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The Society

Yemen (Şan'a')

April 1973

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

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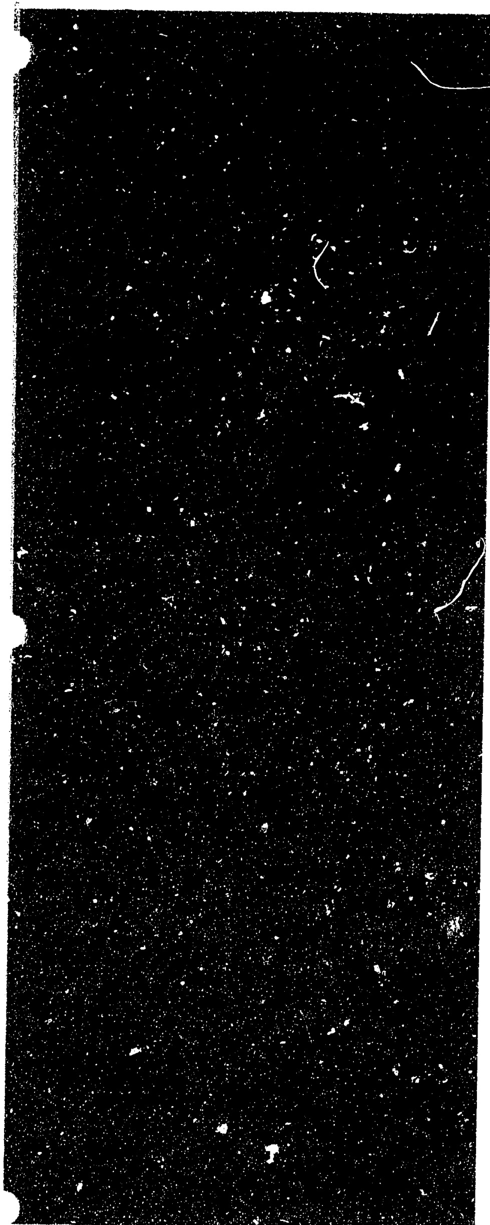

YEMEN (SAN'A')

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A. Historical background (C)

Despite a long history as an autonomous political entity, Yemen is only now experiencing the earliest stage of transition from a traditional tribal society to a modern, unified nation-state. Although predominantly Arab, Muslim, and tribal, the people are divided by ancient religious, social, and ethnic differences. Perhaps as many as 10% are non-Arab in a racial if not cultural sense. Yemeni Muslims are split into two major rival sects and a minor one; pre-Islamic religious beliefs, moreover, are still strong. The tribes are also characterized by contrasting life styles and political loyalties, and rural tribesmen have little in common with townsmen who are largely free of tribal ties. As a result of revolution and civil war in the 1960's, the country's medieval, obscurantist monarchy was replaced by a republic whose leaders have vowed to bring the nation out of the Middle Ages and into the 20th century. But life for most Yemenis has not changed. In the countryside, where almost 97% of the people reside, subsistence farming and herding remain the major economic pursuits, the tribe and family are the most important social units, and Islamic fundamentalism continues to hold sway.

As early as the first millennium B.C., the Sabaean culture, centered within and to the south of the present republic, was the most advanced in the Arabian Peninsula (Figure 1). City states, notably Ma'in,[1] Saba, Qataban, and Hadramaut, were at the hub of a trading network which stretched from the Malay archipelago and the Indian peninsula to the Fertile Crescent. Known as Sabaeans, the inhabitants of the city states built their civilization upon profits derived from trading. Cultural achievements, although not as impressive as those of the Fertile Crescent, included the development of a refined southern Semitic language and of advanced building techniques, exemplified by the famous dam at Ma'rib.

[1] For diacritics on place names see the list of names at the end of the chapter and the maps in the text.

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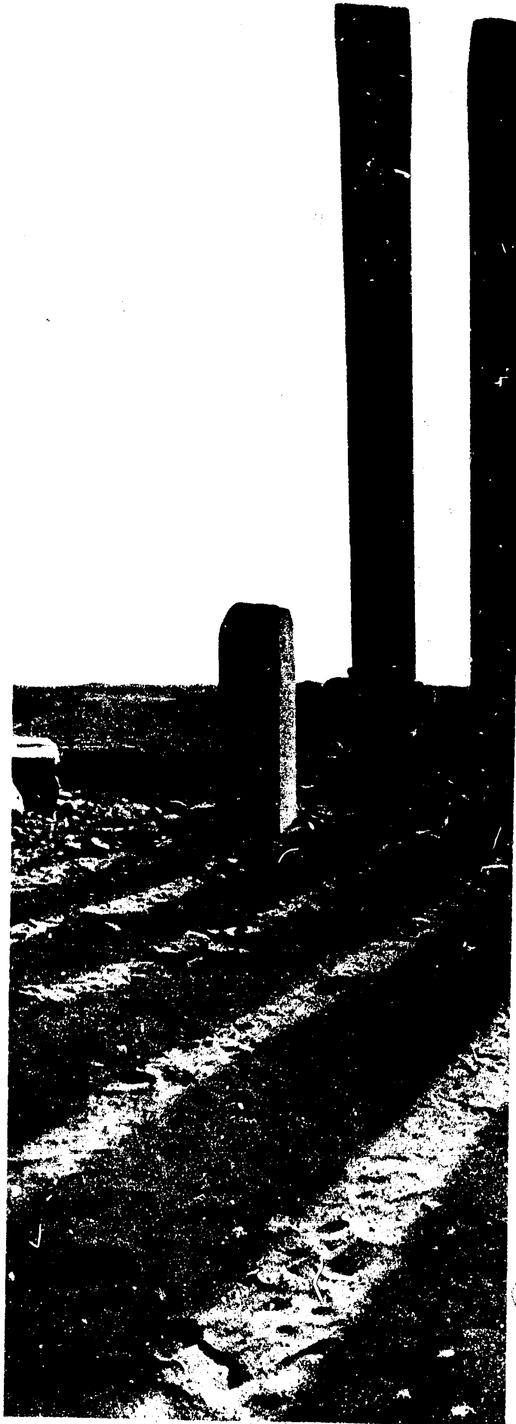
FIGURE 1. Brorze statue discovered in the temple of 'Ilumquh, the Sabaean temple dedicated to the moon god (U/OU)



The Yemenis' "anarchic disposition," evident throughout their history, was largely responsible for the decline of the Sabaean civilization. Each city state jealously guarded its independence, and warfare was common. Although Saba—known also as Sheba—conquered much of southern Arabia in the third century, the region was never a true political unit. Finally, in the sixth century, weakened by constant strife and the loss of trade, the Sabaeans were conquered by invaders from Ethiopia, and Yemen entered into an "epoch of poverty" from which it has yet to recover.

Religion has always played an important role in shaping Yemen's history. The religion of the Sabaeans (Figure 2), which provided the basis for political order, was displaced, in turn, by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all introduced through invasions from the north. Although Islam quickly became the predominant religion, two major sects were introduced which continue to divide society. At an early date, Yemenis in the southern highlands and coastal plains became Sunni Muslims of the Shafi'i school; later, in the ninth century, followers of the Zaydi sect of Shia Islam settled in the northern highlands and established a

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FIGURE 2. Ruins of Sabaean moon-god temple, near Ma'rib, capital of ancient Sheba (U/OU)

theocratic state governed by a religious leader, or Imam. Conflict developed, based upon the power claimed by the Zaydi Imam, and for over 10 centuries the more powerful Zaydis exercised varying degrees of hegemony over the Shafi'is.

Foreign intervention in Yemen was intermittent and never at a level which affected indigenous political and social structures. Incursions were made by the Egyptians in the 12th century and by the Ottoman Turks in the 16th century. The period of Ottoman hegemony, which began in 1517 and lasted until 1918, left little lasting imprint on Yemeni society. In part because only a small portion of the country was occupied—usually the major cities—and because Turkish troops and officials were only sporadically stationed in the country. Thus, until 1918 Yemen's political history was characterized by brief interludes of strong rule, either Zaydi or Ottoman, separated by long periods of near anarchy. Throughout this chaotic era, however, the average Yemeni was rarely disturbed by political unrest; social order was provided by the family and the tribe which educated new members and commanded basic emotional loyalties.

Attempts by the Turks to impose a strong colonial rule tended to unite the Zaydis and Shafi'is and to stimulate active resistance. In the latter part of the 16th century, following the arrival of a large Turkish expeditionary force, the Zaydis and Shafi'is rallied behind Qasim, a popular Zaydi Imam later known as Qasim the Great, who forced the Turks to agree to a truce and to recognize the partial authority of the Zaydi kingdom. From the 17th century to the mid-19th century the Ottomans showed little interest in their southern Arabian colony. This period coincided with a general decline in the importance of the Zaydi Imams and with the growth of a flourishing coffee trade with Western European merchant nations, particularly England. After the opening of the Suez Canal in 1969, the Ottomans developed a renewed interest in Yemen and, in 1871, reoccupied the capital of San'a'. Once again Ottoman imperialism unified the Yemenis, who, under the leadership of the Zaydi Imam, a pious and orthodox descendant of Qasim the Great known as Yahya al-Mutawakil ala Allah (the Relier on God), once again limited Turkish hegemony.

With the departure of the Turks after their defeat in World War I, Imam Yahya became the ruler of an independent Yemen. At the suggestion of his advisers, Yahya set up a Western-style government including a

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Prime Minister and a cabinet but, in reality, only the Imam had the power to govern. His regime, which continued until his death in 1948 by an assassin's bullet, was characterized by isolation and an almost total rejection of 20th century technologies and the amenities of Western civilization. Fearing that too many material benefits would undermine faith in Islam and that too many new ideas would compromise the Imamate, Yahya either banned or severely restricted the importation of radios, telephones, cinemas, printing presses, books, automobiles, and medicines, and opposed the construction of factories.

Nevertheless, contact with the outside world was impossible to avoid, and some Yemenis were exposed to modernizing influences. As a result, discontent with the country's autocratic theocracy grew, particularly among Yemeni exiles. In the mid-1940's, a "Free Yemeni" organization was formed for the express purpose of overthrowing the Imam. Yahya was succeeded by his son Ahmad, who proved more reactionary and tyrannical than his father; he staved off numerous assassination attempts and fought a relatively successful rearguard action against the modern world. Ahmad's son, Muhammad al-Badr, was more liberal than either of his immediate forebears and promised to institute wide ranging reforms upon assuming office. However, his reign, which lasted only 1 week, was ended by a coup on 26 September 1962.

The 1962 republican revolution and the ensuing 8 years of civil war—which produced a great loss of human life and widespread devastation—ended Yemen's isolation from the modern world and destroyed the old patriarchal, theocratic framework of the state; political reform, however, did not lead automatically to economic development or to social change. Some change has been effected, but the regime is still seeking new political and social directions. This search has been complicated by the civil war and by the fact that Yemen has virtually no modern tradition of its own; accordingly, the country's leaders are forced to rely on foreign concepts and institutions which often are unsuitable to Yemeni conditions.

The end of the civil war and the royalist-republican rapprochement of 1970 may lead to greater stability and permit concentration on domestic development. The inclusion of former royalists of conservative persuasion in the government of the Yemen Arab Republic indicates that radical social experiment will not be seriously pursued. In any case, there is little evidence to suggest a systematic attack on the essential features of Yemeni society—the relatively rigid class system, the subservient status of women, the abject poverty, and the entrenched tribalism. Although Westernization and increasing foreign contacts are slowly thrusting the nation into the modern world, Yemen for many years will be a primitive, fractured land, brutal in its physical aspect and torn between adherence to an ancient past and acceptance of a more dynamic future.

B. Structure and characteristics of society (C)

After the overthrow in 1962 of Yemen's ancient Imamic government, which had held the country together for centuries, civil war and revolution combined to disorient much of the population, alter traditional social institutions, and set in motion new forces capable of changing the conventional style of Yemeni life. Since the 1962 coup, the old ethnic, tribal, class, and family structures have been steadily if not systematically eroded, and new institutions, such as labor unions, have been created to fulfill new needs. In the context of Yemeni society, these are radical developments, but their effects should not be exaggerated. The weight of tradition is heavy, and it is doubtful that the cultural patterns of most of the population have yet been affected by the revolution. Most Yemenis retain a deep attachment to the land and to the social patterns which derive from a subsistence agricultural economy. The tribe and the family continue to receive primary emotional loyalties, and ethnic, religious, and cultural rivalries remain strong. Furthermore, in the absence of effective central authority, evident throughout much of the republic's existence, the age-old patterns of life in large areas of the country have tended to persist, reflecting well-established, often Imam-oriented habits and traditions.

1. Ethnic and culture groups

Successive foreign conquests and migrations have markedly affected Yemen's population. In the highlands, the inhabitants are almost entirely a mixture of various Semitic peoples, while the residents of the Tihamah, the hot, humid coastal strip along the Red Sea, are of diverse racial origin. As a result of this intermixture, physical types vary (Figure 3). The Arabs, most of whom live in the highlands, are divided into two fairly distinct groups—those of southern Arabian and those of northern Arabian origin—each with differing physical characteristics. The Yemenis of

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southern extraction, known as Qahtanis (descendants of Qahtan, or Joctan in the Old Testament), are generally believed to be descended from the ancient Himyaritic and Sabaean peoples who inhabited the pre-Islamic empires of Yemen. In 2246 B.C., according to legend, Qahtan migrated from Hadramawt to Yemen where he introduced agriculture and architecture. Although intermarriage between the Qahtanis and the northern Arabs has occurred, thus blurring considerably the physical and genealogical distinctions between them, some "pure" Qahtanis are still found in a few remote southern mountain villages. The Qahtanis are generally darker skinned, shorter, and more slightly built than the northerners. They have round heads, short noses with fairly wide nostrils, and prominent mouths; curly hair is common.

The northern group, known as Adnanis (after Adnan, son of Ishmael), entered Yemen as invaders and immigrants during the Muslim conquest of A.D. 628. They are primarily located in, but not limited to, the northern and central regions of the country. Most Adnanis are of small-to-medium stature (averaging 5 feet 5 inches), with oval faces, high foreheads, thin noses, and fairly thin lips. Their eyes are usually brown, hair is black and wavy, and skin is olive or light brown. These features are characteristic of the Mediterranean branch of the Caucasian race, the "purest" representatives in Yemen being the tribal and village sheikhs, who are frequently tall, with long heads, narrow faces, and high-bridged noses. An estimated 8% to 10% of the north-central highlanders are said to have fair complexions, blue eyes, and blond hair, possibly resulting from infusions of central Asian nomadic stock. Prominent in this light-skinned group are the sayyids, or persons claiming to be descendants of the Prophet.

The non-Arab Yemenis, rarely seen in the highlands, live primarily in the Tihamah, or coastal region. A complex racial amalgam, they have diverse and occasionally obscure origins. Black-skinned types predominate along the western Tihamah plains; their lips and noses are frequently thin, and hair is often frizzy. Descendants of various African peoples, including the Somali, Afar, Galla, Amhara, and Tigrai, are found in the coastal towns. The ancestors of the Amharas and Tigrais, known as Akesumites, came from Ethiopia as conquerors in the fourth and sixth centuries A.D.; the others either were brought into the country as slaves or voluntarily emigrated to Yemen over many centuries. Reportedly, Yemen was still recruiting "black" slaves from Ethiopia as late as the 1940's. Some of these dark-skinned peoples have mixed freely with the coastal Arabs and are occasionally known as "Afro-Arabs."

A distinct non-Negroid physical type is discernible in some of the larger towns and villages of the Tihamah. Traditionally assumed to be partly of Malay origin, persons of this type have been described as short in stature, with broad faces, wide noses, and dark skin. A very old community of people known as the Hajur is also found in parts of the Tihamah and the southern highlands. Although of indeterminate origin, some are probably descendants of black African slaves, while others may be related to an early ethnic strain similar to the aborigines of Hadramawt and Zufar (Dhufar). Local legend refers to them as descendants of the pre-Islamic Akesumite conquerors. According to one anthropologist, however, all three elements are probably "inextricably blended," with the Negroid strain the most pronounced. In the southern provinces of Ibb and Ta'izz there are small groups of peoples related to various south Asian types.

Although Yemeni society is racially diverse, there is no comparable linguistic variety. The language of Yemen is Arabic, a Semitic tongue. Several dialects have been distinguished in different parts of the country. These include the dialects of the eastern desert; the highlands, where San'a', the capital, is located; the southern region, reflecting influences from the speech of Aden; and the Tihamah, where the impact of Turkish and of African languages is evident. Yemenis generally do not speak foreign languages; English is understood by only a few of the educated and by some former residents of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen—known as the P.D.R.Y. or Yemen (Aden).

Virtually all Yemenis are Muslims; Shias of the Zaydi sect and Sunnis of the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence predominate in roughly equal proportions. A few members of the Ismaili sect of Shia Islam are also represented. The Zaydi strongholds are in the central and northern highlands; the Shafi'is, whose propensity for trade and travel has resulted in large-scale emigration, are located mostly in the southern mountains and in the Tihamah. Practically all non-Arabs are Shafi'is. Almost all of the inhabitants of the provinces of Al Hudaydah in the west and Ta'izz in the south are Shafi'is; Hajjah in the northwest and Sa'dah in the north are peopled largely by Zaydis. The population of San'a' is chiefly Zaydi but appears to contain a substantial Shafi'i minority; Ibb is also mixed, with the Shafi'is apparently in the majority. Information on the religious composition of the population of Rida' and Al Bayda' is not available. The Ismailis are centered mainly in the Haraz district

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FIGURE 3. Representatives Yemenis (U/OU)

(a). Negro children of the Tihamah

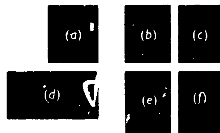
(b). Young bedouin from one of the northern nomadic tribes

(c). Adnani child with the characteristic thin nose and high forehead

(d). Citizens of San'a'

(e). Peasant family from the Tihamah whose features suggest Malay origins. The woman wears a hat distinctive to the area.

(f). Highland soldier chewing *qat*, a mild narcotic leaf



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west of San'a', in or near the town of Manakhah. Until 1948, a sizable community of Jews lived in Yemen. Almost all have since emigrated to Israel; the remainder live mostly in Sa'dah Province.

2. Tribes

For centuries the tribe has been the basic sociopolitical unit to which Yemenis looked for the maintenance of order and the settlement of disputes. Yemen has been aptly described as "a loose confederation of tribes," and it probably retains a stronger sense of tribal identity than any other Arab state, with the possible exception of Oman. In the past the tribes were militarily powerful and politically decisive; their relationships with each other and with the Imam determined whether the country erupted into civil war or remained at peace. Imam Yahya fought numerous wars and reorganized the government in an effort to weaken tribal cohesion and to bring the tribes under his control. Nevertheless, throughout his reign the tribes continued to hold the balance of power and, in order to govern successfully, he was obliged to control a fluctuating tribal coalition. Recalcitrant tribes were bribed or held in check through the practice of holding hostages, usually the young sons or relatives of important leaders. The political importance of the tribe has continued under the republican regime; in fact, not until February 1971 did the government announce a reduction in tribal subsidies.

There is no agreed definition of a Yemeni tribe, which has been variously described as "a small nation, with its own territory, grazing ground, wells, market towns, allegiances, friends, enemies, history, and the like," and as "a collection of families related by blood and united in dress, in traditions, and in manner of living." Blood relationship is generally considered the basis for tribal organization; however, genealogical claims are often fictitious. Tribal groupings, moreover, are not always based on lineage, and different clans of one tribe may occasionally belong to opposing confederations or religious groups. Some tribes also have protected or ruled over unrelated nontribal groups of landless tenants, artisans, or laborers.

Available information on Yemen's tribal organization is often contradictory, largely because no fixed tribal structure exists and great institutional flexibility prevails. The most inclusive tribal group is the confederation, which may be subdivided into tribes, clans, subclans, and extended families. The Hashid confederation, for example, is composed of an estimated 16 distinct tribes; one of these the Usaymat tribe, is apparently divided into two clans: the Dhu Fari, a nomadic section with four subclans, and the Dhu Uhrah, a settled group with 22 subclans. Yemen has four major tribal confederations, each with component entities (Figure 4).

It is difficult to judge the impact of tribal identification. Most observers agree that except for the small urban population, the bulk of the people retain some sense of tribal affiliation. Nevertheless, the old structure reportedly has been eroded in much of the south and west, and the people living there, in contrast to the northerners, are generally believed to possess neither tribal rights nor obligations. In fact, the southern tribes, most of them Shafi'i, appear to be little more than loosely connected groups of families.

Tribal cohesion, never very strong, has been disintegrating as a result of the civil war and the intrusion of foreign influences. Because the geography of highland Yemen did not favor the growth of tightly knit tribal associations, each mountain clan tended to develop independently. In peacetime the Bakil confederation experienced almost total dissolution, although its tribes usually came together during warfare. Today, there is considerable uncertainty as to which tribes belong to the Hashid confederation and which to the Bakil. During the civil war, moreover, members of the same tribe occasionally supported different sides and even fought against each other. In reality, some "tribes" are no more than a hodgepodge of hired mercenaries, and tribal loyalties are increasingly swayed by bribery and the prospect of loot.

The leadership of a tribe usually is the responsibility of a single individual called the sheikh, and every tribal unit, in theory, has its own. The sheikh's function is to govern the tribe, arbitrate in intratribal disputes, preside over the division of tribal lands, and serve as a representative to the central government. He is often assisted by a council of notables. Serious problems, including criminal cases, may be referred to the *qadi*, or judge. In the past, a sheikh generally determined his tribe's political orientation; however, as the pace of modernization has accelerated, the classical "feudal" relationships have begun to erode, and tribesmen no longer automatically follow their chief.

Although the exact procedure for transferring political power to a new chief is unclear, in most instances the office appears to be hereditary; in others the leader may be chosen by the tribal notables from a family of sheikhs or, as in the south, from a number of influential individuals. A hereditary sheikh, however, must be able to hold and wield power; if he cannot, he

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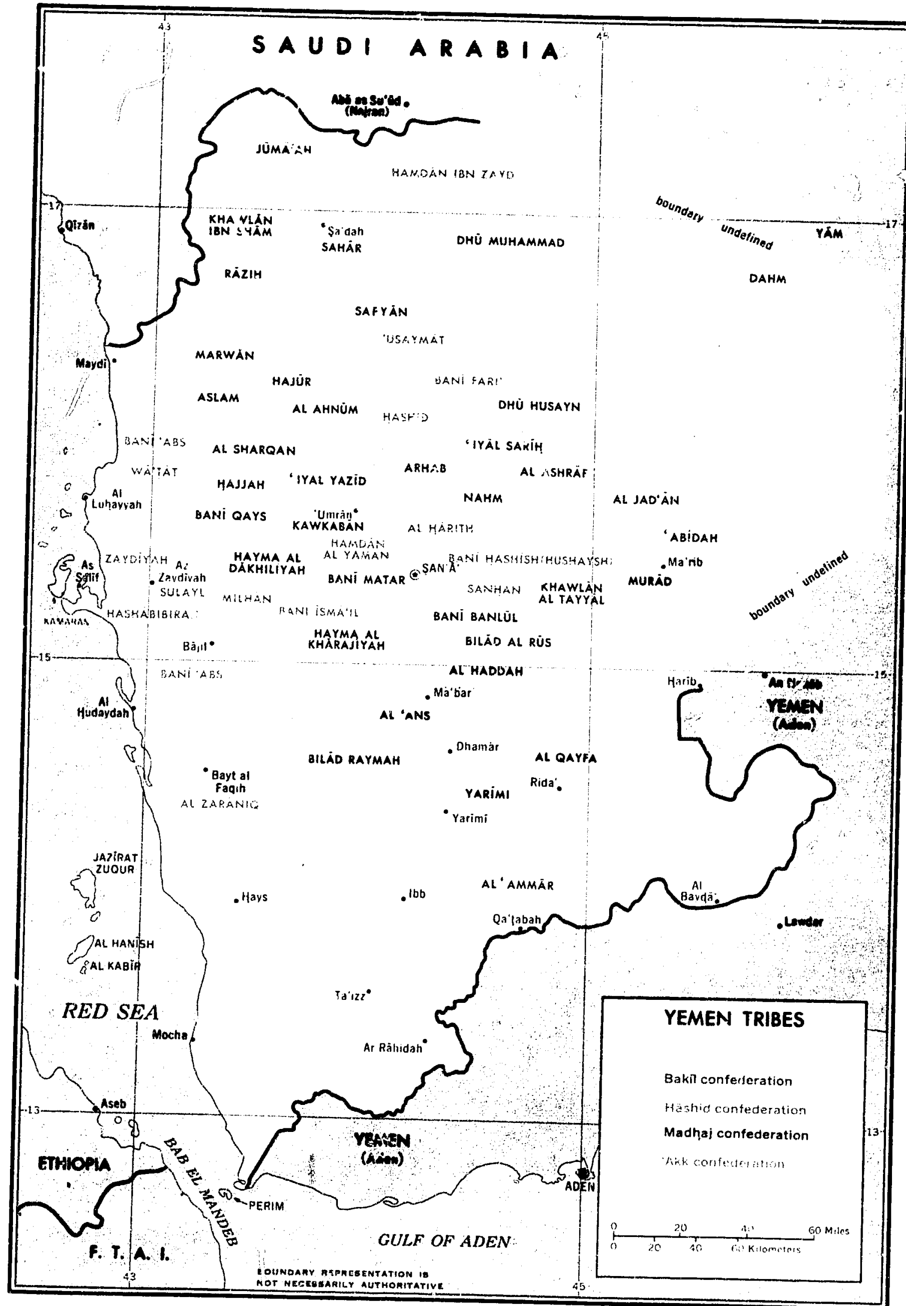

FIGURE 4. Selected tribes and tribal confederations (U/OU)

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may be displaced by a nonhereditary leader, acting upon the ancient principle of "tribal democracy."

3. Family

Among the people of Yemen, both tribal and nontribal, the extended family is the dominant social unit. This form of kinship organization, which eclipses the nuclear family in importance, is the center of the individual's emotional loyalties and the primary instrument through which he receives his education, religious training, and other aspects of his cultural heritage. The importance of the family is reflected in Article 7 of the 1970 Permanent Constitution, which views it as the basis of society, and declares it to be founded on "religion, customs, and patriotism." The principles governing kinship organization and structure are similar to those common throughout the Arab world. Descent is patrilineal—a person belongs to his father's family, residence is patrilocal—one lives in or near his father's house; and authority is patriarchal—the eldest male makes the major decisions for the entire household, including his married sons. Women are regarded as subordinate to men. Marriage is typically endogamous, contracted between members of a fairly small group; many communities appear to be little more than collections of extended families or clans.

It may be assumed that the civil war has created tension and instability within some families, and that economic progress, however limited, has advanced personal independence. Increased educational opportunities, including schooling for girls, exposure to new ideas and values, and government programs in various social fields may be expected ultimately to produce considerable change in traditional family customs.

Male-female relationships, carefully defined by custom and religious prescription, manifest the dominance of the male. According to the Koran, "men are the protectors and the maintainers of women because God has given the one more strength than the other and because they support them from their means." In simple terms, women are worth less than men; in the 1930's, for example, the blood money paid in compensation for killing a woman was reportedly about one-half that paid for murdering a male. Financial and legal affairs are generally left to men; for example, a woman must have a male relative or friend represent her in legal matters associated with inheritance. Women play no significant social role other than rearing children—a wife's status within the family depends upon her success in bearing sons—and performing household chores. Lower class women often have the additional responsibility of petty commerce or agricultural labor. By custom, politics lies within the male domain. Although the constitution does not limit membership in the Consultative Council (the national parliament) to men, in 1971 not one of the members was a woman. Reports indicate, however, that among the tribes of the Hashid confederation, women may assume some positions of leadership.

The seclusion of women is practiced to some degree in most areas. Female members of an urban family generally live in separate quarters known as the harem; upper class girls rarely leave the harem, but in poor families girls are allowed to play with boys until age 5 or 6. In some rural areas and in bedouin communities, however, the harem is not rigidly maintained. Within the cities, men do not customarily accompany women outdoors, although since the revolution exceptions to this rule have been occurring (Figure 5). Veiling is still observed in the urban setting, but non-Arab, tribal, and bedouin women often work side by side with men and tend to be unveiled or only partially veiled (Figure 6).

For the man, marriage is viewed as a religious and communal duty; for the woman, who needs a husband for her support, it is a virtual necessity. Although the Koran allows up to four wives, most Yemenis have only one wife at a time, the expense of supporting additional spouses being a major deterrent. Serial marriages, however, are common; 12 to 15 wives during a lifetime is not believed to be unusual. In addition, *mutah*, or temporary marriage, limited to a fixed time period of from a few days to several years, is also practiced, despite the opposition of religious leaders.

Initial marriage usually takes place when the prospective groom is age 15 or 16 and the bride somewhat younger, with the initiative in marriage negotiations being undertaken by the young man's family. In choosing a mate for their son, parents give first preference to the young man's first cousins, that is, the daughters of his father's brothers, a custom generally honored throughout Arabia since pre-Islamic times. Factors considered by both families include the physical health of the couple—the girl's virginity, as well, is highly valued—and their relative socioeconomic status. Although one source reports that a girl must agree to the marriage, it is almost impossible for her to decline if her father consents. Because of the separation of the sexes, marriage partners can be total strangers to each other even though they are often related.

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FIGURE 5. Yemeni couple marketing. Despite some change, husbands and wives still seldom appear in public together. Note the primitive wooden lock on the door of the shop. (U/OU)

FIGURE 6. Veiled townswoman wearing richly embroidered robes. She carries a coffee pot on her head. (U/OU)

After the marriage contract, which stipulates the nature of the dowry provided by the groom's family, is signed by representatives of both parties (ordinarily the bride's father and the bridegroom, or the two fathers), the couple is legally married. The wedding ceremony, which may not take place for several months, is an event of great importance. Preparations last many days and take on a holiday air for women of both households. Week-long festivities culminate in an evening banquet, after which the groom returns home with his bride and, for the first time, sees her unveiled.

Little information on intrafamilial conflict is available; however, sexual problems between man and wife are reportedly a major cause of difficulties. Physical abuse of wives is probably common; nonetheless, women traditionally have had the right, if mistreated, to seek aid from their own families (Figure 7). Despite the existence of a strict moral code and harsh punishment for sexual "excesses," both homosexual and adulterous practices are believed to be fairly common. Divorce procedures favor the husband, who separates from his wife simply by repudiating her and relinquishing control over the dowry deposited at the time of marriage. On the other hand, a wife must prove her husband unfaithful—a difficult task—or, if she has been deserted, she may win her freedom only after proving total lack of support for roughly 3 years. After divorce, a woman returns to the home of her nearest male relative, who attempts to arrange another marriage as soon as possible. Young children of divorced parents remain with their mother but revert to the father's control between the ages of 9 and 12. Failure to produce a son is grounds for divorce or for taking a second wife; when two wives do not get along, the childless one may be sent away or divorced. Subsequent marriages by the husband are less likely to be endogamous than the first, and he exercises greater freedom of choice.

4. Social classes

The concept of class in Yemen is not well defined; class distinctions, although significant, have been blurred by cultural, geographical, racial, and religious

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FIGURE 7. Victim of punishment for running away from husband, who virtually has proprietary rights to his wife (U/OU)

divisions, as well as by the egalitarian ideals of Islam. Social status depends on genealogical background, tribal affiliation, occupation, and race, as well as the secondary determinants: wealth, landholdings, and religious learning. Status symbols, however, are not the same for different groups; a city dweller, for example, may reject a tribesman's claim to superior status, and Shafi'i and Zaydi tribesmen may not recognize each other's social position because of antithetical religious beliefs.

Efforts to modernize the country since the revolution have somewhat modified the prevailing system. Among the most important changes effected were the removal from power of the royal family and the sayyids and the abolition of slavery. The traditional order has also been affected by economic development which has created new, if limited, job opportunities; as a result, salary, education, and skills have gained in importance as status determinants. With gradual progress toward a modern state, newly emerging groups are likely to be elevated in rank as old ones are displaced. Merchants skilled in trade and finance, educated individuals, and military leaders, all of whom are generally more sophisticated than the majority of Yemenis, are likely to enhance their social position, perhaps at the expense of rural chiefs.

In prerevolutionary Yemen there were a number of broadly constituted social groups. At the top were some thousands of sayyids—estimates vary from 5,000 to 300,000—including the Imam and his family and government officials of common lineage. Their position was based upon the claim of descent from the Prophet Muhammed, through Fatima and 'Ali, the Prophet's daughter and son-in-law. Reinforcing their social position was the belief that they possessed magical powers both to heal and to injure. In theory, any sayyid was eligible to become Imam; in practice, the Imamate was limited to a few prominent families who inherited or usurped the office through palace intrigues. In the 20th century, the institution became hereditary, passing from father to eldest son. As the most literate, learned segment of society, sayyids occupied most of the important political positions under the Imamate, although a few commoners became the Imams' most trusted aides and others were appointed to secondary administrative positions. Although the sayyids ruled largely in their own self-interest, few were wealthy and some were poor, if not totally destitute; the greatest fortunes were concentrated within the Imam's own family.

The sayyids represented a closed social class to which entrance was severely limited. As a privileged elite, they possessed a more cohesive outlook and were more united in the defense of their interests than any other social group. Aware that modernization would destroy their privileges, they generally opposed basic social reforms and were viewed by other Yemenis as an oppressive and exploitative class. Sayyid men could be distinguished by their attire: a long-sleeved, ankle-length gown (*kaftan);* a white turban, frequently marked with a green band; a curved dagger, or *jambiyah*, worn on the right side of the waist; and, on ceremonial occasions, a green woolen scarf draped over the shoulders, with one end hanging to the left knee (Figure 8).

Immediately after the outbreak of the revolution, most royal officials were driven from office or imprisoned, and many were killed. Revolutionary propaganda deliberately attacked the sayyids' social position, portraying them as arrogant, greedy, lazy aristocrats, with hands outstretched for the commoner to kiss, aware only of their rights and oblivious to their responsibilities. Since the revolution, many sayyids have joined the army as republican military officers—a career that formerly would have been rejected. Some have also attained cabinet rank under the republic, but noble birth no longer automatically insures high social position, and it is no longer fashionable to claim sayyid status.

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FIGURE 8. Mounted sayyid in ceremonial dress (U/OU)

Of somewhat indeterminate though high status are the ulama, or religious scholars, who in the past were closely allied to the Imam. The status of these individuals varies considerably. Religious learning was and still is highly venerated in Yemen, and the title of *qadi* is generally applied to distinguished scholars. Heads of mosques and other religious institutions generally outrank learned men without title or position.

Below the governing class are the tribesmen, living in rural areas and constituting the bulk of the population. In the past, the Imam's reliance upon the Bakil and Hashid confederations for military and political support endowed them with great prestige. A tribe was feared or respected for the number of warriors it could mobilize, and its rank or influence in the country at large could be calculated roughly by the amount of money it received from the government or the number of hostages the government held to keep the tribe under control. Within the tribes, the sheikhs formed a privileged elite ranking somewhat below the sayyids. A tribe's status often depended upon the prestige and wealth of its sheikhs whose genealogical or political relationship to the Imam and other leaders was a significant aspect of their power.

There are still an estimated 2,500 tribal sheikhs in Yemen, of whom over 200 wield significant political power. An individual's position within the tribe is determined by various factors, including lineage, landownership, wealth, weapons, age and, most important, fighting ability (Figure 9).

Tribespeople are probably the most fluid social group in Yemen. Entire tribes have lost status by defeat in war, loss of land, or gradual impoverishment. Tribes which were considered the defenders of the Imamate before the revolution have lost some prestige as their role in the new regime has been taken over by the republican army. Within the tribe the position of sheikh is usually hereditary, but it is possible for a commoner to acquire leadership status through government appointment or tribal election. Today, wealthy landowning sheikhs occasionally branch out into commerce and establish ties with the merchant class.

Urban merchants, artisans, and other townsmen are generally regarded as lower in status than tribesmen. Within and among these groups pronounced social distinctions exist, based more on occupation and wealth than on lineage. Primarily of Shafi'i persuasion, the merchants represent the upper stratum of urban society and perform the major leadership role in the Shafi'i community. They have assumed importance only since the 1930's, but at present wield considerable economic power. With the emphasis upon commerce and banking which followed in the wake of the revolution, the status of Yemeni businessmen has doubtless increased.

FIGURE 9. Yemeni tribesmen wearing jambiyahs. The jambiyah, or dagger, is the symbol of manhood. (C)

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Artisans rank considerably lower than merchants. Their lesser status is caused in part by the belief that nonagricultural labor is demeaning. The small artisan class is stratified into various trades, each with recognized status and each headed by a sheikh. Carpenters, cobblers, dyers, weavers, goldsmiths, and silversmiths, among others, are most often trained by their fathers and pass their skills on to their sons; it is thus exceptionally difficult to move from one trade to another. Often, in the case of Yemeni Jewish society—which once supplied many of the skilled craftsmen—and possibly that of Arab society as well, the name of a particular trade was associated with the whole family engaged in it, or even displaced the family name.

A step below the artisans are the sharecroppers and paid farm laborers who till the fields for landowning tribesmen. Their number apparently increased during the latter years of the imamic regime because of stringent taxation and the need to forfeit land in payment of debt. Nearly comparable in status are the ***dushans*** and ***shadins***—the eulogists and minstrels—who attach themselves to particular tribes or wander from place to place singing of heroic deeds and satirizing enemies.

At the bottom of the social ladder are the ***akhdams*** and the former slaves, both predominantly non-Arab. The ***akhdam***, a despised class drawn primarily from Negroid and other non-Arab elements, are employed as farm helpers, domestic workers, stevedores, porters, water carriers, or in other menial tasks; some ***akhdam*** women are singers and dancers. Slaves, legally freed in 1962, were mostly Negroes or "Afro-Arabs." In many respects the small slave class fared better than the ***akhdam***. The term "slave" was not an epithet, and the institution was generally benign; in some cases the slaves were better fed and clothed than free men and were spared hard agricultural labor. Many slaves were held in high esteem by their owners, treated as members of the family, and placed in positions of trust. Upward mobility was possible, either through manumission or through appointment to a prestigious position. In the republic, the generally impoverished condition of x-slaves, as well as their skin color, makes it difficult for them to move up the social ladder, and many probably continue in the service of former masters.

5. Community organization

Most Yemenis are sedentary and live in settlements ranging in size and complexity from dispersed mud huts in remote mountain areas to sizable communities containing large villas, and even palaces. The physical layout of most Yemeni communities has not changed in centuries, but modification of community patterns may be expected as economic and political development proceeds, as tribesmen slowly gravitate toward the cities and towns, and as government programs expand into the villages.

Most of the larger communities are located in the southern half of the country among the detribalized Shafi'i. The number of settlements qualifying as cities or towns is unknown; in the late 1960's, however, it was estimated that only 11% of the population were "urban." A medieval atmosphere still surrounds many of Yemen's sizable communities. Cities are enclosed by walls built originally to protect the inhabitants from marauding tribesmen, and massive stone and mud-brick houses (***dars***), rising six to seven stories, are often constructed on the fortress principle (Figure 10). These houses are frequently interspersed with whitewashed mosques and small walled gardens. In virtually all towns it is customary for tribal and other groups, each with local officers, to live in separate quarters (***harahs***) which not infrequently mirror the tribal organization of the countryside. In Al Hudaydah, the Afro-Arab servant class lives in grass huts in its own residential area, while the Arabs live in masonry houses in another section. Artisans are also loosely organized into ***harahs***, although with the creation of new industries occupational segregation may be expected to become less common.

San'a' traditionally has been divided into three major sections, which partially assume the character of separate towns: 1) Qa'ah al-Yahud, formerly inhabited solely by Jews; 2) Bi'r al-'Azab, the residential quarter built by the Turks, inhabited mostly by members of the royal family and other wealthy citizens; and 3) San'a' proper, the commercial center of the town where the majority of the people live. The capital city is further subdivided into smaller quarters (***harahs***) consisting of groups of 30 to 50 houses, each headed by an ***aqil***, an unpaid but respected community leader who helps to manage neighborhood affairs.

Most Yemenis live in small villages of 15 or more houses situated near arable land (Figure 11). In the highlands, villages are perched upon hilltops or located in the valleys. The inhabitants are most often herder-cultivators; however, a few nonfarm villages, the residents of each specializing in a different craft or trade, are reported in southern Yemen The village, which has been described as the "geographical seat of a clan-like unit," may be composed of compact, tightly grouped clusters of houses or of scattered dwellings separated by farmland. Many larger villages

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contain from 50 to 100 dwelling units, with only three to four entrances for the entire group. In the Bani al Harith tribal area north of San'a', walled gardens are common; inside each wall is a house and sometimes a tiny village. The gardens are usually irrigated, but nonirrigated fields also are farmed outside the walls. As in towns, class and tribal divisions affect the physical layout of the villages, with the ruling tribesmen often living in large, favorably situated houses which overlook the farmers' mud huts sprawled at their base.

Most farmland is owned individually or by the tribe—one source reports that 90% of the farmers own their land. Although a few absentee landowners are said to maintain substantial holdings and a few large tracts were reported near Al Hudaydah in the 1960's, farms of over 300 acres are rare and the average is said to be 2.6 acres. The larger plots are often worked by day laborers. A typical farmer in the Bani al Harith area is limited to about 1 acre, while the paramount sheikh owns about 1,000 acres out of a total of 4,000 to 6,000 acres. Farmers in this area have hereditary land use rights but must supply 50% of the crop to the tribe. Highland farms are extensively terraced. The terraces, many of them constructed centuries ago, are often only a few feet in width and require considerable community cooperation for their upkeep. In the flat Tihamah, where terracing is unnecessary, a primitive but intricate system of dams, dikes, and levees is maintained for channeling the periodic flow of water from the mountain wadis onto the fields.

The migratory habits and community structures of the nomadic and seminomadic population in Yemen have not been investigated. It may be assumed that their cultural patterns are closely related to, yet distinct from, the permanently settled agriculturalists. The seminomads are sheep and goat herders whose large flocks require some seasonal migration. They usually occupy much smaller territories than true nomads, as their wanderings are limited by attachment to permanent settlements for most of the year. Genuine nomads, the bedouin, rarely engage in agriculture; they wander continuously through extensive although definite territories.

6. Basic values and attitudes

The common core values customarily designated as Yemeni are largely the traditional values of the Zaydi tribesmen which reflect three main forces—Islamic tradition, tribal law and custom, and awareness of a Yemeni identity. Islamic tradition fosters a profoundly conservative spirit which infuses every aspect of society. It is grounded on the moral and legal precepts of the Koran and the Sharia which, until 1962, served as Yemen's unwritten constitution. Zaydi interpretations of these works encourage belief in the immutability and virtue of traditional ways, foster reverence for the wisdom of the past, and promote the pleasures of paradise over the struggles of earthly existence.

Patterns of authority and community life sanctioned in the tribal ethic reinforce this conservative outlook. Many of the most highly prized virtues are found in the *urf*, a collection of unwritten

FIGURE 10. Mud-brick "skyscrapers" (*dars*) and a mosque rising above a narrow street in the capital city of San'a'. Note the inscription praising Allah high on the building at left. (U/OU)

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FIGURE 11. View of the Wadi Dahr agricultural area with walled gardens in the foreground and the village, nestled against the mountains, in the background (U/OU)

la[illegible], usages, and traditions passed orally from generation to generation. Above all, the extended family is venerated and its honor and reputation cherished. Within the family, interpersonal relationships continue to be governed by respect for age and authority. Beyond the family, the tribe commands the loyalty of its members and represents the largest social unit to which tribal Yemenis feel a moral obligation. An individual's honor is closely associated with that of the extended family and the tribe, and if a Yemeni acts dishonorably he disgraces not only himself but also his kin. On the other hand, if the family or the tribe consider that they have been wronged by an outsider—and Yemeni tribesmen are quick to take offense at real or imagined slights—redress must be made.

Warfare has been practically a way of life among tribesmen, whose love of fighting is said to be "imbibed with their mother's milk." As one scholar has remarked, it is almost a disgrace for a freeborn man to die a natural death. Qualities most esteemed have been described as "bravery in battle, patience in misfortune, persistence in revenge, protection of the weak, and defiance of the strong." In some parts of the country, the civil war exacerbated warlike tendencies. Blood feuds, the endless series of often violent attacks and counterattacks between two families, apparently are not quite so prevalent in the densely populated highlands, where villages are well protected and depend on the orderly development of agriculture, as in the other tribal areas.

The tribesman's emotional attachment to the land and his sense of individualism have further influenced the value system. Farming and herding are considered the most worthy occupations. In an environment where resources are scarce, hard work is necessary, and the family provides the only means of support, the agrarian life-style is greatly cherished. Within the

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framework of family and tribe, the highland way of life also fosters a rugged self-reliance. As described by an ancient South Arabian saying:

> **Every tribesman thinks himself a sultan. Every Arab considers himself worthy to rule, and it is rare to find one of them submitting to another, be it his father, his brother, or the head of his clan.**

Since the Imamate was overthrown, the government has attempted to create a political consensus by reinterpreting traditional values in the light of contemporary needs. The faith in Islam that is extolled in the preamble to the 1970 Permanent Constitution, for example, is one that is "synonymous with development, marches with time, and does not stand as an obstacle in the path of progress." Furthermore, republican leaders have continually emphasized the need to eliminate racial, tribal, and sectarian prejudice and to build a society based upon social justice, brotherhood, love, and cooperation.

Government efforts to reshape the value system have not, as yet, met with much success. Where new ideas have come into conflict with old ones, the latter have prevailed, and Western social and political concepts have had little popular impact. Some substantive changes in values have occurred among the small urban elite, but they are mostly suggestive of future possibilities. Increasingly, the outside observer has the impression of two societies living in uneasy coexistence—one traditional, whose primary loyalty is to tribe and family, the other dynamic, whose goal is the creation of a modern nation-state. The modern sector of society is extremely small, however, and behavioral norms continue to be largely determined by the village, tribe, and family; it is doubtful whether the core values, even though under attack, have yet been shaken.

Yemeni conceptions of themselves as a nation and attitudes toward their government are conditioned by their geography and history, and by their ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. In general, Yemenis view themselves as members of small, separate communities rather than as members of a national group. Furthermore, as a result of centuries of intergroup rivalry and aggression, exploited by both foreign and indigenous rulers, members of different communities often view each other with hostility. Most Yemenis, in consequence, have a vague sense of nationhood which is aroused only when the country's integrity is threatened by foreign intervention.

The major schism in Yemen is between two Muslim communities, the Zaydi (Shia) and the Shafi'i (Sunni). Originating in a dispute regarding the succession to the Prophet, this conflict, in its Yemeni context, stemmed from the Shafi'i rejection of the Zaydi Imam in his role as creator and interpretor of Muslim law, although his position as a neutral administrator of the Sharia and as temporal leader of the country was unchallenged. This rift was exploited by the Turkish conquerors and later by the Imams. The Turks, as Sunnis, favored the Shafi'is during their occupation of Yemen and appointed them to important administrative positions. After independence was secured in 1918, Imam Yahya undertook to reduce the Shafi'i community's influence through confiscation of its properties, the execution and imprisonment of its leaders, and discrimination in government employment.

Communal frictions increased immediately after the 1962 revolution, even though the event itself apparently was the result of joint Zaydi-Shafi'i planning. Early republican governments reportedly were composed largely of Shafi'is who, in turn, appointed fellow adherents to posts in the civil service and the military. By 1966, 60% of the officer corps and 45% of the enlisted men in the once Zaydi-dominated military were said to be Shafi'i. This dramatic growth in the numbers of Shafi'i in the military establishment was related to their loyalty to the republic at a time when many Zaydi tribes were waging war against it.

With the gradual return to peacetime conditions, the traditional Zaydi-Shafi'i conflict shows signs of abating as the thrust of Yemeni politics takes on new direction. Zaydi domination in the Shafi'i south is being modified. Tax collection, for example, long a prerogative of Zaydi officials, is now in the hands of the central government. However, large Zaydi land holdings, the basis of their influence in the south, still exist.

An equally important conflict has been between townsmen and tribally organized cultivators. Tribesmen have displayed a strong antipathy toward the merchants and artisans of the city and toward the comfort and "effeminacy" of city life. They have scorned the townsmen's unwillingness to carry arms—a traditional symbol of manhood—and their dependence on the government for protection. Until recently, the tribesmen, occasionally with the permission of the Imam, preyed upon city dwellers for sport and for plunder. In 1948, Imam Ahmad declared San'a' an open city in reprisal for the assassination of his father, and the tribes sacked the town. For their part, townsmen, particularly the educated elite and the ardent revolutionaries, look down on tribesmen and consider them rude, haughty, savage, and untrustworthy. They especially resented the su-

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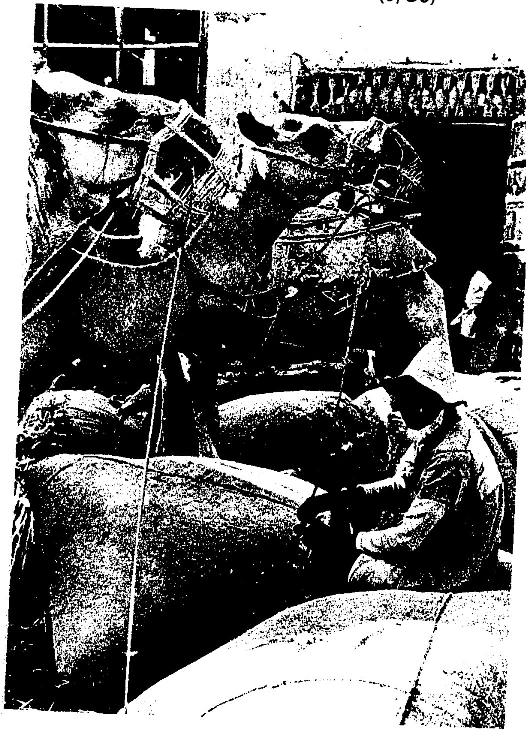
premacy of the "backward" tribal elements during the rule of Imam Ahmad.

Throughout the civil war, townsmen and tribesmen continued to find themselves at odds. The revolution was accomplished in an urban setting and was undertaken by military officers, intellectuals, and businessmen. Townspeople were generally supporters of the new regime and constituted a large portion of the army. On the other hand, although many tribesmen were disenchanted with the rule of Imam Ahmad, few challenged the institution of the Imamate. As a rule, tribesmen fought for the deposed Imam or, guided by the tribal ethic which places a premium on expediency and opportunism, fought for the royalists one day and the republicans the next, depending upon the prospects for victory and loot. It is believed that tensions have lessened since the cessation of hostilities and the inclusion, in 1970, of tribal leaders in the government. Nevertheless, the tribes have retained their independence and both tribesmen and townsmen continue to harbor their age-old antipathy.

FIGURE 12. A camel driver rests on a bag of cotton outside a cotton gin in Al Hudaydah, major city of the Tihamah (U/OU)



A pronounced regionalism complements urban-tribal differences. Several observers have commented on the nearly complete isolation of the Tihamah from central Yemen. According to one writer, there is an unpopulated no-man's land between the lowland Tihamah villages and the highland tribal areas; this zone apparently originated in ancient tribal prejudices, reinforced by racial, climatic, economic, and political factors. Tribesmen consider the Tihamah fit only for the non-Arab population, which is concentrated along the coast. Al Hudaydah, the area's major city and a relatively sophisticated port town, is detested by highlanders, who view it as abominable, flat, and unprotected (Figure 12). In northern Yemen, the people of Sa'dah, whose trade has traditionally been oriented toward Saudi Arabia, have maintained only a tenuous relationship with the Yemeni capital. Sources in San'a' have described the residents of Sa'dah as provincial, intensely religious, suspicious of any "Yemeni," although they themselves are Yemeni citizens, and closely bound to tribal and local tradition.

Further intensifying Yemen's nation-building problems is the animosity between Adnani and Qahtani Arabs. Although both descended from the same Semitic stock, they trace their genealogies to different sources. The Qahtanis believe that they represent the "pure" Arabs and that the Adnanis are merely descendants of immigrants from the north. Although actually Adnanis, reputed to be descendants of the Prophet, the Imams and sayyids claimed Qahtani ancestry and identified with the Himyarites in order to improve their status among the indigenous Yemenis. Nevertheless, many Qahtanis still regard the former Adnani sayyids as "foreigners" without legitimate claim to rule, even after 1,000 years of continuous residence.

Nationalism is a motivating force only among a small group of urban intellectuals, students, businessmen, and military officers. Many of these men acquired their modern ideas outside the country, and a number were members of the Free Yemeni Party centered in Aden. An effort is being made to stimulate national pride and patriotism among the bulk of the population through the use of modern techniques, such as speeches by national leaders and the display of national symbols. Nonetheless, efforts to create a sense of national unity appear, so far, to be ineffective, largely because the ordinary man has little faith in

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government. This attitude has developed after centuries of exploitative and autocratic rule. According to observers, the average Yemeni finds it difficult to believe that government officials are working for the people rather than for their own personal benefit. Tribesmen have shown little liking for centralized government in any form and for the republic in particular. They continue to evaluate the new political leaders in terms of the old criteria; former President Sallal, for example, was viewed as a lowborn Yemeni whose only qualifications for office were that he was male and possessed all 10 fingers and toes.

Despite the apparent absence of national awareness, Yemenis are committed to the integrity of their homeland. The appearance of a large number of Egyptian troops and military advisers during the civil war caused fear of foreign domination and led many Yemenis, some of whom had been traditional enemies, to unite against the Egyptian-controlled government.

Popular attitudes toward foreigners have been influenced largely by the nation's historic isolation. Although the Turks occupied coastal areas in Yemen for almost 400 years and controlled San'a' occasionally, they rarely penetrated the central highlands. After the establishment of the Imamate in 1918, Yemen became a hermit kingdom, deliberately and almost completely isolated from the outside. The few foreigners who were allowed to enter the country—prior to 1946 only eight Americans had been in Yemen—had to be personally approved by the Imam. Freedom of movement was not allowed, and visitors were kept under close guard.

The Yemenis have been described as xenophobic and intensely suspicious of Christians. After visiting Yemen some years ago, a European traveler declared that:

> the foreigner feels as if he is surrounded by an invisible elastic wall which cuts him off on all sides. . . . He meets with secret resistance everywhere; his every step is watched with distrust; his actions arouse suspicion all too easily. . . . Once suspicion has been aroused, passive resistance can rapidly burst into active hatred.

On the other hand, others have argued that respect for foreign guests is traditional, noting that rather than being xenophobic, Yemenis are simply fiercely independent and their suspicions are based on ignorance, not fear, of the outside world. In the 1960's, many foreigners were accorded a courteous and friendly reception.

Since 1945 when it joined the Arab League, Yemen has gradually expanded its international contacts, joining the United Nations in 1947 and several of its affiliated organizations in subsequent years. Officially nonaligned, the republican government has shown a desire to work with all nations willing to share their technological skills and knowledge.

Lipservice is paid to the larger Arab questions, particularly the Palestinian problem but, except for a few of the educated elite, the populace probably does not register strong feelings concerning Israel. Furthermore, if the Yemeni Zaydis are like the Shias elsewhere, they are not enthusiastic about supporting Arab nationalistic causes that are based largely on Sunni concepts of Islam and Arabism.

Little evidence exists concerning Yemeni attitudes toward international conflict. It is clear, however, that the Yemenis are not a pacifist people. Tribal customs have a strong martial cast, and fighting among themselves has been endemic throughout their history. Yemen has also fought numerous wars to repel foreign invasion or to enlarge the national domain. As President 'Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani stated in 1969, "Our people are by nature very sensitive when it comes to their country's independence; they reject pressure and interference from outside."

C. Population (U/OU)

Yemen, the most populous state in the Arabian Peninsula, had an estimated population at midyear 1972 of slightly over 6 million. Moreover, as the result of a high birth rate and a declining death rate, its population has been increasing rapidly, at a currently estimated rate of approximately 2.9% per annum. This high rate of growth, if unchecked, will exert great pressure on the nation's natural resources and hinder government efforts to stimulate economic development and improve social conditions. In years past, emigration has served to reduce somewhat the impact of rapid population growth, but restrictions placed on Yemeni emigrants by some of the countries to which they have traditionally migrated appear to be limiting the effectiveness of this form of relief.

Although immigration has been unimportant, the movement of Yemenis out of the country has contributed to a northward shift of population within the Arabian Peninsula. It has been estimated that between 500,000 and 1 million Yemenis live outside their homeland, but it is not known to what extent these expatriates represent emigrants since World War II or are the descendants of emigrants of an earlier era. Most Yemeni emigrants live in other countries of the Arabian Peninsula, especially Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Aden), and in the East African nations, but

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communities of Yemeni are also found in such diverse places as Singapore, Marseilles, Cardiff, and New York City. There are probably over 20,000 Yemenis in the United States.

Because Yemen has no regular system for the registration of vital events, it is impossible to determine birth and death rates precisely. According to estimates, the birth rate, which has been rising, is about 50 per 1,000 population, while the death rate approximates 21 per 1,000 population. The current death rate is considerably lower than that of the 1950's and 1960's and, as health and sanitation programs are expanded, it is expected to decline even further. In particular, the infant mortality rate, which was estimated at 160 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1970, will probably decrease. According to the United Nations, life expectancy at birth stood at 42.3 years in the 1965-70 period, and on the basis of current projections it is expected to be slightly above 48 years for the period 1975-80.

Barring the recurrence of civil war and famine, which together took the lives of over 200,000 Yemenis between 1962 and 1970, the population will continue to increase at a high rate. Furthermore, if traditional outlets for emigration are closed off, as has already occurred in Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Aden), the growth rate will accelerate. Assuming a constant growth rate of 2.9% per annum, a conservative estimate, the 1972 population will double in 24 years; it will reach 7.5 million in 1979 and 10 million in 1990. Despite the high growth rate, the government has not promoted population control. Moreover, underlying social values and customs foster continued population growth at a high level. Among these are the tradition of large families, the desire for male offspring, and the subservient status of women.

1. Size and distribution

Yemen has never conducted a national population census. Estimates of the population during the 1960's ranged from 3.5 million to 5 million, with the United Nations accepting the latter figure as being reasonably accurate for midyear 1965. Subsequent growth, averaging 2.8% to 2.9% per year, has resulted in a population estimated to have reached 6,074,000 at midyear 1972.[2] Yemen is thus the third most populous Arab state in southwestern Asia, ranking after Iraq and Syria. Its population is about 8% greater than that of Saudia Arabia, its neighbor to the north and east, and more than four times as large as Yemen (Aden), its neighbor to the south.

Although some of its boundaries are ill defined or have never been delineated, in its Statistical Yearbook published in September 1971, Yemen claims a land area of 77,221 square miles. Most Western sources, however, estimate its size at 75,000 square miles. At midyear 1972, overall density was roughly 80 persons per square mile if the Western estimates of size are used; Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Aden) had 7 and 14, respectively. Despite its predominantly rural and agricultural orientation, Yemen is about 33% more densely inhabited than the United States as a whole.

Official population estimates as of 1970 for the eight provinces (Figure 13) show that Ibb Province, with 171 persons per square mile, was the most densely populated of the major administrative districts, followed by Ta'izz Province with 144 persons per square mile. Al Bayda', with a density of 33 persons per square mile, had the least concentration. San'a' Province had the largest population, but because of its size—about 40% of the total area—had a density lower than that of the nation as a whole.

The population of Yemen has long been unevenly distributed (Figure 14). Traditionally rural and agrarian, the people have settled in areas where topographical and climatic conditions favor agriculture. The westernmost part of the country, on the Red Sea, is the Tihamah, a 15- to 30-mile coastal plain bordered on the east by mountains whose altitudes range from 2,000 to 12,000 feet and which

FIGURE 13. Population, area, and population density, by province, 1970 (U/OU)
(Population in thousands; area in square miles)

PROVINCE	POPULATION	AREA	PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE
Al Bayda'	191	5,792	33
Hajjah	573	6,564	87
Al Hudaydah	764	13,514	57
Ibb	859	5,019	171
Rida'	286	3,861	74
Sa'dah	477	6,950	69
San'a'	1,910	30,888	62
Ta'izz	668	4,633	144
Total	5,728	77,221	74

NOTE—Data are derived from the 1971 edition of the Yemeni *Statistical Yearbook*. The total population figure is lower than that shown by U.N. estimates. Area figures exceed the 75,000 square miles which numerous sources report for Yemen.

[2]Official data on population growth, based on religious tax collections and published in the 1971 Yemen Statistical Yearbook, imply an average annual rate of growth of 2.2% for the 1967-71 period. This figure, however, appears unrealistic in view of U.N. estimates based on known demographic data for other Arab countries at similar levels of development.

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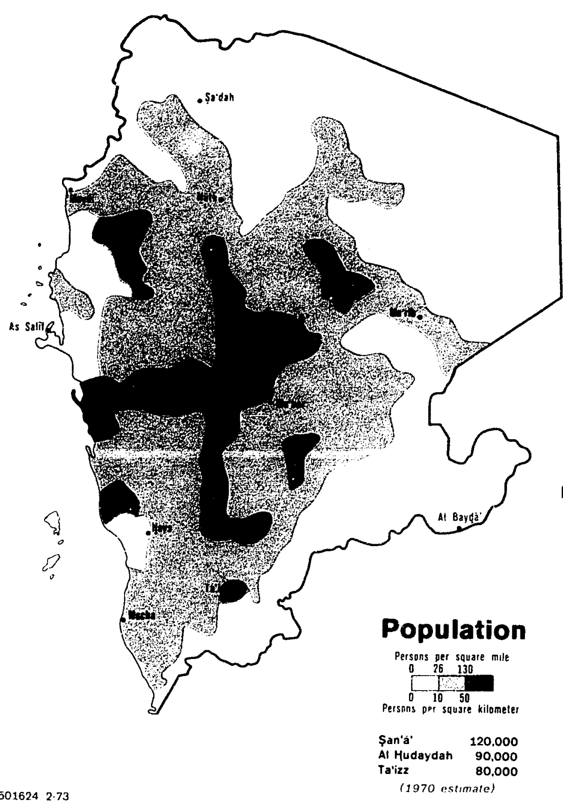

FIGURE 14. Density of population (U/OU)

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are backed by flat to dissected interior desert plains. Roughly 10% to 20% of the inhabitants live in the Tihamah, primarily in villages and small towns. Perhaps as many as 75% live in the mountainous area, with the remainder residing in eastern Yemen which, except for clusters around wells and desert oases, is largely uninhabited. Among the provinces, the uneven distribution is marked. Ibb and Ta'izz Provinces collectively account for only 12% of the national territory, but accommodated 27% of the total population in 1970. (Figure 15); at the other extreme, Al Bayda' Province makes up 8% of the total area, but it contained only 3% of the population in 1970.

Little information is available on internal migration. The permanent movement of persons within the country is thought to be relatively small, primarily because of a shortage of job opportunities and because those wishing to improve their status generally emigrate rather than seek a new home within Yemen. During the famine of 1970, however, many Yemenis were forced to leave the villages of the Tihamah to seek aid in the larger towns, and it is not known whether they returned home after the crisis was over. Seasonal migration annually involves a large number of seminomads. Some of these persons look for employment in the agricultural areas around San'a' during harvest time, but they normally return to their homes after the harvest has been completed. Other seminomads move seasonally with their herds but generally return to permanent settlements. Yemen's small nomadic population moves almost continuously in search of water and grazing land for their herds.

Urban areas in Yemen have yet to experience the rapid growth characteristic of many developing

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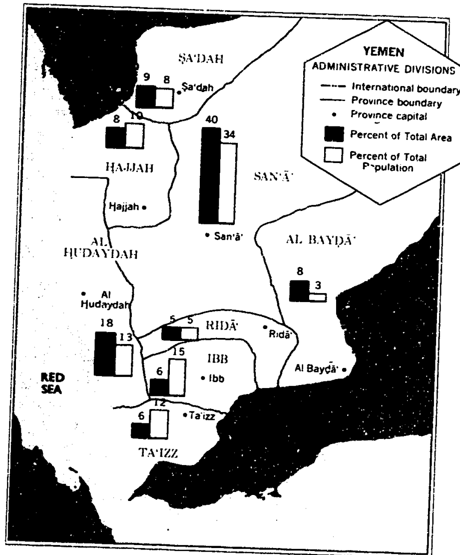

FIGURE 15. Distribution of population and area, by province, 1970 (U/OU)

nations, and rural communities are still the most common form of settlement. Nonetheless, many Yemeni cities and towns have been growing since the late 1950's and have become important in the commercial and political life of the country. In the late 1950's, the U.S. Government estimated that there were 26 localities with more than 2,000 inhabitants, and it may be assumed that more communities have reached that size in the intervening period. The urban population—those resident in towns with over 20,000 inhabitants—was estimated by the United Nations at about 11% of the total population in midyear 1968. The population of San'a', estimated in the 1940's at 50,000 to 60,000, remained fairly stable until 1962, despite the transfer of some government offices to other areas during the reign of Imam Ahmad. Since that date, the population has grown; in 1970, according to government estimates, San'a' had 120,000 inhabitants, roughly one-fifth the total urban population. Yemen's chief port, Al Hudaydah, had 90,000 residents in 1970, while the population of Ta'izz was thought to have been in the neighborhood of 80,000. A few towns, such as Mocha (Al Mukha), formerly an important port and export center for coffee beans, have continued a centuries-long decline in population.

2. Age-sex structure

In the absence of census data on the age and sex composition of the Yemeni population, the United Nations has prepared a model population distribution for the country based upon the average values of births and deaths for the southwestern Asian region as a whole. The resultant age-sex structure estimated for midyear 1970 (Figure 16) conforms to the pattern found in most of the economically underdeveloped

FIGURE 16. Population, by age group and sex, midyear 1970 (U/OU)

AGE GROUP	NUMBER			PERCENT DISTRIBUTION			MALES PER 100 FEMALES
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	
0–4	531	515	1,046	18.3	18.2	18.3	103.1
5–9	410	398	808	14.1	14.1	14.1	103.0
10–14	347	335	682	12.0	11.8	11.9	103.6
15–19	298	287	585	10.3	10.1	10.2	103.8
20–24	255	245	500	8.8	8.7	8.7	104.1
25–29	215	208	423	7.4	7.3	7.4	103.4
30–34	182	176	358	6.3	6.2	6.2	103.4
35–39	153	148	301	5.3	5.2	5.2	103.4
40–44	128	124	252	4.4	4.4	4.4	103.2
45–49	106	104	210	3.6	3.7	3.7	101.9
50–54	86	86	172	3.0	3.0	3.0	100.0
55–59	68	70	138	2.3	2.5	2.4	97.1
60–64	51	54	105	1.8	1.9	1.8	94.4
65–69	35	39	74	1.2	1.4	1.3	89.7
70 and over	37	43	80	1.2	1.5	1.4	86.0
All ages	2,909	2,832	5,734	100.0	100.0	100.0	102.5

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areas of the world where high birth rates and high but declining death rates have resulted in rapid population growth. As indicated by these estimates, the Yemeni population is marked by an extremely large proportion of children. Persons under age 15 accounted for an estimated 44.3% of the total in 1970. The median age was 17.8 years, contrasted to 28.0 years in the United States.

At midyear 1970, almost half of the Yemeni population—47.0%—were in the dependent ages, usually considered to be 0-14 and 65 and over; only 2.7% of the population were age 65 and over. The population in the working ages (15-64) constituted 53.0% of the total; thus there were 884 persons in the dependent ages for every 1,000 persons in the working ages, compared with 615 in the United States. This ratio for Yemen, however, overstates the actual degree of dependency; many children under age 15 are engaged in some form of work activity, and persons age 65 and over often are forced by economic necessity to continue working.

Yemen's estimated population profile, compared with that of the United States (Figure 17), illustrates the large birth cohorts in Yemen during the 1960's. Each subsequent age group tapers off slightly, reflecting both the smaller cohorts of births in the past and the steady attrition caused by deaths. In contrast, the U.S. profile has a narrow base, indicating a much smaller proportion of children; moreover, the proportion of the total population in each age group 35 and over is larger than in Yemen.

According to the estimates for 1970, there were 2,902,000 males and 2,832,000 females in the Yemeni population, or 102.5 males for every 100 females. This excess of males, while contrary to the experience in the West, is not unusual in the male-oriented societies of the Arab world. Males outnumbered females in all age groups under age 50.

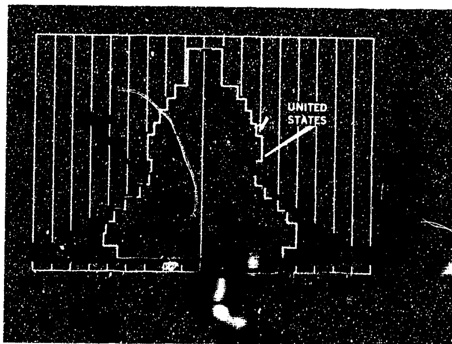

FIGURE 17. Population, by age group and sex, Yemen and the United States, mid-1970 (U/OU)

D. Employment (U/OU)

1. The people and work

Most Yemenis continue to gain their living from the land, roughly nine out of every 10 workers being subsistence farmers or pastoralists. A high proportion of those in nonagrarian occupations are merchants, traders, artisans, or craftsmen involved in the traditional economy (see the Economy chapter, under Manpower). Some persons, largely in urban areas, have jobs associated with the nascent modern economy or with the government, but as yet they remain a small part of the total labor force. In the countryside, women traditionally have labored in the fields alongside men, whereas townswomen, particularly those from well-to-do families, have been segregated and assigned to household chores. In 1969, a new textile plant in San'a' employed 300 women, the first to engage in industrial labor.

Underemployment is widespread in both towns and rural areas; unemployment is probably less pronounced, but it may have increased in the last few years as a result of droughts and the disruptive effects of civil war. Yemen's cities have not, as yet, been plagued with large numbers of unskilled and unemployed migrants from the countryside. This is, in part, due to the pride of rural highlanders in their tribal life style and their strong preference for agrarian pursuits. In addition, Zaydi tribesmen have an aversion to city life, considering it restrictive and soft. It is conceivable, however, that the expectations of rural Yemenis for a better way of life eventually will be aroused, resulting in increased migration to the cities.

In general, Yemeni workers are not suitably oriented for employment in a modern industrialized economy. Work discipline is not highly valued, largely because there is not that much to do in an underdeveloped preindustrial society with few resources. Except in several new factories and possibly in the civil service, rigid time schedules are unknown. During the plowing and harvesting seasons, farmers labor from sunrise to sunset, but in a normal work situation the Yemeni laborer works 3 to 4 hours a day and takes the afternoon off for conversation and chewing *qat*. In contrast, Yemeni workers abroad are often noted for their industry and ambition. Perhaps with a more suitable work environment and adequate economic

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incentives Yemenis at home can adapt to the conditions of modern industry.

Dissatisfaction with conditions of employment has been evident among the few skilled workers and professionals trained overseas and has, in many instances, resulted in emigration. Insufficient and irregular compensation, poor utilization of skills, and corrupt practices are major causes of discontent. Improvements in the form of wage increases have taken place, but they have often been nullified by the rapid depreciation of the Yemen riyal. In an effort to improve working conditions within government, a civil service law, passed in 1971, provides for standardized job descriptions and specified salaries, establishes recognized grievance and promotion procedures, and grants vacation, sick, and maternity leave.

2. Labor organizations

Before 1962, labor unions were nonexistent. Apart from government proscription, a major barrier to their formation was the absence of large industries. According to a 1964 report, "neither the country's agriculture nor its industry was sufficiently advanced to support any major, nonself-employed labor force." The first labor union, the Yemeni General Trade Union, was organized in Ta'izz in May 1963, approved by the President in July 1963, and claimed about 2,150 members in 1964. Affiliated unions were organized in Al Hudaydah in October 1964, with 1,000 to 1,300 members, and in San'a' in October 1965, with an initial enrollment of 800 members. The charter of the San'a' union provides for organizing such groups as taxi drivers, bank employees, and construction workers. In 1965 the Yemeni General Trade Union became the Yemeni General Federation of Workers (YGFW) with a council composed of delegates from member unions. Other small unions affiliated with the YGFW have been founded in Mocha and Ar Rahidah, and a rival union was established in Al Hudaydah.

In 1968, as a result of what the government regarded as illegal political activity, a number of national labor leaders were arrested and certain union activities were curtailed. Subsequently, the right to establish trade unions was reaffirmed by the government in Article 38 of the 1970 Permanent Constitution. Reports indicate, however, that since the imprisonments unions have been ineffective and clandestine labor groups have developed outside the official organization.

Unions generally avoid participation in overt political activities, but they do have a limited cultural impact. Each of the three major unions administers evening literacy classes for its members; in 1965, for example, 150 persons were attending classes in San'a' and 60 in Ta'izz. In addition, the unions maintain libraries (the Ta'izz union has a library of 2,000 books) and recreational facilities. In 1964, the Ta'izz union held weekly panel discussions on various issues, and a special committee was created to promote understanding of unionism among the workers. Unions also may open savings accounts, form cooperative associations, and provide social and "sanitary" services. Activities are financed, in part, by union dues. Members of the San'a' union were required to pay dues amounting to the equivalent of 1 riyal per month if their salary was more than 30 riyals, or ½ riyal if their salary was less than 30 riyals. The Al Hudaydah union charged dues of 1 riyal per month for salaried employees and ½ riyal for day laborers.

As yet, it is meaningless to consider trade unionism as a national movement with substantial economic and political power. Total membership is probably less than 10,000. In addition, the unions lack capable leadership. Article 25 of the 1964 labor law, moreover, provides that the Ministry of Interior can disband any union for inciting to overthrow the government, "disdaining" the republican system, or promoting sectarianism. Nonetheless, with the cooperation of the government, the unions have advanced the welfare of workers. By 1964, for example, the Ta'izz union claimed to have reduced the hours of work in many firms and restrained the arbitrary firing of workers. Unions also have aided in the establishment of sickness and maternity leave and workmen's compensation for their members. Above all, unions represent the skeleton of a mass organization which could eventually have an important political role; in fact, unionism is perhaps the only modern social institution to emerge since the revolution.

E. Living conditions and social problems (C)

1. Levels of living

With the exception of Oman, Yemen is the poorest of the Arab states, and its levels of living are among the lowest in the world. Most Yemenis live at or near subsistence levels; most are entirely outside the cash economy. The major obstacles to economic and social development have been an almost total lack of nonagricultural resources, the refusal of the ruling elite to encourage change, and an archaic social and political system which has dulled individual

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expectations of betterment and limited the possibility of growth.

Precise indicators with which to assess the state of the economy and the welfare of the population are unavailable, but a few examples of conditions within Yemen reflect its primitive state. Roughly 70% of the gross domestic product is derived from agriculture, and 90% of the labor force are farmworkers, largely in the subsistence sector. Industry was virtually unknown until about 1960, and as of 1970 there were only two industrial enterprises which employed over 50 workers. Prior to 1962 there was no national banking system and before 1964 no national currency. Not one hard-surfaced road existed before 1959, and as of mid-1964 it was estimated that less than 3% of the population were served by electricity. Since about 1940 the economy has been in an almost continuous decline, caused by crop failures, reduced international demand for Yemen's export commodities, and the inability of the domestic handicraft industry to meet foreign competition. The civil war, which plagued Yemen during most of the 1960's, produced widespread devastation. The International Red Cross estimated that during the first year of the war, 1.5 million civilians were uprooted, hundreds of villages were destroyed, and homeless families were living in caves and wadies.

The national wealth is unequally distributed in Yemen, although due to a scarcity of material goods and social services, the inequities are not readily perceived. Only fragmentary data on personal income are available for those Yemeni in the cash economy, although it is known that wages in both the public and private sectors increased in the second half of the 1960's. The average monthly income of a skilled construction worker in the early 1970's was roughly the equivalent of US$70, and unskilled workers made about one-third as much. Bank employees earned approximately $24 a month, hotel and restaurant personnel $15 a month, and workers in the textile and aluminum factories $14 a month. Among the highest paid individuals are the senior civil servants; members of the Republican Council were paid the equivalent of $630 per month in 1964.

Sharp increases in the cost of living in the late 1960's and early 1970's brought about a general decline in the material welfare of those in the cash economy. Prices rose partly as a result of a rapid expansion of the money supply, a decline in the level of real output, and the depreciation of the riyal. Seriously affected were the prices of basic commodities; during the 1966-69 period, the price of wheat, sorghum, potatoes, beef, and eggs all increased by over 100%. Although there have been no surveys of consumption expenditures, it is thought that most income is absorbed by the purchase of basic necessities.

Little, if any, revenue is set aside for the construction of new shelter or the renovation of old dwellings. As a consequence, substandard housing predominates in both rural and urban areas. Yemeni dwellings, whether the ancient mud-brick "sky-scrapers" of the highlands (Figure 18), the straw huts of the Tihamah (Figure 19), or temporary desert shelters, are usually overcrowded, unsanitary, and lacking in comfort. Overcrowding is considered a serious problem in the cities, and it is not uncommon for an entire clan to be sheltered in one four- or five-story house. The problem was accentuated during the 1960's when houses—in some instances whole villages—were destroyed by warfare or by natural disasters, such as torrential rainfall. Urban dwellings, particularly those of the well-to-do (Figure 20) are usually of better quality than rural dwellings and often have a few amenities. Observers, however, have commented upon the number of dilapidated structures in most cities and towns. Many houses in Al Hudaydah, for example, are unpainted and weatherbeaten, with plaster peeling from the walls and windows needing repair. Numerous houses in Dhamar have been described as in the "last stages of neglect and decay." There are a few modern apartment units in the cities of San'a', Ta'izz, and Al Hudaydah—some built by and for foreigners—but most are considered to be poorly constructed (Figure 21). The republican government, although aware of the housing crisis, has been unable to finance public housing programs.

2. Welfare services

The traditional method of caring for the needy, based upon mutual assistance within the extended family and tribe, continues to be the most important way of dealing with welfare problems. Informal care is provided within the kinship circle to orphans, widows, the elderly, and the physically and mentally handicapped. These traditional arrangements, however, have been insufficient in the face of massive welfare problems associated with the civil war and periodic droughts.

At the national level, civic consciousness and social responsibility have not been highly valued, and the Imamic government was never interested in developing formal social welfare programs. The few social services provided by the Imam included rudimentary hospital care and a boarding school in San'a' for several hundred orphans.

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The most important traditional welfare activity undertaken by the government was the royal dole, which consisted of food and money for the aged and the infirm, for religious leaders, and for worthy individuals who had served the Imam. The sums dispersed were relatively large, particularly in San'a'. The dole, however, rested entirely on the whim and generosity of the Imam, who personally directed payments to families and individuals. These grants usually ceased with the recipient's death. Another traditional program was institutionalized in the form of the *zakah*, one of the "five pillars of Islam," which makes personal gifts to the needy incumbent upon the believer and includes a religious tax paid to the government for charitable works. A lesser Islamic injunction is *karamah* (generosity), an esteemed attribute of a Yemeni chief, who is expected to provide aid and assistance to the members of his tribe.

The republican government, preoccupied with the aftermath of the civil war, has not yet entered the welfare field with a deliberate policy, although Article 35 of the 1970 Permanent Constitution guarantees

FIGURE 18. Multistoried home of a wealthy tribesman, San'a' plateau. Lower floors are made of mud, upper floors of brick. Note drain spouts and urine troughs projecting from walls. (U/OU)

FIGURE 19. Village in the Tihamah, with conical thatched huts (U/OU)

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FIGURE 20. Homes of wealthy merchants along the waterfront, Al Hudaydah. Balconies are common in coastal cities. (U/OU)

that the state will "sponsor welfare for children, the disabled, and the aged." According to a U.N. study, any attempt to develop a comprehensive social security system will encounter "conceptual difficulties, inadequate administrative structures and personnel, poor coordination of policies and programs, and generally meager financial resources."

3. Social problems

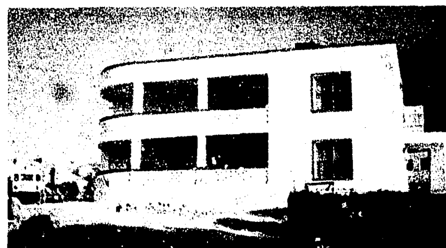
Crime is not considered a major problem. Within the traditional social order, a family's honor is judged by the actions of its members, and most Yemenis are loathe to disgrace their families by committing immoral or antisocial acts. These traditional inhibitions, however, do not apply to acts of violence committed as a result of a blood feud. Juvenile delinquency is thought to be largely deterred by strict parental control.

The few crime statistics compiled in Yemen are considered unreliable. Records kept by the Ministry of Interior for the period 1964-70 indicate that robbery was the most common offense. These records, however, fail to include many offenses committed in the name of blood feuds, as well as crimes perpetrated during the civil war. Yemenis convicted of crimes face harsh sentences. Decapitation and the amputation of limbs have been common penalties for serious crimes, but the government is moving to introduce more humane forms of punishment. Prisons are medieval; only in 1971 did the government order that prisoners not be chained in their cells.

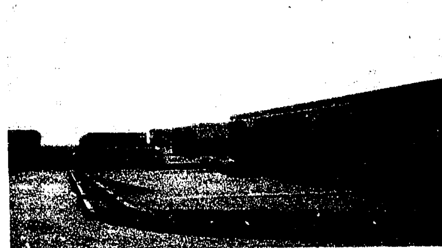
The use of narcotics such as opium, morphine, and heroin is largely unknown, but *qat* is chewed by an estimated 75% to 90% of the male population and 25% of the female. It is obtained from *catha edulis*, a small nonflowering shrub whose leaves, when masticated, produce narcotic-like effects. The usual practice is to chew the leaves for hours, often in the company of a large group of friends, continually packing sprigs into a ball inside the cheek, thereby producing a temporary feeling of well-being and mental alertness.

Little is known about the social effects of chewing *qat*, although a mental health adviser to the World Health Organization (WHO) has concluded that "*qat* has contributed to the stability of the community by socializing leisure time and inhibiting aggressiveness." Nonetheless, from a medical and economic standpoint, *qat* chewing is harmful. Whether or not the drug is addictive in the physiological sense is not

FIGURE 21. Modern housing. Because of poor construction, most of the newer structures will soon become dilapidated.



Apartment house, Ta'izz (U/OU)



Housing project, Al Hudaydah, built originally to house Soviet technical personnel (C)

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known; however, its use has been linked to such disorders as headaches and constipation and to a general loss of resistance to various diseases. The long-term chewer is marked by pale skin, protruding eyes, and a general deterioration of bodily functions. As a result of its popularity, the amount of acreage devoted to *qat* has increased at the expense of exportable crops, such as coffee. Furthermore, *qat* consumption deprives the individual Yemeni of important earnings which could best be spent upon basic necessities. Long *qat* sessions have severely restricted economic production, and one observer has estimated that for every potential worker, from 1,825 to 2,190 productive hours are lost each year. In May 1972 the government ordered all *qat* shrubs destroyed; it is doubtful, however, considering the economic and social importance of *qat*, that such drastic action will be taken within the near future.

F. Health (C)

1. Endemic diseases

Although data on the incidence of disease in Yemen are scarce, it is known that infectious and parasitic diseases are major causes of mortality and morbidity. Inadequate sanitation, substandard diets, insufficient potable water supplies, and faulty or nonexistent waste disposal systems contribute to high disease levels. Many women die in childbirth, and as many as one-third of all children die before reaching their first birthday and one-half before reaching age 5. Those Yemenis who survive early childhood usually fall prey to a variety of illnesses during the remainder of their lives.

Tuberculosis is considered by medical authorities to be the most prevalent disease in Yemen and perhaps the most common cause of death. Pulmonary tuberculosis is widespread among women and young children, particularly those in urban areas confined to the crowded harems; tubercular meningitis occurs frequently among infants and young children. In 1970, the discoveries of a Finnish medical team in the Tihamah linked the incidence of tuberculosis to the malnourished condition of the inhabitants. The occurrence of malaria is also high. This disease is found in all sections of Yemen, where 12 different varieties of the anopheles mosquito, the malarial vector, have been discovered, but it is especially widespread in the Tihamah and in the foothill regions. Gastrointestinal diseases of all kinds are a major cause of illness and death, and acute dysentery is said to be the most usual cause of death among infants and young children. Cholera was reported in the Tihamah in the latter part of 1971 and later spread to the city of Al Hudaydah; in early 1972, 55 cases of the disease were reported.

Schistosomiasis, affecting men more than women, is said to be endemic in areas from 3,000 to 7,000 feet above sea level. Among Yemeni Jewish emigrants to Israel, schistosomiasis affected 20% of all children aged 3 and 4, and 85% of those emigrants over age 50. Diseases of the eye, primarily trachoma, afflict an estimated 90% of the population. Venereal diseases are also common, regardless of class, and one observer has estimated that 80% of all adults suffer from some form of these diseases. Scabies is reportedly prevalent among children and laborers, at least in the three major cities. The greatest incidence of leprosy is found in the mountain area between Ibb and Zabid. Tetanus is said to be fairly frequent in the Tihamah but rare in the mountains. Relapsing fever is widespread, and smallpox epidemics were fairly common until the 1935-40 period, when Italian doctors initiated a vaccination campaign. More recently, Saudi Arabian health regulations have forced many Yemenis to obtain smallpox vaccinations before embarking on the pilgrimage to Mecca. In 1966, WHO reported that the disease had been virtually eradicated in Yemen, with no new cases since 1964. An outbreak of measles reached near epidemic proportions in the major cities of Yemen in 1971 and was thought to be indirectly responsible for a number of deaths among small children.

2. Nutrition and sanitation

a. Diet and food supply

Most Yemenis suffer from malnutrition. Dietary deficiencies are directly responsible for the high incidence of a number of disorders, including anemia, tuberculosis, and deep skin lesions, as well as reducing resistance to other diseases and retarding development. Undernourishment is particularly severe among children, and rickets is prevalent. In 1966, observers from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported that many 2-year-old children in the Tihamah weighed only 6 to 9 pounds.

During late 1969 and early 1970, as a result of nearly a decade of civil war and drought, food shortages became acute and famine conditions were reported in some areas of the country. Hardest hit was the Tihamah where as many as 500,000 people were severely afflicted. Many persons were reported eating the twigs and branches of cactus plants, normally used as animal fodder. An unknown number of Yemenis

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died of starvation, and many others succumbed to disease because of their weakened condition. Food relief from a number of foreign governments and international organizations eased the threat of mass starvation but not before severe damage had been done to the social and economic order.

The traditional staple food in Yemen has been grain—sorghum, barley, or millet. Townsmen are exposed to a wider selection of food products than inhabitants of rural areas; bedouins subsist on a diet consisting largely of milk and milk products. The typical Yemeni diet is deficient in vitamins, proteins, and other important nutrients, the insufficiency of animal protein being especially marked. Only 10% of the Tihamah households visited by a U.N. mission in 1966 reported eating meat even once a week. Average meat consumption for these households was 250 grams per week for a family of five. Although the U.N. team did not make systematic nutritional surveys, it estimated that per capita daily intake ranged from 1,300 to 1,800 calories, while daily requirements were in the range of 2,000 to 2,500 calories. Consumption of fish is generally confined to the coastal areas, but small quantities of canned fish are available inland. Fruits, particularly grapes and apples, and fresh vegetables, including potatoes, squash, eggplant, cabbage, radishes, and spinach, are apparently consumed much more regularly than in most other Arabian countries. Yemenis rarely drink milk, although milk from sheep, goats, and camels is used extensively in yogurt and cheeses.

The diet of women and children appears to be a special problem. Women and girls usually eat less well than men, as they are generally served last and occasionally consume leftovers from the men's plates. For the first 40 days after childbirth, a new mother typically eats only wheat and honey and drinks *qishr*, a popular drink made from the shell of the coffee bean and seasoned with black pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, and ginger. A newborn infant is given a small amount of honey and cooking fat to help strengthen the body. Although the mother's milk is often poor in quantity and quality, children are usually nursed for about 2½ years. If the mother is pregnant, however, the infant is given cow's milk sweetened with sugar, as many Yemenis believe that the milk of a pregnant woman causes sickness and death. During his second year, a child is gradually trained to eat bread and other solids.

In most past years, sufficient food was produced in Yemen to satisfy the demands of the population. However, agricultural production began to decline in the second half of the 1960's, and it plunged sharply at the end of the decade. Inadequate rainfall and the disruption of crop cultivation as a result of civil strife were mainly responsible for the decline, particularly that of staple grain crops. After the 1969 harvest, cereal production was conservatively estimated to have been 65% below normal, and the total cereal deficit during the 1969/70 crop year was placed at 271,000 metric tons. To meet this shortage about 115,000 tons of food were imported during the period from October 1969 through May 1970. For the remainder of 1970 and through the spring of 1971, commitments totaling 95,000 tons of cereals were financed through credits and donations from foreign countries, especially the United States, the U.S.S.R., Canada, and East Germany, and from the United Nations and various private charitable organizations.

The Ministry of Agriculture has instituted a number of projects in an effort once again to reach self-sufficiency in food production. Included are programs designed to expand cultivable land (estimates of the arable land under cultivation range from 25% to 40%) through the construction of small dams, and to increase productivity by providing high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. Yet to be faced are the problems created by a shortage of facilities for transporting, storing, and distributing food products.

b. Environmental sanitation and hygiene

Low levels of environmental sanitation are responsible for food contamination and the spread of disease. Although the total supply is sufficient in most areas of Yemen, water supplies are often contaminated, either at the source or in storage. In the highlands, mountain wells and rain catchments usually provide adequate supplies of water; in the Tihamah, both shallow and deep wells are the major sources. Provision of adequate water for large towns is a serious problem. As late as 1964, the San'a' water system was almost totally undeveloped. However, efforts to modernize water supply and distribution systems in some cities have achieved significant results. A piped system in Al Hudaydah, which was built with Soviet aid in the 1960's and expanded early in the 1970's, is in operation, and the cities of Ar Rahidah, Dhamar, and Al Bayda' have expanded their capacities and improved delivery systems. The largest water project and one of the most advanced in the Middle East was undertaken in Ta'izz by the U.S. Agency for International Development, which completed a US$4.2 million system, called the John F. Kennedy Water System. It provided some 50,000 city residents with potable water for the first time and at least temporarily ended the need to truck in water

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from outside the city. By mid-1964, 400 Yemenis had been trained in the United States to operate the system, but breakage and a lack of spare parts have since hampered efficient operation. Moreover, substantial population growth has occurred, and the local water supply is no longer sufficient to meet increased demand. In July 1972, a technical adviser from the ILO was sent to Yemen to aid in the repair of the equipment and to develop plans for its improvement and expansion.

The basic principles of hygiene and sanitation are virtually unknown. Newborn babies are not bathed for a long period and children are brought up almost totally unaware of the elementary concepts of personal cleanliness. Even children of fairly affluent families wear dirty clothes to ward off the evil eye, commonly thought to be attracted by neat attire. Government attempts to upgrade personal sanitation and hygiene through educational programs have been limited; WHO, in support of local health programs, has provided sanitarians in the cities of San'a', Al Hudaydah, and Ta'izz.

Sanitation control measures are almost nonexistent. Ticks abound because of the large animal population; rats and mice are common in towns and villages; flies are dense in the lowlands; and lice are prevalent in rural areas. Milk pasteurization is limited, if available at all, and food is prepared without regard to cleanliness. Conditions are unsanitary in animal markets and slaughterhouses, although "modern" facilities are being built in the large cities. Sick animals, moreover, are rarely treated or inspected.

Modern sewerage systems do not exist. In Al Hudaydah the beach is used as a toilet and refuse dump, and in San'a' sewage is discharged into pits 50 to 100 feet deep and 6 feet in diameter but with no provision to prevent leakage into the water table. In many towns, including San'a', trash and garbage are thrown into the street, only occasionally collected, and dumped haphazardly outside the walls or even within a neglected corner of the city. Dogs and vultures help to consume much edible refuse. (The only known law relating to public sanitation in San'a' forbids the killing of dogs, which serve as scavengers.) These urban arrangements for waste disposal have been described as "modernity itself compared with those in the country villages," where waste disposal facilities are nonexistent.

Bathrooms, if any, in upper class dwellings are usually located on an upper floor and contain an area furnished with water pitchers and small dippers for ritual ablutions; such rooms are also equipped with a hole in the floor for the toilet. This hole is connected by a shaft to a chamber on the ground floor where fecal matter is collected; the chamber is reportedly cleaned about twice a year. In addition, bathrooms contain a urine trough or spout that protrudes through the exterior walls.

3. Medical care

Prior to the 1962 revolution, organized medical services in Yemen did not exist. Doctors were virtually unknown until the arrival of a small Italian medical mission in the 1930's, and in 1951 there were only four doctors—three in Ta'izz and one in San'a'—in the entire country. Medical facilities were limited. Only three major hospitals—one each in San'a', Ta'izz, and Al Hudaydah—were in operation during the last years of the Imamate, and these were dirty and vermin-infested and lacked basic medicines and equipment. Public health programs were restricted to malaria control, begun in the 1940's; a smallpox vaccination project, started in the late 1950's; and the services of the WHO Health and Training Center, established in San'a' in 1957. The republican regime has attempted to improve health services by initiating additional public health programs, expanding facilities, and increasing medical personnel. In urban areas, access to health care has increased and medical facilities have improved, but general poverty and the lack of an adequate transportation system still operate to deny health care to most of the rural population.

Superstition is widespread. Most Yemenis believe that illnesses are caused by hidden spirits called jinns, of whom there are apparently four main kinds: earth jinns are thought to cause bowel and stomach complaints; sea jinns are responsible for headaches, insomnia, and eye trouble; air jinns provoke heart pains and loss of breathing; and sky jinns attack the nervous system, causing spasms and limb contractions. These spirits may be warded off by protective amulets or exorcised by folk practitioners. Traditional medical practices include bloodletting and cauterization for the treatment of fevers, rheumatism, or nervous disorders. Leg ulcers are treated with a compress of grape leaves containing a mixture of dates and powdered dog brains. Medicinal herbs used especially for intestinal maladies are still grown in small garden plots and marketed throughout the country. In the mid-1960's, Khawlan tribesmen claimed that many of their war casualties were successfully treated by local "doctors" using traditional herbal remedies.

Although a Ministry of Health was created in 1937, it remained a rudimentary organization until the revolution. In 1964, acting under a government directive calling for the provision of needed health

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services for all citizens, the ministry expanded to about 15 sections, including Finance, Medical Supplies, Pharmacies, and Personnel. By 1967, the following departments had been added: Health Quarantine; School Health; Birth, Death, and Age Registration; and Public Water Supply and Sanitation, along with a school for public health officers. In addition, a variety of programs have been undertaken. New health centers were opened under WHO supervision in Ta'izz, Al Hudaydah, and Bajil. Free hospital care for the indigent is supposedly available. Public health officers have been assigned to districts throughout the country to offer instruction in public health practices, and informational campaigns have been launched in an effort to raise health standards and to alert the population to the dangers of epidemic diseases. Malaria control activities have been intensified, and medical teams have been sent to various areas to inoculate the population against smallpox and cholera. The ministry has also issued regulations concerning the control of restaurants and slaughter-houses. In 1969, the government announced that mobile medical units would be sent to the villages. During the FY69, the regime spent 3.8 million riyals for health programs, roughly 4.4% of total expenditures.

a. Medical personnel

Although the republican regime has made considerable effort to expand the number of medical personnel, the shortage remains acute. In the early 1970's, approximately 200 physicians were practicing in Yemen, or about one physician per 30,000 inhabitants. Furthermore, most physicians practice in the larger urban areas of the major provinces, resulting in an even less favorable ratio in some areas. In 1970, according to official sources, 198 out of 220 doctors and pharmacists were located in the provinces of San'a', Ta'izz, and Al Hudaydah; thus, the 41% of the total population living outside these provinces had access to only 11% of the doctors and pharmacists. In Sa'dah Province there was only one physician for the entire population, estimated at 477,000.

Until 1965, all doctors were foreigners, those from Egypt, the U.S.S.R., Italy, and Hungary being most numerous. Some European physicians withdrew in the 1967-68 period, but the medical corps was augmented by personnel arriving from the People's Republic of China. In 1970, 22 Chinese doctors were reported in Yemen and, in the next year, 24 Chinese "medical officers" arrived to work in Yemeni hospitals; 16 physicians from the U.S.S.R. were also practicing.

The number of Yemeni physicians grew from five in 1965 to over 75 in 1970. Yemen has no medical school, and most of the doctors studied medicine in Czechoslovakia, Egypt, the United Kingdom, or the U.S.S.R. Many are thought to be poorly trained; in fact, the Soviet-educated doctors are said to have received only about one-half the training normally required in Western medical schools. Most auxiliary medical personnel are Yemeni; in 1970, 801 of the 837 individuals engaged in auxiliary occupations were Yemeni. In 1968, indigenous auxiliary personnel included 92 nurses, 54 sanitarians, 35 laboratory technicians, and 12 X-ray technicians. A group of 22 medical technicians, trained in San'a' by Soviet and Yemeni physicians, completed an 11-month training course in 1972 which covered such topics as the basic principles of medicine and first aid. Some assistant nurses, sanitarians, and "dressers" are trained at schools established by WHO in the cities of San'a', Ta'izz, and Al Hudaydah. Generally, the level of competence of Yemeni auxiliary medical personnel is low.

b. Medical facilities

In 1967, according to the Yemen Statistical Yearbook, 18 hospitals and 57 dispensaries were operating in the country, and by 1970 the number had increased to 27 hospitals and 105 dispensaries. Hospital beds numbered 4,573 in 1970, or approximately one bed for every 1,200 people. San'a', Ta'izz, and Al Hudaydah provinces collectively accounted for 20 hospitals and 4,100 beds in 1970, whereas Sa'dah Province had only one 20-bed hospital.

Several specialized hospitals have been established to treat tuberculosis, mental illnesses, and leprosy, and to offer gynecological and pediatric services. Additionally, the International Red Cross maintains a prosthetic center in San'a' for civil war amputees. The Swedish Save the Children Foundation opened a child health clinic in Ta'izz in 1964 and later expanded it into a 30-bed hospital. Initially staffed with two nurses, the clinic concentrated on tuberculin testing and immunization; after expansion, 2,000 to 3,000 patients per month were treated. Other countries and organizations which have aided in the construction and staffing of hospitals include Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Hungary, Kuwait, and the U.S. Southern Baptist Convention.

For the most part, the major hospitals continue to be overcrowded, unsanitary, and poorly supplied, with a conglomeration of equipment and personnel from many countries. The largest is the 1,000-bed Al

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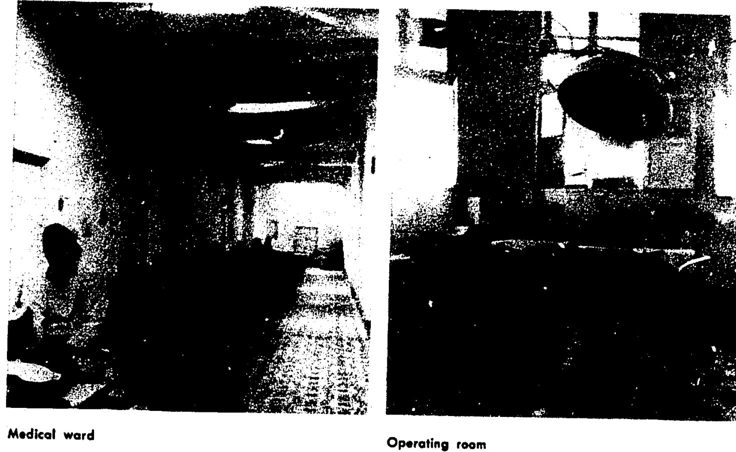

Medical ward — Operating room

FIGURE 22. Facilities at the Al Jumhuriyah Hospital in San'a'. Most hospitals are overcrowded and ill equipped. (C)

Jumhuriyah Hospital in San'a' (Figure 22), described in 1967 as "a veritable Tower of Babel" because of its Egyptian, Soviet, Yemeni, Italian, and Chinese physicians. In 1972, the Ministry of Health budgeted 1.1 million riyals for the hospital's renovation. Formerly the largest facility in Yemen, the Ta'izz Hospital was once considered the most modern. In 1964, however, it was described as unclean and ill equipped; the windows had no screens, flies were everywhere, and sheets were dirty. Although running water was available, no sewerage system existed, and bathrooms were smelly and dirty; equipment was primitive. In Al Hudaydah, hospital conditions were described in 1964 as "deplorable," and in Dhamar, the old army barracks serving as a hospital was characterized as poorly managed, with conditions approaching squalor.

As of 1972, Yemen did not have a pharmaceutical factory, but the Yemen Drug Manufacture and Sales Company, a state-owned enterprise which imports drugs, has as a goal the production of medicines. Most drugs and medical supplies are supplied by those countries with medical teams in Yemen, particularly the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

G. Religion (C)

Yemen is a Muslim country, and Islam is the official religion. The importance of the faith is reflected in the Preamble to the 1970 Permanent Constitution which states:

> We [the Yemeni nation] shall have no life to live among nations and we can claim no pride or character except through our true Islamic religion which has been the religion of our nation through the last fourteen centuries, and through following its divine guidance, achieving its precepts, abiding by its directions and strictures, and by remaining within its bounds.

More than a formal religion, Islam is a complex blend of religious, social, and political attitudes which has been described as "an all-pervasive way of life, guiding thought and action to a degree without modern parallel in the Western world." The organizing principle of the Muslim community (*ummah*) is the Sharia (the right path), a legal and moral system regulating, in theory, every aspect of life. The Sharia, identified in Article 2 of the constitution as the source of all laws, still underpins the foundations of Yemeni society. On the popular level, however, pre-Islamic tribal law and religious practices continue to exert a significant influence.

While the country is divided into several sects, all Muslims are basically agreed on the major tenets of their faith. The central body of dogma includes belief in the following: the oneness of God, or Allah; the Prophets of God, the last being Muhammad, who revealed God's design to man; the Koran, Islam's holy book containing the word of God in eternal form; the Angels, headed by Gabriel, who transmitted the Koran

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to Muhammad; and the Last Judgment, at which time the righteous will be rewarded in heaven and the wicked consigned to hell. The essential duties required of Muslims, sometimes known as the "pillars of Islam," are fivefold: 1) to profess the creed, "there is no god but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet"; 2) to pray five times daily, i.e., at dawn, midday, afternoon, sunset, and early evening, and to attend public prayers in the mosque on Friday (Figure 23); 3) to fast daily during the holy month of Ramadan; 4) to give alms to the poor; and 5) to undertake the pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca at least once in a lifetime. (According to Saudi Arabian records, 60,358 Yemenis made the *hajj* in 1972.)

Yemeni Islam, especially that of the Zaydi sect, has always been conservative. The Yemeni is said to belong to "the older species of *homo religiosus*, whose main concern is the salvation of his soul and the souls of those for whom he feels responsible." Many Yemenis consider man's role to be that of Allah's servant, who never questions the divine will. In the 1930's, the supremacy of religious thought was unchallenged, the totality of life being determined by Islam down to the smallest detail and activity. As late as 1960, Islam was still considered the primary determinant of Yemeni behavior.

Despite Islam's pervasive influence, many tribesmen, particularly nomads, have been largely unaffected by formal Islamic teachings. According to one scholar, from the 10th to the 20th centuries only "nominal obeisance" has been given by the tribes to Islam. Some Muslims in San'a', usually considered a stronghold of religious conservatism, were reported as long ago as 1910 to chafe under Sharia restrictions, partly because they inhibited trade. During his reign, Imam Yahya undertook a vigorous campaign to eliminate tribal law and to establish the Sharia as the country's only legal code. In the mid-1930's, for example, one of his emissaries to the nominally Muslim Tihamah was described as using a huge club in his efforts to teach the natives how to pray. Yahya's attempts to assert the primacy of Muslim law were not entirely successful, however; tribal law is still practiced, and ignorance of much of Muslim doctrine remains.

Official Islam is complemented by a distinctive folk religion, consisting of various animistic survivals from pre-Islamic times, superstitious practices, and other syncretic additions. Although some of these beliefs and practices have been reported as late as the 1950's, the extent to which they continue to exist is not known.

Numerous hunting practices, agricultural festivals, and the beliefs of "an intensely agricultural people" concerning the land (for example, every field has its proper [illegible]) have led one observer to characterize Yemeni Islam as "an earth cult connected with the concept of fertility"—a notion, however, disputed by other scholars. Instances of animistic and early Semitic

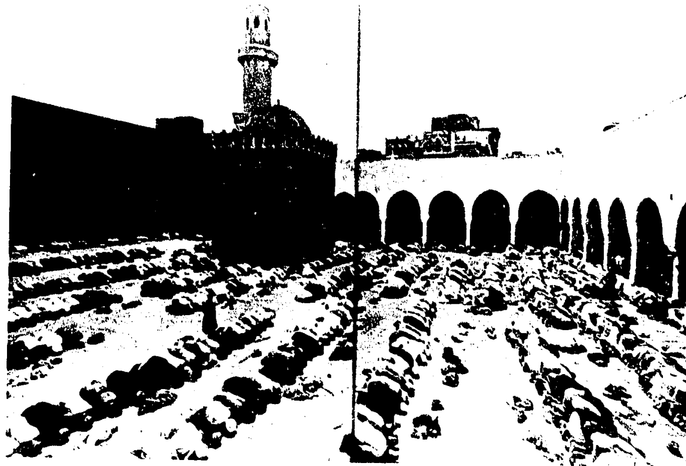

FIGURE 23. Muslims kneeling for prayer at Al-Kabir Mosque, San'a'. Note the stone *kaaba* at rear of courtyard. (C)

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rites abound, including invocations to celestial bodies and "the black rock," the secret worship of stones. The widespread black heifer cult, in which cows decked with flowers are led through the villages as part of seasonal fertility festivals, is thought to be another ancient rite, possibly similar to the worship of the golden calf in Biblical times.

Belief in jinns—hidden spirits which live in rocks, springs, and trees—is strong. One jinn belie[illegible]wn a village spring is propitiated by the [illegible] a black ox when the water supp[illegible] particularly malignant spirit is the [illegible] the Tihamah. The *zar* is said to [illegible] force them to perform acts fo[illegible] responsible. Described as "com[illegible] such individuals are impelled to da[illegible] eat or drink and cannot sleep. An affli[illegible]son, moreover, is believed to be able to eat hot coals without being burned. To exorcise the spirit, a *shaykh al-zar*, in company with former patients, performs a ritual, which includes burning incense, dancing, singing, and invoking the sun, moon, stars, "the black rock," and the kings of the jinn. For his part, the patient drinks the blood of a young goat.

FIGURE 24. Bedouin woman from eastern Yemen. The large beads around the neck are probably protective amulets. (U/OU)

In addition to jinns, various people, colors, words, and numbers are believed to have evil influences. The number five, for example, is considered evil and an insult if used in conversation. Both men and women reportedly specialize in averting the evil eye or casting it on others. To ward off these mysterious forces, protective ornaments are frequently worn around the neck (Figure 24), in the hair, or on the clothing. Other aspects of folk religion include belief in astrology, in *'ilm al-raml* (the science of reading the sands), and in other forms of divination.

On a somewhat different plane are the mystical orders of saints' cults. Although the Zaydis discourage both, many villages have shrines and saints' tombs, which are the object of popular veneration and occasional pilgrimages. At least one "saint" earned his reputation as a successful brigand who brought prosperity to his tribe. Several religious brotherhoods specializing in curing snakebites and a dervish order whose members mutilate themselves with axes and iron maces have also been reported.

Yemenis pay their allegiance to one of three Islamic sects. The Zaydis, who belong to the heterodox Shia branch of Islam, have been dominant politically for much of the country's Islamic history. They derive their name from Zayd, the great-grandson of 'Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, who was killed at Kufah (Iraq) in 740. After his death, Zayd became revered by some Shias as a religious and political martyr. By the end of the ninth century, a number of his followers had arrived in the Yemen highlands and had established the Imamate, which was to last until 1962.

The Zaydi state was a classical Muslim theocracy ruled by God, who, in political terms, was represented by the Koran and the *hadith* (traditions) as well as by Zaydi interpretations of the significance and contents of these two basic sources. The head of state was the Imam. Unlike other Muslim rulers, traditionalists considered him infallible, although his powers were limited by Islamic law and political reality. The Imam combined the office of temporal and spiritual ruler, his roles as king and priest being inseparable. As king, the Imam was responsible for national defense and the conduct of foreign relations; as religious leader his chief function, according to one scholar, was "to uphold the Sharia and impose the penalties, to watch over the performance of all duties commanded by God, to defend the '*ummah* against its enemies."

The importance which was attached to the Imam as the defender of the faith cannot be overestimated. He was the indispensable instrument for the conduct of moral life, as expressed in the old saying, "He who dies without an Imam dies a pagan." Believing that prayers would be illegitimate before God if the Imam left the country for any reason, conservatives were critical of Imam Ahmad's trip to Rome for medical treatment in 1959. Thus, with the dissolution of the

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Imamate and the flight of the Imam in 1962, the entire religious foundation of the Zaydi community was undermined.

The Shafi'is are adherents of the orthodox Sunni branch of Islam. Strictly speaking, they do not constitute a sect but belong to a legal school founded by Muhammad ibn-Idris al-Shafi'i (767-820). In the early Muslim era, the Sunnis developed four schools, all equally orthodox, which differ on technical points of law, ritual, and interpretation but not on major doctrinal questions. Like Sunnis in other countries, the Shafi'is acknowledge Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali as the first four successors to the Prophet; in contrast to the Shias, they do not believe that the caliph or supreme religious authority must be descended from Muhammad, beginning w[illegible], and they do not recognize the infallibility of the Imam.

The smallest of Yemen's Islamic sects, the Ismailis are Shia dissenters who seceded from the main Shia body after the death of the sixth Imam. Described as a "quasi-masonic organization" with an "esoteric doctrine," they believe in a *mahdi* or hidden Imam who will return one day to redeem the world. Their lives are regulated by definite ceremonial prescriptions and rituals; for example, arms and feet are washed only to a specific height, and beards have a distinctive cut. Ismailis are occasionally referred to in Yemen as the *al-Makarima*, derived from the al-Makrami, a 17th century family which established its leadership of the Ismaili community. Although the Ismailis governed Yemen in the 11th and 12th centuries, their subsequent political and social impact has been negligible, and many were probably killed in the 1930's by the royal army. All republican governments from 1962 to 1968, however, have reportedly included at least one Ismaili of cabinet rank.

Central to the development of modern Yemen is the persistence of the Zaydi-Shafi'i conflict. It has contributed to the factionalism that characterizes Yemeni history, was a factor in the abortive revolts of 1948 and 1955 and the revolution of 1962, and continues to inhibit the growth of secular nationalism. The Zaydi character may account in part for the continuing dispute. As long ago as the 13th century, the Muslim traveler Ibn Jubayr described them as "fanatics and snobs, who denounce everybody outside of their sect," while a visitor in the 1920's declared that "they have not changed in 600 years." Others have remarked upon their "extraordinary exclusiveness and racial solidarity." On the other hand, several observers have noted their reputation for religious tolerance.

Although the Zaydis may believe that other Muslims have deviated from the correct path, it is nonetheless true that specific religious differences have played only a secondary role in the controversy. Zaydi teachings are closer to Sunni dogma than those of any other Shia sect and, in any case, the average Yemeni does not understand the doctrinal differences between the two groups.

Differences in modes of living are also negligible. Some Zaydis, moreover, have converted to the Shafi'i sect, and it is not uncommon for Zaydis and Shafi'is to intermarry or worship in each other's mosques. The Al Qa[illegible]la tribe, for example, like others in south and southeastern Yemen, contains adherents of both sects, who apparently live in relative harmony. The Shafi'is, however, are generally more sophisticated and worldly than the Zaydis and have maintained stronger connections with the surrounding Islamic world. According to one scholar, "the greatest distinctions between them [illegible] and in their oral traditions, histories, epics, [illegible] tales concerning themselves and others, which each sect has as a part of its culture."

Although many Zaydis view the Republic as a symbol of atheism, available evidence indicates that republican leaders have pursued a basically conservative religious policy. Apart from the abolition of the Imamate and the confiscation of mosque properties, they have not undertaken radical reforms but, on the contrary, have deemed it necessary to maintain traditional religious structures. Immediately upon taking power, the republicans announced that one of the revolution's purposes was to reestablish Sharia principles, which had been corrupted by the Imam. Article 3 of the 1963 Provisional Constitution declared that Islam was the official state religion and that legislation would be based on the "noble principles" of Islam. At least in the early years, the Ramadan fast was strictly observed under the republic, and ministers were reportedly forced to attend Friday prayers on pain of imprisonment—presumably part of the price required by the tribes for continued allegiance to the republic. Nonetheless, the secular republic is different from the royalists' "free Islamic kingdom," whose main function was the propagation of "God's religion." As early as 1963, the Ministry of Religious Endowments (*Awqaf*) had drawn up plans for reforming the country's 10,000 mosques by developing them into cultural centers which would provide libraries of religious, social, and literary works, as well as lecture and seminar programs.

Shortly after the revolution, about 30 mullahs from Cairo reportedly were sent to Yemen to attempt to

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break down the religious "fanaticism" of the tribes and to disseminate modern concepts of Islam. With an obvious political implication, they preached that Zaydi law did not legitimize rule by an Imam. Along similar lines, an official of the Yemeni Ministry of Information in 1964 attacked "so-called" religious leaders who exploited their position, charging them with mental stagnation and failure to adopt progressive ideas. The impact of such propaganda, however, is difficult to assess. Religious leaders are said to have lost prestige, curiously without much resistance or protest. Their silence has led some to conclude that in Yemen religion is not a decisive factor in the degree and rate of social change.

Few Christians other than foreign diplomats and businessmen live in Yemen, although a small number of Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese Christians are known to have held official positions under the Imams and to have acquired Yemeni citizenship. Three Christian groups maintain missionary activities in Yemen—the Baptist Mid-Missions, the Red Sea Missions, and the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1970, the Baptist Mid-Missions maintained two missionaries in Yemen; the Red Sea Missions operated two clinics, each staffed by a missionary worker; and the Southern Baptist Convention sponsored a mission station in Ta'izz and ran a hospital in nearby Jiblah.

The Jewish community in Yemen, once estimated as consisting of about 50,000 persons, has declined to fewer than 1,000. As of 1963, the remaining Jews in the country reportedly earned a modest income as farmers and artisans. Although officially excluded from political and civic life and ineligible for government jobs, the Jews have not been actively harassed.

H. Education (C)

The creation of a modern educational system is a major objective of the republican regime. However, because of the primitive nature of the traditional educational system, the upheaval caused by 8 years of civil strife, and the shortage of available funds, the government has been largely unable to move beyond the planning stage. As a result, the system remains poorly developed; only a small proportion of school-age children attend classes and, of these, few advance beyond the beginning primary grades. Facilities are antiquated, classes are overcrowded, and teachers are inadequately trained. Higher education must be pursued outside the country, and many of those who obtain advanced degrees, often at government expense, fail to return to Yemen.

Until 1962, formal education was essentially a religious function, and public schools in the Western sense hardly existed. The Imamate was concerned principally with the training of future officials who were expected to be better educated than the persons they governed. Late in the 19th century, the Turks established a few secondary schools which offered courses in popular science and geography. Imam Yahya, however, abolished these schools in 1919 and reestablished the Koran as the basis for all learning. Thus, the distinction between education and religious instruction was eliminated, and for a generation after the Ottoman withdrawal only the Koran and the Zaydi texts were taught. Although a few government-supported primary schools existed, the backbone of the educational system was the ***kuttab***, or Islamic primary school (Figure 25). Even today, although now under the purview of government officials, the ***kuttab*** serves to impart schooling in reading and writing, along with religious instruction, to a significant segment of those children attending school. As in the past, however, most children receive no formal instruction; rather, they are trained in time-honored fashion by their parents.

Because the leaders of the imamic theocracy required little modern knowledge, the sons of important families were relatively well served by mosque schools or by private tutors, who taught them language, law, religion, archery, and horsemanship. Furthermore, the education which these boys received by listening to their elders covered a wide range of subjects and prepared them to participate in the essential aspects of their society. These arrangements, although obviously inadequate to meet the needs of a modern state, provided sufficient education for the limited purposes of the traditional society, and the continuity of Yemeni Islamic civilization was successfully maintained.

The republican government assumed control of all schools in 1963. Subsequently, it announced that the right to 6 years of free primary schooling was guaranteed to all children, and it established a 12-year program composed of a 6-year primary cycle; a 3-year preparatory, or lower secondary cycle; and a 3-year upper secondary cycle composed of either general secondary, technical secondary, or teacher training courses, all designed to lead to further technical, vocational, or professional training (Figure 26). A national university was proposed, but as of mid-1972, it was still in the planning stage.[3] Information

[3]Authorities consider the Sharia and Law College, which provides training in Islamic and secular law, as the nucleus for the national university. However, in 1970 the college suffered from a shortage of both faculty and students.

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FIGURE 25. Boys learning to write at religious school (U/OU)

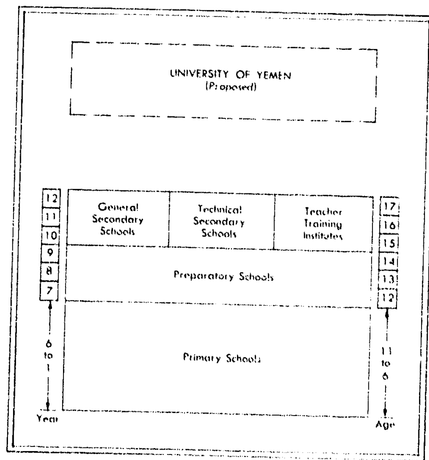

FIGURE 26. Structure of the educational system, 1972 (U/OU)

pertaining to the curriculum at the various levels is generally unavailable. In 1972, the Minister of Education stated that "certain curricula followed by our schools in all stages are in conformity with the curricula of any other Arab state except for things . . . such as the study of Yemeni history and geography and religious subjects." Technical and vocational courses are offered at the primary and preparatory level. Instruction is given in Arabic. If practices from the Imamic era continue, the scholastic year extends from October to July, with classes meeting 3½ hours per day, Saturday through Wednesday, and 2 hours on Thursday.

Responsibility for the planning, development, and maintenance of the educational system is delegated to the Ministry of Education, although other government entities have responsibility for specialized aspects of the system. In 1965, the ministry launched a 3-year educational promotion program under official Egyptian auspices. The program's objectives were to build 18 secondary schools by 1968, to provide teacher training for 300 students annually, to open commercial institutes in San'a' and Al Hudaydah and agricultural schools in Hajjah and Ibb, and to

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construct primary-level vocational schools in each province. Only a few of these projects, however, have been undertaken. In 1970, under the aegis of the ministry, a six-member Higher Advisory Council was appointed to formulate a 5-year plan covering school construction, technical education, and scholarships. To reduce the almost total reliance on foreign textbooks, the Ministry of Education has established a printing house. In this project, support has derived from UNESCO and the United Nations Children's Fund.

Centuries of neglect in the field of education are reflected in low levels of educational attainment and literacy. In 1962, there were fewer than 100 university graduates in all of Yemen, and formal schooling was largely restricted to a small circle of urban men. Literacy, considered the ability to read and write one's name and to read simple passages from the Koran, was estimated in 1972 to be 15% for men and 10% for women; probably no more than half of these were functionally literate. Almost without exception, the rural poor are illiterate.

Recognizing the importance of education as a prerequisite for future economic and social development, the leaders of the republican regime have endeavored to expand the educational system to provide more children with at least a primary education. Efforts have in large part been thwarted by preoccupation, until 1970, with the civil war, and by limited funds, a shortage of facilities, and a dearth of instructors. Moreover, some Yemeni parents have been reluctant to send their children to school. This is especially true for girls; a large number of parents continue to believe that formal schooling, accompanied by unveiling in the classroom, will lead to their daughters' moral ruin.

Data on the number of students attending schools are fragmentary; nonetheless, as indicated in the following tabulation, total enrollment (reported by the Yemeni Government or estimated by UNESCO) has apparently increased substantially since the 1958/59 school year:

School year	Enrollment
1958/59	41,256
1962/63	64,322
1963/64	59,100
1965/66	77,079
1966/67	66,070
1969/70	78,114
1970/71	93,817

Enrollment in each school year, however, represented only a fraction of the eligible youth, at best no more than 10% and probably closer to 5% of all children aged 6-15. The bulk of the enrollment, both during the latter years of the Imamate and since the establishment of the republic, has been at the primary level (Figure 27). In 1970/71, for example, 94% of all students attended primary schools, while roughly 5% attended preparatory and secondary schools. Of total primary school enrollment in 1969/70, over 60% were enrolled in the first 2 years and only 4% were in the sixth year; this imbalance is due, in part, to the fact that many schools offer only 1 or 2 years of the 6-year primary cycle.

The Yemeni school system is most extensively developed in the provinces of San'a' and Ta'izz; in consequence, children in these two areas have a greater opportunity to attend school. In 1970/71, with less than half of the total population, these provinces accounted for almost two-thirds of primary school enrollment and three-fourths of preparatory and secondary school enrollment (Figure 28).

An increasing number of girls are receiving a primary education, although their contribution to total enrollment remains small. In 1965/66, 3,556 girls attended primary schools, and by 1970/71 the number had risen to 8,263, or roughly 9% of the total primary enrollment. Primary schools are not coeducational—separate schools for girls exist in Al Bayda', Al Hudaydah, Ibb, San'a', and Ta'izz—and practically the entire enrollment of girls is confined to urban area schools. Few girls advance beyond the primary level; in 1970/71, 122 girls attended preparatory schools and 180 were enrolled in secondary or teacher training schools.

In the absence of a university and of adequate secondary institutions, the republican government, continuing a practice begun by Imam Yahya in 1936, sends students abroad for advanced study. In 1963, some 1,500 Yemenis were said to be enrolled at secondary and university levels in Cairo, most with financial support from the Egyptian Government. After 1967, Egyptian scholarship assistance declined markedly; by 1969/70, according to an official Yemeni source, only 292 Yemenis were studying in Egypt. During the same year, 137 Yemeni scholarship students were studying in Iraq, 93 in Syria, and 37 in other Arab countries. In 1971, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Lebanon, Syria, and Kuwait offered a total of 137 scholarships to Yemeni for professional and technical education. The number of Yemeni students in Communist countries increased sharply after 1962, rising to an estimated 908 in 1966, of whom about 75% were in the U.S.S.R., including 200 in military institutes. About 325 students were in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe in 1967 and 644 in 1970. Reportedly,

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FIGURE 27. Enrollment, by type of school (U/OU)

TYPE OF SCHOOL	1958/59	1962/63	1963/64	1965/66	1970/71
Primary	38,653	61,335	57,894	74,900	88,217
Secondary	626	1,097	1,116	*2,009	*5,061
Secondary vocational	1,827	1,718	**35	**45	**127
Teacher training	80	172	55	125	412
Total	41,256	64,322	59,100	77,079	93,817

*Includes preparatory and general secondary schools.

**The sharp decline in secondary vocational enrollment is probably due to the elimination of religious schools from this category.

FIGURE 28. Enrollment, by type of school and province, 1970/71

	PRIMARY SCHOOL				PREPARATORY SCHOOL		SECONDARY SCHOOL*		TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE	
		Enrollment								
PROVINCE	Number of schools	Male	Female	Both sexes	Number of schools	Enroll-ment	Number of schools	Enroll-ment	Number of schools	Enroll-ment
Al Bayda'	20	1,208	98	1,306	1	5	0	0	0	0
Hajjah	32	2,001	150	2,151	1	25	0	0	0	0
Al Hudaydah	130	12,070	1,068	13,138	5	742	1	216	0	0
Ibb	90	8,110	736	8,846	3	235	1	58	0	0
Rida'	77	5,636	189	5,825	2	94	0	0	0	0
Sa'dah	6	755	6	761	0	0	0	0	0	0
San'a'	208	27,366	2,573	29,939	5	1,006	3	452	2	164
Ta'izz	168	22,718	3,443	26,161	5	1,744	1	611	3	248
All Yemen	821	79,954	8,263	88,217	22	3,851	6	1,337	5	412

*Includes four general secondary schools and two technical secondary schools.

14 Yemenis were studying in the United States in 1971, chiefly under private auspices.

Although a large number of the foreign-educated Yemenis are poorly trained, they represent a cadre of technicians and academic specialists whose skills are in short supply. Nonetheless, because students abroad are aware that little or no effort will be made to relate their studies to Yemen's manpower needs or to utilize their knowledge, many do not return to Yemen; consequently, the drain of talent is a serious problem. Other factors include the low salary scales prevalent in Yemen and disillusionment with political conditions. Some of those who do return cannot find work.

The failure of the Yemeni Government to meet most of its educational goals is largely due to a shortage of funds. As estimated by the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut, public expenditure on education in 1969 represented only 2% of total government expenditures. The bulk of the education budget is allocated to salaries and maintenance costs, leaving little revenue for new projects. Much of what is new has been financed by foreign governments or international organizations. The more prosperous Arab countries have provided substantial assistance; thus, Kuwait built and equipped a girls' preparatory school and a teacher-training institute and, along with the sheikdoms of Bahrain, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi, granted the equivalent of US$500,000 for the establishment of the national university. Egypt has provided teachers and educational advisers as well as textbooks, and Saudi Arabia, after its 1970 reconciliation with the republican government, announced plans to build three teacher-training institutes. The Soviet Union has constructed a public administration institute, several military schools, and three vocational schools; the People's Republic of China has provided a secondary vocational school. The FAO aided in the building of an agricultural secondary school in Ta'izz.

Inadequate school facilities and a severe shortage of teachers have helped to produce an academic environment judged one of the poorest in the Arab

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FIGURE 29. Classroom interior. Most schools are crowded and have limited equipment. Students are forced to sit wherever space is available. (C)

world. The 854 schools at all levels reported by the Ministry of Education to be operating in 1970/71 are inadequate for the students now being educated. Classrooms are crowded and possess little in the way of equipment or teaching aids (Figure 29). Even the newer schools tend to be somewhat spartan. For example, the Ar Rahidah primary school, built in 1964, houses approximately 300 students in six classrooms; because of a shortage of desks, many students are forced to sit on the floor. By contrast, however, a new school in San'a', built by Soviet technicians, is reportedly well equipped, and has laboratories, workshops, a gymnasium, and recreation rooms.

Low pay scales and poor working conditions have made the teaching profession unattractive and, as a consequence, few qualified Yemenis have joined the teaching force. Pupil-teacher ratios are high; the national average for primary schools during the 1969/70 school year was 47:1, while in Ta'izz Province it was 69:1. In an effort to increase the number of trained pedagogues, the republic has established teacher training institutes in San'a', Ta'izz, and Al Hudaydah and has provided some in-service training. In addition, trainees are being sent abroad; in 1966, 618 teacher trainees were reported to be studying in 13 countries, more than two-thirds in Egypt.

Since the mid-1930's, Yemen has depended on other Arab states to supplement its teaching force. In 1964/65, some 185 Egyptians were reported to be serving in 38 schools, and the number increased to 200 in 1965/66. Most of these teachers were withdrawn after 1967, but many returned after the fighting subsided. In 1971, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Lebanon, Syria, and Kuwait pledged a total of 384 teachers for the 1971/72 school year.

I. Artistic and cultural expression (U/OU)

Yemen's cultural heritage dates back to the pre-Islamic Sabaean and Himyar kingdoms. Contemporary cultural expression, however, is limited to traditional architectural forms, handicrafts, folk literature, and music and dance. Writing in the mid-1940's, one observer characterized Yemen's cultural level, perhaps unfairly, as "completely medieval." Until the revolution, Zaydi theology and the history of Yemen were virtually the only subjects considered worthy of study and, while the Imams were usually distinguished religious scholars, modern learning was entirely discouraged. Furthermore, Yemeni rulers enforced stringent Islamic laws against the reproduction of human or animal forms in sculpture, painting, or other art, thus seriously inhibiting artistic expression. Consequently, in Yemen as in much of the Middle East, art is confined to abstract, geometrical, and floral designs. In general it is of mediocre quality, although Yemeni Jews were master silversmiths.

Architecture is perhaps the most distinctive expression of Yemeni culture. Often highly ornate, many of its basic forms have remained essentially unchanged from pre-Islamic times. Particularly notable are the tall houses, not found in other parts of the Arab world, which are skillfully built without iron or concrete supports. Architectural lines are generally simple and functional, reflecting the Yemenis' plain life, but the better houses may be ornamented with elaborate geometric designs, wood carvings, and calligraphy on exterior walls, doorways, and windows (Figure 30). San'a' builders excel in decorative windows and friezes, and are master designers of luxurious garden courts, many with fountains.

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The mosques of highland Yemen are basically similar in architectural style to those of northern Arabia, although several in Ta'izz and San'a' reflect Turco-Byzantine influences. Most mosques contain a central, quadrangular courtyard surrounded by arcades and slender, octagonal-shaped minarets, or towers. In some of the older Zaydi mosques in San'a', the minaret is topped by a small metal dove, representative of the dove which warned the Prophet in time of danger. Both exterior and interior ornamentation is generally confined to calligraphy and geometric designs. In the poorer villages, however, mosques often have no minarets and little, if any, decoration.

Yemen has long been known for the excellence of its handicrafts, including jewelry, leather work, embroidery (Figure 31), carpetmaking, and gold and silver work; the towns of Zabid and Az Zaydiyah are noted for their weaving. Handicraft traditions, however, are dying in the face of foreign competition and the emigration of skilled Jewish artisans to Israel.

Classical literature, one of the great monuments of Arab civilization, contains significant contributions from Yemeni writers, both pre-Islamic and Islamic. Of pre-Islamic works, poetry remains the most enduring form. A Yemeni prince, Imru al-Qays, who lived in the sixth century, was a master of classical verse and produced one of the most famous pre-Islamic odes, a work which continues to be recited throughout the Arab world. Much of the great Arab-Islamic literature which developed outside of Arabia, particularly in Baghdad and Damascus, was influenced by these early verse forms. In modern Yemen, poetry appeals to all levels of society and is an important aspect of social life and ceremony. Yemen is rich in unpublished anthologies (*diwans*) of colloquial and classical verse; basic themes concern love, bedouin and village life, and morals. Along with formal prose and speech, poetry is viewed by Arabs generally as the highest form of art. The ability to use highly stylized Arabic is considered a major social asset, while the skillful use of language is a value in itself.

A large body of indigenous prose work exists, of which many volumes were produced before the 15th century and dealt with Islamic theology and the history of Yemen. A considerable amount of theological literature was written in the 10th and 11th centuries by the Zaydis, much of it just now beginning to be studied. Although some primitive biographical works were produced along with Yemeni histories, they are of doubtful literary value. In recent centuries there has been little creative prose expression, most of it being commentary on older theological and historical works. In 1925, Imam Yahya founded the library of the Great Mosque in San'a', but its reported 25,000 volumes are limited largely to ancient manuscripts.

As in many countries with a high rate of illiteracy and a paucity of recorded literature, Yemen has a rich oral tradition. Storytellers, emphasizing pious, bawdy, or heroic themes, are popular throughout the country. In some areas of southern Yemen, for example, these

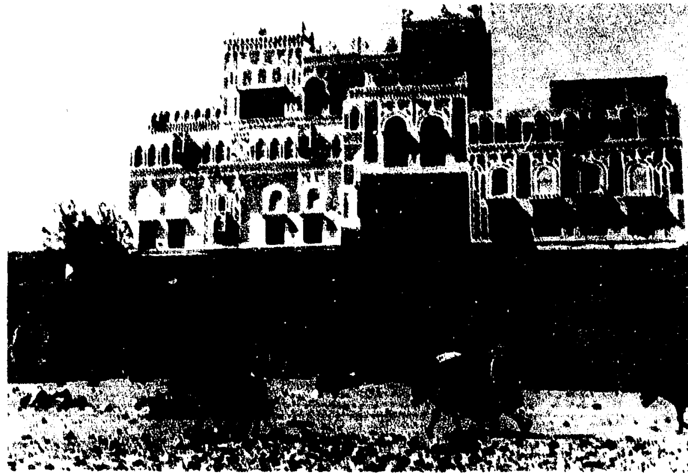

FIGURE 30. Exterior of an ancient house in Dhamar, displaying geometric designs on friezes and window arches. Note the fortress-like construction of the ground floor. (U/OU)

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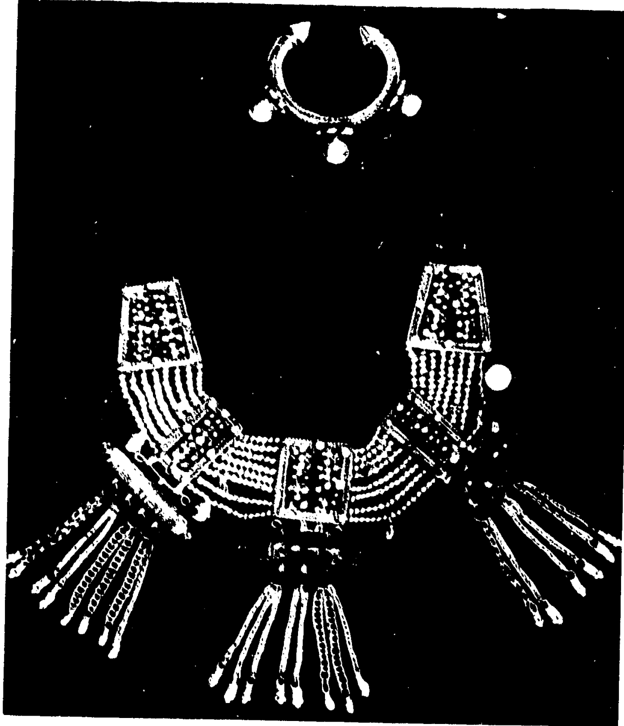

FIGURE 31. Silver jewelry worn by bedouins (U/OU)

stories include fairy tales, chronicles, and moral anecdotes, as well as linguistic jokes, puns on local customs, and riddles. Folk stories involving "the experiences of Humayd," an old peasant type whose psychology and morals are recounted, are popular and are told mostly by female storytellers. Another favorite subject reportedly concerns the exploits of Sayf ibn Dhi Yazam, who defeated Ethiopian invaders in the pre-Islamic era. An extensive body of proverbs exists, but it has not been well investigated. Perhaps one-third of the proverbs known to Yemenis are common throughout the Arab world. According to one scholar, the most popular themes pertain to "personal honor and prestige, retribution, patience and self-restraint, and the folly of unnecessary labor." Most Yemeni proverbs, moreover, contain a warning to distrust people who appear to be friends.

Dramatic art is undeveloped; the most common form is a kind of Punch and Judy show called *karagoz* (black eyes), evidently introduced by the Turks. Several sources report that primitive "plays" were staged during the Imamate for the benefit of the royal family. Acted on a raised platform, these were apparently comic episodes in which actors shouted their lines, performed amusing antics, and mimicked both upper and lower classes.

Little is known about Yemeni music. The few who have studied it report a number of diverse forms among the country's many tribes. A similarity is said to exist between the harmony of some South Arabian songs and the Berber music of Algeria's Kabyle region. Music popular in urban areas, however, apparently differs little from that of Arabian towns in general. Music sung by soldiers is usually characterized by a wide range of melodies, except for the *zamal*, which apparently is a kind of monotonous chant.

Typically improvised by the performer, music does not follow any clear-cut theory of composition. Strolling minstrels (Figure 32) wander over large tracts of territory, performing for village audiences. As songs

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FIGURE 32. Minstrels using typical instruments. Songs usually are short and the rhythmic accompaniment improvised. (U/OU)

are learned by ear, they are usually short, with simple rhythmic phrases. Love songs, especially amorous folk tunes, are popular; forbidden during the Imamate, they had to be sung in strict secrecy. Religious singing (*ghina dini*), however, was encouraged. The incantation of the Koran (*tajwid*) involves special study and is important at festivals and ceremonies, but Yemenis are said not to excel in this. Other musical forms include the caravan song (*huda*) and the chanting of poetry (*inshad*).

Closely associated with folk music is dancing, which also incurred the Imam's disapproval. Social dancing in the Western sense is not acceptable, and men and women do not dance together. Folk dances vary with tribe and village. Tribal sword dances are common, many emphasizing great speed and action. According to an observer, the dancer "spins round and round beating a furious measure with his feet, lifting his knees almost to the level of his chest, and twirling his dagger in his hand." A simple dance imitates various movements of the horse. Women in groups of four to eight often dance during ordinary social occasions; these dances employ rhythmic, advance-turn-withdraw patterns and intricate feet and hip movements. Men are not allowed to watch. Instruments used for accompaniment of both songs and dances are usually simple flutes, drums, and tambourines.

J. Public information (U/OU)

The development of communications media in Yemen has been slow. Widespread illiteracy has been a factor retarding the growth of a newspaper and publishing industry, and religious conservatism prevented the introduction of radios and motion pictures, at least for most of the population, until the revolution. Most information is still transmitted informally by word of mouth, usually at mosques, coffeehouses, or markets. Printed media remain primitive and have inclined toward emotional, anti-Western polemics, particularly during the period of Egyptian intervention. Yemen's first indoor motion picture theater was opened in 1964; at present, a few theaters—mostly open-air gathering places—exist in the main cities, and mobile film units are being sent to the villages. According to the United Nations, 1.8 million Yemenis attended these facilities in 1965, but this figure, which may include those who viewed short film clips, appears to be high. Yemen has no television; in February 1972, however, an agreement was signed with a French company to set up a station in San'a' and, in March 1972, ground was broken for the building. Offers to construct additional television facilities have been made by the governments of Abu Dhabi and West Germany.

Radio is the most important of the formal communications media. Until about 1940, however, ownership of a radio was forbidden, and receivers were barred from public places until the 1962 revolution. During the 1950's, most radio sets were owned by the Imam, his family, and a few district officials. By 1964, according to estimates of the U.S. Information Agency, the number of radio sets had reached 8,000 or approximately 2 per 1,000 population. Since that time, transistor radios imported from abroad (Figure 33) have greatly expanded the radio audience, and the number of sets available is roughly estimated at 25,000. Most receivers are located in urban areas, particularly in San'a' and Ta'izz, but transistor sets are found even in remote villages.

Yemen's first radio station, Radio San'a', began broadcasting in 1946, using a small transmitter donated by the United States. Operations were expanded in the 1950's, in part to counteract propaganda from the revolutionary Arab states, but

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FIGURE 33. Yemeni listens to news from San'a' on Japanese-made transistor radio (U/OU)

transmission was adversely affected by inadequate equipment, minimal soundproofing in the studios, and an irregular power supply. Broadcasting content was limited by the small, ill-trained program staff and by the lack of a fixed annual budget.

After the revolution, all forms of public media were placed under formal government control; *Radio San'a'*, officially known as the Yemeni Arab Republic Broadcast Station, was attached to the Ministry of Information. By 1969, the Yemeni Broadcasting Authority, headed by a director general, had been established, but little improvement in the station seems to have been achieved. In the words of an observer, "clutter, decay, and chaos" were its "dominant characteristics." Although the staff numbered about 60, most were without formal training in broadcasting operations. To meet the need for skilled personnel, a radio training institute was established in San'a', and Egyptian experts were recruited as instructors. Nonetheless, programs remained mediocre, and the deficient power supply continued to result in frequent disruption of broadcasts. These conditions are believed still to prevail; as a result, and because reception in various parts of the country is poor, many Yemenis reportedly listen regularly to foreign broadcasts, including those of the British Broadcasting Corporation, *Radio Israel*, *Radio Cairo*, and *Radio Moscow*.

As of 1971, *Radio San'a'* was broadcasting from stations located in San'a' and Ta'izz. In November 1972, the San'a' Domestic Service, operating with three transmitters was on the air daily from 0300 to 0605 and from 1100 to 2200, local time. All programs, including news reports offered seven times a day, were broadcast in Arabic. Prior to the withdrawal of its forces in 1967, Egyptian influence over *Radio San'a'* was pervasive. Most news originated in the Middle East News Agency (MENA) in Cairo, and other programing was heavily dependent on a 1,000-tape library supplied to the station, primarily by Egyptian authorities.

Newspapers have experienced an extremely limited circulation, possibly reaching less than 1.0% of the population. The first publication was a government edited newssheet that appeared in 1876, but it probably went out of existence after the Turkish withdrawal. A second newssheet, *Al-Iman* (Faith), began in 1926, appearing sporadically in its early years. By 1948, it had developed into a four-page monthly paper containing, in addition to occasional articles by the Imam, information on the Imam's audiences, announcements of government appointments and transfers, the whereabouts of various notables, and other local news. It also published the texts of treaties, as well as articles on Islamic and literary topics. In 1948, circulation was estimated at about 3,000, mainly members of the Imam's family and government officials.

In the mid-1940's, only two printing presses, both in San'a', were reported in the country, one for the publication of *Al-Iman*, the other for use by the Ministry of Education for printing certificates, diplomas, and pamphlets. Later, however, two papers—the official Imamic sheet *Al-Nasr* (Victory) and *Saba*, which confined itself to poetry and eulogies—were printed in Ta'izz, indicating additional presses. Foreign papers, magazines, and books rarely entered the country, except on a clandestine basis. In 1946, the Aden-based *Al-Jamiyyat Al-Yamaniyat Al-Kubra* (Grand Yemeni Association) established an anti-Yahya newspaper called *Sawt Al-Yaman* (Voice of Yemen), which may have had some circulation inside Yemen.

After the revolution, the republican government continued to publish an official gazette, introduced several daily and weekly newspapers, and created the Saba News Agency in 1970. According to the Ministry of Information, the following dailies were publishing in 1970: *Al-Thawrah* (The Revolution), a San'a' newspaper, and *Al-Jumhuriyah* (The Republic), a Ta'izz journal, both with estimated circulations of 20,800; *Al-Sha'ab* (The People), *Al-Sabah* (The Morning), and *Al-Risalah* (The Message), all circulating roughly 4,000 copies; and *Al-Thughrah* (The Port), with a circulation of 2,000. In 1972, the three most important dailies, as reported by a government spokesman, were *Al-Thawrah*, *Al-Jumhuriyah*, and *Al-Thugh ah*. One weekly, *Al-Wahdah* (The Union), circulating 4,000 issues, was

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publishing in 1970, and in mid-1972 another weekly, *Al-Bilad* (The Country) was appearing in San'a'. In addition, a military magazine called *Majallat Al-Jaysh* (Army Magazine), has recently begun publication. Likewise, no information is available on other periodicals that are possibly being published.

All newspapers are controlled by the Ministry of Information, and foreign journals must be licensed. Following the Imamic practice, new[illegible]pers were, at least initially, written and published [illegible] a republican government. For a while, content was strongly influenced by *Akhbar Al-Yaman* (News of Yemen), a San'a' daily published in the mid-1960's and written

Egyptian advisers in the Ministry of Information. Many news articles are simply a rehash of *Radio San'a'* news programs. In addition, the Yemen press has used reports from MENA, TASS, the Novosti Press Agency, and the New China News Agency, all of which have representatives in the country. Before the curtailment of U.S. activities in Yemen in 1967, the Ta'izz newspapers occasionally carried items produced by the U.S. Information Service. Although government restrictions on publications may have decreased, under a 1968 press law editors may be convicted and jailed for "inflaming tribalism or sectarianism." In addition, publication of a newspaper or periodical may be banned, as was the case with *Al-Hayyat Al-Jadidah* (The New Life), which was ordered to cease publication because of pro-Communist views allegedly expressed in its editorials.

Book publishing has made little if any progress. During the 1942-44 period, reportedly no more than 30 "books" were published in Yemen. In 1966, there were apparently only four printing presses in the country, two dating from Imamic times, one of West German manufacture in need of repair, and one, a gift from the People's Republic of China, which was still crated. The government approved the establishment of the Yemeni Printing and Publishing Company in 1970, but this step is unlikely to have an immediate impact. In the mid-1940's, only one bookshop was reported in the entire country. Located in Al Hudaydah and owned by an Indian Muslim, the store imported a few books printed in Egypt and India.

Telephone service, although extremely limited, has begun to provide important communications links within Yemen. As late as 1948, only one telephone line existed, which was supplied by the U.S.S.R. for the exclusive use of the Imam. In 1951, Ta'izz had a small system with 15 numbers, and the Imam was considering the installation of a dial system. Only three cities had telephone service in 1964—San'a' with a 500-number exchange, and Al Hudaydah and Ta'izz, each with a 200-number network. In 1970, 1,000-number exchanges were being installed in both Ta'izz and Al Hudaydah, and a 2,000-number system in San'a'. Eight other cities also had telephone exchanges which were in operation or were being installed. The first domestic connection between cities was opened in 1970 between Ta'izz and Al Hudaydah, followed by a telephone and telex link between San'a' and Al Hudaydah. Long distance service was initiated in 1964 between San'a' and Cairo, and in 1970 plans were under way to tie Yemen into a world communications system. In January 1971, the number of telephones in the country was estimated at 3,550, or about 0.6 sets per 1,000 people.

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	COORDINATES	
	° 'N.	° 'E.
Abā as Su'ūd, Saudi Arabia	17 28	44 06
Ad Dali'	13 42	44 43
Aden, Yemen (Aden)	12 46	45 01
Aḥmadi	14 48	42 57
Al Bayḍā'	13 58	45 36
Bayt al Faqih	14 31	43 17
Al Ḥudaydah	14 48	42 57
Al Luḥayyah	15 43	42 42
Al Luhayyah (*port*)	15 42	42 42
Ar Rāhidah	13 20	44 17
Asir, Saudia Arabia (*region*)	19 00	42 00
As Salif	15 18	42 11
At Ta'if, Saudi Arabia	21 16	40 24
At Turbah	13 02	43 5
Az Zaydiyah	15 18	43 0.
Bab el Mandeb (*strait*)	12 30	43 20
Bahrain (*island*)	26 00	50 30
Bājil	15 04	43 17
Balaq	15 10	45 23
Bani al Harith	15 38	44 10
Bani al Harith (*tribal area*)	15 38	44 10
Barat	13 33	44 39
Da'ān	16 04	43 50
Dhamār	14 16	44 23
Dhofar, Saudi Arabia (*region*)	17 00	54 10
Hadhramaut (*region*)	15 00	50 00
Ḥajjah	15 42	43 34
Ḥaraḍ	16 28	43 04
Ḥarib	14 57	45 30
Ibb	13 58	44 12
Jiblah	13 56	44 10
Jidda (Juddah), Saudi Arabia	21 30	39 12
Jisayn	16 59	44 11
Kamaran, Yemen (Aden) (*island*)	15 21	42 34
Khawr Kathib (*bay*)	14 52	42 57
Kirsh, Yemen (Aden)	14 37	46 45
Maḍiq Kamarān (*channel*)	15 20	42 38
Mafḥaq	15 07	43 54
Manākhah	15 07	43 44
Ma'rib	15 30	45 21
Maydi	16 18	42 48
Mocha	13 19	43 15
Najran, Saudi Arabia (*oasis*)	17 30	44 10
Perim, Yemen (Aden) (*island*)	12 39	43 25
Qa'ṭabah	13 51	44 42
Qiaān, Saudi Arabia	16 54	42 32
Ramlat as Sab'atayn (*dunes*)	15 30	46 00
Riḍā'	14 28	44 53
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	24 38	46 43
Rub' al Khali (*desert*)	20 00	51 00
Sa'dah	16 57	43 44
Salif, Ra's as (*point*)	15 19	42 40
San'a'	15 23	44 12
Ta'izz	13 38	44 02
Tihāmah (*area*)	14 03	47 55
Uqdah, Saudi Arabia	14 07	43 05
Wādi Zabid (*wadi*)	14 09	43 18
Zabid	14 12	43 18
Zahran, Saudi Arabia	17 40	43 30

Selected Airfields

	COORDINATES	
	° 'N.	° 'E.
Al Bayda	14 06	45 26
Al Hudaydah New	14 45	42 59
As Salif East	15 18	42 52
Qalat Marinaf	16 00	43 11
Rawdah	15 28	44 13
Sadah New	16 58	43 44
Sana South	15 19	44 12
Sukhne	14 48	43 26
Taizz New	13 41	44 08

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