royal institution chaired by the King in which the king holds two main roles, namely as head of state and chairman of the kingdom. In the context of the main governing body, a Council of Ministers/Majlis Al-Wuzara formed consist of the prime minister that is King and the deputy of prime minister is Crown Prince. The crown prince is the second highest position after the king and The crown prince can rule in the name of the king. It should be note that the crown prince determined by the king and must be taken from the descendants of Abdul Aziz. This is in accordance with Article 5 of the Basic Law of Government, royal power inherited from the most capable children and grandchildren of the founder of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al-Saud. (D.C) In addition to the Council of Ministers, there is also the Council of Senior Ulama whose job is to give advice to the King and the Council of Ministers so that government policies are in accordance with Sharia law.

In legislative terms, there is a statutory body called the Majlis Al-Shura, or Consultative Council, whose members consist of 150 experts chairman designated by the King. The main task of this assembly is to assess, interpret and improve

royal laws, small laws, contracts and agreements between nations. The Assembly also advised the king and the Council of Ministers on issues relating to programs and royal policies.

In the term of the judiciary, a judicial institution known as the Majlis of the Supreme Court (Supreme Council of Judiciary) is known by the authority to regulate the administration of the judiciary and handle the issue of the authority to judge (competence). This assembly consists of 11 people chosen from prominent scholars in Saudi Arabia figure of family tree of power holders in Saudi Arabia.

Figure 2.1. Family Tree of Power Holders in Saudi Arabia



The transition of power in Saudi Arabia is done if the king or the crown prince dies. When the deceased is king, then the one who will replace is the crown prince. Then the new king chose one Crown Prince. However, if the deceased is the crown prince, then the king will appoint a replacement. This can be seen by what happened in Saudi Arabia in 2015, when King Abdullah Bin AbdulAziz died because of illness, it made The Crown Prince take the throne which at that time was held by Salman bin AbdulAziz. This is in accordance with Article 5 letter b until f has provided an arrangement;

(a) ...

(b) The right of the dynasty was reserved for the son of the founder, King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Faisal Al Saud and son of his son. The most qualified of them were appointed as kings, to rule based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

(c) The king appoints the crown prince and dismisses him from duty with a royal decree.

(d) The crown prince dedicates all his time to work and other obligations given by the King.

e) The power of the king is given to the crown prince when the king dies.

(f) The crown prince took control of the king when the king died until "bai'ah" was carried out.

