SANĀ'
AN ARABIAN ISLAMIC CITY

Edited by
R. B. Serieant and Ronald Lewcock
This impressive and lavishly illustrated volume is the result of many years of research and careful planning. Led by Professor R. B. Serjeant and Dr Ronald Lewcock, a team of internationally acknowledged experts and academics here deals with specialised aspects of the city. This work is one of major scholastic importance in which the society—along with the complex religious, legal and mercantile setting—long history, crafts, arts, and religious and vernacular architecture of this traditional Islamic city of north Yemen are exhaustively described and analysed. A large number of both colour and black and white illustrations are used to show the function and form of the architecture and the living crafts, supported by many plans and line drawings, with maps to show the evolution of the city.

In its dramatic highland setting, Ṣan‘ā’ had until recently avoided many of the problems and changes faced by the cities of Arabia. Such traditional cities of Islam evolved and function in a unique and fascinating manner, but their insular traditions and society are now being rapidly eroded in the face of modern economic and technological pressures. In a few years cities such as Ṣan‘ā’ will have altered out of all recognition to their long and splendid histories. However, this major work preserves the city of Ṣan‘ā’ for posterity. This book will be the standard work of reference on the subject.
R. B. Serjeant

After reading Oriental Languages at Edinburgh and Cambridge, R. B. Serjeant was appointed to a research post in South Arabian Dialects at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and went to Aden in 1940. He served there in the Aden Protectorate Government Guards but later joined the BBC and became editor of the Arabic Listener. Returning to London University he was appointed Colonial Research Fellow and worked in Ḥḍramawt in the Eastern Aden Protectorate, subsequently spending long periods in both Protectorates. In 1964 he made his first journey to Royalist Yemen, visiting the Imam at al-Qarah. In 1969 he first visited the Yemen Arab Republic where he has carried out field research during some half dozen visits. He has also travelled in the Arab states, East and West Africa, and visited Iran, India, Pakistan and Malaysia. He returned to Cambridge in 1964 where he is Sir Thomas Adam's Professor of Arabic. His publications include Islamic textiles: a history, Prose and poetry from Ḥḍramawt, The Su'ayibs of Ḥḍramawt, The Portuguese off the South Arabian coast, South Arabian Hunt, and he is co-editor with Dr Robin Bidwell of Arabian Studies. In 1974 the Royal Society for Asian Affairs presented him with the T. E. Lawrence Memorial Medal.

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World of Islam Festival Trust
Acknowledgements

It is the editors' pleasure to acknowledge the support and help so freely and generously given them in the production of this book.

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The members of our group most closely concerned in the general field work, literary research and discussion that went into the planning of this volume were, along with the editors, Drs Costa and Smith.

Finally the editors wish to record their appreciation of the amiable collaboration by Scorpion Publications in the persons of Colin Larkin and Leonard Harrow, and for their fine work on San` ā', and they thank Alistair Duncan, Director of the World of Islam Festival Trust for his patience in shepherding our project to completion.

If, by inadvertence, the editors have omitted the names of persons who help should have been acknowledged, they plead for forgiveness, for they drew on so many. Individual contributors have recorded their special acknowledgements in their own chapters.
If to dwell in Ṣan‘ā’ be your passion
Reckon what these letters ḥ do fashion—
Corn, a beloved, bath-house with fuel, (ḥabb, ḥammām, ḥaṭāb)
Garden, ass, protection and profession. (ḥaṣirah, ḥimār, ḥirfah, ḥimā)

‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaymī (ob. 1068/1657-8)

Ṣan‘ā’ be it must, however long the journey,
Though the hardy camel droop, leg-worn on the way.

Traditional, cited by al-Ḥamdānī and others

Ṣan‘ā’ of the mansions and towers tall,
High in antiquity, from time afore,
Proud in resisting covetous assault,
Founded through Noah’s son Shem’s prescience,
Prescience of a lord, a king most wise—
For Shem ‘t was who with sureness sought it out,
Sought it more than two thousand years ago
Set ‘tween the hills of Nuqum al-Naggām
And lofty ‘Ayarān where [men] dig for springs.
In bygone former days he founded it.

A land wherein are found Ghumdān and al-Qalis.
The man of valour built them, the Chief, al-Ra‘ī’s,
Tubba‘ who held sway there; where also built Bīlqīs.

Ahmad ‘Īsā al-Radā‘ī, late 3rd/9th century (?)
Contents

Introduction 9

1 Geographical Sketch 13
   Jan Acres, revised by Ronald Lewcock and Robert Wilson

2 The Ghayls of Ṣan‘ā’ 19
   R.B. Serjeant, Paolo Costa, Ronald Lewcock

3 Calendars, the Time of Day and Mathematical Astronomy 32
   R.B. Serjeant, David A. King, Ismā‘īl al-Akwa‘

4 Pre-Islamic Ṣan‘ā’ 36
   A.F.L. Beeston

5 Ṣan‘ā’ the ‘Protected’, Hijrah 39
   R.B. Serjeant

6 The Church (al-Qalis) of Ṣan‘ā’ and Ghumdān Castle 44
   R.B. Serjeant, Ronald Lewcock

7 The Early and Medieval History of Ṣan‘ā’ ca. 622-1382/1515 49
   G. Rex Smith

8 The Post-Medieval and Modern History of Ṣan‘ā’ and the Yemen, ca. 953-1382/1515-1962 68
   R.B. Serjeant

9 Western Accounts of Ṣan‘ā’ 1510-1962 108
   R.L. Bidwell

10 The Urban Development of Ṣan‘ā’ 122
    Ronald Lewcock, Paolo Costa, R.B. Serjeant, Robert Wilson

11 Administrative Organisation 142
    R.B. Serjeant, Husayn al-‘Amri

12 The Market, Business Life, Occupations, the Legality and Sale of Stimulants 159
    R.B. Serjeant

13 (1) The Statute of Ṣan‘ā’ (Qānūn Ṣan‘ā’)
    (2) Additional Documents 179
    R.B. Serjeant, Ismā‘īl al-Akwa‘ 233

14 Analysis of the Ṣan‘ā’ Market Today 241
    Walter Dostal, revised by R.B. Serjeant and Robert Wilson

15 The Buildings of the Sūq/Market 276
    Ronald Lewcock

16 The Mint of Ṣan‘ā’: a Historical Outline 303
    Nicholas Lowick
The Mosques of Ṣanʿā’: the Yemeni Islamic Setting
R.B. Serjeant

The Architectural History and Description of Ṣanʿā’ Mosques: The Great Mosque
Ronald Lewcock, G. Rex Smith, R.B. Serjeant, Paolo Costa

The Smaller Mosques of Ṣanʿā’
Ronald Lewcock, R.B. Serjeant, G. Rex Smith

The Jews of Ṣanʿā’
A. Shitrit, Wilfred Lockwood, R.B. Serjeant

The Hindu Bāniyan Merchants and Traders
R.B. Serjeant

The Houses of Ṣanʿā’
Ronald Lewcock, R.B. Serjeant

The Public Bath (Ḥammām, pl., ḥammāmāt)
Ronald Lewcock, Ismā’il al-Akwa’, R.B. Serjeant

Children’s Games in Ṣanʿā’
Ḥusayn al-`Amrī

Ṣanʿā’ Dress, 1920-1975
Martha Mundy

Ṣanʿā’ Food and Cookery
R.B. Serjeant, Ahmad Qaryah, Annika Bornstein

Envoi: Ṣanʿā’ As It Was
R.B. Serjeant

Bibliographical References

Glossary R.B. Serjeant

Index of names of persons, families, tribes, races, nationalities, titles
and supernatural beings R.B. Serjeant

Place name and Geographical Index

General Index

List of Maps

1 The Region of Ṣanʿā’
2 The Ghayls of Ṣanʿā’
3 Ghayls to the North and South of Ṣanʿā’
4 Von Wissman’s Map of Ṣanʿā’
5 The Eastern Half of the City
6 Manzoni’s Map of Ṣanʿā’
7 Map of the Sūq
8 The Jewish Quarter of Ṣanʿā’
9 Ṣanʿā’ Today

Note
This volume is very much a joint production and many chapters are the work of more than one author; but one or more authors may also have made contributions to chapters mainly written by others though no specific attribution to them has been made in the List of Contents. The Editors themselves have revised the chapters, some lightly, some in depth. Broadly speaking the first name appearing after the title of any chapter to which several persons have contributed is that of the major contributor; other names follow in order according to the contribution each has made to it. This is, however, an approximation for it is impossible to be precise and in more than one case the order of names is simply that of the order in which the work of the individual contributors appears in the chapter concerned. (Eds.)
Introduction

Traditional Šan‘ā is the theme of this volume—that is Šan‘ā city of the Islamic era up to the officer revolution of September 26th 1962—and its richly antique culture which continues to survive despite much political change since that date. To avoid controversy it is not attempted to study the currents of political ideas to which the rising generations in the towns were exposed from the 1930s onwards—early nationalist writers like al-Kawukibi, Western liberalism, even the Atlantic Pact now hardly remembered—which filtered into the Yemen through the Arabic press via Aden, the powerful effect of Nasserite socialism and `Urûbah, communism, the Bāth, or even such home-grown political theories as that of Qalîn-`Adnan rivalry.1 Neither does this book deal with the Islamic reaction as exemplified in al-Ikhwan al-Muslimûn. Important as its part was and is in the politics of the latter decades, the flux of ideas has not altered the essential spirit of Šan‘ā and its standing as the forum of a traditional yet liberal aspect of Islam.

As an intellectual and literary centre Šan‘ā was unhappily affected by the 1962-67 War—a frequent visitor, the late Fu‘ād Sayyid, Keeper of Mss. in the Cairo Dar al-Kutub is said to have mourned the disappearance during this time of the salons at the houses of the learned where discussion ranged far and wide over religion, philosophy, literature, history, current affairs, and business was transacted to the accompaniment of the madâ `ah-pipe circulating from person to person, and chewing of tender pipe circulating from person to person, and chewing of tender gums. Some salons of this kind have returned, but, as in other Islamic countries, traditional learning has lost its former pre-eminence in Zaydí society while modern education has still far to go to achieve a level comparable with it. Not only has the status of the cultural elite of Šan‘ā changed, but the very composition of its population has been appreciably altered by a large influx of Shāfi`is from the Lower Yemen come to settle there, the immigration of country tribesmen and the arrival even of Akhdam from the Tihâmah as street-cleaners for the capital. Nowadays too a not inconsiderable floating element of foreigners from East and West has affected the life of the city.

Like the Yemen in general since 1962, Šan‘ā has undergone certain physical changes, some far from entirely beneficial to it. On the other hand fine roads have been, or are still, building. These could hardly have been attempted earlier for lack of financial and technical resources although some tolerably good unsurfaced vehicle tracks were introduced on important routes by the Ottoman Turks and then by the Hamid al-Dîn Imâms. With external aid roads are now pushed ahead and a sensible plan has been made for the inevitable development of Šan‘ā and its greatly increased population—aiming to preserve the old while getting on with building the new.

Widespread damage was caused the heritage in the north by bombing during the 1962-67 Egyptian presence—historic little towns were destroyed and can never be replaced. But Šan‘ā, during the early days of the Republic suffered more from the planning that decreed the deliberate demolition of the walls and gates linking Bustân al-Sultân with the Bir al-`Azab suburb, and of two mosques there. A street was driven between the two districts, flanked by ugly ill-constructed edifices mostly in concrete. Part of al-Khuzaymah Cemetery must also have been built over but already, before World War I, the Turks appear to have encroached upon it. A school, completely modern in construction, just inside the southern wall, sticks out in the old city like a sore thumb. The destruction of Bâb al-Shû`ub and Bâb al-Salâm between 1962-67, and the later, quite unnecessary, clearing away of the old Turkish adobe garrison tower at Bâb al-Balaqah, on the grounds that these gates impeded motor traffic, have lost the city some salient features of its outline. Alterations imperatively necessary could have been more discreetly effected and better planning would have allowed Bâb al-Balaqah to remain. Worse than anything was the bull-dozing of the historic Khanâqîd, the two fortified walls carried on arches across the Sâ‘îlah flood-course, so that a motor road could be run down it—this during President al-Ghashmi’s short term of office. This seems to us totally inessential. Historians must also deplore the demolition of old Jewish houses in Qâ‘ al-Yahûd, re-named Qâ‘ al-`Ulûfî, notably Ǧâḥshûb’s house with its many interesting architectural details.

By contrast the first Ottoman occupation left a legacy of pleasing pieces of architecture such as the Bakriyyah Mosque—while buildings of the second Ottoman occupation executed in local stone, like the military barracks extra muros, harmonise well with traditional Šan‘ā building.

A law promulgated about 1974 requires new building to conform to traditional styles. Though in many cases this means simply that a traditional skin is grafted on to a building modern in conception, with not very satisfactory results, the control tower at al-Râhabah International Airport constructed in light and darker grey stone is truly a find blend of old and new.

Restoration carried out with good intent but with no taste or regard for its historic features has been a cause of irreparable and deplorable damage to parts of the historic Jâmi’ Mosque, one of the earliest foundations in Islam. A proposal was actually made at one time to demolish its fine minarets and replace them with

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San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

In assembling this volume much fundamental pioneer research in the field has been involved, be it in San'a' and the Yemen or through consultation of MSS. and printed sources in Arabic add to which works in European languages, Hebrew and Turkish. Yet our researches are nowhere near exhaustive of the written sources. Numerous individuals have been consulted on the content and language of our studies. Some chapters have been nearly re-written at least once as new data were discovered, most embody the work of several hands and all have gone through revisions. A certain overlap of course inevitably there is when subjects are treated from several angles. Gaps there are also, of which the editors are only too conscious, due in part to circumstances, in part arising from the inaccessibility of what we needed to study.

It had been intended to include a chapter on Yemeni San'ani literature and literary circles, but at least this is covered by Sayyid A'zm al-Shahmi in his own book(s) on Yemeni literature. It is surprising indeed that until little over a decade ago, the rich Yemeni literature (taking literature in its full sense as including the Arabic 'sciences') was all but unknown in sister Arab countries. San'a' s repute in 'Abbasid times as a centre of learning is surely established by al-`Harih who commences his celebrated 'Assemblies' with the Maţāmah of San'a—even if there be nothing San'ani about it but the title! Recent years have seen a spate of modern verse and anthologies. Music, frowned upon in Imam Yahyás day, has not been touched upon, but we do have Professor Muhammed `Abdul Ghânim s important study of sung San'ani verse.4

Throughout the book the religious ingredient is everywhere evident, but it cannot be claimed that it has more than touched upon the intellectual life of Islam, its preoccupation with and proliferation of writings upon the law, doctrine, controversies, schisms and the like. Popular religion and credences figure only incidentally. No separate chapter has been devoted to the social structure of San'a' which however is dealt with in several places. The time factor, if no other, did not permit of listing San'ani families, in which Quarter of the city they were or were located, and the compilation of a survey of their history and origins—this is a project eminently desirable. Little is said of irrigation, agriculture and traditional medicine, though Martha Mundv made out an initial list of medicines found on sale in San'a' Sûq, the majority of which may be found in the 7th/13th century al-Mu'tamad fi 'l-adwiyah al-mufradah of Yûsuf b. 'Abdah al-Ghânim.

Our fieldwork in San'a' is incomplete in one major respect—

2 Selected papers edited by R. B. Serjeant have been published by UNESCO as The Arabian city, Paris, 1966.

5 See however, E. Rossi, 'Note sulla irrigazione e le stagioni nel Yemen', Oriente Moderno, Roma, 1953, XXXIII, 360.
the refusal of the military on security grounds—to allow us to make a survey of the Qsr, though it is fair to add that Lewcock was permitted a brief superficial visit to it. The military have probably not realised that satellite photographs could reveal most of its secrets, but if such photographs exist they might provide some archaeological data—this is an avenue unexplored by us. We did not survey the city walls—which are being eaten into by building in many places, or crumbling, so not slowly, into ruin from neglect to maintain them. Detailed planning of the ghaylis is a desideratum but Costa found it impossible to trace them into the area of extension of the city southwards. Serjeant was shown some archaeological data—this is an avenue unexplored by us.

Sahhâf and Fâlâshûb, who were the most active in photography, have recently been erected around Ghurqat al-Qalis, the site traditionally assigned to it, and this precludes investigation for re-adjustment of opinions expressed here. However, despite the importance for Arabian, Islamic and Christian history of excavating al-Qalis (popularly al-Qllays), Abraham's church, a high wall has recently been erected around Ghurqat al-Qalis, the site traditionally assigned to it, and this precludes investigation for the present. It would be more than interesting were it possible to excavate the known site of Ghumdân Palace.

In many ways the opportunities for undertaking serious research in the Yemen, San‘î in particular, which began after the end of the 1962-67 War, have been no more significant than in the field of architectural studies. Although only a limited time has passed since then, and architectural research is seriously handicapped by the lack of any archaeological study within or near the city, and by the absence of classification of most of the documentation, the immense wealth of surviving buildings in San‘î has made it possible to establish the main outline of building development for at least the last 300 years, and, in the case of mosques, for well over a thousand years. It has proved possible, subsequently, to link this in its essentials with detailed accounts of the physical character of the city in the 3rd/10th century, and with what little can be gleaned of pre-Islamic San‘î, so that the essential continuity of architectural design can be asserted with some confidence for a period dated back to the beginning of Islam, and, on the evidence of the tower-palace of Ghumdân and a few other fragments, four centuries earlier.

K. A. C. Creswell, in his introduction to the edition of his classic Early Muslim architecture, rewritten as late as 1958, could say that 'Arabia, at the rise of Islam does not appear to have possessed anything worthy of the name of architecture.' The statement is surprising, in view of the wealth and quality of Arabian traditional architecture now being revealed, and which is almost timeless in the antiquity of its lineage. This architecture had almost certainly been discussed, or at least mentioned, by earlier researchers and travellers. But it is true that the kernel areas of ancient Arabian culture were not easily accessible for research until recently, and that even now, the scope of research which can be undertaken there is limited, especially in the archaeological sphere.

The pride of the Yemeni in his traditional architecture is still evident, in spite of recent aculturation. With good building materials readily to hand, especially stone, plasters and translucent gypsum, a settled way of life, and little alternative means of expression of his success in life apart from building, the houses, mosques, minarets and samarrahs tended to grow in size and acquire decoration and rich finishes where today such expression is diverted to the acquisition of motor cars and relatively impermanent household gadgets. The stimulus given by the pride in owning fine buildings to the quality of design and construction in architecture must have been a millennia-old phenomenon in the Yemen, and explains the distinction attainted by its architecture—which has led to it now being widely admired in the world outside.

With the demolition of buildings and walls since Hugh Scott's visit to San‘î in 1937-38 and the covering of what were then open spaces and countryside, his photographs published in his book In the High Yemen and those unpublished, now in the British Museum of Natural History, South Kensington, are already of historic importance—as of course are the photographs of earlier travellers. For instance Scott's book shows irrigation wells operated by animal power that has completely given way to motor pumps.

* * *

Where documentary evidence is concerned we must record one major omission in that, because of its virtual inaccessibility, we were unable to make a direct study of the Misa‘awadd of Sin‘ân Fâshā, preserved in the Chancellery of the Jâmi‘ Mosque. The authorities had not, as yet, permitted it to be photographed for reference and study at leisure. During our all too brief stays in San‘î, with so many fundamental data to establish, it was out of the question to try to read it there and copy out passages by hand. An edition of the Misa‘awadd with provisional identification of places, families, etcetera, is an indispensable preliminary to anything near a comprehensive history of San‘î.

Arabic documents abound, many in private hands—those few that came our way we have used. Arabic documents in Hebrew character are to be found with Jewish emigrants from San‘î—if these seem to be cited in a ratio disproportionate to their number it is primarily because they have been more accessible. Through the good offices of Professors S. D. F. Goitein and Y. Ratzaby (himself originally hailing from Wadi Sa‘wân) we obtained a photograph of the records of the former Jewish Religious Court at San‘î which are now in Jerusalem.

It is deeply to be regretted that part of the massive trove of Islamic documents of the early centuries that was discovered in the Jâmi‘ Mosque only a few years ago, has been allowed to be lost, stolen or dispersed—what remains is reported to be in the process of calendaring but the loss to the Islamic heritage of any of it is of a degree that can only be imagined—certainly a serious loss.

Legal writings, including fuṣûl, may be described as having been drawn upon to the extent they were readily available to us. Archival sources have hardly been tapped—to cover the Ottoman archives alone, though undoubtedly rewarding, would be a lengthy task.

History is only treated in outline, as a background setting particularly where it relates to San‘î. The presentation of the little known last four centuries of Zaydi rule, Imâm by Imâm, if not ideal does at least provide some historical framework. Relatively few basic historical texts have been printed—a sensible practical scheme would be to reproduce a series of facsimile texts of Mss. provided with a list of chapters—rather than wait for the appearance of definitive editions. Where Mss. of Arabic chronicles have been consulted Yemeni scholars have been referred to over the many difficulties of language and comprehension that confront non-Yemenis.

Where pre-Islamic San‘î is concerned Professor A. F. L. Beeston has coped with the sparse inscriptive evidence and indicated certain problems, but more inscriptions must surely be discovered alluding to San‘î, and every year new inscriptions throw more and more light on early Yemeni and Arabian Islamic history.

At present historical information for the first three or four

6 Ayman Fu’âd Sayyid, Masâlik lâwîh al-Yamân fi l’- târîf al- Islâmî (Sources de l'histoire du Yemen à l'époque musulmane, Cairo, 1974), is valuable but already needs supplementation.

centuries of San‘âni and even Yemeni history as a whole, tends to be rather thin. Though, for example, Christianity had still some importance during this era, about the end of which it seems to disappear, much of this is to be deduced from casual references in al-Razi’s Tarikh San‘â’. Al-Razi is an immensely valuable source for half-remembered political events, semi-forgotten religious controversies—interpreted in the light of later Islamic attitudes, popular religion and local traditions with references to persons and episodes unknown to other Arab writers—but so much of what he relates is quite obscure.

Medieval Yemeni history has perhaps attracted more attention than any other period, but Zaydi history is not well known. Given the known standpoint of the Zaydi school their historians often display a high level of objectivity, though this statement should be qualified to some extent when they come to treat of the Isma‘ilihs (Fâjimi-‘I’tişâbihs), heretical in their eyes. Fâjimi Yemeni history is still mainly in Ms. form and only some of it available for consultation. It is to be hoped that many more chronicles of the type of the anonymous Sânâ‘î majhûlîn, rich in social history, edited by Qâdi Husayn al-Sayaghî and published by the Centre for Yemeni Studies, will come to light.

In point of reliability European travellers diverge considerably, but we owe much to the best of them, Niebuhr and Manzoni. Poorer as we should be without Ibn al-Mujawir’s accounts of the Yemen, they, no less than some of the European travellers of a later era, are not always quite trustworthy.

The early history of San‘âni confronts us with many obscurities and in chapter 10 some problems of the city’s growth and development are indicated. In consequence our proposals are not infrequently tentative, subject to adjustment in the light of fresh archaeological or documentary evidence. In view of the limitations the editors have been obliged to place upon themselves to produce this volume they have even talked from time to time of a supplementary collection of studies.

* * *

For the editors it was a memorable experience to partake in a parallel activity—the conceptions and creation of the ‘City of San‘âni’ of the Nomad and City Exhibition at the British Museum of Mankind in 1976, in association with Paolo Costa, Walter Dostal, Martha Mundy, Rex Smith and Robert Wilson—interpreted so splendidly by Margaret Hall of the British Museum and her team. To construct a physical illusion with the authentic spicy smells, the sound of the call to prayer and the Museum and her team. To construct a physical illusion with the authentic spicy smells, the sound of the call to prayer and the singer with his lute, is something the written word cannot achieve.

Transliteration

Transliteration is always a problem. Besides Arabic there is quotation of Turkish and Hebrew. Turkish words are given in the modern Romanized script but of course this means that Arabic words in Turkish appear in Turcized form. For Hebrew the editors have been content to accept the transliteration of their Hebraist colleagues. Arabic words from documents in Hebrew or Hebrew script conform with the appropriate Arabic-Roman transliteration.

For the transliteration of classical Arabic the system of Arabian Studies has been adopted. The numerous colloquial Arabic words derived from Mss. or printed books, or else taken down from word of mouth are harmonised with this system insofar as it is possible to do so. Ettore Rossi has given a description of the phonetics of San‘âni Arabic, but neither his system of transcription, nor that of S. D. F. Goitein for the pronunciation of Yemeni Jews, has been followed, and for practical reasons quotations from either have been made to conform to our system.

Where the pronunciation of consonants differs from classical Arabic it is assumed that ǧâd is heard velar g as in gate, ǧâd and ǧâr are most easily described as a palatalized dhâl, and ǧâr. while often sounds to the writer like the classical Arabic ǧâd is sometimes actually written as a dâl. The most learned use these pronunciations but they may also use standard classical pronunciation. Pronunciation varies too with a man’s degree of learning. The short vowels are often uncertain to the Arabs themselves and individuals will pronounce place-names for instance, differently from one-anothe. The short vowels are often uncertain to the Arabs themselves and individuals will pronounce place-names for instance, differently from one-anothe.

All place-names have been checked with Yemenis and all colloquial, i.e. non-dictionary words, but a few of the more highly technical terms Professor Dostal has collected it was not possible to check since, being special to a craft, they are unknown to others.

This volume will establish the standard form of many words and names, so it is important that they correctly and simply represent the Arabic as far as possible, avoiding the cryptograms of the ‘linguists’ and the erratic notation of the place-names of otherwise excellent an observer as Johann Ludwig Burckhart— it is difficult to identify the route of the Kibi pilgrim caravan as he records it with the place-names given in the Arabic sources.

The indices attempt through cross-referencing to remedy unavoidable inconsistencies in spelling of foreign words. Long established names, such as Mecca, are retained in their traditional English spelling.

Language

A wealth of Arabic terms has been provided, even to the extent that they may prove wearisome to the non-Arabist, but they are vital to the true understanding of classical texts and colloquial expression. To convey a range of senses of a single Arabic word these are given, where appropriate as alternatives separated by an oblique stroke. Many Arabic words have no direct English equivalent.

The northerners call the southerners laghâ’îyâh (sing., lagha’îhî), alleging that they cannot pronounce the letter qâf, and I believe the southerners have for, their part, a nickname they give to those with a northern accent, but the only term known to me is the abusive and much resented muqamîmî, preparer of dung-cake fuel (kibyakhi) which they use. The crafts, or at any rate some of them have a secret or private language, laghât al-a‘âdîyâh/ al-sâ’îyah, the language of the master-craftsmen. The builders, according to a San‘âni informant, even employ Hebrew words in it. It has also been described to me so laghât al-‘umâmîrîn wa-l-masâ’îyâh, the language of the builders and stone-trimmers. The butchers, (al-jazzârin) also have their secret cant. Examples of cant words are Ya‘yâ ‘l-Shu‘ûbî for Imam Ya‘yâ, al-mu‘âfrad for al-qâîr, al-lîdî or al-sawayyî, for a pretty girl.

\(\text{San`a'}\) is situated in the centre of the highland zone, in an elevated plateau, on the eastern edge of the great block of mountain ranges which rise up only 50km or so from the Red Sea. To the east further mountain ranges separate it from the beginning of the deserts which slope continuously down to the Arabian Gulf, hundreds of miles to the north east.

The plain in the centre of which \(\text{San`a'}\) is built is between 2350m and 2200m above sea level, falling gently towards the north north east. It is some 80km in length, in width varying up to a maximum of 16km. The southern limits of the plain form a watershed between the catchments of the Wâdi'l-Khârid, which flows north east, and the Wadi Sihâm, which flows west to the offshoot of the western range. The northern boundary of the plain is dominated and enclosed by rocky mountain ranges. On the eastern and western sides of the San`â' plain are massive mountains which overlook San`a', and the twin peaks of al-Nandayn, 2513m, which are due south. Volcanic activity has continued sporadically to within recent times and is seen in the broken tongue of lava which cascades down through the gap followed by the San`a'-Hodeidah road west of the city, then spreads out in lobate forms onto the plain near Wâdi 'Asir, stone terrace walls over two metres high can be seen. The stones and boulders on gravel fans have often been painstakingly cleared to one side, to reveal the fertile loessic soil beneath.

Erosion slowly levelled the land, disintegrating the rocks of the mountains and depositing them in the flat floor of the plain below. In the trough between the parallel mountain ranges east and west of \(\text{San`a'}\), sedimentary deposits, loess-like silts, partly composed of wind-deposited ‘dust’ and partly interbedded gravels, have accumulated to measured depths of up to more than 400m in the north \(\text{San`a'}\) plain. These sedimentary deposits have the property of sucking up and holding any rainfall like a sponge. This accounts for the great fertility of the \(\text{San`a'}\) plain, and makes it possible to dig wells everywhere and thus create, from the steppe which would be almost bare in the dry season, gardens and oases which bloom throughout the year. The water contained in the deposits is not enough, however, to maintain a permanent cover of brushwood and trees. Only along the bed of the Wâdi 'l-Khârid, where there is underground water movement, there is there a perennial strip of trees, mainly tamarisk. Such trees also follow some of the tributary wadi valleys. On the western side of the \(\text{San`a'}\) plain there are several strong springs (e.g. Haddah) which nourish luxuriant oases of fruit trees.

\(\text{San`a'}\) lies spread at the foot of Jabal Nuqum, 2892m, which may have been a dominant influence on the original choice of the site of the settlement. It is the city’s ‘weather mount’, a collecting point for rainclouds in summer, and therefore probably experiencing a slightly higher local rainfall. (This is suggested, though not proved, by existing rainfall records.)

The surface of the plain is not as flat as it appears from the air. Besides the lobate lava flows, some scarcely weathered, which frequently protrude from the base of the mountains, sheets of gravel and unconsolidated rubble, brought down by mass movements, cause variations in surface relief. These surface irregularities are very evident to the south of \(\text{San`a'}\).
Drainage

The present-day erosive effect of running water on the plain is limited, despite the absence of a complete vegetation cover, as the earth bunds found round all fields regulate and distribute surface run-off following rain. Furthermore, all the wadis feeding the Wadi l-Sa`lah, which itself disappears as a surface feature north of al-Rawdah, are permanently dry except following heavy rain. Thus the term 'alluvial plain', with its implications of a flowing river, is misleading in the case of plateau around San`a'. Aeolian erosion and surface sheet movement, (noticeable after rain), are probably the major factors of landscape sculpture under present climatic conditions, aided by the friable, dry nature of the soil during most of the year, and a very scant plant cover.

Climate

Northern Yemen does not share the desert climate of most of the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, due to the effect of its high mountain backbone, culminating in Jabal al-Nabiyy Shu`ayb, 3760m. San`a', in the centre of the Yemen, has a temperate climate, with generally very dry and mild weather; yet the temperature difference between daytime and night-time can sometimes reach 30°C. San`a' lies at a climatic cross-roads: contrasting airmass sources affect it. Southerly and westerly airstreams bring increased humidity and the possibility of rain. Greater cloud cover at such times depresses maximum temperatures. In contrast, dry continental air from the interior of Arabia brings, as commonly in the autumn, an abrupt drop in humidity, clear skies, lower minimum temperatures, and a greater daily temperature range, (midday maximum being still high due to clear skies, as in December). Occasional warmer winter spells with rainshowers indicate a protrusion north of southerly maritime air, which finally advances with the sun to bring the minor rains of the spring months.

In the summer, the many peaks and ridges of the great block of highlands over 3000m above sea level, 'catch' some of the rain held in the warm, moist, monsoon winds blowing from the southwest. Thus the areas of maximum summer rainfall in the Yemen are on the west-facing slopes fronting the Red Sea Rift. This orographic rain diminishes rapidly in the lee of the mountain divide, so that areas farther east, such as the San`a' plain, are considerably drier. The total annual rainfall at the edge of the Red Sea Rift, 25km to the west, is 50 percent higher than at San`a', and it is 10 percent higher on the mountains and plateaux immediately surrounding the San`a' plain than on the plain itself. San`a' lies within the solar tropics, at lat. 15°22' N and long. 44°11' E, and has the 'radiation climate' typical of tropical high mountains. The sun is at its zenith over San`a' on May 2nd and August 15th, and radiation from the sun is high throughout the year, only slightly lowered during the cloudy months of the summer rains, July and August. The hottest and coldest months, June and December respectively, are directly related to the intensity of solar radiation, and the tropical strength of the sunlight allows year-round plant growth under irrigation. Nevertheless, the climate of San`a' could better be described as 'warm temperate' rather than 'tropical', due to the effects of the high altitude, (2255m at Bab al-Yaman). The temperature and barometric pressure is low and the nocturnal loss of heat by outward radiation is also low, so that ground frosts at night are frequent during the winter, despite relatively high midday temperatures.

Rainfall

Such meteorological records as exist confirm a consistent rainfall pattern of maxima in March - April - May, and July - August - September. San`a' rarely receives rain between November and January, or in June, but no month is inevitably rainless. Occasionally, heavy storms occur in April and May, but the rainfall in July and August is more concentrated, typically falling in thunderstorms, and also more reliable. In August 1933, more than one fifth of the annual rainfall total fell within twenty four hours; other examples of the intensity of the summer rain could be quoted.

Jabal Nuqum has been observed to have an important local effect on summer convectional rain. Cloud caps form and coalesce over the peak, resulting in heavy, thundery afternoon rain, as the clouds move out over the plain.

The total annual rainfall varies between 200mm and 500mm.

Humidity

The atmosphere of San`a' is relatively dry, most constantly during the winter months. Mist is unknown, but a layer of white smoke from the kitchens overhangs the city in early morning, which is particularly pronounced during November.

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1 For example, the following:
Nov. 1940...64.2mm.
Jan. 1943...15.9mm.
Dec. 1943...4.8mm.

2 The recorded monthly and annual totals are given below for a wet, a dry, and an average year: 1963, 1971, and 1967 respectively:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Rainfall (mm)</th>
<th>Year's Total (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>120.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>195.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>325.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>325.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>325.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>325.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Relative Humidity Average for first six months of 1944
The Region of Ṣan‘ā’
Sanʿā’—An Arabian Islamic City

Pressure and Winds

Local winds show a strong daily rhythm which tends to override regional, seasonal changes. There is generally weak air movement both morning and evening, and stronger winds at midday, related to convection currents over the heated land. ‘Dust Devils’ (‘ifārah or jaʿfārah, pl. jaʿfārah) develop with the strong winds; observed up to 600m high, they move slowly and haphazardly across the plain.

By night a breeze frequently blows down into the plain from the surrounding higher, colder peaks.

The configuration of the land causes an interesting contrast in the summer between southerly winds blowing both morning and evening, and strong northerly winds at noon (although a hot, dry jfān wind sometimes blows from the south). During winter a south west wind normally dominates.

The combination of high day temperatures, low humidity (with the consequent high evaporation), and a moderate and somewhat erratic annual rainfall, result in the available moisture of the Ṣanʿā’ plain being only marginally adequate for agriculture.

Historians speak occasionally of rainfall famine years and deaths from starvation, but rain can fall in quantities causing ruin to crops —this being known as matar ghadab ('rain of wrath'). The historians periodically also mention falls of snow —as when in 1087/1676 —77—when snow lay on the ground in Ṣanʿā’ ‘like pounded salt’.

Plant Geography

To naturalists, the south west corner of Arabia including the Yemen is of particular interest, a transition zone in which three biogeographical regions overlap: Northern or Palaeartic, Oriental and Ethiopian (Tropical African).

Down on the Tihāmah, and in the valley floors of the wadis descending from the mountains, tropical species of both flora and fauna are typical. On the wet, west-facing foothills of the High Yemen, tropical and temperate species mingle, including some from the Mediterranean. At higher altitudes, plants and animals found elsewhere in Central and Northern Europe, and Asia, have been identified, together with others unique to the Yemen. It is not known whether these temperate species are relics of a cooler, wetter past, or have spread across the barrier of the hot intervening deserts. The Red Sea has been a barrier to the spread of certain species, found either in Ethiopia or the Yemen, but not common to both.

Above 2100m there are fewer plant species to be found than on the moister western mountain slopes. Many of these flourish only during the summer, the first spring rains covering a previously arid landscape with the fresh green of vegetation, which generally persists until the autumn. These include many aromatic and flowering plants.

The summer also forms the growth period for most of the

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4 Sanʿā’—Temperatures (°C) 1963

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local winds show a larger range, that is significant for agriculture. Figures compiled from the records of several years reveal the following:

4 Sanʿā’—Temperatures (°C)

To make the December figures more meaningful, the figures for the following month, i.e. January 1964, are given.

Absolute Maximum: 25.4°C. Mean: 16.6°C. Absolute Min: 1.9°C.

All are air temperatures.

Ground temperatures show a larger range, that is significant for agriculture. The readings were made at 1400 hours.)

5 Barometric air pressure at Sanʿā’ is low, varying from a monthly mean of 25.4°C. Mean: 14.6°C. Absolute Min: 1.9°C.

6 Absolute Maximum: 25.4°C. Mean: 16.6°C. Absolute Min: 1.9°C.

7 Two hours’ collecting during September at the edge of the Sanʿā’ plain yielded fifty-two species: European—willows, junipers, dwarf junipers, sweet basil, potentina (p. viscosa), buttercup (ranunculus multifidus), primula (primula verticillata), field scabious, lavender (lavandula pulegrosa), Alpines—rock pink (dianthus uniflorus), gentian (gentiana pneumonanthe), a creeping gentian with purple-tinged, white flowers), campunala (campunala edulis), a blue-flowered, creeping campunala, with succulent, edible roots), iris (iris albicans/iris florentina, a white iris found up to 2400m). Flowers also found in the Ethiopian Highlands—celosia spinosa (a trailing clematis with small white flowers), ross abysinica (a wild white rose), Buddleja polychroma (african blue butterfly with orange, scented spikes of blossom), jasmium officinale (white jasmine which forests over rocks and stone terraces up to 5000m), antichrix abysinica (low, woody bushes with white daisy-like flower heads on rocky ground), veronica (grows in clumps of knapweed-like flowers with magenta heads). A flower found on dry stony ground in the Sanʿā’ plain which is also seen in Egyptian deserts—centaurea pallescens. In moist areas many ferns grow, such as two species of maidenhair fern—a hornet (equisetum ramosissimum), a selaginella (selaginella yemensis). Flowering plants discovered near Sanʿā’ (new species)—lavandula alpina (a rare yellow lavender peculiar to the Yemen), esphoria vaticanis (a euphorbia), cichorium bottae (bright blue, dwarf chicory found near water). Biogeographical links with Asia and Africa are obvious in the names of these flowers found on or near the Sanʿā’ plain—rumex nepalensis (found on the edge of streams and irrigation channels), merienia bengalensis, zostera palustris (archozoa somalensis (on the slopes of Nuqam), pansicum tenerrissimum (found on bare, rocky basaltic fans in the valley).

See also A. Deflers, Voyage au Yemen: Journal d’une excursion botanique fait en 1885, Paris 1899, for an account of the flora of the Sanʿā’ region, and botanical researches in the Yemen up to his visit.
crops raised in the Ṣan`ā’ plain. In an average summer the whole plain forms a single agricultural area scattered with villages or isolated farms, and extending east and west in the tributary valleys into the mountains. The thorough use of even the smallest rainfall makes it possible to raise substantial crops nearly every year; nevertheless, occasional crop failures are caused by the absence of any rainfall, either in spring, at the end of summer, or even during a period of several years.

The most fertile farms are those where the water reserves are abundant, such as on the slopes of Jabal Haddah, 30km south west of Ṣan`ā’, the valley of Dilā’, 30km to the north west, and the Wādi Daḥr, 10km north. There it is possible to find orchards of apples, pears, quinces, peaches, apricots, plums, almonds, lemons, walnuts, figs, and many varieties of grape, as well as the ubiquitous Many flowers can be grown, especially roses. Ṣan`ā’ was noted for production of rosewater until the present century.

Euphorbias flourish in the Ṣan`ā’ area, and are richly represented by prickly, succulent, cactus-like forms, though the introduced prickly pear (kalas Turki) is the only true cactus in the Yemen. At 2700m and above, a low compact pincushion-like species is common—Euphorbia officinalis—which has a latex extremely caustic to the skin. Another common species is a Stapelia with stems like grotesque fleshy fingers, a few centimetres high.

The fauna include many African and European species, and there are many Arabian sub-species which have obviously evolved along a slightly different path in the relative isolation of the Yemen Highlands: e.g., Eidolon Sabaeum, a fruit-eating bat closely related to an African species. Fox and hare are common around Ṣan`ā’, but gazelle and leopard are evidently far less numerous than they once were. Porcupines and hyænas are reported in nearby wadis.

Water Supply

Dug wells have always been the major source of Ṣan`ā’i’s water, and the accessibility of water a few metres below ground must have been of great importance to the original ancient settlement. The Quaternary valley-fill aquifer, with the water table at depths varying from 5m to 50m, at present the one most exploited, is however, being mined of water: more water is being extracted than was possible by manual or animal power. Wells thus have to be deepened, sometimes several times a year in the centre of the city where the water table now approaches a depth of 50m. Digging is by hand: dark, dangerous and costly work by massâr, well cleaners, who send up baskets of spoil hauled up with rope and pulley by men at the well head. The traditional way of raising water is by harnessing to the well ropes animals—donkeys, camels or oxen—which then pull up the water by walking down a sloping earth ramp to give them added power. These raised ramps are a conspicuous feature of Ṣan`ā’, and remain even after the installation of diesel-powered hydraulic pumps at many of the wells. Drilling rather than digging wells by hand is increasing. These borehole wells are far deeper and further drain the water reserves in the Quaternary aquifer.

However, the Cretaceous sandstone aquifer which is the main groundwater collector of the area, far below the land surface at depths starting at 80 to 100m, has water levels which seem stable. It constitutes the most reliable long-term source of water for Ṣan`ā’.

Sources of water which are of considerable importance locally are the perennial springs found at Haddah, ‘Asir, Bayt Baws, and Wādi Daḥr. A "perched" (isolated, local), aquifer has formed in the basalts of the Tertiary Trap Series, resulting in springs at surprisingly high altitudes: approximately 2425m at Haddah, and 2495m at Bayt Baws. The largest spring in the area, in upper Wādi Daḥr, emerges from basalt, where the fractured, blocky nature of the rock gives a good water yield. The irrigated orchards and fields of these four villages are an important source of produce supply to Ṣan`ā’.

Dug cisterns are another important source of water, created all over the Ṣan`ā’ plain. These are pits excavated in the surface of the plain, lined with large blocks of stone, and faced with qadāṭ, or native cement. They are usually fed by surface drainage during the spring and summer rains, but some are filled from a well dug nearby, or from a spring, as in the case of the large cistern above Haddah village. Yet other cisterns have been made by damming a small valley and incorporating the rock of the valley sides. They vary in shape, usually being oval or rectangular, and in size, from 6-40m across and 4-8m deep, with or without steps leading down to the water, giving access to animals and men alike. Some are even subterranean; all are interesting relics of the past, difficult to date, but many undoubtedly pre-Islamic in origin, patched up repeatedly and used up to the present day.

Supplementing the water obtained from wells and cisterns, man-made underground aqueducts, called in the Yemen ghayl or Persian kāriz, have brought water considerable distances to the city centre. The best-preserved is al-Ghayl al-Awsad, which, until 1973, contained a flowing stream, now completely dry. The ghayls are discussed in detail on pp. 39-31.
San'a—An Arabian Islamic City

Effect of Water Resources on Agriculture

An estimated 50 per cent of the total land surface within the San'a plain catchment area is arable land. The annual rainfall together with water storage is normally sufficient for two crops, sown before the spring and the summer rains respectively, with the skilful aid of dry-farming techniques. By far the largest acreage of crops is rain-fed.8

Out of a total of about 1,000 wells found serving agriculture in the plain in 1975, 30 per cent were found abandoned, and 10-15 per cent were dry. 40-45 per cent of all wells had vertical-shaft, engine-driven pumps installed—a very high figure. At the remaining wells, traditional methods of lifting the water were still used, and the irrigated plots were correspondingly smaller.

Under irrigation, crops can be grown all the year round in San'a; although there is likely to be consequent impoverishment of the soil this has still to be investigated. At present, farmers spread incinerated refuse on their fields during the winter months, but as this contains much plastic, tin, and other non-biodegradable matter, it may do some damage to the soil.

The following list indicates the wide variety of crops which tolerate the San'a climate, and their relative importance in using the available irrigated land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main crops</th>
<th>% area of total irrigated land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lentils</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenugreek</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qât</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the great majority of people in the Yemen, and in the San'a district, depends on agriculture for a livelihood, water resources have a prominent position in discussions of San'a's development.

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8 As the following estimated figures (1972) for the San'a plain indicate:

- Areas irrigated from wells: 750 hectares
- Springs: 400 hectares
- Left fallow: 1,050 hectares
- Dry farmed: 22,000 hectares
Chapter 2: The Ghayls of Ṣan‘ā’

Ṣan‘ā’ lies in a plain (Ḫaql Ṣan‘ā’) at the foot of and to the west of a high mountain chain formed by Jabal Nuqum, Birash and the massif of Jabal al-Lawz and the Hijaz in pre-Islamic times. 4 Ḫidāmah is used in the speech of the local people around Ṣan‘ā’ both at Ghayl al-Barmaki and al-Awasd.

The ghayl is also known at Ghayl Bā Wazir near the Ḥadramī coast where however it is called mi‘yān. The question as to whether this type of underground channel irrigation was introduced into the Arabian Peninsula from Persia, as is often all too readily assumed, remains open. It would of course be a facetiously attractive theory to suppose that the ghayl system was introduced to Ṣan‘ā’ by the Persian Aḥāz before Islam, and spread to other Yemeni towns where we have found them, but though Arab historians do sometimes associate irrigation works with the Persians there is no other evidence, as yet, forthcoming to prove their assertions.

The channels generally run for a while underground then emerge into the open—apparently they do not run underground to prevent evaporation but to drain any waters infiltrating through the sub-soil to them. Below the actual catchment area there is generally a large cistern that ensures a steady flow and continuity of the supply. The channel then runs, open to the sky, following the best route, sometimes zigzagging to prolong the length of the water-course and thus find a more gentle gradient—where otherwise the slope of the land would create too great a speed of the flow. The majority of the channels are intended for irrigation alone—only al-Awasd, in active use until 1973, was employed for drinking and religious ablutions.

The Yemen has many channels for drinking and ablutions only—for example the channel conducting the water to the celebrated mosque of al-Janad, supposedly of the Companion of the Prophet, Mu‘ādh b. Jabal, near Ta‘izz. This channel

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2 Qādh‘ Ismâ‘īl’s unpublished proverb. It is also quoted in E. Roosi, ‘Note sur l’irrigation, l’agriculture et le stagnage nel Yemen’; Omanie Moderno, Roma, 1953, XXXII, 357, ‘fuddâh being explained as—la forma di canaliere aliaggio vulcanico. This is a most valuable article on the Yemen in the thirties.

3 Goitein, Jemenica, 112, no. 799. Bāynt Na‘ām is a Ḥamādīn village at the top of Wâdī Ḍahr. Ḍahr is however a perennial surface stream, not a subterranean water-course, so in this case at least it simply means that people at the source of a spring obtain no advantage from it.

4 Cf. R. B. Serjeant, ‘Some irrigation systems in Ḥadramawt’, BSOAS, London, 1964, XXVII, i, 57. Abî ‘Ubayd al-Qâsim b. Sallâm al-Harawi, K. al-A‘mar, Bombay, 1918, defines ḫisâmah as ‘wells/pits (âbâr) which are excavated, there being a distance between them. Then a bore is made (subhaq) between each two wells with a channel (qqâdî) which leads the water from the first to that which is next to it, until the water is collected in the last of them.’ See Husayn b. Fâydh Allah al-Ḥamðânî, al-Sulayhiyyûn, Cairo, 1955, 152, for al-Kâṣîmî, near Zabid. Ibn al-Dairî‘, Qurât al-‘āda, ed. Muhammad al-Akwa‘, Cairo, 1977, II, 111, under annals for 791/1389, speaks of roofed water channels makhlûlah (sing. makhllûlah) (masgûfah) of Zabid, the term still being in current use. For Iran and Oman see Professor A. K. S. Lambton, art. ‘Ḫaṣw’ in E.J.

5 The thin rough-hewn stone pillar in the midst of the court of the mosque is known as ‘Aṣā Mu‘ādh, i.e. Mu‘ādh’s staff.
catchment wells are to be found. It then runs underground at a
depth averaging 3.5m, for a distance of between 200 to 300m
without small wells for giving access to cleaning the water-course,
ethen with small wells for this purpose for another 100m—
rather like the North African joggirah system. From this point
the channel runs in the open for a total length of 15 km. Originally
it supplied drinking water to 22 villages, ending at the mosque of
al-Janad itself.

Two groups of channels are found in the al-Sanā‘a area—one on
the northern, and the other on the southern side of the city. This
latter waters the fields on the southern side of San‘ā‘ in the area
known anciently and today as al-Sâfiyah, and supplies the town
itself—whereas the former brings water to the near-by town of
al-Rawdah to the north.

Only the southern group of channels directly concerns the
city of San‘ā‘, but we must take into consideration also the
northern channels which collect the water in the suburban area
of Sul‘al-Shubâ‘ib and conduct it to this important satellite town
of San‘ā‘ which is known as the Wadi al-Dahr, by the great
families of the capital. It incidentally produces a relevant quantity
of the grapes and vegetables sold in the San‘ā‘ Market. This
southern group of ghâys consists of Ghayl Alâ‘, al-Ghâyl al-Aswad,
Ghayl al-Barmakî, and Ghayl al-Bâsh, the last-named located,
more precisely, to the south east of San‘â‘.

There is one indication that San‘â‘ or its environs were served
by a ghâyl before Islam, though the evidence is somewhat slender.
Al-Râzi cites a statement that the Sâfiyah of San‘â‘ is Daynubadh
and Ghayl Alâ‘/Ulayy. In August 1975, while re-examining
part of the old course of Ghayl al-Barmakî we asked Sinhan
tribesmen about this Ghayl Alâ‘, a name which they did not
know in this form, but they pointed to a line of trees some distance
to the north of al-Barmakî, nearer to Nuqum which they knew as
the village of Alâ‘. This village, they said, had âphylâ‘ from the
time of Himyar, but they had been from remote ages buried over
(wadawûn). On a visit, shortly after this, to Alâ‘ we found,
did not have time to do more than look briefly at them, fairly deep
wells which the villagers told us had in one case at least, probably
more, two underground channels leading into them from a
mainly easterly direction, and cut in rock. These were called by
them majâllâ‘ with the curious plural jîm. The village had
quite extensive walled orchards, or what had been orchards, and
there were evident evidences of a well-devised surface irrigation
system which gave the impression of antiquity. Only a careful
examination of the ground may confirm that there was actually
an ancient ghâyl feeding San‘â‘ or the fields about it. Al-Râzi
however has some further information to quote. ‘The most
lawful of the Şawâ¼î are what ‘Umar b. al-Khatjûb (the second
Caliph) appropriated (asjûb-ha) of the land of Bâdhan (the Persian
Abûn Governor of San‘â‘), of which are Alâ‘ (read Alab) and
a property (dayâ‘ahu) in al-Manâshir, and the Market of Bâdhan.‘ Elsewhere he states, ‘Bâdhan had no Muslim son so ‘Umar made his
property a sâfisâ‘.‘ Then, again, he describes the place Mas‘a‘ al-Nubây/Nawbây as—a place under Ghunmân towards
the road of Alâ‘ (read Alab).

The first record of the construction of a ghâyl is that attributed
in 183/799. In San‘â‘ he built Dâr al-Barâmikâh, later known
as Dâr al-Qarân—the Mint, in the place known as Sûq al-Tâbâbânî,
The Straw-sellers’ Market. A suitable location for this building
would be near the apparently artificial mound upon which stands
the present-day Sûq al-A‘r where fodder is sold, and which, at
that period, may have been on the edge of the city—its other name,
al-Jabânâ‘a, implies an open space outside the walls, though of course today it is well within the centre of the city.

The Banû Shihâb, says al-Hamdâni, have most of Haqî San‘â‘, a part of which is the Maydân of
‘Abbâd b. al-Ghâm. When Ibn Barmak excavated the great
river (nâhîr = ghâyl) the places in which his (mattocks) were
to strike and his ditches (râdî‘) perhaps from Latin fassum)
lay in the land of ‘Abbâd b. al-Ghâm. So he asked him to
sell the passage-way (mansûfah) of the Ghayl, but he refused,
selling, ‘Such as I do not sell a middle part of his land. Yet
it does not become me to stand in the way of any path to
(public) weal (sabil-an min subul al-khayr), but, conditional on
your allotting me a share in your benefaction (mukrûmâh), I
shall make room for you.’ He (Ibn Barmakî) replied, ‘Say
what is necessary.’ To which he replied, ‘A branch channel (shaghârah, pl. -â‘i) which I shall make a water conduit
(mastirâ‘) for the inhabitants of San‘â‘. So from it he cut off for himself the shaghârah-channel which pours into Sûqayât
‘Abbâd—which today is the drinking place (maskrâb) of the
people of San‘â‘. San‘â‘ people used to reckon that Ibn
Barmakî’s benefaction was rendered complete only by
‘Abbâd since he took charge of most of it for drink and for
the irrigation of their lands (dâyâl).’

In the rather confused passage following, al-Hamdâni seems
to indicate that the Ghunmâyûn are one of the Arab families of
Banû Shihâb in San‘â‘ and have a ghayl râdî‘ which comes out
from the middle of San‘â‘ (makhruju-hu min wasâ‘i San‘â‘). Whether this is to be identified with Ghayl al-Barmakî or is a
separate water-course is not known.

As a working hypothesis it is suggested that ‘Abbâd’s Maydân
lay somewhere about the present-day Bâb al-Yâmân. Ahmad
al-Shâmî states that in his youth, while foundations for a house
south of the Jâmi‘ Mosque were being excavated a ghayl was
discovered—might this be al-Barmakî? It may have run through
the area west of the Jâmi‘ to the long open street between
al-Tawashi and al-Filayhi Quarters and out of the city by the

Sîlah for the passage of floodwater. Rossi, op. cit., 358, apertura di afflusso
al canale. 6 Ibid., 133.
8 Ibid., 106 seq.
9 Al-Hamdâni, Jâhî I, ed. Muhammad al-Awân, 414 seq.; ed. Lôfgrén,
Uppsala, 1965, II, 175.
10 Id., 120. ws still in current use, explained as sâqîyâh sâqînâ‘ min al-ghâyl
al-kabîr.·
11 Al-Kindî considers râdî‘ a proper name, but one wonders if it is not some
technical irrigation term.
The region of Sana'a. Map showing the ghayls running into the city with an aerial view (above) of the built up area.
present day Bīb Shuʿlīb. This would tally with the information from the Jewish sources. Literary evidence available to us is inconclusive but documents might well provide accurate data, especially the Miswaḍdah of Sūnūn Pasha when it becomes possible to study it closely.

Al-Rāzi’s19 account runs, ‘It is a river (nahr) in Ṣanʿā’, the advantage (manṣaḥa) of which is evident there—they could not do without it for washing their clothes. It was a charitable act (yadāqah) which he (al-Barmaki) performed for them and through which he made good their drinking places (ṣībūl sing., sabīl) right up to Mecca.’ He adds, ‘Muḥammad b. Khālid . . . was the one who introduced Ḥaḍīl Ṣanʿa’ and its drinking places. He collected the people so that he made them bear witness concerning the tradition and he swore by God Exalted that he had spent none of the money of the Authority (maʿal al-Sultan) on it, but only what was lawful (halal).’

22 name of the Quarter, Bustan al-Sultan—and, of course, to irrigate (yashugq) Sanʿa of the Yemen, about which their poet says,

and dug a great river (nahr) in it. He adds26 that ‘the drinking of the inhabitants from Ghayl al-Barmaki, already mentioned, is one who introduced Ghayl Sanʿa and its drinking places. He

made by the Ayyūbid, Tughtakin,23 in 601/1204-5, when he

began work on the new city of Ṣanʿa’. Writing about 1260 A.D., the traveller Ibn al-Mujawir25 notes that, coming to Ṣanʿa’ from the south, the distance from Naqīl Yislah to Ghayl al-Barmaki which enters Ṣanʿa’ from the south would be four farṣākhīn, a farṣākh being about three miles. Often reporting more like a journalist than a scholar, he states that a Barmaki fleeing from Ḥarūn al-Rāshid made it, constituting it a waqf to the weak (duʿāfā’).24

This is unmetrical verse21, but nevertheless suitable for singing,

‘To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

Alas, O weeping, when the lover be far

the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.

This is unmetrical verse21, but nevertheless suitable for singing,

‘To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

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the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

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His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.

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the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.

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‘To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

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the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.

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‘To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

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the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.

This is unmetrical verse21, but nevertheless suitable for singing,

‘To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

Alas, O weeping, when the lover be far

the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

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His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.

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‘To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

Alas, O weeping, when the lover be far

the geographer, about the first quarter of the 13th century A.D., calls Ghayl al-Barmaki a river (nahr) which splits from his beloved—to whom makes he his plaint?

To me then will he complain and to the city (balad),

His tears flowing like the Ghayl al-Barmaki.
In the year 1177/1763-4 he ordered the excavation of the watercourses (maqārī) of al-Ghayl al-Aswad and its spring/source (manba') in the Qāī which lies west of the village of al-Jardā' and east of the village of Bayt Sibjān, a distance of about two hours south of the city of San'ā', as well as the excavation of the water-courses of Ghayl al-Barmakī and its source (manba') from around the village of Bayt ‘Uqub and the village of Ghaymān, a distance of about three hours south east of San'ā'. After the excavation of the water-courses of the two, and getting the use of them, there came from the Qāī Ismā'īl b. Yahyā al-Ṣâdīqī, one of the governors (huqqām) of San'ā', the written text of a decision by him (taḥrīr al-raqīm min-hu), dated Ramadan of the year 1180/February, 1767. The gist of his decision (raqīm), as I read it, is that the tracks (ṣāhār) of al-Ghayl al-Aswad and Ghayl al-Barmakī had been put right (ṣahārīmat) by the far-reaching dam/barrage (? al-sadd al-bâlīgh), but (these tracks, azkār) and been effaced, and people had made these water-courses into sown land. So al-Mahdī repaired them, and the afore-said Governor ordered the Mashāyikh of the wādi al-Shu‘ūb, Bār al-‘Azāb, Ḥaddāh, and Bayt Baws to put a valuation on them, and their valuation of the two came to 700 riyāls. The afore-mentioned Governor chose the option (raṣūla) of selling them with their water-courses and all pertaining to them by sharī‘ law and custom (τυρφ), to the Factor of the Treasury (Wakil Bayt al-Mā‘āl), to al-Mahdī al-‘Abbas for 1400 riyāls. Al-Mahdī remitted the price determined by the Governor afore-said to the factor of his (personal) holdings (amlāk), the faqīḥ ‘Alī b. Abdullah al-‘Aṣmī. 37

This ‘Ali b. Abdullah al-‘Aṣmī, called al-Ṣānā‘ī of the well known ṣādī family of Government officials (who died in 1183/1769-70) had ‘under his surveillance many posts (sawā‘ā‘f) connected with the Imām, including building (al-imārah), whatever it was, for the Government (Dawlah), the administration (taṣūṣah) of the city, the punishment of anyone who revolved against the path of obedience to God and His Apostle, the putting down of irresponsible (ṣurāh) of people whom he “shall know them by their token” (Qur‘ān, II, 273), the inspection of the workmen (al-tamha‘ah al-‘Amri) excavating the shafts (kaṣa‘ā‘m) of the ghayls and repairing them. 38 In true Yemeni administrative tradition, be the ruler sultan or imām, al-Mahdī, ‘the Imām, the Caliph of God Exalted, seized from him his house and horses, committed him to prison, and exacted from him the handing over of his property/money which he specified as an obligation on him.’ Zābārah comments, ‘This is a thing which, in God’s knowledge, has happened before.’

When Hālevi visited the Yemen in 1869 al-Barmakī had dried up, and only al-Ghayl al-Aswad, and, to a smaller extent, Ghayl Ālāf were still active. 39 Zābārah writing of very recent times, states that al-Ghayl al-Aswad still cuts through (yashqiqq) San‘ā‘ and irrigates some of the properties in Wādi Shu‘ūb, but Ghayl al-Barmakī has become very weak so that in these years of the 14th/20th century it has only irrigated a part of the properties of Mahāl Dā‘ al-Khayr, south of San‘ā‘. 40

Ghayl al-Barmakī in 1975

The catchment area of the ghayl lies midway between the village of Dār Salm and the southern side of Jabal Nuqum. At the source of the ghayl there are about twenty wells to the south of al-Jardā‘ village. The course of the ghayl runs underground in a more or less north westerly direction, receiving also water from a branch ghayl called al-Mansūri which starts a few hundred metres to the south east. Al-Barmakī runs at an average depth of 7m for a total length of about 500m. The outlet at the point where the underground channel emerges into the open is a highly sophisticated structure—three flights of steps lead down to water level, obviously to allow people to draw water from the channel. The staircase and its walls are carefully built in dressed stone. Originally part of the staircase was probably roofed. It then continues in the open for about 800m until it flows into a cistern of about 24m × 31m. This is a few hundred metres south east of Bayt Mi‘yād village, from which the ghayl then runs approximately northwards to irrigate the area beyond the village. However, before it comes to Bayt Mi‘yād the ghayl has already split into three branches at a very old garden 300m south of the village—where it is apparent that at least part of the ghayl did not go to San‘ā‘ but irrigated the fields south and west of Bayt Mi‘yād in al-Ṣāfiyyah.

Al-Ghayl al-Aswad

The sources consulted say nothing of al-Aswad before the opening years of the 9th/14th century though it had certainly existed in some state or another in the 8th/13th century. If negative evidence has any value it may be pointed out that Ibn

35 Abābā, lit, traces, steps — perhaps a technical word here; perhaps it refers to the line of mounds on the ground above the water-course, formed by the spoil removed to form the channel.

36 The sense of this whole sentence is completely uncertain to us.
al-Mujawir, about 1260 A.D. mentions only al-Barmaki, but though al-Aswad is neglected by the sources prior to the first date, this is inconclusive.

‘In this year (803/1400-1),’ says the author of Ghâyat al-amân,41 ‘Ali b. Salah al-Din ordered Ghayl al-Aswad,42 south of San‘a’, to be excavated and its water-courses to be repaired, when previously they had been covered over (probably with earth, datharat) and become dilapidated/demolished. Water appeared and reached al-Bustan (Bustân al-Sultan) and Sha‘ûb. The place where it first comes out (asl makhraji-hz) is from Qâ‘ Artil below Ghayl Alaf. Ghayl al-Barmaki was in good repair at this time.’

Our sources do not name al-Aswad as having been destroyed by the Tahirid sultan ‘Amir in the 9th/15th century, though it is likely that it shared the fate of the other ghayls, but, as already seen, it was re-excavated in the year 1177/1763-4.

This is the only ghayl which runs underground from the beginning to the end of its course. It originates about the plain east of Jabal al-Nandayn—perhaps more correctly called Haddayn, at a distance of about 200m from it and from Ghayl Alaf. Its catchment system is formed by 16 wells. Its channel runs northwards at an average depth of 6m, crosses the bed of the Sa‘ilah, and enters the environs of San‘a’ near the mosque of al-Jarâdî.

This latter is the first of four places at which there is access to the water of the ghayl. Near this very small mosque there is a little cistern at ground level, and a double staircase bending slightly to the left, leading down to the ghayl. At present both sides of the staircase are blocked with bricks near the actual level of the ghayl. A few metres north west of al-Jarâdî mosque lies al-Bilayli Mosque, then comes al-Bahlûli Mosque. From here the channel runs straight for about 500m, then crosses a drainage canal which runs parallel to the town wall of San‘a’. From this point the ghayl turns towards the north west again, then runs in a straight line, more or less in the centre of the post-1962 Shâri‘ ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Mughni, up to Dâr al-Shukr and the Mutawakkîl Mosque.44

Fig. 2.2 Al-Ghayl al-Aswad—plan and sections. The ghayl and ablution places at al-Bilayli Mosque.

Key to all figures

- a: animal stalls
- cu: court upper level
- eu: entrance hall upper level
- gh: ghayl—water level
- k: kitchen
- m: mawzûr
- o: loading and mounting animals
- pr: cold pool room
- rl: library
- t: terrace
- v: rain water cistern
- wr: well ramp
- be: boiler
- ch: changing room
- f: warm room
- h: excrement room
- l: lobby
- ma: rainaret
- or: restaurant/eating place
- p: public ablution area
- s: store
- tm: tomb
- vr: men in charge
- wb: water cooling box
- c: court
- e: entrance hall
- g: grinding mills
- i: grain and fruit store
- lb: lavatory/bathroom
- nw: washing floor
- pl: pool
- rr: reception room and business
- sp: shop
- u: shaft
- wb: water cooling box
- y: women’s room and wardrobe
- z: minaret

42 Note this form, the Ghayl of al-Aswad, not the Black Ghayl as the name is given elsewhere.
43 For the text’s sake we must read ‘Adan.
44 Al-Wâsi‘î, Al-Badr al-mawâli, Cairo, 1345 H, 10, says that al-Aswad enters San‘a’ towards two mosques, Masjid al-Mutawakkîl and Masjid Hajar at al-Bb al-Sabânah (Cf. Masjid San‘a’, 43). It then enters Bustân al-Mutawakkîl and comes out at Sho‘ub, north of San‘a’, to water the lands (arâdi) up to al-Jarâdî. Masjid Hajar was unfortunately demolished during the Egyptian occupation of San‘a’.
Outside the Mutawakkil Mosque can still be seen the flat mugaddad open space known as misbânah, the wash-place for women, made by Imam Yahyâ b. al-Mansûr, though it is now not in use since the water supply of the ghayl has been cut off. Hammâm al-Mutawakkil is also on al-Ghayl al-Aswad. Inside the Mutawakkil Palace the channel is still well preserved along the busân to the mafraj of Imam Yahyâ at the end of it. The ghayl supplied water to the mafraj, then it runs under the mud wall still around the mafraj into the open—close by it outside the wall, is a well known as Bir Khayran. At no great distance in time, the course of al-Ghayl al-Aswad continued beyond the Mutawakkil Mosque to the Bustân al-Yahûd/Yahûdi of Arabic writers—on this land now stands al-Qiyâdat al-`Ammah li-`1-Quwwat al-Musallahah, the Forces G.H.Q., in a building said to have been sequestrated from the Imam al-Badr.

Zabârah informs us that, in the year 1314/1896-7, the Mayor (Ra’is al-Baladiyyah), Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Bilayli the San`ani, completed the building of the well-known mosque in the Safiyah, south of San`a’, on the right of a person going out in the direction of Haddah and San`a’, in addition to the excavation and construction of the well and sabil from which the passer-by on the road drinks, and the cistern connected with it for sheep-and-goats to drink. He brought the water of al-Ghayl al-Aswad into the ablution places (mutawaddayât), expending much money on perfecting the building.

We visited the Bilayli Mosque in November 1975. Access to the ghayl water is from inside the mosque area, and there is a more complicated approach to it than in the next mosque lower down on the water-course, al-Bahlûli. One descends a staircase divided into two, and those wishing to perform the ablution descend by the left side and, after washing (yitwaddaw li-`l-salâh), return ascending the right side, carrying their shoes in their hands. At the foot of the stairs are little ablution rooms called masâf (pi., masâf), one for men, and one for women, where there are little shallow pools—the waste water from them is thought to have drained away from them, not to have returned to the course of the ghayl. Masâjîd San`â’ calls them mi(hâr, and says there is one for washing (ightisâl) and one for the ritual ablution (li-`l-wudû’).
At al-Bahhūl, the next mosque in the series, but outside the actual mosque itself, a stairway, also divided into two by a low wall, leads down to the channel of the ghayl called maqâli al-mâ'. The roof of the ghayl is covered by a sort of paving stones. As in al-Bīyāfī there are mawāfi' rooms with a small pool in the middle, different rooms being assigned to men and women. The arch inside the bathing-room is called jalilaylī (pl., jalilayli) which Dr Maqâṭi suggests is derived from the phrase often written inside such an arch as those, ālilū, jallā jaliwālu-ha.

Informants at the Bahhūl Mosque insisted that the ghayl is not a wārâf but belongs to the farmers (mamlûk al-zurrâ') who have cut off the water above (jilaylī sâwâf). They suggested that the people of Šârî' Al-Ābi 'Abd al-Muqânnî have refused to pay their share for the maintenance of the ghayl, and that they took the water for nothing (jilâbhu 'l-mayy bi-dûn maqâblîb).

It would be interesting to obtain copies of the agreements for al-Ghayl al-Aswad which should show how the ghayl used to be maintained and who is responsible for the expenses involved, but this task we have left until a possible subsequent occasion.

The late Muhammad Ahmad Nu'mân some time before he was murdered in Beirut in 1974 is said to have put up the sum of 100,000 riyāls to have something done about bringing al-Ghayl al-Aswad into commission once more.

When the ghayl used to run there was two kinds of fish in it, both simply being called al-kuri, Šârî' small boys are said to have liked playing with them.

**Ghayl Alāf**

One of the notable acts (ma'âthin) of the Imam al-Qasim b. 'Ali (ob. 393/1002-3) was to bring forth the Ghayl Alāf by the hand of his governor al-ZayDI, south of Šârî'.

Ghayl Alāf was extended by Tughrah b. Ayyûb to Bustân al-Sulâijn.

It was one of the ghayls destroyed by Sultan Amîr the Tâhirîd in 870/1465. The poet al-Khâfanjî (ob. 1180/1766-7) makes Bir al-Shams boast, 'I have Ghayl Alâf.' It also has a proverb of its own of the standard type, 'Ghayl Alâf yisqî bi-ghayr ahl-ih, Ghayl Alâf irrigates/waters people other than its own.'

The people in the upper localities derive no advantage from the ghayl passing through their own territory. Ghayl Alâf is owned half by Bayt Zuhrah, and the rest by owners (mullâk) among whom are to be counted the Yemeni Government, Bayt al-Jârâî and Bayt al-Amrî. Bayt Zuhrah stem from an ancestor, 'Abdullah Shârî Zuhrah of Dùh Muqâmmad, from Urjûzâh in Barat, who transferred to Bayt Mi'yad, and the rest to the cultivators (murrâ) and have now become Mâshâyikh of Bir al-Aswad.

Ghayl Alâf is now the largest of the southern ghayls. Its source (manbâ') is from a small valley opposite the village of Artîl. At this source, according to Husâyn al-Shâyîfî, are dayâr-ßân (sing. al-dirâwân) which he described as stones high up in the air down which water trickles. At any rate, the catchment area is formed by some fifty wells. The ghayl runs in a straight northerly direction underground for about a kilometre, then debouches into a large collecting cistern which seems to have been at least partly roofed. This cistern is square and measures about 20m a side. Now it is silted up so that the exact depth cannot be measured. It has been suggested that it also draws on the Sawad Hizyâz.

From the cistern the canal runs, open to the sky, sometimes straight, sometimes zigzagging northwards round the eastern hill of Jabal al-Nâhâyân or Haddayân, becoming very deep and impressive towards the north west. It then turns again northwards to run along the eastern edge of the old military airfield. From

The north eastern corner of the runway the channel zigzags for about 300m, then it branches out into many small channels which are invisible nowadays beneath hundreds of new buildings. One branch of the canal is still visible along the road to Bâb al-Khuzyâmeh, more or less in front of the large Jâ'îfî house where there is a group of old buildings.

Near Bayt Mi'yâd, on the western side of it, all the wells of the channel, intended for cleaning, are visible and well preserved. One of these wells, the nearest to the house of Bayt Mi'yâd, shows many deep ruts made by the well ropes in the stones of the casing of the well-head. Obviously the inhabitants of the village used it to draw water from the channel for a long time. Probably they had some special right to do so, and this would be worth investigation.

Ghayl Alâf is said to have supplied water to the fields of the Sâlîlah, then it went on to Bayt al-Zuhrah from which it flowed northwards through Bir al-Aswâf and Bir al-Shams as far as al-Jârîfî. South of this village there are actually remains of several large cisterns, but it is impossible nowadays to follow on the ground the course of the channel through the town. North of Bir al-Shams some channels are visible running in a northerly direction, but it is not possible to ascertain whether any of them is Ghayl Alâf.

Mohammed Hassan speaks of Ghayl Alâf as being near Bâb al-Sâbâh, also removed during the Egyptian occupation.

**Al-Nahrayn**

Ghayl al-Barmâkî and al-Ghayl al-Aswâd were both, as stated to us, known to have entered San`â' from the Upper Khamdâq, the wall set on arches runs over the Sâlîlah or flood-bed on the southern side of the city. This nevertheless seems unlikely in the case of al-Barmâkî. After al-Barmâkî had been extended to Bustân al-Sulâijn, and, whenever it was that there came into being the two ghayls in Bustân al-Sulâijn, the northern and lower part of this Quarter lying west of the Sâlîlah were known as al-Nahrayn, the two rivers or ghayls, and this gave the name to the Masjid al-Nahrayn there.

**Ghayls from Jabal Nuqûm**

In the year 985/1577-8 or thereabouts the Ottoman Murâd Bâshî is said to have made water flow to the Muwâdiyyah Mosque which he had constructed and to the Qârî from Ghayl al-Bâshî at the lowest part of Jabal Nuqûm, where traces of the concerned (gaddâ) of the Sâghîyâh or water-channel from Ghayl al-Bâshî to al-Qasr are said by Zâhîrî to be still evident on the ground.

From Masjid Nuqûm, an ancient foundation, or a little below it we went to see the ghayl called Ghuzî Bâsh (doubtless Qizîl Bâsh) with Nâsîr al-Rû`aynî. It seems fairly certain that this is to be identified with Murâd Bâshî's ghayl. Al-Rû`aynî showed us a square well of excellent masonry with footholes for steps in the side, down which one descends to the bottom. In the wall there, are said to be arches from underneath which passages can be entered, though there is only enough room for a small child to pass along. One passage is said to communicate with an underground cistern (birkâh) in which there is an iron door made by the Turks behind which are held the treasures of Himyâr. The door, on each side, is however guarded by the Jinn, by two slaves (lûdî). The birkâh is believed to lie under an adjoining hillock approached by this passage. If in fact there be such passages, then some may come from catchment areas in the ghayl to approach the airport and ambush a high-ranking Egyptian officer, arriving or taking off from the airport. This appears unsubstantiated.

50 Op. cit., 81. Al-Badr al-muzîl, 3, states that it enters Bir al-Azâb after irrigating al-Sâlîlah, i.e. lands and crops south of Šârî'.

51 Al-Jumâl al-Yamanî, 1, 482.
mountain, but one passage must be an exit—carrying on down-wadi from the well-bottom. Lower down the wadi is a cistern with a barrel-vaulted roof on top of which is a flat masonry praying-place to which one ascends from ablution tanks that would be supplied from the vaulted cistern which has a sort of window facing downstream with a rough modern temporary iron network of bars to protect it. The praying place looks now disused. We continued down the wadi to the point where the rough mountain slope ends and fields begin—here there had been a cistern but it has been removed, seemingly fairly recently. The wadi or gully in which this ghayl lies seems known as Wâdi ‘r-Quṣâr. With the great extension of new building in this area it would be difficult to trace the course of the ghayl to inside the Sân‘â’ walls. It is said however to join the Bîr al-Bash‘al-Bâsh, described by al-Hajari as the ‘great benefaction (mahsinah)’, near a small mosque he constructed also in the vicinity of Masjid al-Haymi. Qâṣî al-Ismâʿîl said this well is in the high part of the city and has the best and sweetest water, and he cited the proverb, ‘Lazim ‘al-‘âd man ‘aṣrîq yathân wa-yidi ‘l-ma min al-Bâsh, He who is in love must grind (grain) and fetch water from al-Bâsh well.’ Both these are hard work executed by women.

Another little gully called Ayn al-Faqih flows towards Bâb al-Yâman when there is rain, but it does not seem important.

The Northern Ghayls
Since these ghayls do not actually serve the city of Sân‘â’ we have only been able to devote a limited amount of field research to them, yet their importance because they serve the villages just outside Sân‘â’ is obvious, and some of the historical data are also relevant to the general history of irrigation in the Sân‘â’ basin. If our field data are incomplete so also is our search for data to be obtained from literary sources, but the extracts drawn from certain chronicles which follow do shed light on the discovery and exploitation of sources of underground water.

The author of Tabaq al-halwâz informs us under the events of 1058/1648 that in this year an increase of the flow (soâriq) of Alâf in the (subterranean) water (al-bahr) came about, the effect of which showed in Sân‘â’ and its environs like al-Rawdah and al-Jirâf. The ghayl of al-Jirâf showed at the lightest digging, and flowed from the top of the dam/barrage (al-sadd) at Shu‘ûb/Sha‘ûb, and it continued to do so. The people of al-Jirâf derived the most perfect advantage from it, and through the rising/discovery of bubbling springs (istitla` al-`uyûn al fawwârât) people found relief from water-lifting from wells (masâni) and the labour on bucket-watered land (dawâli) or on khattârât (the latter a simple and widely known apparatus for lifting water to be found, e.g., in Nigeria, Egypt and Hungary, consisting of a long pole set on an axle upon a column horizontally, and having a weight at one end and a scoop or bucket at the other - the bucket end dips into the water and is lifted by the weight at the other end see C. van Arendonk, Les débuts de l’ imamat Zaidite au Yémen, trans. Jacques Ryckmans, Leyde, 1960, 137 and 143. I have not yet seen or heard of the khattârah as being used in the Yemen today.

2.4 Al-Ghayl al-Aswad. An ablution pool in one of the caves carved out alongside the ghayl.

2.5 Al-Ghayl al-Aswad. The second ablution pool.

The reading is uncertain as this word is undotted.

56 Masâjid Sân‘â’, 50.
58 For the ‘uyûn anhdr of al-Jiro cf. A‘immâr al-Yâman, (2), II, 170. For dawâli and khattârât (the latter a simple and widely known apparatus for lifting water to be found, e.g., in Nigeria, Egypt and Hungary, consisting of a long pole set on an axle upon a column horizontally, and having a weight at one end and a scoop or bucket at the other - the bucket end dips into the water and is lifted by the weight at the other end) see C. van Arendonk, Les débuts de l’ imamat Zaidite au Yémen, trans. Jacques Ryckmans, Leyde, 1960, 137 and 143. I have not yet seen or heard of the khattârah as being used in the Yemen today.
59 The reading is uncertain as this word is undotted.
60 Al-Sirat al-Mutawakkiliyyah, 557 seq.
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

2.6 Al-Ghayl al-Aswad. A vent and access shaft.

2.7 Al-Ghayl al-Aswad. One of the wells which serve as the collecting source for the ghayl.

Ismail (1054-87/1644-76), but regrettably the Mukallâ Ms. is imperfect and worn at this passage. Of San'a', he says, All its water is from wells except the ghayl of al-Rawdah known as Ghayl Rislân. Our lord al-Hasan, God be pleased with him, had excavated a ghayl near it which... (unclear). In digging it he ultimately reached to the length of the ropes of the wells nearby it, or more. In point of fact all he did was to produce water of a large well by (using) force—when the measuring of its depth (qa'r) was measured on the top of the ground, this being possible by artifice and patience. One of (our) predecessors brought forth Ghayl Alâf near Artil, it being said that the person to do so was the Sayyid al-Imâm al-Qâsim b. Ahmad, buried in Dhamût, of the posterity of Zayd b. 'Ali, God's peace on him, he being a governor ('âmil) of the virtuous, the greatest Imâm, al-Qâsim b. 'Ali al-‘Iyânî (4th to early 5th/10th to 11th centuries), God's peace on him. Nothing else was known in San'a'.

As for these ghayls which God has brought into the open in such abundance this was not Man's action, but a person of Shu'ûb/Sha'ûb merely happened to come upon wetness in earth (tin) close to the dam/barrage, known as Sadd al-Imâm, so he went up to it and water showed there. When he noticed it increase he informed our Lord 'Izz al-Islâm, God succour him, who went out to it and ordered an extension (tawsi'ah) to be dug in it, and it increased until it was as I shall relate, if God Exalted will. It began to be brought forth after... (blanks in text) and he appointed over it honest men (umam) (to oversee) the digging and construction of it. Then he built it with stone (text unclear) after setting long shafts (kazimah) in it, and they were, up to the recording of this decision (? ragm hâdha 'l-tawsi'ah),... (blank)... each shaft (kazimah) near to the building of a well (? in shape ?). He assigned places for them to cross to the paths, places for the washermen (sabbdûn), any who wanted to draw water (ightirâf), and for the Prayer. It irrigated their properties for most of the inhabitants of Shu'ûb from al-Jiraf then al-Rawdah and al-Hushayshiyyah, increasing abundantly all the time. He brought it forth to the districts of Dhahban and the homelands

61 Between the Military College and the road.

62 This statement is strange in view of the existence of al-Barmakî.
of Jadir and 'Alamān, God revivifying through him a world of people and livestock. The supplies of our Lord Muhammad bore the provisions and maintenance (al-aqwāt wa-l-nafāqāt) necessary for any upon whom he relied, then the fodder for his horse and all...63 (damaged) and he supplied many others apart from them. All these ways to the water had initially no track/trace/mark (athar)—God is most knowing.

Yea, and one of the Shu‘bū people found an indication of water in another place near that, as already stated above, and he apprized our lord ‘Alī, son of the Commander of the Faithful, God succour him, of that. So he also ordered people to dig and they discovered marks that had become lost under the ground and paths to the water, and the water became plentiful till it was near the river which belongs to our lord ‘Izz al-Islām, God succour him, (in quantity), and it irrigated much of the districts of al-Rawdah and what lies beyond them. Then our lord Ahmad b. al-Hasan, God succour him, also discovered (water) and a great river (nahr), over and above the first two, came forth the flow of which he directed to many of the peasants (duʿāfāʾ)64 and many found advantage in it. Then our lord Muhammad b. Ahmad son of the Commander of the Faithful also discovered a river (nahr) but lesser than those previously mentioned. The country around these rivers was most fertile, its harvests (khayrāt) abundant, so these areas of it were brought into cultivation again. Al-Jarmūzī continues,

The increase in the (supply) of water goes on up till the present, increasing each year and the number of the said

63 The whole of this sentence is rather strange in the Arabic.
64 Duʿāfāʾ, presumably non-tribal cultivators.
Ghayl Abi Ṭalib

This ghayl is described as irrigating up to al-Rawdah, its source being east of Shuṭub below the village of al-Ḥijāf. Tūḥtaṭāni b. Ayyūb brought it forth. When the rule (daulah) and Caliphate passed to the Imām al-Manṣūr b. ʿAlī b. Muhammad (1006-29/1598-1620) he assigned it to his son Abū Ṭalib Ahmad b. al-Qāsim, and he made it a waqf to the estates in Darb al-Qāsim in al-Rawdah, al-Ḥijāf, Bīr Zayd, and some for the Jāmī’ Mosque of al-Rawdah. This ghayl still continues (to flow) up to now (1926) but it is sometimes strong, sometimes weak.72

Zabārah states73 that he has seen a writing (muḥarrar) of ‘Alī Muṣṭafā dated 1196/1782, the contents of which pose something of a problem to us here. In this, ‘Alī Muṣṭafā notes that he bought half of the Ghayl al-Ḥusayn b. al-Muʿayyad called Ghayl al-Sadd, the well known ghayl north (qibla) of the city of al-Mansūr7 from its owners (mustaḥfa), the Bayt Abī Ṭalib, its qarar (place where water rests, probably the source or perhaps the dam itself), its possessed water-courses (majāri namūḏākh) along with the rights ensuing to them in shar- andurf-custom, and that, after repairing it and bringing it forth, he constituted it a waqf muḥabbat74 firstly for himself, then for his children and their male and female children. . . . If his posterity from the Yemen, al-Ḥaramayn and Damascus become extinct the revenues of the waqf ghallāt al-mawqūf) are to be applied in the interests (li-maḍāḥ) of the Jāmī’ Kabir in San`ā. He assigned the guardianship (wafaliyāt) over it to himself so long as he lives, then to the uprightness of his children. If they become extinct and it goes to the Jāmī’ Mosque the guardianship will go to the Imām al-Mīhrāb (i.e. the Imām al-Salāḥ) in the Jāmī’.

It was Ghayl al-Sadd which was, as al-Jarmūzī has informed us, developed by ‘Īz al-Islām about the middle of the 11th/12th century, but the name Ghayl al-Ḥusayn b. al-Muʿayyad suggests the Imām al-Manṣūr . . al-Qāsim b. al-Muʿayyad (1127-31/1716-20), and this in turn suggests that the name Ghayl al-Manṣūr, into which today Ghayl al-Ḥusayn b. al-Muʿayyad flows, is another appellation for the same ghayl. On the other hand the Abū Ṭalib house is not stated to have owned this ghayl, but only the ghayl called after its house. For the moment therefore it is uncertain to which ghayl this passage refers.

The Old San`ā’-al-Rawdah Road

Only those parts of this old road which, since they were exposed to the action of floods, had to be built or paved, are still clearly visible today. As the road must bear some relationship in its siting to the ghayl it is relevant to describe its course in case it undergoes alteration in coming developments.

The road started at Bab Shaṭub/Shuṭub following the same route as the modern one for about 800m, then it turned gently towards the Sīlḥār bed and along its eastern bank. The road touches a small group of old houses around a very old well—old rusted dressed stones are re-used in the walls of these houses—then goes on to Qaryat Dūr and Qaryat al-Daijī. Immediately after the last named village is preserved quite a long stretch of paved road and a small bridge, the width of the inner span being 2.65m
The Ghayls of San`ā’

and the inner height to the key 1.40m. The arch is today formed by two courses of stone of a thickness of 0.42m; the width of the bridge from face to face is 3.90m. The built and paved road is preserved for a length of 380m, its width being from 3.50 to 5.30m.

Two other small portions of the paved road are preserved near the village of al-Jirāf. It would be interesting to make a topographic survey with cross-sections, of the area near al-Jirāf where the Sā’ilah, road and channel run parallel and very close to one another. In all probability the road may have been built and paved with huge stones only where it was necessary to do this, so those parts visible are likely to be also the only sections so constructed existing in olden days.

The date of this road is so far unknown. It seems at least several hundred years old, while the bridge was probably re-built in more recent times.

Ghayls to the north (left) and south of San‘ā’. 
Chapter 3
Calendars, the Time of Day and Mathematical Astronomy

Calendars

In the Yemen there is a variety of calendars used in the countryside varying much from region to region, but all based on the observation of stars. This has given rise to a not inconsiderable literature showing the correspondences between calendars, and of almanacs which specify the appropriate agricultural labours to be undertaken in their seasons.

The hīrah year which in this book is given along with the corresponding date in the Christian era is of course common to all regions for official and religious purposes. Being a lunar year it is not used for dating seasonal events and operations.

Instead the Byzantine/Greek months (al-shuhûr al-Rûmiyyah) are in common use in the north and even as far south as Lahej on the Aden side of the border. Al-Hamdâni dates agricultural operations such as sowing or harvesting by this system which, writing about the very early 4th/10th century, he treats as well as the Aden side of the border. Al-Hamdâni dates agricultural operations such as sowing or harvesting by this system which, writing about the very early 4th/10th century, he treats as well as

Rossi confirms that San‘ā‘ distinguishes four seasons of the year - Shí‘ih winter, Rabī‘ spring, Sayf summer, and Kharîf autumn. A Ms. source says that winter begins on 24 Aylûl which should be 6 October, spring on 24 Kânûn, summer on 24 Adhâr, and autumn on 24 Hazirân, but I have not checked to see if these are the accepted dates in present day San‘ā‘ though it is likely. For the peasants of the San‘ā‘ plain Rossi gives Qiyâd the late winter harvest, Dihâ‘ the harvest of spring-summer, Allân the season of rains, and Surâb the autumn harvest. Al-Yahr is a hot period falling about late May, June and July—it would appear to vary in its incidence: Sabt al-Subûtū in the northern Yemen is said to be the Saturday, falling in October, which marks the beginning of winter.

The past year, says Qâdi Ismail, is called al-‘ām among the tribes of Dhamâr and Yarîm, and the year before it gabl al-‘ãm. In everyday speech people naturally date by events, such as before or after the ‘Id, either of the two Feasts, but especially by al-‘Id al-Kabîr, the Feast of the Sacrifices, etc.

It would be possible to say much more about calendars in the

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1 Al-Hamîdâni, Sîfah, ed. D. H. Müller, 199.
2 In Muḥammad Haydarâh’s almanacs published at Ta‘izz, but this may not be true for other parts of the Yemen.
4 L’Arabo parlato, 151.
5 This for Rossi’s ‘Alamî.
Yemen and Ṣan`ā' district in particular, as also, the popular wisdom and lore connected with them. A knowledge of them is essential to any enquiry into the life of the villages surrounding Ṣan`ā', and even into life in Ṣan`ā' itself.

In Ṣan`ā' Arab time is commonly used, though persons and institutions dealing with foreigners also use the western reckoning. Thus western 6 a.m. is 1 o'clock and 12 noon 6 o'clock Arab time. The Arab day commences at 6 p.m. Western time, so that, e.g., an Arab referring to the evening of Friday means a period commencing at our 6 p.m. on Thursday. The Muslim calendar is therefore reckoned by nights, but the Rūmī calendar on the contrary by days, since it is the daytime which starts first.

The Times of Day in the Upper Yemen

In olden times the Yemeni did not use a watch, but distinguished the various times of day by names of their own. The list of these below was provided by Qadi Isma`l. Though, as elsewhere in the Peninsula, Arab time is ordinarily in use, in the larger towns of the Yemen concessions have been made to European time reckoning.

1) Sharqat al-shams or faḍḥāhāt al-sams (Class. al-shurūq), sun-rise.
2) Khurjat ghanam or, with the tribes, masrah qurash, the going out (to pasture) of the sheep-and-goats, or the morning departure of cattle/beasts. Waqī` al-`ajīn, kneading time (for the breakfast bread), with women.
Class. al-bušir.
3) Ḥamya` hams, or ḥamyat al-kilāb, or simply ḥamyah (Ṣan`ā`), the warmth of the sun, or tarbat shams, when the sun's rays fall on the earth straight down. Class. al-ḥudūww.
4) Rabbat shams (Class. al-ḥudū), high morning, from about 9 to after 11 a.m., used by the tribes particularly. Waqī` waqī` al-wāqī`, (Class. al-ḥurayrīh, Ṣan`ā`, al-lasyah; Dhamar—firewood (time). Dhamar—firewood (time).
5) Waqī` al-wagdah/al-wagid (Class. al-hājirah); San`ā`, al-lasyah; 9 to after 11 a.m., used by the tribes particularly.
6) Waqī` al-`ajīn, kneading time (for the breakfast bread), with women.
Class. al-ṣumū`. 10) Khurjat al-zulq, the beating of the drum. The verb massa, sleeping.
11) Qabl al-maghrib (Class. al-ghurūb), before sunset, setting of the sun.
12) Bā`d al-maghrib (Class. al-shafā`), after sunset.
13) Qabl al-maghrib (Class. al-shafā`), after sunset.
14) Ḥisāb (Class. al-ghuṣayn), evening, or Ṣalāt al-`ishā`, evening prayer.
15) Bā`d al-`ishā`, or al-dān, after evening, or, the near.
16) Darbat al-marfa`, or al-tamīsīyah (time equivalent to Class. al-sulṭah), the beating of the drum. The verb marṣa, yināsī, obviously to be derived from the Arabic marṣ, evening, means to beat the drums (tubūl) at 3 o'clock Arabic time, i.e. 9 p.m. This is to announce the curfew which appears to be an ancient institution and to be indicated in a passage of al-Rāzi's 18 history.
17) Ḥājār (Class. al-ṣafā), quiet, stillness of people and sleeping.
18) Nusa al-layl (Class. al-sulṭah), middle of the night.
19) Ghdā Bahmad, or suhīr, or al-tasbah bih al-sulṭah (Class. al-sulṭah); Ramadan breakfast, breakfast, or, the first tasbihah, 19 collect.
20) Al-tasbihat al-thānīyah (Class. al-subh) or Al-tasbihat al-thānīyah (Class. al-subh), the second tasbihah, collect.
21) Al-ṣan`ah, or al-tasbihat al-θālithah, the third collect. At time of Class. al-sahar, before daybreak.
22) Al-faṣr, dawn.
23) Dā`a, or dā`a` salām, or ghabbat (Class. al-sul`) light before sun-rise, of last shadows of the night, etc.
24) Ziqziqah, or daw` barah (al-sabdh), bird-chirping 20 (sparrow-fart?), the light of a veiled woman uncovering her face (kashf daw` sif` `an wajhi-hā). Festivals

`Id al-Mawlid al-Nabawiyy, the Prophet's birthday—12 Rabi` I.
`Id al-Nasr, the Victory Festival, when Imam Ahmad defeated `Abdullah al-Wazir 22 28 July 20 2 27.
`Id al-Jum`at al-Sā`in, when the people of San`ā` accepted Islam, after which all the Yemen followed them—First Friday of Rajab.
Al-`Id al-Ṣaghir/I`d al-Fitr, the Lesser Festival—Shawwāl.

7 This is evident from the Ms. of which I have a photocopy through the kindness of the Shaykh Muhammad Zayd, containing much agricultural material, notably a poem of Ḥanūn b. Ḥāshim al-Afḍari. This Ms. of much contents I have under examination at present. The Islamic calendar also has numerous sayings and laws connected with it, e.g., al-ṣawār marmhūmah ma di yik̲ĥ̲?ad, the ten days of Dhu`l-Qa`dah are fortunate even if they fall in winds. They are fortunate (marhmūmah = khaṣṣyā`) because things for the 'Id are plentiful.
8 Paraphrased as waqī` sharī`-hā. One says Mīn ayn faḍḥāhā = ashraṣṣāq, imperfect ashraṣṣāq.
9 Ḥāmya` hams, or ḥamyat al-kilāb, or simply ḥamyah (Ṣan`ā`), the warmth of the sun, or ṭarbat shams, when the sun's rays fall on the earth straight down. Class. al-ḥudūww.
10 Between Salāt al-Zawád and al-`Aṣr.
11 A portion of the first part of the night (Lane).
12 A portion of the first part of the night.
13 See p. 169 seq.
14 About now in Ramadan, Iftār al-sā`im, faster's breaking his fast.
15 Class. `atamah, first third of the night after the disappearance of al-shafā`. Cf. p. 148a, n. 46. The haras al-layl assemble and chant zawmall.
16 About now in Ramadan, Iftār al-sā`im, faster's breaking his fast.
17 Fahmā, the intense dark of the night.
18 See p. 169a, n. 46. The haras al-layl assemble and chant zawmall.
19 "Qaḥwah ghadā`, lunch coffee-time, with women.
20 "Qaḥwah ghadā`, lunch coffee-time, with women.
21 No longer celebrated of course.
22 A strange expression is reported of San`āni women not of the upper classes—of one of these would say, Shair `id tidmī` all-ball, i.e., "A woman she intends to visit; or she might mention the name of the woman, woman she intends to visit; or she might mention the name of the woman, or, between the two prayers, or,
**Mathematical Astronomy in Medieval Yemen**

There has been an active tradition in mathematical astronomy in the Yemen from the 4th/10th century down to the present century. This tradition is attested by several dozen medieval astronomical manuscripts of Yemeni provenance that have been located in the past few years in various libraries in Europe and the Near East. The scope of the surviving Yemeni astronomical writings suggests that other works were compiled by the astronomers of medieval Yemen that are now no longer extant.

The Yemeni tradition of mathematical astronomy is quite distinct from the tradition of folk astronomy attested in the Yemeni almanacs described above. This folk astronomy relates the seasons, whose passage is determined by the progress of the sun along the ecliptic, to agricultural and meteorological patterns. Medieval mathematical astronomy, on the other hand, was concerned with such topics as the determination of the positions of the sun, moon, planets, and the fixed stars; the prediction of planetary conjunctions, eclipses, and visibility of the lunar crescent; timekeeping by the sun and stars; and the computation of horoscopes and celestial configurations with astrological significance. The Islamic tradition of mathematical astronomy was based on the earlier traditions of Greek, Sasanian, and Indian astronomy, rather than the primitive folk astronomy of the Arabian Peninsula. Since only a very small fraction of the works compiled by Muslim astronomers is known in medieval Europe, most of the vast corpus of Islamic astronomical literature has only become known in the West during the past 150 years, as a result of the labours of orientalists working in the libraries where this heritage is in part preserved. This literature includes zijs, that is, astronomical handbooks containing extensive tables and instructions for solving the standard problems confronting the medieval astronomer; tables for timekeeping by the sun and stars and for regulating the times of prayer, which in Islam are astronomically defined; treatises on mathematics; treatises on astrology; and treatises on a wide range of other related topics.

The earliest Yemeni astronomer on whom we have some reliable information is the celebrated late 4th/10th century geographer al-Hamdâni. He compiled a zij which was used in the Yemen at least until the 7th/13th century. Unfortunately this zij is no longer extant, but we know from a surviving fragment of al-Hamdâni's treatise on mathematical astrology that he was familiar with the earlier zij of the astronomer of Abbasîd Iraq. Most of these works are likewise lost, and it is a complicated task for the historian of Islamic astronomy to gather information on these works from such valuable sources as al-Hamdâni's chapter in his treatise on astrology dealing specifically with the different opinions of his predecessors.

Under the Rasûlid Sultans there was considerable activity in astronomy in the Yemen, some of which was conducted by the Sultans themselves. The two astronomers al-Fârisi and al-Kawâshi were apparently sponsored by the Sultan al-Mu`ayyad. Al-Fârisi prepared a zij containing tables for the Yemen, based on a 6th/12th century Iraq zij, and al-Kawâshi prepared a zij with tables specifically for Aden and Ta`izz, based mainly on a contemporary Egyptian zij. The Sultan al-Ashraf himself compiled an extensive treatise on astrolabes and sundials, displaying his knowledge of certain earlier Andalusian and Egyptian works on these instruments. He compiled new tables for drawing the curves on astrolabes and sundials, computing these tables for the latitudes of the major cities of the Yemen. One of the astrolabes made by al-Ashraf with the aid of these tables is now preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Al-Ashraf also compiled an extensive treatise on astrology, in which he included astrological tables computed specifically for the latitude of San`â'.

The Yemeni astronomer Abu l-`Uqûl worked for the Sultan al-Mu`ayyad. He compiled a zij based on one of the zijes of the 4th/10th century Cairo astronomer Ibn Yünus, and included tables computed specifically for the latitudes of Aden, Ta`izz, Zabid, and San`â'. Greater originality is displayed in the corpus of tables for timekeeping attributed to Abu l-`Uqûl. These tables for timekeeping by the sun and stars, computed for the latitude of Ta`izz, constitute the largest known corpus of such tables compiled for any Islamic city during the medieval period, being considerably more extensive than the corresponding tables that were prepared for such centres of astronomy as Cairo and Damascus. In fact, the Ta`izz corpus contains over one hundred thousand entries, but it is difficult to estimate the extent to which these tables were used in later centuries since they survive in only two manuscripts, whereas literally dozens of manuscripts of the Cairo and Damascus tables survive. No comparable corpus of tables for timekeeping appears to have been compiled for San`â'.

Each year almanacs and ephemeredes were prepared for the Yemeni Sultans by their astronomers. These contained extensive calendrical and astrological information for the year in question, as well as tables of the positions of the sun, moon, and planets for each day of the year. Two of these survive in the manuscript sources, both now preserved in the Egyptian National Library in Cairo. The first was prepared for San`â', 127/1326-7, and the second for Ta`izz, 808/1405-6.

The Sultan al-Afdal compiled an extensive compendium of astronomical treatises and tables, most of which were simply lifted from earlier Egyptian, Syrian, and Yemeni sources. Such a compendium is of considerable interest to historians of science for the information it contains on earlier works that are no longer extant in their original form. Various other Yemeni works of an eclectic nature survive either complete or in fragmentary form in the manuscript sources and remain to be properly studied, including zij for San`â', Zabid, and Ta`izz. The last Yemeni zij tables were compiled for San`â' in the 11th/mid 17th century by the brothers al-Hasan and Abdullâh al-Sarhî, relying entirely on earlier Yemeni zij. In San`â' today there is still a small group of elderly people who have received instruction on the zij of the brothers al-Sarhî.

Besides this sophisticated tradition of mathematical astronomy the Yemeni astronomers maintained an interest in traditional folk astronomy and simple timekeeping using shadow lengths by day and the lunar mansions by night. Thus, for example, the 7th/13th century astronomer al-Fârisi wrote a treatise on these two topics as well as his zij. In the courtyard of the mosque of al-Jadid north of Ta`izz there is a stone gnomon about the height of a man, with which the time of day could be reckoned using the shadow length.

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22 On this day Imám Yahyyä used to go out to `Ayn al-Fagih or Khaza' in Sultans themselves. The two astronomers al-Fârisi and al-Kawâshi were apparently sponsored by the Sultan al-Muzaffar.

simple rules originally adopted from Indian astronomy, and the
time of the midday and afternoon prayers, both defined in terms
of shadow lengths, could also be regulated. In medieval Yemeni
almanacs simple tables were sometimes given for reckoning time
of night by the lunar mansions.

In the Yemen, as elsewhere in the Islamic world, mathematical
astronomy declined from about the 9th/15th century onwards.
The works of the early Yemeni astronomers were thereafter
forgotten and in some cases lost. Fortunately, enough Yemeni
manuscripts survive in libraries in Europe and the Near East
to enable us to document a substantial part of this tradition for
the first time.
Chapter 4
Pre-Islamic Ṣan‘ā’

Continuous occupation of a site often makes it impossible to retrieve the archaeological record of its earliest phase, and one is forced to rely on written records, which ordinarily testify to it only as an already established habitation site; and this is the case with Ṣan‘ā’. However, situated as it is at an important road junction, where the north-south route along the spine of the Yemen is met by one of the principal routes from Ma‘rib up into the highlands of northern Yemen, it is likely to have been an occupied site from very early times. Such inscriptions evidence as we have for Ṣan‘ā’ and its palace of Ghamdān (famous in the lore of Islamic times), clusters in the third century A.D. (see below), which appears to have been the period when the location enjoyed particular significance. In order to appraise this, some brief account must be given of earlier periods.

Ṣab‘a—or the Sabaeans—is the name of a community who, basically, were ‘owners of the town of Ma‘rib and its agricultural lands’ (RES 39102). But already before the Christian era, Sabean domination had extended over some other neighbouring areas: the oases on the edge of the desert north of Ma‘rib; several cantons: first Ḥāshid, situated in Ḥāshid Sīlah and dominated by the aristocratic clan of the Banū Ḥāshid; secondly Humlān in the hilly country west of the Ṣan‘ā’ plain, dominated by the Banū Ḥāshid whose principal centre seems to have been at Ḥāshid (north west of Ṣan‘ā’ on a route leading to ‘Amrān); thirdly Ḥajārī, the leading clan was the Banū Sūkhaym, centred on the town of Shibām close to modern al-Ghirās. Some 35 km south east of Ṣan‘ā’ is the massive Jabal Kanīn, and the valleys to the north of this belonged to another influential clan, the Banū Jurat, who were not Ta‘lab worshippers and hence not part of Ṣan‘ā’.

Von Wissmann writes1 that Ṣan‘ā’ was ‘apparently’ the northern outpost of Jurat territory, his map2 makes the Jurat frontier run northwards from the Yislih pass approximately along the line of the modern motor road from Ṣan‘ā’ to Dhamār, but then curve round the west and north of Ṣan‘ā’, cutting off Ṣan‘ā’ from the village of Shu‘ub only 5 km northwards; and Shu‘ub was unmistakeably part of Ṣan‘ā’, since it participated in the Ta‘lab cult. Such a geographical frontier seems extremely artificial and improbable.

An unpublished text in the Aden Museum3 reveals that there was a sanctuary named Awā outside Ṣan‘ā’, parallel to the sanctuary of Awā outside Ma‘rib; the duplication of the name need cause no surprise since there was yet another of the same name at Shibām—Kawkabān. Both the latter and the Ma‘rib shrines were of the Sabaeans national deity ‘LMQH, and the one at Ṣan‘ā’ probably was as well. It could even be that Ṣan‘ā’ was founded as a national, non-tribal enclave (like Washington D.C. in the USA).

During the first three centuries A.D., Ṣam‘ay was subdivided into three

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*Epigraphic References
CIH = Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum, pars 4, inscriptiones Himyariticas continet.
RES = Repertoire d'Epigraphie semiotique.
Epigraphic names and technical terms are given in 'arabicized' form, though the ancient pronunciation was in some cases probably substantially different.

1 Sabean influence in the oases and the towns of the Jawf is attested by a range of early inscriptions recording ‘walling’ of the towns; in the Qā‘ al-Bawn by the inscription Rathjens 42 (C. Rathjens, Sabaeica, Teil III, herausg. von M. Hûlter, Hamburg, 1966).
2 The word in itself means simply ‘town’, but for its use as a toponym compare the modern place-name al-Ahjur.
3 Zur Geschichte und Landeskunde vom Altraddahen, Wien 1964, 367.
4 Ibid., Abb. 17 facing p. 294.
5 Publication is anticipated in the forthcoming second volume of the Corpus des inscriptions et antiquités sud-arabes.
It has hitherto been almost universally accepted that Raydân in this title means the hill-fortress of that name close to Ṣaḥaf (south east of Yarim) in Himyarite territory. I have elsewhere voiced doubts about this. Glaser records that there had been an ancient fortress called Raydân just outside Vommissmann's attacks to explain this away by the supposition that the south gate might have been called 'the Raydân gate' simply because the road towards Yarim and Ṣaḥaf started from there, and that this has given rise to what he calls the 'legend' of a second Raydân outside Ṣanʿâ'. But is it just an unfounded legend? Once again, no definitive answer is possible at present. One thing that is certain is that the kings of the Sabaeans and of Raydân consistently stress Ṣanʿâ' and its palace of Ghumdân as a dynastic headquarters on a parallel with Ma'rib and its palace of Silhîn. In the religious sphere, the national cult of the Sabaeans remained, down to the beginning of the fourth century A.D., firmly rooted in Ḳurnah's shrine at Awâ near Ma'rib. But in the political sphere, from the end of the second century or at any rate early in the third, Ma'rib and Ṣanʿâ' played parallel roles.

There are three texts in which Silhîn and Ghumdân are bracketed very closely together: Ja 577, on which see further below; NNAG 12 tells us that Ilmûqah showed favour to king Sha'ar Awtar 'and the bayt [singular!] Silhîn and Ghumdân', in Er. 18 thanks are expressed for 'the royal installation and accession of Ilıshara' Yâjdîb and his brother Ya'zal Bayyin, kings of the Sabaeans and of Raydân, in the bayt Silhîn and Ghumdân'. How to interpret bayt in these contexts is puzzling. J. Ryckmans renders it in the former instance as 'dynasty', but however is not so easy to accept in the second instance. But these texts at all events show us Silhîn and Ghumdân enjoying an equality of status as royal dynastic centres.

Normally, Ṣanʿâ' is designated simply a 'town' (hajar). But Ja 577/717 has an interesting phrase, referring to 'the two mahram's and the town, Ma'rib and Ṣanʿâ' and Nışhâ'm' According to the stylistic principles of the inscriptions, this certainly implies that Nîshq (in the Wâdî Jawf) was a town and nothing more, whereas Ma'rib and Ṣanʿâ' are being each assigned a distinctive rank as a mahram. This cannot here mean a religious shrine, since Ma'rib was not per se a cult centre, the religious cult there being served at Awâ some distance away from the town; it must have a more general sense, of a place to which access is prohibited or restricted, no matter whether for religious or for other reasons. Ja 577 indicates that the towns of Ma'rib and Ṣanʿâ' were hedged about with a special awesomeness derived from their being royal residences, whereas Nîshq was not, in spite of being a place of considerable importance in the Sabaeân federation.

In another text (Ja 647) we hear of certain 'army lands' (araḏâ' al-khamîs) situated at Ma'rib, Ṣanʿâ', Nîshq and Nîshâ'm (the last named being close to Nîshq). A plausible guess is that these are agricultural areas set aside for growing crops used to provide rations for the troops, as was the case in 'Abbasîd Iraq with an area south east of Samarra irrigated by a canal which was called Abu 'l-Jund 'father of the troops'.

It is indeed as a military centre that Ṣanʿâ' emerges, alongside its dynastic role, most clearly in the texts. Just as Ma'rib was the headquarters for campaigns eastward against Ma'dramma and northward against the bedouin, so Ṣanʿâ' was the headquarters for campaigns southwards against the Himyarites and westward against the Red Sea coastal areas. In the campaigns southwards and westwards it was Ṣanʿâ' that the Sabaean troops used as their base of operations (Ja 575, 576); to Ṣanʿâ' they returned in triumph (Ja 574, 576, 577); in Ṣanʿâ' they received peace missions (Ja 574) and hostages (Ja 616); at Rûbâ'bûb (probably an open assembly space outside the town) honours were handed out to victorious leaders (Ja 629). In one instance (Ja 644), Ma'rib itself had fallen into the hands of insurgents having the support of the Banû Shaddâd of Khwâlîn, and the lord of Ghumân (which lies between Ṣanʿâ' and the Shaddâd area) had to move back to Ṣanʿâ' in order to collect a force with which to subdue the Banû Shaddâd. In another case (Ja 576), when the campaign was against the Himyarites, the Sabaean troops had to move up from Ma'rib to Ṣanʿâ' before launching their campaign. It can also be remarked that the name Ṣanʿâ' itself means 'well fortified', since in the Sabaeân language derivatives of the root *ṣîr are (with a solitary exception where the meaning is uncertain) exclusively associated with military defensibility.

As I have said above, it is in the third century A.D. that the name Ṣanʿâ' emerges into prominence, though the site may have existed earlier under another name. The internal chronology of that century is a complex problem; but if one follows J. Ryckmans, the kings mentioned in connection with Ṣanʿâ' and Ghumdân would be arranged as follows:

(a) the joint kings Sa'adshams Astra' and his son Marthad Yuhâhmîd at the beginning of the century (Ja 629).
(b) slightly later than the above, a certain Yuhâqîm, not himself a king, but son of king Dhamar'alî Dharîh (Ja 644).
(c) the joint kings Ilhshara' Yâjdîb and his brother Ya'zal Bayyin about the middle of the century (Ja 574, 575, 576, 577, Er 18, CIH 314).
(d) also somewhere about the middle of the century, Sha'ar Awtar (NNAG 12).
(e) perhaps in the third quarter of the century, Nashâ'karîb Ya'man Yuhârîh, 'son' and successor of the brothers (Ja 616).
(f) the joint kings Yusîr Yuhârn'îm and his son Shammar Yuhârîsh, who present a problem: Ryckmans distinguishes two pairs of kings so named, one slightly anterior to the brothers (c), the other following after Nashâ'karîb, and at the end of the century. It is not at present possible to determine which pair (if there were indeed two pairs) is mentioned in Ja 647.

It is clear from this statistic that the reign of the brother kings Ilhshara' and Ya'zal (c) was the time when the importance of Ṣanʿâ' in the Sabaeân state was at its peak. This is in line with Muslim sources, which name Ilhshara' as the builder of Ghumdân. This tradition has a direct bearing on our chronological problems, since it precludes us from placing Sha'ar Awtar, in whose reign Ghumdân already existed (NNAG 12), earlier than the reign of the brothers Ilhshara' and Ya'zal.

All the texts which have been discussed come from the temple of Awâ, and were intended to record, and explain the reasons for, offerings of votive statuettes to the national deity in gratitude for successes achieved and in hope of a continuance of divine favour. But in the course of the fourth century A.D. the ancient polytheistic cults were swept away and replaced by a monotheistic type of belief. In consequence, the temple of Ilmûqah at Awâ was and was not.

13 The 'Himyarite Problem', Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, V, 1975, 1-7. Epigraphic evidence for it is weak, and the inscriptions show no mention of the title kings of the Himyarites before the sixth century A.D. The sole reason for this identification lies in the reference in the Greek Periplous Maris Erythraei to a Charibael, 'king of the Himyarites [sic] and of the Sabaeans', as having his royal residence at afar.
14 Professor Serjeant writes to me that 'a traditional interpretation makes the name refer to the town's manufactures'; but this is certainly a (relatively) modern interpretation based on the normal meaning of the root in Arabic, whereas the meaning in Sabaean was quite different.
15 Chronologie des rois de Saba et du Raydân', Oriens Antiquus, III, 1964, 263.
16 For the royal residence at afar, see e.g. CIH 429/10 (in the form Ghundân) and Er 18.
17 The Ceremonial of the Sabaeans, 13 the kings mentioned in connection with Ṣanʿâ' and Ghumdân.
18 E.g. Yaqût, Dāhidã', under entry Ghumdân.
19 Unless, that is, the Ilhshara' who built Ghumdân was a previous king of that name, father of the Sa'dshams mentioned under (a); but this is less likely, given the special clustering of texts mentioning Ṣanʿâ' under the latter Ilhshara'.
an'a’—An Arabian Islamic City

abandoned, and the sequence of records there, of such immense value for our knowledge of the preceding centuries, ceases. There is no epigraphic mention of San’a’ or Ghumdân throughout the fourth to sixth centuries. Besides the cessation of the Awâ records, there is a political reason for this: power had shifted into the hands of a Himyarite dynasty established at Zafâr (the Tubba’ kings of the Islamic sources), whose realm embraced the whole south west corner of the Peninsula, so that the lands of the older Sabaean federation became merely one province of that extended realm. During that period, San’a’ must have suffered a temporary eclipse of its importance.

At the same time, there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the Islamic tradition that the Christian king Abrahah (mid-sixth century) built a church at San’a’, thus, attesting a continuing importance for the town. In fact, some foundations were recently found east of the Great Mosque, which Dr P. Costa thought may belong to the apse of a church. About the final destruction of Ghumdân the traditions are contradictory: Ṭabari17 says that this happened during the Abyssinian invasion of the early sixth century; whereas Hamdâni18 asserts that Ghumdân continued in use until the time of the Caliph ‘Uthmân.


16 Ṭabari, Annales, ed. de Goeje, I, 934.
17 Ibid., I, 928.
Chapter 5

Şan‘ā’ the ‘Protected’, Hijrah

In the pre-Islamic inscriptions, as already seen, Şan‘ā’ is designated as a hajar, defined as a qaryâh, i.e. village, town, in Ḥimyar dialect by al-Ḥamdânî, but by Nashwân. The Sasanian Lord of San‘ā’, Bâdhân, and arrogated to the Islamic šaīkhīs the sacred enclaves, haram and hawtah,* have been discussed in earlier writings, as also the little known but undoubtedly ancient Yemeni institution called hijrah* that resembles them in a number of respects. The question here is whether, before Islam, Şan‘ā’ had something of the nature of the haram of Mecca. I am persuaded that it had, in view of the evidence to this effect marshalled below, but the Meccan haram and Ḥaḍrami hawtah flourished in territories and with societies closely similar—whereas the Yemen is endowed with a natural richness, and was in antiquity more complex and culturally advanced than either. Caution is therefore necessary in drawing parallels.

To digress briefly before launching into this topic, it is suggested that the ‘army lands’ (aradât al-khamis) (p.37b) may have been kept inviolate. It is a pity so few inscriptions relating to San‘â’ have, as yet, come to light, but both terms, hajar and mahram, are full of import for understanding the true status of Şan‘ā’ before and after Islam.

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San`â’—An Arabian Islamic City

A land of power/authority; he errs who would compare it to another city.

Abd al-Malik said, ‘That is a village upon which is the wrath of God—what of you are beyond San`â’?’ So he told him, and ‘Abd al-Malik said, ‘Well, that is a preserved gasabah (mahfûzah)—what of you are beyond San`â’?’

There was evidently some controversy, possibly in the city itself, about its status, for al-Râzî20 quotes what must be the gist of an argument. ‘If anyone says, “How can San`â’ be preserved (mahfûzah) as has been narrated when it has been violated (ubihat) numerous times, that having been witnessed of those who wished to do to it like al-Fadl al-Qarmatî when he violated it on behalf of the Qarmatians, driving out its inhabitants and plundering its properties? This demonstrates that the narration (risâyah) that it is preserved is not authentic!”’ (it may be answered that) Medina was also violated and Mecca was also violated as it (Medina) was.

Protection by Allah of a Karam or hawtah by means supernatural goes concurrently with protection of it by the surrounding tribes that have entered into an agreement with the Lord, or Lords, of the enclave to maintain its inviolability internally by the prohibition of any warlike action or aggression within its boundaries, and to defend it from external aggression.23

A verse of al-Râzî’s Urjûzah,24 probably composed in the 3rd/9th century, names San`â’ as protectors in those days, in time should it be befal her the fear: ‘Of foe malevolent perturb her—then—two tribes straightway arise in her defence, Qahtân and, of Sâ`arân, the free tribesmen.25 That is to say that the Banû Shihâb, the large tribal confederation of Hadûr, west of San`â’, and the Abna’ of mixed Persian and Arab descent, but free tribesmen (ajyâr)—the term is used in earlier times of the same class at Najrân, settled in San`â’ (but also in Dhamar etc.) will unite (presumably) to defend the city. Under the heading of towns (qarî) of which the population is split into two opposing parts, Hamdâni26 includes San`â’ as divided between the Shihiyâyûn and the Abna’. ‘Whoever is affiliated to Nizân (tanazzar) there enters with the Abna’, and the people of the town (balad) and those affiliated to Qahtân (enter) with the Banû Shihâb.’ The Abna’ would seem to have affiliated to the northern Arabs by joining the Prophet Muhammad. To judge however by the mixed speech of the city its population was varied. ‘Among the people of San`â’ are the vestigates of pure Arabic (al-`Arabiyah al-mahfûzah) and fragments (subadh) of the speech of Himyar. The town of San`â’ is of various languages and dialects (lughât wa-lahajât)—each area (buq `ah) has a lughah (dialect/language), and anyone near Shûb’ differs from the lot.’27

Sufficient indication has been given by the few pre-Islamic inscriptions available, and early Arabic sources, of San`â’ special status. Arabic authors also speak of San`â’ al-mahmiyyah bilah, San`â’ the protected by God, but then they also refer to most towns, perhaps even smaller places, as al-mahfûzâh with the same sense, and this is no doubt merely a convention.

It is stated by various Yemeni men of learning we have consulted that San`â’ is mudhjarah, and this introduces a much wider concept of its standing than the rather bald allusion earlier sources make to it as mahram, himâ, hawtah, or mahfûzah. The Yemenite hijrah must be linked with the Prophet’s hijrah, as I have suggested, usually rendered as ‘emigration’ (by older Western scholars as ‘flight’), but properly speaking Muhammad’s hijrah chiefly involves the concept of seeking protection with powerful armed tribes, even if hijrah does mean one’s physical transference from one place to another. The following description of the process, given me about 1964 or 1966, should assist to clarify it.

‘Sometimes the tribes agree upon the tâhir of a town—that war should not take place inside it, nor should there be aggressive

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17 At-Akwa’ s reading al-karam al-anis is to be substituted for D. H. Müller’s al-`Arabiyyah as-sulbîah which does not seem to make much sense—the metre accepts either reading.
18 The poet is using the word ma’âlû which would be aware of San`â’ s older name Uzâl. The same root is found in the name of the joint king Ya’zal Bayyin (i.e. Raybu ‘aduww-in haribîl-adghâni Raybu ‘aduww-in haribîl-adghâni Qahtan and, of Sasan, the free tribesmen. 27
19 Ibid, 41, 280.
20 Ibid, 247.
21 Qasabah is in this sense of fortress synonymous with the name San`â’.
22 A village adjoining Hadîdâh of the Banû Shihâb.
23 This is plain from the version of the story given by al-Râzî on p. 263.
24 cf. ‘Haram and hawtah’, 45.
25 Sîyâh, 241.
26 In râba-hã min hadathi ‘l-zamâni râba-hã min hadathi ‘l-zamâni
27 In râba-hã min hadathi ‘l-zamâni râba-hã min hadathi ‘l-zamâni
28 Sîyâh, 124.
29 Ibid, 135.
action (‘tīdā’) against it, even though their enemies be inside it.' It was commented that it would be a shameful act (‘ār) to attack one's foe in a town protected thus.

If we were to suppose that the avenger of blood (yājib al-‘lā’r) discovered a murderer in the protected town (al-madānat al-muhārijarah), it is not proper for him to take the vengeance for his (slain) relative inside it—or else he commits a deceit/ treachery (‘amal khudā-an) and he is obliged to restore the town's inviolability58 (yuḥajjir al-madīnāh), and give it satisfaction in accordance with customary law (‘alā hasb al-‘urf). For the most part, the place of abode of those persons who are protected (muḥārijarin) may be (part) of the protected town (al-madānat al-muhārijarah)—like ‘Āl al-Kibār (in the Kībār), ‘Āl al-Shāhī in Jahlānāh59 and Bayt al-Mutawakallāt at Shahārah.

Basically (fi ‘l-‘asr) ‘Sā‘i is protected by all the tribes (muḥārijar min jamī‘ al-qabāl) that are around it, and it follows (tābi‘ah) Sinjāh basically.62

The Sayyids who gave me this definition of the hijrah and muḥājarāt then remarked, 'The Allegiance of al-‘Aqabah—that is hijrah (Bayt al-‘Aqabah hiya ‘l-hijrah).’ This spontaneous recognition by a highly educated Yemeni Sayyid that the agreement of al-‘Aqabah concluded by his ancestor the Prophet Muhammad with certain of the tribal chiefs (nagibs)63 of Yathrib (later Mединat al-Nabiyyī, the Town of the Prophet) is identical with hijrah is in itself impressive evidence of the sense of continuity of this institution from olden times.

He further commented that the noted Mshāhīyk family, Bayt al-‘A‘mar, are ‘hijrat Hashid, i.e. that Hashid accorded them protection (hajjarū-hum), hijrah-protection being received by inheritance (takhadhū al-hijrah bi-l-tawārīx). They were, he said, ‘uṣūrīn, in the sense of qaṣīm ‘ālim before qaṣīm, before they became Mshāhīyāk. When tribes protect (yuḥajjirū) a Sayyid or some other person, he remains above the level of hostilities (ṣuṣūr khudā-al-khūsūmat) and (in the case of persons of standing of course) he remains as a place of reference when there are quarrels (marjā‘ ‘ind al-khusūmat) and (in the case of persons of standing of course) he remains as a place of reference when there are quarrels (marjā‘ ‘ind al-khsūmat)—in other words he acts as arbiter. Such a person is under no obligation to share in contributions made by the tribe for one purpose or another, known technically as ghurm.

The ghurm is a levy the tribe imposes on itself when it wishes to collect funds for war, or a sum for the payment of the blood-wit (díyah), or for the cost (qimah) of entertaining a guest. Sayyids never paid this darībat al-ghurm, nor the blood-money tax (darībat al-dīyā). The tribe divides it out (yufarrju ‘alā) amongst its members (al-qabāl yuḥjarrah mu‘a‘ aṣīrāh) and when for instance there has been a large entertainment the tribe makes the levy on itself secretly to meet the costs, without the guest knowing anything of this.

The way in which hijraj (pl. hijār) is accorded—mainly to Sayyids, but as in the case of Bayt al-‘A‘mar it can be accorded to others—30—is that the tribes assemble together and decide to grant a certain person protection because of his sanctity, etc. The person so protected does not fight and is not molested. The Sayyids are called hijraj al-qabālīyah and the Sayyid is muḥājar min kulli shi, respected and protected from everything. The tribes are at his disposal and respond to his call (al-qabāl ‘illah tāhī tārīq-dhāt al-hijrah). Should any attack the Sayyids, the Shaykh al-Bilād will say, ‘Dhā hijri-nā wa-ta‘ādā ‘alayh, This is our hijrah and he has attacked him.’ The tribes then rise to fight in defence of him. 'Indeed,' said my friend, 'if I, a Sayyid, am insulted in any way, the tribes will bring aqīa’r sacrificial animals, to me, so as to conciliate me (ṣākhudh minīn ‘l-rāğ). These beasts must be slaughtered at the door of the Sayyid’s house.66

Since he does not fight, the hijraj person can act as an intermediary between the tribes. A tribesman will say, 'I shall go to my protected person (Aṣār ‘ind al-hijraj).’ He means that he will go to him for arbitration and in this context hijraj almost takes on the meaning of arbiter. The men of religion (ṣarīj al-dīn) called hijraj are thus taken as a marjā‘, reference, therefore arbiter, and a gudrah, an example to imitate. The tribesman acting as a soldier does not enter the houses of men of learning (būyū al-lim-ma yaddhū al-qabāl ‘ill al-‘junūd ‘inda-hum), and the men of religion give these troops no maintenance (nasfagah) as the local tribe would have to do. Among the conditions of the people who are hijraj is that 'conscription' (tajmīd) does not apply to them, i.e. when the Imām sent for troops to a tribal district and each house produced a man or two for the army, the hijraj were not obliged to send anyone. The hijraj Sayyids judges also in cases of marriage and divorce or quarrels of any sort. He writes amulets for men called ta‘ūniyāh and for cattle and camels then called ruyyāh. This last function frequently figures in the biographies in Zabārah’s Nashr al-‘urf, and Imām Yahyā was often approached by the tribesman to curse his ailing cow by such means. Whether any ulama would object to the practice I do not know. For this some sort of recompense would certainly be given, but there seems also to have been more or less voluntary gifts called harah made by tribespeople to Sayyids in accordance with a man's means or wishes.

The tribe does nevertheless have some control over the muḥājar person, for it can instruct him to desist from acts of which it disapproves, or 'we shall declare ourselves quit of protection for you (nata‘arrā min al-hijraj lak),' On his part, if the hijraj finds that the tribespeople have not been treating him properly or looking after his defence, etc. he could say, 'I declare you free of your (obligation) to protect (me), A‘ābri-hum min al-hijraj.' This is effected by a proclamation (zākārāh) which a dā‘ūnah or the mu‘āyyīn al-qarāj will go to a high place and declaim. These principles are exactly illustrated in the case of the celebrated supporters of the Prophet Muhammad in the Meccaic period, Abū Bakr, when he absolved his protectors from further obligations to defend him, and in a certain case when one of the

30 This can only be effected by the offender paying a ghurm. The verb in the imperfect I have heard pronounced yighram and ngīram. Hiṣār here applied to the town would mean ju ‘l-tīdā mufarrarah.
31 For Jahlān see Zabārah’s description, ‘Ammām al-Yaman (2), I, Ta‘izz, 1372 H., 36.
32 ‘Sīwāl is the haṣār of Arbāb, their hijraj. When al-Zubayr broke away from Sū‘ān during the Egyptian occupation he wished to assemble both the Royalist and Republican tribes at Sīwāl of Arbāb because this was where they traditionally assembled—Hamdān, Arbāb, Nihm, Sufyān, Hamdān Quraysh etc. See Nashāwī’s description of the hijraj at the beginning of this section.
33 ‘Qāfī fi‘l’tām’ does not agree that Sinjāh had this special link with ‘Sā‘i.
34 The word is still in common use in this sense in the Yemen, in Arbāb for example.
35 For the word ‘sūsūr’ see, yufarrju diya‘-ah, Cl. p. 154 passim. Zuhayr (Shayk Dīnām Zuhayr b. ‘Abd al-Qariyy al-Qādisi, 1381/1964, 17, 26), muṣhabah as well as muṣhabah are paid for by instalments as a ghurmah without abridging blood. Wāhidī, al-Maghzīn, ed. Mansund Jones, London-Oxford, 1966, 628, says, Muhammad
37 This is precisely in the way that al-Khalifī says in his description fi ‘l-khūsmat fi ‘l-khūsmat al-μuḥājīn which I am editing along with the Rosai Manus on tribal law.
Prophet's followers terminated an undertaking of protection given him, he did so publicly at the place of prostration (masjid) in Mecca.

Habashiti confirms what has been said above.

Those people called qubālī are different from the people called hijar because the hijar have a special distinction (mitwah) and honour (namūs) with the tribes (qubālī); they make of them judges (qudāh) to judge between them and they enter into (marriage) relations with them (yunnābuhu-ban). They are the people who come and settle in the country (bilād) and gain possession in it. If they do not care to enter into what the tribes enter—war, raids (muhāshā), or some indemnity which the tribes have to pay (li-zājāh minmā ṣawāwabahu-ban) they have the right (not to do) that. They call them hijar and no-one may ever molest them. If someone does molest them by some wrongful act (ḥikātah), plundering (nāḥb), (offensive) talk (qil), or anything else, the tribes, all of them, rise and start up on account of this thing of theirs ('ala ḥijāt-hu-ban) just as the protector rises up on account of (something done to) his protected person.

That the protected categories, known as hijar, existed in the Ṣan`ā’i district in the pre-Islamic period has been strikingly demonstrated to me by Professor Mahmūd al-Ḡul, quoting inscription Ry. 508 which contains the line subh yāḥiṣmad intendhuma wehrmumau ṭrmbuma, that is to say—the tribes of Hamdān, and their hijar, and their tribes/beduīn Arabs.

It seems to me probable that even when Ṣan`ā’ had an Imaṃ ruling over it, part of the political sub-structure of such power as he wielded must have included some kind of tribal agreement to protect Ṣan`ā’s. If al-Raḍū’s Uṣūlah belongs to the 3rd/9th century, it would tend to indicate that under an ‘Abbasīd governor the integrity of the city was guaranteed by the Abūs and the Bani Shihāb. It may be that when the Yemeni histories are made available to us, further indications of the tribal political relation with Ṣan`ā’ could reveal themselves. How the political inter-relationship of the city and the surrounding tribes was affected by the presence of foreign rulers at Ṣan`ā’ such as the Ayyūbīds, Mamlūks, and the first Ottoman Turks, is impossible. From such evidence as we have up to date, to say, naturally the economic inter-dependence could not be much affected.

Sayyid Muhammad al-Ghaffārī told me that there are seven tribes (qubālī) involved in the taḥbīr or guaranteed inviolability of Ṣan`ā’—Hamdān, which as we have just seen from the inscription above, had hijar before Islam, Bani Ṣ-Ḥarīrī, and Bani Ḥushaysh on the northern side, and on the other sides or districts, Bani Matar, the claim Bāṣṭān al-Shu‘bah as Matari45 territory, Sinbān, Bilād al-Rūs, and Bani Bahālī who are a part of the great Ḥawāīlī conference, and are adjacent to the Ṣan`ā’i mountains. By all of these the city was muḥajjara, a ḥijār guaranteed by most northern tribes, as a Shaḥāf al-Dīn Sayyid told me, so they could sell their produce and buy necessities there—Ṣan`ā’, as he put it, was ḥamad, invite. 38  

Khwālīn are known also to make certain claims to part of the city.

Of course Ṣan`ā’ has been captured and plundered more than a few times since the argument as to its being malīqūṣ of al-Raḍū’s day, and harsh treatment meted out to it by such conquerors as the Tāhirīd ‘Aмир, the Mamlūks and others. After the Ottoman Turkish surrender of Ṣan`ā’ to the Zaylīs in 1038/1629 Ṣan`ā’ in native hands may not have suffered major inroads on its security, but during the second Ottoman Turkish occupation, the customary and tribal inviolateness (al-hājīsah al-turfiyah sea-lqabahūyāsah) was raised, and the tribes used to attack Ṣan`ā’, but without consistency (li-dīn darīmāh). Inside the city Arab opponents of the Turks seemed to have delighted in blowing up buildings.46 Then, as al-Ghaffārī said Ṣan`ā’ was muḥajjara in the eye of Imaṃ Yāḥyā, but Imaṃ Ahmad rent it open (ikhbaraq-hu-ban) when his tribal supporters plundered it after the collapse of the Bayt al-Wazīr take-over in 1948. The tribal sack of Ṣan`ā’ made a lasting impression on the Yemenis and has still not been forgotten.

There were probably written undertakings respecting the taḥbīr of Ṣan`ā’ and al-Ghaffārī was of the opinion that such gawānīn probably still exist, though nobody knows where. We know that the blood-feud between tribes, mutual enemies, does not run in Ṣan`ā’, as in any other protected place. Nor could arms be borne in the town.47 A case was cited to me illustrative of the workings of this institution in Ṣan`ā’. ‘Ībn al-Bukhaytī (of one of the two branches of the Ḥadī Shaykhs) slew his foe, a murderer, inside Ṣan`ā’—it being muḥajjarah. So he was first compelled by the Government to make Ṣan`ā’ respected (taḥbīr) again by paying a fine (gharm) and slaughtering a sacrificial animal (ṣawābah) for the city. The person who commits any wrongful act will “ḥajjar” it—slaughter an ‘ṣuqra’ at it for the town—it must be slaughtered at the Gate of the town.” The beast, a bull, is slaughtered for the town (ṣawābah li-l-bilād), basically it is “for the name of the town (‘ala ism al-bilād).” During the Hamīd al-Dīn Government period it was slaughtered at the Ḥukūmah, Government offices. In 1974 I saw cattle tethered at ‘ṣuqrah outside al-Qasr al-Jummārī (the Republican Palace). It appears however that an ‘ṣuqra’ is not always, in practice, actually slaughtered or hooked.

With the centralisation of power under the Hamīd al-Dīn Imāms, Yāḥyā in particular, the hijrah in general, for there are many hijrah in the Yemen, naturally became greatly weakened as an organisation. Officials of the Imām’s Government replaced the authority of the protected residents of the hijrah, so that, today, there remain far fewer evidences of its functioning than in the previous age. A tribesman, I am informed, who murdered in the hijrah during the days of the Hamīd al-Dīn would be seized and handed over to the civil authority. In addition to paying the blood-wit (diyyah), he would also have to pay a fine called ḥajjar, for having murdered in that place. This fine for the hijrah corresponds exactly to the additional payment made for violating the Hudrami hawātah.49

Unlike other Sayyid houses, it appears that the Ḥamād al-Dīn pronounced ḫudā, as with Class. di’d.

39 Travel in Yemen; an account of Joseph Ḥudey’s journey to Najran in the year 1870 written in San`ā’i Arabic by his guide Ḥusayn Ḥabashiti, ed. D. G. Quilter, Jerusalem, 1941, 31. Cf. for a ṣawābah. Hebrew text, 99. The K. al-Adhā wa-l-lāqūma, op. cit., has 15n, a section, Muṣṭāfah Qubālī b. Ṣinā’ah b. Ḥusayn b. Ṣinā’ah b. Ḥusayn b. Qubālī, a member of the tribe Barīt, of Ṣan`ā’, undertaking to pay a fine for the hijrah of one of his banana baniyyas when he killed a man in Mina (ṣawābah). It means ‘my protection’ with you, my object was thrown down!) your ‘imāmah or jambiyyah on the ground in front of the mushāqah of your order, the people of the house may not marry outside it. I believe however that this rule
40 Cf. hijra in Gloss. dat. 150.
41 People speak of, ‘Ḥamād Bani Ṣafir fi ṣawābah, The law of the Bani Ṣafir in their market.’ They administer the land on which the market is held as it belongs to them—this being an oppressive rule (ḥamād ḥamād), as understood by others. Identical provisos exist with the names Bani ‘Īnā‘, well-known Mashāyikh in al-Qúb al-Dīn province and their market Ṣaq al-Ṣafir and Ṣaq al-Ṣamī‘, and of a law of Ḥubash with their Ṣaq al-Ṣafir (Ṣaq ‘al-Qub al-Din), unpublished. It means they are a law unto themselves.
42 Tr. of Jami` al-ṣunna, 2, p. 1499.
43 Another sort of ‘ṣuqra’ is to put down (when I have seen this happen the object was thrown down) your ‘imāmah or ṣawābah by the ground in front of the person you are involving, and say, ‘Ḥabashiti b. ‘Abd Allah (or ‘Abd Allah b. Ḥabashiti). This is in God’s honour/protection (ṣawābah) with you, my turban/baggage/irris. ‘Ṣib is a most difficult word to render accurately, but see Gloss. dat., 225, with the senses also of power, dignity.
44 Cf. ‘Hamam and bawara’, op. cit., 46.
had no special hijrah of their own, but, in fact Ḥāshid ḥajjarat al-Imām Yahyā—perhaps when his election by the ulema as Imām was supported by the tough paramount chief, Nāṣir b. Mahkūţ of Bayt al-额mar.

As an interesting sidelight on how the ‘aqīrah can be employed in the political game, after Imām Yahyā’s murder in 1948 at Ḥiyayz, a little south of Ṣan‘ā’, Imām Ahmad got a certain ‘Allī b. Ṭāfī al-Imām Yahyā—perhaps when his election by the ulema as Imam of Bayt al-Ahmar.

My informant on this point was a member of the Qādi class himself. There is however apparently some difference of opinion as to whether the Qudāḥ were not considered muhājjārin. ‘Allī b. Ṭāfī was saying to them, ‘The blood of people (of nobility) has, in your eyes, become like that of dogs (unclean animals for whose blood, hunting dogs apart, no compensation is sought).’ It implied that ‘Allī b. Ṭāfī was saying, ‘Ḥādhā ‘inda-kum yā Arbaḥ! If you do not rise to avenge (sha‘a) then you are as dogs—this being the ugliest of things (mabsaḥu ‘alā) should it happen!’ So they rose as one man to avenge Imām Yahyā.

It seems that some of the Qudāḥ, the Qādi class, with a position in certain respects analogous to that of the Sayyids, if resident in a hijrah have no obligation to participate in paying the ghurm, but others do. The Ṣayyid city of Dāmār used also to be muhajjarāt, and the tribal villages around Dāmār were considered as the ‘Doors’ Abwāb Dāmār, but the dā‘a’, the call or summons would be for the protection of the Şādāh families, Ḥamīd al-Dīn, Shārāf al-Dīn, and ‘Īzz al-Dīn, not to the Qudāḥ who were not considered muhajjarin. My informant on this point was a member of the Qādi class himself. There is however apparently some difference of opinion as to whether the Qudāḥ are excluded from the status of hijrah there. In support of the claims of the Qudāḥ to be hijrah it is to be remarked that neither they nor the Ṣayyids paid for the entertainment of troops sent there by the Imām though the other Dāmārīs did. A case that might be further investigated is that of the Sayyid house of Bayt Ṣāliq in Ḥodīdah—because of whom the street in which they lived was regarded as muṣafarāt, and they used to receive gifts. I understand however that they no longer enjoy this favoured position. Sayyid Ahmad al-Şāhirī informs me that in the Yemenite Tilāmah the hijrah does not exist, but he thought the Mansibs (who in the area of the old Aden Protectorates were the lords of Ḥāṣṣāt) had a position resembling that of the hijrah—this indeed seems to be the case.

Since learned scholars were often settled in the hijrah it often took on the character of a hijrah ‘ilm a centre of learning renowned as a sort of school of the Islamic sciences and a place to which students resorted. Of this aspect of the hijrah Qādī ʿIsāfīr al-ʿAwkāh has for some time been preparing a study of a comprehensive nature.

Several classical sources show how close the concept of the Yemeni hijrah is to that of the Prophet. Aḥbāb ‘Ubayyī defines it in the following words, ‘The hijrah is two ḥādhā, the hijrah of the ḥādī (tribesman, countryman) and that of the ḥādir (settled man). Where the hijrah of the ḥādī is concerned it is his duty to respond when summoned (ṣuḥṣā da‘wā) and to obey when he is ordered. Where the hijrah of the ḥādir is concerned it is the severer of the two in affliction and the greater in reward: The sense is that the ḥādī, tribesman, when summoned to fight must do so, (but he does not have permanently to leave his country). The ḥādir on the contrary must abandon his native place and possessions. The fact that Aḥbāb ‘Ubayyī gives hijrah a religious implication should not prevent one from recognising it as a secular institution also.

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Hijrah in Early Islam

A Ḥūsān, hearing of the Prophet’s arrival in al-Madīnāh, came to him and said, ‘Make a pact with me (Bāy‘a ‘alā), Oh Apostle of God.’ To which the Prophet answered, ‘Is it to be an allegiance of the A‘rāb (bāy‘a ‘A‘rābīyyah) or a bāy‘a hijriyyah?’ The Ḥūsān replied that he desired a bāy‘a hijriyyah.53 This is to be explained in terms of the important passage of al-Wâqīdī’s Maḥāzāh thirty directions attributed to the Prophet before the Mu’tah expedition. People who come over to the Muslims are to go to the dār al-hijrah and they shall have what the muḥājarīn have and also the same duties. If they accept Islam and chose to remain in their own territory (dār) they shall be like the A‘rāb, probably to be understood as the Tribal Arabs outside the centres like Medina or Mecca. They shall receive no booty unless they fight alongside the Muslims. If they refuse then they are to be summoned to pay the jizyah poll-tax. Like Islam itself, the hijrah makes a complete break (ṣuḥṣā) with what went before it.54 What is clearly intended is that all alliances, affiliations etc., prior to the hijrah of a person or group, are annulled by the hijrah. Allegiance to Islam and the Apostle supersedes them. These quotations imply a new engagement, verbal or written, like the engagements into which the Prophet entered with the tribal Qaṣīds of Yathrib, and it is impossible to conceive of hijrah agreements which as a main item would not contain arrangements for protection. The very wording of al-Balādhūrī in allusion to the Prophet’s agreement with the Qaṣīds indicates this. ‘The Apostle of God had acquired protection and an edge of hijrah (mān‘a va-dār hijrah),’ i.e. at Yathrib (Medina).

Ibn al-Athir55 gives a significant definition of hijrah, ‘When Mecca was opened up (i.e. taken over by the Prophet) it became Dār al-Islam (Islamic territory) like Medina, and the hijrah was terminated (inqa‘a‘at).’ The second hijrah was when the tribal Arabs (al-A‘rāb) hijara (emigrated leaving one’s tribe, leaving the desert) and raided along with the Muslims but they did not do as those of the first hijrah. It seems to me that the second massive hijrah of the Arab tribes may have become confused with the first hijrah, or more precisely the first two hijrah to Abyssinia and Medina where the Muslims sought new protectors. The new situation after Mecca and Quraysh were incorporated in the Prophet’s confederation (ummah) is expressed in the maxim, ‘There is no hijrah after the opening up (of Mecca) but (only) war (jihād) and intent (nīyyah).’56 That hijrah implied certain obligations is clear from the tale of al-Nabighah57 who, wishing to return to the bâdīyah came to ask permission of the Caliph ʿUthmān who said to him, ‘Al-ta‘arru bi da‘-l-hijrah la yasluhu.’ ʿUthmān however eventually did give him permission to go, but for a limited period. What he meant was that reverison to tribal circumstances, and presumably a looser tie with the Islamic state, was not approved.

A most interesting application of the directions attributed to the Prophet was made by al-Mansūr būllī al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad who fought against the Ottomans in the first quarter of the 11th/17th century from al-Qūrāh and other places.58 Al-Mansūr būllī said in al-Hādāyah,59 ‘The ordinance (ḥukm) of the bādī (the tribesfolk of the country of Ṣā‘ā) is that of the tribal Arabs (A‘rāb) of the Muslims in the time of the Apostle of God, and they do not have the ordinance (ḥukm) of the hijrah or of the infidels (kuffār). It is the Muslims’ duty to support (nazzara) them when they need, except against people with whom you have a pact (mithāq).’

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51 K. al-Amārī, Cairo, 1353 H., 219. ‘Aṣālah also makes the significant statement that there is no need for a Muḥājir for hijrah as he can worship wherever he wishes.


54 Al-Ḥamdānī, pp. 230-231 mentions two tribesmen making a hijrah and qadīm ‘alā Ḥādhār (cf. 962). Ibn al-ʿAṣkānī, Nāṣirīyāh, Cairo, 1311 H., IV, 239, says, ‘A man would come to the Prophet and leave his people and property, not going back to any of it, and he would associate himself solely with his muḥājir, the latter term explained as his ‘place’ of muḥājārah.

55 Ansāb al-Aṣhrāf, ed. Hamidullāh, Cairo, 1858, I, 257.

56 Ibn al-Athir, loc. cit.

57 Ibid.


59 Al-Jarrāģūz, al-.Snīf al-Munīrīkūḥiyāh, 54.

60 Brockelmann, GAL, Sup., II, 559, mentions only his al-Ḥādī ilā sabāt al-irshād which I have assumed is this work.
Chapter 6
The Church (al-Qalis) of Ṣanʿāʾ and Ghumdān Castle

Ghumdān/Ghamdān

The great castle of Ghumdān/Ghamdān is celebrated in the Yemen national ethos as an expression of the grandeur and both technical and aesthetic achievement of the ancient pre-Islamic civilization. It is variously supposed to have been destroyed in the time of the third Caliph ʿUthmān or, even earlier, by the Abyssinian conqueror Abrahah, but in fact it was evidently re-fortified a number of times. The descriptions of it that have survived in such authors as al-Hamdāni while no doubt containing a sub-stratum of fact, are so overlaid by legend as to be of very little factual value. Its four sides were of different coloured stone, one side white, one black, one green and one red; it had seven storeys each 40 dhira` in height, or 20 storeys of 10 dhira` etc.

That it had copper/bronze (nahâs) 3 lions at each corner which roared when the winds blew and passed through the statues is reasonable to say more about it. We can be sure it was a high building and the western fortification of the town, the Qasr being the eastern fortification.

The Church al-Qalis and Christians

The case of the famous Church of Ṣanʿāʾ is rather different from that of Ghumdān, for al-Azragi provides what is at least a plausible account of it though one may be sceptical as to certain particulars of detail, and Wüstenfeld's text is sometimes faulty. The site, called Ghurqat al-Qalis/al-Qullays, is today still shown in ʿAnnah. The same author reports a legend likely to have originated with the Christians before Islam, that Jesus came to visit Ṣanʿāʾ and prayed in the place of the church (kanisah) so the Christians made the church in Ṣanʿāʾ where his place of prayer (musallah) was. This church in these days of ours is a ruin, and lies at the lowest part of the Zuqiq al-Mubayyidin (The Tinsmith's Lane) on the south (ʿAdani) side opposite the Jewish synagogue (bz'ah) which still remains in Ṣanʿāʾ today. Of this church a corner (debr) like a column (ustuwān) remains at the edge of the road to the Sūq.
Church (al-Qalis) of San‘a’ and Ghumdan Castle

al-ʿAttārīn and the Damascus Quarter (darb), and I have come across many arches (ʿuqṣūd) remaining up till the year 390/1000. It is possible that this is not al-Qalis of the Abyssinians, but as a working hypothesis it is to be supposed that it lies somewhere east of the Coppersmiths’ Market: we know today, well in the central area of the old town. Coppersmiths of course would tend any household utensils they manufactured or, if this were a separate craft, it would surely be practised in close proximity to them.

Christian communities continued to flourish in the Yemen for several centuries after Islam. About the years 837-50 A.D. Peter (Mār Petrus) is mentioned as Bishop of the Yemen and San‘a’ by Thomas of Margā, and, though his book contains absolutely no other information about Mār Petrus, it does indicate the existence of some sort of ecclesiastical organisation. In the time of the first Zaydi Imām ʿAlī al-Hāḍi (ob. 298/911) Christians are treated as a protected faith along with the Jews. He received jiyah poll-tax from them. But though he had the exclusive right to enjoy this source of revenue he did not do so. They were told to come to the Imām if any molested them, and during al-Hāḍi’s wars with the Banu ʿHārithi they, along with strangers (ghurābā‘) and Jews, were ordered to leave Minās. Christians and Jews had landed properties (dīyā‘) inherited from the pre-Islamic era, but they were obliged to sell any properties purchased after Islam to Muslims.

These Christians were at least, in the main, those native to the country. Al-Qalis on the other hand was constructed by a foreigner. When the Abyssinians came to the Yemen to avenge the Christians martyred at Najrān by the Jewish ruler Dhū Nuwās, they burned Ghamdān, ‘the largest castle known on earth’ and the Qal‘a of the Najashi since he wrote to him, ‘I have built you a temple (bayt) in San‘a’ the like of which neither the Arabs or non-Arabs (ʿĀjam) have constructed, and I shall not desist until I divert the pilgrims (ḥujj) of the Arabs to it and they abandon the pilgrimage to their own temple.’ The political motive is at once discernible—the creation of a new centre of politico-religious power, to which might be added an economic gain in that pilgrimage centres are also markets and recipients also of votive offerings.

So, says al-Azraqī, Abrahah built al-Qalis, using the stone of Qur Bīlqās at Mārib—in this the account seems fanciful, though Yaqūt also reports an inscription, his chain of authorities going back to Muhammad ibn Ziyad al-San‘ani who became governor of San‘a’ in 133/750-1, ‘I saw written on the door of Your as Owner/Master (Malik) so that Your name may be mentioned in it, and I am Your servant:’ There seems to be nothing inherently improbable about this report.

The following is the description of the construction of al-Qalis.

It was regular, level on all sides (murāba‘a mustawī ‘l-tārib) He (Abrahah) made its height 23 60 dīrā‘. Its raised area (khīb, lit., earth placed on an area to level it, plinth) was 10 dīrā‘ high, and one ascended to it by alabaster marble steps (daraj al-rukhām). Around it was a wall (ṣūr) with 200 dīrā‘ between it and al-Qalis, surrounding it on every side. He put between that, all of it, stones (reading so for the text’s ‘with stones’) which the people of the Yemen call jurāb, ornamented (manqīshah), 24 25 fitted into each other (mutābaqā‘) so that a needle could not enter between their courses (atībā‘), stuck close together to it (mutābaqā‘ bi-hā‘). 26 He made the height of the part he constructed of jurāb 20 dīrā‘ high. Between (each course of) jurāb stones he inserted (a course of) triangular stones like a camel’s hump, entering into each other, of green, red, white, yellow and black stone, with sawām 27 wood/beam(s) (ḥakshab sawām) between each two courses (ṣād), 28 round of head (ṣār), the thickness of the beam (ḥakshab) being (that of) a man’s chestside (khudra), protruding over the building. So he used to insert this construction after this fashion. Then he inserted a frieze of alabaster/marble 2 dīrā‘ in height, the alabaster protruding 1 dīrā‘ beyond the building. Then over the marble he inserted (a course of) shining black stone of the stone of Nuqum, the mountain of San‘a’, overlooking it. After this he placed shining yellow stone, then over that shining white stone. This was the exterior (qāhir) of the wall (ḥā‘i) of al-Qalis, the breadth of al-Qalis wall being 5 dīrā‘. They say that they do not recollect the measurement (dhar‘) of the length and breadth of al-Qalis (from the outside). It had a door of copper (nabdā‘) 10 dīrā‘ in height by 4 dīrā‘ wide, the entry from which was to a chamber (bayt) in it, the length of which was 80 dīrā‘ by 40 dīrā‘, supported by columns (reading ‘umud al-sāj) 29 of sāj-wood ornamented/painted 31 and (with) gold and silver nails (matā‘irām). Then one enters from the chamber into an iwān (arched space) the length of which is 40 dīrā‘ on its right and left, its arches having mosaic applied to them, and being decorated (mushajjarah) with tree and shrub (motifs), 32 with stars of gold figuring conspicuously (ẓāhir) between their (arches’) interspaces (ad-dafa‘). Then, from the iwān one enters to a dome (zubāh), 30 by 30 dīrā‘ which he walled with mosaic in which were crosses depicted in mosaic (ṣalab manqīshah bi-y-sayfasa‘a‘), gold and silver. In it (the dome) was a piece of alabaster (rukhāmah) next to the place of the rising of the sun, of balqā‘ 33 (any colour mixed with white), square, 10 dīrā‘ by 10 dīrā‘, (so bright) it causes anyone looking at it from the centre of the dome to cover the eye, conducting the light of the sun and moon inside the dome.

14 Thomas of Margā, the Book of Governors, trans. E. Wallis Budge, London, 1892, II, 448.
15 In Qumān San‘a‘, this word means merchants or dealers not local to the town.
16 Al-Hamdāni, Sifah, Leiden, 1884-9, reads incorrectly Minān for Minas.
18 For the latest researches on this topic, see Irfin Shabtī, The marble of Nārān, two documents, Subsidia Hagiographica, no. 49, Brussels, 1971.
19 Al-Azragi, loc. cit.
20 As in the case when harams or hawtahs are founded.
21 Malik would mean God.
22 This height 60 dīrā‘ seems most unlikely, but of course the ordinary observer would have no means of actually measuring it.
23 This figure also looks exaggerated; a figure of 200 dīrā‘ for the total distance from wall to wall would be easier.
24 The stone of Nuqum, the mountain of San‘a’, overlooking it.
25 See Fig. H.12.
26 It is not easy to see how this last phrase applies, unless the bi-hā‘ refers to al-Qalis.
27 A sort of tree of the mountains resembling ebony according to the lexicons.
28 Any row of bricks (ʿaraq) of the wall (hā‘it), and a course or row (ṣaff) in a building.
29 As in the case when harams or hawtahs are founded.
30 Painted wood pillars could well be meant. Yāqūt says that Abrahah, lakkaka-ha bi-anus ʿal-asbāgh, to lacquer/paint(?) with various dyes (colours?).
31 This figure also looks exaggerated; a figure of 200 dīrā‘ for the total distance from wall to wall would be easier.
32 This is probably not to be taken too literally as mushajjarah can be applied to a variety of types of decoration.
33 Balqā‘ of course is the name of a stone used in Yemeni architecture but it cannot have that sense here.

25 See Fig. H.12.
26 It is not easy to see how this last phrase applies, unless the bi-hā‘ refers to al-Qalis.
27 A sort of tree of the mountains resembling ebony according to the lexicons.
28 Any row of bricks (ʿaraq) of the wall (hā‘it), and a course or row (ṣaff) in a building.
29 More likely because.
30 The text has mutāla‘ al-ʿumal bi-ṣājā‘, but al-ʿumal seems impossible and easily misread for al-ʿumal. Allâq al-ḥiīn means, to make the building to be.
Underneath the piece of alabaster (tuhkhîmah) was a pulpit (minbar) of labakh wood—this being ebony (âbnûs)—with them34—with intervening (courses?) of white ivory. The steps (daraj) of the pulpit of sâj-wood were covered (mulabha) with gold and silver. In the dome were chains of silver.35 In the dome, or in the chamber, was an ornamented (manqûshah) beam of sâj, 60 dhîrâ` long, called Ku`ayb, and a beam of sâj of similar length to it, called Ku`ayb’s Wife, from which36 they used to seek good fortune (yatabarakhân) from it (Ku`ayb), and it used to speak to them and tell them of things, some of which they liked and some of which they disliked. Wallâb’s son said, ‘All that you have heard is false. Ku`ayb was no more than an idol of the Jâhiliyyah by which they were deluded (jutinû). So order the duhu43 i.e. the drum and a flute (mitmâr) and have them close at hand—then make the demolishers go up on top of it and order them to (start) demolishing. The drum and flute will be spurring them on and keep them the more cheerful and you will make much money from the building material (nîqâq) from it as well as obtaining satisfaction from the scoundrels (jasayq) who burned Ghumdân, and you will have expunged from your people the name of the building of the Abyssinians (al-Habash) and cut off (all) memory of them.’

Now there was in San`â’ a Jewish scholar ( sûm). He had come to al-`Abbas b. al-`Rabi’ previously to gain his favour, and had said to him that a king who demolishes al-Qalis will govern the Yemen for forty years. So when the words of the Jew and advice from Wallâb b. Munabbih’s son coincided in favour of it, he resolved to demolish it.

Abu `1-Walid said, ‘A reliable person informed me saying, “I was there with al-`Abbas when he was demolishing it and he made a great deal of money out of it. Then I saw him call for chains. These they attached to Ku`ayb and the beam with it, and he (attempted to) get men to bear them40 (the chains), but no one would come near them out of fear because of what the people of the Yemen used to say about them.41 So he called for w r d yin,42 i.e. wheels, and attached the chains to them, then oxen, and men with them, pulled them until they brought them out43 of the wall (sûr). When the people saw nothing of the harm which they feared from them, a man of the people of Iraq, a merchant in San`â’, sprang up,44 bought the beam and cut it for a house of his. It was not long however before the Iraqis became afflicted by leprosy (judhâm), and the rabble said, “This is because of his buying Ku`ayb.”’ He continued, “Then I saw the people of San`â’ after that going round45 al-Qalis and picking up the bits of gold and silver from it.”

The narrative conveys unequivocally that the demolition and plundering of al-Qalis which figures as one of the glories of ancient San`â’ in the early poets was unpopular with the San`â’ populace and resented by them without distinction of Muslim or Christian. The adherents of both faiths evidently held Ku`ayb and his Wife in superstitious reverence of the sort that Muslim orthodoxy correctly classes as pagan. The reverence extended to the pillars al-Masmûrah and al-Manqûrah of the Jâmi’ Mosque is of a similar genre but any pagan elements that may have attached to them in the minds of the commonalty have been purged and extruded from the descriptions of al-Wâsî.46 It is to be remarked that the penalty for swearing a false oath at the two pillars of the Jâmi’ Mosque is affliction with leprosy (judhâm) and the rabble said, ‘This is because of his buying Ku`ayb,’.47

41 The dual must be read here instead of hâ. 
Abū Sāliḥ and the Church of the Aqsaʾ

Abū Sāliḥ reports also ‘M rûr al-Dayr, it being a church around which is an impregnable fortress (husn). It is now called Maqbarat al-Hukamâʾ (Cemetery of the Wise), and in this district are identical with capitals found in the ruins of St. Mary of the Abnâʾ resided in San`āʾ then one should look for them in this district, but he might have resided at Dhamār. Zafâr south east of Yarim which had a large church of which almost nothing is left fits the description geographically but it is not reported that Kisrâ’s Amir ever resided there. Christians in Najràn until the beginning of the 7th/13th century according to Yemeni historians, until the days of al-Mansûr ‘Abdullâh b. Hamzah, then there were many properties which he made wagf to it (habasa-hâ `alay-hâ). If these last statements can be accepted as fact a possible explanation of the great size of the ambulatory as reported by al-Azraqi presents itself. As stated below the walled enclosure around the church at Axum was clustered with buildings. The same might have been the case at al-Qalis. It is tempting to compare the maqâwîr of those pre-Islamic Christian days with the muhajir of Islamic Yemen, the student living in the row of cells attached to the mosque. Presumably the area enclosed by the wall of al-Qalis in San`āʾ would moreover have something of the nature of a sacred enclave, a hijrah or haram. Abū Sāliḥ reports also ‘M rûr al-Dayr, it being a church around which is an impregnable fortress (husn). It is now called Maqbarat al-Hukamâʾ (Cemetery of the Wise), and in this district are identical with capitals found in the ruins of St. Mary of the Abnâʾ resided in San`āʾ then one should look for them in this district, but he might have resided at Dhamār. Zafâr south east of Yarim which had a large church of which almost nothing is left fits the description

The Remains of the Church (al-Qalis)

The site, 175m west of the wall of the citadel, as stated above, is identified by a large pit lined with coursed rubble masonry, 12.45m in diameter north-west to south-east, and 14.65m in diameter south-west to north-east. The irregular shape is partly due to its being given a roughly octagonal form on the north side. It looks as if Abû Sâlih relied on a Christian tradition about al-Qalis, but again, although no detail of his account appears in the text itself and the translation, at least here, unreliable. The west-east orientation parallels the orientation of Axumite churches in Ethiopia. In the Great Mosque in San`āʾ there are four capitals which originally carried crosses on all their faces, as well as three other capitals of a related shape without crosses, and a number of decorated column shafts (pl. 18.20). The capitals with crosses are identical with capitals found in the ruins of St. Mary of Zion in Axum, built, according to a seventeenth century text, in 372 A.D. and finished in 424 A.D. It seems quite possible, however, that the cathedral was extended or altered a century later, after the successful campaigns in southern Arabia, that is, about the same time as the church in San`āʾ was built.

Although the cathedral in Axum was destroyed in the 17th century and a small one built in its place, the original platform of the great church remains, and from this and earlier descriptions of it, it is possible to reconstruct its plan and dimensions. The church was elevated on a platform, it had a nave with five aisles ending in an east end with seven parallel chapels. More important, its total length was 125 cubits or ell, each ell calculated

Native Christianity in the Yemen does not seem to be known to our sources after the 4th/10th century though this does not necessarily mean that it had disappeared, and in Socotra Island it still existed into Portuguese times.

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by Littmann, von Krenker and von Lüpke as a little less than half a metre.

The al-Azraqi dimension for the total length of the nave and vaulted choir (râwâm) of the Šân'ā' church is 120 dhirā', each dhirā' being almost certainly the 'Abbâsîd dhirā' of 48.25 cm. From this it seems clear that the ell and the dhirā' of the early Islamic period were effectively the same measure. So that the lengths of the bodies of the two churches were roughly equal, though the Šân'ā' church had added to it, at the eastern end, a further 30 dhirā' in the diameter of the domed eastern chapel plus the width of its walls. The total height of the Axum church was 32 ell, that of the Šân'ā' church 33.5 dhirā'. On the other hand the nave of the Axum cathedral was 47 ell wide, whereas the Šân'ā' church is given as 40 dhirā' wide. At its east end the Axum church was increased in width by its seven chapels to 92 ell. It seems that in overall area these two churches were closely comparable, as indeed they were in the design of their stone capitals.

How are we to explain, then, the presence of a large domed chamber as a feature in the Šân'ā' church when it does not occur in the plan of the church in Axum? The explanation seems to lie in the interest shown by the Byzantine empire in the Axumite conquest of southern Arabia, and more particularly the interest taken by the Syrian Christians. From the description of the church and the fact that its mosaics were taken to decorate the Kâbah in Mecca in 65/684, it is possible to judge that it was closer to Byzantine architecture, at least in part, than Axumite architecture in Ethiopia is thought to have been. The plan of the church, from al-Azraqi's description, was of Syrian type, in this case directly derived from the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which has a domed octagonal chapel 16 m in diameter at the end of a five-aisled nave 26 m wide, and it was thus in turn linked in type to the sacred domed church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Smaller domes are known in chapels behind or above the altar in later Ethiopian churches. The Šân'ā' church is unusual in the large size of its dome, and in the use of a Byzantine octagon in plan. The decorated beams referred to by al-Azraqi may have been braces to the dome or to the barrel vault of the choir, but their length does not relate to any dimensions in the plan and seems likely to have been exaggerated. The slabaster panel referred to in the domed chapel was probably a large top-light in the centre of the dome, like those smaller ones that survive in front of the mihrâb in the Great Mosque (pl. 18.32). From the reference at the beginning of al-Azraqi's description to the Šân'ā' church being 'rectangular', it seems possible that the octagon was incorporated within an enclosing outer wall, the narrow remaining spaces on either side possibly serving as chapels. This regular shape for the whole church conforms closely with later Ethiopian practice. The dome, or rather, the roof over it, seems to have projected above the rest of the church as happened at Bethlehem; it is doubtful whether it could have reached the stated height of 60 dhirā', that is, 29 m.

The great size mentioned for the open-air ambulatory around the church (200 dhirā', or 96.5 m) appears likely to be an error which has crept into the text. The Axum church stood within a large walled enclosure, but excavation has shown that this was clustered with buildings. An open space for ambulation between 50 dhirā' and 100 dhirā' wide is more probable.
Chapter 7
The Early and Medieval History of Ṣan‘ā’, ca. 622-953/1515

Introduction
Methodology

The arrangement of the material covering more than 900 years of the history of the city of Ṣan‘ā’ has presented problems, not least that of offering the inevitable host of names and dates in a digestible form. It is hoped that the pattern adopted will prove acceptable to the reader. As far as is possible, interminable lists of the names of persons, tribes, places and dates have been avoided. Rather, a more general picture of the city during this period has been attempted. However, the local dynasties centred on Ṣan‘ā’ are well documented in the primary sources available to us and in these accounts a more detailed picture of events can be given. The Ayyûbids period can also be treated in this way, whereas mention of Ṣan‘ā’ and its affairs is rare for the later Rasûlid and Tahirid periods—at any rate in the Sunnî sources. The account given here must by necessity remain much weighted on the politico-military side, since this is the nature of these primary sources from which the material has been culled.

A brief allusion has already been made elsewhere1 to the question of the primary sources for the history of medieval Yemen. In this field the historian suffers from the plethora of manuscript material of the Sunni, Zaydi and Ismâ‘îlî traditions, although the last two still remain inaccessible or remote. However, the hope is that this chapter might at least form a reasonable introductory history to the city of Ṣan‘ā’.

This early and medieval period of the history of Ṣan‘ā’ has been divided into seven parts as follows:

1) the early Islamic history of Ṣan‘ā’, 1-232/622-847
2) the Yu`firids, 232-387/847-98
3) the Sulayhids, 389-482/1037-1088
4) the Sultans of Hamdan, 493-569/1099-1173
5) the Ayyûbids, 569-628/1173-1228
6) the Rasûlids, 628-783/1228-1381
7) the Zaydi Imams, 783-953/1381-1546.

It must be admitted, of course, that this form of presentation is not wholly consistent. Numbers 2, 3 and 4 above were local dynasties, in the main centred on Ṣan‘ā’ itself, while 5 and 6 were states covering much wider territory, the latter having headquarters in the southern area of the country, though often controlling Ṣan‘ā’ and indeed regarding it as an extremely important city.

The reader might consider that it is rather late to introduce a section on the Zaydi Imāms beginning with the date 783/1381. Indeed, from the year 284/897-98, when the first Zaydi Imām arrived in Sa`dah in the extreme north of the Yemen, until 1962 it can be said that there was a Zaydi Imām present in the country. On many occasions the Zaydi Imām controlled Ṣan‘ā’. On many occasions too, the Zaydi Imām played an important part in the events taking place in the city. But rather than deal with the Zaydis as a separate entity before this year—the year they seized the city and from that date held it continuously until the Turkish conquest—it seemed preferable to bring them into the picture whenever history demanded it under the heading of either of the local dynasties—2, 3 and 4 above—or under that of the main politico-military force in the country—5 and 6 above. In this connection it should perhaps be stressed that this in no way implies that the Zaydi Imāms played a minor role in the history of Ṣan‘ā’ prior to 783/1381. Indeed the very opposite is the case. Their omission from the earlier section titles is justified only on purely practical grounds.

The Yemen as a Political Unit

From this study of the history of Ṣan‘ā’ it will be seen that the first two centuries of Islam produced nothing like a political entity called the Yemen. The picture during this period is rather that of a series of local dynasties ruling over varying extents of territory, but in no case controlling vast areas. The city of Ṣan‘ā’ was the seat of the governor appointed by the head of the Islamic community, from the Prophet himself to the `Abbasid Caliphs in Iraq. On occasions too the areas of al-Janad in the south near Ta’izz and Hadramawt fell under the control of a governor similarly appointed by the head of the community and who may have been responsible directly to his appointer or alternatively to the senior governor in Ṣan‘ā’.

After the rise of the Yu`firids in 232/847, the appointees of the `Abbāsids Caliph became weaker until it was no longer possible for them to continue the practice of appointing governors in the area. During this period and those of the Sulayhids and the Sultans of Hamdan after the Yu`firids in Ṣan‘ā’, the pattern of numerous ‘city-states’ throughout the country continued. The most important of these at the time of the Ayyûbid conquest in 569/1173

The Religious Factions in the Yemen

There are three main religious groups which will be encountered in any history of early Islamic and medieval Yemen. The inhabitants of those areas which came under the sway of the ‘Abbasid governors, including the Ṣan‘ā’ area, must have been orthodox Sunnis, presumably originally following the Ḥanafi madhab. We know, however, that about the close of the 4th/9th century, the Shafii madhab was introduced into the Yemen and gradually those Sunnis in the area adopted this school of law. The third group is the Zaydi, a mild form of Shi‘ism not far removed from the Sunnis. The strength of the Zaydis and —perhaps more important—the cruel terrain put paid to any such thoughts. For the Zaydis to move south of Ṣan‘ā’, however, was a much easier task, in which perhaps that business and commerce continued, even if it did not always flourish, in these hard times and that Ṣan‘ā’ remained forgotten that the historiography of medieval Yemen was a collection of dates and battles. Periods of peace and stability, particularly Ta‘izz, Ṣan‘ā’ was a vital centre for them too, if they were to make territorial gains south of the city. Ṣan‘ā’ was therefore a notable exception from the lists of destruction which can be found below. Also both the Ayyubids and the Rasulids adopted a policy of cooperation with the Isma‘ili Banū Hātim in Ṣan‘ā’, rather than blatant confrontation and a number of Hātimis served the Rasulid administration well in high positions. All too was far from perfect in Zaydi-Sunnī relations, as will be clear from this historical account of Ṣan‘ā’, and the two often fought bitterly. The impression is, however, that, whereas the Isma‘ilis were often opposed because they were Isma‘ilis, the Sunnis and Zaydis fought together rather for political and territorial reasons.

The Strategic Value of the City of Ṣan‘ā’

Following on the capture of Ṣan‘ā’, by the Ayyubids in 585/1189-90, the city ceased to be the headquarters of a local dynasty. The Ayyubids preferred the south as their headquarters, particularly Ta‘izz. Ṣan‘ā’ was a key military centre through which the Zaydis in the north could be kept in check. It cannot be said, in our opinion, that the Ayyubids had serious designs on taking and holding vast areas of the country to the north of Ṣan‘ā’. The strength of the Zaydis and—perhaps more important—the cruel terrain put paid to any such thoughts. For the Zaydis to move south of Ṣan‘ā’, however, was a much easier task, in which perhaps that business and commerce continued, even if it did not always flourish, in these hard times and that Ṣan‘ā’ remained forgotten that the historiography of medieval Yemen was a collection of dates and battles. Periods of peace and stability, particularly Ta‘izz, Ṣan‘ā’ was a vital centre for them too, if they were to make territorial gains south of the city. Ṣan‘ā’ was therefore fought over as bitterly and desperately as it had been in the days of the local dynasties. We know that buildings were often destroyed, houses, palaces, even mosques. Such a continual battering must have taken its toll therefore on Ṣan‘ā’. One notable exception from the lists of destruction which can be found frequently in the medieval sources is the suq. One can suggest perhaps that business and commerce continued, even if it did not always flourish, in these hard times and that Ṣan‘ā’ remained as important in this role as in its military one. It should not be forgotten that the historiography of medieval Yemen was a collection of dates and battles. Periods of peace and stability, administrative organisation and political development did not fall within the scope of the historian. Perhaps it is not venturing too far to suggest also that Ṣan‘ā’ remained in some unofficial way a commercially protected town, where, whatever was happening outside the walls, and for the most part within them too, a man might always buy and sell.

3 It is true that, for example, the Yu‘firids brought large areas of the country under their sway and some case might be made for making the same statement regarding the so-called Qaramitah and the Sulayhid. None of these, however, controlled as extensive an area as that of the Ayyubids, nor was their control as tight and as deep. The proof of this is to be found in the lasting nature of the political area established by the Ayyubids.
4 Cf. below, The period of the Suduwan of Hamdan, p. 59a-60b.
5 E.g. the author of the Simf, Amir Badr al-Din Muhammad b. Hātim.
Apart from the important change in the situation of the city following on the Ayyûbid conquest and described above, we see for the first time in the Ayyûbid period the appointment of a fief-holder (muqta') in Şan‘a’. The system of fiefs was not of course invented by the Ayyûbids. Those Ayyûbids in power in Egypt had found a local Fātimid brand of feudalism and also they had naturally imported facets of the Zankid iqṭâ’ which they had known in Syria. What evolved in Egypt therefore under the Ayyûbids was probably a hybrid form of fief-holdings—a cross between the local Fātimid and imported Zankid types.

For the Ayyûbid and Rasûlid periods in the Yemen, we still do not have available the wealth of socio-economic material which the historian of medieval Egypt has at his disposal. It is only possible here, therefore, to make a few general statements regarding the iqṭâ’ system in medieval Yemen and in particular in Şan‘a’ itself.

Despite their close political and economic ties with the Fātimids in Egypt, it seems that those Ima’mî groups in the Yemen before the Ayyûbid conquest—the Shâlâyids, Banû Zurayq and Banû Hâtim—had no well ordered feudal system. The institution was imported into the country by the Ayyûbids and is first mentioned in about 598/1202 during the rule of the sultan’s pleasure—in keeping with his rank and station. The incumbent of the fief would be appointed by the head of the ruling family or, in his long absences, by a governor, wâli or ‘amîl, or, if the absence were brief, by a deputy, nā’ib. The muqta’ was appointed by the sultan himself and he was assigned an iqṭâ’—which he held only during the sultan’s pleasure—in keeping with his rank and station. The incumbent of the fief of Şan‘a’ was certainly an amîr of high standing. With the death of the sultan, his successor would invariably review the fief situation in the country; he may have decided to retain a fief-holder or to shuffle round the available appointments among his amirs. There is no apparent evidence that the iqṭâ’ was hereditary. In contrast to the situation in Egypt, Yemeni fief-holders appear in the main to have resided in the territory assigned to them.

In keeping with his Egyptian counterpart the fief-holder must have had to provide troops when required by the sultan and have been responsible for the efficient and smooth running of the agriculture and economy of his area. In return he would have been permitted to collect certain taxes from the local population.

The Early Islamic History of Şan‘a’, 1-232/622-847

The sources for this section are naturally predominantly Yemenite, though the major universal history of Tâbarî has been used as a control on names and dates.8 Being relatively late, these sources lack detail for this crucial early period. In fact almost all we have is a list of the governors sent to the Yemen, firstly by the Prophet, then by the Orthodox, Umayyad and ‘Abbâsid Caliphs. This section must therefore inevitably remain sketchy. At the end for ease of reference a list of the governors of the Yemen resident in Şan‘a’ has been appended, though even here it is not possible to be entirely confident of the material in places, due to the conflicting nature of the sources from which the list has been drawn up.

The beginning of the sixth century of the Christian era saw south western Arabia torn by the hostilities of the rival mono-theistic religions, Judaism and Christianity. The last king of the Himyarites, the infamous Dhû Nuwâs, had embraced Judaism and in A.D. 523 massacred large numbers of Christians in Najrân in his newly found religious fervour. This appalling slaughter brought into the Yemen a force of Christian Abyssinians and the latter gained victories there in 523 under Arâyî and also in 525 under Abrahah. Thus the Himyarite dynasty was brought to an end and the Abyssinians, introduced as savours, remained on as conquerors. Some time during the period 525-75, Abrahah, while ruler of Şan‘a’, built there the famous church named al-Qâfîs (pp. 41-48). The other notable event of this Abyssinian period was the unsuccessful attempt by Abrahah to conquer Mecca in A.D. 570 or 571.

The Yemenite nationalist movement which strove to free the Yemen from her Abyssinian conquerors had at its head a Himyârî named Sayf b. Dhi Yazân. Failing to find support from Christian Byzantium, the traditional story goes, he turned to Ctesiphon (al-Mada’im) and appealed to the Persian emperor Kârâ Anûshirwân, who, in A.D. 575, agreed to despatch a Persian army under Wahriz to the Yemen. Wahriz succeeded in ousting the Abyssinians from the Yemen, but remained in the country, thus replacing one colonial rule for another. About the year 6/628, the fifth Persian governor in the Yemen, Bâdhân, embraced Islam together, if we are to believe the Arab historians, with the whole of the population of the country.9 Bâdhân was appointed governor of the whole of the Yemen by the Prophet and he continued in this capacity with his residence in Şan‘a’ until his death.

Due undoubtedly to its crucial geographical position, Şan‘a’ had re-emerged as the chief town of the Yemen at the latest by the beginning of the 6th century of the Christian era. It was certainly the capital of Dhû Nuwâs and, when the Abyssinians entered the country, it remained their headquarters. It was also the home of the Persian governors and remained the seat of the governors appointed in Islamic times. Throughout the periods of the Prophet, the Orthodox, Umayyad and ‘Abbâsid Caliphs to the rise of the Yu’âfid dynasty and their involvement in the affairs of Şan‘a’ in the 3rd/9th century, governors were sent out to the city. These governors were often responsible, at least in theory, for the whole of the country, though other governors were sometimes also appointed for the al-Janad area and al-Jadramawt. It is impossible to speculate on the extent of the authority of the Şan‘a’ governors, though they probably controlled little or nothing outside the walls of the town. They presumably had a force under arms for the day-to-day policing of the urban area, though it seems clear from our sources that they could not impose their will by tyrannical means on the local population; a number tried and complaints to the Caliph, though perhaps slow to receive attention, eventually brought justice either in the form of a reprimand or with the actual dismissal of the governor and his replacement by another.

More important than the daily administration of Şan‘a’ would have been the task required of the governor to promote Islam and the Islamic way of life. We cannot accept the naive assertion of the historians that Bâdhân, the Persian governor, accepted Islam and the whole of the population immediately followed. In this large area where communications are so appallingly difficult the spread of Islam must have been of a gradual nature. It is probably in this context that one should appreciate the appointments of governors in al-Janad and al-Jadramawt. Şan‘a’, apart from its obvious importance as a military centre, was also a centre of commerce and trade, perhaps operating under some kind of special sanctity derived from the mahram institution of pre-Islamic

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6 Terms like fief and feudalism should in no way be taken to represent their precise meanings in the medieval European context. They are merely used here for convenience for the Arabic terms, iqṭâ’, muqta’ etc.
7 As yet no Ibn Mammâti, Qalgashandi or Magrizi of the Yemen has come to light. For an excellent study of the Egyptian system of fiefs, cf. Hassoan Rubie, _Financial System_, London, 1972, cap. II. His primary sources are given in the footnotes and see also his Bibliography, especially 200 et seq.
8 e.g. in Ayyûbid times the Rasûlid Amir, Badr al-Dîn Hâsan and in Rasûlid times, Amân al-Dîn al-Shârî’î.
10 Cf. _Financial System_, 63.
12 _Tabari_, _Târikh_, I.4, 1851.
times. There may well have been the agreed regulation that arms were not carried except by the governor's militia and that tribal squabbles were left behind at the gates of the city. There is certainly evidence to suggest that the suq system flourished and economic stability is achieved only in a situation of peace. The city, then, in these early centuries of Islam would have attracted traders, big and small, from an ever increasing area outside and this was how the new religion gradually spread throughout the whole area. We can assume that the centres of al-Janad and Ḥadramawt played exactly the same role in the dissemination of Islam in the Yemen.

Although he is credited by some as the builder of the Great Mosque in Ṣan`â’, there is no indication that Farwah b. Musayk al-Murādī was ever formally appointed governor. Wabr b. Yuḥannas al-Kalbī was therefore the first governor appointed by the Prophet.15 All our sources list ‘All b. Abī Tālib as a governor, though the statement that he never reached the Yemen is in all probability correct.16 Among other well known names to appear in the sources are Mu‘ādh b. Jabal, another contender to be the founder of the Great Mosque as well as that of al-Janad, Abū Mūsā al-Ash`ārī and Khālid b. al-Walīd. At this stage of course we cannot be sure of the exact dates of appointments and the list appears inordinately long, with fifteen names quoted for what must have been a period of ten years or less. The possibility clearly does exist that this is simply a list of all those who might at some time have represented the Prophet in Ṣan`â’, some, like ‘All himself, being appointed but never in fact taking up the appointment in person.

It can be assumed that the period of the first three Orthodox Caliphs was one of stability and the steady growth of Islam in the Yemen as a whole, though some sources mention the apostasy of certain Ṣan`ā’ī.17 The names of only three governors are given for this period. With the assumption of the caliphate by ‘Ali in 35/656, however, and the resulting civil war between his followers and those of Mu‘āwiyah, the repercussions of this struggle were felt in Ṣan`â’. In 40/660-61 Mu‘āwiyah despatched an army under Burd b. Ṭaḥā to drive out ‘Ali’s governor in Ṣan`â’, ‘Ubaydullāh b. al-‘Abbās, and destroy the ‘Ālī party in the town. ‘Ubaydullāh, hearing of the impending attack of the Syrian army, addressed the inhabitants of Ṣan`â’ from the minbar of the mosque and in an impassioned speech appealed to them to join him to repel the enemy. The response from the populace, the most influential of whom were the Abnā’, descendants of the Persian conquerors, was, however, poor and ‘Ubaydullāh fled the country for Kūfah. Mu‘āwiyah’s army under Burd entered Ṣan`â’ to establish Umayyad rule there. When Umayyad control was established over Ṣan`â’ Uthmān b. Affān al-Thaqafī18 was appointed governor by Mu‘āwiyah.

It is interesting to note that with the control of the Hijaz passing to the rebel ‘Abdullāh b. al-Zubayr, he was able to appoint his own governors in Ṣan`â’ for a period of nine years between 64/683 and 73/692. During the last two years of Ibn al-Zubayr’s life, however, the town was in a state of turmoil. In 71/690-91, a group of the ḤarūrīYYah, a branch of the Khawārij who had originally come into being by seceding from the followers of ‘Ali, arrived in Ṣan`â’ where the inhabitants, having refused to fight, made peace with the intruders at the price of 100,000 dinars, some of which had to come as assistance from outside the city. Ṣan`â’ remained in chaos until the death of Ibn al-Zubayr in 73/692 and the arrival of the governor of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, Muhammad b. Yūsuf, the brother of the Caliph’s tough governor in Iraq, al-Hājjāj.19 The list of the Umayyad governors continues at the steady rate of one governor per Caliph with the exception of Hishām (105-25/724-43) who found it necessary to appoint two. It will be noted too that no fewer than five out of the nine governors appointed from the time of ‘Abd al-Malik until the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate were Thaqafīs.

Of those names of the governors appointed in Ṣan`â’ by the ‘Abbasid Caliphs listed below only two are worthy of further mention. In 140/757-58, Man‘āb b. Zā’id was appointed in the Yemen as governor on behalf of the Caliph al-Mansūr. He remained for a period of six years in Ṣan`â’ after which he was recalled by the Caliph to combat the Khawārij in Khurāsān. He left his own son behind to take his place.20

The year 183/799-800 saw the arrival in Ṣan`â’ of Muḥammad b. Barmak, the governor of al-Rashīd. It appears that he remained in Ṣan`â’ for nine or ten years, for the appointment of his successor is recorded for the year 193/809. Muḥammad b. Khālid is credited with the building in Ṣan`â’ of a palace named Dār al-Barā`īmīk as well as the construction of an underground channel of the ganāt type, known in the Yemen as ghaylī (see pp. 19b-31b) for the local population. This was given the name Ghayl al-Barmakī and is reported to have watered the south and west of the town. Its source near Ghaymān. The governor made the ghayl a waqf and swore to spend only his own funds on its upkeep. He also produced drinking places (sing. sabīl) in the town for the general public, though whether the form of these was anything like those found to this day in Ṣan`â’ is not certain (pp. 293-299). His governorship clearly marked a period of prosperity in the town and we are told in one source that on the appointment of his successor to the governorship there were 85,000 dwelling places in Ṣan`â’.21

Early in the 3rd/9th century, a small local dynasty in Ṣibā’im Kawkabānī a little to the north west of Ṣan`â’ looked upon the increasing weakness of the ‘Abbasid governors there and their frequent changes with ever greater alarm. The ambitious head of the family, Yuḥayr b. ‘Abd al-Kalbām al-Jawāli, began to make plans to include the town in his own territory.

13 This statement leaves aside Bādhān who had to all intents and purposes been confirmed in an appointment already held on behalf of the Persian Emperor.
14 Cf. Ibn Samurah, Ṭabagât, 16, who says he got no further than `Akk in the Tarimān.
15 Kharaṣṭānī, Kifāyah, Leiden University, ms. 805.
16 Cf. Ibn Samurah, Ṭabagât, ed. Fu’ād Sattāl, Cairo, 1957; Jeandot, Sulāh, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, ms. 3101, 33b; Kharaṣṭānī, Kifāyah, 17.
17 Ibn al-Qāsim, Ghayyat al-anṣārī, Cairo, 1938 H, 96-97. For the story of the murdered son of ‘Ubaydullāh b. al-ʿAbbās, see below, The Mosques of Ṣawwā’i, Maṣʿūd al-Shahbāzīnī.
19 Ibn al-Qāsim, Ghayyat, 130-31.
20 Râzi, Tārikh San’d’, Damascus, 1974, 106-07; Ibn al-Qāsim, Ghayyat, 141-44. Ibn al-Qāsim calls the flow nahr. He specifically mentions prosperity in Ṣawwā’i in 186/802-03, putting the number of houses at 120,000.
List of Governors of the Yemen Resident in Ṣan‘ā’

a) in the time of the Prophet

- Wabr b. Yuhannis
- `Ali b. Abī Tālib
- Mu‘ādh b. Jabal
- Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī
- Khālid b. al-Walid
- Khālid b. Sa‘id b. al-‘Aṣ
- al-Ṭahir b. Abī Hālah

b) in the time of the Orthodox Caliphs

- Abân b. Said b. al-‘As
- Ya‘lā b. al-Muqim b. ‘Abī Tālim

- Ya‘lā b. Umayyah al-Tamīmī
- 'Amr b. Hāram
- ‘Ukqâb b. (Abī) ‘Abdullâh
- Mu‘ādh b. Kindah
- Jarir b. ‘Abdullāh al-Baṣṭī
- ‘Amir b. Shu‘ayb
- Shahr b. Bādhān

- Mu‘qir b. ‘Abdullāh al-Thagāfī
- ‘Ali b. Abī Tālib (35-40/656-661)

- Janadi, Sulûk, omits.

- Bikhazi, `Coins', al-Abhâth, on the authority of ‘Arshi, Bulûgh, 11, makes this two different men, ‘Umar and Zayd. He also writes al-Hallâb instead of al-Khallâb. Both errors are ‘Arshi’s.


- 24 Bikhazi, `Coins', al-Abhâth, on the authority of ‘Arshi, Bulûgh, 11, makes this two different men, ‘Umar and Zayd. He also writes al-Hallâb instead of al-Khallâb. Both errors are ‘Arshi’s.


- 26 Janadi, Sulûk, al-Hârithi; Khazraji, Kifâyah, al-Harbi.


San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

Mansur b. Yazid b. Mansur al-Himyari
`Abdullah b. Sula'yman 29
b. `Abdullâh al-'Abbas 31
Ibrahîm b. Sula'yman b. `Uqbah b. Muslim al-Bahi 32
al-Harithi b. `Ata' al-Kindi al-Rashid (170-93/88-909)

`Abdâd b. Maymûn/Muhammad al-Sâmî 33
al-Rabi' b. `Abdullah b. Abd al-Madid
`Abd al-Rahim al-Harithi
`Abdullah b. Mus'aba b. `Abd b. Muhammad b. Ibrahîm
Ibrahîm b. `Abdullah b. Tallhad al-Harsh 34
Muhammad b. Khâlid b. Barmak Hammad al-Barzahi 35
Muhammad b. `Abdullah b. Mahîk al-Khuza`i (913-98/829-93)
Muhammad b. Sa'id al-Kimâni

`Isa b. Yazid al-Jâlidi 38
Muhammad b. Mâman Ahmad b. `Abd al-Hamid 39
Husayn/Husn b. al-Mansûl Ibrahîm al-Ifrîqi
Muhammad b. `Abdullah b. Muhîr Fâ'ab b. `Umar b. Shihâbi
Ya`qûb b. Ishaq b. `Abbas `Abbad b. `Umar al-Shihâbi
Mansûr b. `Abd al-Rahman al-Tanukhi 41
`Abdullâh b. Muhammad b. Mâman 42
`Isa b. Khâlid al-Turkî 43
Harshamah Shâr Bâmiyân (227-32/842-47) `Iskâf al-Wâthiq
Harshamah Shâr Bâmiyân (227-32/842-47) `Iskâf al-Wâthiq

Muhammad b. `Abd Allah b. Mahân 44
`Abbad b. (al-)`Umar al-Shihâbi
Ya`qûb b. Ishaq b. `Abbas `Abbad b. `Umar al-Shihâbi
Mansûr b. `Abd al-Rahman al-Tanukhi 41
`Abdullâh b. Muhammad b. Mâman 42
`Isa b. Khâlid al-Turkî 43
Harshamah Shâr Bâmiyân (227-32/842-47) `Iskâf al-Wâthiq

Ya`qûb b. Ishaq b. `Abbas `Abbad b. `Umar al-Shihâbi
Mansûr b. `Abd al-Rahman al-Tanukhi 41
`Abdullâh b. Muhammad b. Mâman 42
`Isa b. Khâlid al-Turkî 43
Harshamah Shâr Bâmiyân (227-32/842-47) `Iskâf al-Wâthiq

40 Janadi, Sulûk, `Abd al-Rahman al-Tanukhi as representative in San'a' before arrival of Harshamah
41 This and the following governor struck coins in their own names. Cf. Bikhazi, `Coins', 23-24. He may have been appointed by al-Amin, cf. Ghûjût, 146.
42 Janadi, Sulûk, has simply Jâfdir b. Yazid b. `Abdullah.
43 Janadi, Sulûk, gives this governor two periods of office. The first period is not mentioned by Khazraji, Kifâyah.
44 He struck coins in his own name. Cf. Bikhazi, `Coins', 30.
46 He struck coins in his own name. Cf. Bikhazi, `Coins', 30.
48 Joint authority—never came to the Yemen, retained al-Tanukhi as representative in San'a'.
49 This and the following governor struck coins in their own names. Cf. Bikhazi, `Coins', 23-24. He may have been appointed by al-Amin, cf. Ghûjût, 146.
The Period of the Yu’firids, 232-387/847-998

There can no longer be any discussion regarding the correct vocalisation of the name of the man who gave his name to this dynasty. It was clearly Yu’fir. The dynasty which Yu’fir b. `Abd al-Rahmân al-Hiwar founded was to be the first independent native dynasty in the Yemen in Islamic times. Dhin Hiwâl, living in the Shibâm area at this time, claimed descent right back to Qâhân through Hiyamr, thus making themselves the successors of the Hîmâyirite tubhâ’ of the pre-Islamic era.47

The increasing impotence of the ‘Abbâsid governors in San`â’, then, and their frequent changes stirred Yu’fir b. `Abd al-Rahmân into action. In 227/841-42 he ordered the attack from Shibâm on San`â’, then under the governorship of Mansûr b. `Abd al-Rahmân al-Tanîkhlî. But the attack failed miserably and the Yu’firid army was compelled to return to Shibâm. With the arrival of reinforcements from Iraq, al-Tanîkhl attacked Shibâm, but the town too well fortified. His attempts to destroy the Yu’firid house were thwarted.48

When news of the Yu’firid rebellion reached San`âra, the ‘Abbâsid capital, al-Wâthîq despatched in 229/843 the Persian general, Harthamah Shâr Bâmiyân, with a force to the Yemen, at the same time appointing him co-governor with `Îdâkh al-Turki. Shâr Bâmiyân reached San`â’ later that year, 229/844, and proceeded to Shibâm. The ‘Abbâsid army, though with superior forces and a large number of horse, was still unable to break the defences of Shibâm and the Persian general gave up, returned to San`â’ and from there made his way back to Iraq.49

The Caliph, al-Wâthîq, dismissed the governor, `Îdâkh al-Turki, who had in any case never set foot in the Yemen, and appointed Ja`far b. Dinâr. He arrived with his army in San`â’ in 232/846. He too was making little progress in his attempt to take Shibâm when, later that year, 232/847, news arrived of the death of al-Wâthîq. Ja`far lifted the siege and made peace with the Yu’firids and made off for San`â’. He was confirmed in his appointment by the new Caliph, al-Mutawakkil (232-47/847-61), but left his son, Muhammad, as his deputy in San`â’ and returned to Iraq. Al-Mutawakkil replaced him by Hîmâyr b. al-Harîth who went out from San`â’ to meet the Yu’firid rebels. By this time, however, the latter were strong enough to leave their fortress and soundly defeated the governor, Hîmâyr, who fled and left the Yemen soon after. This marks the beginning of Yu’firid rule over San`â’.50

It can be assumed that this was a great propaganda victory for the Yu’firids, the hitherto relatively unknown family from Shibâm. We can now read of large areas of the Yemen between `Sâ’idâ in the far north and al-Janad in the south coming under their sway. It would seem most unlikely that the later ‘Abbâsid governors in San`â’ had controlled such vast areas. San`â’ itself for some time to come was to remain the headquarters of the dynasty.51

The intentions of the Yu’firids are difficult to gauge exactly, though if their coinage is a good indication, they planned to remain within the ‘Abbâsid state, for all the coins struck at this time bore the name of the ‘Abbâsid Caliph and not that of their amirs.52 We do not know also whether the Caliphs in Iraq granted diplomas of authority, as, we are told, they did later. Since the sources are without exception silent on the remainder of the rule of Yu’fir b. `Abd al-Rahmân over San`â’ and the surrounding areas, it can be assumed that it was a period of peace and stability. In 258/872 feeling himself too old and infirm to carry out his duties effectively, Yu’fir handed the reins of government over to his son, Muhammad, who received a diploma from the ‘Abbâsid Caliph. Muhammad preferred to use Shibâm as his capital, rather than San`â’, where he is said to have built the city walls. He set about to collect wealth for the state, raising taxes and relying heavily for revenue on the silver mine in Hamdân territory.53

In 262/876 a violent flood swept through Wâdi `I-Sirâr in San`â’, leaving in its wake great devastation. Muhammad b. Yu’fir could only interpret this as a sign of divine wrath and a warning that his greed should cease. He left on pilgrimage in an attempt to appease his Creator, leaving his son, Ibrâhîm, behind as his deputy. On his return from the pilgrimage he retired to Shibâm and left his son, ‘Abd al-Rahîm, in San`â’. In 273/886-87, however, he dismissed him and exercised authority through deputies. The ‘Abbâsid Caliph in Baghdad decided that the hand of the Yu’firids needed strengthening and he despatched his governor, Afl b. al-`Usayn to the Yemen. Before his arrival in the country, however, in 279/892, San`â’ had erupted into violence. Both the `Abnâ’, the descendants of the Persians, and the Banû Shibât, the tribal group predominant in the town, joined forces and took to the streets. They plundered Ibrâhîm’s house, though he himself had escaped to Shibâm. He was, however, assassinated there shortly afterwards. His cousin, ‘Abd al-Qâhir b. Ahmad assumed the little power remaining to the Yu’firids and held on until the arrival of Ibn al-`Usayn. The latter proved a just and able governor and he put an end to the street violence in San`â’.54

Ibn al-`Usayn was recalled in 282/895-96. The events of the following years in San`â’ are not well chronicled and we cannot be sure that the Yu’firids even managed to hang on to the town after the departure of Ibn al-`Usayn. They were certainly deserted by their most ardent supporters, `Alî Tarîf. The governor’s Turkish troops—called Khâtâfûn in the Arabic sources—lacked discipline and committed a number of atrocities in San`â’. The government of the town was seized by a Nihmi, Abu `l-`Atahiyah `Abdûl Bâhi, but he was unable to control Al Tarîf and the Khâtâfûn. He called in the first Zaydi Imam in the Yemen, `Ali ûd-dî `I-Haqq the time to assume control.55

Ya`yah b. Usayn was a Hâsîr Sharîf born in Medina in 245/859-60. Fired by an ambition to rid the Yemen of all the evil practices perpetrated there and to bring to her people the benefits of his own version of Islam, Ya`yah paid a brief visit there in 280/893 reaching a place named al-Sharafah somewhere near San`â’. However, when he did not find the enthusiastic welcome we hope, clear from our footnotes.56

46 Cf. al-Hamâdî, Ikhî, II, 71.
47 Geddes, Yu’firids, Appendix B, tables 1-3. This is an excellent study of the Yu’firid dynasty which is to be published. Our debt to the author of this unpublished thesis is here acknowledged and the extent to which we have drawn from his material is, we hope, clear from our footnotes.
48 `Imâk al-Dîn `Idrîs, Kana, British Library, Ms. Or. 4581, 177b; Geddes, 55.
49 Kana, 177b; Geddes, 56.
50 Kana, 177b-178a; Geddes, 57-58.
51 Geddes, 58.
53 Kana, 178a; Geddes, 60-63.
54 Kana, 178a, Ibn `Abâbir, Gâyât al-samin, 162-63; Geddes, 64. Cf. also Lewcock and Smith, ‘Two mosques’, AHRP, II, 117b.
55 Kana, 178a; Geddes, 69-71.
56 The editor of al-`Alawi, Sirat al-Hândî, Beirut, 1972, 206-207, reads erroneously Jafrîn. The singular is probably Khâtâtûn and they are named after Ibn al-`Usayn who also bore the name Khâtâtûn.
57 Kana, 178a, Fara al-Hândî, 11-17; Geddes, 71-73.
from the local population which he had expected, he returned disappointed to the Hijaz.  

The north of the Yemen at this time was in a state of strife and bloodshed. Remembering the brief visit of this religious reformer three years earlier, some influential tribal leaders from Sa'dah and Khawlan wrote in 286/896 to Yahya in Medina asking him to return to the country and attempt to bring the terrible tribal feuding to an end. Yahya agreed and arrived finally in Sa'dah in the following year, 286/897.  

Meanwhile in San'a' Abu 'l-Ata'iyah found it increasingly difficult to cope with the Al Tarif, the clients of the Yu'firids, and the Khatfarim, the Turkish soldiery brought by the Abbasid governor, 'Ali b. al-Husayn. He began to correspond with Yahya, who now called himself al-Hadi il-a-Haqiq, and recognised him as Imam. In 286/899-900 Abu 'l-Ata'iyah wrote to al-Hadi formally offering to hand San'a' over to him. The Imam readily agreed, but it was 288/901 before he was able to leave his newly acquired territories in the north and start out for San'a'. Abu 'l-Ata'iyah, in order to clear the town of the troublemakers from Al Tarif and the Khafatim, suggested that they ambush the Imam as he approached with the Zaydi army by way of Wadi 'l-Sirr. Al Tarif and the Khatfarim left hastily for the wadi, but Abu 'l-Ata'iyah slipped out to Hadqagan to meet the Imam there and offer him his oath of allegiance. His advice to al-Hadi was that they should return quickly to San'a' before the doped Al Tarif and the Khatfarim could get back. The Imam arrived in the town and took up residence in Abu 'l-Ata'iyah's own house.  

Al Tarif and the Khatfarim returned burning with fury at this trick. They joined followers of the Yu'firid house and pro-Yu'firid rioting broke out in San'a'. The ring leaders of all three factions were imprisoned by al-Hadi and he began to organise his authority in the city. The coinage was struck and the khutbah read in his name. Feeling that his administration in the town was operating smoothly, he left for a hasty tour of the north area of the Yemen, hasting back, however, to the Yu'firid camp at Abn Abililin, to change his name. He swept with speed through the highlands leaving behind representatives from his Tabarist soldiers in each town captured. He returned to San'a', but preferred to set up his headquarters in nearby Shabam and, therefore, appointed his cousin, 'Ali b. Sulayman, as governor there. A serious revolt by Banu Rabibah necessitated the sending by al-Hadi of large bodies of troops away from Shabam and San'a' and the Yu'firids and Al Tarif seized their opportunity. Shabam was besieged and street fighting broke out in San'a', the latter directed against the Zaydi governor, 'Ali b. Sulayman, who was compelled to flee. 'Abd al-Qahir b. Aghmad, the Yu'firid leader, once more took over the city.  

With the arrival of reinforcements from the Hijaz, al-Hadi felt strong enough to attempt the recapture of San'a'. He entered in triumph in the face of minimal opposition, though the surrounding areas remained in Yu'firid hands and hostile to the Zaydi. On numerous occasions the Yu'firids pressed the city hard, sometimes entering only to be driven out again. A dual blow was struck at the morale of al-Hadi and the Zaydi army when both Abu 'l-Ata'iyah and 'Ali b. Sulayman were killed during the Yu'firid incursions. The Imam was deserted more and more by his tribal troops who showed no inclination to sit it out in the beleaguered city with no chances of attacking the enemy and gaining booty. To add to his problems al-Hadi fell ill and could no longer carry out the leadership of the defence of San'a'; the inhabitants began to blame him for their misfortunes. In 289/902 he decided to leave the city to its fate and was borne by litter all the way back to Sa'dah.  

Ibrahim b. Khalaf, the Yu'firid general, now entered San'a', seemingly to take it over for his masters. His aim was, however, to throw off his allegiance to the Yu'firids and establish his own independence. The Yu'firids had no one to turn to for help other than the Imam who at first hesitated, but then agreed to come to the assistance of his erstwhile enemy. In 290/903 he left Sa'dah and approached San'a' via al-Jawf where he hoped to pick up tribal support. There he was surprised by Ibrahim b. Khalaf who in the affray which ensued captured the Imam's son and took him off to San'a'. Al Hadi lost interest in the whole affair. He tried to negotiate the release of his son, but was compelled to return to Sa'dah empty handed.  

The Yu'firids under As'ad b. Ibrahim were able to regain control of San'a' when Ibrahim b. Khalaf and the newly arrived Abbasid emissary, 'Ali b. al-Husayn, came to blows. Ibrahim was forced to flee to the Tihamah, while 'Ali b. al-Husayn was killed by the followers of As'ad who now showed no desire to put up with interference from the Abbasid Caliph. As'ad began the long task of restoring the city which had been so badly damaged during the repeated hostilities described above. He undoubtedly shared the authority with his cousin, 'Uthman, though the two later quarrelled and the latter fled to Kawkabun. As'ad took the town and imprisoned 'Uthman in Shabam below it. As'ad was now in full control of the Yu'firid house.  

The troubles of As'ad b. Ibrahim, the Yu'firid leader, were not, however, over. Perhaps an even greater threat than that of the Zaydi Imam was to appear. This was in the form of the two Fatiimid da'is who arrived in the Yemen about this time. Although they were referred to as Qarâmitah by the non-Fatimid, San'a' and Zaydi sources—a term which has been used thus also by certain European scholars—they were clearly the official Fatiimid da'is in the Yemen and sent there at the express order of the Fatiimid Imam.  

Abu 'l-Qasim al-Hasan b. Faraj b. Hawshab b. Zadin, who was later given the name Mansur al-Yaman, was a Kûfan by origin and in 266/881-90 was converted to the Fatiimid da'wah by the Imam, al-Husayn b. Almudhab, under the name Manûr al-Yaman, was a Kûfan by origin and in 266/879-90 was converted to the Fatiimid da'wah by the Imam, al-Husayn b. Almudhab. He returned to the Yemen, both of them bearing the title of dâ'î, the former operating from the highlands in the north east of Aden, proclaimed the jihâd against all who refused to join him. He took Ayban and, gradually, the whole of the southern Yemen with al-Mudhaykhirah as his headquarters, lying to the west of Ibb and Dhû Jiblah.  

In 292/905 Ibn al-Faqil left with a large army for the north. He made firstly for Dhamar where he defeated the Yu'firid governor, al-Yâfî', in its fortress, Hirrân. Hearing of the defeat of his governor in Dhamar, As'ad left San'a' and fell upon the Fatiimid army at a village named Jawbun south of his capital. His attack had little effect on so huge a force and the Yu'firids were compelled to retreat without further incursions. Ibn al-Faqil advanced on the city and led his army to the summit of Nquam, the mountain overlooking San'a' in the east. There he remained inactive for three days. A tribesman from Banu Shihâb, who occupied the southern section of the town, admitted Ibn al-Faqil and a small
detachment of his forces into the Shihābi area. He encountered fierce opposition, however, though he eventually reached the area of the Great Mosque and the ruins of Ghumān. The town was submitted to the most appalling looting and destruction. As'ad fled to Shibām with his cousin, 'Uthmān, and having no confidence in their ability to hold the town, from there into exile in al-Jawf.

The two Yu'firids had been right not to remain in Shibām, for the town fell to Abu 'l-Qāsim, Ibn al- Faḍl's fellow dā'ī, shortly after the fall of Şan'ā'. The two Fātimids met in Shibām—their first meeting since their arrival in the Yemen twenty-four years before. It must have been an emotional meeting, though it is clear that once the greetings were over there were determined efforts on the part of Abu 'l-Qāsim to restrain his colleague and to insist on a more humane approach in spreading the da'wah. His strong words presumably fell on deaf ears.

Confused incidents followed in Şan'ā'. Ibn Kābālah, previously a staunch Yu'firid supporter, went over to Ibn al- Faḍl after his conquest of the city. He now returned to Şan'ā' and was permitted to enter by the Fātimid authorities. No sooner, however, had he set foot in the town, than he began to preach for the return of Jabal Maswar. 66 In the following year, 299/911, al- Hādi accepted an invitation to come to Şan'ā' and the Yu'firid, clearly considering the Fātimids the greater enemy, joined forces with the Imām to enter the town. The newly arranged Zaydi-Yu'firid rapprochement soon wore thin and As'ad left again for al-Jawf. Ibn Kābālah, in 294/906, turned on al- Hādi who refused to be drawn into hostilities and made off for Şadāh. Ibn Kābālah summoned As'ad to return to Şan'ā' and for the next five months the town was again under Yu'firid control.

The ambitious Ibn al- Faḍl could not leave the main town of the Yemen in the hands of the Yu'firids for long. Master of the south and the Tihāmah, he had to take Şan'ā' once and for all. He entered the town again with little opposition. He consolidated his authority and was to remain in power there for the next three years. His immense power and recent successes evidently turned his head completely, for he renounced not only the Fālimid da'wah, of which he had probably been only a lukewarm supporter anyway, but Islam as well.

In 297/910 al- Hādi determined to resume his authority over Şan'ā'. He marched down from Şadāh and entered the town with little opposition. Ibn Kābālah, who had been in exile in Zabīd, arrived at the gates to find that the Zaydi forces had already left. As'ad, the Yu'firid leader, again arrived in Şan'ā' and, feeling secure, began to appoint governors in the outlying areas, including Ibn Kābālah as governor of Dhamār. As'ad also set out to drive Abu 'l-Qāsim, the Fātimid dā'ī, from Shibām. The town was placed under siege and Abu 'l-Qāsim slipped away, only to return as soon as the Yu'firid army had departed.

The death of al- Hādi, the Zaydi Imām in 298/911–12 meant that the Yu'firids could not count on Zaydi assistance to repel the Fātimids. As'ad and Ibn Kābālah, who appears not to have taken up his governorship, fled as Ibn al- Faḍl advanced. He entered the town in 299/911. His declared intention was to make war on his erstwhile colleague in the da'wah, Abu 'l-Qāsim, an intention he had voiced on repudiating the da'wah and Islam. With Abu 'l-Qāsim out of the way, the Yu'firids weak and the Zaydis with a new and less forceful Imām, the whole of the Yemen was the prize which offered itself to Ibn al- Faḍl. The battle between the two, Ibn al- Faḍl and Abu 'l-Qāsim, was indecisive and a truce was agreed. Ibn al- Faḍl passed through Şan'ā'—causing much damage to the Great Mosque—on his way to al-Mudhaykhirah and left the town undefended. As'ad once again moved in to assume control for the Yu'firids. 67

In 302/915 Abu 'l-Qāsim died. Ibn al- Faḍl died also within a year, though not from natural causes. He was murdered in al-Mudhaykhirah by two agents of the Fātimid Imām, al-Maḥdī, whose da'wah he had betrayed. 68

With the death of Ibn al- Faḍl, As'ad was able to move to the south of the country where he spent the next two years slowly and persistently taking over the former's positions. After this lengthy campaign he returned in triumph to Şan'ā', bringing with him his new bride, one of the daughters of Ibn al- Faḍl. Fātimid prisoners were executed in the city and there was great rejoicing now that Şan'ā' was finally, so it was thought, rid of the Fātimids. Abu 'l-Qāsim had made no provision for a successor and the Fātimid da'wah temporarily collapsed. What little support remained for the da'wah was confined to the area of Jabal Maswar near Hajjah. 69

With peace established in Şan'ā' and the whole of the territory held by the Yu'firids in a state of relative calm, As'ad retired from active participation in the affairs of state and withdrew to Kahālīn, leaving his brother, 'Abdullāh as governor of Şan'ā'. As'ad died in 332/944. These last few years of his life had perhaps been the zenith of Yu'firid power in the Yemen and their like was certainly never to return. 70

Strangely, he had made no arrangements for his succession. Internal squabbles among the Yu'firid amirs immediately flared up and we cannot even be sure from our sources which personalities were involved. By 344/955–6 Şan'ā' had passed into the hands of one Muḥammad b. al- Daḥāq. He was followed by a Ţarīf acting for the Zaydi Imām. The town sunk ever more deeply into chaos with the brief rule of a Yu'firid client, then Ibn al- Daḥāq again, this time ruling in the name of the Tihāmah dynasty, the Ziyādids. The political troubles of the city caused the tribes to approach 'Abdullāh b. Daḥāq b. Abī Ťarīf requesting his reactivation Yu'firid rule in Şan'ā'. 'Abdullāh agreed and left Shibām to enter Şan'ā' in 353/964, but having settled in the city he left quickly to return to Shibām. The control of the town reverted to Ibn al- Daḥāq, ruling for the Ziyādids. In 369/978 Yūsūf b. Yāhiya, the nephew of the Zaydi Imām, al- Qāsim, entered Şan'ā' and recited the khūyah in his own name, declaring himself Imām. This again was a temporary arrangement, for Ibn al- Daḥāq fought back. The Yu'firid, 'Abdullāh, watched helplessly from Shibām while the struggle for Şan'ā' raged on between the two. Frustrated at his impotence he left for the Tihāmah in 379/990–91 and after successes there, went on to Mīkhlāf Jafār in the south. He died in Ibb in 387/997–98 and with his death the Yu'firid dynasty came to an end. Şan'ā' and the rest of the Yu'firid domains remained in anarchy until the arrival of another Fātimid dynasty in the town, the Šulayḥids. 71

73 Sirāt, 402, 403, with the statement that Ibn al- Faḍl contracted some stomach ailment; Yaman, 205-07, who has a different account of Ibn al- Faḍl's death; it was, Janadi claims, contrived by 'Abd al- Bāqī, presumably the `Abbasid caliph and that the poisoner was killed defending himself against Ibn al- Faḍl's men; Geddes, 141-42, giving the more plausible Fātimid account.
74 Sirāt, 405-64; Yaman, 207-12; Geddes, 143-57.
75 Geddes, 149-52.
76 Sirāt, 409-10; Kama, 1802-1808; Geddes, 153-61.
The Period of the Şulayhids, 439-82/1047-88

Şan'a' remained the headquarters of the Şulayhid dynasty for less than forty years and for the majority of that period we have almost complete silence on the nature of their rule, so we have to follow their period in Şan'a', after they had moved to Dhū Jiblāh in the south and in the days of their queen, Arwa bint Ahmad.77

There are at least two suggestions, to our knowledge, about the origin of the name Şalāh. In an 8th/14th century Yemenite book of genealogies78 we read that it is from a place name Şalāh, whereas, with no apparent indication of his authority, a modern author79 states that it is the name of a qabīlah in Harāz named al-Ağlū.

The father of the founder of the dynasty, Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Şulayyī, was a respected leader of the mountainous Harāz region, south west of Şan'a'. He was a Sunnī, following the Shāfīʿi madhhab and he gave his son, 'Alī, destined to be the first leader of the dynasty, a traditional Sunnī education. By this time, the early 5th/11th century, the Fātimid da'i in the Yemen was on Allahabad, Sulaymān b. 'Abdallāh al-Şawālī who, presumably attracted by his great learning, had sought and won the friendship of Muḥammad b. 'Alī. The dā'i may have tried to win over his Sunnī friend, Muḥammad b. 'Alī, without success, but his frequent visits to the house brought him into contact with Muḥammad's brilliant young son, 'Alī. Sulaymān, until the day he died, secretly taught the young 'Alī the doctrines and ideas of the Fātimid cause until he was completely won over. When Sulaymān passed away, all his books, papers and writings were bequeathed to his young convert.80 The Fātimid sources also indicate that al-Şawālī appointed 'Alī khālid al-ša'dī.81

Our Sunnī sources suggest82 that in 429/1037-38 'Alī b. Muḥammad raised his standard on the summit of Jabal Masâr, the highest peak in the Harz range, thus implying some kind of official declaration of the Fātimid da'i. The Ismāʿili sources do not support this and give the impression that 'Alī continued his studies quietly in the area until about ten years later. If we are to accept the Sunnī sources, however, he followed this act with the construction of the fortification, having with him only about sixty followers. He slowly set out to win over the local population. He wrote to the Fātimid caliph, al-Mustanṣir (427-87/1036-94), asking him for permission to proclaim the Fātimid cause openly. The date of this is not clear and it may have been before the raising of his standard on Masâr. Alternatively, this may have been a request to expand territorially, by the sword if necessary. The Caliph agreed and 'Alī rapidly overran the southern mountain fortresses and the Tihāmah.83 The Fātimid view84 appears to be that 'Alī staged his revolution (thawra) in 439/1047-48 and conquered the whole of the Masâr area against stiff local opposition. From there he moved on to the Tihāmah region and defeated the ruler of Şan'a', Abū Ḥāshid, at Şif, to take control of the city. But 'Alī had to fight to retain the capital. He was repelled firstly by an attack from an allied Zaydī-Najâhid army, the latter from the Tihāmah, and in 448/1056-57 the onslaught of a group of Hamdān allied with a Zaydī Sharīf. All sources are agreed that by 455/1063-64

77 The Sunnī and Zaydī sources nowhere give her name, Arwā, and call her al-Sayyidah (al-Hurrah). Tayyibī Fātimī ('Imāmī) sources state that Sayyidah Arwā bint Ahmad al-Ḥurrah al-Malikah held the grade of Ḥujjāh. Cf. Lewcock and Smith, ‘Two mosques’, AARP, IV 129.85

78 See Īyān Śulaymān, 101; and cf. Kay's comments, Yaman, 252, n. 31.

79 Author states that it is the name of a gabilah in Harāz named al-Ağlū.

80 Our Sunnī sources suggest that in 429/1037-38 ‘Alī b. Muḥammad raised his standard on the summit of Jabal Masâr, the highest peak in the Harz range, thus implying some kind of official declaration of the Fātimid da'i. The Ismāʿili sources do not support this and have the impression that ‘Alī continued his studies quietly in the area until about ten years later. If we are to accept the Sunnī sources, however, he followed this act with the construction of the fortification, having with him only about sixty followers. He slowly set out to win over the local population. He wrote to the Fātimid caliph, al-Mustanṣir (427-87/1036-94), asking him for permission to proclaim the Fātimid cause openly. The date of this is not clear and it may have been before the raising of his standard on Masâr. Alternatively, this may have been a request to expand territorially, by the sword if necessary. The Caliph agreed and ‘Alī rapidly overran the southern mountain fortresses and the Tihāmah. The Fātimid view appears to be that ‘Alī staged his revolution (thawra) in 439/1047-48 and conquered the whole of the Masâr area against stiff local opposition. From there he moved on to the Tihāmah region and defeated the ruler of Şan'a', Abū Ḥāshid, at Şif, to take control of the city. But ‘Alī had to fight to retain the capital. He was repelled firstly by an attack from an allied Zaydī-Najâhid army, the latter from the Tihāmah, and in 448/1056-57 the onslaught of a group of Hamdān allied with a Zaydī Sharīf. All sources are agreed that by 455/1063-64
the city. Ismā'īl died soon after the arrival of the Ṣūlayḥīd army in Ṣanʿa' and al-Muqarram Ahmad appointed his son, 'Abdullāh, in his place. The complete vengeance for the death of his father and humiliating captivity of his mother was only possible for al-Muqarram in 461/1068-69. The ʿUmayyids were destroyed, leaving the Tibāhīm once again under the Ṣūlayḥīd banner. The mother of al-Muqarram, ʿAṣmā', died in Ṣanʿa' in either 467/1074-75 or 479/1086.24

From this point onwards the history of the Ṣūlayḥīds is difficult to unravel. In 461/1068-69 al-Muqarram Ahmad had married Arwā bint Aḥmad b. Jaʿfar b. Mūsā al-Ṣuḥaylī. Arwā was born in 444/1052-53. The union produced four children, though none were to play a prominent part in Ṣūlayḥīd affairs. Probably after his mother's death in 467/1074-75 or 479/1089, al-Muqarram Aḥmad handed over the affairs of state to his wife, who, arguing that she could not be wife and mother and head of state into the bargain, left Ṣanʿa', to set up her capital in Dhū Ḥijab. This is the version of events as given by ʿUmarah, our earliest source for the period. It coincides with that of al-Khazraji who also gives the date of the transfer of the capital as 480/1087-88.25

The Fāṭimid sources would seem to indicate that affairs were still in the hands of al-Muqarram Aḥmad himself, when the capital was established in Dhū Ḥijab, though it is clear that the idea was Arwā's.26 The position of Sābā b. Aḥmad, from another branch of the Ṣūlayḥīd house, is difficult to explain, unless we have the clue in Abū Makhramah that he was merely the official dāʿi, since the new ruler, being a woman, could not carry this title. Whatever the truth of the case, the main Ṣūlayḥīd administration left Ṣanʿa', probably about 480/1087-88, for Dhū Ḥijab, and Ṣanʿa' was left in the hands of two governors, ʿImrān b. al-Faḍl al-Yāmi, and ʿAṣad b. Shihāb.27 With the death of the dāʿi, Sābā b. Aḥmad in 492/1098, Ṣanʿa' was lost to the Ṣūlayḥīds.

The Period of the Sultans of Ḥamdān, ca. 481-567/1088-1173

During the period 492-567/1098-1173 Ṣanʿa' was in the control of three distinct families of Ḥamdān. In a previous publication28 the names given to these families were Banū ʿl-Qubayb and Banū Hātim (II). When, in about 480/1088, the second Ṣūlayḥīd ruler, al-Muqarram Aḥmad transferred the dynasty's capital from Ṣanʿa' to Dhū Ḥijab, he left behind as governors his maternal uncle, ʿAṣad b. Shihāb, and a Ḥamdānī tribal leader named ʿImrān b. al-Faḍl of Yām, an Ismāʿīlī like his masters. Ṣanʿa' thus remained a provincial town ruled from Dhū Ḥijab until the death of the third Ṣūlayḥīd ruler, Sābā b. Aḥmad, in 492/1098. In this year another Ḥamdānī tribal leader, Ḥātim b. al-Ghāshīm al-Mughāllāsī, with backing from Ḥamdān, took over the city and assumed the title of sultan.29 Thus commenced the rule of Banū Ḥātim (I).

Our sources for this early period of the rule of the Ḥamdānī sultans provide little detailed information. Sultan Ḥātim appears to have relied heavily in controlling the city and fickle Ḥamdān on his oldest son, Muḥammad, though the latter did not succeed his father when he died in 502/1108-09. His practice of marrying attractive girls and then murdering them had brought about his execution before his father's death. Power in Ṣanʿa', therefore, passed to the second son, ʿAbdullāh. ʿAbdullāh was poisoned two years later, probably by the third son, Maʿn, who then took his place.30

But Maʿn was not the man to cope with the difficult situation in Ṣanʿa' and the surrounding area. He proved weak and ineffectual, totally unable to handle feuding factions within Ḥamdān. In 510/1116-17 he was formally deposed by Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Faḍl, the son of the former governor of Ṣanʿa' under the Ṣūlayḥīds, and a tribal gathering elected as leaders Hishām and al-Ḥūmās, the two sons of al-Qubayb b. Rūṣāf, a totally different family of Ḥamdān. The two already held a high reputation for justice and uprightness and were escorted into Ṣanʿa' with great pomp. The deposed Maʿn held out for a time in the citadel of Ṣanʿa', but was finally compelled to submit. He was imprisoned in Bīrāsh. This marks the end of the rule of Banū Ḥātim (I) and the beginning of that of Banū ʿl-Qubayb.31

We now get in our sources little more than a list of names. Ḥīshām (I), being the elder, was in effective control and proved considerably more successful in controlling Ṣanʿa' and Ḥamdān than previous rulers of this period. He died in 518/1124-25 and al-Ḥūmās became sole ruler. He died in 527/1132-33 and his son, Ḥātim (I), took over. As the next year his rule was confirmed by `Umarah, it is clear that affairs were still in the hands of al-Mukarram Aḥmad himself, though none were to play a prominent part in Ḥamdānī affairs. He died in 533/1138-39, having left to his four sons instructions for his succession. Before his death he had sworn to keep one of their number, Abu ʿl-Ghārāṣ as leader of the dynasty, but once their father was dead, three of the sons tried to push the youngest, Muḥammad, into accepting the leadership. Muḥammad declined and died soon after his father. Ḥamdān stepped in, observing this prevarication on the part of the brothers who were also defying their father's last wishes. A tribal meeting was called which gave its blessing to the appointment of ʿAbdullāh b. ʿAṣad as the grandson of the Šūlayḥīd governor in Ṣanʿa' in 481/1088-89. Control of Ṣanʿa' thus remained with the new dynasty, Banū Ḥātim (II), down into Ayyūbid times. These latter were of Yam and, in name at least, Ismāʿīlīs.32

The new sultan, Ḥātim, at the head of 700 horse, entered Ṣanʿa' with great ceremony. Our sources again let us down badly at this point, though it is clear Sultan Ḥātim spent all his efforts during the next twelve years on the conquest and pacification of the north of the country. The Zaydis were pushed back into their traditional capital, Ṣadā, and with that exception, the area to the north of Ṣanʿa' by the year 545/1150-51 was ruled from the city by Sultan Ḥātim and his agents.33

But events changed dramatically in the year 547/1150-51 when the Zaydi Imām, al-Mutawakkil Aḥmad b. Sulaymān began to push southwards from Ṣadā. Thus began the eleven year struggle not only for the northern area but for its chief city, Ṣanʿa'. Aḥmad b. Sulaymān had firstly moved into the areas of Ṣanʿa', al-Jawf and al-Zahir. Having secured the support of the important tribes of Banū Shihāb in Ḥāṣar, and Madhhīṣ and Khwānīn south of Ṣanʿa', he marched northwards on the city from Dhamūr with 8,000 troops. The Zaydis and Hātimī forces met near Ṣanʿa' and Ḥamdān, the mainstay of the Ḥātimī army, proved unable to stand up to the Imam and his powerful tribal support. Many of Ḥamdān lost their lives and the Sultan was compelled to take refuge in the citadel of Ṣanʿa' where he was
besieged and forced to capitulate. Sultan Ḥātim was granted protection by Imām Aḥmad to come down and meet him. The Imām received him with an outward display of friendship and Ḥātim was allowed to withdraw outside the city with the remnants of his defeated Ḥamdānī army which dispersed. The Imām too permitted his tribal support to return to their homes.104

Sultan Ḥātim collected his force of Ḥamdān with all speed and marched on Ṣan`ā'. ʿAbdāl b. Sulaymān, bereft of his tribal followers, left the city and made for Birāsh. He sent urgent messages to Žanj calling upon them to rejoin him against the Ḥātimīs. But Ḥamdān under the command of Sultan Ḥātim fell upon the Zaydi force at Birāsh, many of the latter were killed and the Sultan was able to regain control over Ṣan`ā'. The Imām, realising that his only hope of recapturing the city lay in assistance from Žanj, marched southwards to meet them and urge them to fight again with him. But again Sultan Ḥātim was able to forestall the Imām's action. He won the race to Dhamār, headquarters of the Žanj, and by persuasive words and generous gifts he made peace among quarrelling factions within the tribe and prevented their giving further aid to the Zaydīs.107

Sultan Ḥātim died in 556/1160-61 and was succeeded by his son, ʿAlī. The latter received the oath of allegiance from the whole of Ḥamdān and then left to take up residence in nearby Wādī Dahr. Presumably angered by ʿAlī's abandonment of Ṣan`ā' a group of Ḥamdān set up a rival leader from the al-Ḥubayy family, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥumās, in the city. ʿAlī was thus compelled to march on Ṣan`ā' and many of the rebels fled, though others remained to oppose his advance in the streets. ʿAlī's youngest brother, ʿImrān, was killed in the fighting, but the Sultan accepted the peace overtures of the Ḥamdānī rebels. ʿImrān's funeral thus turned out to be a meeting of reconciliation for the whole of Ḥamdān.108

Using Ṣan`ā' as his base, Sultan ʿAlī could now turn his mind to expansion. His military activities were to a large extent successful, for he gained much in the north of the country to the detriment of Aḥmad b. Sulaymān, the Zaydi Imām. Sultan ʿAlī gained control of the Zaydi stronghold of Sa`dah. He administered his newly conquered lands by means of fiefs and the appointment of governors.109

There is nothing further to report concerning the activities of Sultan ʿAlī and the Banū Ḥātim (II) in Ṣan`ā'. The city remained their capital and base, but our sources report only their actions outside it. One can assume that they held the city under tight control and the peace that reigned there enabled Sultan ʿAlī to turn his attentions elsewhere. Incidents are reported involving the Zaydīs in Sa`dah in the extreme north, in the Ḥarāz area south west of Ṣan`ā', and in the Shihām-Kawkabān area to the north west.110 With the advance to the north of Tūranshāh with his Ayyūbid forces in 570/1174-75 there entered a new contestant for the struggle for the chief city of the Yemen.

The Period of the Ayyūbids, 569-628/1173-1229

The Ayyūbid dynasty took its name from Ayyūb b. Shādhī b. Ṭūrānshāh, a Kurd originally from the town of Dāvin in Armenia. The early history of the family, particularly that of the two brothers, Ayyūb and Šīrkhūd, cannot be recounted here.111 Suffice it to say that the family moved firstly into Iraq, later into Syria, where the two brothers attained high positions under the Zankīs. With the third expedition into Egypt led by Šīrkhūd, leading in tow his reluctant nephew, Ṣalādīn, in 564/1169, the independent Ayyūb regime was set up there. Following the early death of his uncle, Šīrkhūd, Ṣalādīn, still young and inexperienced in politics, was thrust into power, first as vāżīr to the Fāṭimid caliph, and finally, in 567/1171-72, as ruler in his own right, though theoretically on behalf of the Zankī ruler of Syria, Šūr al-Dīn. Again we cannot argue here at length on the reasons for the expeditions led by the brother of Ṣalādīn, Tūranshāh, firstly in 568/1172 into Nubia, and then in 569/1173 into the Yemen. Possibly the Ayyūbīs in Egypt wished to safeguard the southern end of the Red Sea in order to keep the east/west trade route open. The trade between India and beyond in the east and Egypt herself and the Mediterranean in the west was of vital importance to Egypt. Also, the Ayyūbīs had two years earlier brought to an end the religiously unacceptable Fāṭimid Caliphate and had no wish to see Ismā`īlimism continue to flourish unabated in the Yemen. There was also the fact of strained relations between Ṣalādīn in Egypt and his nominal master in Damascus, Šūr al-Dīn, the latter becoming increasingly anxious at the growing power of the former in Egypt, and, on more than one occasion, threatening to march on Egypt to teach his vassal a lesson. Since they felt somewhat insecure, therefore, the idea of a safe place of refuge if ever the house were threatened from Syria, might well have appealed to the Ayyūbīs. Whereas Nubia proved totally inadequate for that role, the Yemen might have been the ideal place. Other factors, of course, entered into their thinking at this time and these have been fully discussed elsewhere.112

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106 Fisṭūḥ, 42b-43c; Kifayāt, 61-62; Qurraṭ, 26a-26b; Gāḥyar, 301-03.
107 Fisṭūḥ, 43b-44; Kifayāt, 62; Qurraṭ, 26b-27a; Gāḥyar, 303-05, with a different pro-Zaydi account.
108 Fisṭūḥ, 45b-46a; Kifayāt, 66; Qurraṭ, 27b; Gāḥyar, 310-11, under the year 557/1161-62 and describing a further clash between the Hātimīs and the Zaydīs.
109 Fisṭūḥ, 46a; Kifayāt, 66; Qurraṭ, 28a; Gāḥyar, 314-15.

111 A résumé of this, right up to the expedition of Tūranshāh to the Yemen in 569/1173 is given in Smith, Ayyūbīds, II, cap 2. This also contains a detailed discussion of the reasons for the Yemenite expedition in that year with full references.
112 Ayyūbīds, II, cap. 2, iii, The reasons etc.
Saladin’s elder brother, Tūrānshāh, entered the Yemen in 569/1173 and marched down through the Tihāmah, passing through Ḥaḍīrāq to Zabīd. After defeating the Mahdīi forces,113 he crossed over to the Ta‘izz area before turning southwards to Aden. There he put an end to the rule of Banū Zuray’ and turned north passing through al-Qādiyyah and Dhū Jiblāh. Approaching Dhamār in 570/1174-75, Tūrānshāh met with stiff tribal resistance from Jān and lost sixty-five men. He remained in Dhamār, still compelled to ward off the tribal forces. Here it was that the Ayyūbid leader had previously urged his men on to fight the enemy. The next prize was clearly Ṣan‘ā’, but unfortunately we cannot be absolutely sure exactly what happened as Tūrānshāh arrived there for the first time. The town was in the hands of Banū Ḥātim (II), as described in the previous section, in the person of Sultan ‘Alī b. Ḥātim. On his arrival, Tūrānshāh set up his camp at al-Jabūb to the east of the town. Sultan ‘Alī, together with his brother, Bishr, slipped out of the town to the fortress of Birāsh. The Ayyūbid camp remained at al-Jabūb and no one came out to it. Perhaps Tūrānshāh entered and remained within the walls for a while, or perhaps he did not enter at all. Whatever the true course of events, the Ayyūbid forces were not long in the area, as they left again for the Tihāmah.114

When Sultan ‘Alī was sure that the Ayyūbids had departed, he came down from Birāsh in Ṣan‘ā’. He immediately dismantled the citadel,115 a task he had begun before the Ayyūbid advance. In order to deny the use of the fortifications to the Ayyūbids, he also broke down the walls over the Sā’ilah or watercourse (ḥkanādat) and the wall (ṣūr).117

Ṣan‘ā’ thus remained for the time being in the hands of the Banū Ḥātim. The restless Tūrānshāh returned to Syria in 571/1175-76, possibly passing through Ṣan‘ā’ on his way north, though our main source for the Ayyūbīd period makes no mention of this. Before he left he appointed four governors over the territories conquered by his armies, Aden, Ta‘izz and al-Janad, al-Ta‘kār and Dhū Jiblāh and Mūkhār Ja‘far, Zabīd and the Tihāmah. This represents the sum total of the conquests achieved by Tūrānshāh before his departure from the Yemen.118

The second Ayyūbid sultan in the Yemen, al-Malik al-‘Azīz Tughtakin, another brother of Saladin, did not reach there until 577/1181-82. In the intervening years, the mu‘āthīs left by his predecessor, Tūrānshāh, had fallen out amongst themselves and the unity brought about in the Tihāmah and the south of the country had been lost. Al-‘Azīz Tughtakin, therefore, was compelled to spend five years consolidating Ayyūbid control over those areas. In 582/1186-87, he took Dhamār and Hirrān in Jān territory in preparation for an attack on Ṣan‘ā’. Sultan ‘Alī and his brother, Bishr, destroyed the citadel119 early in 583/1187 and the city wall, hastily rescuing as much of their possessions as they were able and carrying them off to the safety of outlying forts. They then again took refuge in Birāsh before ordering the burning of the crops to deny food and fodder to the Ayyūbid army now advancing on Ṣan‘ā’. Their cousin, Qādi Ḥātim b. As‘ad, carried a message to al-‘Azīz Tughtakin suing for peace. At their meeting near Dhamār, Tughtakin agreed to a peace treaty to be effective for one year on payment of 90,000 dinars and supply of one hundred horses to the Ayyūbids. Tughtakin, therefore, left Ṣan‘ā’ in the hands of the Banū Ḥātim and returned to the south.120

Tughtakin was fully occupied in the south for the duration of the peace. Immediately on its expiry, however, he set out once again on the northern road through Dhamār, into the Jāhān plain. There he was met by Qādi Ḥātim who requested protection (ḥimmah) and asked him to call off his advance on Ṣan‘ā’. Qādi Ḥātim offered 30,000 dinars and thirty horses, handing over hostages while he went to seek the approval for the tribute from Sultan ‘Alī in Ṣan‘ā’. The latter rejected the terms and Qādi Ḥātim returned to Tughtakin in Jāhānearing for the lives of the hostages. Tughtakin’s offer to Qādi Ḥātim was that he join the Ayyūbids in order to save the hostages. Qādi Ḥātim swore an oath of allegiance to the Ayyūbid sultan and was welcomed into the fold. After a delay while several fortresses were captured by the Ayyūbids, Tughtakin arrived in Ṣan‘ā’in 585/1189-90. He remained there a few days and then set out on campaigns in the north, all the time using the town as his base. A number of fortresses were taken, the majority being manned by Ḥātimis.121 These campaigns continued until Tughtakin began to run out of funds. He decided to make peace with Sultan ‘Alī and had such power to demand from him the tribute of 500 measures and 500 measures per month. Peace was concluded between the two parties, leaving Tughtakin free to undertake the building of a palace in Ṣan‘ā’ named Dár al-Sulţān, built, so it seems, entirely from the gravestones of Ḥamādān leaders taken from the Ṣan‘ā’ cemetery.122 Tughtakin returned from a visit to Sa‘dah the following year, 587/1191-92, and pitched against Birāsh and this well-tried refuge of the Ḥātimis fell to the Ayyūbids. Intending to leave for the south, Tughtakin made a number of appointments, including placing al-Ḥumām Abū Zabā over Ṣan‘ā’. Having no further interest in Ṣan‘ā’ Tughtakin left for the Ta‘izz area.123

In 593/1196-97 Tughtakin died. His son, al-Mu‘izz Ismā‘il was in the Yemen, but due to some dispute between father and son, he was making his way back to Syria when news of his father’s death broke. The news reached him in Ḥaḍār, so he returned to Ta‘izz via Zabīd, publicising his new appointment as he went along. In Ta‘izz he was met by the Ṣan‘ā’ governor, al-Ḥumām Abū Zabā, who offered him his whole-hearted support. The new sultan decided on an immediate expedition to Ṣan‘ā’ and his governor there accompanied him there from Ta‘izz. On their arrival there in 594/1197-98, al-Mu‘izz seized al-Ḥumām and killed him. He appointed in his place as governor, Shihāb al-Dīn Yānāl al-Jazari. Having reinforced the Ṣan‘ā’ garrison, the sultan left for the south.124 Our Zaydī source adds here125 that the Ayyūbids attempted to trick the Ḥātimis, who had since offered their allegiance to the new Imām, al-Manṣūr, by offering them Ṣan‘ā’. Sultan ‘Alī sent his brother, Bishr, and his son, ‘Amr, and both were arrested by the Ayyūbids in the city. Sultan ‘Alī reaffirmed his support for the Imām after this incident and an inconclusive battle followed between the Ayyūbids and the Zaydīs. Al-Mu‘izz once more turned southwards. An allied force of Zaydīs and Ḥātimis was defeated in Ḥaḍār by the governor of Ṣan‘ā’, al-Jazari.
There followed a serious rift in the Ayyubid camp in San`a'. The governor, Shihâb al-Din al-Jazari, and a Kurdish amir, Hakû b. Mu`ammad, quarrelled and the latter opened up correspondence with the Imam, al-Manṣūr 'Abdullah b. Ḥamzah, with a view to joining him. The Imam agreed and sent a Sharif to meet with Ḥakû and he took an oath of allegiance to the Zaydis. The affair remained secret and Ḥakû still displayed loyalty to the Ayyubid sultan. But the news soon reached al-Mu`izz and a general alert was issued to arrest the treacherous amir. Hakû was indeed captured, but he managed to slip away from his escort to Jalal Kina. He finally met the Imam and, after renewing his oath of allegiance to him, was given command of his forces. With great enthusiasm he turned against his erstwhile colleagues, the Ayyûbids. This important defection brought al-Mu`izz in person to Ṣan`a'.

Al-Mu`izz was anxious to go to the offensive and planned to attack "Abdullah b. Ḥamzah in Shibâm, his headquarters at that time. A further blow to the unity of the Ayyûbids came, however, with the defection of a mamlûk of al-Mu`izz, Shams al-Khawa`. The latter did not leave alone, for as many, we are told, as six hundred cavalry left with him for `Asir, just outside Ṣan`a` to the west. Almost deserted thus, al-Mu`izz was forced to abandon his plans to attack the Imam at Shibâm. Al-Mu`izz took his family and possessions and retired south from the Ṣan`a` area.

From `Asir, Shams al-Khawa` wrote to the Imam in Shibâm inviting him to join the rebel Ayyûbid cavalry in an attack on Ṣan`a`. Against the advice of his officials, the Imam accepted the invitation and arrived in `Asir. The two marched on Ṣan`a` and pitched their camp to the north of Masjid al-Harrah/Hurrah. The Imam with a detachment of his own forces approached the nearest gate of the city, Bāb al-Khandaq, only to be pelted with stones and arrows by the inhabitants from the wall above. The Imam returned to camp. The inhabitants heard the Shi`i adhân from the mosque dressed in black—presumably in woman's garb—and throwing the people into confusion. The Imam was let in with the escape from prison of al-Jazari and the Zaydi governor in the camp and realised that it was a force of the Imam's troops. Some of the inhabitants went out to meet the Imam, but in general the town was divided on the question of allowing him to enter or not. "Abdullah b. Ḥamzah returned to Ṣan`a` with a party of supporters from the city and made for Bīb Ghumdīn.

Shams al-Khawa` entered through Bāb al-Khandaq, further throwing the people into confusion. The Imam was let in through Bīb Ghumdīn and made straight for the Great Mosque. People came flocking in to greet him in the mosque and his first order to open the prisons was carried out. Shams al-Khawa`, having seen the Imam's popularity, became afraid for his own safety and called out the people into the streets under the pretext of a general amnesty (aμām). He surrounded the Great Mosque where the Imam was. Most of the latter's followers scattered, leaving him with only fifteen. He was compelled to escape from the mosque dressed in black—presumably in woman's garb—and hid in a private house. Following a number of further encounters in the city, the Imam was finally able to get his army inside the walls, after winning sufficient popular support from the locals. He made his peace with Shams al-Khawa` who left for the Tihama. The latter was arrested by al-Mu`izz in Zabīd and exiled to Dahlāk island where he died. Attempting to take advantage of the absence from Ṣan`a` of Ḥakû b. Mu`ammad with a large force of Zaydi troops, an Ayyubid army moved north in 595/1198-99, reaching Dhamār. Ḥakû hastily returned to join the Imam and the remainder of the Zaydi army in the town and, before battle was joined, Shihâb al-Din al-Jazari, who had been the Ayyubid governor in Ṣan`a` before its capture by the Zaydis, slipped away to lay siege to his former stronghold. The Ayyubid army was heavily defeated at Dhamār and suffered many casualties. The Imam was thus able to pursue al-Jazari to Ṣan`a` and, although the city had fallen to the latter, he managed to slip inside the gates with a second Zaydi force under Ḥakû close in his wake. Al-Jazari fled the city to Birāsh which he quickly fortified. The Zaydi armies pressed the fortress hard and a long siege ensued. Al-Jazari received some support from the Ḥātimi, Bīshr b. Ḥātim, but the latter was unable to relieve Birāsh. Al-Jazari sued for peace and, after the intervention of Ḥakû, the Imam reluctantly granted it. The Ayyûbids were to retire to the south, but they broke their word and began to stir up the tribes against the Imam. Both the latter and Ḥakû were furious at the behaviour of al-Jazari and the Ayyûbids and a force left to punish them. The Ayyûbid army was pushed south and al-Jazari captured and taken with the Zaydi army to Ṣan`a`. The Ayyûbid attempt to retake Ṣan`a` had been a miserable failure and the ex-governor of the city languished in chains in a Zaydi prison.

News of the resounding defeat of his army and the capture of al-Jazari brought al-Mu`izz up from the south with a large tribal army which he had been able to assemble. Without the knowledge of the Zaydis in Ṣan`a`, he reached al-Ḥaṣqi near Naqīl Shayd, but here a pitched battle took place between the Ayyubid tribal army and a Zaydi army under Ḥakû, who had by coincidence decided upon an attack on the south, the area well under the control of the Ayyubid sultan. Despite news of the arrival of the Imam and Zaydi reinforcements, things went badly for them. In the fighting Ḥakû and other rebel Ayyûbid amirs were hacked to death with swords and cudgels. Al-Mu`izz plundered Ḥakû's camp and withdrew to Dhamār. The news was a great blow to the Imam who lost much of the support of the fickle tribesmen. He instructed his governor in Ṣan`a` to hold on to the town at the expense of other fortresses held in the north and he himself marched to Shibâm. The Ayyûbid cause received a further boost with the escape from prison of al-Jazari and the Zaydi governor in Ṣan`a` capitulated to the advancing Ayyubid army. Al-Mu`izz once more entered the city to take control and reappointed his governor, Shihâb al-Din al-Jazari. The Imam retired to Thulū`, presumably judging that Shibâm was too near for comfort to Ṣan`a` and the newly arrived Ayyubid force there.

The murder in Zabīd of al-Mu`izz in 598/1201-02, threw the whole of the Yemen into a situation of uncertainty. The sultan had become thoroughly unpopular among his own amirs and mamlûks, particularly when he pronounced himself Caliph and fabricated a genealogy going back to the Umayyads! His murder was at the hands of his own mamlûks. The younger brother of al-Mu`izz, al-Ḥāṣim Ayyûb, was at the time in Ta`izz: but he was a mere youth and unable to reunite the crumbling Ayyubid state in such troubled times. His atâbak, Sayf al-Din Sunqur, had openly declared his opposition to his brother, al-Mu`izz, and had approached the Imam with the object of joining him. Of the important Ayyûbid amirs, Shihâb al-Din al-Jazari remained in control in Ṣan`a`, while the now influential `Alam al-Din Wurdashār b. Sāmī had already joined the Imam with a group of other Ayyûbids. Sunqur seized power in the name of his protegé, al-Ḥāṣim. He assembled a group of Kurds and took Ta`izz. Al-Jazari thought his only hope was to join forces with the Imam, particularly as it seemed that Wurdashār was still totally committed to the Zaydi cause. His correspondence with the Imam was followed by a meeting between the two when al-Jazari offered the oath of allegiance. Al-Jazari returned to

125 The name is a strange one and not, as far as we can ascertain, Kurdish. All the MSS. of the Sirî have quite clearly H k w throughout, though an anonymous Zaydi MS. of the period (Ambroasiana, HS 5) reads in at least one place H k w. The form Ḥakû given in the text is purely conjectural. Cf. Ayyûbids, II Cap. 5, note on 45.15.

126 Sirî, 45-46; Ghâyat, 344-46.

127 Sirî, 48-50; Ghâyat, 349.
San’ā with the Imam’s brother and with the Zaydi adhān once more resounding throughout the city, the inhabitants came to know that their nominal overlord was the Zaydi Imam. The Zaydi representative did not stay long, though al-Jazari remained loyal to his oath. He even wrote to the Ayyūbid ruler of Egypt, al-Adil, informing of what he had done. Al-Jazari was not to serve the Zaydi Imam for long, however, for during an expedition into the south of the country with the Imam’s brother, he fell into the hands of Sayf al-Dīn Sunqur who imprisoned him on Jalab al-Ta’kār. 133

The hand of Sunqur was considerably strengthened by the return to the Ayyūbid fold of Wurdashār. The latter was granted San’ā as a feoff in the absence of the imprisoned governor, al-Jazari. Wurdashār made his way up to the city arriving there in 598/1201-02. 134

During one of his absences in the north, the inhabitants of San’ā declared themselves against Wurdashār and the Ayyūbid house, calling for support from the Imam. The latter responded to their call, but his troops could not gain access to help the San’ānis because of Wurdashār’s siege of the city. Wurdashār himself received some support from the tribes, especially Banū Shihāb, and he also sent to inform Sunqur of the situation in and around San’ā. Sunqur at the head of 600 horse hastened to his aid. The rebellion was put down and the inhabitants punished. 135

On his return from the Tihamah, where he had assisted Sayf al-Dīn Sunqur against some rebellious Kurds, Wurdashār broke completely with the Imam and a struggle ensued between the two for the north of the country. This was brought to an end in 602/1205-06 with the signing of a further peace treaty for ten years. This lasted only about two years, however, with the Ayyūbids and Zaydis again waging war for territorial gain in the north, on occasions Sunqur taking part in expeditions but all the time using San’ā as a base. 136

The āṣabah, Sayf al-Dīn Sunqur, who had stood in for the young Ayyūbid, al-Nāṣir Ayyūb, died in Ta’izz in 608/1211-12. Al-Nāṣir assumed officially the rule for the Ayyūbid house, but under the influence of the unscrupulous Ghāzī b. Jibrīl. The new sultan confirmed Wurdashār in his position in charge of San’ā and the surrounding areas. The governor of San’ā was frequently to be found accompanying the sultan in the north of the country. He was not to serve his new master long, however, for he was poisoned in 610/1213-14, probably by Ghāzī b. Jibrīl, who coveted more power and saw in him an obstacle to that aim. Appointed commander-in-chief of al-Nāṣir’s army, he accompanied the sultan into San’ā. 137

Having called in the Banū Hatim and Hamdān tribal troops to protect San’ā, the Ayyūbid forces there left to move against the Imam’s forces in the north. The subsequent battles were inconclusive and came to an abrupt end with the death of the Imam in Kawkabān in 614/1217-18. Ibn Fulayt passed away in the same year. He was taken and buried in San’ā. The death of his āṣabah brought al-Mas’ūd quickly up to San’ā—the first time he had entered the city. 138

From San’ā al-Mas’ūd took the important fortress of Kawkabān before making peace with the Zaydis. He retained his governor, Jamāl al-Dīn Kawbaḥ, in San’ā and left for the south. In 615/1218-19 and in the following year 616/1219-20 al-Mas’ūd paid brief visits to San’ā, on the first occasion for hostilities against the Zaydis and on the second to conclude another peace. The years 617/1220-21 and 618/1221-22 both saw what were now becoming annual visits by al-Mas’ūd. During the latter he granted San’ā to the Rasūlid, Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan, before leaving for Mecca. 139

With the Ayyūbids from San’ā occupied putting down an uprising instigated by a Sufi, as well as the absence of the sultan in Egypt, the Zaydis under the Imam’s son, ‘Īzz al-Dīn, moved again on the town. The Zaydi waited until Badr al-Dīn had left the town to go to the aid of his brother, Nūr al-Dīn ‘Umar, the latter first Rasūlid sultan, although Badr al-Dīn was aware of the Zaydi threat. 140 The brothers met in the Dhamār area, as news continued to arrive of the threat to San’ā from the Imam’s son. The Zaydis encamped at Asīr, just outside the city to the west, and the Ayyūbids finally fell on them there and routed them. News of the Sufi’s uprising and the Zaydi attempt on San’ā brought al-Mas’ūd post-haste back from Egypt. He arrived in the country in 624/1226-27. 141

Al-Mas’ūd was met on his return by his nā’ib or lieutenant, Ḥusām al-Dīn Lu’lu’, who, jealous of the growing influence of the Rasūlid brothers, gave adverse reports of their conduct to the


134 Simîn, 95-97; Kīfāyah, 128; Ghâyat, 367.

135 Simîn, 100-01; Kīfāyah, 128-29; Ghâyat, 374-75, giving 700 cavalry.

136 Simîn, 105-12; Kīfāyah, 129-30; Ghâyat, 390-91.

137 Simîn, 149-52; Kīfāyah, 130-31; Ghâyat, 395-98, with the suggestions that al-Nāṣir poisoned Wurdashār and Ghâzī poisoned al-Nāṣir.

138 Simîn, 153-55; Kīfāyah, 131-32; Ghâyat, 390-401.

139 Simîn, 159-68; Kīfāyah, 132; Ghâyat, 401-04.

140 Simîn, 168-70; Kīfāyah, 132-33; Ghâyat, 404-05, with Jamāl al-Dīn Kawbaḥ, k.w.n.

141 Simîn, 170-72; Kīfāyah, 133; Ghâyat, 405-06.

142 Simîn, 173-74; Kīfāyah, 134; Ghâyat, 408-09.

143 To those who criticized his decision to leave San’ā he replied with the adage: ūnsur adhān kaūn nisf ma`a-hu; cf. Simîn, 179.

144 Simîn, 179-88; Kīfāyah, 134-37; Ghâyat, 410-16.
The Period of the Rasûlids, 628-723/1228-1323

Nûr al-Dîn 'Umar, the Rasûlid amir left in power in the Yemen, feigned loyalty at first to the Ayyûbîds in Egypt. He found it necessary to pitch against a number of fortresses in the south in order to consolidate his position there, before he moved north. He later left the Yemen to take up the governorship of Damascus. Before leaving the Yemen he cast around among his senior amirs to find a suitable nûbîd but found no one willing to keep the Ayyûbîd banner flying in the Yemen except Nûr al-Dîn 'Umar. He was charged with the task of ruling the country until a member of the Ayyûbîd house might reach the Yemen. Al-Mas'ûd died in Mecca on his way north. No Ayyûbîd arrived to take over from Nûr al-Dîn 'Umar. After a period of feigned loyalty to the Ayyûbîd house, he declared an independent Rasûlid state.145

The troubles started because of the behaviour of Asad al-Dîn Muhammad, which did not meet with the approval of his master, al-Mansûr 'Umar. However, however, it seems that a wife of the sultan, Badr al-Dîn Hasan. The governor of the last Ayyûbîd sultan, al-Malik al-Mas'ûd, hastily left the city.146

The real beginning of the Rasûlid regime as an independent power in the Yemen can probably be dated to the year 628/1228, when Nûr al-Dîn 'Umar from Shanî' arranged a peace with the Zaydi Ashrâf. On the surface there seems to have been little of any great importance in this act, but it is clear from our two main sources that the agreement included a declaration of intent to exclude any representative of the Ayyûbîd house from the country. At any rate, an official letter confirming the position of Nûr al-Dîn as the independent ruler of the Yemen arrived in 632/1234-35 from the 'Abbâsîd Caliph in Baghdad. This arrived with the Iraqi pilgrim caravan which carried also the kiswah covering for the Ka'bah. Nûr al-Dîn 'Umar was thus officially al-Malik al-Mansûr, Sultan of the Yemen.147

Shanî' under Asad al-Dîn Muhammad flourished for a time, though in 645/1247-48 things began to go wrong between the sultan and his fief-holder. Some of our sources suggest that the troubles started because of the behaviour of Asad al-Dîn Muhammad, which did not meet with the approval of his master, al-Mansûr 'Umar. However, however, it seems that a wife of the sultan, called simply Umm Qûb al-Dîn in the sources, began in this year to press her husband to grant Shanî' as a fief to her son, Qûb al-Dîn.148 When al-Mansûr suggested this to Asad al-Dîn Muhammad, offering him in lieu the fiefs of Abyan, La'î, Haçiramawt and al-Šîhr and, after his refusal, to release him from service with an annual stipend of a thousand dinars, the latter left in an angry mood for Shanî'. Al-Mansûr 'Umar was unable to deal with the problem of the Shanî' fief until the following year, for matters in the south and in the Tihamah held his attention. The news of the rise of the new Zaydi Imam, Abî Bakr, returned to the Yemen. At first received with hospitality, they were later arrested by al-Muẓaffar Yusuf who could not afford the presence in the country of other ambitious Rasûlids striving for power. The arrest of his father and uncle at once produced further opposition from Asad al-Dîn Muhammad in Shanî'. Although there was another brief reunion between him and al-Muẓaffar Yusuf, Asad al-Dîn fled to the east of the country.152

In 671/1274-75 al-Muẓaffar Yusuf, the son of al-Mansûr 'Umar, was compelled to spend all his time establishing himself in the south and in the Tihamah during the early period of his rule. In the north the Zaydi Imam, Abîd b. al-Šûsîyân, entered Shanî' with his Ashrâf and began to bring the whole of Shanî' and Dhamar areas under his control. Asad al-Dîn, who had installed himself in the stronghold of Birâsh, found himself hard pressed by the Zaydi force from Shanî'. He made approaches to a group of rebel Zaydis of Banû Hâmzah who were at first plotting to overthrow Abîd b. al-Šûsîyân. Possibly since they saw little or no chance of succeeding in ousting the Imam, they arranged an agreement between him and Asad al-Dîn, whereby the latter would join with the Imam and be responsible for leading an army against al-Muẓaffar Yusuf in the south. Matters did not go according to plan, however, for after he had left to fight the sultan, the Banû Hîtim were able to reunite with him with his uncle, al-Muẓaffar Yusuf. Once more the unreliable Asad al-Dîn had succeeded in making peace with the Rasûlid house. After much ceremony and pomp to celebrate the reunion Asad al-Dîn Muhammad returned north. When the Zaydi Imam found himself unable to stem the advance of Asad al-Dîn's army—the latter much reinforced by troops supplied by al-Muẓaffar Yusuf destroyed the citadel (al-Qasr) and left the city to the Rasûlid army under Asad al-Dîn.153

In 694/1251-52 the Rasûlids, Badr al-Dîn Hasan and his brother, Abî Bakr, returned to the Yemen. Asad al-Dîn, despite with hospitality, they were later arrested by al-Muẓaffar Yusuf who could not afford the presence in the country of other ambitious Rasûlids striving for power. The arrest of his father and uncle at once produced further opposition from Asad al-Dîn Muhammad in Shanî'. Although there was another brief reunion between him and al-Muẓaffar Yusuf, Asad al-Dîn fled to the east of the country.152

Continuing his opposition to the Rasûlid house, Asad al-Dîn sold the fortress of Birâsh to the Zaydi Imam for one thousand dinars, thus breaking a Rasûlid-Zaydi peace Asad al-Dîn, despite aid from the Imam, fled before the Rasûlid army sent northward by al-Muẓaffar Yusuf. Then seeing the tremendous tribal assembly which the Imam was able to put under arms and fearing for the fate of the Rasûlids, Asad al-Dîn Muhammad sent to their leader warning them and advising them to return south. This advice they hastily followed.153

Al-Muẓaffar Yusuf had all this time been delayed in al-Dumâyshah in the south by the troubles there. Asad al-Dîn had quarrelled with the Imam over the price of Birâsh and other territorial matters. A Rasûlid army left the south and the Imam fled from Shanî' before its arrival. Asad al-Dîn was thus able to return to the city. The sultan reached Shanî' and confirmed the fickle Asad al-Dîn as fief-holder of the area in 651/1253-54. For Asad al-Dîn proved a more reliable representative and was

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145 Simj, 188-94; Kifâyah, 137-38; Ghâyat, 416-17. For a full discussion of the rule of al-Mas'ud and the role of the Rasûlid brothers during this period, as well as the different historical treatment of the events, cf. Smith, 'Ayyûbids and Rasûlids, I, 180-88.

146 Simj, 201-02; 'Uqûd, IV, 96-97; Ghâyat, 416-19.

147 Simj, 203; 'Uqûd, IV, 41, 51; (mentioning the striking of coins by Nûr al-Dîn in 630/1232-33), 74-75; Ghâyat, 419, 421-22.


149 Simj, 222-227; 'Uqûd, IV, 74, 76; Ghâyat, 427, 430. 150 Simj, 284-36; 'Uqûd, IV, 96, 97-98; Ghâ yat, 433-35.

151 Simj, 270-84; 'Uqûd, IV, 96-7; Yajima, 'Arbân, 9-10; Ghâyat, 435.

152 Simj, 284-87; 'Uqûd, IV, 97-99; Ghâyat, 436.

153 Simj, 301-05; 'Uqûd, IV, 130-61.
engaged in a number of military assignments for the Rasulid house in the north. 154

In 656/1258 in what must have been a periodic reshuffle of the Rasulid fiefs, al-Muzaffar Yusuf confirmed Asad al-Din Muhammam in the San`a’ area. Arrogantly declaring that the area was his and not his fief, Asad al-Din was dismissed and the fief given to his son, Ajmad. 155

In the same year after the murder of an ally of al-Muzaffar Yusuf, Asad al-Din seized his fortress without the sultan’s permission. Al-Muzaffar Yusuf wrote to him castigating him and prepared to march north. Passing through the Dhamar area and retaking his ally’s stronghold, the sultan pushed on towards San`a’, while Asad al-Din Muhammam fled to Dhahamar. The former entered the city in 658/1260 and not long after appointed a new fief-holder for San`a’, Shams al-Din Ali b. Yalya. Asad al-Din lurked in the area, attempting to raid the town. These raids clearly aroused some concern amongst the Rasulids, for ‘Alam al-Din Sinjar al-Sha`bi was sent north with an army to assist in combating Asad al-Din. His stay in the north was brief, however, and he returned south. He went back to San`a’ the same year as its official fief-holder. 156

The appointment of ‘Alam al-Din al-Sha`bi as muqa’ of San`a’ opened an important chapter of relative peace and stability in the area. He was a gifted man and as much at home as a politician as a military commander. Although the Zaydi Ashraf briefly took San`a’ not long after his appointment there and al-Muzaffar Yusuf was compelled to march north, 157 the city was generally firmly under al-Sha`bi’s control until his tragic death in 682/1283-84. 158

We are now entering into the period—until the death of al-Muzaffar Yusuf—which marks the high-water mark of the Rasulid regime in the Yemen. The territory under their control covered the whole of the Yemen, even extensive areas to the north of San`a’, and stretched across to Hadramawt and the port of Zafar in the east. This was apart from the south and the Tihâmah. The land was administered by means of a series of fiefs, all held by trusty muqa’a, plus a cadre of roving ambassadors despatched by the sultan as their services were required throughout the Rasulid area, perhaps to assist the local muqa’a in a military campaign, perhaps to conduct delicate negotiations with tribal leaders who had quarrelled with the fief-holder. Apart from his responsibilities for the fief of San`a’, ‘Alam al-Din was also the head of this cadre. We find him, therefore, much engaged in the north of the country, dealing with tribal affairs and maintaining a rigid policy of denying San`a’ to the Zaydi Ashraf. In 674/1275-76, however, during al-Sha`bi’s absence from the city, the Zaydis took San`a’ and were able to hold on to it until the following year. 159

In 682/1283-84 al-Sha`bi died tragically when his house in San`a’ collapsed on him and his assembled guests. 160 He was succeeded there by al-Malik al-Wâthiq, the sultan’s son. Al-Sha`bi was to be greatly missed, both as holder of the fief of San`a’ and as roving ambassador. Al-Wâthiq continued for some time as muqa’a of San`a’, though he could not match the qualities which his predecessor had brought to the position. He was removed from office in 687/1288-89. 161

In 694/1294-95 al-Muzaffar Yusuf, feeling himself weak and too infirm to carry on the affairs of state, handed over to him his son, al-Ashraf ‘Umar. The old man died just over four months later. 162 His reign had been a long and prosperous one—one which saw the greatest territorial gains for the Rasulids and relative stability throughout their lands. One wonders, it is true, why al-Muzaffar Yusuf permitted San`a’ to remain so long in the hands of the thoroughly untrustworthy Asad al-Din Muhammam. Although he had inherited him from his father, al-Mansur ‘Umar, and he was his close relative, in fact his nephew, it is uncharacteristic of al-Muzaffar Yusuf to put up with anything less than complete loyalty for such a length of time. His choice of ‘Alam al-Din al-Sha`bi in San`a’ after the disgrace of Asad al-Din Muhammam, however, was entirely vindicated. Until his untimely death, al-Sha`bi served the city and his Rasulid masters well. It was to him and other officials of high calibre that the Rasulids owed the brilliance of their rule in the Yemen.

Litle is now heard of San`a’ in the primary sources for some time, with the exception of the occasional references to the fief-holder. In 696/1296-97, al-Asraf ‘Umar died and was succeeded by al-Mu`ayyad Dâwûd. 163 The following are recorded as holding the fief of San`a’ during this period. At the time of the assumption of power of al-Mu`ayyad Dâwûd, it was al-Adîl Abu Bakr, a son of al-Asraf. 164 In 698/1299, we find al-Muzaffar Hasan b. Dâwûd taking the fief. 165 In 700/1301, the sultan’s son, al-Zâfir, is mentioned proceeding to San`a’ as muqa’a. 166 In contrast to the above list of members of the Rasulid family, the fief was taken over in 702/1302 by Amir Sayf al-Din Tughril, 167 though he resigned two years later when he quarrelled with a high-ranking state official. Al-Mu`ayyad Dâwûd appointed his own son, al-Mu`azzfar, to the area, though the latter appears to have remained absent and sent a lieutenant in 704/1305. 168 Later that year, however, Sayf al-Din Tughril returned to the fief after the resignation of al-Mu`azzfar. 169 The author of the Zaydi Ghâyat al-amûnî makes mention on two occasions of the deputy governor of al-Mu`ayyad Dâwûd—he uses the verb makhlaﬁa and the word amûnî—Amir Muhammad b. Hasan b. Nûr al-Din, though he does not appear in Khazrajî’s Lizard. 170 Al-Mu`ayyad Dâwûd died in 721/1321 and al-Mu`azzfar ‘Ali followed him into power. 171 In the following year, 722/1322-23, the Zaydi Imam attacked San`a’ with a large force. The siege which ensued dragged on and the Rasulid representative in the city was forced to sue for peace. 172

In 723/1323-24, the governor of al-Mujahid ‘Ali in San`a’, Asad al-Din b. Nûr al-Din, died. Seizing the opportunity when the Rasulid administration in the city was in confusion over the death, the Imam Muhammad b. al-Mu`âthkar, took the city. 173 This event marks the beginning of important territorial losses for the Rasulids in the north. As for San`a’, the Rasulids were never to have effective control there again. From this period for over a century until 858/1455, they survived in their traditional strongholds in the south and the Tihâmah. In this year, after disastrous family squabbles amongst the Rasulids, their remaining territories fell to the Banû Tahir, led at first by the brothers, ‘Ali and ‘Amir b. Tahir. The Tahirids, however, imprisoned only occasionally on the history of San`a’ and from now until the entry of the Turks into the Yemen in the mid 10th/16th century, the city remained mainly under the control of one Zaydi group or another.

One cannot write of the Rasulids without being compelled to stress two faces of their rule in the Yemen. The early Islamic history of the country is that of a series of petty states rising, flourishing for a time, declining and passing away into oblivion.

154 Sima, 303-05; Ghiyath, IV, 103-06.
155 Sima, 334-36.
156 Sima, 334-42, 346; Ghiyath, IV, 130-01; Chronique, 12, 13.
157 Sima, 413-15; Ghiyath, IV, 133.
159 The best description of this tragic event is to be found in the Sima, 536-40, whose author, Muhammad b. Shîrîn, was in the house and himself buried for several hours under the rubble. Cf. also Ghiyath, IV, 226-27; Chronique, III, 99, 157-58.
160 Sima, 541, 543, 555; Ghiyath, IV, 235; Chronique, 19; Ghiyath, 468.
161 Sima, 986-67; Ghiyath, IV, 273-75; Ghiyath, 476.
162 Ghiyath, IV, 296; Ghiyath, 477-78.
163 Ghiyath, IV, 301; Ghiyath, 478.
164 Ghiyath, IV, 318; Ghiyath, loc. cit., stating al-Mu‘ayyad was appointed in 696/ 1296-97.
165 Ghiyath, IV, 328.
166 Ghiyath, IV, 438; Ghiyath, 482-93.
167 Ghiyath, IV, 564; Ghiyath, 485.
168 Ghiyath, IV, 567; Ghiyath, loc. cit.
169 Ghiyath, 488-89, 494-96.
170 Ghiyath, IV, 446; Ghiyath, 494.
171 Ibid, 497.
172 Ibid, 499.
It was only with the coming of the Ayyûbid house to the Yemen that we can discern a definite and concerted effort to extend control over the whole of the country. The Ayyûbids did not, through force of circumstances, have the opportunity to complete this task. But their successors, the Rasûlids, who, it must be recalled, took over bloodlessly, continued to build on the legacy bequeathed to them by the Ayyûbids. During the reign of al-Mu'azzam Yûsuf (647-94/1249-94), Rasûlîd power reached its high-water mark and it can be safely said that they effectively controlled the whole area of south western Arabia and Hisâramawt and the south coast as far as Zaffûr too. Only parts of the country to the north of Ṣan`ã’ were in Zaydi hands and not under Rasûlîd control.

This period meant more than the establishment of the unity of the Yemen, however, for it produced also a peace and stability hitherto unknown in the country's history and one, one might venture to suggest, not repeated down to the present day. This peace and stability in its turn led to economic prosperity, when imports and exports passed freely through Rasûlîd ports such as Aden and an elaborate fiscal policy pertained throughout the country. An intellectual flowering took place also and certainly much literature relevant to culture of the Yemen was written, not least by the members of the Rasûlîd house themselves.

The Period of the Zaydi Imâms, 732-953/1332-1515

The difficulties of writing an account—even an introductory account—of a period of Yemenite history which demands extensive use of primary Zaydi sources has already been noted. After the loss of Ṣan`ã’ to the Zaydi in 723/1323, all but these Zaydi histories forget the very existence of the city—at least during the Rasûlîd period. The name figures again in the Sunni sources on the occasions on which the Tâhirîds appeared in the history of Ṣan`ã’.

We are therefore compelled here to draw extensively on the work of the 11th/17th century Zaydi writer, Yahyâ b. al-Ḥusayn, whose chronicle, Ghâyat al-amâni, was published in Cairo in 1968. The following account, therefore, is based in the main on that work and is thus brief and tentative. The pattern which emerges, once the power of the Rasûlîds in the north was spent, is one of effective control of Ṣan`ã’ by the Zaydi with only internal quarrels and tribal opposition until the mid 9th/15th century, when the Tâhirîds, the new masters of the south, contested the city for a time.

In 723/1323, following the death of the governor of al-Mu‘âyryan ‘Ali and the confusion which reigned, Ṣan`ã’ was taken by the Zaydi Imám, Muhammad b. al-Muqafîr. This was a grave blow to the morale of the Rasûlîds and this event, coupled with that of internal squabbles between the Rasûlîd troops and the inhabitants of Ta‘izz, brought an end to Rasûlîd activities in the north. We can assume that the Imám established his position in Ṣan`ã’ and remained for the most part in the city. He died in 729/1328-29 in Dhamarmar, but was brought to Ṣan`ã’ for burial in the Great Mosque. He was interred in the prayer hall of the mosque (mu‘akhkhara) and the inhabitants themselves bore the cost of transporting his body from Dhamarmar. Following his death, Ṣan`ã’ was seized by the Zaydi Ashrafi of Banû Ḥamṣah.174

In the following year, 730/1330-3, however, after no fewer than four Imams had attempted unsuccessfully to establish themselves at the head of the Zaydi community, Yahyâ b. Ḥamṣah emerged in the supreme position. He moved quickly into Ṣan`ã’. From there he was able to wage war on certain Isma‘ili groups of Hamdân in the Wadi Dahr. He died in 747/1346-47 and the city fell into the hands of two brothers, Zaydi amirs named Ibrâhîm and Dâwûd b. ‘Abdullâh. The two amirs with strong Hamdân support held on to their control of Ṣan`ã’ despite the pressure upon the city in 750/1350-51 from the new Imám, ‘Ali b. Muhammad, who had just risen in Thulû. The city held fast in the face of a six months’ siege and the Imâm was finally compelled to return to Thulû.175

Power within Ṣan`ã’ passed to Dâwûd b. ‘Abdullâh’s son, ‘Abdullâh, who was again able to resist the legitimate Zaydi Imám in 775/1373-74. Imám Ṣalâh al-Din marched with a strong army from Dhamar, though he was unable to make any impression on the defences. He withdrew with heavy losses to Dhamar. The Imâm was forced to wait until 778/1377-78 before he was again able to turn his attention to Ṣan`ã’.

He negotiated a peace treaty with Hamdân, stipulating that the latter abandon their support for the Banû ‘Abdullâh in the city. He then set in motion a carefully laid plot. He asked for the hand of the mother of Idrîs b. ‘Abdullâh b. Dâwûd in marriage and her son agreed, despite opposition from Idrîs’s cousin, Dâwûd b. Muhammad. The marriage was consummated just outside Ṣan`ã’, after which the Imâm returned to Dhamar, his new bride to Ṣan`ã’. In 783/1381-82, the Imâm marched on the city in full force and, as he drew near, his wife, the mother of Idrîs, ordered her son to go out to meet him. Again despite the opposition of his cousin, Dâwûd b. Muhammad, Idrîs left the citadel, which he held with his mother, to meet the Imâm. The latter promptly on his arrival, threw him into irons. Dâwûd, realising his cousin had been thoroughly tricked by the Imâm fled with all his family and possessions. He was eventually to join the Rasûlîd sultan, al-Ashraf, with whom he remained until his death in 788/1386-87. The Zaydi Imâm, Ṣalâh al-Dîn, entered Ṣan`ã’ and took the citadel. His wife and her son, Idrîs, were permitted to live in the city, though he had no further contact with them. Once again Ṣan`ã’ was in the hands of the recognised Imâm.176

Imâm Ṣalâh al-Dîn died in 793/1390-91 from injuries after he had been thrown and dragged along by a mule which had shied at a bird. The assumption of power by his young son, ‘Ali, coincided with unrest throughout the Zaydi area. Although Ṣan`ã’ itself was not in danger, ‘Ali was compelled to travel frequently in person to trouble spots and we know that on these occasions he appointed a deputy (istakhkafa) over Ṣan`ã’. It is recorded also that in 798/1395-96 he dismissed his qaḍî in the city, since the latter had been corresponding with the Rasûlîd sultan—called simply Sultan al-Yaman al-Asfal in the Ghâyat.177

It can be noted in passing that the security of the Zaydi in Ṣan`ã’ was threatened for a time in 806/1403-04, when a force of Hamdân moved on the city. They were, however, repelled and lost a number of their leaders. Shortly afterwards Imâm ‘Ali concluded a truce with the Rasûlîd sultan.178

From the year 828/1424-25 there followed three Rasûlîd sultans in rapid succession and it was evident that the edifice of their power in the Yemen was beginning to crumble. In 839/1435-36 serious internal squabbles plunged them further on the road to ruin. Again two more young and mediocre members of the family assumed what remained of Rasûlîd power between the years 842-45/1438-42 and there were serious tribal uprisings in the Thulâm in 843/1439-40. We find the brief appearance of a Rasûlîd usurper in 847/1443-44 and finally the conflict between al-Mu‘azzam and al-Mas‘ûd brought an end to the dynasty in 858/1454, when the latter left the Yemen for Mecca. What was left of the Rasûlîd territories in the south was taken over by the Banû Ta‘dir, whose two leaders, the brothers ‘Ali and
`Amir b. Ṭāhir, declared themselves independent rulers and began to consolidate the south. Meanwhile, `Ali b. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, the Zaydi Imām, had died in 840/1436-37 in Ṣan`ā’ of the plague.179

With the Ṭāhirids busy in the south, the Zaydis in Ṣan`ā’ could feel reasonably secure, though tribal opposition from Ḥamādan posed a serious threat to the city in 860/1456. Sooner or later, however, clashes were inevitable between the two powers in the land and it is clear that from the start, the Ṭāhirids had done all they could to discomfit the Imām. After Zaydi-Ṭāhirid skirmishes in the south in the years 862-63/1457-59 the Ṭāhirids took Dhamār—an obvious prelude to an attack on Ṣan`ā’—in 865/1460-61, though they were unable to hold on to the town and had to retake it in the following year. From there, with the aid of a Zaydi rebel, they were able to gain access to Ṣan`ā’ in 866/1461-62.180

The next few years saw a fierce struggle for the city of Ṣan`ā’ between the Zaydis and the Ṭāhirids. Although the Ṭāhirid sultan, al-Mujāhid ʿAlī, felt confident enough to leave the city soon after its capture and to appoint a deputy in his absence, it was back in Zaydi hands by 869/1464-65. Two attempts by the Ṭāhirids to re-enter Ṣan`ā’ in 870/1465-66 were both unsuccessful and during the second ʿAmir b. Ṭāhir and many of his followers were killed. The situation in Ṣan`ā’ at this time truthfully reflected that in the whole of the country—the Ṭāhirids generally weak and in retreat, the Zaydis strong.181

The power of the Ṭāhirids was however not yet spent. In 907/1501-02 the sultan, ʿAmir b. ʿAbd al-Wahhab, moved into Dhamār with a large force. He marched on Ṣan`ā’ and began a total siege of the city. The siege dragged on and, despite the use of mangonels, the Ṭāhirid attack was repelled in the following year. ‘ʿAmir’s efforts in 910/1504-05 were rewarded, however, and his siege engines proved too much for the city’s defences. The Imām, Muḥammad b. ʿAli al-Washali, hastened to relieve Ṣan`ā’, but he fell into the arms of the waiting Ṭāhirid army and was taken back as a prisoner to ‘ʿAmir’s camp. The sultan entered the city. If we can rely on our Zaydi—and probably therefore here a little biased—source, a reign of terror followed, ‘ʿAmir killing off the Zaydi Ashraf within Ṣan`ā’, plundering, interfering with their womenfolk and confiscating horses and weapons. In the following year, 911/1505-6, the sultan left Ṣan`ā’ for the south, having appointed one of his military leaders as deputy. With the Ṭāhirids in the city, we get little information about events there. We have mention of the Ṭāhirid governor (ʿamīl) there in 917/1511-2 and news of the sultan’s visit to the city in 920/1514-15.182

179 Ibid, 567-85.
180 Ibid, 586-94.
182 Ibid, 628-41.
Chapter 8
The Post Medieval and Modern History of Ṣanʿāʾ and the Yemen, ca. 953-1382/1515-1962

The Mamlūk in the Yemen

From remote ages the Red Sea has been an artery of East-West commerce and the rich documentation now coming to light demonstrates that this commerce flourished with ever greater vigour during the Middle Ages. The revenues derived from the Yemeni ports enabled the Rasūlids and their Tāhirid successors to maintain the splendour of their rule from the southern capital, Taʾizz—the customs revenue from Aden and lesser ports, amounting to over 2,300,000 dinars per annum, was remitted as treasure (khirāzānah) dispatched in four instalments to Taʾizz and escorted with the pomp and ceremony of the tabl-khānah.1 In the first decade of the 15th century the Rasūlids estimated to draw from Balad Ṣanʿāʾ, al-Sirr, al-Raḥbah, the regions of Hamdān, Ḣabd, Dhayfān and al-Bawmān 150,000 dinars and 3,000 dinars worth of raisins; these are the flat upland areas controllable from Ṣanʿāʾ.2 On the contrary the Zaydi Imāms of Ṣaʿdah and, intermittently, of Ṣanʿāʾ, enjoyed no such sources of revenue mulcted largely from strangers not native to the country. Though the Imāms could call on the valour of the northern tribes for support tribal loyalties were ever constant and fickle, while attempts to collect taxes were an ever present cause of friction, often leading to the casting off of Imāmic suzerainty.

Outside the Yemen, in the closing years of the 16th century, had commenced a train of mighty events that were yet to involve not only land-locked Ṣanʿāʾ in its high mountain plain, but even the tribal areas lying beyond it. During the years AD 1497-9 the Portugese Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope, struck across the sea to India, and returned to Lisbon. Swift to follow up the first voyage, the Portugese soon established a maritime commercial empire on the seaboard of the Indian Ocean. By blockading the Islamic lands of the Middle East from the rear as it were, they created a kind of economic crisis in the Yemeni ports enabling the Rasūlids and their Tahirid successors to maintain the splendour of their rule from the southern capital, Taʾizz—the Yemenis for the first time had met with a new weapon, the bundug3 or arquebus, which was mainly responsible for their losing the battle. The Mamlūk troops arrived by sea at Kamarān island in 1515. As the last Tahirid Sultan, ʿĀmir b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, refused to provision them, they resolved to attack him, being supported hereby the mountain Zaydis who promised supplies and horses. The Egyptians defeated ʿĀmir outside Zabid and he retired on Taʾizz—the Yemenis for the first time had met with a new weapon, the bundug or arquebus, which was mainly responsible for their losing the battle. The Mamlūk went on to attack Aden but it successfully withstood their bombardment and they retired, leaving behind them a reputation for cruelty and rapacity.

Egyptian forces now turned to Taʾizz which they took, and then al-Maqīra in which ʿĀmir's treasure was kept—it was revealed to them by a faqih, a close companion (samīr) of his whom they then killed. Chinese porcelain and metal vessels are among items of booty mentioned by the historians.4 The tribes of the middle region of the Yemen opposed their advance northwards to Ṣanʿāʾ, but were badly defeated.

The Mamlūks—usually called by the historians al-Jārīkīsah, i.e., Circassians, entered Qaʾū al-Ṣaʿāʾ where they defeated the Tāhirid forces. Sultan ʿĀmir attempting to flee to the celebrated fortress Dhū Marmar, in Tāhirid hands at that time, was in the Yemen under a local Dīl Muḥtaj broke away from the main branch in India. The are called Sulaymānīs after their first charismatic Dīl, Sulaymān b. Ḥasan and the Indian branch is known as Dāwīs.5 For a naive description of the bundug see Qurra al-ʿaswān, ed. Muhammad al-Awār, II, 220.

1 See p. 44, n. 30. Though so far no description of the Yemeni tabl-khānah's composition is known, it would probably be something along the lines of that of the Mamlūk (cf. Qaiṣahbānī, Sāḥib al-ʿarīb, Fāḥīrīs, Cairo, 1972, 405).
2 Malakāhāk al-fāṣṣah, my transcript, f. 13r. Royal estates of the Rasūlids in Ṣanʿāʾ and Dhānim produced 720 dinars.
3 Al-Dāʾī ʿl-Muṣṭaq, the head of the Daʾwah, Yūnūs b. Sulaymān, moved the headquarters of the movement to India in 946/1539. After 999/1589 a group

the Portugese at Dīl and a Portuguese naval force probing into the Red Sea in 1513, mounted an attack on Aden but failed to take it.

Mamlūk rulers had followed the traditional Egyptian expansionist policy in moments of power, of extending the Egyptian sphere of influence down the Red Sea. At an earlier period the Fāṭimid dynasty had, by propagandist techniques, acquired adherents in the Yemen even before coming into power in Egypt, and later the headquarters of the Fāṭimi ʿṬayyībī Daʾwah, usually referred to as Ismāʿīlīs, had been transferred there. In later centuries both Muhammad ʿAlī Pasha and Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir were to attempt to take the Yemen by force of arms but their armies found it too tough a nut to crack. The Mamlūks, already controlling the Hijaz and their influence extending almost to Sūwākīn on the west bank of the Red Sea, seem to have decided it imperative to conquer the Yemen and use it as a base to counter the Portugese menace.

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5 L. O. Schuman, Political history of the Yemen at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, Gröningen, 1962, 86.
captured near Jabal Nuqum and his head struck off. The Mamlûks then advanced on the city with the heads of `Amir and his brother impaled on their spears, and its governor, al-Baḍînî, in fear, asked them for safeguard (amân)—which they granted and he opened the gates to them. Yet this in no way saved it, for they killed some 500 or 1,500 of its defenders and troops and exacted crushing levies from the merchants (tujjâr) as they had done at Zabid and other towns—for instance the little Bandar al-Buq`âb of Zabid had been forced to pay the large sum of 10,000 Ahsâfařîs its revenue at the beginning of the 9th/15th century under Rasûlîd rule had been 50,000 dinars. The Mamlûks are said to have made the Şan`ânîs carry wine-jars (dinân) for them from al-Sâ`îlah to the Qaṣr—which for the Muslim porters of the city would probably be a humiliation. This would indicate that the Jews who made the wine were established near al-Sâ`îlah at the time. Nor did al-Baḍînî’s surrender preserve his own life and fortune, for when they later decided to leave Şan`ā’ they strangled him. The chronicler compares them to the Tatars at the sack of `Abbâsîd Baghdad.

At the siege of Zabid the Mamlûk San`âni, Sharaf al-Dîn took up his position near the fortress of Thulûl which was still held by a Tâhirîd governor. This alarmed the Mamlûks so they proposed to him that they leave him in peace there and he should not molest them in Şan`ā’.

The Arrival of the Ottomans

Zaydi progress in establishing control by the Imamate over south western Arabia was now to be brought to an abrupt check. As long ago as 1525 a report, probably written by the commander of the Ottoman fleet in the Red Sea at that time, Salîm Ra`îs, was made, presumably, to the governor of Egypt, concerning the Red Sea and the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean.

The author of the report indicates the potential Portuguese danger to the Ottomans, and points out the extent to which they were capturing the trade in spices and other goods, as well as trying to cut off the trade between the Red Sea ports and the Indian coast. ‘The province of Yemen’, he says, ‘is more flourishing than the province of Egypt, and it has no ruler. Its revenue is abundant. In this province 4,000 guldens are paid, and 700 guldens are received per annum from the trade in the Red Sea, and 1,000 guldens from the trade between the Red Sea and the Indian coast. 6

At Zabid he matched the treacherous behaviour of the Jarakîsah against Imam Sharaf al-Dîn10—to which they agreed—but after Diwâdî had been so injurious as to allow them to enter Aden, they hung him from the yard-arm of one of their grubs, seized the port and established a garrison there under a Turkish governor.

Sulaymân’s expedition achieved nothing against the Portuguese in India and he returned in vengeful mood to the Arabian coast. At Zabid he matched the treacherous behaviour of the Jarakîsah Mamlûks by executing their Amir of Zabid, Ahmad known as al-Nâkhîdah, the Ship’s Captain, after he had come to meet him under his safe-conduct. This act he followed up by executing all the remaining Jarakîsah in Zabid. Sulaymân on departing for Jeddah and Istanbul, left instructions with the Ottoman Amir, Mustâfa ‘Izzat, whom he had placed in charge at Zabid, to look for the opportunity to acquire the Imam’s territory.

6 Qurra al-wa`iṣa, II, 232.
7 Al-Qâsim, Ghiyât al-amâni, Cairo, 1988, II, 563. If this accusation should have any truth in it, the likelihood would be that it was a local aberration.
9 The Mulakhkha gives a figure several times this for the Zabid area but perhaps the Report only means the little port of Zabid, al-Buq`ah.
10 The Sharaf al-Dîn family try to play down (the family quarrel) which lost them the Imamate. Of Clive Smith, ‘Kawkabân: some of its history’, Arabian Studies, 1982, VI.
The First Ottoman Conquest and Occupation

In pursuance of their expansionist policy the Turks were already besieging Ta’izz by 946/1539-40, and in 951/1544-5 they even attempted to reach San’ā’ via the Wādi Sibāh, a route taken by the post (bārid) from the Tihamah to San’ā’, the surprisingly short journey of two days only. These manoeuvres were abortive. What in actual fact made possible, or at least facilitated Ottoman penetration of the Upper Yemen was dissension with the Imamīc House, a disastrous pattern so frequently recurring in Yemeni history.

Imām Sharaf al-Dīn al-Azdī, in the declining years of his long life, grew envious of his son al-Muṭahhar, a valiant warrior who had played a leading role in Zaydi victories over the weakened Ṭāhirids. One of the Imam’s sons attempted to imprison Muṭahhar but he retired to the lofty fortress of Thula and the Imam sent another son of his to attack him there. Muṭahhar retaliated by writing to Uways Bāḥā, the Ottoman general in Zabīd, urging him to attack Imamīc territory. At the same time he entered into correspondence with the tribes who, true to character, on perceiving the split between him and his father, at once stopped paying their dues (ḥuqûq) but, apprehensive of attack from Muṭahhar, took his brother’s side instead.

Uways, far from loath to snatch the opportunity presented to the Ottoman forces, advanced from Zabīd to Ta’izz, taking large cannon with him. This seems to have been the first time cannon were used inside the Yemen and, as can be seen from the illustration from Rumuzī’s Fath-nimāmah, they were to be employed all over the Yemen to reduce its otherwise virtually impregnable fortresses to surrender. Ta’izz nevertheless fell to Uways because the tribal soldiers garrisoning the city, mostly Shāfī’īs, deserted to him and others followed. The Ghāyat al-amānī11 remarks that news of this disaster took only four hours to reach San’ā’, normally a journey of six to eight days. Evidently some system of signals was in operation, possibly a series of beacons.12 The news threw San’ā’ into a state of fear. Some left the city with their families, but the preacher (ḥadiib) of San’ā’, one of the Banū Ḥulayfah fagzhs, composed an address in which he quoted what the author of Tārikh San’ā’ states, namely that it is protected (mahmiyyah), and that "whosever intends evil to it God will throw face downwards on the ground." ‘Perhaps this came from the afore-mentioned fagih by way of setting the people of San’ā’ at ease (about the Ottomans), for otherwise, such mighty calamities, far from unknown to anyone who has the slightest acquaintance with history, have befallen it, and were it only what befell it in the days of Wurdsān and those of the Jārikish that had afflicted and tribulation enough.”13

The new crisis drove Imam and his son to seek Muṭahhar’s aid. Such was their weakness that they acceded to his terms—to hand over to him San’ā’ with forts, weapons and supplies. He now moved into San’ā’ and even struck coins in his own name there. The Turks meanwhile had brought most of the Lower Yemen under their heel and certain Arab quarters were urging them to go on and take the Upper Yemen.

In 954/1547 Uzdimir Pasha advanced on San’ā’. Earlier Muṭahhar had wished to carry out a spoiling raid on the Turks at Ḏhamār but was frustrated by family intrigues, so he retired to near-by Wāḍī Dahr from which he would be able to raid on San’ā’ without being bottled up in the city. In it he left 300 arquebusiers (bunduqānī), so evidently the Zaydis could by now dispose of some firearms. Uzdimir camped outside San’ā’ and Muṭahhar’s efforts to combat the Ottoman army were repulsed so he retired once more on Thula. One of his brothers moved to the defensible fort of Kawkabān on the escarpment west of Thula and another made his headquarters at Dhū Mārmār commanding the eastern flank of San’ā’ plain and the route to the Jawf. These three forts with local tribal support could form a defensive line north of San’ā’, and, had the Imamīc House been united, a base from which to harass the Turks.

Uzdimir pressed on with the siege of San’ā’, but it was treachery that let him enter it, for a man of al-Rahdūbah (the village north of San’ā’) in charge of the Khandaq of Bāb al-Shu’ūb, the fortifed wall set on arches over the northern part of the flood-course, let the Turks in from that side. So, on the seventh day from their arrival outside the city, its citizens woke up to see Turkish flags planted on the wall (dâyir) and spears brandished in front of them. "Terrors, panic, cries for help were the order of the day. Some 1,200 persons were slain, houses looted, honours ravished. Women were sold publicly in the market, some lost their reason, others killed themselves. A number of notables perished in the confusion. At the beginning of the day a grandson of the Imam brought what troops he had to the Sīlihah to fight the Turks, but was almost immediately routed and retired to the Qār—which he swiftly left through Bāb al-Sīrān, the Turks distracted by the sack of the city, paying him no heed. Once established inside San’ā’, Uzdimir issued orders to sheath the swords and end the looting.

Squabbles within the Imamīc House continued to weaken it severely in face of the Turks. Furthermore, on their eastern flank, the Ǧāmīl ʿĀshīf of the Jawf, so often hostile to the Zaydis, linked up with the Turks. Uzdimir waged war with the Zaydi princes, mostly against Muṭahhar, employing his cannon against the mountain-top castles14 towering above his troops. During the periodic truces Muṭahhar had the further problem of suppressing troubles in the territory he controlled. Yet Turkish brutality and treachery alienated tribes which might have joined the Ottoman side, for no reliance could be placed on treaties the Ottomans contracted but immediately broke when they saw the moment opportune.

Uzdimir took up residence in San’ā’ as capital of the Ottoman Yemen. In 961/1554 he was replaced, but left as his memorial the qubba near Bāb al-Shu’ūb to which he assigned a generous waqf. A few years later, in 965/1557-8, another generous benefactor to San’ā’ died, the Imam ʿAṣ-ad al-Dīn Ǧāyūbī, who built al-Azhar Mosque and extended al-Ajlam—to which, as other buildings, he assigned extensive waqfīyat. He also constructed fine buildings around which he laid out gardens in al-Jirāf and al-Rawdah.

Arrangements for the Qār of San’ā’ are noted briefly by al-Nahrawānī15 round about the year 977/1569. The Governor-General (Biklār bīklīyāh/Beylerbey) resides in it, for it is extremely strong and because of its impregnable it has in it an armoury (bāyāt al-nāḥāh) and powder (bārūd) magazine. At the side of it is a prison in which criminals are confined. When the Wazīr (Sinān Pasha) came to take San’ā’ he appointed a constable (dīdar) in this castle in command of about seventy soldiers whose duty was to guard this castle with all the stores (khāzānāt) of weapons, powder and prisoners it contained. He made governor over them an ʿāghā called Khidr Bey, but he found it irksome to live in the Qār because it was the residence of the Governor-General, so he resided outside the Qār. So the Qār became administered like a fortress (qalāʾ) and was kept through the garrison, and a keddāh, according to the custom of fortresses,
but the ághâ (Khidr) and the rest of the soldiers lived outside the town (balad). This Khidr treated the townsfolk unjustly and oppressively so they complained to the Wazir and he dismissed him, appointing as governor over them Yâbûy Jâwûsh of the Jâwîshihyâh of the Sublime Porte (al-Bâb al-Âlî). San'â' wall itself had at this time towers (âbôr) as of course one would expect, and the Turkish Divân or Government Offices, was located there.

A measure which would have had its effect on commerce in the Yemen was taken by the governor Mahmûd Bâshâ as a first action when he came into office in 967/1560—he is described as a great blood-shedder. He executed the faqîh 'Abd al-Malik al-Yamani, the Amir of the Mint (Dâr al-Darbh)—all of whose property he sequestrated—and along with him the kaykhûyâ Kaywân, both of whom had adulterated the coinage (iskkâh) with copper.

The First Zaydi Attempt to Liberate the Yemen from the Ottomans

Some twenty years after the sack of San'â', by 974/1566, Mu'tahhar had regained enough power to advance on the city during the absence of the Turkish Governor in Istanbul. His nephew, at the same time, entered al-Haymah and Banû Maṣâr, Harâz having been taken from the Turks. The Ismâ'îlîs of Hamdân, though inveterate foes of the Zaydis, had been alienated by Turkish harshness. Al-Nahrawâli provides an interesting if violently hostile account of Mu'tahhar's propaganda to the Yemeni tribes in asking for their support, accusing him of telling the tribes that he had received commands in dreams from the Prophet and advice to relieve the mu'ta'â' cultivators of the kharâj-tax for three years, that he should not punish them for past lapses but pardon them for 'following others than yourself in the past'. The Prophet has promised him a sign 'to my people (ummîyât)' that there would be an eclipse of the moon on Shawwâl 14 which, as al-Nahrawâli points out, Mu'tahhar would be able to predict from the almanacs (taqâwîm)!

In San'â', when he commenced to lay siege to it, were sixteen Turkish Amirs, some of whom were clearly Yemenis—they included the Ismâ'îlî Dâ'î and his son. Mu'tahhar's success in repulsing a relieving column from the south brought out the tribes against the Turks, and the Governor, Murâd Bâshâ, was slain in flight from Dhamâr where he had abandoned his stores and possessions. The San'â' garrison now surrendered to tribes against the Turks, and the Governor, Murâd Bâshâ, was

Ottoman horse and 2,000 infantry etc.—whom, in contra-

Turkish Amirs, some of whom were clearly Yemenis—they included the Ismâ'îlî Dâ'î and his son. Mu'tahhar's success in

many districts of the Yemen to collect taxes and he despatched 20 The same mühimme or defter requires two beylerbeyliks of San`â' and the Beylerbeyi of Egypt was appointed Commander-in-Chief (Sûrâshk) in the Yemen with 700,000 akhs salary (sâyânî) as replacement for Mu'âljâ Pasha.

Sinân took vigorous counter-action against the Zaydis. Arriving at Zabîd with much treasure and large reinforcements, and bringing up large guns with him, he advanced by the central route on San'â' via Toluzz and Dhamâr. Once again Mu'tahhar had no option but to withdraw from San'â', but he took with him the treasure he had acquired and the guns captured in the forts. He permitted the San`ânis to get in touch with Sinân, probably to save them from Turkish retaliation, but took into his service about 500 of the notable soldiers (a'în al-'askar) from San'â'.

Sinân adopted a more clement policy than that at the earlier Ottoman siege of San'â', 23 despatching a rescript (mâsûrîm) promising the townsfolk security (â'mân) and, when his troops did enter, he assigned a Shâwûsh to stop them molesting private houses.

Using his Ismâ'îlî allies, he sent the Dâ'î 'Abdullah b. Muhammad with men to re-take Haymah and Harâz. In person he launched an attack on the line of forts north of San'â', principally Kawkbân and Thulâ, artillery bombardment playing a large part in operations. At the attack on Mu'tahhar's son Luft Alih at Dûb Marmar and Wâdi l-Sirr the Turkish soldiers were ordered by Hasan Bâshâ to take men, women, children and infants prisoner but not to kill them, the males to be sent to join the galley slaves (al-kûrkajiyya) of whom the Turks were greatly in need. 24 The Zaydis now had some guns in their castles and Mu'tahhar more treasure at his disposal. Nevertheless it is to be remarked that in local wars the Arabs were still using mangonels (manjaniq) as late as 988/1580. Mu'tahhar spurred on his supporters to resist by reminding them of the 'looting, slaying, imprisonment, violation of honour (intîhâ' al-haram) that would befall them from the troops of Rûm and Egypt'. 25 In the heavy fighting the Yemenis put up a stout resistance and eventually Sinân was obliged to come to a truce with Mu'tahhar at Kawkbân.

Sinân, after he had settled the affairs of the Ottoman troops 26 at San'â' and increased their pay-and-rations (maṣajîr), made preparations to return to Egypt. He doubled the kharâj-tax on...
the Yemen, levied for remission to the Sultan at Istanbul, now standing at 200,000 dinars.

When Muṭahhar died of blood in the urine (bawl al-dam), it was a great calamity (muṭāḥah) felt, as the chronicler relates, throughout the whole country. Yet again the divisive tendency of the Yemen served it ill, for each of Muṭahhar’s sons stuck to the district which he happened to control. In the ensuing dissensions the Ottomans were able to play politics in the north. They attacked or intrigued with the princes, turning their rivalries to their own advantage, but accepting their de facto local authority by granting them recognition as Ottoman officials. By 1000/1591 all turmoil (fitnah) in the Yemen had abated—the quiet was to continue some five years.

The Governor regarded as the most just of the Turks during this century was Murād Bâshâ (984-88/1576-80) who relieved Ṣan`â’ of many unjust customs (ruṣūm, often meaning taxes) including forced billeting of troops. Nevertheless the two Jesuits brought captive to Ṣan`â’ in 1590, where they were detained for five years, say of it: ‘It was a very great city in ancient times but after the Turks had taken it the population declined so that there remained not more than about 2,500 houses, of which 500 belonged to Jews. Within the walls, which are of thick mud with many towers, there are numerous gardens and orchards with many of the fruits there are in Portugal. All are watered from wells, for there is no spring within the city.’28 The Ottomans left some fine buildings in Ṣan`â’ including al-Murâdiyyah, and especially the Bakriyyah Mosque completed by the Governor Ḥasan Bâshâ in 1005/1596-7. They promoted the Ḥanafi rite of Islam in the city and there is recorded the death of the Muffīr of the Ḥanafiyyah at Ṣan`â’, an Ahnûmi, originally a Zaydi, who had adopted this rite.

The Imam al-Qâsim the Great

Rises against the Ottomans

Al-Qâsim b. Muḥammad, known as the Great (al-Kabîr), is justly regarded as the founder of the Zaydi Yemen.29 As al-Hâdi is the heroic personality who brought Zaydism to the Yemen, so al-Qâsim is the first hero of the later Zaydi era. His Odyssey of adventurous wanderings is set forth in its confusing detail in A. S. Tritton’s account of the Rise of the [Zaydi] Imams of San`â’.30 His career, typical of that of more than one Zaydi Imam, merits tracing in outline.

Al-Qâsim was engaged in teaching at Masjîd Dâwûd of Ṣan`â’ when a pupil of his suggested he declare a claim to the Imāmate. In view of the Ottoman domination he at first regarded this as absurd but when the Turks began to show suspicions of him he fled for Shibâm-Kawkabân and then Ǧabûl al-Sharaj—since his father had supported the redoubtable Muṭahhar it was natural he should seek refuge in what had been Muṭahhar’s territory. In 1006/1597-8 he proclaimed publicly summons (da`wâb) to himself in Ḥajr district in the north west, with a following of 400 tribesmen. He was further joined by the Ahnûmis, known for their loyalty to the Zaydi Imâms up to the present time. The Turks responded by the despatch of troops to attack Ahnûm and al-Qâsim had to take refuge in the high defensible table-land of Barât to the east, territory of the powerful Ǧhû Ḥusayn and Ǧhû Muḥammad tribes.

Strong action by the Ottoman general Sinân Bâshâ al-Kaykhîrî in 1008/1599-60, coupled with cruelties or bribery, overawed the Tribes. When he invested al-Qâsim in Ǧūdâ the Imam had to abandon it in haste, carrying only his personal weapons and a Qurân, accompanied by a handful of followers with only three firearms between them, to take refuge in faithful Ahnûm. In the confused fighting of the next few years in the north the son of Muṭahhar’s brother and rival Ǧhâms al-Dîn who generally held some forts on the escarpment of Kawkabân, usually supported the Turks.

By 1013/1604-5, the year in which General Sinân was appointed Ottoman Governor, the Imam was in Barât again. Negotiating through Muṭahhar’s nephew Ibn Ǧhâms al-Dîn, the Governor tried to induce al-Qâsim to accept the office of fief-holder. When he refused, the Barât tribes in fear of Turkish reprisals, dissolved their agreements with the Imam and he had to leave.

Al-Qâsim was by now almost in despair and contemplated leaving the Yemen altogether, when the Amir of Ḥajjah, the strong town and fortress in the western mountains that commands several important routes, offered him his support. This proved to be the turn of the tide. To quell the insurgent districts the Turks despatched Yemeni Amirs attached to their service, but without avail. The Zaydi tribes captured from Ottoman forces such fortified centres as Ṣibârîrah and broke out in a general rising. Sinân reacted by ill-treating the hostages or prisoners in his hands, men, women and boys, till some died. Early in 1016/1607, hearing he was to be superseded by a new Governor, Jaʿfar Pasha, Sinân tried to arrange a truce with the Imâm through the intermediary of Ibn Mu‘âfâ, Lord of Sûdâh. After some false starts the Imâm did agree with the new Governor, Jaʿfar, that he should retain the territories he had won independently of Ottoman control, and the Arab hostages (raḥâ`în) were released from Ṣan`â’ prison.

Sinân betook himself to Mocha but died there and is buried beside al-Ṣâdhîlî, the saint with whose name coffee is associated, and his successor seized his vast treasure. He had executed some remarkable public works. One of these was the causeway (Mudârâq) to Shahrâbâr from Rakkâm to its West Gate along which I travelled in 1964. In Ṣan`â’ alone he constructed the court (gârî) of the Great Mosque which he paved, and the domed building in the centre of it, as well as restoring the ablution places (mâlawîr). The tallest minaret in Ṣan`â’, that of the Imâm Salâh al-Dîn Mosque was also built by him, and the Public Bath Hammâm al-Maydân. His important dasfuro wa waqq properties is discussed on p. 153a. It was furthermore Sinân who built the fort on top of Jalâb Nuqm after destroying Ǧirâb fort east of it, because the Khawlân tribes used to raid right up to Qa` Ṣan`â’, then take refuge in Nuqm without being noticed by the Ǧirâb garrison. The Nuqm garrison, when the tribes made for the Qâ’i, would fire arbalests (ṣayārīṣayārīṣ) to warn the Ṣan`ânis.

An evil thing Sinân did, the chronicler tells us, was to change the coin (ṣikkhah), entirely abolishing the former currency ( alf-farbât al-ṭâlâ) and establish a new currency. This brought great loss to the people in their trading (tiṭârîgh) and debts (du`yân),22 the merchants suffering detriment (faḍ`arr) through it. One of them said, ‘It does not benefit those in power to alter the coinage (ṣikkhah), nor introduce a decrease (muqâyîn) in the measure and weight standards (al-mikayal wa al-mizân) since loss is thereby occasioned to many of the people of the time.’31 Ottoman Governors were indeed notorious for the amount of debased coinage they issued. It is in 1022/1613 that the Ghiyâṣ at-ṣâmî24 alludes to the qish for the first time but it was obviously in circulation before that date. A curious titbit of information is that in Sinân’s governorship the substance called mūmiyyah appeared in Jalâb Nuqm, not being known there previously; it

29 Al-Qâsim was descended from a 4th/10th century Imam. al-Mâṣûr Mayyâ (325-66/934-76).
30 Al-Qâsim had to take refuge in the high defensible table-land of Barât to the east, territory of the powerful Ǧhû Ḥusayn and Ǧhû Muḥammad tribes.
31 Ghiyâṣ at-ṣâmî, II, 792.
32 This would mean sums owed to merchants.
33 Ibid, II, 725.
34 Ibid, II, 797.
was dark red in colour and more efficacious (ablagh) than that which comes from Egypt.

The chronicler says of Sinân that he spied on the people, keeping his ears open to hear of their hidden affairs, and meted out punishment on the slightest evidence. Rarely could anyone persuade him to turn back once he had decided on anything.

The new Governor, Ja'far Bâshâ, took the severe measure in 1016/1607-9 of executing the intendant (nâzîr) of waqfî, Muhammed b. Ahmad al-Bawni because the San`anis had complained of his taking their property for the waqf. This item of information is unusual for, although many waqf intendants are recorded as acting corruptly, it is because they converted waqf revenues to their own use.

Ja'far Bâshâ on his recall in 1021/1612-13, went down to Zabîb preparatory to quitting the Yemen, but his successor died en route for Şan`î. Ja'far then started back to Şan`î, but the Turkish commander there, Chelebi, along with the Arab Amirs in Ottoman service, decided to fight him and left the city to do so. The north now lay undefended apart from some castle garrisons that soon fell to the tribes who went on to take Zabîb. The Şadah garrison agreed to evacuate the town under a safe-conduct from the Yemenis. They set out accompanied by the tribal chiefs who had guaranteed their safety but they had not gone far when the tribes fell upon them, slaying and plundering. It is characteristic of the Yemen that the Imam's army, small as it was, attempted to protect them, but was helpless in the face of the large tribal contingents involved. The tribesmen were likely enough motivated in part by their resentment of past Turkish cruelties. To have the surrender conditions honoured the Imam had to send one of his sons whom the tribes would respect and fear. In more than one case the Imam's officers contracted agreements which the tribes then broke, for at the best of times Imamic authority over the Yemeni tribes has always been uncertain.

Ja'far meanwhile had overcome his opponents under Chelebi and entered Şan`î by the Khandaq. He despatched a force of 9,000 men to re-take Şadah. Al-Qâsim now found himself in a situation close to that of the Imam al-Badr about mid-1964, for the Ottomans initiated a pincer movement against his position in the central highlands, despatching a force from the west through Abu `Arish in the Tihâmah plain to attack Jabal Razîl which can also be approached from the Qâ of Şadah in the east. The Imam's men routed the Tihâmah column, its commander losing his tents, copper, carpets, treasure, clothes and cattle!

A deal of fighting ensued, with much changing of sides by the tribes and treachery by both tribes and Turks. The tribes feared the Turks but were unscrupulous looters of Yemenis or Turks to their own selfish advantage. The Turks suffered some signal defeats in which they lost many prisoners to the Imam whom he distributed among the tribes as agricultural labourers. Yet he still remained unable to capture Şadah and one of his sons was actually slain there and his head taken to Şan`î25. His power nevertheless continued to grow and his position in the central highlands became firmly established.

At this juncture Ja'far Bâshâ, hearing he was to be superseded, came to a truce with the Imam on the basis that al-Qâsim should retain the districts he now held and Yemeni prisoners in Ottoman hands should be sent from Şan`î— for it was feared that the Imam's son imprisoned there might be sent to Europe. Ja'far departed with the great fortune he had amassed from the estates of Turks deceased during his term of office. The chronicler26 remarks that the best thing he did was to remove the khârij-tax from lands deserted by their inhabitants; previously a district would be taxed according to former assessments, regardless of whether land had continued under cultivation or not. The new Governor, Muhammad Bâshâ, entered Şan`î in 1026/1617 and set up in al-Bustân near Bib al-Sabalâb. Şadah now fell to the Imam and support for him continued to grow, though not without reverses from time to time. An instructive appreciation of the politico-military situation following the truce concluded between the Imam and Muhammad Bâshâ in 1028/1619 emerges at a conference to which he summoned the Amir and the Aghâs.

'You know,' (said the Governor), 'how troubles (fînah) have gone on between us and the Imam despite our doubling the number of soldiers, increasing their pay and allowances (maßârî)26 and extending their role (mađâr) yet they have shown no efficiency to conquer the Imam's territory but remain stationed on the frontiers.' They made a reply to him, the gist of which is, 'There is no good moving against the Imam at this time, nor any result but loss of men, for the Imam and his companions are not now as they used to be in times past. On the contrary, they have become owners of weapons and equipment (úddah) from what they have won from the soldiers of the (Ottoman) Sultanate during this period—beside which the Imam receives from them only what they themselves (are prepared to) concede of the obligatory dues (al-âqaq al-aqâfî) and he does not set out to collect (gabd) any of the rest of the claims (maâlib) for tax. In this way their wish for him has redoubled and they have spent themselves freely in the jihaîd in front of him—whereas in this gang (ziyâbah) with you there is not a single man of the redoubtable and courageous Ottoman (Arwam) troops of yore—except a pitiful few. God has placed abundant weal in this land under your domination. (Proper) ordering of it and study of its conditions are matters of the utmost importance of which no intelligent man is unaware.27

Mustaţâ 'Ali's28 description of recruitment in Egypt of soldiers for the Yemen and Ethiopia bears out what the Amirs told the Governor at Şan`î, which he calls a calamity for the Egyptian Turks (Rûmîlî) and the Muslims.

As soon as the noble order arrives from the capital, in which the recruitment of 300 or 500 soldiers of Turkish origin is decreed, at once the illustrious beglerbegî appoints two conspicuous good-for-nothings for this service. One of them becomes the ighâ, the other one the steward (kerkhûdâ). He goes to the Sultan Hasan Mosque and sits there every day until noon with one or two bags of gold coins. After this has been publicly proclaimed, a countless number of wretches that have never in their life seen five gold pieces together hear of this windfall and sell themselves for five or ten gold pieces. . . . They have their names entered in the register, whatever the circumstances may be. At once they find a cock's feather and stick it on their heads. They even swell with pride, saying 'We have become the Sultan's servants'. All they possess is a short under-vest reaching to the waist and a hatchet. That is also all the baggage that is going to be theirs. When they come to the Yemen they see neither Turks nor Turks out in the wilderness. [There] they live among the felîzîm until their end comes from a rifle [sic] or arrow.

That the Yemenis were now well armed is confirmed by the Pasha's construction of the star-shaped fort on top of Jabal Kibrit near Dhamâr29 to prevent supplies of sulphur for the manufacture

36 Ja'far Bâshâ had begun to pay Arab troops at the same rate as Turks.
39 Reference is made to Dhamâr sulphur by Ibn al-Mujâwir, Thârikh al-
Post Medieval and Modern History
of gun-powder reaching Imamic territory. The open hint that the Ottomans had endangered their position by extortionate taxation doubtless reflects the views of the Arab Amirs attending the Governor's conference.

Even Mu`izz of the Lower Yemen had for a time rebelled, so, in view of Ottoman difficulties in so many places, it is hardly surprising that they concluded a treaty on the basis of the status quo with the Zaydis in 1028/1619. This was renewed after al-Qâsim's death in the following year by his son al-Mu`ayyad, destined to play a major part in recovering his country from the Ottomans.

Imâm al-Mu`ayyad and the Final Expulsion of the Ottomans

During their brief terms of office Muhammad Bâshâ and his successor like many of their predecessors accumulated vast fortunes. A new Pasha, Haydar, was appointed in 1034/1624 with whom Mu`ayyad, conscious of theickle loyalties of the tribes and their impatience, even of his own right, renewed the earlier truce. However, by the close of 1035/1626 he decided to break with the Ottomans. He was joined in a widespread rising by the northern tribes. Victories all over the north brought out once more against the Turks; they took much booty and rendered the roads unsafe for caravans taking them supplies. Most of the Tihâmah fell to the Zaydis but the Turks, counter-attacking managed to hold onto Zabid.

While the Imam's men were besieging Šan`â', they captured the Jabal Nuqum fort, but since the Turks within the city were still strong, the Yemeni garrison posted on Nuqum were given orders to fire the za`yarâ' (army attack) twice if they saw Haydar's men make a foray on Haddah, thrice if they raided in the Rawdah direction. To the south, Shihân tribal district had opted for the Imam—this made the situation the more difficult for the Turks. Haydar asked for a truce so he could leave Šan`â' for the Lower Yemen taking all his effects with him—this the Imam's son refused. To show their teeth the Turks mounted an armed demonstration with a display (sinah) around the city, and their cavalry routed assaults by the Imam's men—but the parade was ineffective and they retired back into Šan`â'. A cavalry sortie to al-Haddah frightened the Zaydi headquarters out of the village into the hills and it moved round the enclosing mountains to al-Rawdah. Zaydi contingents seem to have been unable to cope with mounted troops.

The Dài and Hamdân, sympathetic to the Turks, tried to intervene, but the Zaydis punished Hamdân and entered the well known Iṣmâ'îl centre, Şaybâ'n, above Wâdi Şahr. The princes of the Iṣmâ'îm house were prominent in the fighting. The Imam for his part was busy reducing strongholds in the north most of which were probably held by the Turks' Arab allies—Amîrân with its treasury (khîzânah) fell into Zaydi hands, and the key fortress of Dhû Marmar was taken in 1037/1627-8. The Lower Yemen was now also falling away from the Turks, but the Turks, counter-attacking, managed to hold onto Zabid.

As the siege of Šan`â' continued Haydar soon turned to force to leave the city. As conditions grew severer he rounded on his allies and robbed them. The Imam, seeing his soldiers needed rest, wrote to Haydâr in December 1037/1629 proposing a truce with the release of hostages from Šan`â'—this was agreed and extended to Dhu 'l-Qa`dah 1038/1629. Famine in the capital and the tremendous prices paid for grain had been an incentive for people to run the gauntlet with provisions for Šan`â', Hamdân seemingly being the main suppliers. Food was now fresh enough, but jewels were converted into cash and cannon turned into bronze coins (dawâris) to pay for it.

As the truce drew towards its end, Haydar prepared to leave Šan`â' for Zabîd. On Friday, 14 Rajab 1038/9 March 1629 the Imam's son 'Allî met Haydar in al-Busûân and Haydar delivered over to him the keys of the city. The Imam sent a contingent of his own men under 'Ali to protect Haydar's camp as the local people had collected to plunder everything even up to the edge of the camp; another son, Hûsayn, sent troops to protect Haydar on his journey to the coast via Bâb al-Ahjur and Jabal Tays. His treasure, 10,000 (gold pieces) which he had deposited in the Qâṣr was given by the Imam to his envoy. Mu`ayyad appointed his own Yaḥyâ governor (âmil) over Šan`â' liberated from Ottoman rule.

Ta`izz fell to the Zaydis the same year. The Ottomans remained a potential danger to the Zaydi Imâm in parts of the Tihâmah for a number of years to come, especially in Zabîd and Mocha, but the surrender under agreement to the Zaydis and occupation of Zabîd, Mocha and Kamarân in 1045/1636 removed the last trace of the first Ottoman occupation.

Turkish Administration during the First Ottoman Occupation

Any account of Turkish administration which does not embody the abundant information contained in the Ottoman archives is by this token defective—Dr. Salih Özban43 has re-emphasized their value and the preliminary outline of data he has provided is so important that some must be quoted here as an indication of what these archives can contribute to the history of Šan`â'.

The Ruüs Defterleri (957-1326/1550-1908) that cover parts of both Ottoman occupations, show, inter alia, that in the administration of the Beylerbeylik of the Yemen a portion of the revenue was not distributed in the form of sinâr (a sort of fee) but collected directly by the Treasury. In the Yemen eyâlet or province the salaries (sâlyâne) of beylerbeys, soldiers and other officials came from the annual taxes collected in the provinces—as in fact the document infra confirms.

Dr. Özban remarks that 'as far as we know, no cadastral survey has survived to the present for sixteenth century Arabia.' Some of the Maliye Defterleri contain accounts of revenues and expenditures of the Imperial Treasury (Hazine-i amire) of the Yemen. Some cover customs duties, regulation of trade and industry or expenditures, i.e., the salaries (sâlyâne) of high officials, pay (mevâcib, Ar. mawâjib) of soldiers etc. One dated 1003/1594-5 has a special character as an ijma type—it shows various revenues totalling 608,479 āltûns, the salaries of the vezir Hasan Pasha, defterdar and umera at 92,837 āltûns, wages of various officials at 344,916 āltûns. Two documents in the Topkapı Palace Archives dated 968/1560 and 983/1575-6 contain accounts of the revenues and expenditure of the Beylerbeylik of the Yemen.

The document in Arabic that follows was found for me by Mademoiselle Ngâr Anafaâr44 of the Topkapı Saray in 1963 along with several others which must await publication mean-

40 Zyâné/zâriyâd, apparently a type of arable, possibly the same name as arable of al-Tabak al-ahtah, 628, annals for 1077/1666. Perhaps arable, should be read here.

41 Ghiyât al-amâni, II, 830, seems to imply Šan`â' was surrendered to Hûsâyîn.

42 See n. 22.

43 In addition to my debt to Mlle. Anafarta I am indebted to Professor Dr. Halil Sabillioglu of the Economics Faculty of Istanbul University who, in spare moments at the Riyâ4 Symposium enlightened me on numerous difficult readings of these documents, and to Dr. Susan Skilliter for her constant willingness to be consulted on difficulties with Turkish.
while. In several places my reading of the text is uncertain but these accounts, rendered from Mocha when Hasan Bâshâ al-Wâzir (988-1031/1581-1604) was Governor of the Yemen, are so illustrative of the Ottoman rule that it seems appropriate to include them here. Mocha by this time had become the principal supply port of the Turks replacing Aden which they had by mismanagement allowed to fall into a sorry state as a note dated 1000/1591-2 on the fly-leaf of the Istanbul Ms. of Ibn al-Mujâwir’s Târikh al-Mustabsir informs us. In 990/1582 and the previous year 989/1581 there was much confused fighting in the north. The document provides details on military supplies of lead, cannon-ball, brass/copper and cloth, this last perhaps for the troops, sent up to Šan‘â’.

### Praise is to God

**A Blessed Daftar**

Containing a list of the expenditures expended on Sultanic affairs (muhibbât) and what pertains to [the expenditure of] the Presence of our lord His Excellency, God aid him with His support, i.e., the Sultanic revenue accruing from Bandar Mocha over a period of eight months, from the new moon of Muḥarram al-Ḥarâm at the beginning of the year 990/January 26 1582, until the close of the month of Sha‘bân al-Karim/September 18 of the afore-said year. God, far is He from imperfection, is He who brings success.

#### Principal (al-Ail)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold, good coin (dhahab, sikkah hasanah)</td>
<td></td>
<td>32,731</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expenditure on account of the Honourable Sultanate, God Exalted strengthen it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on the two cannon (midfa’) despatched to al-Ḥujârîyyâh to the military camp (mahattah) against ‘Ayn, that being on account of the work on the wheeled carriages (‘a‘alî), cost of charcoal and wage of blacksmiths and carpenters...</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>16 19 pârahs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### The blessed grabs when they set out for Bāb al-Mandab:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of yard-pieces and twisted cord for the jalabah-dhows (?)</td>
<td>gold, good coin</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Honourable revenue despatched to the Imperial Treasury (al-Khânîn al-‘Amirah) by the hand of the al-Sharif Ḥusayn...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gold, good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Revenue despatched by the hand of Yahyâ Jâwush...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Salary (ṣâfîyân) of our lord, His Excellency, God aid him with His support...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purchase of lead from the Aghawât of His Excellency in Egypt the Preserved...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buhârs at good (coin)</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hire of camels to send up cannon-ball (funduq) by the hand of Muhammad Jâwush...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purchase of pieces of Mecca Indian laṣf (cloth)...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kawrajah</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kawrajah by good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purchase of pieces of Indian laṣf also...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kawrajah</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by 19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purchase of laṭî cloth, first lot/issue (daṣfah)...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kawrajah</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purchase of laṭî cloth (second) lot/issue...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kawrajah</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purchase of laṭî cloth, small...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kawrajah</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54 Turkish mukâmme.
55 The Governor of the Yemen?
56 The harf dhahab ofmâr or dhahab is to be identified with the aškâf (The Portuguese of the South Arabian coast, 1435).
57 Unidentified and reading not quite certain.
58 The ghabâr is a well known type of vessel.
59 Rubbân, might also mean 'pilot'.
60 My reading here is conjectural—gurâ (plur. of gurra) a ship's yard, dafâr, possibly 'cord' but dubious, ofhâr is a plural of jalâbah, but so far I have not found this attested.
61 Identified in al-Burq as Yamâni, 389, but other persons mentioned here have not yet been traced.
62 The buhâr is usually 300 lbs (The Portuguese, 151).
63 Fîli may be an unattested plural of fânâh, the latter known to Dozy, Supplement, but in this and other cases below the reading may be fatâh.
64 Laṣf—cloth has not been traced.
65 Lâti and dûti (dhoti) are mentioned on the fly-leaf to the Aya Sofia Ms. of Ibn al-Mujâwir, dated 1005/1596-7. Gazetteers of India show several places called Lat—perhaps this is a cloth made at one of them.
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

Purchase of brass (nahâs) \(^{57}\) from the afore-mentioned Aghawât of Egypt .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Brass</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buhârs farâsilahs</td>
<td>44 12</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buhârs farâsilahs</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>silver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>pârahs 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purchase of brass from Khawjah 'Abbas Jawsagi \(^{58}\) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Brass</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buhârs farâsilahs</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>silver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>186</td>
<td>pârahs 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hire of camels for the aforementioned brass and despatching cannon-ball (funduq) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Goods</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>loads</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Draft (hawâlah) of al-Khawâjâ Safar b. Ibrahim according to the honourable certificate/billet \(^{59}\) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>silver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>pârahs 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collection (qabâh) \(^{60}\) of the Bâniyân arriving from San'a' according to an honourable certificate/billet .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collection of the group (jamâ `ah) \(^{61}\) of Sa'd 'Ali by way of the loan (gardah) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sent to Jâzân \(^{62}\) according to the honourable command .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collection of the Amir 'Ali al-Qabûdân \(^{63}\) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>225</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expense of the galliot (qiliyâjah) in which Ja'far Jawushi set out to the Sublime Porte (Darjâh-i 'Ali) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>silver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>pârahs 32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purchase of latî-cloth .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Cloth</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kasurajah</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>by 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purchase of Mecca lafīf (cloth ?) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Cloth</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kasurajah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>by 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purchases of Mecca lafīf (cloth ?) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Cloth</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kasurajah</td>
<td>by 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hire of camels for the aforementioned cloth and pieces (fiqāh) of cloth to San'a' .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Cloth</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gold (dhahab)</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purchase of lead despatched to Husayn Agha, Commander of the Yemeni Pilgrimage in the afore-mentioned year while he was in Zabid .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Goods</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buhârs</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>by 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collection of al-Khawâjâ Safar al-Qaramâni, \(^{64}\) cost of robes (qafāsin) \(^{65}\) .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gold (dhahab)</td>
<td>good coin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total \(^{66}\) of the expenditure on account of the Honourable Sultanate, God strengthen it by His support .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Payment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Currency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good coin</td>
<td>silver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,439</td>
<td>pârahs 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

57 For nahâs = brass, see p. 226b.
58 Reading uncertain.
59 Takhrib seems to mean an official note or chit.
60 It seems to mean that the Bâniyân received the money.
61 Unidentified.
62 Jâzân/Jiizân/Qizân the well-known port just north of the present Saudi-Yemeni frontier.
63 The Turkish admiral based on Mocha.
64 Of Qaramân, Cilicia, presumably of Turkish descent at least.
65 The qafâsin probably means a robe of honour of a type sent to chiefs or notables.
66 I have not been able to make the various entries tally with this total.
The Zaydī Imāmate of the Yemen

For political reasons the traditional tribal society of the northern and eastern Yemen mountains requires the spiritually superior overlord such as the Imām, as indicated on p. 68a. For the Lower Yemen temporal dynasties have been able to rule successfully. In Ḣadramawt the power or influence of the Shāfi`ī Sayyids may occasionally have brought them near the position of Imāms but the institution of an Imāmate was never established. The Zaydi Imams claim authority to rule as descendants of the Prophet through his daughter Fātimah. Their descent is through the Imam Zayd b. ʿAli whose school maintains the positive and warlike principle of commanding the right and prohibition of what is wrong (al-amr bi-l-maʿrûf wa-l-naḥy `anl-ma`rûf) which is the complete antithesis of the Imāmī Shiʿah principle of taqiyyah, religious dissumulation. The fourteen qualifications—al-ashrīlah al-arba` `at-`ashr—of eligibility for the office of Imām make a formidable list of requirements.

It is the duty of the Muslims by law (sharʿ) to appoint an Imām (nasb Imam) who must be:

Mukallaf, an adult, major,
Dhakar, male,
Harr, free,
ʿĀlim, a descendant of ʿAli b. Abī Ṭālib,
Fāṭiḥ, by the Prophet’s daughter Fātimah (sea-law `ariq-un), even if he be the son of a freed slave-woman (muharrarah),
Sālim al-hamās, sound in his senses,
Wa-l-atraf, and ends (hands, legs, etc.),
Mufāhir, qualified to form a legal opinion,
ʿAdā, just,
Sakhiyy bi-waḍiq al-ṣuqūq fi marāţi-ha, generous in such a way as to place things in the places appropriate to them,
Muḍābēr, akhāri rā`yi-hi al-sābāh, competent (as a ruler), most of his independent judgement hitting the mark,
Miṣyām, ḥaythu tajūz al-salāmah, courageous without being fool-hardy.
Lam yatassāqad-dum-hu muḥāy, no Imām whose da`wah has been already responded to preceding him (imam ustujiba li-da`wah-hi),
Wa-sārīg-ha al-da`wah, the way of the Imāmate is the da`wah, and it is not valid with two Imāms (wa-lā yashīḇ imāmayn (sic)), and he makes his da`wah in accordance with what is best (wa-`idda`a`a bi-l-latt hiya ahsan).

It is not possible to render da`wah in a word or two into English, but for practical purposes it is the proclamation of oneself as the Imām of the age and the summons to the Believers to join one. The above list is what has been laid down by the English, but for practical purposes it is the proclamation of the Upper Yemen temporal dynasties have been able to rule successively, or when its rule is brought down by such external causes as invasion. Purely temporal dynasties like the Rasīlūd and Ṭāhirīdūr have flourished in the Lower Yemen, but it is ʿṢa`īd, capital of the Upper Yemen that concerns us.

Geopolitical and Social Considerations affecting Yemeni History

At this point some rationalisation needs be essayed of the confused aspect of Yemeni history, with an appreciation of the factors which force it into well defined patterns. This history is recorded as an insufferably tedious meaningless to and fro of battles and campaigns often scarcely possible to trace, at least 67 This list has been provided by Ḥusayn al-ʿAmri from al-Wāsiʿi, al Ṣyār, 1:250,000, and the till recently, on inadequate maps, remotely impossible to read. Two broad patterns easily discerned is the entry of foreign conquerors from the lowlands, their initial success but ultimate inability to conquer the northern highlands, and their eventual retreat. There is a close similarity between the first Ottoman occupation, the second Ottoman occupation over two centuries later, and the Nasserite occupation of 1962-67. Initial success in each case came through possession of superior weapons and organisation. This doubtless accounts also for Ayyūbīd victories in the 6th/12th century on which Rex Smith’s fine edition of al-Sim` al-ghāfī can now be readily consulted.

Local patterns are still less easy to distinguish but foremost is centralisation around a member of the Aḥl al-Ḫay (the ‘people of the heart’). The Aḥl al-Ḫay were the traditional tribal society of the Yemeni highlands. As such, they inhabited the higher mountains or valleys, not the lowlands. The situation is now much improved by the production of a British series of maps produced for the Yemen Arab Republic by the Director of Military Survey, Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom, 1974, 1:250,000, and the
The Zaydis have a highly developed idiosyncratic religious culture of their own—yet it is still Islamic in the most orthodox sense and Zaydis can fairly claim to constitute a 'Fifth School' of Islam. During both Ottoman occupations they were offended that the Turks should regard them as heretics—which they felt the more insulting, given the open profanity, as they saw it, of Turkish personnel in the Yemen. They are far removed from the Imāmi Shiʿah and the Ismāʿilis (Fatimī Ṭayyibīs) with whom they have ever been at the bitterest enmity. As Muʿtazilis the Zaydis are fairly liberal, sometimes surprisingly so.

As already indicated the Zaydi-Shafiʿi rift is one of socio-political difference even if expressed in religious slogans. Al-Imām al-Shāfiʿī revered the Prophet’s House and Zaydis accept the same fundamental tenets and jurists as Shiʿis. The accusation has frequently been levied by the more partisan ulama and officials against the Shāfiʿis that they are nāṣibīs, i.e., opponents of ʿAli b. Abī ʿĀlib, ancestor of Sayyids and Sharifs, be this justified or not. In Ḥāḍramawt Shāfiʿi Sayyids would be no less disapproving than Zaydis of anti-Sayyid sentiment.

The strong conviction of the rightness of the Zaydi Imāmate and special privileges enjoyed by members of the Prophet’s house by birth has of recent years been shaken to some extent by the secular education to which Zaydi Sayyids have been exposed, as for instance in the case of the young Hamīd al-Ḍīn princes who were at school in Egypt prior to September 1962.

In the period which enters, the Zaydī Imām is carried to power on the flood of tribal assault upon the resettled foreign occupier, a flood he unleashed but could barely control. In the creative effort to build up a strong centralised government determined on peace and security, the Imām’s main obstacle will be those very tribes with whom he was swept into power. Few Imāms ever came near bringing all the Yemen under their control—al-Mutawakkil Ismāʿīl and his immediate successors made a sort of empire, but the two most nearly successful in this were the Ḥāmid al-Ḍīn Imāms, Yahyā and his son ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ʿAbd Allāh al-Badrī, and the young Hamīd al-Ḍīn Imām, Yahyā and his son ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ʿAbd Allāh al-Badrī.

Historical Background to the 17th, 18th and Early 19th Centuries

The 17th-19th centuries witnessed the long slow decline of the Ottoman Empire (punctuated by occasional bursts of energy) accompanied by European expansion into every quarter of the Indian Ocean and the growth of British ascendency in India. The Napoleonic wars and French occupation of Egypt impinged a little on the Yemen, but it was far more deeply affected by Muhammad ʿAlī’s penetration of Arabia. The British capture of Aden at first seems to have made little impression on the northern Yemen, but the new ‘forward’ Ottoman policy of the 19th century has left lasting changes.

During the era of Western merchantile and colonial expansion Mocha was the point of contact—it had begun in Ottoman times in the 16th century to supplant Aden as it declined under extortionate Turkish taxation that ruined this once prosperous port. To this day Mocha still has impressive ruins of its former grandeur. European vessels began to put in there in the early 17th century. The East India Company sent the Ascension there in 1609 with a cargo of iron, tin, lead and cloth—the first English caller at Mocha. Its Ottoman Governor made difficulties with the Company sent Sir Henry Middleton who was treacherously imprisoned by the local Aghā but escaped—he was eventually
summoned by Ja‘far to San`a’. He comments that the mountainous regions of the Yemen were unsubdued and ruled by Arab chiefs; the Turks were held in great abhorrence on account of their proud and insolent behaviour so that no Turk could travel up and down without a safe-conduct from the chief through whose regions he passed.

By 1616 the Dutch Pieter Van den Broecke arrived at Mocha and opened a rather wavering trade with the Yemen. His compatriot, Job Grijp, in 1628 bought 40 bales of coffee, but the Arab revolt against the Turks made it almost impossible for him to sell his own merchandise. Coffee is not shown in the East India Company’s lists until 1650, by which time it had become far the most important of Mocha’s exports.21 It was not until 1709 that the first French vessels under de la Roque visited Mocha, made a commercial treaty and opened a factory. In 1737, offended by the Yemeni practice of paying for the goods they purchased by remitting future custom dues, the French bombarded Mocha port. It is noteworthy that, a little earlier, the Imam had refused a Turkish request that he stop trading with Europe.

Though the coffee trade produced revenue there is scant reference in the Arabic sources consulted to European traders at Mocha or Aden. Zaydi Yemen seems not greatly interested in events beyond its own territory, except possibly in the Hijaz. Sayyid ‘Ali b. Mu‘ammad al-Wazìr in his Tabaq al-bahārus does indicate that during the latter part of the 11th/17th century, Yemeni circles in San`a’ were informed on important current events outside the Yemen. Şan`a’ of the 17th-18th centuries was remote and difficult of access, but the Yemen was not closed—otherwise it could not have been visited by the worthy Carsten Niebuhr and many other Europeans of lesser fame. From the Şan`a’ province and the north there appears to have been little emigration abroad, though northerners sometimes emigrated to Shāfi‘i districts and even turned Şāhārī (khashfa’s)—on the other hand the Hādī tribe turned Zaydi during this period. However preoccupied Şan`a’ was with internal affairs over these centuries there are many indications, in the histories and the Qīnām Şan`a’ itself, that merchandise was imported from abroad and was certainly not in economic isolation from the rest of Arabia and countries overseas.

The era was not one of a state of intellectual decline that many other Islamic states witnessed—one has only to recall the names of al-Badr Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Amīr al-Şan`ānī (1099-1188/1688-1768-9) and Muḥammad al-Shawkānī (1173-1251/1760-1835)73 Yemenis also claim al-Zabīdī, though he actually compiled his major Arabic dictionary, Tāj al-‘arīs, in Cairo. There was much debate on matters of law and religion, albeit along traditional lines. Belles-lettres flourished and the Yemen would not be an Arab country had it not a great output of verse. Historiography is well represented—al-Jamā‘ī’s al-Sira‘at al-Mutawakkilīyyah, so much consulted in this study, is an outstandingly good piece of writing in respect of coverage, selection and presentation of material, not so often matched by Arabic histories of any period.

In the three and a half centuries of the later Zaydi Imamate few Imāms actually resided in Şan`a’. The Reconquista Imāms, al-Şa‘īm and al-Mu‘ayyad, in the first decades of the 11th/17th century had their capital at Shahārah north of Şan`a’—today it is little more than a village located on the peak of a high mountain, fortified and difficult of access, up long steep masonry causeways. Though nearly impregnable as a fortress it is vulnerable to air attack from which it suffered badly after 1962. Politically it would be a well placed centre for communicating with the northern mountain tribes and indeed Imām Aḥmad used it in his campaigns against the Turks. It is the hīrākh of the Mutawakkil Sayyids. Al-Mutawakkil in whose reign the Imamate achieved its greatest territorial expansion through conquest, resided in Dāvrān, a defensible village on a mountain side south of Şan`a’, readily accessible from Qa‘ī Jahrān plain, about two days’ journey from Şan`a’. His son, al-Mu‘ayyad Muḥammad, made his centre at Mā’bar quite near Dāvrān. Of the other Imāms, al-Mahdī Aḥmad resided at al-Ghīrās east of Şan`a’, dominated by Dīr Mārmār fort; al-Mahdī Muḥammad is known as Śāhīb al-Mawāhib because of his headquarters there near Dāvrān, and al-Manṣūr was born in Shahārah.

The greater part of al-Mu‘ayyad’s reign was spent fighting the Turks and he is as much the hero of the Reconquista as his father al-Şa‘īm the Great. He had also to deal with recalcitrant Yemeni tribes. Despite his preoccupation with wars and politics he found time, as did all Zaydi Imāms, to write. The Tabaq al-bahārus24 remarks that he followed the school of the first Zaydi Imām, al-Ḥādī, but with certain ikhtiyārāt of his own—that is exercise of his own individual preference on points of law. He did not make female relations (dhawu‘l-arhām) inherit this probably25 but the Imam had refused a Turkish request that he stop trading with Europeans.26 Though he did return to Şan`a’ several times later.

21 Tabaq al-bahārus, 165a, notes the arrival of four Englishmen (Iaqqaz) and a Khwājā Hindi in 1086/1675.
22 Though he did return to Şan`a’ several times later.
25 On actual practice today in this important matter, see Martha Mundy, ‘Notes on women’s inheritance in Highland Yemen’, Arabian studies, 1978, V, 161-87.
26 Tabaq al-bahārus, 24a. al-Šan`ānī died in 1060/1650.
27 The phrase is ‘ārīf al-mutawakkīlīyyah’ of Bani Ḥāshim, wa-bi-maylawh iki ‘l-faqīrīn’ are quite the same as al-Mu‘ayyad’s action in ‘ārīf zālah fi ‘l-Hāshimiyyah al-faqīrūn’ which was one of his ‘mukhtarât’.
28 The mudarraj on the north side was constructed by the Turks (p.72b). In 1964 I was told the southern causeway was rebuilt or extensively repaired by Imām Yahyā. 79
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

Al-Mutawakkil ala Ali'a Ismâ’il b. al-Qâsim
(1054-1087/1644-1676)

Al-Mutawakkil’s reign of 33 years is the most brilliant era of Zaydi Imamic rule and marks the furthest extent of their dominion—yet Mutawakkil had to contend with his brothers who declared themselves Imâms, though they ultimately assented to submit to him. Al-Jarnûzî’s biography, al-Sirat al-Mutawakkiliyyah90 has been extensively drawn upon throughout this study. Mutawakkil took the village of Dâwra‘, south of San‘a’, as his capital, but moved round from place to place accompanied by ulema and students (murîd), supported from the Treasury, who learned from him.80 Al-Shawkânî tells us that, in Mutawakkil’s day, the country was restored to prosperity, the farmers (ra‘îy) had excellent harvests and became wealthy. ‘Everyone was secure in what was in his hands, for he knew the Imam’s justice would restrain him from meddling with any of his property, while others than the Imam would be restrained by respect for the Imam from venturing on anything unlawful (haram), for the people had recent experience of the oppression of the Turks and the wars that had taken place between them over a long period had exhausted them.’

Mutawakkil was much concerned with the affairs of the ra‘îy.81 In his day roads were safe, prices cheap, and nobody could ill-treat (qalama) another, even if the latter were an infidel (kafir), so merchants came from all countries. He was an enquirer (bâkhtî) and scrutiniser (munaqûs) respecting the sharî’ah-law, not deviating from its verdict (hukm). He used to respect scholars (ahl al-’imam).82 Fortune seems to have smiled on him for in San‘a’ and the neighbouring villages in the year 1058/1648, the underground water (ba‘d) greatly increased and came nearer the surface so that people were enabled to irrigate their land more easily.83

The Diwan or administration was located in the interior part of the San‘a’ Qasr where the Pasha’s ‘chair’ (kursîyy) was.84 There seem to have been Turkish officers in his army and indeed from various sources it is evident that some Turks stayed on in the Yemen.

In 1057/1647 Mutawakkil ordered that pasture-land held as property should be de-restricted (tâhîyat al-mara‘î min al-amîk) and that land-owners should be prevented from restricting it (tâhajjur-hã).85 In the previous year he had commanded that the zakât-tax on pasturing beasts (sa‘a‘im) was not to be taken unless the complete legal minimum liable to taxation (al-nicâb al-tâmm) was reached. This order was carried out in some districts but not in others.

Controversies (maṣûrahât) flared up in 1058/1648 between the Imam and the ‘ulema of the age’ over such questions as market-taxes/customs (mukûs), imposts (majabi), zakawat and others, the Imam defending his taxation policy. Among the treatises he wrote are primary accounts of the theory and practice of Zaydi Imams and ulema. 87 Mutawakkil’s relatives also queried his monthly demands (majâhil) on Lower Yemen territory. The argument and counter-argument of the ulema and Imam are reported in extenso in al-Sirat al-Mutawakkiliyyah88 but although the theory and practice of Zaydi Imams and ulema is far from lacking in interest it cannot be examined here. Towards the end of Mutawakkil’s life a learned Qâdi, Aḥmad b. Jâbir al-Ayyrâzy, ceased attending (’tasa‘ala) the Friday Prayer in the San‘a’ Jami’ Mosque because he had heard of the Imam’s attempt to annul his verdicts (a‘lâm) and his ordering his governors to turn away from his depositions.89

A sign of Mutawakkil’s growing power was the arrival of an embassy from Abyssinia in 1056/1646-7 with a present of slaves, cistern (sahâd) and weapons of Abyssinia. The ‘King of the Christians’ who had earlier sent an envoy to Mu‘ayyad, now invited the Imam to send him a return mission. This resulted in the famous visit to Abyssinia of al-Hâyi.90

A further manifestation of the Imam’s ambitions or claims to Caliphal functions was his decision in 1058/1648 to appoint an Amîr over the Yemeni pilgrimage (Hajj al-Yaman) to be escorted by a cavalry detachment (jaridâ) and infantry. The pilgrims were accompanied by Sayyid Muhammad b. Šalîh of Jânî and Abû ‘Arîsh as an escort. In Mu‘ayyad’s reign there was no such office as Amîr al-Hâyi though in the Rasûlid period there had been a Yemeni Hâji which on one occasion clashed with the Mamlûks who captured and imprisoned the Rasûlîd Sultan who was with it.

The Conquest of Ḥadramawt

The Zaydi conquest of Ḥadramawt has a special interest as a long range strategic operation over difficult terrain. The Kâthûrî Sultan, Badr b. ‘Umar had been deposed by his relatives and Mutawakkil took this as a pretext for despatching an expedition (sayf) against them.82 Letters were sent to Ḥusayn al-Ra‘î, ‘the first lock (qib) of these cages’, controlling the country from Bâlîb Bani ‘l-’Ard to al-Baydâ’—next to him was al-Haythâmî of Dathinah, then the ‘Avlāqi to the east, then the Wāhîdî; south west of Dathinah was the Fadlî.91

The Imam’s brother assembled about 10,000 foot warriors and 1,000 rein (i’mân) of cavalry in 1065/1654-5 and in the initial campaign defeated Šalîh al-Ra‘îsâqi and his allies at Najd al-Salâf.91 The Ra‘isi flled to al-Baydâ’ and the Zaydis footed the furniture, goods, weapons, sheep-goats of the country. A campaign was now mounted against Šafî. Their leader, Sultan ‘Abdullâh b. Harharâh, had with the standards of the Shaykh, the Ḥâbîb of the famous Bû Bâkîr, Sûlim Sayyûdî92 of Ḥadramawt in whom the Imam had great faith (i’tiqâd ‘alâmî).93 Notwithstanding, though there was heavy fighting in the steep high Yâfî mountains, the Zaydis were victorious; they also

90 Tasâb al-’âlî, 101, records the death of Aḥmad b. Šalîh, Śâli‘ b. Jîrin, called Amîr Ḥajj al-Yaman, at al-Qunûfudah, whose house was in good relations with the Imam. At a later period the Kûbî Sayyids were in charge of the Yemen pilgrimage. It is to be remembered that the Imam’s order for his depositions was no general security (aman) in the Hijaz and that as many as four mahâmîl (empty litters sent as a sign of independence with a contingent going on pilgrimage) took the road to Mecca, those from the Yemen, Sham, Maghrib and Iraq. In 1080/1670 mahâmîl went from Iraq, Sham, Mîr and the Yemen. The Sultan had made the address (khulbah) in the name of the Imam in 1059/1654-5. For the Ḥadramawt episode see Muhammad b. Ḥabîb, Tārîkh al-Dânîr al-Kabîriyyah, no place or date of publication (1948 ?), 105. 38 Qufl is often used of a fortress that ‘locks’ a route.
91 Tasâb al-’âlî, 101 a, records the death of Aḥmad b. Šalîh, Śâli‘ b. Jîrin, called Amîr Ḥajj al-Yaman, at al-Qunûfudah, whose house was in good relations with the Imam. At a later period the Kûbî Sayyids were in charge of the Yemen pilgrimage. It is to be remembered that the Imam’s order for his depositions was no general security (aman) in the Hijaz and that as many as four mahâmîl (empty litters sent as a sign of independence with a contingent going on pilgrimage) took the road to Mecca, those from the Yemen, Sham, Maghrib and Iraq. In 1080/1670 mahâmîl went from Iraq, Sham, Mîr and the Yemen. The Sultan had made the address (khulbah) in the name of the Imam in 1059/1654-5. For the Ḥadramawt episode see Muhammad b. Ḥabîb, Tārîkh al-Dânîr al-Kabîriyyah, no place or date of publication (1948 ?), 105. 38 Qufl is often used of a fortress that ‘locks’ a route.
92 All these are well known tribes of the former Aden Protectorates, even al-Baydâ’ once being regarded as British protectorate.
93 This is to be identified with Najd al-Aslaf, south of Yarîm, a flat-topped hill.
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95 This is to be identified with Najd al-Aslaf, south of Yarîm, a flat-topped hill.
96 For this section however Tasbâb al-’âlî has mainly been used. For the Šarh see The Penitence, II, 112. 88 Niebuhr, Travels, trans. R. Heron, II, 73, says he made caps to earn his living, as is often recorded of Yemeni notables. 89 Al-Badr al-tai’, I, 1-6, 90. 89 Al-Badr al-tai’, I, 1-6, 90. 88 Niebuhr, Travels, trans. R. Heron, II, 73, says he made caps to earn his living, as is often recorded of Yemeni notables. 89 Al-Badr al-tai’, I, 1-6, 90. 88 Niebuhr, Travels, trans. R. Heron, II, 73, says he made caps to earn his living, as is often recorded of Yemeni notables. 89 Al-Badr al-tai’, I, 1-6, 90.
fought the Ibn 'Asif Sultans and the Nakhibis, but Ibn Hararah was later allowed to return to his country.98 The Kathiri Sultan Badr b. 'Abdullah, now thoroughly alarmed, released his uncle Badr b. 'Umar and notified the Imam of his obedience and that the Imam's name was being mentioned at the Friday address.99

In 1069/1658-9 the Kathiri, Badr b. 'Umar arrived in the Yemen complaining that his brother had driven him out of Zafar, so the Imam decided on the invasion of Hadramawt, al-Shihr and Zafar. Safiyy al-Islam Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Jasan, Mutawakkil's nephew, was chosen as general and, started out with Wadi 'l-Surr to Khawlan, Q hwan and Raghwan where he stayed till the latter half of September when he proceeded to Ma'rib and Baytun, staying there at a place called al-Himaa, Wadi and Wadi Hajr.100 His troops suffered great hardship and hunger. Safiyy al-Islam had posted a garrison at coastal Ahwar of Lower Awlaqi territory to ensure that supplies reached him from this direction, but Ahwaris refused to hire their animals to transport them and resisted the Zaydis. About mid-March 1070/1660 the Imam took action by sending money and clothing (akhsiyah) to the Dubmah of Baraq to induce them to raid the edges of Bilad al-Ramlah.101 east of Baraq, and the flood courses (masag4) of the Jawf. They did in fact raid the Badu al-Majrakhir and loot their camels but that was all. By this the Imam had hoped to arrange supplies for the troops in Hadramawt, but as the chronicler observes, it was no use on account of the distance. This reveals a certain ignorance of geography on the part of Mutawakkil.

Safiyy in Hijar found it difficult to move and his operations were held up at An'am for lack of camels. His army's morale was low so the Imam sent men of al-Haymah to Al-Bayda' to encourage the army. However Safiyy managed to extricate himself after sending out scouts to reconnoitre the country. He now took the route up the 'agabah or pass (perhaps al-Madillah) to al-Khuraybah of the Wadi Dawa', and Raydat Ba Madus, and thence to al-Hajarayn and the Kathiri Sultan's capital only two days further on. The Sultan retired to Shibam, then to Shanafir. Safiyy entered Shibam which the chronicler calls 'an eye among the towns of Islam'. The Sultan now 'returned to obedience'.102

Omani Maritime Attacks on the Zaydi Held Coasts

The conquest of Hadramawt soon brought the Zaydis into confrontation with the rising maritime power of Oman. Ja'far, the Kathiri, had in 1070/1660 induced the Imam of Oman, Sultan al-Sayf,103 to take Zafar—it was however re-taken by Mutawakkil's own Kathiri protege. A Zaydi na'id was appointed to al-Shihr. He was replaced in 1079/1668 by a new na'id sent by Mutawakkil to take over the governorship (waliyyah) of Zafar of Hadramawt'. The new na'id took over al-Shihr, sending his son to Zafar in his stead.

Since they commanded the sea-power the Omani could raid the south Arabian coasts as they willed and in 1079/1669, in May, the chronicler records that they came to plunder the coast of Aden and Mocha. The Omanis fell in with three barques (jilib) of the Franks at the very entrance to Mocha port (badb al-fardah). The Franks defended their property but the na'id of Mocha was helpless to repel the Omani raiders because of their greatly superior numbers and their seven galliots (birâsh).104—large vessels. Reinforcements arrived too late to prevent some looting, and so a number of vessels went on to Jeddah. On their return voyage to Muscat, the Omanis plundered the Mahrah coast.

Some years later, in 1084/1673-4 the Socotran Mahrah and the coastal Mahrah west of Zafar wrote to the Imam to protect them against the Omani marauders—so presumably the attacks continued. Yet, in the following year, Omani raiders sailed by way of Socota where they killed some people, their barbaht following the Baniyân105 to the Gate (Bâb) of Mocha, plundering and throwing them into the sea. At Sihr Island and Aden the people drove them off with arquebus and zebratana, but the Omanis joined up with the rest of their ships and blockaded Bâb al-Mandab Strait until driven off by Safiyy al-Islam commissioned by the Imam to deal with them. In 1085/1674 the Imam despatched a force, 300 strong, to defend al-Shihr from Omani attack from the sea. There was good cause for apprehension, and when news arrived about April of the following year that Omani vessels had put to sea from Muscat with the 'Wind of the East', the Imam and his son suspected their intention was to raid the Yemeni coast.

Insecurity at sea could not but affect the San'a' markets importing goods from abroad as when, for instance, in 1073/1662-3 'only a little cloth (baze) entered Mocha bandar because of the afore-mentioned trouble from the Frank'106 in the previous year. A glimpse of how commerce was carried out by vessels plying the trade-route from the Gulf and India is afforded us by Jarmuzi in describing the treatment meted out by the Kathiri Ja'far b. 'Abdullah at Zafar to people from al-Kunj (Kung)107 a little north east of Lingeh.

Insecurity on the caravan routes from Hadramawt via the Jawf to San'a' would affect inland trade along the relatively easy route along the steppe bordering Ramlat Saba'tayn? Masâgil means majrâ suyu1 al-Jawf, the flood courses of the Jawf. When news arrived about April of the following year that Omani vessels had put to sea from Muscat with the 'Wind of the East', the Imam and his son suspected their intention was to raid the Yemeni coast.

Foreign Relations

In general the Yemeni chroniclers are well informed on events in India. Mutawakkil was in touch with Aurangzeb. He was brought a gift of horses (birdhawn) from India in 1071/1660-1 and next year Safiyy al-Islam, established in Aden, despatched to the 'King of India' a gift of noble Arab horses and horses of the Yemen—a present of double the value came back in return. Again in 1087/1676-7 ships arrived at Mocha bandar bearing a present from Sultan Aurangzeb to the Imam and padaqah to the Ashraf of the Yemen.

Relations with the Hijaz were close and the exchange of views in questions of law and religion frequent and continuous. The Yemen was well aware of events in the Ottoman dominions, be they in the Hijaz, Saw'akin/Suakin, or even Istanbul, and visits were made from time to time by Turkish diplomats. The Ottoman Sultan in fact decided to attack the Yemen in 1085/1674-5 but the project was abandoned for fear of the Portuguese. The activities of the Portuguese and other Europeans are recorded and in 1074/1663-4 the chronicler notes that the English had plundered Surat. The attack of the Hollanders and English (though probably the latter were not involved, only the pirate Hubert Hugo) on Mocha in 1659-60 has already been translated into English.107

98 Ta'amq, 29b.
99 'Ababi al-khadub was-'l-jumâ' ah.
100 Wadi Hajr is well known, the chief town being Sidahah, but there is a Wadi Hajr near Wadi which might be intended at this point.
101 Ramlat Saba'tayn? Masâgil means majrâ suyu1 al-Jawf, the flood-courses of the Jawf.
102 The full account of the operation is in al-Sirat al-Mutawakkiliyyah but only the summary of Ta'amq al-khadub has been used.
103 He ruled from 1050-1091/1640-1680.
104 For these types of vessel see the writer's Portuguese off the south Arabian coast, index.
105 This must be the Indian trading vessels arriving with the monsoon.
106 The attack by the Hollanders and Hugo.
107 Al-Salimi, Tuhfat al-'a`yân, no place of publication, 1332 H, II, 57, in a letter from the Oman Sultan to Imam Isma'il of the Yemen, Kunj and Jirin are described as the two bandars of the Shihr. Kumar is described by I. G. Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, II B, 1940-45. It was once fairly important. Jirin is Hormuz island (Portuguese Gombroro).
Mutawakkil and Taxation

There are two aspects to Mutawakkil’s fiscal policy—if it can be called a policy—his treatment of the tribes, probably at least the northern and Zaydi tribes, and his taxation of towns, imposts of various types, customs duties, etcetera.

That he did not directly tax certain tribes is evident from a passage in the Tabaq al-halawā. The kadhâ of Barat, the very learned Qâdi `Abd Allâh b. Sa`da, then al-Iyâni al-Barati, and his father ‘received the dues of their tribes (wâjibât gabi’li-him) by their choosing and being given the choice, and al-Mu’ayyad billâh assigned that to them, except what was surplus to their requirement and they continued in that fashion’. In fact even the great Mutawakkil paid subsidies to tribes as has commonly been done up to the present time. In the following case in point it looks as if the payment was made to ensure the security of routes through tribal territory. In 1086/1675-6, says the chronicler,110 the Duhmah plundered a caravan of the Sa`dah merchants (nûjûr) at al-Annashiyah (some 22 miles south of Sa`dah, on the main route from ‘Sn`â), giving as the reason that the Imam had cut their stipend (jâmâyûkhiyâh), but saying that if he restored it they would return the booty.

In the opening years of his reign, as already seen, Mutawakkil was criticised by the ulama for levying certain categories of tax illegal in their eyes. In 1074/1663-4 he laid down an impost (farâda) `1ûm) on everyone of the butchers.112 This continued until Rabi’ II of year 1077/1666 and through it the people suffered detriment (tadarrara) so the Imam removed it, retaining however the inspector because of his easy treatment of the people. In 1076/1665, a certain Sayyid Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Ghurabâni had written to the Imam from Barat criticising certain of the ordinances (ahkâm).113 It is not however stated whether this influenced him when he removed that year (the imposts) `he had laid on the nûjûs and only the previously existing imposts (qâbâlâti) remained.’

In 1085/1674-5 the Tabaq al-halawâ notes that `levies (maqâlib) upon the Lower Yemen, apart from the zakât, fitrah and expiatory fines (kâfáf), had redoubled, such as the prayer-levy on the person praying (maqâl al-salâh ’ala `l-musalli) etcetera, the toll on sheep (nazzâq) levy, the levy on profit (maqâl al-râbât), the lead (shat) and gun-powder levy, the levy for the Governor’s table (matlub sufrat al-wall) and the levy of the Two Feasts.’ Perhaps it was on account of these exactions that the chiefs of al-`Hujiariyyah rose and killed some slaves of ‘Izz al-Islâm that year.

In his reign the ‘Sn`î Jews had one of their recurring Messianic phases which landed them in trouble with the administration (cf. p. 399b).

At the time of his death Mutawakkil’s testament to his sons and relations was to refrain from ‘eating the zakât’.114 This he commended to all other Hashimis, advising them to take to trading.

Al-Mahdi Ahmad b. al-`Hasan b. al-Qâsim (1087-1092/1676-1681)

Two short reigns followed Mutawakkil’s long and successful tenure of the Imamate. His nephew Sa`diy al-Islâm Ahmad b. al-Hasan, the conqueror of Hâdramawt, took office after him, a prince of great experience, in his late fifties.

Acknowledgement (tasîm al-bay`ah) of allegiance to him came from the Sultan of Hâdramawt accompanied by a present. In his day a Sharîf Nâjîr of Anis introduced a new tenet (madhab) of his own, prohibiting what is lawful, kissing the hand at greeting (maqâl-fahah)117 and the taking of coffee (qahmat al-bosn) etcetera. This latter led to the up-rooting of many coffee-bush plantations (maqâhirî).118 His punishment was merely imprisonment. In 1090/1679 the Imam ordered the Jews to be expelled from ‘Sn`î and they settled temporarily at Mawâzî (cf. p. 399b seq.).

Al-Mu’ayyad billâh Mu`ammad b. al-Mutawakkil Ismá`îl (1092-1097/1681-1686)

Al-Mahdi’s successor, a son of Mutawakkil, had trouble with other pretenders to the Imamate. He settled first in ‘Sn`î, then in Dâwân. In his brief reign the warlike Yâfî tribes threw out their Imamic governor and al-Mu’ayyad was unable to recover suzerainty over their territory.

Al-Mahdi Mu`ammad b. Ahmad b. al-`Hasan b. al-Qâsim (1098-1130/1687-1718)

Al-Nâjîr Mu`ammad, a great grandson of al-Qâsim the Great, took first the name al-Hâdî, then al-Mahdi, but is known as Shâhîb al-Mawâhîb because he made his residence at al-Mawâhîb about three miles east of Dhammâr. When he claimed the Imamate he was in al-Manşârîh of al-`Hujiariyyah province. His Al Qâsim relations besieged him there and he nearly surrendered for lack of water, but God granted him rain so he made a sortie and captured all the Al Qâsim Amirs in a tent. He lavished money on armies and all came to pay him allegiance. Zâdârî119 calls him one of the great kings who would take money/revenue (mâl) from (his) subjects (wa `yûm) without measure (tagdzr) and spend it without measure. After the departure of the Turks until he ruled over it the Yemen was preserved from tyranny (jârl), impost-taxes (jibâyât) and taking of what the shar’-law does not deem lawful, but when this one rose he took money/revenue lawful and unlawful (min hili-hi wa taqazha hili-`hi). He was monarch of a mighty kingdom and had many troops but was ascetic in dress, wearing neither silk nor fine clothes. He was partial to the company of ulama but, though he liked to make a show of being an Âlim he was not really one. He was known as Shâhîb al-Sâdârî122 because when he came out of the retinue accompanying him, seeing the troops filling the area he would dismount from his steed and prostrate himself in gratitude and humility.

Shâhîb al-Mawâhîb seems to have executed, looted, bestowed or withheld gifts in so arbitrary a fashion that it was popularly said a mired of the Jinn would speak to him by night to kill someone118 (which was true of them, but by compari-son with him they are to be accounted nothing). His ability to manage the treasury of the people of ‘Sn`î was such that he had poisoned Imam al-Mu`ayyad and that he was a skilled astrologer (munajjîm).119

110 Ibid, 106a.
111 Ibid, 106a.
112 Written in the ms. jazîrin, but jazîrin seems the best reading.
113 Ibid, 103a.
114 Dozy, Supplément, seems appropriate here—`plurisors sors d’impos non prescrits par le droit canon, et par consequent illegaques sans un certain point’. An unclear passage (Tabaq 109b) seems to indicate he was attacked by the Al Qasim Amirs in a tent. He lavished money on armies and all came to pay him allegiance.
115 Fines paid to expiate an oath taken in vain, e.g., Agmîn billâh ansî `alamal kafta. In such case the fine goes to the Imam.
116 See p.79b, supra.
A strange disturbance that took place in his day was the rising of an ambitious Sayyid, Ibrahim al-Mahawari123 of al-Mahawar, a village of Bila'il al-Sharaf in al-Hajar district, he being a descendant of al-Qâsim b. 'Ali al-`Iyâni, a 4th/11th century Imâm. He appeared in 1111/1699-1700, his followers being ecstatics (ma`dâhib) a type common enough in the Lower Yemen but unusual in Zaydi districts,124 and some reached Bandar al-Salahah and Wâdi Mawr and besieged the fortress of Thulâ. Al-Maha%wâri had an outstanding reputation for writing out magic squares (a`zzâfag) and talismans (pitamân/qa`lâm) which he would blot out in water and give to cows and bulls to drink and order them to be slaughtered for the people and for birds. He is described as skilled in legerdemain (sha`wadhah) and was reckoned a great magician. He had the reputation of being able to preserve his followers from bullets125 until a woman of Thulâ dropped a stone of the merlons on top of one of them and killed him. His fanaticism led him to kill many Jews and Bâniyâns. Army after army was sent against him by the Imâm only to be routed and most of the troops slain. Finally the Imâm sent his own sons against him and they defeated him. He fled to Sa`dah where the local governor cut off his head.126 At the height of his career al-Maha%wâri claimed to be the Expected Mahdi. 

Sûhs al-Mawahib resolved to bring Yâfi` back under Zaydi control and in 1101/1699-90 he despatched an army against it and the Sultan Bsh al-Arif, under the leadership of the Kabir of Hamdân, but after an initial success the force was defeated. Fearing reprisals on him by the Imâm the Kabir returned home and came out in rebellion but was in turn defeated and executed. In 1120/1708 Yâfi`, having inflicted a series of reverses on the Imâm's troops, attacked Ibb, led by their Sultan `Umar b. Sûh b. Harharah with 20,000 tribesmen not only of Yâfi` but also of al-Rasâs, al-Hawwâshib, Dathinah, the followers of al-Haythami, Al-Hu`ayqayn.127 Murâd, Bahyân and al-Mug`ababu. The walls of Ibb were weak and the tribesmen took it with their swords and muskets (bânâdiq) slaying men and women, respecting neither Muslims nor Jews, burning and plundering. They took all that was in the Suq, the Khin of the Bâniyân and the mosques, leading 1,000 camels with it as well as what was carried on donkeys and on their own backs. An Imâmic force sent against them was routed and had to retire on Ibb. Yâfi` was never to be recovered by the Imâms.

Though the Imâm had been supreme in the Yemen, in 1126/1714 a rival, al-Mutawakkil b. `Ali b. al-Qâsim, came out in opposition against him and eventually besieged him al-Mawahib where he died—to the relief of the besieged and besiegers.

Early in his reign Sûh al-Mawahib marked out a town, al-Khadrâ`, about a mile from Rada`, where houses, castles, then, because he fell sick in it, he abandoned al-Khadrâ` and developed al-Mawâhib, a walled town, and al-Khadrâ` fell into ruin. Another more fruitful venture was his despatch of Ibrahim al-Mahawari128 of al-Mahawar, a descendant of al-Qâsim b. `Ali al-`Iyâni, a 4th/11th century Imâm. He appeared in 1111/1699-1700, his followers being ecstatics (ma`dâhib) a type common enough in the Lower Yemen but unusual in Zaydi districts,124 and some reached Bandar al-Salahah and Wâdi Mawr and besieged the fortress of Thulâ. Al-Maha%wâri had an outstanding reputation for writing out magic squares (a`zzâfag) and talismans (pitamân/qa`lâm) which he would blot out in water and give to cows and bulls to drink and order them to be slaughtered for the people and for birds. He is described as skilled in legerdemain (sha`wadhah) and was reckoned a great magician. He had the reputation of being able to preserve his followers from bullets125 until a woman of Thulâ dropped a stone of the merlons on top of one of them and killed him. His fanaticism led him to kill many Jews and Bâniyâns. Army after army was sent against him by the Imâm only to be routed and most of the troops slain. Finally the Imâm sent his own sons against him and they defeated him. He fled to Sa`dah where the local governor cut off his head.126 At the height of his career al-Maha%wâri claimed to be the Expected Mahdi. 

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Al-Mutawakkil ‘ala Allâh al-Qâsim b. al-Husayn (1128-1139/1716-1727)

This Imam’s prowess as a warrior in the reign of Şâhid al-Mawâlib had roused the latter’s jealousy and fear of him, as has been seen. In 1119/1707-8 he was appointed by Şâhid al-Imâm to campaign against the Hâshid tribes and he sent with him the naqib Şâhid Hubaysh, the Kâfir of the Bakl tribes—an interesting case of an Imam using one powerful confederation against another. Al-Qâsim duly chastised the Hâshid tribes, entering Khamir and gaining complete control of the territory; he built a wall round ‘Amrân. Şâhid Hubaysh however took to intriguing against him, but al-Qâsim’s army remained loyal, and al-Qâsim executed him at Khamir. 133 Following this the Imam made him governor of Şan‘ã’, but he evaded the Imam’s order to assassinate those Dhû Ḥusayn tribesmen of Baraq invited by him to Şan‘ã’—this would indeed have been the grossest treachery.

A relatively tranquil decade followed after the establishment of al-Qâsim as Imam with the title al-Mutawakkil. Al-Shawkâni gives him a good character in that he spent on the poor from the treasuries (buyû` al-amwâl), but he is said to have been noted for amassing money though generous.

In 1135/1722-3 Muḥammad b. Ḥishâq, later to rival his own son in the Imamate (see p.140), proclaimed his da`wah in the Mashriq but the famous al-Qâsim b. Ismail al-Ḥâfiz al-Mana`îrî al-Ahmâr managed to reconcile and bring him back to his allegiance. A year before Mutawakkil’s death (1138/1726) the Ḥâshid tribe of Arhab had grown restive and had taken to robbery in the country about al-Rawdah, and others went on to the west of Şan‘ã’. Muḥammad b. Ishaq, later to rival his own son in the Imamate (see p.140), adds that al-Qâsim duly chastised the Hâshid tribes, including the Ḥâshid tribe of Ḥabâr and Dhaybân came up (as spectators ?). One of Mutawakkil’s mamlûk horsemen—perhaps making a display as in the Niebuhr drawing (p.143)—involuntarily turned his course a little towards these tribes and one Arhabi rose up against the mamlûk, others fired their muskets at the horsemen, and one was killed and fell in front of Mutawakkil. Cool-headed from many battles, the Imam sent a messenger to enquire about the reason for the shooting and caution them, but the Arhabis paid no attention to him and wanted to cut him down. Mutawakkil then permitted their blood to be shed and came forth to do battle in person. Al-Jirâfî 135 adds that the Imam ordered the streets and roads to be guarded and houses locked—the fighting went on till night. Arhab lost 100 men slain and 600 taken prisoner. This affair is typical as arising from a misunderstanding and the hot blood of the tribes. 136

The incident might have led to serious consequences, for next year Arhab invited Ḥâshid and Baklî to join it in taking vengeance and expunging the shame (akhdh al-thar wa-mahw al-ʿsr). The tribes responded, ‘Alî b. Qâsim al-ʿAṣwar, Chief of Ḥâshid, and Nâṣîr b. Juzaqîyân, Chief of Baklî, met with the Imam’s son al-Ḥusayn at ‘Amrân to attract him to their group. Arhab upset the country about al-Rawdah, and others went on to the west of Şan‘ã’—against whom the Imam despatched his forces to Bâb al-Manjil. Then once more the celebrated Muhammad Isma`îl al-Amir mediated between them and al-Ḥusayn returned with the tribes of ‘Amrân.

Shortly after this Mu’tawakkil died and was buried at the side of the Qubbat al-Mutawakkil which was called ‘the Garden of Mus’î at Bâb al-Sababah—he had built a large house next to it. Other pious works of his were an addition to the Şan‘î’s Jabbânah, and building the Jîmân of Ḥadadh.

Al-Nâṣîr Muḥammad b. Ishâq (1135/1723) and al-Mansûr al-Husayn b. al-Qâsim (1139-1161/1727-1748)

On his father’s death, his rebellious son al-Ḥusayn 137 left ‘Amrân for Şan‘ã’ where, some days after his father’s funeral, he proclaimed his da`wah, taking the title of al-Manṣîr. He entered the Dar al-Jîmân for the taking of allegiance (bay`ah) which was paid him by most of the people in Ramaḍân of 1139/1727. Among other claimants to the Imamate however was al-Nâṣîr Muḥammad b. Ishâq, a descendant of Imam al-Mahdi ʿAṣwar who made his counter da`wah at Ẓafîr, north west of Şan‘ã’.

The Hamdân tribes of Ḥâshid and Baklî massed under the leadership of al-ʿAṣwar and Nâṣîr b. Juzaqîyân in support of Nâṣîr. Al-ʿAṣwar went to Şan‘ã’ as a peace-maker (mâbil) 138 and met with al-Mansûr at ‘Aṣîr village. The Imam arranged for the Amir of his slave-soldiers (ʿabid or mamlûk) to assassinate al-ʿAṣwar—he was murdered in the Imam’s tent and his head, fixed on a spear, was taken by the Imam into Şan‘ã’, under a hail of bullets from al-ʿAṣwar’s men. This caused a tremendous stir all over the Yemen. The tribes with al-ʾAṣwar’s son rose to take vengeance and advanced on Şan‘ã’ by way of Madhbîh, while a Baklî group approached the city from the south. The parties fought indecisively, and much more fighting followed. Zâhîr claims that al-ʾAṣwar’s aspiration was to become sole ruler of part of the country, throwing off the Khalîfah’s overlordship, i.e. the suzerainty of the Imam. This assertion is reminiscent of the near contemporary state of affairs in our own time between Imam Aḥmad Ḥāmid al-Dîn and the al-ʿAṣwar family. An unusual, if fleeting, combination, too, was the mutual aid of the Mâkâramî 139 of Ṭayba in Wâdi Ḥâdh and the Imam against his rival al-Nâṣîr.

After his sons had been captured by the Imam and imprisoned in the Qasr al-Nîsîr came about 1141/1727 to the court (al-ṣaḥr al-Mashriq) to pay him allegiance. 140 He settled in Şan‘ã’ to devote himself entirely to scholarship. Al-Mansûr received him well, honoured and respected him, assigning maintenance (rizq) to him, though his son stayed in prison till the reign of al-Mahdi. Al-Mansûr’s name and al-Mana`îrî paid him allegiance. He later renounced Şan‘ã’ and some districts, but the khulbah in the city was made in al-Nâṣîr’s name and al-Mana`îrî paid him allegiance. He then renounced al-Nâṣîr and routed al-Nâṣîr’s supporters. R. L. Playfair, History of Arabia Felix, Bombay, 1859, 115, says al-Nâṣîr, supported by Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn (Sharaf al-Dîn), cf. Nashr al-ʿarîf, II, 302 seq. of Kawthânî ‘made himself master of the whole country with the exception of Şan‘ã’.

A quite different kind of affray occurred in support of Imam al-Mahdi’s agent (ʿamîl) and others, along with the entry of Yâfî tribesmen into Qa`bah through the treachery of certain of its people. The Imam despatched Ḥâshid and Baklî tribesmen against the ʿAbdalis who slaughtered sacrificial animals in the markets of Yâfî (dhahab fî aswâq Yâfî al-ʿaṣwâq) 141 and took refuge with the Yâfî Sultan, Ibn ʿAṣif of al-Qarâh. He managed to persuade Ibn ʿAṣif to drive the Imam’s forces from Aden and Lahej and from that date the ʿAbdalis, themselves of Yâfî stock...
Al-Mahdi ‘Abbás b. al- Husayn b. al-Qâsim (1161-1189/1748-1775)

Al-Mahdi ‘Abbás, son of al-Manṣūr, appears to have come to an accession uncontested by rival aspirants to the Imamate. Many of those who had cast off obedience to his father paid allegiance to him. He is accounted one of the great Zaydi Imams. Niebuhr, who had audiences with him in 1763, states that he was the son of a slave-woman, a negress, and of dark complexion like his mother’s side. A little naively he adds, ‘Had it not been for some negro traits his countenance might have been thought a good one’.

As described by al-Shawkani, he was a perspicacious Imam, keenly intelligent, just, strong at management (qawwâl al-tadbir), high-minded, with a penchant for scholars, dispensing justice to the wronged, diplomatic (sayyid), resolute/prudent (hâzim), watching over the state of his subjects, scrutinising the behaviour of his ‘âmils, no secret state of affairs being hidden from him — having spies who would bring it to his ears. Those close to him (khawaṣṣa-hu) had a respectful fear (haybah) for him in their hearts, doing nothing without the knowledge that it would be reported to him. Thus many injustices were removed. In dealing with the rebellious he would at times reconcile them by gifts/stipends (‘atâ’), at times he would send a body of troops to intervene between these ‘tyrants’ (bughâh) and the peasants (ra’iyah). His power in the Yemen grew great and his reputation reached all quarters. Because of his generosity to those of quality, scholars and writers came to him from distant parts. After becoming Khalifah he used to employ himself in scholarship (‘ilm) always looking up some book or other when by himself. He was alert to put down any tyrant or rebel. His gifts to many of the fujâra’i and du’âfâ’i, envoys and ambassadors were many and frequent.

Al-Mahdi ‘Abbás, adds al-Shawkânî, preserved the border regions of his kingdom by his energy and vigorous assault. He behaved as he chose in dealing with affairs, managing important matters by himself without his ministers having any say with him but, on the contrary, doing as he ordered them—nor could they dissemble to him in any affair of the kingdom or deceive him over any case. He had a perfect discrimination about men and complete experience of the sons of his age. He had the ability to strip the pretence off anyone making an outward show of asceticism (zuhd), virtue and rejection of worldly things on the surface but not in reality.

Throughout the twenty eight years of his reign Al-Mahdi ‘Abbás remained settled in San’ân. Among the many abuses existing before him that he abolished were, according to his contemporary, Qâîd Ahmad Qâsim, the removal of the billeting (ṣaf) of (visiting) tribes on the houses of the San’ânîs and the ‘payments (arât)’ imposed on the people—he used to levy these among the merchants (yafarrî qa lurey-juygur) and impose levies (yughrim) on a group of them along with the troops (ajnâd). He prohibited the commandeering (shukrân) of camels and did away with half of the imports (jibûyûr). ‘And if God will, he will do away with them all!’ He kept a tight rein on his retainers (khâṣṣa) and in most of the country only the (legal) dues specifically were collected from the ra‘îyân, and he prohibited the customary perquisites (ṣiyâsât) collected from the ra‘îyân. He prohibited the taking of money in the Diwân al-Sharî‘ah and assigned to those connected with it proper stipends which rendered them independent (of taking bribes).

Al-Mahdi was punctilious in performing the Ṣalât al-Zuhur, noon prayer, in the Diwân as a group (jamâ‘ah) at the beginning of the time for it and he would go to perform the Friday prayer at the beginning of the time for it also. He forbade anyone to give him the salâm in the Jami‘ Mosque so as not to make it look like the Diwân. He gave alms and aid to the needy. A group of pious men (arîyân) were sent to teach the prayer and he built mosques where needed in San‘ân and elsewhere.

In 1180/1767 Al-Mahdi ‘Abbás was involved in an important waqf question at San‘ân. Certain of his entourage (khâṣṣa) had proposed that he purchase a waqf property in Wâdi Shab‘û north of San‘ân on the basis of an exchange (bi-l-mu‘âwadah) for (sci. for property elsewhere). This roused the aged Sayyid Muḥammad b. Ismâ‘îl al-Amir, now in his eightieth year, who had played so active a part as a conciliator, settling disputes between members of the House of al-Qâsim, and he wrote an address to the Imam recounting the latter’s virtues, many of which are set forth above. Others mentioned in the address are that the Imam had maintained

144 Nasîr al-‘arîf, I, 66.
145 Al-Badr as-sâ‘îf, I, 310 sqq.
146 Gâth, dat., 1999, sayûs, habile, bon politique.
147 Ra‘îyâ, properly ‘subjects’, but seems to mean taxpaying farmers.
148 Fugara’, needy, but especially among the Shafi‘is, religious persons; du ‘afa‘.
149 Cf. Ghârah, p. 41a (n). The ajnâd are probably soldier-tax-collectors. The early 9th/10th century Muslimâkhâsh al-fihân, describing Rustâm administration, speaks of customary gifts to reviewing officials at the two fairs, a ‘jamâ‘ah of the government paying ten dinars. Only a jundi who was making money in some way could pay so large a sum.
150 Cf. ‘Omar al-Makrî, Râ‘îyân. The as-siyâs are certainly a more precise picture of the actual state of affairs than what one derives from the Arab historians.
151 Cf. Ghârah, p. 41a (n). The as-siyâs are probably soldier-tax-collectors. The early 9th/10th century Muslimâkhâsh al-fihân, describing Rustâm administration, speaks of customary gifts to reviewing officials at the two fairs, a ‘jamâ‘ah of the government paying ten dinars. Only a jundi who was making money in some way could pay so large a sum.
152 The reading ra‘îf of Nasîr al-‘arîf, II, 6, is clearly incorrect. Qâîd evidently means that these taxes are illegal. Pâlî, op. cit., 121, remarks on the reactions of the Governor of Mocha of 50 per cent on merchants buying Indian goods and a ‘heavy anchorage duty’.
153 His officials and tax-collectors.
154 Dory, Supplement, ryâdîr, droit coutumier.
155 Hans Webber’s dictionary defines waqf ‘as a ‘commutative contract on the basis of “do ut des”.
156 Nasîr al-‘arîf, II, 8 sqq.
the change for silver coin in a fixed ratio (τραγούδιον ἐκ τῆς ἁλατίας) whereas the former (Imám) kept on changing them (the silver coin) once or twice each year. Sāhib al-Mawāhib, I have heard, changed them thrice in one month. Whenever the former (Imám) made a different rate of change for it (kasarah-ha)156 God's servants lost much money. Another thing is the stopping of the pipes of the band (kasr mazāmir al-nawbah) which were a calamity.157 He commends furthermore the Imám's jihād against Hāshid and Baklî, his clearing open immorality and singing girls (al-fasād wa-'l-maghâni) from San`a', and of women displaying themselves,160 and his giving the troops at the court decent pay and rations (ḥiyyāyat al-an`ād fi l-hādâr). 'But,' he continues, 'neither selling nor exchange (munāqalāt) of the wagf is lawful ... You must be aware, Mawlā-na, that the best of the San`a wagf properties is Sha`ub, for being close to the city, the mosques enjoy its lucre (qadd), tamarisk (āthār) and grain (fa'um) without toiling, on account of its proximity, so that no other properties can take its place.' He recommends him to open up a long buried ghayl with which to irrigate the wagf properties of Sha`ub so that again he may become plentiful, citing the example of his ancestor al-Mahdī Āḥmad b. al-Hasan who opened his ghayl at al-Rawdah from which the choicest grapes are irrigated.

Political-Military Events of the Reign

When established as Imám, al-Mahdī `Abbas at once sent to Ta`izz to settle with his governor, his uncle; this was accomplished once more through the intermediary of Muḥammad b. Ismā`il al-Amīr. A few years later, in 1164/1750-51, however, trouble was caused by a magician (sâhir), a writer of talismans, Ismīl al-Amīr. A few years later, in 1164/1750-51, however, trouble was caused by a magician (sâhir), a writer of talismans, Ismīl al-Amīr to indite a poem, and of all his descendants after him. He left great wealth and extensive lands. His palace was in Bustan al-Mutawakkil quarter. His benefactions include, in an`a' alone, the building of Qubbat al-Aswād in the plain (q') west of al-Jardâ' village to be excavated, Masjid al-Nur in Harat Bustān al-Sultan, Masjid al-Tagwa in Harat Bustān al-Sultan, Masjid al-Mandî `Abbas did not lack for money. In San`a' alone he had 1,800 horses, apart from those at `Amrān and Dhamār, and camels without number.

During his day the famous Qādir Yahyā b. Sāhib al-Sahūlī was a short period the Grand Qādir (Qādir I-Quḍāh) to whom much of sharī`ah matters, and indeed affairs of state also, were entrusted. Nevertheless the Imám ceased to favour him for a while, seques-

trated most of his properties and imprisoned him for years, though eventually he released him and al-Sahūlī prospered again. Officials whose wealth, however gained, impressed the Imāms as excessive were quite commonly mulcted of it in this fashion.

Al-Mahdī's Benefactions

Al-Mahdī `Abbas died in 1189/1775. Zabarah reckons his way of life better than that of his father and grandfather before him, and of all his descendants after him. He left great wealth and extensive lands. His palace was in Bustān al-Mutawaḵḵīr quarter. His benefactions include, in San`a' alone, the building of Qubbat al-Mahdī `Abbas seems to be a near descendant of the Zaydi ideal of warrior-king, follower of the shari`ah, generous giver and benefactor.

Al-Mansūr 'Alī b. 'Abbās (1189-1224/1775-1809)

Al-Mansūr had been appointed governor (māli`a) of San`a' and commander of troops (amīr al-an`ād) by his father who ordered

156. Kasra today means to obtain small change for a coin of a larger denomina-

157. The rendering is slightly tentative. For the phrase darâhim bigash at an

158. Kasra literally means to screw, or to break.

159. A play on the words mardāgha and na`ābah.

160. Takhkikahu al-Amīr.

161. Of Barat, Nashr al-`arf, II, 15 says, 'In the present century it is inhabited by

him to reside in the Qaṣr about the year 1172/1758. In addition to his military exploits in defence of Ṣan`ṣaʾ against the Baraṣ tribes he sent armies to deal with the Khawālīn and Ḥadāq tribes and demolished their castles. On becoming Imām he restored al-Sabūlī as Grand Qāḍī and after his death appointed the outstanding scholar Muḥammad al-Shawkānī in his place. Al-Shawkānī has left a sympathetic biography of him, but al-Wāṣīʾ179 allows him a less favourable character, saying that he entrusted everything to three ministers and only occupied himself with buildings and improvements (jālaqāt) in Ṣan`ṣaʾ and its environs. He put his brother in charge of the Diwān which met twice a week to examine lawsuits (khulāṣ māʾûn). He liked to seclude himself and to sit with women, be they free or slaves. Yet he was brave, generous, hospitable and would enquire about widows and needy persons. For a while all went well.

In the outside world, always a little remote from Ṣan`ṣaʾ which had contacts with it only through Mocha, momentous events were in train with a backwash which was to reach the shores of the Yemen. Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1799 brought the British of India to the southern end of the Red Sea. A captain Wilson arrived in Ṣan`ṣaʾ to parley with the Imām and was lodged in Dār al-Sāliḥiyah in Bīr al-ʿAzāb. Perīn (Māyyūn) was occupied by a British Indian force which shortly moved to Aden. In 1801 Sir Home Popham was sent to the Red Sea to attempt to revive the Yemen’s extensive trade with the East India Company’s possessions which had fallen into sad decay. A Dr. Pringle was sent to Ṣan`ṣaʾ and well received there; in early 1802 Popham now in Mocha, proposed to go to Ṣan`ṣaʾ himself to enter into a commercial treaty with the Imām. Though the Imām’s guest, Popham met with such inhospitable treatment from a greedy tribal shaykh that he turned back at Ta`izz. The Imām in shame and sorrow at Popham’s treatment, promised redress, but was evidently powerless to discipline the Shaykh.

Within Arabia itself the strict Wahhābi movement—it calls itself the “Unitarians”—had started on a career of conquest; by 1801 the Wahhābis were already operating in the Hijāz. A malcontent of ʿAbayd in ʿAṣīr, brought the Nāḍī Wahhābīs to the province in 1215/1800-1. They were opposed by the semi-independent chief of the Tihāmah, from Bayt al-Fajih to ʿAbū ʿArish, Sharīf Ḥamūd b. Muḥammad who was elected their leader by the local Sharīf. ʿAbū Nuqālah,170 the Wahhābi leader was successful in capturing ʿAbū ʿArish. Sharīf Ḥamūd sued for peace and was forced to join the Wahhābis. ʿAbū Nuqālah went on to take Luḥayyāh, Ḥodeidah, Zabīd and Ḥayy, but retired to ʿAṣīr. The two soon fell out and Ḥamūd returned to allegiance to the Imām on the understanding that he would be governor of Luḥayyāh, Ḥodeidah and Bayt al-Faqīh. The Imām sent him a money subsidy and reinforcements of Yām and Bakīl tribesmen. In an engagement with the ʿAṣīr Nāḍīs the latter were routed and ʿAbū Nuqālah slain. Al-Mansūr now sent forces to bring ʿAbū Ḥamūd into submission but it was defeated.

At the court in Ṣan`ṣaʾ rivalry was acute between the eldest prince, ʿAbdūr, son of an Abyssinian slave, rich but avaricious, and al-Mansūr’s third son ʿAbdullāh, of open manner and liberal disposition. The ʿAṣīr, the faqīh Ḥanāf ʿal-ʿUffī,171 had complete control of affairs and behaved arrogantly to many of the Imām’s relatives. He was partial to ʿAbdullāh though, in the Imām’s presence he treated both sons with equal respect. As the aged Imām’s strength decayed the princes’ hostilities grew more overt and on one occasion they even drew their jambīyahs on one another in their father’s presence. By Valentià’s172 visit in 1805 the old man was approaching dotage.

Ill-feeling had arisen between prince ʿAbdūr and al-ʿUffī on account of orders issued at the court (Maṣqām al-Khalīfah) and his curtailment (taṣqīr) of the pay of the troops (ṣarāṭ al-jumād). It may be remarked that the names of the military amirs173 of the Imām’s troops in most of the 12th/18th century seem to indicate that they were slave origin.174 The minister had also stopped the stipends (jirāyat) to the Bakīl tribes till they cut the roads around Ṣan`ṣaʾ, plundering and murdering, and many other tribes started to do the same. ʿQāḍī ʿAbdullāh b. Ḥasan175 al-Anṣi raised the Baraṣ tribes and was cutting the roads in Wādī Dāḥr because al-Anṣi’s son had created dissension in the Dār al-Khalīfah and committed an offence against al-ʿUffī for which the Imām had commanded he be executed.

Ṣan`ṣaʾ was now in a state of siege and in sore straits for grain rose steeply in price and there was a lack of rains. To relieve the city of the siege ʿAbdūr sent to arrest al-ʿUffī and when his father demanded the minister’s release ʿAbdūr’s soldiers surrounded the palace where the Imām and prince ʿAbdullāh were. An agreement was reached whereby ʿAbdūr took over the administration, but his father was not deposed and both the coinage and address at the Friday Prayer were still kept in his name, ʿAbdūr nominally acting as minister to his father. At the time of his action against al-ʿUffī, ʿAbdūr wrote to the tribes making promises to them and they relinquished the siege. Al-Mansūr died at Dār al-Asʿād palace in the next year, 1224/1809, and was buried in Būṣṭān al-Mīsk near Bāb al-Sabābāḥ.

It was al-Mansūr who constructed Dār al-Ṭawāshī, completed in 1200/1785-6, west of al-Ṭawāshī Mosque. It had 360 living rooms but it lasted only a hundred years when it was all demolished. He built also the Jāmīʿ of Qayrat al-Qibl, Masjīd al-Majāmīd and Masjīd al-Bahmāh in Bīr al-ʿAṣāb; Masjīd al-Ṭawāshī and Masjīd Uzāmir he extended, as well as building many houses.

Al-Mutawakkil ʿala Allāh ʿAbdūr b. ʿAbdāʾ b. ʿAbbās (1224-31/1809-16) Al-Shawkānī who had earlier exerted himself to arrange a settlement between prince ʿAbdūr and al-ʿUffī declares that ‘I was the first to render him allegiance—then I had charge of receiving the allegiance to him of his brothers, paternal uncles as well as the rest of the Imām al-Qāsim’s house and all the notables and chiefs.’ Mutawakkil had been Governor of Ṣan`ṣaʾ under his father.

He put to rights what his father had ruined (qaṣada mā qad asfada wāḥdi-hun) except for the Tihāmahs which remained in the hands of the Ashraf, though he came to terms with Sharīf Ḥamūd to return to them some Tihāmah districts. His brief reign saw much fighting with the northern tribes. Al-Shawkānī says he campaigned widely but was victorious in every campaign he had seen to the security of the roads and the ra`āyā. The year before this Imām died letters arrived in Ṣan`ṣaʾ from the Ottoman Sultan and Muḥammad ʿAli Pasha, Governor of Egypt, accompanied by magnificent presents, including an elephant which used to parade with the cavalry and go round the


172 The history of the ʿUffī family of slaves is given in al-Ansī, Taḥrīr al-qirān, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAnṣārī and ʿAbdullāh al-ʿAnṣārī, Cairo, 1369 H, 285, n. 87.

173 George, Viscount Valentià, Voyages and travels to India, Ceylon, the Red Sea . . . in the years 1801. . . and 1806, London, 1809, I, 381.

174 Niebuhr, op. cit., II, 89, says his army has only four generals, shaykhs of the Qasims, elephants which used to parade with the cavalry and go round the

175 The history of the ʿUffī family of slaves is given in al-Ansī, Taḥrīr al-qirān, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAnṣārī and ʿAbdullāh al-ʿAnṣārī, Cairo, 1369 H, 285, n.
Al-Mahdi 'Abdullâh b. al-Mutawakkil Ahmad (1231-1251/1816-1835)

Al-Wâsi`i gives al-Mahdi `Abdullâh a poor character as perpetually changing his ministers and punishing them—they in turn kept replacing the local `âmils who therefore looked after their own interests only.' It was his habit to seclude himself following his pleasures and hunts, listening to music and neglecting affairs of state—through which there was no longer safety for property and on the roads. Robert Finlay of the Bombay Service describes him in 1823 as tall with a dark complexion like an African.

The government (he says) was exceedingly weak, and the Imam was obliged to subsidise the neighbouring chiefs in order to prevent them plundering his country. The amount thus expended amounted to about a lac of dollars annually; but the independent Shaykhs were year by year increasing in strength, and raising their demands in proportion to their ability to enforce them.

The public reception-room of the Imam was covered with Persian carpets, and silken pillows were arranged round the sides; at one end stood the throne, which was raised two feet from the floor, and covered with crimson velvet and cushions of rich cloth of gold. His private apartments were furnished with less taste, and were crowded with the most heterogeneous articles, such as horse-trappings, arms, organs, time-pieces, common empty bottles, bales of cotton goods, silks, and woollen stuffs. His Highness, as well as the officers of his court, were richly dressed, and exhibited a considerable amount of state and magnificence on all public occasions.

The Turco-Egyptians in Arabia

In 1813, during the last years of al-Mahdi 'Abdullâh's father, Muhammâd 'Ali, the redoubtable Pasha of Egypt, had taken up arms against the Wâhidîs in the Holy Cities of the Hijaz which he restored to the Porte while he himself remained virtual master of the Hijaz. That same year he sent an envoy to Sharîf Hamûd of Mocha. Al-Mutawakkil Ahmad also thought to use the Turco-Egyptians to his own advantage. Muhammad 'All's forces which were now moving down the coast again, by sea, blockaded Mocha to which Turki Ebnâ Bir al-`Azab had retired, while tribes from 'Asir carried it by assault on land. The 'Asiris were forced by the Turco-Egyptian commander Ibrahim Pasha to surrender Mocha to him (1833). He was to take further steps against al-Mahdi's son a few years later.

Internal Events in the Yemen

Al-Mahdi, although he took a number of actions during his disturbed reign against recalcitrant tribes, lost several large districts to them. In 1233/1817-18 he inflicted a crushing defeat on the Baraj tribes at San`a and ordered their chief 'Ali al-Shâyîf to be beheaded and his corpse buried in the place for filth (najâsât) outside the city wall near Bâb al-Shu`ub. This was in retaliation for their assault on Bir al-`Azab in which they had murdered and pillaged. Bir al-`Azab at this time was the residence of the Imam's family, the chiefs of state, and great qadis, and of these notables were killed Qâdî Muhammad al-Sâlih and the Inspector of the Waqfs as well as other Sayyids and scholars. The reason for this was that the Dhû Muhammâd and Dhû Hussăn tribes had got the better of the Imam so he ordered them to be put to the ban (iðdâb) in San`a and imprisoned their chiefs and they (the tribesmen) were taken and murdered in the streets and suqs. Some escaped over the San`a wall—the attack was in order to wipe out the shame (`âr) put upon them.

The Imamate of Sayyid Ahmad b. `Ali al-Sirâjî (1247/1831)

This episode exemplifies a pattern far from uncommon during the centuries of the Zaydi Imamate in the Yemen, whereby in times of stress claimants arise from houses of Sayyids other than that in power. Sayyid Ahmad al-Sirâjî was not of the house of al-Qasim the Great. He is credited with all the qualifications that are required of a candidate for the Imamate (shurûf al-imâmah). Short in duration as his Imamate was and insofar as can be judged, of no great significance, Yemeni historians appear sympathetic to him as a scholar in opposition to the established dynasty. He was contemporary with al-Shawkânî and both died in the same year.

Al-Sirâjî taught in the Jâmi' of San`a where he had a great following among the ulema class. So high was his reputation that the ahl al-khayr (benefactors) as al-Shawkânî calls them, would give his students (tablâb) anything he ordered in the way of clothing and maintenance. He left San`â 'muḥāfîr-at-rî' accompanied by a number of scholars and, perhaps at their persuasion, he made his da`wah to the Imamate in 1247 or 1248 (between 1831 and 1833). Authorities consulted are imprecise about the place or time, but he was followed by some men of Khwâlan, Arjab, Nihm, Hâshid and Bakil and went to besiege al-Mahdi in San`a. Al-Sirâjî attributes his decision to revolt to his dissatisfaction with the disorderliness of al-Mahdi's conduct. At San`a' his tribal followers began to ill-treat the ra`iyyah and al-Sirâjî took up their defence against their aggressions with the result that they used to know only the sword and spear, and was familiar only with striking and thrusting.'
deserted him—they were in the movement for what they could get. Al-Wāsī’ claims that al-Mahdī bribed the tribes to return to their own territory. In traditional Zaydi style al-Sirājī kept urging the tribes to action and al-amr bi’l-ma’rûf wa’l-nahy ‘an al-munkar, enjoining the right and forbidding the unseemly. He was assassinated or poisoned in 1250/1834.

Al-Sirājī is presented to us as a man of sincere purpose, scrupulous, but lacking the political chicanery to survive, far less win, in Yemeni politics.

Al-Mahdī ‘Abdullāh’s Benefactions

Ṣan`ā’ owes to this Imam the construction of the Taḥlah Mosque as it is today, the addition of lodgings external to the Jami‘ for students strangers (aqğrah) to the city, the widening of the Maydān opposite Bāb al-Khaliﬁah north of the Jami‘, and the building of Hammām al-Mutawakkil at Bāb al-Sabāḥah, Ḥammām al-Sulţān, the Ḥammām of Wādī Dāsh, among others.

Al-Was’il claims that al-Mahdī bribed the tribes to return to their own territory. In traditional Zaydi style al-Sirajī kept urging the tribes to action and al-amr bi’l-ma’ruf wa’l-nahy ‘an al-munkar, enjoining the right and forbidding the unseemly. He was assassinated or poisoned in 1250/1834.

Disturbance, Anarchy, Chaos, Foreign Interference and Encroachment

The Yemen was now to enter upon an era of anarchy, confusion and much misery internally, with Turco-Egyptian and Ottoman interference, intrigue or active aggression externally. The occupation of the coastal ports by the Tihamah Sharifs obviously weakened the sinews of power of the Ṣan`a’ Īmāms who must expend time and treasure to recover the vital revenues of the ports and other lost provinces.

The Zaydi Imāmate in Decline up to the Ottoman Occupation of Ṣan`a’ (1251-1289/1835-1872)

The character given Imām al-Manṣūr ‘Alī who succeeded his father in 1251/1835, by Cruttenden who visited him in Ṣan`a‘ is unflattering and the scene at his court unedifying. He also had African blood, his mother being said to be an Abyssinian. Suspecting his uncle al-Qāsim was conspiring against him, he imprisoned him, but al-Qāsim escaped to Ta’izz and made an agreement with Ibrāhim Pasha at Mocha to hand over Ta’izz to the Turco-Egyptians in return for a stipend. Ibrāhim entered Ta’izz in 1837 but by that time al-Manṣūr was already deposed. He had unwisely dismissed his commander of troops, Anbar, and they promptly turned on him in his house at Buṣān al-Mutawakkil and imprisoned him. During his year as Imam rains were scarce and streams (anḥār) went deep, especially at al-Rawdah so wells had to be deepened there to twice their depth.

The troops put al-Nā`īr ‘Abdullāh b. al-Haṣan into power and he restored some order. He had been an Imām of the Prayer in Qubbat Mahdī ‘Abbās and he is said to have put a teacher of the Prayer into every district (baladah). When in Wādī Dāsh for an outing he was treacherously slain by the Bānī Jīnīyāyah and others of Hamdān at Dār al-Hājah.

It was at this time, in 1255/1839 that a British-Indian expedition captured Aden from the independent ‘Abdali Sultan. This once great port was sunk so low that when taken it was found to have only some 1,200 inhabitants.

Al-Hādī Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil was now brought out of prison in Ṣan`a’ and made Imām by those in power in the city. The historians have little to say of him. Māṣjid al-Hādī near Bāb al-Rūm is named after him and in one of his three years as Imām a harvest was so good that the price of 8 gadāh of dhurah fell to one riyād.

Another claimant to be the Expected Mahdī, the fāgih Sa’d b. Sāliḥ al-Anṣārī al-Sufi rose in his time at Ibb of the Lower Yemen, writing magic squares and talismans. He even struck pure silver coinage in his own name. He was besieged in al-Dunwah fort near ‘Udayn and executed in 1257/1841. Shortly after this the Imam recovered Ta’izz and Mocha. In April 1841 he besieged a man named Aden with valuable presents to request British co-operation by sea to aid him recover the Tihamah ports from the Sharifs of Abū ‘Arish who had been oppressing and harassing merchants. The British Political Agent who had been instructed to follow the principle of non-intervention in Arab politics, though sympathetic since Indian merchants were involved, could not accede to the Imam’s request though two further missions were sent from Ṣan`a‘, the Imam even offering to cede Ṣaylā’ to the British.

By 1840 events in Europe had obliged Ibrāhim Pasha to withdraw from the Yemen and Hijaz. Muḥammad ‘Alī Pasha had entertained high hopes of taking Aden, only to be forestalled by the British. The Yemeni Tihamah then fell into the hands of the Abū ‘Arish Sharif Ḥusayn who was to rule it from Mocha on behalf of the Porte and pay the Pasha of Egypt an annual tribute of 70,000 riyāds.

On al-Hādī’s death the deposed Imām al-Manṣūr was reinstated, but about two years later defeated and replaced by al-Mutawakkil Muhammad b. Ḥayyī who was supported by Sharīf Ḥusayn, and entered Ṣan`a’. Mutawakkil soon fell out with Sharīf Ḥusayn, and took from him Zabīd, Bayt al-Faqīh and Mocha, besieging the Sharīf in the Qayy village and making him prisoner there in the qal`ah. The Sharīf’s daughter, evidently a woman of spirit, took herself off to Najrān with horses as agārās to seek help there for her father. The guards who had sworn oaths to keep the Sharīf prisoner broke their faith for a bribe of 25,000 riyāds. Yām (of Najrān or Ḥarāz) answered the appeal to aid the Sharīf and defeated Mutawakkil who had to retire to Ṣan`a’, and they played havoc in Zabīd.

Mutawakkil was now awkwardly placed for whenever he tried to go out of the city to quell tribal insurgencies his soldiers refused to obey him. His minister in Ṣan`a’ al-Manṣūr Muhammad b. al-Hājī al-Misrī, notoriously oppressive and unjust who would chain a man from head to foot and beat him unless he ransomed himself with riyāds.

Mutawakkil then summoned al-Mutawakkil to surrender his dominions to the Porte. Mutawakkil, though reluctant and the northern tribes scornful of the Ottoman Turks, was induced to come down to Hodeidah and he signed a convention in 1265/1849 least where candidature for the Imāmate is concerned. This needs further evidence which al-Shamahi does not give.


189 See n. 142 supra.

by which he would become a vassal of the Porte, receiving half the revenues of the country, the rest to go to the imperial Treasury —and 1,000 Turkish regulars were to garrison Ṣan`ā'.

The Turks arrived at Ṣan`ā' on Thursday 5 Ramaḍān, 1265/15 July, 1849 and immediately put a garrison into the Qaṣr. On the Friday the Ṣan`ānis rose to a man and slew every Turk except those who took refuge in the Qaṣr and Bustān al-Sulṭān. The story goes they heard the Turks saying that tomorrow we'll take this house and that woman. Mutawakkil sent the survivors back to Hodeidah on the ‘Id al-Ḥajar with their leader Tawfīq Pasha who died there of his wounds.

The Ṣan`ānis then seized Mutawakkil and brought back al-Manṣūr Ṭalib to office though he lacked some of the qualifications (sharīʿah) for the Imāmat. He imprisoned Mutawakkil in the Qaṣr, loaded it with eight manacles and had him put to death. Jibrīl's verdict is that he was one of the most accomplished of men (kamālat al-rīhā) but fate was not on his side. He was wrongfully put to death in 1266/1849-50.

Mutawakkil's benefactions include work on the ẖāmmām of Wādi Dahr near Dār al-Hajar in 1263/1847, and some abutment places (maṣʿūrāt) at Qubbat al-Mutawakkil al-Qāsim to which he fed water from al-Ǧihāl al-Aṣwād, as well as lodgings over the city gates (maṣāḥir) for malāḥir for muḥājirs, students of ʿilm from outside al-Ṣan`ā'. When the court of Masjīd al-Nahrān was being excavated a golden idol was found —this may be taken as evidence that there had been pre-Islamic buildings there. Al-Ǧawwārī, incidentally reports tales of buried treasure in the market at Bāb al-Yaman where straw, dhurūs-cane and firewood are sold. It is recorded that a thunderbolt fell in Bustān al-Mutawakkil and entered the Manṣūrīāl-Sanī, all the walls of which were decorated with porcelain (jīn). About this period are mentioned several royal palaces, those of the Imām and his retinue being known as al-Saḥrīyā; these were Dār al-Tawwāshī, Dār al-Dhahab, Dār al-Bustān, Dār al-Jamī` etc.

Sore afflictions now befell Ṣan`ā'—the roads were cut—the tribes rebelled. The oppression (purūm) of the minister al-Miṣrī in Ṣan`ā' drove some Sayyids and Qāḍīs to take refuge with the rival Imām al-Manṣūr Āḥmad b. Ḥāshim at Sa`dah who besieged Ṣan`ā' in 1850 with tribal support and even managed to stay in it for about three months. But the Sayyids and notable of the city chose as Imām a scholar, al-Muʿayyad b. Ḥādi al-Ṣāmi, who was a wazir in the Ǧawwārī period. Al-Ǧawwārī is the son of his wazir and a student of his. After fighting in Ṣan`ā' he gave in to al-Manṣūr Āḥmad b. Ḥāshim who imprisoned him.

Taking fright at this al-Manṣūr Ali b. al-Ǧahdī left Ṣan`ā', stirred up the tribes and was acknowledged Imām under the new title of al-Mutawakkil. With 6,000 tribesmen he surrounded Ṣan`ā' and looted Bīr al-ʿAzāb leaving nothing but stones. Al-Manṣūr Āḥmad fled to Arbāb. Within the next few years some four more Imāms appeared in various districts of the north. In this sorry situation the Ǧāmāʾ was held by the Turks, Ǧaḥīr by the Makrūmī lord of Najrān and the Lower Yemen by the Bakīl tribes.

There was fighting in Ṣan`ā' again in 1268/1851-2 between the supporters of a new Imām, al-Ḥādi Ḥālij, and al-Ǧahdī Āḥḥās holding respectively the east and west of the city. Their soldiers occupied the minarets and large houses, the townsfolk were confined to their homes, the süqs locked up and the mosques including the Ǧāmāʾ closed for about two months. Many ulema left for other Yemeni cities. Some large houses like Dār al-Milīʿdādī and Dār al-Ǧahār of Dahr were destroyed. Playfair speaks of complete disorder; 'robberies and murder were of every day occurrence, the Jews and foreign merchants were despoiled of all they possessed, and this once magnificent city was abandoned to anarchy and confusion.'

At last the merchants of Ṣan`ā', to ameliorate, in some measure, this state of affairs, set up a governor (wālī) of their own, the shaykh al-Ǧajj Āḥmad b. Āḥmad al-Ǧaymī al-Suwâydi who 'was not a scholar (mn ḥal al-tim wa-l-maʿrūfah),' in 1269/1852-53. In the following year the ulema and notables of the city recognised an Al Wazir Sayyid of Wādī l-Sirr as Imām only to depose him again and select another. As al-Ǧawzī left he cursed the Ṣan`ānis and their cattle died, their grapes were stricken with the disease known as dīḥāl and blessing (barakah) was withheld from the grain because of the evilness (fasād) of the people. Not unnaturally plague arrived next year.

Ṣan`ā' was besieged anew in 1278/1861-2 when the current Imām in this game of box and cox, al-Ǧahdī Ḥālij, fell out with the al-Ǧaymī who is described as his muṣir, and for trying to enter Ṣan`ā' found its gates locked in his face. During the siege al-Ǧawzī demolished Dār al-Ǧawābī, a mansion of 360 rooms (muṣālī) reckoned the splendour of the age—the decorations (gūḏāyāt) of which had cost al-Manṣūr b. al-Abbās 70,750 riyāds in Yemeni currency. Al-Ǧaymī sold its doors, windows-frames and shutters (fajūn) and timbers. It was perhaps about this time or before that he incited the populace to plunder and destroy the house of Sayyid Āḥmad al-Kibīn in Ḥārār al-Ǧilāyīš, its doors and windows also being looted. The valuables placed in al-Kibīn's salt-keeping (al-wadā`i) by their owners were stolen with the rest. Al-Kibīn who was acting with the title of Shaykh al-Ǧāmāʾ, though he had no power for it all lay in al-Ǧaymī's hands, had wanted to imprison al-Ǧaymī for debts he owed people and al-Ǧaymī revoked himself this way. Grieved at the loss of his large library al-Ǧaymī went as a refugee (muḥājir) to Barāt. In their disgust at his misconduct the al-Ǧāmāʾis set up 'Abdullāh Yūsuf Ḥūyaydī as their Shaykh and besieged al-Ǧaymī in the Qaṣr. Al-Ǧaymī managed to slip away intending to reach the Turks in the Tiḥāmah, but he was intercepted and taken to al-Ǧawwārī west of Kawkābā where Sayyid Hūsān b. Āḥmad had proclaimed himself Imām with the title of al-Ǧāmāʾ. Al-Ǧādī struck his own coin (darākim 'adādiyyah) in Thūlā, but in 1278/1861 proclamation was made in Ṣan`ā' abolishing his
coining, after which no-one accepted it. Like other Imams of the period he claimed to have the Jinii in his service204 (yastashikilm al-jinn) and they would inform him about (forth-coming) happenings. With a tribal following al-Hâdi entered San`a`, taking al-Haymi with him—to die in prison there. Almost inevitably the San`ânis fell out with al-Hâdi, besieged him in the Qâsr and, in 1276/1859-60 expelled him.

They took over all the responsibilities (azâdik) from the Imam’s soldiers, appointing for each darak an `ugil and his group (jamâ’ah). The Imam’s representative left an`a’ and from him (zahirah), delivered by a dawshan, that they would look after, and they would inform him about, their affairs and that their decisions (?akhwâd) would be the responsibility of the Imam. There had been all the plague in the previous year and so many died that there was a shortage of burial shrouds and as many as twenty biers were blessed at a time. Intense cold destroyed crops.

The people of San`â’ now made Shaykh Muhsin Mu`i’d their governor of the city. Muhsin Mu`i’d turned to negotiate with another Imam, al-Muhsin b. Ahmad, entitled al-Mutawakkil, who was on the point of entering the city, and they took over all the responsibilities (adrâk) from the Imam’s soldiers, appointing for each darak an `ugil and his group (jamâ’ah). The Imam’s representative left an`a’ and from him (zahirah), delivered by a dawshan, that they would look after, and they would inform him about, their affairs and that their decisions (?akhwâd) would be the responsibility of the Imam. There had been all the plague in the previous year and so many died that there was a shortage of burial shrouds and as many as twenty biers were blessed at a time. Intense cold destroyed crops.

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The Arrival of the Turks in Ṣan‘ā’ and Second Ottoman Occupation

From the latter half of the 13th/19th century the Ottomans had once more begun to expand in Arabia and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 meant they could send troops to south Arabia by sea. Despite Tawfiq’s reverse at Ṣan‘ā’ they had preserved their foothold on the coast. In 1287/1870 Ḥajjā Muhṭkār Pasha after settling “Arṣir returned to Hodeidah and the Ṣan‘ānīs and other Yemenis invited him to Ṣan‘ā’ as they were weary of the chaos, lack of security and domination by the tribes. Their desperate condition seems to have overcome memories of the cruelties of Muḥammad ‘Alī’s Turco-Egyptians and of the Ottomans.

Ḥajjā Muhṭkār mounted an expedition to Ṣan‘ā’ and entered it on 16 Ṣafār, 1289/15 April, 1872. Arabic sources consulted mostly skip over this quickly—perhaps the facts are not very creditable or information is simply lacking. There is no clear indication as to who was Ḥajjā—if it was al-Mutawakkil or his son Yahyā. At Sa‘dah he took over Sharaf al-Din’s holdings in the Bayt al-Mal and proceeded to al-Madān of al-Ahnûm and fought the Turks.

The deputation invited Ḥajjā Muhṭkār to come and rid them of the rebellious tribes and then depart. He replied in Turkish—perhaps the facts are not very creditable or information is simply lacking. There is no clear indication as to who was Ḥajjā—if it was al-Mutawakkil or his son Yahyā. At Sa‘dah he took over Sharaf al-Din’s holdings in the Bayt al-Mal and proceeded to al-Madān of al-Ahnûm and fought the Turks.

Once the takeover was completed the Pasha demanded the tax-registers (daʃār) of the Imam. His ministers, secretaries and the Ashrâf advised refusal since this would enable the Pasha to understand the administration, resources and revenues of the Yemen. Coupled with his possession of the fortresses he would thus be enabled to take over the country—which was evidently his intention though not what the Imam, ‘Ashrâf and Masḥayikh had asked the Sultan to do.

Muḥammad Muḥṭd advised the Turks, in order to gain popularity, first to destroy a robber, al-Da‘f, living in a round adobe tower (nawbah) outside Sha‘b—the tower was demolished and the robber executed.

Muḥammad Muḥṭd’s own fate is not uninstructional on Ottoman modes of dealing in the Yemen. He was imprisoned by Pasha Ismā‘il Ḥāfīẓ and threatened with death, but certain Ṣan‘ā’ merchants guaranteed to hand over 40,000 ṭuğrais for him. He did not, however, recover from his fright and died. The Pasha had his house nailed up and sequestrated what he once owned.

The Pasha now Governor demanded the tax-registries again in order to become acquainted with the tithes (taqiṣ) of the Imam and his relatives began to sell their holdings (amlāk).

The campaign of expansion in the north was opened with an attack on Kawākbān which surrendered after bloody battles, and on the western highlands. In July 1293/1876 another campaign was launched, this time against Arḥab and Ḥāṣīd—prisoners and the heads of the slain were brought into Ṣan‘ā’. A truce was made and the Masḥayikh and ‘Uqqāl (Headmen) of the tribes came to the Governor who presented them with gifts. Almost constant fighting with the tribes was to follow. In 1296/1879 a new Imam, al-Ḥāḍir Sharaf al-Din, proclaimed himself at al-Madān of al-Ahnûm mountain and fought the Turks till his death a decade later at Sinārā."
Al-Wâsî'î avers that about 70,000 tribesmen from the Maghrib and Mashriq of the Yemen were at the siege of Şan`a'. They constructed ladders at Haddah to assault the walls manned by the Turks. The tribes around the city walls shouted out their lives and property being saved. The Turks for their part thought the townsfolk were helped by the Imam and chiefs of the troops (ajnâd) were helpless to check these excesses of those quitting an`a' thinking to 'go out from darkness to light', across a woman they assaulted her honour. The Imam and chiefs were plundered by tribesmen of all they had, while if they came across a woman they assaulted her honour. 

Nevertheless, again in 1311/1893-4, the townsfolk could see signal fires (tanâdir) at night near the Quort of Şan`a' and Mount Nuqum overlooking the city on the east and 'Aşr overlooking it on the west, and hear the sound of rifle fire.

In 1309/1891 the Porte sent an emissary to Şan`a', directed to Imam al-Mansûr, Sayyid Muhammad al-Rûfî, a Syrian Mufti and he was welcomed by the chiefs (ru'asâ') of the Arabs and Shaykh 'Ali al-Bilâyî. The Turkish governor after breaking the siege ordered a general amnesty.

In 1311/1894 came the first attempts to blow up houses with gunpowder—in Bir al-'Azb an official's dwelling and in the Şan`a' Maydan west of Jâmi' al-Bakiryâyyah, that of the Hâkim al-Hanâfiyyah, the Turkish rite/school being Hanafi. The Shari`ah Court even was later blown up. South of Hammâm al-Maydân the telegraph wires were cut. Patrols had to try to prevent the telegraph wires outside Şan`a' being cut which led to a shortage of men in the garrison so the Pasha ordered both Khanûq and Bâb al-Sîrûn to be closed. The Post and Telegraphs Office (Da`îral al-Barq wa-'l-Bard) was also blown up. Houses of Yemenis collaborating with the Turks followed and in 1312/1894 an attempt was made on Isma`ilis of Najrân Yam lodged near Masjid al-Humaydi north of Bb al-Yaman. 

In addition to the above al-Wâsî'î cites as causes of the revolt that 'each qa`im-maqmûn and other ma`âirs, when they go out to any province (qâda') or district (nâhiyyah) to collect taxes (ašâr) takes what he can for himself, without helping to write the voucher (sanad) for what he has received from them. Then the Government comes back and declares they have paid nothing. Then the Government orders them to be plundered and their houses destroyed and burned. When the regular army (a`skar nîqâm) arrives in a village it assaults the womenfolk, the ma`âirs affecting that the Yemenis are rogues and their rite/school (maqdahî) is Zakîyyah.' Al-Wâsî'î goes on to say that the Turks do not comprehend that Zaydism is one of the (orthodox) schools and that 'we are commanded to follow the guidance of the Imam Zayd b. 'Ali and his Family.' While the Turks consider us seders from Islam yet they do not pray while the Yemenis do, adhering to the shari`ah as well. 

In justice to the Turks it must be pointed out that some of these reproaches can often enough be applied to Yemenis as well.

The Turks about this time started building a ring of forts around Şan`a' for its defence. The worst offence in Ottoman eyes was now to correspond with or visit the Imam and a number of Sayyids, Faqîhs and Mashayikh who did so were packed off to exile in Rhodes where some married but eventually returned.

In 1311/1894 came the first attempts to blow up houses with gunpowder—in Bir al-'Azb an official's dwelling and in the Şan`a' Maydan west of Jâmi' al-Bakiryyah, that of the Hâkim al-Hanâfiyyah, the Turkish rite/school being Hanafi. The Shari`ah Court even was later blown up. South of Hammâm al-Maydân the telegraph wires were cut. Patrols had to try to prevent the telegraph wires outside Şan`a' being cut which led to a shortage of men in the garrison so the Pasha ordered both Khanûq and Bâb al-Sîrûn to be closed. The Post and Telegraphs Office (Da`îral al-Barq wa-`l-Bard) was also blown up. Houses of Yemenis collaborating with the Turks followed and in 1312/1894 an attempt was made on Jami'lis of Najrân Yam lodged near Masjid al-Humaydi north of Bb al-Yaman. 

Precations were therefore taken by the Turks to double the number of watch-cabin (ma`âirs) in the streets and lanes. Lighting with oil-lamps (famāsîn) was also introduced. When a blowing-up took place in a quarter (hârah) of Şan`a' the Turks would imprison those living in the neighbourhood. An attempt by al-Manṣûr's supporters to set afloat the houses of certain ma`âirs using

The Imâm accuses the Turks of open fornication and sodomy (al-sînwa wa-`l-hudayy) so that they seem lawful, while wives have become like cool water, till children are corrupted. The ra`ûs are oppressed, the say (Kabîrah) of Judaism and Christianity has gained high standing, inviolable Muslim graves have been destroyed and walls and adh n built with stone from them. Statutes (qawwûnîn) have been imposed which have abolished (the distinction) between unlawful and lawful in order to seize property, to the extent that a farmer would consent to hand over his entire crop but it would not be accepted from him.

The letter also inveighs against the tobacco monopoly.

The Imâm's letter along with a memorandum (madâbah) embodying the complaints of abuses from the Mashâyikh of Şan`a' and the Mashâyikh of the Tribes, was sent to Istanbul.

In addition to the above al-Wâsî'î cites as causes of the revolt that 'each qa`im-maqmûn and other ma`âirs, when they go out to any province (qâda') or district (nâhiyyah) to collect taxes (ašâr) takes what he can for himself, without helping to write the voucher (sanad) for what he has received from them. Then the Government comes back and declares they have paid nothing. Then the Government orders them to be plundered and their houses destroyed and burned. When the regular army (a`skar nîqâm) arrives in a village it assaults the womenfolk, the ma`âirs affecting that the Yemenis are rogues and their rite/school (maqdahî) is Zakîyyah.' Al-Wâsî'î goes on to say that the Turks do not comprehend that Zaydism is one of the (orthodox) schools and that 'we are commanded to follow the guidance of the Imam Zayd b. 'Ali and his Family.' While the Turks consider us seders from Islam yet they do not pray while the Yemenis do, adhering to the shari`ah as well. 

In justice to the Turks it must be pointed out that some of these reproaches can often enough be applied to Yemenis as well.
guapowder in 1347/1899-1900 was forestalled by an informer. In point of fact the conduct of the ma'mûrs was often extremely bad and Faydî is recorded as giving his ma'mûrs a dressing down for their maltreatment of the Yemenis without abiding by the laws (qawânin).

Two examples of how the Turks alienated Yemenis may be cited. Due to the overbearing treatment by the Turks, their oppression (qâlin) and 'treating them like others' (i.e. not with the special position enjoyed by Sayyids in the Ottoman Empire as well as elsewhere), the influential Al Wazir left their hijrah at the top of Wâdi 'l-Sirr to settle in the Jawf. They wrote to the Imâm who assigned them subsistence (kifâyât)233 there. Zâbârah alludes to the seizure of women and children prisoners from Arhab when their menfolk had escaped them, regarded by the Yemeni tribes as a shameful act.

Never have we heard of taking prisoner Women or infants or burqu'-wearer.

Of all Ottoman Governors of the Yemen Zâbârah says that Husayn Hilmi Pasha was the most outstanding and astute. He attempted to settle the country by reforms in taxation in which he aimed at eliminating both native Yemeni and Turkish abuses. In 1317/1899 he made a tour of inspection, mainly south of Şanh'â, to regulate the zakawât-taxes234 and other Government demands of the ra'îyyah, from which he resolved to exclude intervention of the Masâhiyîh. Among Husayn Hilmi's more important reforms in fact was his elimination of the Masâhiyîh from the collection of revenues (taẖîl al-amolâl) and zakawât on crops. He appointed assessors in every district (nâhiyâh) and each village was required to elect a person from itself who would co-operate with the Government appointed assessor (khâris) to assess what each villager should pay. The assessment had to be agreed and the individual informed as to the amount of his assessment and the assessment written down by the clerk with the assessor. If the Government agent (here called 'ādi) and the peasants' representative (amin al-ra'îyyah) disagreed then the chosen (?) inspector (al-kashîf al-mukhîb) was to be sent to settle the matter. Each individual then 'drove' what he owed directly to the Government Magazine (Mikhzân al-Ḥukûmah) or by intermediary of the trusted headman (al-âqal al-amen). A mobile column (âhār sayyâr) of local gendarmerie 'Zaptieh' (al-Dabpyyah al-Árab) was made responsible for collecting arrears (bawâ'ig) from the ra'îyyah, the intention being to prevent the regulars (al-Nizm) and their harsh leaders from intervening, and the ma'mûrs from receiving bribes. Bribery which had been the means (hamezat al-qasîl) to obtain Government appointments (waqa'îq) was to be severely punished, and many corrupt or harsh officials were dismissed. Husayn Hilmi took a tough line with sympathisers of the Imam or those who had the slightest link with him and would order the police to assault his house and take away any papers, imprisoning such persons without proof in the Qasr.235 He maintained spies to look for adherents of the Imam, thereby doing the Imâm and his group much harm. On one occasion he took forty men of the tribes and others whom he suspected of sympathising with Imâm al-Manṣîr and packed them off to Tripoli. He tried to destroy the Zaydi school/site by secret methods which caused it much severer damage than did Ahmad Faydî and his men whose sole object was bribes and amusing wealth. Husayn Hilmi's 'hatchet man' was his Chief of Police, notorious for his atrocities in his time and that of his successor 'Abdullah Pasha and those who followed him.

One of the recurrent crises caused by failure of the summer rains struck the Yemen in Râbi'I, 1321/July, 1903, some wells in the Şanh'â district ran dry and the Şanhânîs used to ask God's forgiveness in the mosques after the prayers and they would go out to the Jubbâinah to pray for rain (li-'l-istisqa').236 This resulted in high grain prices, a severe famine and a shortage of grain in Şanh'â except for the maïze (durâh Hindiyâh),237 flour and rice which merchants used to import from Hodeidah and Aden, or the grain buried in the madfân-silos of the Bayt al-Mâl by command of the Imâm in those parts of the north under his control. A qâdî of this grain released from store rose to six ryâds and imported flour sold at 2 s. for a ryâd. Locust depredations, as so frequently in the histories, were also reported. Let it be said that in 1320/1904 the Yemen government of plenty of was importing over £100,000 worth of foodstuffs annually, so it looks as if it was not self-sufficient in this way.

When Husayn Hilmi was replaced by 'Abdullah Pasha238 and his strong hand removed, bribery and oppression returned, says al-Wâsî,239 but some building was done in Şanh'â in his day.

The Death of Imâm al-Manṣîr and Rise of Imâm al-Mutawakkil Yahyâ b. al-Manṣîr Ḥamîd al-Dîn (1322-1367/1904-1948)

In Râbi'I, 1322/May-June, 1904 al-Manṣîr died at Qafât 'Idhar—it was he who revived the glory of the house of al-Qâsim after theslide of the Imâmante into disintegration. Among the measures he took of which Zâbârah240 approves were doles (taqrîrât) of grain to students of religion (mukhâfan) and maintenance (masâyîf) for ulema. He put a stop to Tâgîhù-rùwây in most northern districts (hilâd al-qiblah), restored anayâq241 and books belonging to the taqaf brought back to the Bayt al-Mâl Treasury estates242 which had been misappropriated, gave stipends (râqârât) to children's teachers, widows and orphans, they having been divided out among the Sayyids, the inhabitants of Shahârah and others, in the northern districts. In some places he built forts. Apart from his struggles with the Turks al-Manṣîr had not infrequently to fight opponents to his rule in the north itself. At Qafât 'Idhar the ulama of the Şanh'â district, with those present from Dhamâr and Şâ'dah, assembled and, under pressure from Nâşîr b. Mâkhît al-Áhmar of Hashid—who is doubtless be resolved by reference to the Ottoman Archives—Ábûdullah was said to have locked them up in their conference room, saying 'Mâ bish ghayr Sidi Yahyâ, No one else but Sidi Yahyâ',—they elected al-Manṣîr's only son Yahyâ who assumed the title al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allâh.243 Some ulama not present refused him allegiance (mukhâfan) but finally agreed. His da'tâsh is dated 20 Rabi I, 1322/June, 1904.244 It is noteworthy that the Shâhar al-Dîn family of Kawkabân came to pay its respects, as did delegations from Hâshîd, Hajûr, al-Áhnûm, Shahârah and Sufyân. Yahyâ was indeed one of the great Imâms,245 even if he was

233 Kifâyât, explained by Ahmad al-Shâmi as 'afy yu'mâni, naqâd wa-ḥubîb, money and grain.
234 Tax on crops etc., al-muhkâfâr fruit and vegetables, al-salîh bees, al-munûbîh cattle, sheep and goats, camels.
236 A'mmár al-Yamanî, (2), 5, 312.
237 See "The cultivation of cereals in mediaeval Yemen", Arabic studies, I, 32, for ceremonies near San'a.
238 Called locally had, and elsewhere Rûmî or Ḫababi.
239 There is some confusion over 'Abdullah Pasha and Hilmi which did not exist by reference to the Ottoman Archives. 'Abdullah was deputy (sâdîq) to Hilmi and there was jealousy between them. Zâbârah, op. cit., (2), II, 378, says definitely that Hilmi was deposed in 1320/1902 but other sources seem to indicate 1318/1900.
242 Lands or their revenues misappropriated.
243 Qur'a al-qâsit means assignment of pieces (of wagf land).
244 Handbook of Yemen, prepared by the Arab Bureau, Cairo, January 1986, 172 (secret), states Yahyâ was married to Nâşîr's sister but it was her elder sister.
245 He struck on his coins' Iṣma'i billâh al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allâh.'
246 Al-Wâsî', 299, gives lists of persons present at the occasion.
notoriously close-fisted with money. He was born in San'a in Rabi' I, 1286/July, 1869 and grew up there, studying with his father. He followed him from San'a in 1307/1890, seeking protection (mushājir). During his long exile from the capital he never ceased to take a close interest in its internal affairs, especially in matters of law and religion.

Tribal Mashayikh and soldiers (ajnād) began to flock to I mam Yahya from all over the Yemen, and he gave the order to the tribes to besiege Turkish held towns, and all but Hodeidah were invested by them. Perhaps his cause was helped by the famine. The tribes massed around San'a were supplied by the Imam with grain from the Bayt al-Mal, but in general people were dying and farmers were leaving their land because of the lack of rain and the disturbances. At this time deaths in Qayrat al-Qobīl of Dahr alone were reckoned at 1,600. So severe were conditions in San'a that great and small, even secluded women left it. People sold their possessions at rock-bottom prices—a man would hire a porter to carry something to the Sūq but find no buyer and having no money to pay the porter's hire, the porter would take half of what he had been carrying.

The Mufi ordered the police and some of the soldiery to break into the houses of merchants, notables or anyone of apparent affluence and confiscate the grain in them for the soldiers—in those days, says al-Wāsi', all houses baked their own bread and there were no public bread-ovens (afrān). The police broke into many houses, seized what they found, smashed doors and humiliated the inmates. During the operation some of the ma'mūrs were openly drinking wine. Any animal they found the soldiers impounded, cows, camels, sheep, poultry, asses and horses—which they slaughtered and ate—as the siege grew worse they ate dogs and cats—but even then many soldiers died of starvation.

The Hodeidah merchants imported grain by steamer from Abyssinia and the Sudan, but the Imam kept dispersing grain to his supporters and this must have helped his cause. Ten towns surrendered to the Arabs.

Prices of grain in San'a rose to a quarter sā' equivalent to a Yemeni nafū 251 for a ṭiyāl, then mounted to one and a half ṭiyāls. Once two sā' of bread fetched 27 ṭiyāls. For a qadā 252 of grain 600 ṭiyāls were paid. These prices may be compared with a soldier's pay of five riyals a month plus a grain allowance between 600 riyals were paid. These prices may be compared with a soldier's pay of five riyals a month plus a grain allowance between 600 riyals were paid. These prices may be compared with a soldier's pay of five riyals a month plus a grain allowance between two World Wars. Infants were dumped in the streets to die for lack of food to feed them and a case of cannibalism is mentioned. At the height of the siege a deputation of Turkish officers with a learned Sayyid left the city for Kawkaban to surrender to the Imam there. They consented to hand it over with the arms and this must have helped his cause. Ten towns surrendered to the Arabs.

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The populace were enraged with the Mufti, Qadi Muhammad. The Imam sent Sayf al-Islam Ahmad b. Qasim Hamid al-Din to receive the surrender and himself moved to Qayrat al-Qobīl. After the surrender the tribes dispersed. 253

Under the Imam, Qāṣi Muḥammad Ḥajjāmān for his actions during the siege, and though he was under escort of the Imam's soldiers they spot at him and cursed him. Ḥajjāmān, happening to meet the Imam emerging from the Friday Prayer, sought his protection—which the Imam granted; he pardoned what Ḥajjāmān had done to his father and to himself but added that the shari`ah would deal with any claims the San'ani people had against him. Under the Turkish rule in San'a Ḥajjāmān had guards on his house and in the street, but he was now able to walk abroad freely. In his clemency (ṣilm) the Imam, always a respecter of learning, allotted him food and a stipend—an action much admired, but, says al-Wāsi', Ḥajjāmān did not learn anything from his lesson and wrote secretly to the Turks at Manakhāh.

The tribes in the elation of victory wanted the Imam to grant them the taxes (maṣ'īḥār) of which they might exploit for themselves, and San'a was in a poor state with its Sūq devastated. Yet even while the city was besieged Ahmad Fāyiḍi had been made Governor for a third term. Arriving at Hodeidah he went up to Manakhāh and the tribes massed to besiege him there. Ḥajjāmān corresponded with Fāyiḍi, urging him to hurry on to San'a and reviling the Imam. The Ḥajjāmān faction in San'a included, among others, the Dā'il of the Isma'ilis, for Yām had been supporting the Turks against their hereditary foes the Zaydi Imams. This correspondence was intercepted by the Imam who packed them all off to the north as prisoners. Yahya's position was uncertain and he had serious political problems.

After heavy fighting and accompanied by large reinforcements Fāyiḍi reached 'Asir village on the western edge of San'a plain and the Imam had no alternative but to withdraw north to Ḥāshid country.

Fāyiḍi proclaimed an amnesty in San'a and re-established order, but people returning to the city found that houses there and shops in the Sūq had been destroyed. Half the population is thought to have perished. There had been 400 qashšāḥim engaged as well-workers (ṣānī)—only about twenty were left. No less than thirty qashšāḥim were employed at the Jāmi' Mosque, but after the siege only five infants survived. So today, says al-Wāsi', all the qashšāḥim are new. 254

Fāyiḍi followed up the Imam to the mountain top city of Shahārah but failed to take it. My impressions in 1964 were that it is next to impregnable, and I was shown a battery of Turkish guns with their limbers said to have been captured from the Turks.

Time and again, travelers in the Ottoman Empire remark on the long arrears of the troops' pay and their ragged uniforms—Harris even sketched a Turkish soldier who had only one boot. 255 Disorders for this reason broke out in 1324/1906 when the ma'mūrs in the Posts and Telegraphs demanded their pay (ma'asīḥ) along with some Turkish troops, mainly Syrian Arabs wanting their leave, mutinied at Farwah b. Musayk Mosque and in a matter of ten minutes had looted the Sha'ub area. They went on to the Jāmi' Mosque, drove out the Mashayikh al-Qur'an, students and others, closed all but one of its ten doors, mounting a guard there and at the ends of the streets leading to the Jāmi'. They stayed there for a fortnight till the Governor acceded to their demands and the Syrian Radif troops enlisted for a limited period of service returned home. In Hodeidah also a similar mutiny broke out.

Constantinople now tried a peace mission to Yahya; though it failed, Yahya's proposed terms are revealing. The law to be applied in the Yemen is the shari`ah, the appointment and dismissal of qāṣis and judges and the administration of the Awqaf must return to the Imam. The Imam would punish bribery. Turkish officials would have salaries appropriated to them so that poverty would not drive them to accepting bribes.

Tribes on crops and taxes on animals should be collected according to the shari`ah, collection being made through the Mashayikh of the country supervised by Ottoman ma'mūrs. The Imam would have no truck with Miri taxes. The Imam's supporters, the Ḥāshid, Khawlan, Ḥada and Arḥab tribes were to pay no taxes (takauf) while the officials of Anis should be appointed by the Imam alone. Non-Muslims, i.e. Christians and Jews, were not to be put over Muslims—these prescriptions were to apply even in San'a and Ta'izz and to the employees of the Ottomans also.

Modern, Roma, 1956, XXXVI, 61-81. The Municipality in March undertook to deal with the dead lying in the streets and provide for their burial. Even water became scarce as the animals to draw it from the wells had been killed for food. Merchants were made to disguise their stores of flour. The theft of animals, houses and persons, had excited the revolt. Op. cit., 303. 254 Op. cit., 303.

Fighting in Khwāliān, Anis and other districts continued but the Sultan sent yet another mission to Šan'ā, composed of notable ulama of Mecca who wrote urging the Imām to make peace. The Imām protested that the Turks had been attacking the Ahl al-Bayt, stigmatising them as Rāfiqīs and Kharijīs—to both of which groups (ranging from anti-Shī‘ī to extreme Shī‘ī) Zaydis are opposed, and he objected to Turkish subsidising of the Ismā‘īlīs. He complained that the Turks had forced up the hire of animals by their frequent commandeering their services without payment to the owners. The ma‘mūrs, he complained, were forever misrepresenting the situation and only allowed Yemeni ‘stooes’ to speak to visiting inspectors from Istanbul who tell them what the ma‘mūrs want them to hear, while the Imām’s letters to the Sultan never receive an answer.

Hasan Taḥsīn who succeeded Fayḍī in 1326/1908 sensibly left the Imām’s territory alone and the Imām on his part kept to his own territory. A stream of litigants from all over the Yemen repaired to the Imām to settle their cases by the shari‘ah not the Ottoman Qānūn—Yahyā actually appointed hākimīs in areas controlled by the Turks to deal with cases by shari‘ah; he even appointed Qādī al-Husayn b. ‘Ali al-‘Amri to act in this capacity in Šan‘ā. A deputation of nobles invited to Istanbul for conversations failed because those in Turkish employ quarrelled with the others. A last attempt to induce the Imām to send representatives there founded on the demand that the statutory shari‘ah punishments (hudūd) replace the Ottoman Qānūn—which, said the Turks, would upset their other vilayets.

In 1327/1909 the Committee of Union and Progress depose the Sultan ‘Abd al-Hamīd but the Young Turk revolution seems to have made little difference to the Yemen. A new governor was however appointed in 1910, Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha, who believed in a tough policy. His arrogance provoked the Imām in January 1911; to rouse the tribes to besiege Šan‘ā and all Turkish centres. The new Pasha locked the city gates to stop people leaving it and put police patrols in the streets which beat up groups they came across in conversation. If they happened on a light in the upper storeys of a house they beat and imprisoned the owner on the pretext that he was signalling to the tribes outside to assault the city. The Governor wanted to execute fifty prominent ulama and merchants but the Turkish Nā‘īb of the Sharī‘ah Court refused to shed Muslim blood without a legal judgement. With police arresting people in the street, the sûgs mostly shut down and the mosques filled with persons taking refuge with nothing else to do but study the Qur‘ān from dawn to the ‘A‘zīz Prayer! The Governor then imposed a levy on an‘ā’ of 70,000 riyals. He commanded the houses adjoining Sha‘ūb and those in the afiyāt to be demolished, and he had mines planted around the city, but the tribesmen chanting zāmilīs and popping off their rifles. ‘Izzat Pasha arrived with his Turkish and Arab Chiefs of Staff. They concluded together the famous Treaty of Da‘ān and, although the Turkish Parliament rejected it and ‘Izzat Pasha had to go in person to Istanbul to press his views, it was ratified by an Imperial firman dated September 22, 1913. ‘Izzat Pasha left the Yemen but under the new Governor Muḥammad Nādīm Bey the agreement was loyally observed by both sides.

By the Da‘ān Treaty the Yemen was split into two administrative regions—the Zaydi region with its towns, including also Ḥarāz and Ta‘izz—to all these the Imām was to appoint Zaydi jumā‘ah (governors) and have control of the Waqf—and the Shi‘ī region administered by direct Turkish rule. The crucial central issue of law was resolved by the re-adoption of the sharī‘ah for the districts controlled by the Imām while the Turkish Government retained the right to appoint the sharī‘ah judges (ḥukkām al-shar). By the Da‘ān Treaty the Imam was to release the hostages and pay $an‘ā of 70,000 riyāds. He commanded the tribesmen to be dispersed and the mosques filled with persons taking refuge with nothing else to do but study the Qur‘ān from dawn to the ‘A‘zīz Prayer! The Governor then imposed a levy on an‘ā’ of 70,000 riyāds. He commanded the houses adjoining Sha‘ūb and those in the afiyāt to be demolished, and he had mines planted around the city, but the tribesmen menacing the city gingerly dug them up, as they did when mines were planted by Egyptian forces in 1962-67. A young British officer, A. J. B. Wavell, has left an informed inside account of conditions. At first there was no shortage of food. Lamp oil got scarce and the Jews who had cornered it refused to sell except at an enormous profit. The Governor had a short interview with them and it was then forthcoming at a reasonable price! Wavell comments however that they got even with the Turks by putting up the price of ‘araq (mastic)—to which, as it was unlawful to Muslims, the Turks could not reasonably object. The majādīyyah (a twenty piastre piece), that the Arabs would only accept in the towns, depreciated sharply against the riyād—normally 10-11 piastres to the riyād it dropped at the loss of ‘A‘zīz fort, to 19 piastres. As the Imām offered seventy dollars for each Millāh head (the Millāhs were irregular Arab troops raised by the Turks) most of them deserted, but the gendarmerie mostly remained loyal to the Turks.

Wavell’s account shows clearly how delighted the Šan‘ānis were when Ahmad ‘Izzat Pasha, sent to replace Muhammad ‘Ali who relieved the city on 5 April, 1911, again after hard fighting. The tribes Dhu Muḥammad and Dhu Ḥusayn were particularly notorious with the townsfolk for their ignorance and violence. At Ibb their chief tried to stop them from looting and murdering and confine themselves to besieging the Turks, giving quarter to Arabs or Turks leaving the town, but his harangues had absolutely no effect. The tale is told that in their ignorance they tried to eat tablets of Indian soap but left sugar-loaf (sukkar al-ra‘i) saying it was gun ammunition.

The Šan‘ānis came to complain to ‘Izzat Pasha of the previous Governor but Turkish policy now took a change of direction. The Pasha perceived the difficulties of the military situation and set out to effect a rapprochement between the Imām and the Ottomans. An emissary—probably the President of the Court of Appeal, Qādī al-Husayn b. ‘Ali al-‘Amri and Sayyid Qāsim of the Abu Talib house—was sent to Istanbul with a view to effecting a rapprochement between the Imām and the Ottoman Government. While the Ottoman emissary was in Turkey the Turks under Mahmūd Bey, the young Governor, decided to effect a rapprochement with the Imam and entered into negotiations with him. The Imam then agreed to a truce and appointing Da‘ān, five hours north west of Amārn as their rendez-vous. The Imam arrived escorted by thousands of tribesmen chanting zāmi‘īs and popping off their rifles. ‘Izzat Pasha arrived with his Turkish and Arab Chiefs of Staff. They concluded together the famous Treaty of Da‘ān and, although the Turkish Parliament rejected it and ‘Izzat Pasha had to go in person to Istanbul to press his views, it was ratified by an Imperial firman dated September 22, 1913. ‘Izzat Pasha left the Yemen but under the new Governor Muḥammad Nādīm Bey the agreement was loyally observed by both sides.

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Any Mīr taxes were to be levied in accordance with the shar‘. A British source says that ‘octroi and transit duties were abolished’, but adds that there were, when collected, ‘market dues (ten per cent) on all produce sold, one Turkish piastre for every goat slaughtered and ten Turkish piastres for every bullock.’ Customs dues continued to be charged at the ports. Arhab and Khwāliān, because of the poverty and destruction caused by the fighting there, were to pay no Mīr taxes for ten years and Anis was to have no taxes (jibāyī al-‘amal) for the same period. The Imam was to pay a tenth of his revenue (ḥāsīlāt) to the Turkish Government.

On the political side the Imam was to release the hostages (raḥā‘īn) from Šan‘ā and its district held by him as well as those from Ḥarāz (Ismā‘īlīs) and Amārn. These are the more important provisions of the Da‘ān Treaty in summary. On September 22, 1913, ‘Izzat Pasha commanded the Šan‘ānis to assemble in the Maydān and he announced the
terms of the Treaty to them, the most important being the substitution of the shari‘ah for the Ottoman Qânûn. 263 They were then addressed by the Government muftî. ‘Izzat assigned stipends (amdân Ǧirā’î) to the Ḥāshid and Arab tribes in and supplied the Idrisi with money and arms—this blockade was to cause the Hodeidah merchants much loss. In spring, 1912, the Idrisi showed his enmity to the Imam and the Turks and, with Italian money seduced the Ṭīḥāmah districts to himself. 264 This led to troubles in Khawlan al-Sham and Razih, but Sayf al-Islam Muḥammad al-Ḥādî took up arms against the dissidents. In early 1913 the Turks tried to persuade him to become a governor under Imām Yahyā but he refused. The Idrisi were to cause the Imām much trouble till their eclipse in 1926.

At this point it seems appropriate to digress and say a little about the al-ʿĀjmar family, the kabîrs of Ḥāshid who have played a prominent role in Yemeni politics for the last eighty years or more, and their name figures from time to time before this. Originally ‘fuqāraʾ ṭīm’, scholars, they have become Mashāḥyīk of the ‘Uṭaymat of the Ḥāshid federation and are known as ḥiraj Ḥāshid—they made them muḥâjir and their ḥira‘ī is Ḥamīr and al-Qalīfah near Ṣāhirāh. Nāṣir b. Mabkhūṭ al-ʿĀjmar who had supported the Imām in his early struggles with the Turks, had his chief strongholds at Ḥamīrī, Ḥabûr and Ṣafīr. In disgust at the Imām’s compact with the Idrisi he deserted to the Idrisi in 1912, and, still in 1911, was joined by ʿAbdullāh b. Mabkhūṭ. Nair b. Mabkhūṭ al-ʿĀjmar who had fought with clean hands. He had always held his own.’

But, as Colonel Jacob 265 says, ‘The sands had run out . . . . On the declaration of the Armistice, Turkish forces surrendered to us, some at Aden and others in the Red Sea, both at Hodeida and at Luḥayta. Ali Saʿīd Pasha’s entry into Aden took the form of a triumphal procession. Crowds met and cheered him. He had fought with clean hands. He had always held his own.’

For the Turks, as later for Nasir, the Yemen adventure was costly, wasteful and pointless. They have left a reputation for toughness and courage. Old men not infrequently speak well of them, especially those who served with them like the two old tubanjis (gunners) the writer talked with in Ṣāhirāh in 1964. But for the Ottomans the Yemen was Maqbarat al-ʿĀtrak, the Cemetery of the Turks—in Turkish folksong to this day the Yemen is remembered as a place for which your sons are conscripted to fight, and they do not return.

**Şan‘ā’ Under Ottoman Turkish Administration**

During the second Ottoman occupation the Yemen was divided into four sanjaqs governed by mutaṣarīfīn, the Markaz or Centre including the capital Şan‘ā’ where the Governor and Commander in Chief resided, ‘Arīs, Hodeidah and Ta‘izz. It was further divided into twenty-one qudās, al-Luhayyah, Ḥajj (Quf), Abu ‘Arīsh, Ṣan‘īyā, Bāji, Bayt al-Faqīḥ, Mocha, Ḥaţṭ, Ṣuṣ, Ṣawīrah, Ṣawiran, Ṣahīb, Unayzah, al-Ḥuṣayrīyāḥ, Ṣan‘, Ṣai‘yā. Şan‘ā’ included Ḥarāz, Kawākabān, Ṣan‘, Ḥaţṭ, Ṣawīrah, Ḫaţṭ, Ṣawiran and Āmān.

The period, relative to the centuries of Ṣa‘dī rule, is well documented. 266 Apart from Turkish archives, 267 there was the official paper Şan‘ī in Turkish and Arabic, sâhîmah (rather inaccurate), issued at intervals from 1298-1314 H., and some Turkish books, to say nothing of European sources, but this

263 Wyman Bury, 39, states that the Turks invited the Turkish civil and military should not come under the shari‘ah dispensation. The Arab gendarmerie, as enlisted men, had to choose between the shari‘ah and the Qa‘bat, but must abide by the decision made. 264 Handbook of Yemen, loc. cit. 265 Sharaf b. Muhammad al-Mutawakkil. 266 John Baird, ‘The Turkish-Italian War in the Yemen 1911-12’, Arabian studies 1926, 311-21. 267 It appears that Muhammad Sa‘īd Pasha was not actually deposed till 1331/1912.

268 European archival sources are abundant. See also Farabi ‘Uthmān Abâzah, al-Humān al-‘Uthmâni fi‘I-Yaman, 1872-1918, Cairo, 1975.


section has drawn on mainly Arabic sources. Though doubtless a much fuller social history of Ottoman Shan‘a’ than this sketch could be written relying upon these, this material still remains to be digested.

The Internal Administration of Shan‘a’ Under the Ottomans

Scent published information is available on the earlier decades of Ottoman rule in Shan‘a’ during the second occupation. The Turks probably used Muḥsin Mu‘īd, the headman, in his former capacity. It happened that the Turkish Niṣābūrī in the Court (al-Maḥkam al-Shār‘īyyah), al-Ţarābulusī, had been attacking the tenets of the Ţayyũrī, and he advised the Governor to imprison a number of Ţayyũrūn ulama. Muḥsin Mu‘īd seems to have supported this démarche in 1294/1877, since he was imprisoned for the part he is alleged to have had in it a few years later.271

Shaykh ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Bilāğī al-Ṣān‘ānī was acting already as Mayor when deposed in 1305/1887-8 by the incoming Turkish Governor, ‘Uthmān Nūrī Pasha, from the Riṣāṭ al-Balādīyyah and imprisoned. In his place he appointed a Turk, Muqafī Efendi al-Qaylāwī who effected some notable changes. He regulated the affairs of Šan‘a’ and fixed the weights and measures in its markets.272 He ordered the streets and lanes to be cleansed and rebuked the common folk (al-Tannūh) and irresponsible (ṣuḥāfī) for obscene language, abuse, swearing and cursing one another, punishing those who disobeyed. All orders issued by him were carried out.273 Al-Bilāğī may have acted in a somewhat similar capacity to the Shaykh al-Maḥkāmah of Qānūn Šan‘a’. Al-Wasī’ī274 speaks of him as a supporter of the Turks but a veritable right arm to the Šan‘ānīs and a great help to them with the Government. Before the arrival of the Ottomans he had been at loggerheads with Shaykh Muḥsin Mu‘īd, and he was imprisoned under the Governor Muqafī Taṣā‘ī. Although the Government which awarded him the title of Pasha. He is described as loving the Sādah and ulama, generous, a benefactor with Yemeni writers), took most of the steps towards modernisation in the Yemen and Šan‘a’ in particular. He was also Governor of Bilād al-Bustān. One notices (ṣuḥāfī) one’s feet on it.

emergency communication between Şan`a' and Hodeidah should the telegraph wires be cut.

Both Ottoman occupations have left their impress on Şan`a'. Apart from some fine buildings there were changes in the administration of the city, notably the creation of the Municipality (Baladiyyah). A number of Turks stayed on in the Yemen after 1918 and have been absorbed into the Şan`a' population. The Imám's army was organised on Turkish lines until it came under the influence of Egyptian instructors during the Nasserite period. Şan`a'ni Arabic still retains a not inconsiderable Turkish vocabulary.

**Alterations in the City Under the Turks**

Heavy rains in 1295/1878 brought a great flood from Jabal al-Lawz north east of Şan`a' which destroyed the Khanādīq of the Şar`lah, mounting to al-Qasimi and al-Abhar Mosques on the south east bank, destroying houses, and to Shāri` al-Bustan. It still exist for this purpose called gh~craq Rûm. The Turks paid 292 the telegraph wires be cut.

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The Turkish Military Hospital was built on the ruins of an Imám's palace. A tannery (midbâghah) for hides was set up by Husayn Hilmi at Sha`ūb. In 1318/1900-01 the new Pasha, `Abdullâh, ordered that the streets of Şan`a' should be cleansed, sprinkled and swept each day.

For purposes of defence, as already remarked, Faydi ordered many forts (qila') to be built round Şan`a' and on the Şan`a'-Hodeidah road, a distance of a five day mule journey, as well as three in Naqum, three in Jabal `Aşir and others in the Sawād of Sha`ūb, after a succession of Government offices in several parts of the country had been burned with gunpowder.

**Imám Yahyá Ruler in Şan`a’**

Turkish power so near eclipse, Imam Yahyá moved to al-Rawdah in August 1918.294 The great Sayyids, ulama and merchants came out from Şan`a' to greet him, and the tribes brought sheep and goats to cake at his house for joy at his arrival. The Governor Mahmúd Nàdêm and Commandant Ahmad Tawfîq approved the Imâm should enter Şan`a' and that the Qaṣr with its equipment be handed over to him. The Imam sent two lieutenants to take it over. In Safar 1337/November 1918 the Imam entered Şan`a' amid the joyous acclamations of the populace, proceeding first to the Jami` to perform the `Aşr prayer. He took up residence in Bir al-`Azab. Sayyid `Ali b. `Abdullâh al-Wazîr had played a major part in engineering the triumph of the Imam. A great reorganisation commenced. The affairs of Şan`a' were set in order, the mu`amirs were stepped from taking bribes and oppressing the people, heresies (bida`) were put down, teachers sent to all villages, and hostages taken. Mahmúd al-Nàdêm and other Turks including the well known Qâş Râghih chose to remain in official posts in the Yemen—it seems that al-Nàdêm even cherished hopes of bringing back the Yemen to Turkey295 and he had clearly not conformed with the Armistice conditions which required the Turkish armies in the Hijaz,' `Aşir and the Yemen to hand over their equipment to the British.

Of the internal situation in the Yemen at this time little is written or known. Despite goodwill to a native ruler, the Imám's position cannot have been too certain, but he sent his governors everywhere and put down tribal trouble with an iron hand. "Ali b. `Abdullâh al-Wazîr was sent to deal with the Haraz Mâshâyikh and Shaykhs of the Yemen and `Asir. (Documents on the history of southwest Arabia, ed. R. W. Sinclair, Salisbury N.C., 1976, no. 43. Some of the reports in the collection are extremely naïve and ill-informed! Harold F. Jacob, Kings of Arabia, though rather discursive is excellent on this period and has some remarks about al-Nàdêm.

291 A`immat al-Yaman, (2), II, 95.
292 Jami`.
293 Qâshl; 307.
294 Giuseppe (Yusuf) Caprilli wrote in Şan`a' till after 1322/1905. Cf. A`immat al-Yaman, II, 161; al-Wâsi`, 281, for full details of the trouble over the tobacco Régie, and p.177. Luigi Caprilli who died in 1889 was for six years in charge of the Régie.
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The Shâfi`i south had to be recovered so `Ali b. `Abdullâh conquered Wusâbayn, Zabid and other districts.

The Imam refused categorically to recognise the boundary between the Yemen and British Protectorate tribes agreed in part by the Anglo-Turkish Boundary Commission before World War I, but claimed all south west Arabia. It cannot be said that his assertion of a right to territories Zaydi soldiery occupied only for some decades, and which had regained independence up to two centuries earlier, had a better claim to validity than engagements voluntarily entered into with the British by the local chiefs and their tribesmen. Nevertheless he occupied Dîlî, Shu`ayb, Qayayb, al-`Ajjâd, `Awdhali territory and others, and only withdrew after the British bombèd Ta`izz, Dhamîr, Mâwiyah and Ibb in 1928. If one deprecates the bombing let it be unequivocally affirmed that the protected tribes for their part did not wish to have Yemeni governors and tax-collectors in their countries, Zaydi soldiery was extremely unpopular with them, and they co-operated with the British to expel Yemeni forces from their territory.

To keep down the heads of possible dissidents Yahyâ’s formidable and able warrior son Ahmad was sent to Hajjah of Hâshid country in 1338/1919-20. He wrested fiefs from the great Mash’âyik, broke the power of the al-Ahmar family, humiliated the tribes of the area and so kept them in subjection that Nâsir b. Nâsir Makkhûr fled to King `Abd al-`Azîz in Sa`ûd Arabia. Ahmad turned Hajjah into a fortified base from which he conquered the northern Tihâmah. After quelling Hâshid he turned to the Zarâniq of the southern Tihâmah who had been a thorn in the side of the Turks. By the close of 1928 he had dealt harshly with them, but effectively.

In 1931 Ahmad, now Crown Prince, was fighting the Danf in the Jawf, and in the following year had pushed up to Barat. Hearing that there were ornamented doors there plundered by the ancestors of the Dhî Muhammamd from the house of al-Mahdi `Abdullâh b. al-Mutawakkil at Bir al-`Azab in the mid 13th/ early 19th century he ordered his brother al-Hasan to find out about them and bring them to the camp. They were indeed discovered in the houses of Al Madmûn, Al Dumaynah, al-Buhûr property of the Makârimah (Ismâ’ilis).

Ahdâm’s northern advances and the Sa`udi-Yemen differences over Yemeni holdings in ‘Asir alarmed the Sa`ûdîs and they despatched an expedition to Najrân and one down the Tihâmah coast under Amîr (later King) Faysal which took and occupied Hodeidah. Imam Yahyâ sued for peace—which was agreed in Sa`dah, `Hûth, Zabid and Ta`izz. A middle and a secondary school are mentioned at Sa`nî, and elementary schools were opened all over the Yemen. It was always the practice of Yemeni rulers to keep hostages301 as surety of good behaviour of families and tribes, and these were maintained and educated. In 1344/ 1925-6 Yahyâ built the great library of the Sa`nî Jâmi`, collected books on every topic, and assembled the old Wâqf libraries which had been allowed to fall into sad neglect. In fact Sa`nî society had its aristocratic intellectual élite of Sayyids, gâfîs and others, highly educated along traditional lines in literature, law, religion, philosophy and many other ‘ilm subjects.

At his court (maqâm) Imam Yahyâ appointed as Chief Secretary of the Diwân Malikî, Qâdi `Abd al-Karîm Mughajar, his Prime Minister was Qâdi `Abdullâh b. Husayn al-Amîrî, and the Head of the Court of Appeal (Isti’naf) founded in the Turkish era, was Qâdi al-Husayn b. `Ali al-Amîrî. In 1341/1922-3 the Imam completed the building of Dar al-`Ammah302 and moved into it.

Each administrative centre up to 1962 had a civil governor (`Imâm madâm) representative of the central government whose duty it was to maintain security, a qâdi sharî in charge of legal matters, and the shaykhs and tribesmen enrolled as soldiers. Soldiers received five riyâls a month from the Bayt al-Mâl and a ration of grain.303

It was in the same year that he went to deal with the southern Tihâmah.

300 See p.88a.

301 Hostages were also kept by Aden Protectorate rulers. Though Yemeni reformers inveigh against the system it was far from harsh and a practical means of forcing tribesfolk to keep the peace.

302 Al-Mutawakkil Qâsim b. al-Husayn (early 12th/19th century) had formerly lived here. It has an elegant hexagonal plan. In 1346/1927-28 Yahyâ completed building Jâmi` al-Qahbah, a large Jâmi` connected with Qubur al-Mu`awwakkil, . . . al-Qasim b. al-Husayn.

303 For administration in the Yemen, see Western Arabia and the Red Sea, B.R. 527, Oxford, 1946, 328-39.
In the Shafi’i districts in particular the corrupt practice of the officials and Zaydi tribal soldiers from the north pressed heavily, though there is no reason to think that it was notably worse than under rulers at any time in the past. Shafi’i would declare that Imam Yahya was all right but his muwazzafin, officials, full of injustice (pulm) and the soldiers ruthless robbers. In northern districts where taxes were collected by local assessment (bi-l-amanah) conditions were more favourable, and subsidies were given to certain Zaydi tribal chiefs.

The northern and Mashriq tribes like Arhab and Khawlan cannot support themselves on their land and so must emigrate—a lesser chieftain with a body of tribesmen would ask the Imam to enter his service and be despatched to a southern district to assist in tax collection. The Shafi’i’s of the Lower Yemen would emigrate to Aden and thence to many parts of the world including Europe and America. They kept in close touch with their relatives to whom they sent remittances and they learned that conditions in the Yemen could be improved and that the Imam’s isolationist policy must inevitably break down. Otherwise in the twenties and thirties people did not seem to move much within the Yemen from one place to another. They had virtually no access to the foreign press which was banned and the Yemen had at first only a monthly paper, al-layman printed by the old Turkish press in the Imam’s court (masqam). There was also a small press at the Education Office (Idarat al-Ma’arif) which published a few books like Masqam San’at upon which we have so heavily drawn.

Anti-régime Movements

Imam Yahya’s iron grasp of the Yemen, often through the instrument of his eldest son Ahmad, had brought into subjection many proud independent men and tribes. This along with his inflexibility, his isolationist policy which allowed of no improvements, and the exactions of corrupt officials and harsh soldiery in tax collection. The Shafi’i districts in particular the corrupt practice of the officials from father to son, on the other prominent Sayyid houses and tribal chiefs. The first two classes at least were contemptuous of soldiers though they might use them, for they themselves were an aristocracy of the pen and the sword. In the spring of 1935 a young Sayyid, Ahmad al-Muta’, poor and of a family of small consequence, fixed for himself a tour of inspection of schools which he used to contact persons of note whom he knew would bear the Imam some grudge or have reason to be disaffected. He succeeded in getting in touch with an imposing list of notables including al-Ayni and tribal chiefs. The first two classes at least were contemptuous of soldiers though they might use them, for they themselves were an aristocracy of the pen and the sword. In the spring of 1935 a young Sayyid, Ahmad al-Muta’, poor and of a family of small consequence, fixed for himself a tour of inspection of schools which he used to contact persons of note whom he knew would bear the Imam some grudge or have reason to be disaffected. He succeeded in getting in touch with an imposing list of notables including al-Ayni and the celebrated al-Wazir Sayyids. His efforts led to the formation of the ‘Opposition Society (Hay‘at al-Nu‘l)’, a secret organisation with headquarters in San’a’ and branches elsewhere. Until 1944 it was the first organised resistance to the régime, aiming at promoting administrative reform, promotion of the Zaydi Da‘wah, the conversion of the vital support of the northern tribes to its cause, and linking with the foreign press and individuals to criticize the Imam’s rule. Its San’ā’ Treasurer was al-Izzī Shāhī al-Sinaydār. Yahya’s isolationism was never complete and even in the first decade of his reign some student missions were sent to study at the Azhar in Cairo111 where they joined the Yemeni Riwaq.112 The most outstanding of others who studied at one time or another in Cairo after this time was the famous poet Qaḍī Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Zubayrī.113 In 1935 the Yemeni Government requested places for five young men at the Military College and five at the Radio-telegraphy School at Baghdad. This was to cost the Yemen dear for two of the signallers, ‘Abdullāh al-Sallāl and Ḥasan al-Amrī, were to participate in anti-Hamid al-Din movements. At Baghdad they seem to have been exposed to an extreme nationalist current. In fact many young men who had spent time abroad seem to have hoped to achieve great things on returning to the Yemen but turned disgruntled when they met no response from Imam Yahya. A weakness which the opponents of the Hamid al-Din house sought to exploit was the jealousies of the young princes (Ṣa‘ūd, Sayyīf, al-Iṣlām). Yahya was convinced that Ahmad whom he had made heir-apparent in 1927, was the ablest of his sons to succeed him. Some writers have made much of the effect of establishing succession to the Imamate in one particular Sayyid house from father to son, on the other prominent Sayyid houses from which an Imam might be drawn. In practice, Zaydi history shows that a son, not necessarily the eldest, usually succeeds his father, though it might be after an uncle or other relative, whatever Zaydi theory may hold regarding election to the Imamate from any Sayyid house. When the princes expressed their fears of Ahmad to his father his rejoinder was ‘Ahmad hū hajar al-mafjar, Ahmad is the stopper-stone’,115 meaning that he is the strong man. It was precisely because Ahmad would be a strong ruler like his father that men of rank impatient of authority in opposition to him.

At this stage Ahmad, though given to excluding himself at times to ponder state affairs, would also hold court at which persons of divergent political groupings mixed—chiefs including Ḥusayn al-Aṣār, Amin Abū Rās, poets were invited like Zubayrī, Sayyids Ahmad al-Shāmī and Ṣayyid al-Mawshikī, Ḥusayn al-waysi author of the geography,116 Qaḍī ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-‘Iyānī, Ahmad Nu‘mān117 of a distinguished family of anti-Tūbāb of Šafī’ī Yemen was also one of a list of names significant in Yemeni politics. The court scintillated with wit, and verse, literature, history were the very stuff of conversation. The Heir-Apparent listened to the young Liberals (Ahrār) encouraging them to speak of their views and proposals. It is likely Ahmad was keeping a finger on the political pulse with

304 The output of this press has been surveyed by Ettore Rossi, ‘La stampa nel Yaman’, Orientes moderno, Rome, 1938, XVIII, 568-90.
306 See p. 42a seq.
307 Information given me personally by some actors in these movements apart, Ahmad al-Shàmi, ‘Yemeni literature in Hajjah Prisons’, Arabian Studies, II, 1975, 43, gives idealised Zaydi reasons for the disaffection for Imam Yahya.
308 Nil also means struggle, defence.
309 The output of this press has been surveyed by Ettore Rossi, ‘La stampa nel Yaman’, Orientes moderno, Rome, 1938, XVIII, 568-90.
310 ‘Loggias’, but it may be described as a teaching group.
311 See ‘The Yemeni poet al-Zubayrī . . .’, op. cit.
312 ‘The Yemeni poet al-Zubayrī . . .’, op. cit.
313 ‘The Yemeni poet al-Zubayrī . . .’, op. cit.
314 Not of the same house as Yahya’s Prime Minister.
315 Authors, of op. cit., 102, a Yemeni proverb. A dam (cistern), pool (bawd), large cistern (bawd) have a hole (mafjar) at the bottom to let out water for irrigating fields. It is closed by a strong stone when the cistern etc. is filling and the stone removed to empty it.
316 Al-Yaman al-kubrā, Cairo, 1962. He also wrote Rihlat Sumū‘ al-Amīr Nu‘mān al-Dīn, Cairo, 1358/1939, printed under the supervision of Abū al-Mu‘āwīy al-Dīn, Cairo, 1358/1939, printed under the supervision of Yahya’s Prime Minister.
317 Ahmad Nu‘mān a leading Yemeni Liberal for many years in exile, has held important ministerial posts in the Yemen Arab Republic. He clearly had considerable admiration for Imam Ahmad despite their differences.
the Liberals and assessing their value as possible supporters. The Liberals began to realise that Ahmad was far from sympathetic to their ideas and unlikely to promote them. The point came when in early summer 1944, Zubayri and Nu'man abandoned Ta'izz for Aden—there they founded the Yemenite Liberal Party (Hizb al-Ahrar),319 well subsidised by Yemeni merchants abroad and others. A little later Ahmad al-Shâmi, Zayd al-Mawshâki and Mu'ji Damdâm joined them, but they returned to the Yemen where the Heir-Apparent welcomed them. They eventually adhered to the aristocratic group around 'Abdullah al-Wazir—the Aden Liberals and the Al Wazir were uncertain allies.

Another group was founded in 1363/1944 called the Reform Association (Jam'iyyat al-`Ahrar) mostly an Ibb Qa`di group with Qa`di Muhammad al-Akwa' as its president. It sent a draft pamphlet entitled Barnâmaj al-`iqlah320 to Zubayri in Aden where it was printed and distributed. Qa`di 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Iyámi was a member of this group.

In September the same year the Imam ordered Ahmad al-Mu'ji, al-Simayrâd, Mu`ammad al-Akwa' and three brothers of al-Sayâghi family among a number of others to be imprisoned, as were also most of the members of the mission to Iraq. They were allowed to cool their heads in prison for a while then most were released.

Imprisonment was evidently used by the Imams as a sort of disciplinary punishment for offences, even those involving serious disloyalty, and for such misdemeanours as financial corruption. It carried no stigma. The rulers who could rely on no one individual as a person permanently to trust, had no choice but to employ men of the administrative classes, tribes and officers. So an offender was consigned to prison to cool his ardour or learn his lesson and then brought out again at the Imam's will for re-employment. The Imams were doubtless fully aware of the dangers in this situation and their sole recourse was to try to win over at least some men of the Imam's confidence.

The situation is complicated by a web of kinships etc. It is therefore not surprising to find the ex-prisoners of Hajjâh back in office and emerging as conspirators and later officials in the Republic.

The strength of Yahya's rule, al-Shamahi avers, was the large and numerous family of the Imâms, this rock, he says, was smashed by the fourteen princes, sons of the Imam took the Imam's opponents, this rock, he says, was smashed by the fourteen princes, sons of the Imam took serious disloyalty, and for such misdemeanours as financial corruption. It carried no stigma. The rulers who could rely on no one individual as a person permanently to trust, had no choice but to employ men of the administrative classes, tribes and officers. So an offender was consigned to prison to cool his ardour or learn his lesson and then brought out again at the Imam's will for re-employment. The Imams were doubtless fully aware of the dangers in this situation and their sole recourse was to try to win over at least some men of the Imam's confidence.

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318 Al-Shamahi, op. cit., 191, avers that the break came when Ahmad declared 'I beg God I may not die until this sword of mine is dyed with the blood of the Moderns (Jam`iyyat al-`Ahrar). By 'Moderns' or 'Contemporary' he seems to mean those following Mu`ammad 'Abduh, al-Kawakibi, Taha Husayn, al-Aqqad, in fact the Egyptian Islamic modernists and literati of the time.

319 The Aden Ajami being in contact with the outside world would have been credited with an importance quite out of proportion to their role within the Yemen at this time.

320 A printed programme of reforms demanded by the Liberals, Barnâmaj al-iqlah al-Mutanbi, al-Sinaydar, Muhammad al-Akwa and al-Muta`i, al-Sayâghi family among a number of others to be imprisoned, were allowed to cool their heads in prison for a while then most were released.

321 The Nashr al-`arf, II, 248 seq., states that the first of the `Amri princes was his reliance on his Prime Minister over so many years. The princes were Yahya's sons by seven wives, Sharifahs, not all married to one individual as a person permanently to trust, had no choice but to employ men of the administrative classes, tribes and officers. So an offender was consigned to prison to cool his ardour or learn his lesson and then brought out again at the Imam's will for re-employment. The Imams were doubtless fully aware of the dangers in this situation and their sole recourse was to try to win over at least some men of the Imam's confidence.

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324 It was a member of this group.

325 Al-Shamahi, nevertheless considers him the ablest and most experienced administrator after Ahmad. The writer met him in his cave at al-Kifl in 1964.

326 At the Hajj immediately following, al-Shamahi met Hasan the Imam's opponent. Husayn managed to persuade his full brother Ahmad Mula` and the Wazir Amirs and others to be imprisoned, were allowed to cool their heads in prison for a while then most were released.

327 During World War II, British postal censorship intercepted correspondence between Sayyids and others. They were well aware that the support of the Zaydi tribes could only be won by a Sayyid with tribal backing. They therefore decided to back 'Abdul-Malik al-Wazir for the Imamate.

328 Al-Shamahi, op. cit., 210, merits study. Ahmad al-Shami was a member of this group.

329 Al-Shamahi, op. cit., 210, merits study. Ahmad al-Shami was a member of this group.

330 Perhaps because this group contained few Sayyids.

331 Al-Shamahi, op. cit., 210, merits study. Ahmad al-Shami was a member of this group.

332 Al-Shamahi, op. cit., 210, merits study. Ahmad al-Shami was a member of this group.

333 Al-Shamahi, op. cit., 210, merits study. Ahmad al-Shami was a member of this group.
al-Wazir made Imam. This was published in the Aden paper of the Liberals, Siqat al-Yaman.

A dramatic picture of the scene at the Imam’s Mausoleum in San‘a’ when the Aden telegrams arrived is drawn by al-Shamahi. Al-Wazir, unaware of these events, entered the Mausoleum and was deeply engaged in the work assigned to him when the Imam turned to him with a smile, handed him bunch of papers, saying, ‘Have a look at these papers, Fakhri,’ they are such and such a number.’ Al-Wazir was surprised to hear the Imam give the exact number of papers, but when he glanced at the first telegram congratulating him on the throne, a shudder ran through him and he hastily disclaimed it. ‘Look at them all first,’ said the Imam, ‘then let’s talk.’ Trying to recover his breath Al-Wazir read them all including the ‘Sacred Covenant’, and asking the Imam’s leave to speak, he told him this was a plot against the Imam and himself by which it was intended to destroy the Imam’s trust in him and those mentioned in the ‘Covenant’. Finally he took the oath that he had nothing to do with the Aden Liberals. His written disavowal was published in al-Yaman.

Yahya’s loyal guards there to join him, Jamal went to the ‘Urdi-Barracks as well as the general command of San‘a’; Bab Sha‘ub and Ras San‘a’ area were under Ahmad al-Muta‘ and ‘Azil ‘Sallih al-Sinaydar, while the fourth sector, the Radio, Bir al-Azab and ‘Asir, were assigned to Muhammad al-Shami, Husayn al-Mu‘tabil, and the Shamaish.

Three of Imam Yahya’s sons had been confined to the Qasr, and one of them, Yahyá (b. Yahyá) managed to win over the garrison and even to fire on ‘Abdullah al-Wazir himself in Dar al-Qasr. With his supporters falling away on all sides and the princes taking over control of the Qasr, ‘Abdullah al-Wazir saw no alternative but surrender. So he and his companions went to Prince Yahyá who took them into custody and ordered beacons to be lit on the minaret of the Qasr and his house as a token of victory over al-Wazir in the Qasr. No sooner had these beacons been shown than the sympathisers of Imam Ahmad had entered the Qasr and soon all San‘a’ was alight with beacons to welcome Imam Ahmad. This caused confusion in the city and encouraged the tribes to assault the Gates where the guards offered little resistance and mostly declared for Ahmad. The city fell on Saturday 3 Jamadí 3, 1367/14 March, 1948. Imam ‘Abdullah al-Wazir’s reign in San‘a’ had lasted less than a month.

The sack of San‘a’ by the tribes whose lust for plunder was unleashed has left a lasting impression on the San‘anis—the sheer wantonness of it is astonishing—one sees sometimes in the stiqs for sale carpets slashed with swords. The Qã’ al-Yahûd was sacked though the Jews had no part in an Arab dynastic quarrel, and Louise Février found little but ruins to see. Al-Shamahi dramatically pictures the tribes entering, amid ululating of the women, rumours, victory fires, with guns, picks, axes, camels and donkeys, paying no heed to ululations, fires and welcoming acclamations of Imam Ahmad. All they wanted was the money and stores of goods and the tribal armies looted houses, merchant establishments, huts, mosques, devouring everything in them, fighting each other over them—this went on for seven days. Louise Février says they demolished a fine house close by carrying off the wooden doors and windows. They snatched off the jewellery of Arab women. Early looters with camels heavily laden with booty often met late-comers who in turn despoiled them. They killed anyone who resisted. The tribes paid no heed to their chiefs and all the Hamid al-Din could do was to try to protect the mansions of Imam Yahyá from being plundered of their goods, stores, arms and ammunition. Al-Shamahi goes further and accuses one of the princes of attacking and plundering
houses. The victors however spared no effort to track down all those associated with the conspiracy—the leaders were sent to Hajjah, and shortly afterwards the Al Wazir and others were brought back and executed in the main square of San’â’. In all something over twenty persons of family and distinction were executed. Sayf al-Islam Ibrahim, who had joined the Liberals in Aden in 1946 but was caught in San’â’, brought back and executed in the main square of San’â’. In all about thirty persons were executed. 343

Afterwards Aden in 1946 but was caught in San’â’, and shortly afterwards the Al Wazir and others were executed. Sayf al-Islam Ibrahim, who had joined the Liberals in Aden in 1946 but was caught in San’â’, brought back and executed in the main square of San’â’.

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Ahmad had not taken part in the siege in person. He was now elected Imam by the San’â’ ulama as al-Nâṣîr li-Din Allâh the day after the fall of the city. His retaliation for his father’s murder was severe but restricted, not accompanied by wholesale executions. 344 The assassination of Yahyâ was unpopular and Yemenis in Aden heaped abuse on the Liberals. The writer was in Hajdramat at this time and recalls the shock felt in Tarim Sayyid circles at the deed. Some say that Ahmad promised as a reward for the tribes the sack of San’â’—that he made such a promise seems unlikely—but even he could probably not have controlled them once they were loose. For the San’ânis the sack was a disaster, many big merchant houses were ruined and the great Samarat Muhammad b. Ahsan has been closed ever since. It created a hostility to Ahmad there and he made his capital Ta’izz to which San’â’ played second fiddle till the coup d’etat of 1962.

**Characters of Yahyâ and Ahmad Hamid al-Din**

What manner of man was Yahyâ who ruled the Yemen for thirty years and whose imprint on it can be seen to this day? Wyman Bury 345 quotes a Turkish officer just returned from Khamir, ‘He just sleeps and eats, and drinks coffee.’ “I gathered that he took no very active part in the affairs of the vilayet, beyond receiving reports from his nominees and adherents, which should keep him in touch with everything that goes on. He never smokes, lest he should offend the strict Moslem prejudice of his more fanatic supports, and conformers to all the rigours of Islam.” The British Intelligence Handbook 346 reports that he is said to be an intelligent man of shifty, weak, and yielding character, who, owing to his parsimony, has not much hold over the tribesmen of the north-east. He greatly weakened his position by releasing, in accordance with the peace of 1911, 400 hostages kept in captivity since 1904.” Bury 348 more shrewdly observes that he is less powerful on the side of Government than he was in opposition.

Yahyâ throughout his life was stigmatised by an almost ingenuous miserliness. As a politician and administrator he is not to be despised and he put to the best use such assets as Imâm has, political acumen, sanctity and scholarship. If no soldier, as Bury says, the interpretation of his daily routine as inactivity is quite wrong, for the writer sharing the same caves as the Imâm hoped, through isolating the Yemen from the outside world, including modernised Muslim countries like Egypt, to avoid corruption of the pure Islamic faith (as he saw it), and politically to preserve the Yemen’s independence. The ban on the foreign Arabic press was part of this policy. Music was banned for sectarian reasons. Yahyâ was a man of simple manners—he is said, at least in his early days, to have gone about

*Ahmad Hamid al-Din was a ruler of tremendous personality, astute, brave, resolute, learned and witty, suspicious, unable to brook opposition, often terrifying, patient but swift to action. His reign saw great change in the external world forcing itself on the Yemen. Internally al-Shamâhi provides the clearest survey of the inimical forces working against Ahmad. They were many and varied—certain great Sayyid houses, the tribal chiefs of Hashid, Baraj and others, certain Qâdi houses, the young officers of the Shâhid, Sa’udi Arabia and the oil states. There was no way to arrest this decline in a basically agricultural country, the known resources of which were already fairly fully exploited and which the security provided by the dynasty had even allowed to develop a little.

8.2 Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din. Critics say that his nose was more aquiline in shape than would appear from the portrait. (Artist: `Ali al-Jannâtl.)

345 *Handbook of Yemen*, op. cit., 44.
347 It is said of Jâbir Rizk al-Kawkabâni, a famous poet and musician of Kawkabân now dead that since music was prohibited only a part of his verse and music have survived. He performed in secret. Gramophones etc., were also prohibited.
This seems to have been accompanied by a large rise in the population. For economic decline the Hamid al-Din were conveniently awarded the blame and even a commonsense movement among farmers who substituted profitable cash-crop qat-growing for difficult and not very profitable coffee was reckoned a fault for which the Imãms were responsible.

If these problems were not enough the rise of Nasserist expansionism, the success of army coups in Egypt and Iraq and the interference of the USSR came to complicate the situation. Where, in the past, anti-regime movements were mostly dealt with as an internal matter they now came into the full glare of radio and press publicity. Ajamad could and did deal severely with dissidents—he was even, all things considered, reasonably clement—but he could not cope with the 'media' which made of every dissident a martyr.

Imãm Ahmad and Unrest in the Yemen: Ímãm al-Badr

Ahmad was now firmly established as Imãm and the popular tide meanwhile running in his favour but the rivalry of the Hamid al-Din princes was to lead to the downfall of their house. This rivalry the prisoners of Hajjah sought to exploit, though doubtless the princes had no need of their help on the path to self-destruction. By 1954 Qadi `Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani had been released from prison and he persuaded the Imãm whose suite he had joined, to release others. Ajamad al-Shami, when freed, joined the suite of Ajmad's only son, Muhammed al-Badr, and the literary and scholarly circle frequenting his salon at his mansion, Dar al-Bashir in Bir al-`Azab—others attending the salon included the blind left wing poet al-Baraduni and `Abdullah Huxman.

The crucial issue within the Hamid al-Din house was their dislike of Ahmad's purpose that al-Badr be recognised as Heir-Apparent—broadly speaking the rest of the Hamid al-Din favoured al-Hasan, the Imãm's brothers. Imãm in Shan'a in summer 1954 was quarrelling violently with his brothers over the question and, thinking they were planning to murder him, he suddenly left for Ta'izz, leaving al-Badr in Shan'a. Hasan declared his opposition to al-Badr becoming Heir-Apparent in print in al-Jumân. So Ahmad packed off Hasan, whom he had dismissed from the Premiership on June 16 1956, as Yemeni ambassador to Washington and made his brother `Abdulrah Heir-Apparent and made Deputy Prime Minister and Commander in Chief. On April 25 1955 he was made Prime Minister.

In 1956 al-Badr made a lengthy tour abroad, meeting Nasser in Cairo and falling under his spell. He came to London and was well received but with reservations because of the frontier situation, and he was given neither aid nor arms. In Russia and the Soviet block he found a readiness to supply him with (relatively) modern arms and military instructors. Al-Badr probably thought to provide himself with a trained modern army which would support him if Hasan were to return and raise the tribes, but he was playing a dangerous game.

In Cairo Nasser had been considering the Liberals who were issuing a stream of propaganda by pamphlet and on Satwa al-'Arab against Imãm Ajmad which had an undoubted effect within and without the Yemen. This Ajmad countered by joining the United Arab Republic in 1958 and the Liberals had to transfer their activities to Beirut. At this point, perhaps even earlier, Egyptian officers were brought in to train the Yemeni army. By 1959 addiction to morphine had given such a hold on Ajmad that he had to go to Italy to be 'dried out', taking with him al-Iryani whose opinions he valued while he was aware that he had to go to Italy to be 'dried out', taking with him al-Iryani whose opinions he valued while he was aware that he was a dangerous man.

Ajamad however was playing for time and summoned the garrisons and tribes of Jabal Sabir to his aid—in Ta'izz the Shafi`i 'Amli rallied to him. Al-Badr was in Hodeidah, but he moved up to Hajjah to rally the tribes, at the same time releasing the remaining prisoners there of 1948, including Hasun al-'Amri, al-Sallal and Muhammed al-Akwa' who joined him. Meanwhile the Imãm broke out of the 'Urdi sword in hand and challenged his beseigers to personal combat, adding 'Do you want to kill your Imãm, the Commander of the Faithful? You can't do it! Your Imãm is guarded by God!' Ajmad had bribed a number of Thulayya's soldiers to come over to his side. Later he is said to have fined the same soldiers for their mutinying the sum of the bribes he paid them—no wonder the men were filled with rueful admiration for him—Ajamad, Ya Jinnah—You devil!

350 Al-Shamahî, 276.
351 Toffolol died, it is said, through his addiction.
352 Badr brought with him to London Muhammed b. `Abdulrah al-Shami (a Qadi house of Kawkaban not Syyida) and when I chatted to him about the former troubles of the time of which he was believed to be in charge he blamed young British officers for it. He died in Shan'a in 1965.
353 Al-Shamahî, 206; states that from 1955 al-Badr introduced large numbers of Egyptian officers.

Calamitous as the Heir-Apparent's actions were for the Hamid al-Din, his policy did have some positive results in that he got the Russians to recon-struct Hodeidah port, the French to help at Mocha, and the Chinese to build the Hodeidah-San'ã road—but even these long-term benefits were only to the advantage of the foes of the régime as they made the swift arrival of Nasser's armoured forces in Shan'a a possibility.
against those who had been creating disturbance in his absence—some fifty thousand tribesmen brought into San‘a’ by al-Badr hurriedly left it on hearing the speech over the radio. ‘Beruwah al-Shaybah. The old Bull has belched’, they said. Husayn al-A‘jam and other northern chiefs now came out in rebellion, but A‘jam, by political means, including bribery, broke up support for him and he launched many northern tribes against them along with a force of the Regular Army commanded by two experienced Sayyid generals. The Regular Army had been infiltrated by sedition for a number of years—this is well described by an officer, ‘Abdullāh Juzaylān, anti-regime from the days of his training in Egypt. Nevertheless the tribes and army quelled the rebellion. Husayn al-A‘jam’s supporters melted away, but he and his son Hamīd had to surrender and were executed under circumstances not very creditable to the Imām.

A‘jam had weakened the danger of the Russians and to Nasser’s ambitions in the Red Sea. After the defection of Syria from the UAR, he courageously published his famous poem, in late 1961, attacking such socialist policies as nationalisation (‘a‘amīm) as un-Islamic. On this Nasser, whom A‘jam was obviously attacking, broke off the alliance and turned on again the full blast of his powerful propaganda machine, spiced with al-Bayḍānī’s scurrilous attacks on A‘jam and such preposterous inventions as that he fed his prisoners to his lions! Sawt al-Arab, anti-regime against the ‘Tyrant’ (al-Tāghī) to which Yemenis could now listen on their translators certainly won some response—furthermore Yemenis going up and down to Cairo were exposed to anti-regime propaganda. The San‘a’ and Ta‘izz schools became centres of disaffection. Merchants who disliked the monopolies exercised by the Imam’s agent, ‘Abī al-Jabālī, often helped finance anti-regime groups. To all this hostile propaganda the Hāmid al-Dīn made no answer.

An attempt in March 1961 to assassinate A‘jam when he went to see the new Hodeidah port built by the Russians and inspect Hodeidah Hospital, was contrived by its Security Officer, Muhammad al-‘Ulufī and two others, seemingly entirely on their own initiative and unconnected with the other conspiracies afoot.359 They emptied their revolvers into him and the Imam threw himself to the ground pretending to be dead, and survived. A‘jam recovered from the bullet wounds in his thigh, but, if cured from his addiction, it now returned and he would take no measures to deal with troubles—he would seclude himself for long periods and do no business. He understood the dangers but had lost the will to meet them. For this reason in part at least it may be that he did nothing to return the Egyptian officers to Nasser, but perhaps he saw the danger to Badr from Hasan as greater. He was aware that even the person on whom he most relied, Qādis ‘Abī al-Rahmān al-Iryāni was deeply committed to anti-regime propaganda. The San‘a’ and Ta‘izz schools contained detailed information on al-Iryāni and other conspirators.356 The general restlessess engendered by the inflammatory propaganda from outside the Yemen and the stagnation inside it found expression in a series of bomb incidents in the three principal cities.

Imām A‘jam died from old age and natural causes as his American physician has assured me on the 19 September 1962.

8.4 Qadī, Muhammad Muhāmid al-Zubayrī in official costume. The turban (‘imāmah) is wound round a cap (qihf or gāwūq). A shawl (shed) is worn over the gown underneath is called al-zannah. Prince al-Hasan b. al-Hasan gave this jūkh Conference. The jūkh is worn on the Friday, on Feast days (‘Îd) and on strips (sharīt) of embroidery (gitān, pl. gayātin). The white black robe made of broadcloth, jūkh, which gives it its name; it has long sleeves (‘ahmīm tawīlāh) and ends ‘Who -ever calls me a liar, let him try —this is false. With the cat away the mice came out again. The Army in Hodeidah Ahmad made his stern but rousing speech 354
Imām Aḥmad believed the British had at least condoned the murder of his father and it is said furthermore that he was under some pressure from Arab nationalist sentiment to assert Yemeni claims to Protectorate territories. He was successful in getting the British Government to agree to direct communication with London—not through Aden where Yemeni conditions were much better understood. He saw less chance of acquiring Protectorate territory as it developed under British tutelage, and conditions were markedly better there than in his own country. Even before the abortive federation proposals of early 1954 Aḥmad was encouraging dissent tribemen (of whom a supply is always available) with presents of rifles, grain and money, to create fitnah beyond his borders. The independent Sultanates had no wish to join the Yemen and this brought them in to a federal agreement promulgated in February 1959.

In his last years Aḥmad had come to realise that while the British were blocking the way to expansion of Mutawakkilite Yemen southwards they constituted no menace to his country and the real danger to the régime came from Nasser. He therefore adjusted his policy towards the British and this is marked by his appointment of Aḥmad al-Shāmī as ambassador to Britain in 1961. When an attempt was made on the British representative in Taʾizz in January 1962, Ronald Bailey, the Imām hastened to send an envoy to Aden to declare his regret and offer amends. The curious circumstances in which the would-be assassin Muhammad Ahmad Qunbulah, though apprehended, escaped, seem to suggest that there was a conspiracy to upset relations between the Yemen and Britain.

The situation fraught with dangers, the Imām's death was concealed for some days. Then his body was flown to Ṣanʿā', emotional crowds at Taʾizz expressing their grief, only a few days later to hail 'the Revolution'. Aḥmad was buried in the little mosque he had founded, al-Rawdah, in Bir al-ʿAzāb. A prominent 'ulāmā who accompanied the body to Ṣanʿā' had been warned by the Mufti of Aden, al-Bayhānī, not to return to the Yemen—he must have had more than an inkling of the conspiracies of which there were many of varied political hues.

Al-Badr was proclaimed Imām in Ṣanʿā' and allegiance paid him by large numbers of leading ulama, chiefs, officials and army officers. Nasser, as the writer has been reliably informed by a leading Yemeni Republican official, was caught not quite prepared and complained that he had to recognise al-Badr as Imām. On instructions from Cairo one presumes, the Egyptian charge d'affaires, Muhammad 'Abd al-Wāḥid, frightened the young officer conspiracy of 'Abūlīlā Hujaylān by telling them their plot was blown, and they had better act at once. In the early hours of the 26 September 1962, some fifty officers attacked Dar al-Bashāʾir, rather incompetently, with six tanks. Al-Badr and his guards put up a spirited fight—but the Imām was unable to get in touch with al-Sallāl or the loyal Ahnūmī soldiers in the Qasr because the telephone wires had been cut. In the morning al-Badr slipped away to the northern wall, the people on the roofs murmuring 'Allāh yahfāz al-Imām', in blessing as he passed. He set out for Hajj to rally the tribes to him.

A great massacre of the leading officials in Ṣanʿā' followed, many of them ulama of distinction, others like Ahmad Zabarah were thrown into prison. The officers at an utter loss about what to do with their 'revolution' and in fear of the possible consequences, brought in 'Abūlīlā al-Sallāl whom al-Badr had raised to the rank of Chief of Staff in charge of the dispositions against the possibility of an attack by his uncle Ḥasan, and faute de mieux he became the first President of the Yemen Arab Republic.

359 The late R. Tring informed me that a flight by the Governor of Aden to see the new Wāhīr Government in Ṣanʿā' was only put off from landing by heavy rain at Ṣanʿā'. This doubtless lent colour to Ahmad's in fact unfounded suspicions.

360 This mosque is closed and not used.
Most Western visitors to Ṣan‘ā’ were impressed by the beauty of the city and the charm of the city. Their narratives are by no means always totally reliable for many did not know Arabic or lacked the background knowledge fully to understand what they saw. However, their accounts often contain details of not inconsiderable importance which may be used to supplement other sources and provide some, particularly those of a few really excellent observers, contain information not available elsewhere. This chapter attempts to chronicle what they actually said rather than to criticize their descriptions.

The first account of Ṣan‘ā’ by a European was published in Rome in 916/1510 and translated into English some seventy years later. The author was Ludovico di Varthema* a ‘Gentleman of the Court of Rome’ whose travels had already taken him to Medina and to Mecca and were to lead him to the Indies scarcely a decade after. Vasco da Gama. His description is of a city ‘solute upon a verye hyghe mountayne, verye strong by Arte and Nature. The Soltan bewseyd this, with a great armye of fourescore thousande men for the space of three monethes, but could never wynne it . . . . The walles are of eyghteene cubites heght, and twentie in breadth, insomuch that eyght camels in order may wel marche upon them. The region is very fruitful! and lyke unto ours, and hath plentie of water. . . . The sole beareth certayne spyces not farre from the citie. It conteyneth about foure thousand houses. The houses are of fayre byldyng, and give no place to ours. The citty is so large, that it conteyneth within the walles, fieldes, gardens, and medowes.

There is only one disadvantage in this most attractive place:
the Sultan’s son, by a certayne natural tyrannye and madness, delyteth to eat mans fl eshe, and therefore secretly kylleth many to eate them. As such a practice would be un-Islamic, once may suspect that the Sultan himself was either the victim or the propaganda of a real traveller’s tale.

No other Europeans appear to have visited Ṣan‘ā’ before it fell under the sway of the Turks in 946/1539 when it became the seat of a Pasha. It was to this official that two Iberian Jesuits were sent after being captured off the Kuria Muria islands in 998/1590, becoming en route the first Christians to see Ḥadramawt and Ma‘rib. Pedro Paez, who was later to be responsible for the conversion of the Emperor of Ethiopia and for some of the finest buildings in that country, spent five years as a captive in Ṣan‘ā’ before he was ransomed. There he met some Portuguese who had been sent as prisoners to work in the Pasha’s garden. According to him the city had declined since Turkish occupation to a mere 2,500 houses, of which 500 were occupied by Jews. He noted that many of the fruits found in Portugal grew within its walls, all watered from wells for there was no spring within the city.

In 1018/April 1609 the first English ship reached Aden and troubles with local Governors there and at Mocha led to a series of visits, often under duress, to the Pasha of the Yemen by East India Company merchants. In May 1018/1609 John Jourdain set off with another factor and two renegades from Aden. In his Journal he records ‘This city of Setan is noe great citie, but well seated in a valley, and walled aboute with earth in manner of greate stone squared, very curiouslie made for beeing earth, havinge every fortie paces distance a watch howse or little tower with battlements . . . twelve foote thicke, and to outward shewe is as faire as a stone wall. The citie is aboute two miles compass within the walls, and hath within it a very faire and large castle of stone, with some ordinance but not much.’ In this citadel were kept hostages, according to a later traveller perhaps numbering 1,000, from the various Arab tribes guarded by soldiers who, to quote the next visitor, Sir Henry Middleton, ‘keep such a continual halloowing to each other all night long, that one unaccustomed to the noise, can hardly sleep’.

Jourdain’s account continues ‘The buildings within the city is of bricke, and many faire howses and churches with fayre towres, and many pretty gardens within the towne.’ Nearby is ‘one littell hill’ (a curious description of the towering Jabal Nuqun) ‘upon the topp of which standeth a platforme or bulwarke with some ordinance and watch kept, because on this mountaine there are found many sorts of stones, as catts eyes, agatts and blud stones in greate number.’ Much of the trade, he found, was with the Bâniyâns of Gujerat who imported textiles and metals and exported madder. His summary is ‘a very firtill citie for all provision of victuall and fruite, and reasonable cheape. A whole-some and pleasant place to dwell in, and a temperate aire, neither too hooth nor too cold’—except in the early morning.

Sir Henry Middleton was in Ṣan‘ā’ two years later, having been sent up as a prisoner from Mocha. He adds little to Jourdain except to say that on the west side there is a great deal of spare ground enclosed within the walls, where the principal people have their gardens, orchards, and kiosks, or pleasure-houses. He admired the fine buildings of stone and lime and adds that ‘The city of Zenan is somewhat larger than Bristol.’ The pedantic Scotsman who edited his text comments severely ‘a most improper mode of description, as it is now impossible to say what size Bristol was then.’ In fact there seems little doubt that the population of Bristol was then about 12,000—a figure which would be quite reasonable for Ṣan‘ā’ at the same time.

*Source references are located at the end of the chapter and are arranged in the order in which they occur in the text.
A contemporary visitor, Benjamin Green, noted that the merchants included Armenians, Greeks and Persians as well as Indians and Jews. He thought that the city was at least two miles in compass with buildings of stone and beautiful lime 'as good as plaster of Parisa.' "Ye wall is walled round with mud wall and above or near adjoining to the city gates it is build with stone; and likewise in the inside, of a mans highte yt is build with lime and stone rownd about." The only thing lacking was firewood, in place of which people burned camel's dung. Another East Indian merchant, Joseph Salbank, also visited San'a' at this time and he seems to have been treated with special deference. At each town on the way from Mocha he was escorted to the Governor by infantry and cavalry. At 'Sisam' itself he was greeted a mile outside the gates by 50 mounted Turks and led to a well-furnished house. He reported that the city was so cold that "it will give vent yearly to a good quantity of English cloth" for even in the height of the summer it was possible to wear a furred gown. The court contained 40-50,000 gallant Turks, most of whom wore expensive Venetian cloth. Not far away was a lesek or camp of 30,000 soldiers continuously in the field against an Arab King in the mountains. They were said to wear coats of quilted Indian chintzes which were expensive and little use in the cold. Salbank said there was another lesek near 'Teyes' with a further 30,000 men under a German renegade. Kerr, whom we have just seen criticising Middleton's figures for the population of San'a', decided in nineteenth century Edinburgh, that the final 'O' should be lopped from those of Salbank.

Hard on the heels of the English came the Dutch whose first ship reached Mocha in 1025/January 1616. The Captain-Major of the fleet, Pieter van den Broecke, went up to 'Chenna' to interview the Turkish Pasha, who turned out to be a courteous Hungarian who kept great state, with an entourage including 200 richly dressed noblemen and a tame leopard. Van den Broecke was impressed by the antiquity of the city—by the well more than 100 arms-lengths deep which was said to have been dug by Jacob and produced water too cold to drink and the beautiful mosque which contained a piece of Noah's ark. He reported the existence of another mosque with more than 100 columns, each made from a single stone and which contained many pre-Christian antiquities. He enjoyed the outside view of the four tall minarets and the three gates of bluish stone, but does not tell us if he availed himself of the public baths although he does say that they were used by men in the morning and women in the afternoon. In the ten years that the Dutch struggled to trade with the area, there were several other visitors but none seem to have left any account. This brief flurry of European contact ended with the expulsion of the Turks in 1039/1630.

Nearly a century and a half were to pass before any more Europeans set foot in the city; indeed de la Roque who visited Mocha in 1123/1711 thought that no Westerner had ever seen San'a'. From hearsay he reported the ruins of an enormous pre-Islamic palace in the centre of the town and a temple built by a Christian Emperor of Ethiopia in an attempt to attract worshippers away from Mecca. People said that the climate was perfect, the nights and days of equal length, that the streets were paved and the beautiful mosque which contained a piece of Noah's ark. He reported the existence of another mosque with more than 100 columns, each made from a single stone and which contained many pre-Christian antiquities. He enjoyed the outside view of the four tall minarets and the three gates of bluish stone, but does not tell us if he availed himself of the public baths although he does say that they were used by men in the morning and women in the afternoon. In the ten years that the Dutch struggled to trade with the area, there were several other visitors but none seem to have left any account. This brief flurry of European contact ended with the expulsion of the Turks in 1039/1630.

In all the Streets (of Souan) there are Brokers for Wives, so that a Stranger who has not the Conveniency of an House in the City to lodge in, may marry, and be made a free Burgher for a small Sum. When the Man sees his Spouse, and likes her, they agree on the Price and Term of Weeks, Months or Years, and then appear before the Cadjee or Judge of the Place, and enter their Names and Terms in his Book, which costs but a Shilling or thereabout. And joining Hands before him, the Marriage is valid, for better, for worse, till the Expiration of the Term agreed on.

It is easier to believe the rest of his story that San'a' is the centre for goods brought from India and that each trade has its own street.

It was not until 1177 July/1673 that San'a' received its first real explorer—Carsten Niebuhr, accompanied by the other survivors of the mission sent to Arabia by the Danish King Frederik V. He spent a mere ten days in the city but has left an account which contains more useful information than that of any previous visitor. As Wilson was to report some thirty years later, no European was allowed to approach mounted within a certain distance of the capital and Niebuhr records the humiliation that he felt as his servants continued on their asses while he and his European companions had to walk to their lodgings. Like other subsequent travellers, he was prevented by a strict etiquette from either making or receiving visits until he had paid his respects to the Imam.

This important event occurred on the third day after their arrival. Niebuhr was conducted to a 'spacious square chamber having an arched roof.' In the middle was a large basin with fountains; which he does not describe although in an account of the garden of the 'Wazir' he remarked how they were set in motion by the water being raised in a reservoir by an ass which was led by a servant. These fountains were very common and served to cool the air.

The visitors were led up to the Imam and were permitted to kiss the back and palm of his hand, as well as the hem of his robe. As each of the party performed the ceremony, a herald shouted 'God preserve the Imam', while the bystanders echoed the sentiment. The Ruler, dressed in a great white turban and a gown of bright green colour with large sleeves and rich filleting of gold lace on each side of his breast sat on silken cushions. After a courteous reception he sent each of the foreigners a purse of small change—a real civility which stopped them from being swindled by the money changers. This reception was followed by a call on the principal Wazir.

Niebuhr says that the city of San'a' lies at the foot of Mount Nikkum (Nuqum), on which are still to be seen the ruins of a castle which the Arabs suppose to have been built by Shem. Below the height stands the castle with a rivulet and nearby, outside the city, the walled Bustan al-Metwokkel (Bustan al-Mutawakkil), a spacious garden which was laid out by Imam Metwokkel (al-Qasim al-Husayn, 1126-39/1716-27) and embellished by the reigning Imam (Abbás b. Husayn, 1161-89/1748-79). Niebuhr says that it took about an hour to walk around the brick walls of the main city. He attempted to make a map but found it impossible to be accurate because of the excited crowd—an experience not unknown to photographers today! He reported that the city appeared more populous than it was in reality because of the large expanse of gardens within the walls. It contained many 'noble palaces', three of the most splendid of which were constructed by the present monarch. He particularly admired the place built by the previous Imam, al-Mansūr (1151-61/1727-48). In the castle Niebuhr found the ruins of old buildings but 'notwithstanding the antiquity of the place, no remarkable inscriptions. There is the mint, and a range of prisons for persons of different ranks.' There was a battery with, surprisingly, a German mortar of 1513 and seven small cannon. There were also two palaces which 'are built in a style of architecture different from ours. The materials are, however, burnt bricks, and sometimes even hewn stones; but the houses of the common people are of bricks which have been dried in the sun. I saw no glass windows, except in one palace, near the chandelier. The rest of

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1 This looks like the Shi'ah practice of mut'a'ah or temporary marriage, except that this, according to the Encyclopedia of Islam, is not permitted by the Zaydis.
houses have, instead of windows, merely shutters, which are opened in fair weather, and shut when it is foul. In the last case, the house is lighted by a round wicket, fitted with a piece of Muscovy glass; some of the Arabsians use small panes of stained glass from Venice.'

Niebuhr noted that the city had seven gates and 'only' twelve public baths. He gives no particulars of them but goes on to describe the 'great Simseras (samsarah) or caravanserais for merchants and travellers. Each different commodity is sold in a separate market. In the market for bread, none but women are to be seen; and their little shops are portable. The several classes of mechanics work in the same manner, in particular quarters in the open street. Writers go about with their desks, and make out brieves, copy-books, and instruct scholars in the art of writing, all at the same time. There is one market, where old clothes are taken in exchange for new.'

Like Green before him, Niebuhr commented upon the shortage of wood among the bleak and barren hills of the Yemen. It had to be brought from some three days' journey away and a camel load cost two crowns (qirsh). The shortage was supplemented by 'pit-coal' and peat mixed with straw. This shortage was amply compensated for by the richness of the fruits—some twenty varieties of grapes ripening gradually throughout the months.

The Arabs hung them in their cellars to preserve them while the Jews turned them into wine. Others were exported in the form of raisins.

Upon his arrival at the great open space in front of the Palace, his attendants ranged themselves in a square while, following by his relations, the Imam repeatedly galloped around, feinting to attack the nearest horseman. He then disembowed and stood while anyone who wished could approach and kiss his knee.

Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt brought a renewal of British interest in the political situation of the Red Sea littoral even before the occupation of Aden in 1839 made the two countries into neighbours. Two separate accounts exist of visits to San`a'—a chronology it would be difficult to establish. Furthermore he reported that the population was nearly one million souls for someone had told him that the Imam had taxed each household in San`a' and its suburbs a dollar (qirsh/riyal) and that this imposition had raised 200,000 thalers. More acceptably he stated that the Imam was only rarely resident within the city but usually moved at weekly intervals through a series of houses in the vicinity. He was very impressed by the police force: 'robbers being seldom if ever heard of'. The guns on the walls that previous travellers had noticed had apparently disappeared.

His immediate successor, Pringle, was more concerned with the difficulties of transporting rich presents for the Imam on camel-back up from the coast at Mocha. He was rewarded, however, by the Ruler's evident delight in a large looking-glass. He had several hospitable receptions at court and one cultural evening when he was sent for to explain to the Qâdî 'the principles of the action of an electrical machine and the use of some instruments such as globes, quadrants, portable sundials.'

It is unfortunate that so little has survived of the reports of the next visitor to San`a', Ulrich Jasper Seezten whom Hogarth has described as 'a botanist of European reputation, a profound observer of things and men, and a most learned Arabist ... in many respects the best qualified European traveller who had yet come to Arabia.' He had already visited Mecca to qualify as a Hajî, the better to serve his Russian masters in Muslim territories. He wrote occasional reports back for a German publication and, presumably, for the Czar, but his main notes and his diaries disappeared after his murder near Ta`izz. He had travelled widely but he still felt that 'Szana' was the finest city that he had yet seen in the Orient and that, even in Europe, it would have been regarded as outstandingly beautiful. Constantinople might have finer mosques but not even Damascus had such a glot of fruit.

He admired the gardens and the massive houses, standing compactly, painted with white or other colours. The Imam, at the time of his visit in 1810, Ahmad b. `Ali b. `Abdullah al-Mutawakkil, lived in a new palace in the Bustan al-Mutawakkil. He found many manuscripts for sale in the suq—alas, these presumably were lost with the rest of his possessions.

A quarter of a century elapsed before, during the brief reign of 'Ali b. `Abdullah al-Manzfîr, Charles Cruttenden of the Indian Navy arrived in San`a'. He was gratified by the hospitality of the Imam who sent him five sheep, wax candles and Persian tobacco,
but was shocked by the Ruler’s personal habits. At the official reception the Imam wore a robe of crimson silk, a white turban wound around a cap of cloth of gold and a dagger studded with gems. Outside the palace was picketed the royal stud of very fine horses brought from the Jawa'—horses larger than those of Najd but just as beautiful.

Cruttenden was a shrewd observer and a talented draughtsman so it is a great pity that only two of the sketches that he presented to the Royal Geographical Society can still be found. He estimated the population at 40,000 or 75,000 if the suburbs of al-Rawdah and Wadi Dahr were included. This included some 3,000 Jews, living in their quarter and paying one riyal a year for the privilege of doing so. They sold silver, gunpowder and alcoholic spirits while in other parts of the city one could purchase ancient square golden coins and jewels brought from Ma'rib. Cruttenden himself bought and sent to England the marble head of a perfectly beautiful statue which had been smashed upon the orders of the Imam. Import duties were almost nominal and glass from Egypt was in great demand. Other shops sold magnificent silks and velvets as well as spices and sugar. There were huge storehouses where the merchants brought in the main crop—coffee—during the months of December and January. To avoid the extortion of the Turks to the north, they sent it to Mocha at the cost of 44 riyal a camel load—making a profit of 3½ riyal a time. The merchants formed the principal body of men in the town and lived in considerable style. Non-Muslim merchants, Jews and Baniyans had to conceal their wealth.

Cruttenden reported that the city walls now included Bir al-'Azab, although they had not done so in Niebuhr's time, and measured some 5½ miles in circuit. 'The first thing that struck us on entering the city was the width of the streets and their cleanliness.' There were about twenty mosques, many with gilded domes—particularly those in which an Imam had been buried. There were also more than one hundred palaces, as well as the houses of Egypt and these were much frequented by the wealthy merchants. 'The houses are large, and the windows of those of the higher classes are of beautiful stained glass. A handsome stone bridge is thrown across the principal street, as in wet weather a stream of water runs down it.'

Cruttenden tells us that 'The Imam of San'a has two large palaces with extensive gardens adjoining; the whole walled round and fortified. The first and largest is Bustan el Sultan ... the other, which is the more ancient, Bustan el-Metwokkil. They are built of hewn stone, plastered over with a grey-coloured mortar, having the windows and cornices of a bright white colour which gives the house a very light and airy appearance. Fountains appear to be indispensable to the houses in San'a, and in the Bustan el-Metwokkil there are several.' Indeed there was one in the house in which Cruttenden was lodged—a fountain covered by an enormous vine.

The same year (1836) San'a received a visit from one of the most extraordinary characters of the age, the Revd. Joseph Wolff, a converted Jew who was later to reach Bokhara dressed in an extraordinary cap and gown and proclaiming himself to be the Grand Dervish of the United Kingdom, Europe and America. He seems to have thought that the 'Bnee Arhab' were the remnants of the Rechabites, the nomadic group of teetotal Jews who are mentioned by Jeremiah and his task was to convert them to the obedience of Canterbury. He travelled up from Hodeidah, appropriately loaded with Arabic versions of the New Testament, Pilgrim's Progress, and Robinson Crusoé, which he distributed to a largely illiterate population which presumably found some use for them. The local Jews, although probably surprised, received him with courtesy and the Chief Rabbi told him that the city was the burial place of the Biblical Uzal and that when one of the gates, the Bab al-Sitran (Bab el-Sitran) was opened, the first to pass through it would be the Messiah. The Jews he found, practiced polygamy, but few had more than two wives 'and even then there is a devil among them.' He counted 18 synagogues of which the most important was the 'Kenessa Beit Alusta' (Kanisat al-Usla) and saw an ancient house in ruins—Qasr Shem (who) he believed, was the priest Melchisedek. The Imam, who seems to have been spared a visit from Wolff, lived in a most splendid palace, called Dar Arwahashe (Dār al-Tawashi) 'built in a Gothic style and resembling a fortress.' On his way back to the coast after a short stay the Revd. Wolff encountered some Imam'ilis who discovered that his books did not mention the Prophet Muhammad so they gave him a sound thrashing.

The next account that we have of San'a is given by a French naval officer, Passama, although it appears that he collected information while at Hays rather than visited the city in person. He says that there were more than 400 houses of at least four storeys in height, four public baths, a hundred cafés and thirty mosques of which the principal one had a minaret 120 feet tall and was lit with 350 lamps. There were wells so great that five people could drink water simultaneously and 500 cisterns fed by cemented canals. It took twenty minutes to walk around the citadel which was garrisoned by 500 soldiers and the walls, guarded by thirty cannon, had to be renewed annually after the rain. The trade of the city was monopolised by its 500 Jews who manufactured narghiles, cottons, jambiyahs (daggers) and pitchers.

In 1843 a Frenchman, Arnaud, revisited San'a where he had already spent some time as a pharmacist in the service of the Imam. I have been unable to find anything written by him about the city for he seems to have regarded it as little more than a staging-post on the way to Ma'rib, which was the first European to study. The same, unfortunately, is true of the Austrian scholar, Eduard Glaser, who was in San'a several times in the 1880s. In July 1849 the city came briefly under Turkish rule. There was an almost immediate revolt and the garrison turned its guns on the city. After a few days the Pasha purchased a safe withdrawal for his force and his departure was followed by a period of anarchy...
which still persisted when in September 1856 a second missionary arrived to convert the Jews. This was the Revd. Henry Aaron Stero who took up residence with one of the principal Rabbits although he soon had to move to safety in the house of a Muslim merchant.

He reported that the population was about 40,000 although he must have over-estimated the Jewish numbers which he gives as 18,000, some of whom were descendants of those who had fled from Nebuchadnezzar! They had 18 synagogues, the most important of which the 'Kaneesa Beit Alushta', he described as a spacious and solid building. He reckoned the distance between the Muslim and Jewish towns at half an hour's walk—a large tract of waste land, varied by cemeteries and fragments of former dwellings: 'On the Jewish Sabbath this piece of ground is entirely deserted; not a human being is to be seen, not a voice breaks the dull silence, here and there a bird of prey and a savage jackal may be seen prowling among the tombs in search of food; even they, if their shrill and discordant notes had any signification, seem to think that no one had any right to intrude on these domains on the seventh day.'

Mr. Stern lodged at the Khan of Ali Zarkee, 'a spacious and massive building, situated in the very centre of the market place, and surrounded on three sides by long lines of bazaars, where Jews and Mahomedans were all day congregated. Before the gate of the Khan many idle loiterers, and blustering coffee drinkers, were assembled when we arrived.' He reported that only three Bâniyans remained in the city and two of these were murdered during his stay. He said that the standard coin was a copper called a rupee—600 of which equalled one shilling.

The city was sacked by tribes of Arîb in 1851 and 1853, so the return of the Turks in April 1871 was greeted almost with relief. Certainly the epigrapher, Joseph Halévy, who was there at the end of 1869 reported that half the buildings were in ruins, Bir al-`Azab was practically uninhabited, Qa~r Ghumdan destroyed and the mint sacked by a mob looking for gold and silver. The Mosque known locally as the 'Kanisah' because it had been founded by the Christian Governor Abrahah, was mainly rubble. He reckoned that the population had sunk from 200,000 to something around 50,000. There was a brighter side, however, for he regarded San`â‘ as the most beautiful and cleanest town in Arabia, with streets that were wide, straight and usually paved. Remarkably for Arabs, he said, even the inside of the houses were not dirty. Halévy listed the gates as follows:

1) Bâb al-Sabâh (Gate of the Morning), which consists of two parallel gates linking Bir al-`Azab with the main town. There was, therefore, a little square between the southern
2) Bâb Houzayma (Bâb Khuzaymah—Gate of the little heaps) which led to a sunken cemetery and the northern
3) Bâb Bustân al-Mutawakkil which led to the ruined palace of the Imâms. Opposite it was:
4) Bâb al-Shaqâdîf (Gate of the Palanquins), so called because it was used by the ladies of the Imâms' riding in litters carried by camels. The southern gate of the main town was
5) Bâb al-Yamamah and the northern
6) Bâb Shu`ûb, whilst to the east was
7) Bâb al-Qa~r which has broad stone steps leading up to the Qa~r Ghumdân—a name now hardly remembered by the majority of the people.

In Bir al-`Azab, the north west gate is called Bâb al-`Abîlah and there are two others for the names of which Halévy can give no reason—Bâb al-Rûm and Bâb al-Shari. The main gate of Qa~r al-Yahûd by which comers from the Tihâmah entered, was simply called Bâb al-Qa~r. The southern part of the quarter which was called Balaqah has a gate called Bâb Hatâbiab (probably Bâb Hajabah—Firewood Gate—as some firewood came through this gate; see p.190a, n. 192) and returning towards Bâb al-Sabâh one found Bâb al-Nuzayyi/Nizayyi. The plentiful fountains gave abundant water and two streams crossed the town. The larger, Ghayl al-Aswad flows out as far as Shu`ûb where it is used to irrigate the gardens while the smaller Ghayl Aîlî soon looses itself. There was once, he was told, a third, the Ghayl al-Barmaki but this was so evil-smelling that a learned Rabbi threw some Cabbalistic signs into its source, whereupon it dried up and never reappeared!

He visited the Fort of Birâsh which the Arabs called the Qa~r of Sâm b. Nûb and which the Jews claimed was once their citadel. He found it about 1,000 feet long and 500 feet wide but so ruined that no wall was more than twelve feet high. The bystanders did not like his copying of inscriptions, fearing that he was writing talismans. He was told that the name of the city originated from the Ethiopian invaders, who, looking at its huge walls cried out 'San`â‘' which meant 'It is strong.'

Curiously Halévy stated that the city was the most fanatical in all southern Arabia and was particularly dangerous for non-Muslims at the time when the Sharifs of Khawlan were preparing to lead the Kibbi Caravan to Mecca for the Hajj. It was rarely possible even to catch a glimpse of the mosques for their massive doors were nearly always closed. However, from the outside, the architecture rivalled some of the finest buildings in Andalusia.

He counted eighteen synagogues, agreeing with the previous writers that the most important was Kanisat Bayt al-Usta dating from 1760. Tradition had it that its builder was a certain 'Araîq, a Minister of Finance who was probably the man whose disgrace Niebuhr had mentioned.

The next visitor also remarked upon the ruined state of the city. Charles Millingen, a Scots doctor, whose visit took place in 1873, estimated the population at a mere 20,000 including the Turkish garrison of 1,000 men. He thought it would take two hours to walk around the city but, owing to incessant rain, does not appear to have tried. It was freezing, the Turkish doctors all said that the climate was positively unhealthy, and all the locals were swathed in furs.

Apart from Niebuhr, none of the travellers that we have mentioned so far went to San`â‘ with exploration of the city as a primary objective. But this was the purpose of two visits by an Italian, Renzo Manzoni, who was there from October 1877 to March 1878 and from August 1878 to January 1879. He spent a further fortnight there in February 1880. The value of his descriptive writing was enhanced by the fact that he was the first to publish any photographs.

He shows us a city which had started to undergo changes through Turkish rule. The Pasha Ismâîl Haqîqi, toasted the King of Italy in claret and owned the solitary carriage in San`â‘. There was a weekly postal service and telegraphic link to Hodeidah. The health of the garrison was protected by a 'magnificent and immense' hospital built in the European style with two storeys and wide corridors and equipped with a pharmacy and mortuary. The Turks had also founded a school which gave some technical education.

Manzoni reckoned that the walls of San`â‘, which because the local earth mixed with water (sâbiyar) hardened to resemble stone, looked like an enormous pudding, were 6,843m in circumference. Strangely, his list of gates does not correspond with that quoted by Halévy. They agree on Bâb al-Qa~r and Bâb al-Yaman but he derives the name of Bâb Shu`ûb not from the nearby village but (incorrectly) from the presence of bushes. Where Halévy has Bâb al-Sabâh (Gate of the Morning), Manzoni has Bâb al-Sobâh (Gate of the Ditch). The only other gate that he names is Bâb al-Sirân which he translates Covered or secret gate, but which should be Gate of the Columns, to the south, serving as an exit from the citadel.

Manzoni treats al-Mutawakkil as a separate quarter of the 'conurbation' with Bâb al-Antabah to the south and Bâb al-Shaqâdîf to the north. The third part, surrounded by a wall 6,196m in length, consisted of Bir al-`Azab, the broad open space
Western Accounts of San`â' 1510-1962

Şübü Qâ' al-Yahûd itself. His list of eight gates is practically identical with that of Halîv, Bâb al-Nurayî, Bâb al-Bâlahâq, Bâb al-Rûm, Bâb al-`Abîlîh, Bâb Qa' al-Yahûd, Bâb al-Shari`. He seems to have paced out the walls of San`â' for he says that from the point of the citadel to Bâb al-Yahûd is about 4,280m and the widest part of the city some 1,270m. The wall he reckoned at eight to ten metres with little towers some three metres higher. He commented upon the elegant variety of decoration in the houses with each floor level marked by an outside band. He said that the walls were three to four metres in diameter and twelve to fifteen deep and were often operated by buffaloes. He was welcomed and assisted by the brothers Luigi and Giuseppe Caprotti who had recently been installed as representatives of an Italian firm.

Deflers was more interested in the botany of the area than in the architecture of the city or the life of its inhabitants so he adds little to our historical accounts. He does however explain that the reason for the dove replacing the crescent over the minarets was to be found in the legend that when the Prophet took refuge in a cave on Jabal Thawr, two doves hung their nests over the entrance and, when pursuers arrived, were cooing with such tranquillity that it seemed impossible that there could be anyone inside. Deflers says that all of the minarets were of brick except those of the Jam` which were of stone dressed with white plaster.

In June 1891, San`â' was entered for the first time by an American, the Revd. Samuel Marinos Zwemer. The country was in a state of revolt but he hired a mule and set out on his own from Hodeidah. He lodged with Caprotti who asked him to leave after one night, saying that he feared to offend the Government by entertaining a missionary; one may suspect a polite excuse for one cannot imagine from his writings that Zwemer would be a particularly congenial companion. He remained only five days but returned in August 1894 overland from Aden, reaching the city under arrest for smuggling Bibles. He stayed a fortnight.

As with his predecessors, the Jews were his target. 'It was very touching to realize', he wrote, 'that these Jews were not of the number whose ancestors rejected Jesus ... their forefathers had left the Holy Land many, many years before.' He reckoned their number at 20,000 out of a total population of 50,000. He had travelled widely and concluded that San`â' remained, next to Baghdad, the most flourishing city in all Arabia. He was reminded of Cairo, even, by the Government Quarter with its cafés, billiard rooms, large Greek shops full of European goods, carriages, bootblacks and brass band. He counted 48 mosques, 39 synagogues, 12 large public baths and a military hospital with 200 beds.

The next visitor, in 1892, Walter Harris, for many years The Times correspondent in Morocco, was anything but a missionary but he agreed that the Government Quarter presented an almost European appearance with its military band performing in the afternoons. He regarded the town as forming a triangle with its apex at the citadel and its base formed by the wall of the garden suburb, Bir al-`Azab. The walls, on which were mounted some small guns, were of mud brick and in the sun although the towers are of stone. To increase protection the Turks had built a series of round fortifications, resembling martello towers, a few hundred yards outside the walls. The Turks had repaired the old citadel which they used as an arsenal while there was another fort near the Hodeidah gate. Both these edifices, said Harris, contain the remains of old palaces which had fallen into disrepair. The old Islamic palace in which the Wâli lived was so shabby that it resembled a barracks rather than a residence. Ruined, too, was the old temple and palace of Ghumdân.

Harris greatly enjoyed the shops of San`â'. 'The shops are all of one storey, the floor being raised about two feet above the ground, but not projecting on to the street in the little platforms one is so used to in Egypt and elsewhere. Here the seller sits cross-legged amongst his goods in the shade under his mud-brick shrine; sitting in the same position, I entered a shop opposite.' Among the goods on offer were Greek and local wines but of greater interest was the extraordinary...
quantity of Chinese and Japanese pottery. Very few seemed to be recently imported and some might well have been valuable antiques as were coins, gems, arms, brass and copper work, carpets, pottery and the glass of both Arabian and Persian origin that were offered for sale. There were manuscripts also and he thought that the Yemen might well prove to be as rich a field for collectors as Egypt itself.

There were some of the main streets, went on Harris, which were quite wide thoroughfares in which the few carriages which Sanaa boasts are able to pass each other. The most important of the streets leads from the square into which the Government buildings look to the bazaars. It is only a few hundred yards in length, it is true, but still it is sufficiently wide, to compare favourably with many European towns. The ‘square’ itself is a large oblong open space, faced on the east by the old castle and the large much-bedizened Turkish mosque, and on the west by what were once the palaces of the Arab rulers, and today form barracks and Government offices. At one end of the square an enterprising Turk has built a large cafe where the officers and the few Greek shopkeepers love to congregate, and from the large doors and windows of which float clouds of pomegranate flower smoke, issuing in curling clouds from the shishahs of the smokers. It is from this point that the main street leads off to the bazaars, and in the few hundred yards of thoroughfare are to be seen the best shops, kept either by Turks or by Greeks, in which every imaginable article can be procured, from tins of sardines and inferior Turkish cigarettes to photograph frames and musky chocolate creams. One or two have large glass windows in which the goods are exposed to view, but they have a dingy dusty appearance and seem to tell that trade is not bright.

The vegetable and fruit bazaar was an open space with rough little awnings supported on poles. The shops of the jewellers were particularly interesting and Harris thought their work so lovely that he was reminded of the finest and best Greek and Etruscan work, with none of the roughness apparent in the jewellery of so many oriental countries. The favourite design seems to be single chains supporting pendants of various shapes and forms, from discs of fine filigree work to solid pear-shaped globules of metal.

The greatest skill of the jewellers of San’ā’, said Harris, was to be found in the sheaths of the javanbeyyurs—often of plain silver inlaid with gold coins of the Byzantine Emperors. Harris saw one of silver, studded with pearls and turquoises for which the shopkeeper asked 40. The blades were even more precious and the Yemenis particularly valued old ones, declaring that the ancient art of hardening the steel had been lost. Another lost art was the application of silver to copper and brass and old boxes procured, from tins of sardines and inferior Turkish cigarettes to photograph frames and musky chocolate creams. One or two have large glass windows in which the goods are exposed to view, but they have a dingy dusty appearance and seem to tell that trade is not bright.

The next account of San’ā’ was published in 1899 by a Frenchman named Alfred Bardey who, although he spent 17 years in Aden, had not been there himself but obtained his information from Caprotti. According to him, the Turkish officers of the garrison compared the city to either Paris or Constantinople and wobbled around it on bicycles. The telegraphic network had been extended to include most of the major towns of the country and through Shaykh Sa’id on the Báb al-Mandab, it was possible to send a message anywhere in the world. Other pieces of information that he obtained were that the Yemenis thought their city so old that they termed it Umah-Dim’ay and gave it an importance as so great that it was Kaysiyāya’-yaman. He put the total length of the walls at 13½km, and the population at 60-80,000. Two new names appear in his account: he calls the stream Tanaan and the new Turkish camp al-Hordi (al-’Urdi).

Another almost contemporary visitor was the German, Hermann Burchardt, who reached the city from Hodeidah having hired seven mules at 9½ riyāṣ for the six-day journey. Caprotti lodged him in his samaraba before arranging for him to move into a two-storey house hired for 16 marks a month. The furniture he was told that the reason for this was that the Ottoman authorities had seized most of the Waqf properties. ‘But of all the sights of Sanaa, the population presents the most interesting.’

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Burchardt’s description of San’ā’ adds little to our knowledge. He put the population at 50,000 excluding 6-7,000 Jews, and ascribes the foundation of the city to Noah rather than to his son. He mentions that the fort on the top of Jabal Nuqum has a garrison of fifty men. Obviously there had been material progress under Turkish rule for now there was an official weekly newspaper San’ā’ in Arabic and Turkish, a military school, two civilian schools and an industrial school in which Arab boys were learning trades. There was a State Apothecary and, in addition to the Military Hospital, a civilian one with Jewish women running the female section. Unfortunately Burchardt was murdered and, like Seetzen, the greater part of his notes (plus apparently excellent photographs) have perished.

In 1884 the British Government appointed a member of the Indian Medical Service to be Vice-Consul at Hodeidah, a post combined with supervision of the Quarantine Station at Kamran. Neither Atta Muhammad nor Ahmad Tamiz al-Din who succeeded him in 1892 appear to have visited San’ā’, although the latter suggested in August 1899 that the time had come for the appointment of a British Consular Agent in the capital; he would be able
to persuade the Wall to answer letters and report on the country as a whole. His superior, the Consul at Jedda disagreed, remarking acridly that what was needed was merely a more effective Vice-Consul in Hodeidah. However, in 1901 another member of the I.M.S., George Alexander Richardson, was appointed to Hodeidah and began a series of almost annual visits until the outbreak of war led to his removal. Richardson was a first-class observer of political and military events, but I have been unable to find much descriptive writing about San`a' in his reports. In 1905 he gave the population as 20,000 but that was before the heavy fighting the following year. Early in 1906, the new Imam Yahyâ b. Mansûr started to besiege the capital which surrendered to him in April. About 2,000 Turkish officials and their families were evacuated but in August they re-entered the city without much opposition. Some weeks later Richardson went up to San`a' which he reported 'now a dismal picture, with its gardens and houses partially destroyed, and the latter to a considerable extent uninhabited.' The Military Hospital and Municipal Pharmacy had been wrecked. He calculated that only 800 of the previous total of 7,000 Jews remained; 2,000 had emigrated to Hodeidah. It seems that they must have feared tribal looting for they had been regarded with contempt rather than persecuted by the Turks; perhaps their greatest burden was the payment for exemption from military service.

During this period another Englishman was sent to San`a' clearly to spy out Turkish military establishments at a time of tension on the frontiers of the Aden Protectorate. William Spencer Leveson Gower was a Naval Officer and his account dealt mainly with the strengths of the Turkish VIIth Army Corps. He estimated the population at between 40,000 and 60,000 of whom three quarters were Arabs and the remainder divided between 6,000 Jews, a few Christians and the Turks.

In September 1905, two young Englishmen visited San`a' where they were naturally entertained by Caprotti who had survived the horrors of the siege. They were both more interested in the feat of reaching a forbidden city rather than anything that they found there, except perhaps as a theme for romantic prose. Aubrey Herbert estimated that the fighting had reduced the population from 70,000 to 20,000 and the number of Jews from 8,000 to 2,000. Conditions had been appalling and all the dogs had been eaten by the Turks. Leland Buxton wrote of 'The acres of deserted streets, and the forlornness of crumbling houses seem melancholy' while Aubrey Herbert thought it 'A grey and tragic town, with the savage memories of famine written upon it. There was silence along the decrepit mud walls, which in some places were forty feet high, while here and there they were level with the land.' Both wrote that the houses were embroidered with white stucco and ornamented with great doors of wrought iron. Herbert continued 'On the second or third storey there are small balconies, and the air is full of the noise of buckets ascending and descending to and from them... The windows are circular and paned with a silver fringe.'

Herbert thought the six gates mostly modern and ugly: they were watched by Turkish guard-rooms. He said that there were sixty-eight mosques but visitors were only allowed into two which were used exclusively by Turks. Buxton said that he did not enter any of them but he spotted a most attractive one with a fountain near the South Gate. He repeats the curious tale that there was a well within the Great Mosque which was supposed to be connected directly with Zamzam at Mecca. Nearby, he adds, was a house upon which tradition demanded that each passer-by should spit, although the reason for this had long been forgotten.

Five years later another Englishman, Arthur Wavell, also made a forbidden visit to San`a', evading the attempts of the Ottoman authorities at Hodeidah to stop him. He had already been in disguise to Mecca and Medina and the first sight of the city reminded him of the latter. He was touched by the pride of the inhabitants in the magnificence of their capital and amused by their belief that it was under divine protection; it might be starved into submission but any attempt to take it by storm was foredoomed to failure.

This belief was soon put to the test shortly after his arrival, the forces of the Imam Yahyâ arrived to besiege the city and to fire their inaccurate, and thus extremely dangerous, artillery at it. The Turks were naturally convinced that he was a spy and he heard that at least two attempts were made to procure his murder. The ever hospitable Caprotti, now generally regarded as a mediator between Turk and Arab, felt it unsafe to keep him for long in his samarah.

Wavell therefore hired an unfurnished house for a £1 a month and spent a further £40 in equipping it. It was near the citadel, and consisted of a porch with one room over it leading into a rectangular courtyard which contained the kitchen and was enclosed on two sides by a wall, the third side being the porch and the fourth the house itself.

Wavell, a soldier like his cousin, the future Field Marshal, kept an eye on military matters. He reckoned the wall which included Bir al-'Azab and Qâ' al-Yahût at about 12km in length. The one around the old city was formidable with clay works revetted with stone, often forty feet high and nearly that in thickness at the base. He estimated that siege artillery would be needed to breach them, although the extensions were not as impressive. There were towers and a parapet loopholed for rifles. He counted eight gates.

The Government buildings, constructed by the Turks after their second occupation are at the eastern extremity of the town and Wavell thought them rather imposing although gloomy of
San`â’—An Arabian Islamic City

aspect for they are built of local black stone. In front of them was a dusty space used as a parade ground and on the other side stood the Bakîrî Mosque, which had been built during the first Turkish occupation and restored during the second. Wavell regarded it as an imitation of St. Sophia which was out of keeping with its surroundings although fine enough externally. The inside he thought tawdry with coloured glass balls, ostrich eggs and other preposterous objects' hanging from the roof. Wavell was much more impressed by the purely Arab mosques and prayed regularly thought tawdry with coloured glass balls, ostrich eggs 'and other preposterous objects' hanging from the roof. Wavell was much more impressed by the purely Arab mosques and prayed regularly in the Jâmî' Mosque, whose architecture he thought showed a Byzantine origin. He was shown around by its imâm who showed him art treasures in stone and brass, Hjumayric inscriptions and a fine wooden doorway.

The siege lasted three months so by the end of this time Wavell came to know the city well. He put the population at 16,000 and admired the elegant dress of the upper-class Arabs—silk robes, girdled at the waist, large white turbans and square-toed sandals. They nearly all carried a shoulder-cloth which they wrapped round their heads in cold weather. He himself tried to buy a sabtahk, a dagger locally called a cross-sword, and almost a large as a sword-bayonet but was told that it was unsuitable for small men like himself and that he should content himself with a jambiyah. He was surprised at the number of Levantines who traded mainly with the Turks and whose stores stocked such goods as Huntley and Palmers' biscuits. Wavell thought that the sûgs "call for no special notice". He did however think well of the local claret and raki although he was surprised to find no bookshop in the town. His Yemeni friends told him that they never had time to read books. He thought that Bir al-'Azab was more European in style and recommended future visitors to reside there. The air was believed to be purer and most of the senior officials preferred it.

Two visitors just before World War I were concerned with the possibility of building a railway from Hodeidah to the capital. Neither was particularly concerned to describe San`â’ itself although Deutsch estimated the population at 50,000 including 8,000 Jews. He calculated that the railway would cost £625,000 and would greatly cut the journey by camel which often took six days, and although it could hardly be much cheaper than the average cost of £2.8s.9d. Beneyton was interested in the rare stones of San`â’ which were polished and cost a few pence. These so-called 'Mecca stones' included agates, cornelians, the best of which was called 'roumani' (rummâni) because it resembled the inside of a pomegranate.

Bury reported that the Turks had recently strengthened the defences by establishing a sally-port at the citadel 'a zigzag outlet of massive strength, through which there is no admittance except on business.' More in use was the Bâb Sha`ûb, a gateway in the triple part of Bab es-Sba’ (Bab al-Sabah),' a name given to three adjacent gates, two of which face north and south, on either side of the narrow neck that joins the quarter of Bir al-'Azab to the main town, about 500 yards apart. The third is a massive central arch, crowned and flanked by a strong guard-house and quarters for troops and police. Through this arch, which is almost a tunnel, runs the road joining the native town with the Ottoman quarter of Bir al-'Azab. Just inside was the Municipal Pharmacy which occasionally made up prescriptions accurately. Nearby was the fine building of the Military Hospital and 'the low rambling residence of the Vali is on the right, in a vast, walled garden, and on the left of the Midan' (where the troops drilled) 'is the Government School—a substantial building for resident scholars. State education is free throughout the Yemen when available at all.' Past the school was the Diwân Arkâm al-`Hârîb, a two storied house of vogue architecture, that appeared to be a sort of Secretariat. Also in the quarter was a street of ostensible cafes, much frequented by the Turks and known to the Arab as 'Al-Casino'. It was possible but difficult to get a drink for 'the townsmen of San`a spend a great deal of their time in watching for contraventions of the Sharia, in the hope of paying off old scores.'

He had little praise of Bir al-`Azab or its wall which he thought that an active man could scale without assistance. He himself tried to buy a shabtah, a dagger locally called a cross-sword, and almost as large as a sword-bayonet but was told that it was unsuitable for small men like himself and that he should content himself with a jambiyah. He was surprised at the number of Levantines who traded mainly with the Turks and whose stores stocked such goods as Huntley and Palmers' biscuits. Wavell thought that the sûgs 'call for no special notice'. He did however think well of the local claret and raki although he was surprised to find no bookshop in the town. His Yemeni friends told him that they never had time to read books. He thought that Bir al-'Azab was more European in style and recommended future visitors to reside there. The air was believed to be purer and most of the senior officials preferred it.

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One of the last English visitors before the war was Wyman Bury, a Political Officer from Aden. He like other former soldiers, had an eye for the defensive system, regarding the two large howitzers on the crest of Nuqum as unlikely to be effective except against the city. The citadel would do little to guard against an attack from the obvious direction—from the north along the tamarisk-sheltered course of the brook Alâîf which rose from a spring inside the city and flowed northwards under the walls before flowing around Nuqum to end in Khârid valley. He says that the stream is known locally as the Sha`ûb and along it runs the only carriage road which circles around the outskirts of the town.

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When the Arab Bureau produced its Handbook of Yemen in 1917, Hogarth had little to add to recent accounts. Pierre Lamare, a French geologist who visited the city in 1922 reported that more Western comforts had arrived: the Imâm had electricity and a motor car which apparently had been brought up in pieces on the backs of camels and locally assembled. From a Frenchman one may accept the statement that the wine resembled Chablis, and that the local distillation compared not too unfavourably with Marc du Burgogne.

In April 1922 Ameen Rihani, a Syrian-American, became the first author to visit San`â’. He was not a man to allow mere facts mar a good tale, so much of what he says has to be treated with caution. His journey was, of course, full of peril, for he was warned before starting that if he were to be discovered to be a Christian, his throat
would be cut, and also uncomfortable for the cockroaches in the hamamān were larger than nice!

Other little details are of interest: the rent of one of the best houses in the city was three Maria Theresa dollars or six shillings a month. Mutton cost £1 a lb, 3 lb of potatoes cost 15s and 15 lb of wheat six shillings. Someone told me that there were more treasures under San`a` than in the houses but that they were guarded by jinn. He said that Sayyids needed permission from the Imam to invite him to dinner, although he was himself received by the Monarch whom he also saw sitting under his well-known tree dispensing justice.

In January 1926 the British Government sent one of its leading experts on Arab affairs, Sir Gilbert Clayton, to negotiate about frontier disputes. His diary has little topographical information and the most interesting part of his narrative is his account of the Friday prayer which he watched from a room in the palace put at his disposal by the Imam. Six hundred schoolboys waited by the gates as the Commander-in-Chief led four smart battalions marching with bands and bayonets. There followed the senior year of the Cadet School with special uniforms of long blue coats and orange turbans and then the Imam's infantry escort dancing along the route, waving their swordyaks and chanting. The Imam rode in a carriage with one of his sons, followed by cavalry, a few field guns, howitzers and machine guns. Upon his arrival at the Palace the Imam took up his station by a window and took the salute as the whole parade, led by the schoolboys, marched past him.

Other visitors about this time included the famous American philanthropist Charles R. Crane who in 1927 thought 'the architecture is ugly and I saw little that indicated taste of any kind in architecture, material, clothing or music'—although he did have a good word for the mosques. He was assigned a comfortable two-storey house with an acre of ground with a masjid and understood that the whole property had cost 150 riyals. As a soldier received 2½ Maria Theresa dollars a month this was not an insubstantial sum by local standards. Soon afterwards Frau Weiss-Sonnenberg accompanied her Ambassador husband to a city of which the facades reminded her of Venice, but it was difficult to see the siq because of the crowded crowds. She complained that she was compelled to wear a veil and always to walk twenty paces or more behind her husband.

In the 1920s and 1930s relations between the Imam and the British were seldom cordial and there was a very considerable increase in Italian influence. In 1926 the Italians flew the first aircraft into San`a` and shortly afterwards the mechanic Romolo Cipressi started to run the arsenal and supervise such engineering projects as existed. By 1938 Italy had seven diplomats and twelve doctors in the country while Britain had only an Adeni clerk at projects as existed. By 1938 Italy had seven diplomats and twelve doctors in the country while Britain had only an Adeni clerk at

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Western Accounts of San`a' 1510-1962

151
San`ā'-An Arabian Islamic City

Fig. 9.1 Von Wissmann’s map of San`ā


- Mosques: a Sana`at al-Jadid, b Sana`at al-Qa`it, c Sana`at al-Hazeb and Sana`at al-Ari, d Hammam al-Qa`it (Saba`), e Hammam al-Maydan, f Turkish coffee-shop, g Hammam al-Suq, h school, i Palace once an Imams’ castle, j Dar al-Safi, k Qubbat al-`Arj (Barzan), 34 al-Abhar, 35 al-Jami` al-Kabir, 36 al-Rudwan, 37 al-Tawus, 38 Mahmud, 39 al-Jadid, 40 al-Urd, 41 Sha`ub/Shu`ub, 42 small tomb-mosque, 43 mosque.

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In the winter of 1933/4 the American anthropologist Carleton S. Coon spent some weeks in San`a', where the Imam permitted him to measure the heads of his soldiers. The party was billeted upon a wealthy Jew (who, he averred, had to meet all its expenses) and was told that this was the normal practice; the city was too sacred to be contaminated by the night-time presence of Christians. The European community he counted as six Italians, five Russians and two Germans. He saw two caged leopards and a hyena in the Imam's gardens and the small basement room which served as the National Museum. He returned with tales of tribes near San`a' which worshipped black heifers paraded with their horns garlanded, fire-jumping ceremonies and even human sacrifice!

Renewed negotiations for an Anglo-Yemeni Treaty in 1934 brought several official British visitors to San`a'. Harold Ingrams was reminded of the Black Country by the sight of the city in rain: the minarets resembled factory chimneys. He thought it 'the greatest Arab city I had seen unspoiled by European influence.'

Colonel Maurice Lake had difficulties because he did not know the Yemeni national anthem and could not recognise 'God Save the King' played by the Army Band—indeed the only tune that sounded familiar was 'Pop Goes the Weasel'. Lord Belhaven discussed on the affairs of the ghetto. The European community he counted as six Italians, five Russians and two Germans. He saw two caged leopards and a hyena in the Imam's gardens and the small basement room which served as the National Museum. He returned with tales of tribes near San`a' which worshipped black heifers paraded with their horns garlanded, fire-jumping ceremonies and even human sacrifice!

Another visitor about this time who felt that 'Sanaa belongs to that limited number of cities which does not disappoint on closer acquaintance' was Hans Helfritz—a wildly romantic and rather absurd tourist who seems to have understood little Arabic. He continued, With its large squares, its broad straight street bordered with a succession of palaces, four, five or six storeys high, it has nothing in common with those familiar Arabian cities with their maze of narrow alleys.' From afar he thought that the city resembled a wasp with its narrow waist. He calculated that it contained 50,000 inhabitants, 48 mosques, 39 synagogues, 8 gates and 12 public baths.

He greatly admired the architecture which he felt that millenia had not changed. 'The lower part of (the) houses is built of stone, granite, green basalt or reddish and yellowish sandstone. The upper part . . . is of mud. The skillfulness of the constructor is astonishing . . . Usually a loggia topped with brass and open all sides rises from the actual roof.' The decoration reminded him of the Alhambra and he wondered if Yemeni architects might have had a hand in that. Through the slabs ter windows 'a soft, dusky-like, most soothing light pervades the house.' Helfritz claims to have made more than a hundred records of Yemeni singing while in San`a'. Two more of his statements might equally well be fact or fiction; he says that a visiting Greek who had relations with an Arab woman was returned to the coast laden with chains on the back of a mule and that a man, in the presence of the Imam, shot one who had insulted him; the ricochet of his bullet hit two others, and he was acquitted of the crime because he, like the hero of a cowboy film, was evidently under the special protection of Allah.

In the late 1930's there was a team of Scottish missionary doctors resident in San`a'. One of them, Dr Petrie, wrote some accounts of the city which do not merit quotation. Much more important was the representative of the Natural History Museum in South Kensington, Hugh Scott, who spent some time in the Yemen in 1937-8. He found that tradition still demanded that he should wear a kalpak, Turkish style, when visiting senior officials. He learned that Bâb al-Salâb had recently been demolished and moved a few yards further to the West. There was now a great space fronting Bâb al-Qaṣr—a great gateway flanked with towers.

If one bent on seeing the life start from Bir al-`Azab on a walk through old Sanaa, he must first cross the Burjet Sherara, the broad open space used as a parade-ground, where as like as not soldiers are drilling: he must go through the Bâb al-Salâb and pass the small domed mosque outside the palace where the Imam daily performs his private devotions. Straight in front is a broad street of shops, the Harat an Nahrein, running east from the entry through the old walls as far as the dry flood-bed. If a less crowded thoroughfare is preferred, turn off on the south side along a narrow street which curves round to touch the dry watercourse at a point farther south. This quieter way and the streets opening off it on either hand lie between tall houses where there is much ground occupied by walled-in gardens, even within the old city walls, one side of the said . . . Nearly all the forty-four mosques of the capital are in the old city, and most stand in the crowded quarters east of the water-course. More than twenty minarets rear their heads towards the sky. Charming glimpses of them appear in most cramped and unexpected places.

A little east of Al-Abhar and the 'square', a double right-angled turn opens into a space in front of the Great Mosque. In this great building the Imam is wont to lead the garrison, as spiritual head of his people, at the Friday prayers. But, though the vast oblong measures about 197 feet from south-west to north-east and nearly 214 from south-east to north-west, it has little to show outside but blank walls. On the south-west and south-east sides it is separated from all houses only by narrow lanes. On the north-east, towards the site of pre-Islamic Ghurmûn and the present citadel, there is a wider street. But only on the north-west where is the broad oblong space called Waqf, can the famous sanctuary be viewed at all satisfactorily. For, though al-Jâmi` al-Kabîr is in many parts of its structure rough and plain, lacking the more delicate finish and elaborate ornament of the smaller mosques, it is one of the oldest and most venerable buildings in the Muhammadan world. It preserves the primitive form of an open courtyard surrounded by covered spaces, the roofs of which are borne by rows of columns and arches. There are three rows spaced on three sides of the building, and five rows of columns in the broader covered space on the north-west side, in which is the Mihrâb, giving the direction of Mecca. The pillars number about 177 in all. Happy is a non-Muslim if he catch a passing glimpse of these columned halls through one or other of the nine open doors in the side and back walls.

Western Accounts of San`a' 1510-1962

9.4 The palace of the Imam in San`a', as a photograph taken before 1962.
of the mosque (the tenth door in use, in the middle of the front or north-west wall, is said to be only opened for the Imam). The twin minarets, roughly finished and whitewashed, stand shining when viewed from outside the city but are difficult to see near at hand. They are placed far towards the back (south-east) of the building, unsymmetrically, one rising from the outer wall on the south-west side, the other from the eastern corner of the courtyard.

A perennial stream, flowing through the city from south to north, on the west side of the dry sayl, is covered in throughout its course within the walls, except in the palace precincts. Bin al-`Azab consists mainly of large houses, often adorned with ibex horns for luck. There are numerous wells, the exacting of which resembled the cries of seagulls.

Scott was fortunate to see the Imam going out to lead the 1'd prayers at the Mashhad Shu'lub, a vast quadrangular enclosure open to the sky with battlemented walls and a low square tower. He rode in a huge old four-wheeler with an attendant twirling a bright orange umbrella, some eight feet across, walking by its side. The procession was headed by yellow-coated boys from the Orphan School and some 6,000 troops took part.

Early in 1940 Freya Stark went to San`a', the European population of which was two British doctors, two Germans, a Dane, about six Italians and some Greeks. As it was wartime she took notice of the military establishment, putting the garrison at 5,000 men, who were paid six riyals a month. The purpose of Miss Stark's visit was to show propaganda films which she did among the harems. She met the two wives of the Imam, who lived 'as sisters' in separate but connected palaces with their husband moving between them.

During the war the British doctors left the Yemen and some time later were replaced by ones from France. The widow of one of these, Mme Louise Ferrier wrote an account of her experiences from the summer of 1947 up to and including the siege of the city by the Imam Ahmad. She had a house in Bir al-`Azab with European furniture, a mafraj in the garden and floors of beaten earth which her servant cleaned by sprinkling horse manure and sweeping it up with the dust. Their windows had to be kept shut because women nearby collected and made into 'cakes' human excrement for the baths. There was electricity only in the Palace and that was scarcely strong enough to light a bulb. Al-Maqqam al-Sharif consisted of two buildings separated by a park containing lions and oryx. The Imam lived in one with an old door painted with ibex horns for luck. There are numerous wells, the creaking of which resembled the cries of seagulls.

Dr Fayein recounts that while she was in the city part of the walls was destroyed by the rains. Tradition demanded that the repairs should be paid for by the butchers so when the money was demanded from them they illegally raised the price of meat. Their leaders were arrested and the remainder went on strike. Finally the Viceroy gave way and himself paid for the repairs; the butchers' leaders were released: the price of meat did not come down.

Much has been said of the external beauty of the houses of San`a' and one may perhaps conclude with an account of the tribulations of living in one of the very grandest: the mansion of the Imam al-Badr, known as Dar al-Bashar. The United Nations Peace-Keeper, General von Horn, thought that it must have been built exclusively for dwarfs. 'Loud cries and floods of curses invariably heralded movement from one room to another... The steps were built so high that one progressed only at the cost of sharply lifted knees. The window-sills were even higher—as though specially built to prevent the inhabitants from looking out.' However the house was equipped with a row of four bathrooms, which appeared to share the same water. 'As soon as I had had a bath in number one and the water had gurgled down the plughole, it somehow mysteriously contrived to reappear to fill the bath-tub in number two. This spontaneous process then duplicated itself down the line until in desperation, the user of number four had to sit on his bath plug to prevent a flow of excessively soapy water welling up into his tub.'

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Green, Benjamin. Rid. Green's account has never been printed in full but all relevant to San`a' is quoted. The original Ms. is in the record of the Tenh Voyages in the India Office Library.

Chapter 10
The Urban Development of San'ā’

Introduction

Archaeological excavation in San’ā’ has not, so far, been possible. Its urban growth can therefore be conjectured from the not infrequently equivocal literary evidence, the few inscriptions known to refer to the city and the sparse assistance provided by excavations for foundations, pipes and cables. Among other kinds of evidence are topography, street pattern, type of house, level of streets etc. Dr. Lewcock was permitted a brief visit to the citadel (Qasr al-Silâh) but only a thorough examination of it from the inside might help towards establishing its architectural history. This is a serious gap in our researches on San’ā’. For these reasons our suggestions are tentative and open to modification should fresh evidence become available.

The pre-Islamic inscriptions are discussed by Professor Beeston in an earlier chapter. To recapitulate his findings, San’ā’, by some time in the 3rd century A.D. was a mahram1 and a military station should fresh evidence become available. These reasons our suggestions are tentative and open to modification should fresh evidence become available.

The Literary Evidence

Ghumdân

No topographical details seem to figure in Arabic writing on San’ā’ (at least in those authors consulted) before the first half of the 3rd century. On the other hand, although there is an accretion of legend, certain details of these accounts are confirmed from the inscriptions, and third century writers drew on earlier sources and in all probability on a living tradition.

The first Arabic author to describe San’ā’ with some degree of precision is the geographer Ibn Rustah,2 writing in Ifâlah not earlier than 290/903 but presumably drawing on earlier sources. He speaks of the fortress (qal’âh) called Ghumdân close to the Jâmi’ Mosque, built on a rock foundation.3 Inside this fortress is the well of San b. Nûh (Shem son of Noah)—this is to be understood as meaning simply that it was traditionally the oldest well in the city. Husayn al-‘Amri identifies it as the well existing today on the eastern side of the Jâmi’ at the shops (hâzâmi’) lying east of it.4 Al-Râzi says it is under Ghumdân, opposite the first door of the San’â’ Mosque and is called Karamah; it is used for drinking but is brackish.5 Al-Handamî writing probably a little later than Ibn Rustah, but it must be assumed, with access to more and very likely better written sources and direct oral tradition, states that the first and oldest of the castles (mâhâfîd and qusûr) is Ghumdân;6 then follow others, including Sîlîn. He quotes the pre-Islamic poet ‘Alqamah as speaking of both Ghumdân and Sîlîn as ruins,’7 but Ghumdân, in the Islamic period alone, was fairly frequently destroyed and subsequently rebuilt.8 Of the ancient side (khadd)9 of Ghumdân there remains a section/field of amazing, tangled (mutulâhîk) ruin opposite the first and second of the eastern doors of the Jâmi’.9 The rest of Ghumdân is a great tell10 like a mountain and much of what is around it is of the dwellings of the San’â’ins. Of it is a house/room (bayt),12 and on its tell Ibn Fa’dl al-Qurramî fortified himself when he entered San’â’ and he came to the Mosque, took possession of San’â’ and fell upon its ruler (sultân) and inhabitants.11 A verse of al-Handamî (the author)14 might be considered as referring to a supply of water of the ghazy type, if in fact it refers to Ghumdân of San’â’. ‘Its waters, their channels murmur, a flowing source drinking at which never fails

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1 Mahram can also mean a sacred enclave. Cf. pp. 37a, 39b, 40b.
2 Kiûl, al-Qa‘a‘ af-rânî, Liber romanum et regnum, ed. M. J., de Goeje, B.G.A., Leiden, 1892. VII. 109-13. Ibn Rustah is known to have been in Hijaz in 292/903 and probably had access to reliable informants.
3 Cf. al-Râzi, infra p. 126. Ibid., 75, says it was built on the rock which is on the base (ṣâf) of Ghumdân. One version, ibid, 77, says it was built between al-Qa‘a‘ al-Mumlâmam al-Khadrâ’ and Ghumdân up to Ghumdân. This rock was also said to be in Zaqqû Bani Thumâtan.13
4 Cf. index to Ahmad b. al-Jabbâr Zakkâr, Damascus, 1974, 556.
5 Ibid., 17.
8 Ibid., 15. Dusty, Supplement, citing from Ibn Khaldûn, gives khadd the sense of wall (of a fortress). Al-Râzi, op. cit., 16, alludes to ‘Alqamah Ghumdân as the site upon which Sân b. Nûh built. A harrah is a stony tract of ground. Perhaps khadd is a corrupt reading.
9 Cf. Shams al-‘uliim, op. cit., 81, 108, nûhûn ta‘âbîha bâyân fihi min shuqûgi, marble without cracks. This word appears in a verse by al-Handamî in Feth VIII, op. cit., 16, referring to the rock in the side (gîrî) of Ghumdân.
10 Ibid., 7, if al-‘Amri’s reading be accepted, says ‘Bagiya min ba ‘d hilâni-hi l-mahârib al-mugâbilah li-abwâb al-ja‘âr.’
12 The bayt might be a temple, but this statement is obscure.
14 Feth VIII, op. cit., 17.
to satisfy (wa-miyâhu-hu qamamân-hâ tatahaddaru, yanbâ‘u `ayn-in lâ yuqarrâdû shurbu-kât).’ Al-Qasabah was Abû Sharah b. Yahdab who was the king (malik) of Ghumdân. 16 One of the Mss. has, correctly, Ilisharah b. Yahdab.

Al-Râzi 17 (ob. 460/1068), drawing on a chain of Traditions going back to the first century of the Hijrah, says, ‘The first stone laid upon stone in the Yemen was Ghumdân—Sharâhil 18 the Himyari built it. A thousand years after him Ilisharah Yandab built al-Qasabah.’ Al-Râzi 19 quotes Tradition that the Prophet ordered Ghumdân to be demolished; or this took place in the days of Abû Bakr or ‘Uthmân. He adds, ‘It is said that the generality (‘ammah) of the construction of the Qasabah of San‘â‘ was constructed with the debris of Ghumdân only.’


In brief, then, both the inscriptional and literary references point to Ghumdân as the original nucleus of the city in approximately the three to four centuries before Islam. Over several centuries of the Islamic era the historians seem to indicate that the Ghumdân site was occasionally fortified, dismantled, and re-fortified.

Qasr al-Qalis

The eastern point of contemporary San‘â‘ is formed by a roughly oblong citadel on a foothill, part of the lower slope of Jabal Nuqum, commanding the rest of the city (plate 1), much of the stonework of which is of comparatively recent date. This upper citadel is linked with the lower citadel to the west of a fortified corridor. On each side of the upper portion is a circular tower (nawbah), the two serving as bastions incorporated in the fortifications. The stonework of these two towers is of the same type as that of the lower stonework of Bâb al-Sitrân (The Gate of Columns), opening to the south. All are constructed of large hewn stones fitted together with fine joints. It is suggested that they belong to a class of pre-Islamic Sabean structures, to take a case in point, like certain of those at Dawram/Taybah overlooking Wâdi Dahr. 20 Bâb al-Sitrân has a well-protected bent gateway—one enters between two outer bastions into a passage to the left from which one has to turn to the right to enter the citadel. Such a skewed entry is typical of other ancient cities in south Arabia including the city gates of Sa‘dah and Naqab al-Hajar (in the latter case first to the right then left).

Al-Hamdânî alludes to al-Qalis, a descendant of Ilisharah, to whom Qasr al-Qalis is attributed, and Nashwân b. Sa‘d 21 (ob. 573/1177) states that al-Qalis was a qasr in San‘â‘ which belonged to the kings of Hämâyir—then Abrahah al-Habashi dwelt there after that. Two Islamic histories 22 contain a poem on a medieval battle at Qasr al-Qalis which Mudrîk b. Hâtim won over the Zayjâd about the end of the first quarter of the 7th/13th century. In commenting on the verses of Ājîbî b. ‘Isâ al-Râsi (which he took down from one of the Abnâ‘) al-Hamdânî 23 states that Ghumdân and al-Qalis are two forresses (mahjûdîn) in San‘â‘. The verse itself says that Tubba‘ and Bilqis built them, but al-Hamdânî quotes a variant that Yâhidh Sharâhil and Bilqis built them.

It is strange that al-Hamdânî (in such of his writings as are extant) does not comment on Qalis the eponym, and Qalis Abrahah’s church. The explanation that suggests itself for the conundrum of Qalis = church and eponym, is that the eastern fortification was known by, say, 250 H., or even before Islam, possibly some time after Abrahah (ob. 567-70 A.D.) constructed his church, as Qasr al-Qalis in order to distinguish it from Qasr Ghumdân. Qalis as a person has every appearance of being purely legendary. The existence of the eastern Qasr as a pre-Islamic fortification, though of lesser fame than Ghumdân, then, is credited by Yemenis of the 3rd/9th century.

A verse of Tharâlah b. ‘Amîr 24 would appear to refer to the garrisoning of Ghumdân also, by the Abyssinian invaders:

Were I in Ghumdân, there guarding its gate
Men of the Abyssinians and a snake, familiar. 25

The Jabbânah north of San‘â‘ was to be built on the site of the camp of the Abyssinians on a field (jardîb) which had come into the possession of an Abnâ‘ family. It is then evident from the Arabic sources that these points were garrisoned by the Abyssinians, the two fortresses and an advanced outpost to defend San‘â‘ from attacks from the north. All three would be taken over by the Persian Abnâ‘. When the Yemeni prophet al-Aswad al-‘Amsî who had occupied San‘â‘ in opposition to the Abnâ‘ and other supporters of Muhammed, was assassinated there in 11/632 there was, according to al-Balâdhuri, 26 a town wall (sur al-madinah). The murderers entered al-Aswad’s house by an irrigation channel (jadwal) according to some traditions—this immediately calls to mind the likelihood that it would be a qandâ‘iyyah.

16 Ibid, 24.
18 Sharâhil is of course the same as Ilisharah which latter is written as two words by al-Râzi. A verse in him VIII, 17, has Dâ‘i Sharâhil.
19 Ikhil II, 86, states that in a manuscript or Himyari inscription, of Na‘îla it is recorded that ‘Amsî Yâhidh Dâ‘i Ghumdân a descendant of Ilisharah was the first to begin the tashyid (building finely and strongly and rising high) of Ghumdân after its ancient construction.
20 Ibid, 218. He mentions (p. 202) talismanic stones which were on the first ancient Gate of San‘â‘ (Bâb al-madinat San‘â‘) advanced in the place known as al-Qasabah.
22 Ikhil II, 86-7, Die auf Südarabien Bezüglichen Angaben Naswân’s in Sams al-
San'a—An Arabian Islamic City

10.1 Qasr al-Silsâl, the citadel on the east of San'a'. The highest point of the Qasr is at the top of the picture. A narrow linking passageway runs down to the lower section of the Qasr at the bottom of the photograph.

10.2 Qasr al-Silsâl. Another bastion of the same type on the eastern side of the upper citadel.

10.3 Qasr al-Silsâl. Bih al-Sitarin from the outside.

The Districts al-Qa'î and al-Sîrâr

By the 3rd/9th century San'a' was divided into two districts, seemingly controlled by the Abnâ', of Persia, in the east and by the Arab Banû Shihâb in the west. These are known as al-Qa'î and al-Sîrâr respectively, the names persisting to the present day though oddly enough they are not used by al-Hamdâni. The latter tells us that 'the origin of those of the Banû Shihâb who settled in San'a' and in the East (Mashriq) is from Sa'dah. They went to the Al Dhi Yazan to aid and support them, and Hîmyar gave them as fief (aqsa'at-hum, or "assigned them") those fertile lands they have at Azâl (San'a'), and what is around it, of which are Bayt Sibtân/Sabatân with its river (nahr, perhaps a ghayl?) and farms (diyâ'). The nahr was a permanent stream. He adds that they possess most of Hâql San'a', including Maydân 'Abbad b. al-Ghamr and other

30 The Mashriq is the area approximately east of a line drawn from San'a' to Sa'dah. Al-Akwa' says it is Khawlân al-'Aliyah and part of Sinhân.
31 Hâql San'a' is said to be the Bir al-'Azab area.
32 'Abbad b. al-Ghamr al-Shihâbi was contemporary with the 'Abbasid governor, Ibn Barrih—cf. Iklil I, op. cit., 414 seq.
Qasr al-Silâh, seen across the rooftops of the city. The central bastion, which is actually a complete circular construction, is composed of giant boulders cleverly fitted together in a kind of stonework which is as ancient as any in the city. It almost certainly predates the 5th/11th century.

A sarâr is the wadi-bottom and best part of it and good fertile ground (bain al-wâdi wa-ayâbu-hu wa-ma tàba min al-ard wa-karuma). This description fits exactly al-Sirâr of Şan‘a’ and it would be natural for farming tribesmen to be settled there. Ai-Qaf’, although it seems to have no known accepted meaning, is reminiscent of gatz’ah, land subject to kharâj-tax which the ruler gives as fief. Speculative as it is, one is tempted to suggest that the district might have been a settlement assigned to the Persian Abnâ’ when they came to the aid of Sayf b. Dhi Yazan. It is said to be of the high part (`ulw) of Şan‘a’ at the Qârs and from near Bâdhân to the Yaman northwards, whereas al-Sirâr is the sift or low-lying part of the city. Bâdhân is stated to have accepted Islam in 628 A.D. Perhaps by this time the Banû Shihâb had already developed al-Sirâr to some extent, but held no strongly fortified places there comparable with Ghumdân and the Qârs. About the mid 4th/10th century al-Qâpî’ was stated to be a quarter (rub’) of Şan‘a’.

It is possibly to be envisaged that, under the Umayyad and `Abbâsid governors, Ghumdân and the Jâmi` Mosque were, perhaps with other buildings, distinct from either district, and neutral ground in the wars between the people of al-Qâpî’ and al-Sirâr in which the merchants (tujjâr) and non-arms-bearing inhabitants (du ‘a/a’) of Şan‘a’ suffered detriment. The Shihâbis of Rub’ Bani Shihâb, though once friendly with the Abnâ’, fell out with them, and on one occasion even fled from their side (shigq) of Şan‘a’, but they must have recovered since one of the Banû Shihzâb was governor in 218/833.

The poet and leading man of the Shihâbis, `Abd al-Khâliq . . . b. Mu`ammad al-Jawhar, who invited Mu`ammad b. Yu`fir to help the Shihâbis against the Abnâ’ about the mid-3rd/9th century, calls the Abnâ’ slaves (`abid) of the (pre-Islamic) qayl, Dhû Yazân—which they certainly were not, and also the low persons (safalah) of Fâris. In other verses he says of them.

Full well I know that they were born
But to buy and sell merchandise,
To [work] at [sesame]-oil presses, butcheries and tanneries.

34  Al-Qâmûs al-muhil, article srr.
35  Cf. 7 ãj al- `arûs, V, 474, citing the Prophet when he agla `a 'l-nâsa 'l-dura, i.e., accommodated them in the houses of the Ansâr. Al-Qâmûs, III, 70, says that qai`ah consisted of places (mshâlîd) in Baghdad which the Caliph al-Mansûr assigned (agta`a) to people to inhabit (li ya`marû-hâ). Cf. al-Hamdâni, Sifah, op. cit., 57, speaking of a poet to whom the `Abbâsids assigned property in Şan‘a’ (estate in the amûla`-es). According to al-Râzi, op. cit., 413, the house of the Persian Wahb b. Munabhân (latter half of the first century H.) was in al-Qâpî’.
36  Al-Râzi, 198, speaks of a Şan‘âni, ‘the door of whose house (dur) in Şan‘a’ in al-Sirâr faces al-Rahabah’, the latter north and slightly to the east of Şan‘a’.
38  Al-Râzi, op. cit., 111. One might however read tabî’ in the sense of ‘settle ment’ here as in Iklî, 402, Rab’ Bani Shihâb.
40  Al-Iklî I, 402.
41  Ibid, 372.
42  Ibid, 401.
43  Ibid, 404.
44  Cf. Al-Hamdâni, Sifah, 241. Ai-Radâ`i (Al-Hamdâni, Sifah, 58) mentions another Şan‘âni poet who used to satirize al-sûgah wa-`l-suggâl, the subjects (perhaps here, pace Lane, the people of the migli) and of low standing.
45  Mâlqir wa-ma`ajir wa-masâlikh.
That annoy their neighbour, and to weave mulā‘ahī. 46

From these lines it is clear that by this time the San`anis who called themselves Abnā‘ were traders and craftsmen in the Market and possibly tanners along the banks of the Sā’ilah, as Ibn Rustah describes. Since `Abd al-Khâliq, with true tribal hauteur, despises trade and handicrafts, it may be that the Shiḥābis still continued as tribal farmers as opposed to the Abnā‘ burgheurs. Whether the Market was considered part of al-Qājī, or was directly under protection of the current rulers at Ghumdân, we have no indication. 47

At this point it is appropriate to introduce Ibn Rustah’s account of Şanʻā’ which can be taken as applying to the latter half of the 3rd/9th century.

Ibn Rustah’s Description of the City of Şanʻā’

It is the city of the Yemen—there not being found in the (highland) Yemen, or the Thīmah or the Hijaz, a city greater, more populous or prosperous, of nobler origin or more delicious food than it. It is an inland highland city with a temperate climate; throughout the year the fragrance of its air is spring-like (rābī‘), being temperate and good. The same bedding is laid out in a room (makān) and is not moved from that room for years on end because of either heat or cold.

Wheat (qirrāt) with them ripens twice a year, barley and rice 48 thrice or (even) four times. Some of their fruits and grapes also ripen twice a year. Şanʻā’ is, then, a populous city, with fine dwellings, some above others, but most of them are decorated (muzawwagah) with plaster (juss), burned brick (âjurr) and dressed stones. Some have their foundations (asās) of plaster and burned brick and the rest of fine dressed stones; some have a ground-floor (ari) constructed of plaster and burned brick, some with plaster [only]. Most of their roofs are covered with pebbles (ṣarī) 49 because of its abundant rains.

Its rains fall at predictable times—of this they have prognostications in which they never err. During the summer (javāf) months they have rains for one month, and from autumn

46 Pl. muš`ī, defined by Lane as two oblong pieces of cloth sewn together to cover the body—just as indeed one may see today in south Arabia.
47 Ahmed Ḥanṣam Sharaf al-Dīn, al-Yaman ʻabr al-tārikh, Cairo, 1382/1963, 209, maintains that Ḥarâr al-Sīrār is in the middle of Şanʻā’ and used to include the Dāwād, Filayṣṭī and Abhar Quarters, but he does not include the Sāq Quarter in it.
48 It is unlikely that rice was ever cultivated in Şanʻā’. It is sown in Ḥaraz, Bura‘ and al-Libb according to Hughart al-Sa’ilānī (The cultivation of cereals in mediaeval Yemen, Arabian Studies, Cambridge-London, 1974, 1, 53).
49 Clearly a reference to qalād, cf. p. 479b seq.
In ancient times the [San`ânis] had no wall (sûr),51 but one was introduced after the rebellion (fitnah) of Ibn Yu`fir,52 their king. Their town has a street (shâri`53) splitting it into two halves and penetrating through to a wadi in which the floods (sayûl) flow on the days of rain, as broad as, or somewhat less, than the Tigris, it being called al-Sirâr54—on both of its banks are establishments (qusûr)55 built of plaster, burned brick and stone—most of these establishments belong to the tanners (dabbâgh)—the entrance to the alleys (ziqqah) of the town also opens out onto it. Its market is in an area (nâhiyah) close to the north side of it (qibli-hã)56 and part of this street. Each of its (of San`â) or its

50 Unless there has been a drastic change in the weather there is certainly little or no rain in Kharif (23 September to 22 December).
52 Yu`fir rebelled in 247/861 and made himself master of San`a'. His son Muhammad was recognized by the `Abbasid Caliph as governor of San`â in 259/873.
53 The street would be that which runs from about Sûq al-Halagah to the present day bridge across the Sâ'ilah. Is it to be identified with Sikkat al-Shihâbiyyin of Sirat al-Hâdi, 390 (cf. n. 97)?
54 Ibn Khurdâdhbah, op. cit., 136, writing about 250/864 says, `San`a'T's wadi

split it (reading yanqaggu-hã for yanqaggu-hû), flowing when the rain comes in the months of summer (cayf) and pouring into Saywân so that becomes like a lake (buhayrah). Sayyid Ahmad al-Shâmi informs me that at one time great pools used to form when there were heavy floods, at the Sharârah area. For Saywân some writers read Sanwân.
55 Dozy, Supplément, qasr = salle, cenaculum, pavilion, etc.
56 Assuming the San`â Sûq stands today more or less where it was in Ibn Rustah's time this places much of the north of present-day walled San`â outside the 3rd/9th century northern wall.
57 It is suggested that at old San`â today has no doors or gates to lanes in the Sûq, that bab does not have the sense of gate in this context.
stone and plaster. It is a large mosque and the fugaha of that district mention that this mosque was built by command of the Apostle of God during his life-time, and that, on the site of the mihrāb (prayer-niche), is the grave of one of the prophets58 which used to be venerated in times past before the construction of this Mosque for that reason, and that one of the Companions of the Prophet was in charge of the construction of it. Facing al-Masjid al-Jami', and about ten cubits (dhūrat) from it in proximity, to it is a fortress (qal'ah) the foundation of which is of rock,59 it being known as Ghumdān, the seat of the Tuba's. Sām b. Nūh (Shem son of Noah) built it, and their fugaha' mention that it was the first building to be built after the Flood, its elevation (samk) being extremely high. Most of the area around it has been reduced to rubble and the stones taken from it have been re-used, so that some of them say that the quantity of stone extracted from it rendered it unnecessary to transport stone to that place from elsewhere.60

In this fortress is a well from which water is drawn right up to the present day and they say that it is the well of Sām b. Nūh. There is a second well there, that in which a Muslim was found murdered during the Caliphate of 'Umar. Seven persons took part in killing this man, and 'Umar had them all put to death in retaliation for him. 'Umar declared, 'Were the (whole) population involved in killing him I should slay them in retaliation for him.' This is a well-known Tradition which has twenty-two muezzins all of whom perform the call to prayer each (time of) prayer, one following the other, except in the particular case of the sunset prayer. Then they begin with one voice to pronounce the iqāmah while they are walking from the minaret (marār) to the row (taff) of those at prayer, and by the time they reach the row they have completed pronouncing the iqāmah.

In each of their dwellings is a well from which drinking water is drawn—the well water is preferred to the water of the running sources61 they have. One of their fugaha' described how he weighed a little water from their wells against a similar amount of Tigris water and found the well lighter than the Tigris water. Near almost every one of the mosques is a drinking place (musharáh) containing water for the passer-by (li-'l-sabil), a well known as Ghumdān, the seat of the Tubba's. Sām b. Nūh (Shem son of Noah) built it, and their fugaha' mention that it was the first building to be built after the Flood, its elevation (samk) being extremely high. Most of the area around it has been reduced to rubble and the stones taken from it have been re-used, so that some of them say that the quantity of stone extracted from it rendered it unnecessary to transport stone to that place from elsewhere.60

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It is a great arch (iṣār)63 constructed (ṣagīda) of stone in the vicinity of the butcher's64—the people of Sān`ā' say that at this place sixteen prophets were slaughtered in ancient times. Their grain is husked wheat (ṣāmu` hum al-burr al-naqyyah)65 and 'alās66 which resembles wheat (ṣāmu`) except that it feels thinner than wheat in ears not resembling the ears of wheat. They are enclosed in two husks, one being the husk of what is enclosed in the ear, and the other a husk something like rice-husks. It is hulled of its husk, ground and made into bread, its flavour being found nicer than that of wheaten bread.

There are also produce various kinds of apples, barqiyah, i.e. mishmiq (apricot), various kinds of peaches (frik), i.e. khawakh (peaches), kinds of pear (ṣiyāj)67 not to be found in Khurāsān and many other varieties of pear (kummatr) as well. They have, as they maintain, almost seventy varieties of grapes,68 and palms in their villages but not in their capital (gaqibāt). They have bananas69 in quantity in every place ripening with them every forty days—their fruit is (then) cut, yet the cropping never ceases! They have also tender beans (baqlā),70 sugar-cane, walnuts, almonds, pistachios, pomegranates, figs, quinces, fine unsweet melons eaten with sugar, cucumbers (qishtā) and various sorts of vegetables. Citrons (ṣūr)71 they have, plentiful, large and sweet to taste. They also have sweet smelling herbs (rāyāh), of various kinds, roses, jasmine, narcissus, and varieties of lily (sawzan) sometimes all are found (flowering) at the same time. They also have much honey. Bee's (lājim al-baqar) they prefer to the meet of plump sheep (al-da`n al-samin), all being bought at the same price.72

From them are imported leather, sandals of unscraped skins (ni`āl musha`arah),73 leather mats, the valuable striped material (barād), a cloth of a single colour (muqarz), and cloaks (ardiyah),74 a cloth of band fetching five hundred dinars with them. (They also export) different kinds of bezelstones (fiqā), Baqarānī and Sa`wāt75 vessels, onyx (jaz), various kinds of beads (kharāz) a bezel stone of Baqarānī can cost one hundred dinars or more. They have a market on its own in which only mismār-flutes are sold—these they tie into bundles and arrange in their shops (hawānīt). They have many khānqahs and places in which many people making vessels of onyx and various kinds of beads (kharāz). None of their mosques possesses a courtyard (rahabah) except al-Masjīd al-Jami'. Their leading men (ṣiyākat) are people descended from Sayf b. Dhi Yazan,76 men of the highest rank and nobility, in which they surpass the leading men of the other districts; they are a people (qawām) who [in their origins] go back to liberality and generosity/nobility (karam).

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Their mutton and beef have a special quality, which is that they do not cook except over hot coals—fuel heats them without cooking them.  

Their landed properties are of the most splendid kind with the most abundant fruit and finest state of cultivation. These are of three categories—one of which is rain-land; another drawing its water from springs and one from wells from which water is drawn by camels and oxen, and one, the finest and most highly valued, depends upon water from the dam (al-sādī). The dam is a barrier which has been constructed at the mouth of mountains surrounding places near their landed properties. At the lower parts of that dam they have set up outlets (asfāhān) from which they make the water run in rivers (amhar) that they have excavated, to their landed properties.

Before the governorship of Ibn Yu'fir their villages were tithe-land (tāhiriyah), but then Ibn Yu'fir, instead of that, assessed them as due to pay two hundred thousand dinars. 88

The people of the town (balad) carry out their transactions in muqarran dinars and rudayn dirhams, and coppers (fullāt). The rate of exchange 86 of the dirham sometimes rises from sixty to a hundred to the dinar, and coppers are twenty-four to a dirham, the weight of each dirham being a sixth of a dirham [weight]. 87

They have large pumpkins (gārāb) each like a large jar sold cut up, by the maund (ma'am)—the bigger they are the tenderer.

Their women are free women (baṭārīn). 89 They speak all day during the day-time to attend to their wants and gather in the salons of the fujârah and others after the prayer of nightfall (al-'atamāh) until the time when the drum set up on Ghumdân is beaten. The people of the town hear this, and whoever is found after that sound of the drum out of doors is not intercepted, but anyone found after that is put in prison and punished.

`Shî’ism (rashayya)` 90 is the predominant article of faith by most of its inhabitants and the rest of the Yemen, and their most frequent oath is that they say, ‘By the right (ḥaqq) of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali.’

Though al-Maqqâl, 91 who wrote in 375/985 actually visited the Yemen he says less about it than Ibn Rustah. ‘San`a’ is the capital city (qaṣṣab) of the north (nāṣ) of the Yemen. It has Mashāyiḥik the like of whom I have not seen in all the Yemen with regard to presence/appearance and intellect. Moreover it is an ample town (balad ẓād) abounding in fruits, with cheap prices, good bread (akhbaz) and profitable trades (tijarat), larger than Zabīd. The port of San`a` and Ṣa`dah is `Aththār.

**Fortifications in Ṣan`a’ from the Late 3rd/9th Century**

The historical references to the walls and other fortifications in Ṣan`a` from the late 3rd/9th century are bedevilled by a lack of topographical precision and the ambiguity of certain terms they employ. In the first place when they allude to Ghumān they cannot be absolutely sure that they mean the traditional site by the Jāmi` Mosque or the eastern fortifications now known as Qasr al-Sā`āl. Niebuhr about the 2nd/18th century calls the Qasr al-Sā`āl by the name Ghumān (the modern pronunciation, not Ghumān). It is possible that for some indefinite period before Niebuhr Ṣan`ā`nīs had come to apply the name Ghumān to the Qasr al-Sā`āl though there is still a living tradition that Ghumān is applied to the area east of the Jāmi`.

According to al-Rāzī, 92 when Ibn Yu’fir pulled up the Qasr and uncovered it, he found the construction of its foundation (aṣās) was on a mountain/hill (jabal), as I have heard. ‘Assuming he means Muhammad b. Yu’fir, recognised by the `Abbāsids as governor in 259/871-2, who (re-)built Ṣan`ā` wall, the Qasr in question should be Ghumān since Ibn Rustah says Ghumān was a fortress (qal`ah) existing at this time. It could however be the eastern fortified enceinte which now forms part of the present-day Qasr al-Sā`āl.

**Imām al-Hādī’s Maneuvers In and Around Ṣan`a’**  
To Ṣan`a` city, doubtless much as described by Ibn Rustah, came the first Ṣaydī Imām, al-Hādī ila’l-Haqq, and the account of his battles 93 there supplies important topographical details though it is not easy to interpret them.

Al-Hādī entered Ṣan`a` on a Friday in Muḥarram 288/January 901. 94 He proceeded to the Jāmi` Mosque for the Friday Prayer, and while he was so engaged his enemies came from al-Sūr north east of Ṣan`a`. There was a disturbance at Darb al-Jabbān—quarter (?) of the Jabbānah or Musallâ north east of the city. It was founded in the Prophet’s time and, later, the ‘Abbāsid governors had residences there—it appears to be a separate enclave. Some soldiers had already come from it against the Darb while al-Hādī was still at the Prayer. Whether this last-named Darb means the walls, a city-quarter or a fort, it is probably to be located at the Ṣa`dī Quarter of Upper Ṣan`a`. Perhaps it was the lower citadel. Fighting broke out near al-Hādī’s house but he drove out his opponents and killed some at the Jabbānah. Subsequently he despatched against Ghumān south east of Ṣan`a` was our-flanked and driven back on Jabal Nuqum, but al-Hādī came from Ṣan`a` to ‘Alīb and chased away his enemies there.

The enemy returned, camped and massed at the foot (ṣāf) of Nuqum. Al-Hādī issued forth from Darb al-Qajāt 95 and battled with them but was unable to dislodge them from Nuqum. The enemy massed again and entered al-Qaryāh from (min) Darb al-Qajāt. 96 This is probably to be interpreted as an entrance from the south side of the Ṣa`dī Wall or Quarter of Ṣan`a`, and penetration to al-Qaryāh lying probably on the high ground between the present-day Qasr al-Sā`āl and Nuqum mountain, now called Zahr al-Himār. Al-Hādī came out to meet the enemy, sent his son to meet them, and despatched a contingent against them from Darb al-Jabbān—quarter, and came out in person, following his son, the victory was so great that the enemy fled from the latter, and the Imam entered the city, and the people of the towns who were in alliance with the enemy and who were not strong enough to hold out, submitted themselves to him and acknowledged him as their master. This is the source for his manoeuvres.

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82 On account of the height of Ṣan`a` it is difficult to bring water to a high temperature, and therefore to stew meat.
83 For the text’s a `dhâ’ which seems totally corrupt, a `qâr, rain-lands should probably be read, as in $ifah, 199.
84 Lane says that fûhah, when talking of a rivulet, can mean `the place of its source.
85 Lane says that fûhah, when talking of a rivulet, can mean `the place of its source.
86 For the Barb of the text arf, change, rate of exchange must certainly be fixed tax for the Islamic tithe.
89 Al-Maqqâl, Aban al-`abād, Description imperi ci des Moulawi, ed. M. J. de Goeje, BGA, Leiden, 1906, III, 96, says, ‘The followers of Abû Hanifah predominate in Ṣan`a` and Ṣa`dah and the Ṣa`dah and the Sawad of Ṣan`a` there are fanatical Shï’ah (sunnis) in the hands.’ In the Yemen they used the girâ’at ‘Aim then the reading of Ibn Abî Jâdî, &c., ‘al-Muhammadi, al-Iklîl X, ed. Niebuhr about the 12th/mid-18th century calls the Jâmi` Qasr al-Silâh though there is still a living tradition that Kâ’farr, present-day Qasr al-Sā`al
92 Op. cit., 130. A variant reading for pulled up is rafa `a, raised up.
93 Ghâyat al-amani, I, 178; Sirah, op. cit., 208, is less informative.
94 Sirat al-Hadi ila’l-Hagq is the source for his manoeuvres.
95 Ghâyat al-amani, I, 178, Sirah, op. cit., 208, is less informative.
from Darb al-Qa`f.94 Darb may here again simply mean Wall or Quarter but it could be a walled fortress that would impede the enemy's penetration into the city. Al-Hâdi expelled the enemy from al-Qaryah to seek refuge in Nuqum mountain.

On ‘Id al-Fi`r while al-Hâdi was at the Muşallâ (al-Jabbanah), the enemy raided Şan’a Gate—no indication is given of which gate.95 A Yu`firid force advancing from the west reached the Maydân of Şan’a but was repulsed and al-Hâdi returned to Şan’a.

Yet once more al-Hâdi’s foes came to Nuqum and entered al-Qaryah. This time al-Hâdi despatched one contingent from Darb al-Jabbanah, another from Darb Ibn Zâmard, and himself issuing forth from Darb al-Qa`f, he expelled them from al-Qaryah. As the poet ‘Abd al-Khalâlī96 mentions Zâmard among a list of Persian Abnā’ families, the Darb Ibn Zâmard Quarter might perhaps be located on the north side of al-Qa`f, most likely within the area of the present town or lower citadel of Qâṣr al-Silâh.

The Yu`firids now attacked from the west—coming to Maydân an’ã’—no indication is given of which gate. 95 Possibly opening on to the Maydân? The attempt seems to have been to cut him off from the town. 94

Ibn Rustah describes as bisecting the city, they made for Ghumdân to the Yemen [311-12/923-25], built a drinking place (sigâyah) in ābā’id of al-Sirâr Quarter, probably the street (khâzâ’in) to mount Birash. Tûranshâh however spent only a single day in Şan’a before hurriedly leaving for the south. When ‘Ali b. Hâtim returned he rejected the advice of the Şan`anis to re-build the Darb/Sûr, only too well aware that the Ayyûbids would return to the attack. So he ordered that the demolition be completed, the razing (kand)98 of the Kharâdiq and the destruction of Şan’a Wall (Sûr). Again in 584/1187 ‘Ali b. Hâtim ordered Qumdân and the Wall (Sûr) of Şan’a to be destroyed (they must meanwhile have been re-built) in face of the northward advance of the Ayyûbîd Tughlatîn.99

Only a few years later Tughlatîn rebuilt the Şan’a Wall that ‘Ali b. Hâtim had destroyed and added to it on the west side, the area from the flood-bed (al-Sâ’ilah) to Bûb al-Salâbah, bringing within Şan’â’s boundaries the garden known after him as Bustân al-Salâh.100

The Yu`firids re-occupied Şan’a after the death of ‘Ali b. Faḍl al-Qarmatî in 303/915.

The geographer al-Mas`ûdî99 speaks of ‘the temple (? bayt) Ghumdân which is in Şan`â’ city in the land of the Yemen. Al-Da`bîbî built it in the name of Zuhrahah (the Planet Venus) and ‘Uthmân b. ‘Affân destroyed it. In this time of ours, i.e., 332/943-4, it is a ruin which has been demolished and become a mighty tell. The wazir ‘Ali b. Īsâ al-Jarābî, when he was exiled to the Yemen [311-12/923-25], built a drinking place (riyâyah) in it and excavated a well. I have seen Ghumdân—heaped up ruins (radâb) and a mighty tell the structure of which has fallen in (irtadam) and become a mountain of earth as if it always was [so].’ He adds that Al-Sudayr, Lord of Qa`f al-Kubîn, Lord of the Yemen provinces at the present time, thought of re-building Ghumdân but was dissuaded from this.

Al-Da`bîbî’s founding of the temple of al-Zuhrahah might be dismissed as an Iranian legend grafted on to Yemeni history, but al-Hamdânî does refer to a bayt as part of Ghumdân, in whatever way this is to be interpreted. Historians consulted give no indications regarding Ghumdân until 545/1150-51100 when the Zaydi Imâm’s troops and people of al-Sârîr came to the Maydân, took the houses of al-Qa`f11 and approached al-Darb which they besieged. The Imâm gave a banner to one of his men which he managed to plant on the topmost part of al-Darb whereupon the besieged capitulated. Al-Darb might mean the Qa`f Quarter, a wall, or more likely a fort there, but it could, less likely, also mean Ghumdân. Only five years later, in 550/1155-5,100 the Zaydi Imâm re-took Şan’a from Hâtim b. A`lmâd, after being forced to leave it, and demolished al-Darb which Ibn Hâtim had built in Ghumdân. This was a fortified darb which he had built like al-Qâhirah in Egypt in that he made it a round wall (darb mudammar) a spear’s length above the ground, dressed with clay (makh-tham-an bi-`arîn) to the top of it—upon which he constructed a wall of four storeys (? ûr-an ala’ aarba’ah suwarîn). He took into this a number of the houses of Şan`a.

Twenty years later, in 570/1174, ‘Ali b. Hâtim, in apprehension of an attack on Şan’a by Tûranshâh the Ayyûbîd, commenced to destroy Şan’a Wall (Darb)101 and betook himself with his treasure (khâzâin) to mount Birash. Tûranshâh however spent only a single day in Şan’a before hurriedly leaving for the south. When ‘Ali b. Hâtim returned he rejected the advice of the Şan`anis to re-build the Darb/Sûr, only too well aware that the Ayyûbids would return to the attack. So he ordered that the demolition be completed, the razing (kand)102 of the Kharâdiq and the destruction of Şan’a Wall (Sûr). Again in 584/1187 ‘Ali b. Hâtim ordered Ghumdân and the Wall (Sûr) of Şan’a to be destroyed (they must meanwhile have been re-built) in face of the northward advance of the Ayyûbîd Tughlatîn.

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Ibn al-Mujâwîr103 mentions the great tell where Qâṣr Ghumdân had been, adding that on the place of the Qâṣr, Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Rasûl built a qaṣr of huge size (tabl al-haykal) in 618/1221. Al-Simt al-ghâli104 states that the Rasûlid Amir al-Malik al-Asfrah, later to become monarch, was sent by his father, the ruler al-Malik al-Muqaffar, to Şan’a in 684/1285-86 and at the same time he recalled his other son, al-Malik al-Wâthiq Ibrâîlim, who had arrived in Şan’a the previous year. After campaigning in the north al-Malik al-Asfrah camped at al-Râbah111 from which he ‘ascended to the Qasr of our Lord al-Malik al-Wâthiq in

94 Ibid, 183.
95 Possibly opening on to the Maydân? The attempt seems to have been to cut him off from the town.
96 Ibid, 401.
97 They were brought in through the efforts of Muhallab al-Shihabi on ‘Id al-Fi`r day.
98 Maçoudi, Les Prairies d’or, ed. and trans. C. Barbier de Meynard, Paris, 1861-77, I, 55. Ibn al-Mujâwîr, Tahrîk ammu`asimagin, Descriptive Arabis Mediævalis, ed. O. Lögren, London, 1951-54, 82, says that al-Mâ`addî in his book Murûj al-Dhâlîhî, mentions that the Qâṣr Ghumdân was brought into good repair (qam’a) a second time, more beautiful than it was at first.
99 Ghâybar al-amînî, I, 302.
100 Ibid, I, 311. The description of the fort might seem to fit the Qâṣr al-Silâh better than a site in the middle of Şan’a.
101 Ibid, I, 234. Cf. al-Simt al-ghâli, I, 19, where it is called al-darb al-dâlîhî li-`l-
103 Ghâybar al-amînî, I, 329. Abû Makhramah, Arabische Texte zur Kenntnis der
104 Al-Simt al-ghâli, I, 468.
105 Ibid, I, 468. The Qalr here mentioned must, in the context, be the eastern
107 Al-Simt al-ghâli, I, 337.
108 Dûr al-Salâh was built at Ma`âshîd Handâm with stone taken from the Manbijûl (al-Simt al-ghâli, I, 468).
109 Ibid, I, 324. The scene is unclear.
110 Al-Simt al-ghâli, I, 337.
113 Al-Râbah was obviously a place of assembly or muster from early times.
al-Manzar (i.e. al-Rawdah) where he stayed all that day. The soldiers (al-`asābak al-manṣurah) that came out of Šan`a‘ and made for the hard/open ground (al-asālāh) and the troops (al-junūd) mustered for his entry’. The gates of the town were choked with people come to see the ceremonial entry. ‘His entry . . . was by Bāb al-Nasr (lit. Victory Gate) and when he entered by this gate and faced (ḥadādha) the Qasr’14 belonging to our Lord al-Malik al-Wāthiq, silk cloth with gold borders was spread for his horse.’ He scattered money from the roof (ṣath) of the Qasr to the people and then continued on his way to al-Dār al-Sulṭanīyyah, doubtless passing in procession through the town to Bustān al-Sulṭān.

It is suggested rather tentatively that Bāb al-Nasr115 is to be identified with the present-day Bāb al-Sīrān, or possibly with a gate a little to the west of it. This would identify the Qasr of al-Malik al-Wāthiq with our present-day Qasr al-Sīlāh.

The Gates of Šan‘a’

Three gates of Šan‘a‘ figure in al-Rāzi’s history of the city, but it is difficult to be at all precise about their dating or location. Quoting earlier sources he116 speaks of ‘the church (kanisah) of Šan‘a‘ at its Gate which is near/next its [the city’s] northern (side),’ a little after the time of the Prophet’s negotiations with the Abnā‘ leader Bāḥdān. This Bāb Madīnat Šan‘a‘ at one time had two snake talismans, one of iron and the other of brass.117

The second gate is Bāb al-Maṣra‘. One of these talismans ‘that made of iron, is on the Bāb al-Maṣra‘ where the blacksmiths (al-ḥaddādūn) work today.’ If the blacksmiths’ street is situated where it is in our own century the Gate would be located north of Sūq al-Ḥalāqah and probably about the northern end of their sīq on the northern border of the market area in general. Elsewhere al-Rāzi118 says that Maṣra‘ al-Jazzārīn was built in the age of Ša‘īb al-Nābī—i.e. long before Islam, but there are various rather legendary traditions about it. He adds, ‘It is today the place where oil (sal) is sold and the place of the blacksmiths and it is a shur`ah means a rimmah, a bad smell —this suggests a dump for rubbish, Bāb Shar`ah is totally uncertain. If it leads to Wāḍi Sīr it might be plotted somewhere east of Bāb Dimashq. Shar`ah is suggestive of shar‘i`ah, a way to water.124

The first three gates are described as makhādūmin—probably the same word as makhātum (ba-`l-fin), dressed with clay, but in this case with jīss, either as a plaster or between the joints of the stone.

In the chronicles for the year 596/1200 the name Bāb Sha`ūb appears for the first time in the sources consulted—probably for Bāb Dimashq. If, as is conceivable, Ibn al-Mu`ājwīr’s Bāb Shar`ah is a mis-reading for Bāb Sha`ūb we should have to adjust our proposals to some extent.125

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112 This variant is to be preferred to al-salāḥ of the text. Cf. Glims. dat., sālah, erratum in salāha,—here the sand open ground north of the walls.
113 Adhikir and juddhūd may correspond to different categories of soldiers.
114 A shur`ah means a rimmah, a bad smell —this suggests a dump for rubbish, carcasses of animals.
115 ‘Abd al-Wāsī` b. Yāḥyā b. Šāb. al-Bāh al-аrāzī. hawi. Hic. 343, 344, in the openings (makhādūm) under the walls across the Sāliḥ, but the actual sites of the Khandaq are unlikely to have been where they were, until they were recently demolished. Bāb Shar`ah is totally uncertain. If it leads to Wāḍi Sīr it might be plotted somewhere east of Bāb Dimashq. Shar`ah is suggestive of shar‘i`ah, a way to water.124
116 Al-Khazraji, op. cit., I, 247, calls it Qasr al-ваqī`.
117 Al-Khazraji, op. cit., I, 247, calls it Qasr al-ваqī`.
118 Al-Khazraji, op. cit., I, 247, calls it Qasr al-ваqī`.
119 Al-Khazraji, op. cit., I, 247, calls it Qasr al-ваqī`.
120 Al-Tabari, op. cit., I, 886, records that the prophet, al-ʾAzwād al-ʾAnsā`i, about 1160/1173, summoned the people and they assembled (ibn al-Mujahid) at Ṣafāhah min Šan`a‘. Cf. A. F. L. Breston, ‘Warfare in ancient south Arabia (2nd-3rd centuries A.D.).’ Qahhan, London, 1936, 96, 97, parade ground. Al-Malik al-ʾAsrār arrived at Šan`a‘ (evidently from the north) on 8 Rabi’ I, 686/23 April, 1287 and unloaded (hatta) in the Maydān (Hicoichi Yajima, A chronicle of the Rasûlid dynasty of Yemen, Tokyo, 1974, 19). This would bring him directly below the eastern Qa~r.
121 ‘Abd al-Wāsī` b. Yāḥyā b. Šāb. al-Bāh al-аrāzī. hawi. Hic. 343, 344, in the openings (makhādūm) under the walls across the Sāliḥ, but the actual sites of the Khandaq are unlikely to have been where they were, until they were recently demolished. Bāb Shar`ah is totally uncertain. If it leads to Wāḍi Sīr it might be plotted somewhere east of Bāb Dimashq. Shar`ah is suggestive of shar‘i`ah, a way to water.124
123 A muchsim is defined by al-Akhris, al-ʾasīl, 1, 415, as a married (ba-tayn), married wife, to way to water. The vocalisation of this word is uncertain, and in Šan`a‘ dialect a muchsim means a remnant, a bad smell —this suggests a dump for rubbish, carcasses of animals.
124 ‘Abd al-Wāsī` b. Yāḥyā b. Šāb. al-Bāh al-аrāzī. hawi. Hic. 343, 344, in the openings (makhādūm) under the walls across the Sāliḥ, but the actual sites of the Khandaq are unlikely to have been where they were, until they were recently demolished. Bāb Shar`ah is totally uncertain. If it leads to Wāḍi Sīr it might be plotted somewhere east of Bāb Dimashq. Shar`ah is suggestive of shar‘i`ah, a way to water.124
Outline Theory of the Growth of Şan’a’ till circa the 7th/13th Century

On the basis of the evidence available Şan’a’ appears to have undergone its major development in the pre-Islamic age—the assumption that Islam made any immediate radical alteration in the way of promoting or retarding its growth is to be avoided. The fortified Ghumdân tells, it may be supposed, protected the Sûq in the low-lying area north and east of it, but of this there is no literary and, as yet, no archaeological evidence. At a later, still ancient but unspecified, time, a fortification was constructed to protect the eastern side of the town, possibly the lower citadel with two out-lying towers on the high ground to the east of that. Ghumdân and its sîqs and the eastern fortification were possibly separated by an intervening space of open ground part of which still remains as Maydân.

As noted (p.461) sunk gardens within the walls were probably often originally clay pits for making bricks.

Ghumdân was then the first nodal point in Şan’a’, and the Qa‘abah, whether it means the town centre or the fortified eastern enceinte was largely constructed before and/or after Islam from the debris of a great building—more likely a complex of buildings. There must surely have been a sîq associated with Ghumdân—which would likely be Sûq al-Halaqa (discussed on p. 161 seq.) and the Sûqs al-`Arj and al-Halabah that at one period may well have been on the edge of the market complex—as also the Sûq al-Baqarah.

The Jâmi` was, early in Islam, constructed in a field belonging to the Abnâ’ west of and under the shadow of Ghumdân. It is unknown whether this was a space contained by an urban area, if, at this period it extended to the west of Ghumdân, or whether it was built in open ground westward of Ghumdân. It seems more likely that Ghumdân did not constitute the western extremity of Şan’a’ town at this period. Was this Jâmi’ a new centre to offset the Qa‘abah? There are one or two pointers in fact to the site having been associated with pre-Islamic pagan religion. One of these is the persistent reference to al-Hajar al-Mulamlama—al-Bagarah.

By the latter half of the 3rd/9th century Şan’a’ was walled. To judge from Ibn Rustah’s account the northern wall probably ran a little north of the Sûq area as we know it today, and south of a much more extensive fortified enceinte on the eastern side of Şan’a’. As the Jâmi` lay in the vicinity of the southern city wall, the latter must likely extended with its gate, a little north of the present wall, to Qasır al-Sîlah.

Ghumdân continued to be fortified and dismantled until late in the 6th/12th century, and, depending on how Ibn al-Mujâwir’s statement is to be interpreted, a huge castle may or may not have been near Bôr in Wâdi Ha`far-mawt.

The Islamic Era

The main source for the early Islamic history of Şan’a’, al-Râzi, writing in the first half of the 5th/11th century, provides topographical data based on earlier but not infrequently conflicting traditions. As so many of the places he mentions have disappeared without known trace many unsolved puzzles remain.

The governor of Şan’a’, appointed by the Caliph `Uthmân, Ya’lî b. Umayyah,131 had his houses (dâr) along with those of Ál Ya’lî behind the Jâmi` Mosque, to the west of it at the door of the Jâmi` known as Báb al-Shâhîbîyyn.

The governor of the Yemen on behalf of the ‘Abbasid Caliph al-Ma`mûn, Mu`a‘z ibn Zâ`id had a Dâr al-Imârah, probably a residence combined with administrative offices, ‘fi qiblat Masjid al-Jâmi`’, i.e., north of the Jâmi`—this, Mu`ammar al-Akwa’132 avers, is actually known up to the present time, though it has undergone many changes.

Most famous of all ‘Abbasid governors, al-Barmakî133 who arrived in Şan’a’ in 183/799, built his Dâr al-Barâmîkah, later known as Dâr al-`Arj, this would place it somewhat north of the Jâmi` Mosque, but the text places it much further west, at Masjid al-Kharrâz. Dar al-Barâmîkah had doors/gates with large arches: it was extensive, and the whole quarter (nâhiyah) consisted of his own house (dâr) property. Two arches of Dâr al-`Arj remained standing until 407/1016-17. It became a jâ’amyah134 which the ‘(Abbasîd) governors used to take because there was a dâr in it and shops (bawârîn).

The achievement for which al-Barmakî is most celebrated is the excavation of the Ghayl called after him, though it is possible that this may have incorporated earlier ghayl135—the historians do not say. Were the course of this and other ghayl known for certain, and were there some indication of the dates of their construction more light might be thrown on the early development of Şan’a’.

Were some early ghayl excavated before or by the Abnî? Al-Barmakî’s founding (or re-founding) Masjid al-Kharrâz in al-Sirâr136 may indicate a 2nd/8th century expansion or development of this district.

al-Râzi137 alludes to residences of the governors hailing from Iraq and their suites, to the left and right of the Jabbânah, an area also patronised by local merchants and the wealthy. One has the impression of a fashionable bânkî. This, it might well be, gave the name to the market known as Sûq al-`Irâgiyyin extra muros which we propose to locate in the long street that today runs northwards from the Sûq al-Jimâl to Báb Sha`ub quite near the Jabbânah.

By the latter half of the 3rd/9th century Şan’a’ was walled. To judge from Ibn Rustah’s account the northern wall probably ran a little north of the Sûq area as we know it today, and south of a much more extensive fortified enceinte on the eastern side. As the Jâmi` lay in the vicinity of the southern city wall, the latter must likely extended with its gate, a little north of the present wall, to Qasır al-Sîlah.

Şan’a’—An Arabian Islamic City

132 As noted (p.461) sunk gardens within the walls were probably often originally clay pits for making bricks.

133 ibid., 70, mentions a Dâr al-Hawk, or weaving establishment, set up in Rusûn Bâshân on the Mosque site.

134 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 106.

135 ibid., 70.

136 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 90; mentions a Dâr al-Hawk, or weaving establishment, set up in Rusûn Bâshân on the Mosque site.

137 ibid., 90.

138 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 165.

139 ibid., op. cit., 1, 510.

131 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 106.

132 Ibid., 30.

133 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 106, mentions a Dâr al-Hawk, or weaving establishment, set up in Rusûn Bâshân on the Mosque site.

134 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 110.

135 Op. cit., 27 passim. Cf. al-Mu’tah, 141, the poem of al-Râzi, 106. For example, its name beri first for ‘Wâdi Ha`far-mawt l-ma’—in it is the flood-course.

136 One cannot but feel that this ‘huge castle’ is more likely to have been the fortified enceinte on the east (Qasır al-Sîlah) than Ghumdân.

137 Al-Râzi, op. cit., 106.

138 Ibid., p.20a.

139 See Chapter 2.

140 Ibid., 106.

141 Ibid, 91.

142 Ibid, 27 passim. Cf. Sifah op. cit., 241, the poem of al-Râzi, 106. For example, its name beri first for ‘Wâdi Ha`far-mawt l-ma’—in it is the flood-course.

143 One cannot but feel that this ‘huge castle’ is more likely to have been the fortified enceinte on the east (Qasır al-Sîlah) than Ghumdân.
The Urban Development of San`â'

10.9 The Sûq. Aerial view. The Great Mosque, in the lower left hand corner, and the large samsarahs are visible.

have been constructed there in the second decade of the 7th/13th century; but towards the end of the century the eastern Qasr had become the seat of the garrison of San`â'. It may indeed have assumed a superior military importance to Ghumdân long before that date.

Ibn Rustah's street splitting San`â' in two halves may be identified with that commencing at the bridge over the Sâ'ilah, running south of Masjid al-Tâwûs to Sûq al-Ilalagah and Masjid `Ali.

To try and trace the growth of the city by studying the pattern of the spread of mosques is quite frustrating—many have disappeared entirely and, of those extant, only such dates as those recorded of enlargement and repairs are known. Many have been re-founded with different names. Nevertheless a necklace of mosques encircling the northern boundary of the Sûq includes Masjid al-Shahidayn, possibly founded about the 2nd/8th century, 'Agil (the name suggesting an 'Ali-îd founder) which is small, this being an indication of early date, Ma'âd, believed ancient, and Dâwûd (7th/13th century), near the Cattle Market, in al-Sirâr Quarter, just west of the main Sûq. Ibn Yu'fîr's 3rd/9th century wall should probably be located just north of them.

Al-Tâwûs, named after a 1st/7th century Traditionist, Talhah, originally small, and believed old, Ma'âd, founded by Ma'âd of Hamdân at an indeterminate date before 900/1494, may indicate the western limit of building even as early as the 3rd/9th century.

On the north east two mosques, al-Akhîjâr/Khučayr in Zuqûq Abî Maţar, founded in the 2nd/8th century and the even older Masjid al-Madrasah, founded by a Companion of the Prophet, may originally have been an enclave extra muros.

On the north west al-Filayîy Mosque was founded in 655/1266-67, its founder being buried there. Arguing that a mosque is built to meet the needs of an urban growth, this Quarter should have been developing before that date.

Al-Filayîy and the adjacent al-Qusâ'il Quarters were inhabited by Jews as well as Muslims at a date unknown. Jews similarly lived in al-Tawâshi Quarter (named after the mosque built there in 1028/1619). It was near an ancient Masjid 'Abbas which is not now known.

Arabic sources consulted do not confirm statements by Jewish sources that Jews were compelled to move from any part of San`â' until, of course, the Messianic troubles of the 11th/17th century. Jews are thought to have lived dispersed among Muslims (and, at the early period, Christians also). The presence of the 5th/11th century synagogue in Tinners' Lane of al-Qâ'î Quarter argues some concentration of Jewish dwellings in its neighbourhood.

San`â' seems to have grown, however sparsely, beyond the Sâ'ilah to the west bank by the 3rd/9th century unless the tanners' establishments were outside the city limits. As the Khanâdîq, the event of 1679. Goitein (C. Rathjens, Jewish domestic architecture in San`a, Yemen, Jerusalem, 1957, 70) mentions a Mîrî Joseph al-Quhî of a family that must have resided in al-Qusâ'il Quarter—unfortunately dates do not seem to be known.
10.10 The Sûq, seen from the air on the western side.

10.11 The Sûq. A view looking south from one of the highest sawarahs on the west side of the Sûq with the Great Mosque in the middle distance.

walls carried on arches over the Sâ'ilah on the north and south sides of Şan'â'. were demolished in 570/1174 there must, some time previously, have been a north to south wall on the western bank. The road from Bab al-Sabâh running south east and the main road towards the Sâ'ilah from Bab al-Sabâh as shown on the von Wissmann map suggest an enclave projecting westwards from the Sâ'ilah. Tughtakin's additions may have been to annex Bustân al-Sultân to the south side of this enclave by the last years of the 6th/12th century. This at least seems a reasonable working theory.

The Nuqum Flood-course

During the governorship of Muḥammad b. Yûsuf over Şan'â', some years prior to 73/692, 'came the flood (sayâl) of Birk al-Ghîmâd/Ghumâd143—it was a place of assembly (majma’) for the Arabs and embassies when they came to Şan'â’ to its kings, so that the proverb about it was coined. The Nuqum flood used to flow towards it and it was filled with earth before this date, and it (Birk al-Ghîmâd) became incorporated with the dwellings and houses of Bani 'l-Walid. Then a mighty flood came down and destroyed these dwellings, carrying off the goods."

This flood-course is to be identified with an ancient water-course through the northern part of the city that can still be observed in times of heavy rains. Although its path was interrupted centuries ago by the construction of the north east wall of the city across its bed, in the vicinity of Masjid al-Bakîriyyah, water still flows at such times to a heavy volume both above and beyond the wall.

The catchment area was once the vast north western face of Nuqum whence the rains collect in a wadi which flows past the north corner of the upper citadel of Qasr al-Sîlîh and originally entered the city between the lower citadel and al-Bakîriyyah, where the pronounced depression of its channel can still be observed in the outside profile of its wall. Thence the wadi flowed between the modern Maydân al-Qâşr and Masjid Sîlîh al-Din, past the doorway of the latter, and down into the north eastern corner of Sûq al-Mâlîh, where, even today, with only the catchment within the walls, it runs 30cm deep after heavy rains.

143 Ghûyat al-amâni, I, 111. This cannot be the place or places in al-Hamdîkî, Sûlûk, 203-4. Birk, he defines as stones like those of the farrah (laval-trace), difficult, biting each other (r ma‘ân ã walîh) in which it is difficult to walk. Proverbially it is a distant place.
The stream is diverted around the north edge of the Sūq, and then taken out past Masjid 'Aqil to Sūq al-Jīmal, then at the side of Masjid al-Zumur and through Bāb Sha`ûb, at which point the flood is sometimes almost a metre deep, to join the Sâ'ilah further north.

In this context must be taken the words of al-Rāzi, quoting earlier sources. 'Its (San`ā') wadi is Sūq al-`Irāqiyyīn, and this place is near half of the town (balad)', and, 'this wadi of its is the Sūq, meaning Sūq al-`Irāqiyyīn today—into which flows the flood-water (ayd) of the Qasabah of San`ā', the water of al-Qasabah coming out to the Sūq al-`Irāqiyyīn.'

We consider there is little doubt that, here, al-Rāzi must mean by al-Qasabah, the lower citadel, and the wadi containing the Sūq al-`Irāqiyyīn is the present day Sūq al-Jīmal, as stated above, running down to the present-day Bāb Sha`ûb.

The catchment of Nuqum is now diverted away, outside the city wall, to join the other stream outside Bāb Sha`ûb. It is not impossible that the course has been substantially diverted within the city. Nowadays the flood would have to reach considerable heights and flood the Sūq before it would spill over to flood the Jāmī Mosque at a lower level. The Jāmī was flooded in 265/878-9 but there is no indication known to us whence the flooding came.

Qādi 'Ali Abu l-Ri`āf expressed the opinion that originally this wadi flowed past al-Fiayhi Mosque, to join the Sā'ilah to the west.

The suggestion may be hazarded that Bāb al-Shar`ah of Ibn al-Mujāwīr above, might be the gate through which the Nuqum flood-water entered San`ā'.

San`ā’ Population in the Early Islamic Period

San`ā’ population fluctuated considerably owing to such causes as drought, famine, plague, the frequent wars and doubtless administrative or economic factors.

Al-Ḥamdānī states that in the Islamic period the city gradually grew till after 290/903, then became ruined/depopulated (kharīḥat) but soon recovered and 'today is almost as it was and is increasing'. In the first half of the 5th/11th century it was in a ruinous state. Al-Rāzi gives some absurd statistics for the period before its destruction (often repeated by later authors), of 120,000 houses and in al-Qaṣī alone, a Quarter of San`ā’s, there were 70,000 mukâbis. These are supposed to be the statistics about the time of the Caliph Hâriin al-Rashid, and the figures dropped owing to the Qarmatī occupation and other wars. He quotes inconsistently with the above, another figure, of 1,000 houses for al-Qaṣī which if it was a Quarter of San`ā’s, would give a total for the city of 4,000 houses. If the arbitrary figure of ten persons per house is assumed, this would give a population of 40,000 persons—which is reasonable but guesswork.

In As`ad al-Yu`fīrī’s time (286-88/899-901) the impossible figure of 30,000 houses is quoted. This might be a possible figure for the population. A census of houses purported to have been made some time after 345/956 gives the still impossible figure of 14,000. Another conflicting figure given by al-Rāzi for some period after 344/955 is 6,500 houses, perhaps a little high, but credible.

Statistics given for 353/964 seem to show a heavy drop in population to a very low level. A census records 1,040 houses (dâr) of which 35 belonged to the Jews. During the interval 344-65/955-75, 74 houses of dâr al-naâm, 139 baths (khamâmah) and an uncounted number of mosques and sâ‘yâhâ had been destroyed. When the shops (kamānīs), both those flourishing and those that had been destroyed, were counted they amounted to 700 but many were in ruins, there were 106 mosques still in use. 12 baths, 54 sesame presses and 33 mills (matâhin) for red blossom of the dawm-palm (fird) with which hides and skins are tanned.

The Ottoman City

The first Turkish occupation lasted ninety years, beginning in 946/1539. Although Pedro Paez commented in ca. 1000/1590 that the city declined after the Turks had taken it, it does not seem from the amount of new building work datable to this time that this decline can have persisted very long.

The city walls were twelve feet thick, made of clay and 'to outward shew...as fair as a stone wall'. At the lowest levels there was a plinth of 'hard grey stone', but near the gates the walls were built to full height of 'bluish stone', On the inside there was a continuous plinth of stone and gypsum to a man's height. Small round (semicircular?) towers projected from the wall as bastions at roughly forty metre intervals; some of them were battlemented, and some were entirely built of stone. The clay walls had to be repaired annually after the seasonal rains.

At this period the Turkish governor appears to have lived in the citadel. Near it, in 1005/1597, the governor Ḥasan Pasha erected the great domed mosque al-Bukriyya. He is reputed to have laid out a fine wide street as a setting for his mosque, which was lined with trees throughout its length, from the gate of the citadel to Bāb Sha`ûb. The open square in front of the citadel gate is also said to have been formalized at this time, and Ḥasan Pasha built Ḥammām al-Bukriyyah (Ḥammām al-Maydān) on it as a waqf to support his mosque. The area of these urban improve-

146 Al-Rāzi, op. cit., 18.
147 ibid., 111-14. For miskin (poor) Zabârah, quoting the passage, reads maskan (dwelling).
148 Personal communication on this point.
149 Personal communication on this point.
150 See p. 108a.
152 Pieter van den Broeck, 1026/1616. See p. 109a.
153 ibid., and Green. See p. 109a.
154 Green. See p. 109a.
155 J. Jourdain, 1018/1609.
157 Pieter van den Broeck, 1025/1616. Niebuhr mentions that in his day, the mid-12th/18th century, there were still two palaces in the citadel in which several princes of the royal blood resided. (Herion trans. T. 375).
The City During the Second Zaydi Dynasty

The Turks withdrew from the Yemen in 1040/1620; San`a' once more became the seat of an independent Zaydi Imam. There now began a period of prosperity for the city which lasted for nearly two centuries; it is well attested by the quality and quantity of buildings erected during this time.

Considerable damage was done, however, by a flood which came down the Sà'ilah ca. 1085/1674-5, destroying the southern Khandaq.162

In 1090/1679 the Jews were expelled from the old city. After a temporary sojourn in the Tihamah they were permitted to return to San`a', but not to the old city. Instead they were allowed to build a Jewish quarter on the western side of Bir al-'Azab next to a village which appears to have been in existence before this time, al-Bawniyah; the new quarter became known as Qa` al-Yahûd. It soon had its own sûq and fourteen synagogues, as well as houses 'as handsome as the best in San`a'.

An important new palace was built in a garden on the western side of the city, surrounded by its own defensive wall; it appears to have been erected by Imam al-Mutawakkil al-Qasim, who came to the throne in 1120/1708,167 but it is possible that it dates from the preceding century. This palace, known as the Mutawakkil Palace, from the traditional title of the Imam, al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allâh, had at its centre a tall square block. At the beginning of the 13th/19th century another palace was built there, the new building being that shown in the centre of Cruttenden's drawing made in 1252/1836 (p. 111). Between the wall of the palace and enclosure and the city wall lay an open parade ground, closed by gates at the ends, that on the north called Bab Soghair (Shaqâ?) and that at the south Bab

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158 Al-Sayyid Muafa Salim, verbal communication.
159 Sir Henry Middleton, 1020/1611. See p. 108b.
160 Ibid.
161 Al-Sayyid Muafa Salim, verbal communication.
162 Ghâyat al-amâni, 11, 756.
163 Ibid, I, 388.
164 Cf. R. Manzoni, El Yémen, Rome, 1884, 120.
166 Niebuhr, op. cit., 1, 379.
167 Niebuhr, op. cit., 1, 379.
168 U. J. Seetzen in Monatliche Correspondenz of Baron von Zach, Gotha, 1813, 181.
Intîbîh. Beyond the last gate a wide space was enclosed outside the ancient Bâb al-Sabâh, the western gate of the city. In this square were erected, before 1139/1726, the public baths of al-Mutawakkil and the tomb of Imâm al-Mutawakkil al-Qa'im. In 1175/1761 the Imâm ordered the destruction of all the synagogues and of all storeys on Jewish houses higher than nine metres above ground level.\(^{159}\)

The synagogues were afterwards rebuilt,\(^{171}\) but the Jews henceforth observed the edict that their houses should remain low. At the beginning of the 13th/19th century walls were built around Bir al-'Azab and al-Qã'. The old Bâb al-Sabâh remained, but a new western gate, Bâb al-Shararah, was built on the other side of the Maydân al-Mutawakkil,\(^{178}\) which now became completely enclosed by walls (cf. pl. 12).

Two other gates gave access to the Maydân. Bâb al-Intîbîh on the north opened into the parade ground in front of the palace. On the northern end of this space another gate, Bâb al-Shaqqâdîf, gave access to the countryside. On the eastern side of the Maydân the ancient screen walls of Bâb al-Sabâh were complemented by a new screen wall which had the effect of creating a separate forecourt to the gate. In this forecourt that Bâb al-Intîbîh was situated. On the southern side of the Maydân, just beyond the forecourt, Bâb al-Khuzâymah opened to the southern cemeteries and the countryside.\(^{174}\)

In the new walls around Bir al-'Azab and al-Qã' there were six gates. Bâb al-Nizâyli and Bâb al-Balahqâq opened to the south, Bâb Qã' al-Yâhûd and Bâb al-Abîlah to the west, and Bâb al-Rûm and Bâb al-Shari (sic) to the north.

Within Bir al-'Azab there was a subsidiary walled area on the southern side, Bir al-Bahmah, entered through a gate within Bir al-'Azab (see map, p. 118).

There were three open squares inside the new walls. Between Qã' al-Yâhûd and the rest of the area was a long public space known as Sulbî Qã' al-Yâhûd;\(^{175}\) and inside Bâb al-Rûm and Bâb al-Shararah there were wide parade grounds (pl. 10.20). Parts of all three remain to this day.

There were also wide open spaces in the old city which have since been built over. In particular the area between al-Fâlîyâ and the northern edge of the sitq was an open maydân, following the line of the ancient wadi-bed (cf. pl. 12).

In 1225/1810, San`a' still seemed to a visiting German 'the finest city I have seen in the Orient... even Constantinople would not be excepted if it were not for its mosques';\(^{178}\) and in 1252/1836 Cruttenden still speaks of the city with undisguised admiration, in spite of the brief sacking by tribesmen it had received in 1234/1815;\(^{177}\) 'the houses are large, and the windows of those of the higher classes are of beautiful stained glass.' Many of the mosques had their 'domes gilt, particularly those with tombs of Imâms.'\(^{179}\)

The city was extensively sacked in 1268/1851, and again in 1270/1853.\(^{178}\) When Stern saw it in 1275/1858 he described Bir al-'Azab as 'a large tract of waste land, varied by cemeteries and fragments of former dwellings.'\(^{180}\) Even allowing for exaggeration, his impression is shared by other mid-13th/19th century travellers:

169 Niebuhr. Plan of San`a'. The plan is extremely inaccurate; it was presumably drawn from memory long after Niebuhr left the city. The position of the gate names is confused on the map, but from later evidence these appear to have been the names used in Niebuhr's day (see below). In fact, the northern gate is also marked both Bâb al-Nair and Bâb al-Shararah, whereas the southern gate is marked with the same Bâb al-Shararah. Bâb al-Subûh is shown between Bâb al-Sogair and Bâb al-Hadîd, but no opening is shown for it.

170 Niebuhr, op. cit., 1. 359, but see p. 416.

171 A. A. Isaacs, Biography of H. A. Stern, London, 1886, 114, says there were eighteen in 1275/1858.


173 Al-Badr al-muqadd, 7.

174 Manzoni, op. cit., 164.

175 Ibid., 127.

176 Ibid., 1. 50.


178 Cruttenden, op. cit., see p.111a.

The city was extensively sacked in 1268/1851, and again in 1270/1853. When Stern saw it in 1275/1858 he described Bir al-'Azab as 'a large tract of waste land, varied by cemeteries and fragments of former dwellings.' Even allowing for exaggeration, his impression is shared by other mid-13th/19th century travellers:

169 Niebuhr. Plan of San`a'. The plan is extremely inaccurate; it was presumably drawn from memory long after Niebuhr left the city. The position of the gate names is confused on the map, but from later evidence these appear to have been the names used in Niebuhr's day (see below). In fact, the northern gate is also marked both Bâb al-Nair and Bâb al-Shararah, whereas the southern gate is marked with the same Bâb al-Shararah. Bâb al-Subûh is shown between Bâb al-Sogair and Bâb al-Hadîd, but no opening is shown for it.

170 Niebuhr, op. cit., 1. 359, but see p. 416.

171 A. A. Isaacs, Biography of H. A. Stern, London, 1886, 114, says there were eighteen in 1275/1858.


173 Al-Badr al-muqadd, 7.

174 Manzoni, op. cit., 164.

175 Ibid., 127.

176 Ibid., 1. 50.


178 Cruttenden, op. cit., see p.111a.

The City During the Second Ottoman Occupation: Statistics

In 1289/1872 a Turkish Governor-General once more entered San`a' and the city became the centre of administration of the Yemen by the Porte until the final withdrawal of Turkish control after the Armistice of 1337/1918.

The Turks did not do a great deal to improve the city, being often engaged in quelling revolutions and repelling attacks by tribesmen on San`a' itself.\(^{184}\)

Reports of conditions in San`a' in the first fifteen years of the Turkish occupation speak of the decayed state of the city, and of the greatly reduced population, as little as 20,000 according to Millingen in 1291/1874, and 23,000-24,000 according to Manzoni ca. 1296/1878.\(^{189}\) But later the population recovered. F. T. Haig\(^{180}\) (1887) estimated the San`a' population at about 35,000, but asserts it was once several times as much, judging by the ample spaces and masses of ruins. The Jews numbered approximately 5,200 and there were about 60 Christians, mostly Greeks.

The Turkish sâlnâmahs are obviously not very accurate either:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Muslim males</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Household size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1298/1880</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1301/1887</td>
<td>27,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1303/1889</td>
<td>27,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These statements conflict but, as McCarthy points out, 'it is slightly more likely that, due to the approximate nature of these statistics, the later number would be more correct.' He suggests that the average San`a' household would be between six to seven members (male and female). Zwemer and Burchardt both thought it had increased to at least 50,000 before the great siege of the city by tribesmen in 1322/1904 drove many inhabitants away again.\(^{188}\) All informants tend to agree that the Jewish population constituted about 1/5 of the total, and the Turkish garrison less than 1/10. Zwemer and Harris both stressed how flourishing the town had become by 1309-11/1891-93.\(^{189}\) The gateway of Bâb al-Sabâh was removed by the Turks, the name being transferred to Bâb al-Shararah further west.\(^{191}\) Zâbârah,\(^{192}\) for the early part of the 14th century H. 137
San`ā’—An Arabian Islamic City

10.16 Panorama of the north side of the city showing the city wall. From a photograph taken in the early part of this century.

10.17 Bb Sha`ûb. A photograph taken by Mittwoch, before its destruction after the 1962 coup.

(commencing in 1882), quotes the figures 5,000 houses, 50,000 inhabitants, 30 mosques and 20 baths.

In 1972 there were reckoned to be 16,662 houses in San`a’. Of these 4,730 were over 50 years old and 1417 between 25-29 years old—i.e., by the last year or so of Imam Yahya’s reign the number of houses is calculated at 6,247 and the growth since 1918 was reckoned at 1.3 per cent, while in the period up to the coup of 1962 growth was at the rate 2.4 per cent. These statistics however give an erroneous picture as they do not take into account houses demolished and rebuilt—of which there are many.

A rough estimate—it is little better than a guess—would be that the population fluctuated between 30,000 to 50,000 persons in times of maximum security and prosperity, but it might drop well below the lower figure after a plague or famine.

In 1295/1878 enormous floods did great damage to the city, more than 100 houses being ruined.

The barracks built in the First Turkish Occupation were also destroyed in 1295/1878. In 1305/1887 large new barrack buildings were being built outside the city, on either side of the road south of Bb al-Yaman. A military hospital had already been built by then.

The fortifications of the city were further improved by the construction at regular intervals of towers, a few hundred yards outside the walls, somewhat resembling martello towers. Most of them were doubtless destroyed in the siege of 1322/1904 but several fine madabahs of grey stone near the city may be identified with these towers.

One of the first acts of the Turks was to restore the mosque of al-Bakiriyyah, and the tree-lined road between the citadel, the mosque of al-Bakiriyyah and Bb Sha`ûb again became the centre of the fashionable quarter of the town; it was here that the foreign rulers had their shops and cafes, as well as the new Military Academy, two civilian schools and an Industrial School. Bir al-`Azab once more achieved its earlier importance as a residential suburb. Here reside the Wali and most of the senior officers.

After the prolonged siege by tribesmen in 1322/1904 the walls of the city were severely damaged, in some places being reduced to ground level.

Before the siege there were some 70,000 inhabitants, now the number was reduced to 20,000’ wrote Herbert, an eye-witness in 1905. Although San`ā’ eventually recovered its prosperity, and the walls were rebuilt, another intensive siege by Imam Yahya in 1329/1911 did widespread damage.

The gateway of Bb al-Yaman was afterwards rebuilt in brick and stone to a new design by a Turkish military engineer, together with a stretch of the wall on either side of it.

193 Marnou, op. cit., 392.
194 Haig, op. cit., 471 seq.
195 Harris, op. cit., 301.
196 A. J. B. Wavell, A modern pilgrim in Mecca, London, 1912, 244.
197 Ibid, 242; Burchardt, op. cit., 593 seq.
198 Wavell, 243.
10.18 The wall of the old city of the southern side near Bab al-Yaman photographed in 1974.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Eastern Half of the City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Al-Filayhi Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hammâm al-Filayhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dâwûd Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hammâm Saba' or Quâ'ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hammâm al-Abhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Al-Abhar Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bustân al-Sâdah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Al-Zumur Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sûq al-Jimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Al-Shahidîyân Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sûq al-`Arj or Sûq al-Ḥâtab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Al-Halaqah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Qandah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Great Mosque, al-Masjid al-Kabîr, al-Masjid al-Jâmi`</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bahr Rajraj Quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Bâb al-Yaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Al-Tawâshi Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Hammâm al-Tawâshî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Masjid `Aqîl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Wirdah Samsarah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Sûq al-Zabîb, Raisin Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Sûq al-Mizân, the 'Scales'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Samsarat al-Hawâyîj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Al-Mibsârat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Samsarat Muhammad b. Ahsan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Masjid `Ali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Sûq al-Ahzîmah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Al-Nażârah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Sûq al-Ta`âm or al-Habb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Al-Khân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Masjid al-Madhhab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Masjid al-Rudwân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Masjid Mûsâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Al-Madrasah Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Al-Maftûn Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Salâh al-Din Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Hammâm Yâsir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Hárat Zabârah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Gharqât al-Qalis/Qullays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Al-Bakîrîyyah Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Hammâm al-Maydân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Maydân al-Qâsîr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Bâb al-Qâsîr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Al-Murâdîyyah Mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Masjid al-Abzâr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Masjid al-Bâsbâh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Masjid Nûsîyî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Bâb al-Salâm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Qâsîr al-Sîlah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Bâb al-Sitrân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Ottoman Turkish Barracks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- **Mosques**
- **Bustân**
- **Baths**
- **Shops**
- **Mima' and bir**
- **Samsarahs, restaurants**
- **Public buildings; sesame mill**
The City Under the Ḥamid al-Dīn Īmāms

The withdrawal of the Turks in 1338/1919 was followed by a period of consolidation and reconstruction. The Imam built a splendid new palace next to the old site in Bustān al-Mutawakkil, and in this the first electricity in the city was installed. Inhabitants flocked once more into Ṣan`ā’ and within a decade it had recovered to a population of 50,000.

The new Imam engaged in some public works, founding an Orphan School, al-Madrasah al-`Ilmiyyah, and extending the Great Mosque. On the whole, however, little change took place in Ṣan`ā’. The city was sacked by tribesmen in 1368/1948. During this attack many large houses suffered internal damage, the Samsarat Muhammad b. Ḥasan was pillaged (and has been closed ever since), and some damage was done to houses, especially those in Bir al-`Azab, by fire. Life quickly returned to normal, however, with the physical form of the city much as it had been before, but the new Imam ruled from Ta`izz.

10.23 View of the old city from the south west, with the Sâ'ilah in the foreground.

10.24 In al-Mahdi 'Abbâs's time, following the Friday Prayer, the Imam's or Governor's mounted escort performed exercises in the maydân before the Government palace. (1) pairs bearing lances chasing round after pairs (2) round tower (gasabah) (3) mosque (4) house (5) Governor (6) mountain tribesmen (7) Stancaul of soldiers (8) Governor's servants (9) wealthy townsmen (10) Tihâmah Arabs (11) mountain tribal soldiers (12) water camel (13) Baniyâns (14) Jews (15) Strangers in Turkish dress. (Baurenfeind-Niebuhr)
The Administration of Old Ṣan‘ā’

That the Imams interested themselves in the Government of Ṣan‘ā’ is evident in their concern with the fixing and revision of the Statute of Ṣan‘ā’ (Qānūn San‘ā’) by which the city’s markets were regulated. The indications are that further inquiry will reveal a certain uniformity in the government of all the principal cities under Ṣayf al-Dīn control, in respect of market law, price fixing, the organization and policing of the wards or quarters of each urban community. The government official in charge of Ṣan‘ā’ was the ‘amīl, and in the year 1234/1818-9, this was Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Ḥaymī of the Qāḍī class. Yemeni biographers not infrequently record that such and such an official acted as ‘amīl or ḥākim in Ṣan‘ā’ at some stage in the course of his career. The ‘amīl’s varied duties could even include ordering the market folk to decorate the ‘uqūs in honour of a Turkish notable visiting the city—as at the beginning of the 12th/18th century.1

In Imamic Ṣan‘ā’ of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn there was a ḥākim or judge for the city, but Sayyid Ahmad al-Shāmī informs us that there was also a judge called Ḥākim al-Maqām, at the Maqām al-Imām, i.e., the Imam’s residence, who would act when two contending parties came to the Imam when he would be set to arbitrate between the parties (li-‘l-fasāl bayn al-khasmayn). To take a case in point, Muhammad b. Muḥammad al-Wazīr was Ḥākim al-Maqām up to the dynastic revolt of 1948—but anyone of the dignitaries or qādīs of Ṣan‘ā’ at some stage in the course of his career.2 In fact his standing might act as ḥākim and this was often done by ‘Abdullāh al-Wazīr himself, the Imam at Ṣan‘ā’ for a few short weeks in 1948. Qādīs who give decisions, and depend for their living on fees paid them by litigants, are known as ḥākim al-sabil, which is more serious than a large number of witnesses.3

Imām Yahyā was accustomed to hear cases sitting under a pepper tree (hawâyijih) in the courtyard of his palace.4 In fact the Imam normally dealt only with cases of the aadd category in which, for example, there was the question of the offender’s hand being cut off, and with executions. The documents pertaining to such cases were brought to him, and he scrutinized them and confirmed the decisions. He might even order an execution. The ‘amīls held court in their houses, as in the ‘Amrī house in al-Ṣa’ilah Quarter where there was a special entrance for those coming into the court from the street. If anyone disagreed with the decision of the ‘amīl—which must be a qādī, though a qādī was not necessarily a ‘amīl—the case went up to the Appeal Court. During the first Ottoman occupation, doubtless because the Turks follow the Ḥanafī school of Islam, we find a Ḥanafī Sayyid acting as a ‘amīl in Ṣan‘ā’.5 The jurists were, up to 1962, drawn from the Ma`had Dini, or Religious College, as were most, if not all, of the other government officials in the Ṣayfī districts. As a comment on the distribution of offices as between the two main sects in the Yemen, the saying, ‘Mā amr ilā Shāfi`ī wa-mā `askār ilā Ziyūd’, may be quoted, meaning that the civil posts were occupied mainly by Shāfi`īs and the army posts by Ṣayfīs; this may, however, be a partial view. Before

1 See his biography in Qānūn San‘ā’, vol. 1, p. 1, as the ‘respected ḥākim.
2 Nāshr al-‘arf, II, 930.
3 Al-Burāq al-‘awāl, 1, 156, n. 1.
4 Nashīr, Riḥlah, 100, then al-‘awāl, describes this; cf. Ameen Rihani, Arabian Peak and Desert, London 1930, 104 and 108, for a picture of this tree.
7 Ghayat al-amānī, II, 816. He was a fayṣal fi l-hukūmāt, an arbiter in legal cases.
streets (sikak), we being with him,' says a contemporary. San`a following the coup d'état of 1962, and there does not seem shari`ah is interested in market law may be deduced from studying also the Shaykh of his particular market. He is described in shaykhs and âgîls, and it was only when such affairs started to control. Al-Hâdi used to `make the round of the markets and enter into the province of the shari`ah courts,$ that these courts dealt with them. So petty market or street squabbles, fights, frauds, were not really noticed by the shari`ah, though the Imâms were careful to see that here also no point where Islamic principle was concerned should be neglected. The level at which the shari`ah is interested in market law may be deduced from studying such a legal treatise as the Shahr al-Asbār.9

The `Amîl or Governor, among his other duties, scrutinized the current prices of articles of merchandize as submitted to him by the Shaykhs and Clerk(s) of the Markets. The Governor10 would, in cases of fraud, punish not only the actual offender, but also the Shaykh of his particular market. He is described in Qânûn San`a` as Dhu‘Il-l-Wilâyây.11

In Imám Yahya's day the Government Offices continued to be at Bab Shararah where they had been set up by the Ottoman Turks. The functions of the `Amîl of San`a` are identical with those assumed by the earliest Zaydi Imám, al-Hâdi ila ‘l-Haqq, well over a thousand years ago at Sa`dah, where, it can be postulated, his practice could well be continuing many precedents from before the Islamic age. Though his stay in San`a` itself was brief, punctuated by skirmishes, warlike clashes and encounters, and he had finally to leave it when his demands for loans and assistance from the townspeople to maintain his tribal troops were rejected by them, al-Hâdi’s practice at Sa`dah was considered by the Zaydi Imâms as their model. It would certainly be applied in San`a` and other Yemeni towns under their control. Al-Hâdi used to ‘make the round of the markets and streets (sikak), we being with him,’ says a contemporary.11 If he saw a wall leaning to the side he ordered its owners to put it right, or a foul (frisid) road he ordered it to be cleaned, a dark back part (khail) of a house he ordered its inmates to put a light in it for the passers-by and a person making his way to the mosque etc. If he saw a woman (un-veiled) he ordered her to don the hijâb (veil), and if she was an old woman11 he ordered her to cover herself. He it was who introduced veils (burqî`) for women into the Yemen and ordered them to adopt them.12

There follows an account of al-Hâdi’s surveillance of the markets and price-fixing.13 In brief as Imâm he assumed also the functions of the Islamic muḥâsib like his contemporary the Zaydi Imám Uyûsh in Ẓabâristân. The selection made of his legal pronouncement concerns much that affects the city and its markets.

There is much evidence of the application of shari`ah legislation to the Statute (Qânûn) of San`a`—first of all in the matter of price-fixing (tas`ir) discussed in al-Haymi’s ‘Preamble,’15 and fundamental to the Statute as a whole. There is the prohibition of the interception of commodities imported to the market by merchants from the town, and there is al-radd bi-l- `ayb, rescindment of a sale in the event of goods turning out to have a defect concealed by the vendor—which is known to be also pre-Islamic—and even the regulation that a water-vessel must be covered.16

Urf, Customary Law.

Tark al-`udâh ad-dâvûs, Abandonment of custom is hostility. In his preface to Qânûn San`a`, al-Sayyâgh says that every Yemeni town (baldah) has many Statutes (gawânin)18 which order the social customs (sâdîr) of these towns and other transactions confirmed by the shari`ah—indicated in many legal (fiqhi) problems by such expressions as ilâ il-`urf, unless there be a custom’, (not of course clashing with the shari`ah), or bi-haṣb al-`urf, according to custom’, or ‘al-muqaddam al-`urf, the custom is preferred’. This statement does not, of course, apply to the Yemen alone, and the Mukallâ marriage laws19 for instance, would have their Yemeni counterpart, while there are customary laws for agriculture, fishing, navigation, hunting, agriculture, etc. Tribal customary law, Taqâh20 and Man`ah are yet of another category. Yemenis say `bi-kull qaryah ma`âtim, 22 possibly aid contributions), and interchange of invitations to weddings (gâdah). These probably closely resembled the laws and customs of the Quarters of Tarim town and al-Mukallâ.23 San`a` also had sumptuary laws on the dress of brides and on maintaining dowries at a moderate level (or attempting to do so)—as in Ḥadrâmawt of the present century. All this says al-Sayyâgh, is in accordance with the aim of the ‘Law Giver’.24
In such families as al-Akwa' you have the mahr al-mithl a fixed dowry for marriages that take place within the Akwa' family—which is very large and widely distributed. Certain ordinances also regulated the clothing of each class and the treatment of its outward appearance, so that not to follow it would be a loss of esteem. However, it seems that any sort of sumptuary law such as this last is unknown nowadays, nor is it known in the living memory or through the report of elderly persons.

When a person dies, relatives to this day provide food, wheat, ghee, money (burr, saman, fulûs)—this is an effect a sort of loan or debt which must be returned when an appropriate occasion arises, but the custom seems nowadays to be mainly confined to the ghabâ'il tribesfolk, and it is not, it is said, found in the towns.

Al-Sayyâghi deduces from the Qûmûn San`â' that there were additional codes or statutes to those in the document itself, for each market in the town, to which reference would be made, these being kept in the custody of the Shaykhs. To judge from a parallel type of document, a collection of papers which I copied from the dalâll of Shûbâm of Ḥâdamawt, these are likely to be agreements between the heads of each given market or their hosts, following upon some dispute. Additional San`â' documents, al-Sayyâghi considers, would contain particulars of the taxes (jibâyûn) levied (presumably by each market organization) on the rich, those of middling wealth, and the poor, and the duties obligatory on the Shaykh of each market of raising small and important matters to the 'Amil, the Governor of San`â'.

## Control of the Markets

The Market was governed by the Chief Shaykh (Shaykh al-Mashâyikh) who is elected by the Shaykhs, or, as one informant stated, by the qâla (perhaps indeed by both) of the various markets (Mashâykh al-Aswaq), and it appears that each suq has a Shaykh. Their general duties are laid down in section 49 of the Qûmûn San`â' The Chief Shaykh holds in his hands the regulations (qutâ'ûzûd) issued by the Hákim. The main duty of the Chief Shaykh, like the Islamic muhtasib, seems to have been to keep an eye on weights and measures. The Shaykhs of individual markets would presumably be elected from the (gâlil and amânûn), 'honest men', of each market. The Chief Shaykh was responsible to the Governor, and this office of Shaykh al-Mashâyikh still exists (1972). In the period of the first Ottoman occupation an official of Shûbâm oversaw the San`â' Suq which was set up—one Subash is recorded as having killed a man from Shab' on account of an old hatred between them.

The Shaykh al-Suq was described as the head president (ra`i), and the qâlî as the manager (muðîr), of inferior standing to the Shaykh al-Suq. There are 'ugâil of the tailors and porters, and the porters in fact still have 'ugâil to this day. Sometimes the posts of Shaykh in the markets are, it is said, hereditary in families, but this would be practice not law. In 1972 the Shaykh Mashâykh San`â' was Husâyn `Ali al-Watârî, the Shaykh Mashâykh al-Ḥârâr wa-t-Aswaq, i.e. Shaykh both of the Quarters and of the Markets. Enquiries elicited the statement that the Jews had no part in electing the Shaykh al-Mashâykh.

## The Quarters (Ḥârah/Ḥârât) of San`â'

The earliest division of Islamic San`â' into the two districts of al-Qâtî and al-Sirâr still exists today in its topographical sense. The city, however, can be said to be composed of a number of Quarters or Wards, mainly called after the mosque of each Quarter, though, to judge by Ma`âṣî al-Sûq this is not invariably so. The boundaries between Quarter and Quarter if defined, and they seem to have been defined not so long ago, are not exactly known to the man in the street. This is in direct contrast to the towns of Ḥâdamawt which are closer in their organization to tribal structures, and where the limits of each Quarter are exactly determined—or in active dispute—and energetically maintained by the men of the Quarter. So much is this that affrays break out if one Quarter on ceremonial occasions attempts to infringe on the ground claimed by another. In San`â the organization of the Quarters, although bearing some relation to that of Ḥâdamawt towns, has lost the independence the latter enjoyed, and been brought under the control of strong central governments. It is urban rather than tribal in its aspect. Probably, in the Yemen as a whole, if such inter-Quarter rivalry existed, it has disappeared as anachronistic, and under the disapproval of rulers not bound up with the local society—in which way they would to some extent
be resembled by the Sayyids of Tarim—or as that of these Ḥḍramīs, not even native to the town.

The same sentiment over boundaries and territories was still felt, however, by the tribesmen of the northern Yemen who jealously preserved their territorial integrity from infringement by other tribes with whom they did not happen to be at war, if these tried to cross their country in full tribal panoply—today conditions are probably still as they were. A case in point is that, in 1073/1662-3, the son of the Imām had to make peace (qīd) between the Dhayhān and ʿīlāb Abdūlāh tribes because 'war (al-ḥarāt) had broken out after his arrival, between the people of al-Rajaw of ʿArṭāb and the people of the country because of their beating of the drum (ṣābl) in the country of al-Rajaw'. Again, in the following year, on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacrifices (ʿīd al-Nahr) war broke out in Ṭmrān between the tribes of the town and the ʿīlāb Sīrayh, because the latter had entered Ṭmrān with drums—the principles of proud incompliance with that being observed by the tribes (qawātīd al-qābālī) between the tribes. Among these the two factions lost four souls, and the son of the Imām who was there that day had to separate them and remove the mischief (firnāh) from the Yemen. Each Quarter (Ḥrāsh) has an ʿaqīl34 or headman, and these ʿaqīlī would, at any rate in times past, be responsible to the Governor ('ʿawālī). The ʿaqīl35 is responsible for dealing with any incident (ḥādithah) in his Quarter, and for farq,36 i.e., any sort of impost or tax payable by the Quarter as a unit—this sum the ʿaqīl will apportion among the people of the Quarter to pay. He makes arrangements for dealing with floods and its effects, and probably other natural calamities. At emergencies in the Quarter one shouts out, 'Ya ḡāratāh! 37 This is if, for example, robbers be discovered, or other malefactor. He makes arrangements for dealing with these; and probably other natural calamities. At emergencies in the Quarter one shouts out, 'Ya ḡāratāh! 37 This is if, for example, robbers be discovered, or other malefactor. He makes arrangements for dealing with these;

32 Ṭmrāb al-Ḥlūn, fol. 49 a.
33 Ibid, fol. 50 a. It should be noted that when ʿṢafīr al-Bāḥr Āḥmad b. Ḥlām summoned Ḥmān to himself and the Bayt ʿAmr b. Ḥabū Jāhish heard that they would beat the drum (ṣābl) as they passed from their country to al-Ḥlām, they warned Ḥmān that this would be a ṣāblī which would put a slight (ʿār) upon them. The dictionary sense of ṣāblī is a lazy action, error, but possibly in the Yemen mean an aggressive act.
34 Ṣafīr, Tāwafr, 27, no. 156. It is interesting to note that a proverb, 'ʿAḥlāsī mā muʿaṣ al-ṣābl, Ṣafīr', indicates that the ʿaqīl al-ḥārah has no headman, or headman's headman is in Śanṭā. 'In Śanṭā' has just Strasse der Judenstadt inen ʿaqīl.'
35 It was suggested to me, in modern parlance, a sort of musawaf or mayor.
36 Farq is widely used in south Arabia in the sense of apportioning out a tax or levy among those persons liable to contribute to it. Cf. the Jewish silver-smiths' agreement (p.293a), and Hirochī Yūsufu, Chronicl, 34, al-fārqi wāz-kāli (correcting his reading), the latter making a case, in 781/1380. I have heard said, farāqī gīmat al-ṣāblī, they (the tribes) divide out the cost of the animals to be sacrificed (to lay an obligation on some person or other) into portions. This means that each gave his own share of the cost.
37 This is for the full phrase, Ya ḡāratāh Allāh which seems to be derived from the phrase, ʿaghāna ṭāl ṭamāl-hān-fūlm, he came to the sons of such a one to say, 'ṣāblī to cry, Ya ḡāratāh, without satisfactory cause—any person who does so would be fined.

In the event of a fire a man shouts out, 'Bayti ḥair, My house is on fire!' At this, the Quarter people run up to his assistance, carrying with them their own gear, such as the ladders they normally use when renewing the plaster (qiyq) on their houses, and they pour water on the fire.

The ʿaqīl of the Quarter has a list of the persons in it. At the time of, say, a flood (ṣābl) a money levy (ḡharāmāh) is made upon the men of the Quarter, to pay for the digging of a channel (ṣūdāmāh). The ʿaqīl then produces his sheet (ḥayṣāl-ṣābl) with the names and makes an apportionment of, say, two ṣayqāt per house (fārqi maḥāl ṣayqāl, saying, 'Your contribution (farq-ak) is two ṣayqāt.' He checks off the payments against his list.

The money will be applied to making a channel to lead off the water to al-Sādīlah al-Kabīrā—Āḥmad b. Āḥmad Qaryah of Ḥamān, who told me this in 1973, lived then in Bustān al-Ṣuljān, west of the Sādīlah into which it would be easy to drain surface water as he describes, but in other parts of the town they must have had their own arrangements. A money levy towards repairing a road in the Quarter would be made in a similar way.

At weddings in the Yemen, though I am not sure if this applies to Śanṭā, the ʿaqīl al-ḥārah is called in, also the fāṣiq al-ḥārah and the conditions of marriage read out in their presence. Like the Markets the Quarters have their own security arrangements for the night-watch, though, since, probably, there is not such a concentration of goods attractive to thieves the number of watchmen is smaller and of course the tall stone houses with sturdy doors and many inmates are less vulnerable than the one storey shops or the samsara/wares, deserted at night. A shaykhi al-layl (lit. shaykh of the night) will be chosen by, say, three Quarters to supervise the watchmen and see that they are performing their duties effectively. Nowadays the Shaykhi al-Layl receives a stipend (marasāb) from the Government and the rich give him presents (mustnadī), probably of money, in addition.

The Shaykhi al-Layl nominates the watchmen (ḥurrār) who have to perform the night duties, from the people of the Quarter—at least they did so until recent times, saying, 'Ant ind-ah al-laylā, It is your turn tonight'. If a man is ill, or happens to be rich and does not wish to be bothered performing night-watch duty, he hires (yuṣqu) another man to do so in his place. In such cases the Sayyids pay just like other persons, and indeed in this matter individuals seem less important than the houses of the Quarter.

Qādī ʿIsmāʿīl said that in former days drums (marāṣi) were beaten in Śanṭā at three o'clock Arab time (i.e. nine p.m. European time) and after that people stayed in their houses. After this hour travellers who had not reached Śanṭā used to spend the night in villages around the city, because also at nine p.m. the gates were closed and they could not enter it. So also the gates being closed, Muslims and Jews could not enter one another's Quarters.

147
At Hodeidah Nazih 44 found that at eight p.m. the troops played music for half an hour, Turkish tunes, and were replied to by the garrison of the fort. After the songs (nashid) came the shouts, 'Yâ `Ali, `Ali`a, yaz hâli ...' meaning that the time of the watch-tax to maintain the watchmen or on the personnel of the watch to be supplied by a Market. The earliest allusion to a night-watchman (haras/hurras), dividing them between two or more streets, was in 1066/1655—this does not of course mean that he introduced the night-watch system. Jarmizp speaks of levies for watchmen for guarding against fire, and (for) the raising of walls and the gates of the streets (`urtas al-hurras) wa-naqar al-hurras wa-nabid al-tikah). He cites the Prophet's practice at Medina when he had the defensive trench, al-Khandaq, excavated, imposing a charge to defray the wages of the workmen or labourers on it upon those who did not contribute labour. In Qanûn San`ã', 45 which dealt with the night-watchmen, the watchman must blow his whistle. 46 Meaning that the time of the curfew has sounded; people say, 'Qad ṅārāba al-warraqayn, the whistle's gone!' As the night-watchman goes on his rounds he shouts, 'Yâ `Ali, yâ Muḥammad!' to let his fellow-watchmen know that he is about (ya`annib khābir-aḥ). Nazih 44 says that they call out to one another, the kārī at the Mâqâm of the Imam commencing, followed by the kārīs in the next post to it—thus it goes round until the call comes back to the Mâqâm. Then another phrase is called out which makes the round in the same fashion.

The Shaykh al-Layl and Night-Watchmen

The Markets of San`a' maintain a more elaborate system of night-watchmen (haras/hurras), headed by the Shaykh al-Layl, than do the Quarters. Nor is this peculiar to San`ã', for I found a Shaykh al-Layl and watchmen in Yarim, and both there and in Radi, there are little brick shelters 47  for them on the roofs of the shops in the markets. At Shibām/Kawkabān they maintain these guards as employees, a tax being paid by the shops (hānsīn) for this purpose. There is even a mud brick shelter for one on the roof of the extra muroz development of the market. Probably all large towns in the Yemen have the same system. Qanûn San`ã' gives detailed instructions on the collection and apportionment of the watch-tax to maintain the watchmen or on the personnel of the watch to be supplied by a Market. The police were said to blow their whistles `min/`araq, colloquially used for the Turkish word yasak might be considerably older than the period of the Turkish word yasak might be considerably older than the period of the second occupation of the Yemen by the Ottomans, and the curfew itself may be a very long-established institution. Indeed Marqûj San`ã's, 40 quotes al-Râzî, 92, on the care taken by the inhabitants of San`ã' to keep to time when the drum (kûs) set up on Ghumdân is beaten, anyone found under his control.

This section of the Qânûn is presumably to be considered as belonging to Document A (Basic) of the early 12th/13th century and might even be Qânûn al-Mutawakkîl 52  or possibly a separate document on its own.

Qâdi `Ali al-Akwa' informed me in 1972 that the Shaykh al-Layl is of the family (min usrat) of the Bayt Qa`â', and that the watchmen (haras) are also of this group. The Shaykh al-Layl is elected by the Sîq from the Bayt al-Qa`î, and the post held by inheritance within this group. They are thought, but it is not certain, to be originally of the tribes of Bani Maṭar who reckon some of the western side—Bustân al-Sultan up to the Sîlāh—to be Bani Maṭar territory. The fee (marjî') of the Shaykh al-Layl today (1972) is 300 ṭuqâs, paid by the Badalîyyah—The Municipality—which has taken over this responsibility, to judge by the Qânûn, from the Markets themselves, possibly from the time of the foundation of the Badalîyyah by the Turks, but I have no information on this point. It is interesting to learn from `Ali al-Akwa' that the former President Salîl's father was not a Shaykh al-Layl as has been alleged, but in fact sold charcoal (sawk) though this is a trade with which the haras are connected.

The Shaykh of the Police (al-Shurşah) of the Qânûn (section 48) looks like a more formal title for the popular and more picturesque term Shaykh al-Layl. The Shaykh al-Layl supervises the watchmen (`aqâjah `ala `hurrah), dividing them between two or more streets, some to patrol in the Market and look after the shops, the others to take up posts on the roofs (ajbi). On the roofs of the shops throughout the San`ã' Markets are to be seen small brick cabins (mîhrâz) in which watchmen are stationed at night. The head watchman (akkâr furras al-layl) is posted in a headquarters tower-like brick structure called al-Tayramînâh situated close to the famous 11th/17th century Samsarab of Muḥammad b. Aḥsan which the tribes looted when they entered San`ã' in 1948. Until then this Samsarab was the great business centre of the city, so the head watchman would appropriately be stationed here—this watch-tower might even have been established by al-Mutawakkîl or his nephew Muḥammad b. al-Jasan at the same time as the Samsarab. In his post the head watchman listens to all that is happening in the Market, and if he hears a disturbance anywhere in the market he dispatches one of his men to see what is happening.

Certain particulars relating to the Shaykh al-Layl's duties are provided by al-Sayâjî. 57 First he has complete control/jurisdiction (zâliyyah) during the night only. He must inspect (rafaqad) the shops (hânsîn) and warehouses (samātir al-tiṣâr) which he looks to see how each shop door is locked 54 and at the locks (aqâlî) for sometimes there are to be found those that have been left unlocked, or upon which padlocks, through forgetfulness, have not been set. It is the duty of the Shaykh al-Layl to lock and padlock them. For this he is entitled to a special fee/fine (adab) which he receives from the persons guilty of such carelessness. The Ghuthaymi padlock 59 is still very much in evidence in San`ã' as also the locally made bolt and the long metal keys for some types of lock.
Al-Sayâghi adds that he has the privilege of dealing (qublah) plus the resultant fee (yakh) in some of the markets, like the fee for settling a deal in charcoal (Giyd pulbat al-sand), to which, up to the present date (1963), he is entitled and such matters as that, though the particulars of which I cannot upon no information. Qâdi ‘Ali al-Akwea informed me that the watchmen (haras) nowadays act as porters for goods (qalâm).

Qâdi Ismâ‘îl’s view is that the ‘haras’ are present throughout the Qânûn are not tribesmen—they carry a stick—which is not considered a tribal weapon in south Arabia, but of course they wear their daggers (janâbi). He thought there would be a watchman for each Shan‘î market. Administratively, says al-Sayâghi, watch duties (hirâsah), the organization, posting of the watchmen, execution of their duties, and stipends (ma‘âshât) still remain, today, follow the pattern of the Qânûn without governments (duwal) interfering with it (the Qânûn) except in the way of assistance (bi-l-ma‘âshât) —nor do they interfere in the affairs of the Shaykh al-Layl in charge of the watchmen. The watchmen come under execution of their duties, and stipends (ma‘âshât) still, today, up to the present date (1964), he is entitled and such matters as that, about the particulars of which I came upon no information’. 60

This Policeman certainly was of the list of those who are considered a tribal weapon in south Arabia, but of course they wear their daggers (janâbi). He seems to have played at intrigue with the various Imams who tried to gain control of San‘a’. He enjoyed favour with the Turks after the second Ottoman occupation of San‘a’, and ordered them to destroy al-Manâir’s house in Harat al-Mashâyikh. Al-Sayâghi further suggests that the watch (hirâsah) arrangements might have been intended to assist the city to govern itself under temporary weaknesses in governments and to place the responsibility for this upon the Masâhiyyah and Shaykh al-Mashâyikh of Shan‘î. He takes as cases in point the time of A‘mad al-Hâymi and the Shaykh of Shan‘î Mu‘âsin bin Mu‘âsin (ob. 1298/1881), since both men preserved the city from tribal attacks until the government came and the Imam’s authority was affirmed. In view of the necessity for guarding the town against outbreaks of fire which seems to be at least one reason in Mutawakkil’s time for maintaining the watch, and because the merchants do not sleep in their shops but live outside the Markets—in the case of the Jews as far away as Qâ’s al-Yahûd, the town must always have needed policing by night in this way. In late 1974 after an outbreak of large robberies in Shan‘î Market some of the proprietors of shops took the precaution of sleeping in them at night for a while, instead of returning to their homes. It seems to me that the hirâsah arrangements were intended merely for these immediate needs of Shan‘î and other cities of the Yemen.

The Police (Shurţah)

A few casual references in the histories reveal the existence of police (shurâtah) in San‘a’ and other towns during the 12th/18th century but nothing is recorded about their organization or responsibilities, or of their relation to the night watchmen or other particulars. One revealing story does however give some indication of how the police operated.

In the days of al-Manâir al-Husayn (mid 12th/18th century) a well-known person of San‘a’ was found lying murdered in the streets of San‘a’, and the Imam said to his Chief of Police (qâshâb al-Shurtah), al-Qubay, ‘but the watchmen would not come upon him if he did not bring him the murderer. Al-Qubay, apprehensive of what might happen to him, went to a Sayyid renowned for his skill in discovering secret hidden things, thefts, and for magic (sha‘badhah)—this latter perhaps better rendered as sleight of hand. Such persons, let it be remarked, practiced for instance in al-Mukallâ in our own days and probably still do. This Sayyid certainly had many of the qualities of a confidence trickster! By sheer chance this Sayyid had seen three men with drawn weapons and on learning of the murder from al-Qubay he guessed that they were the guilty persons. So he went through a sort of necromantic performance in front of the shurî, quartering San‘a’, until he told him that the murderer had taken place in the direction of the lane in which he had seen the three men. The policeman, who was one of the youngest persons and best informed about malefactors and hidden affairs, remembered there was a woman of the prostitutes there frequented by a group of known wrongdoers. So he hastened to enter the woman’s house where he found traces of blood, and he dealt with the men by cunning (iyâsah) until they confessed.

This policeman, Mu‘âd al-Qubay who died in 1162/1750, evidently possessed a personality unusual enough to win him notice in Zahrâr’s collection of biographies—a unique distinction for a policeman! Among the duties with which he was charged, was to arrest al-Mutawakkil bin al-Qâsim al-Qubay when the granaries (makhâzin) became empty and no rations were supplied, and for magic (sha‘badhah), and sleight of hand. Ibid, II, 418, relates of a Kawkabân Sayyid of the 12th/18th century who had ‘a strong hand in ‘ilm al-falak wa‘-stikhrâj al-khabâyâ wa‘-l-sarigât (astronomy) and described the place in which a stolen object was. Nevertheless, the Sayyid was a woman of the prostitutes there frequented by a group of known wrongdoers. So he hastened to enter the woman’s house where he found traces of blood, and he dealt with the men by cunning (iyâsah) until they confessed.

During the second Ottoman occupation of San‘a’, an Arab gendarmerie, the za‘tât (al-Qadîyiyâth) was formed under Turkish officers with its headquarters there. A policeman (shurti) was called Qânûn because of the brass plate he wore on the front of the neck with this engraved on it: ‘Nu‘lîzâr’ records that on entering San‘a’ a policeman took away the weapons of our soldiers and ‘wrote down our names’, for only the troops and guards (summar) of San‘a’ are permitted to bear arms in the city. This was also the case in British Aden at one time, and the Dar al-Salah, before a ‘malalâ, retained its name long after weapons had ceased to be held there till the tribesmen left the city again. It was a rule observed probably in most south Arabian cities. Women caused to adulterate, and presumably those guilty of other misdemeanors were taken, and still are, to the women’s prison called Bâzir al-Zawgabi (the verb zawgab means tagahhab) near Qâşr al-Sâlah—al-Zawgabi is the proper name of a tribesman it is thought—but a woman goledar is in charge of this prison.
Prostitutes are taken there. They use to have their heads shaved and were beaten. Formerly the prostitute used to be paraded in the streets, at quite ordinary times, as indeed I noticed with Sayf al-Islam al-Hasan at al-Kitaf in 1964. These were not blown from watchtowers (dawâ'ir al-`amâr), where the trumpets (yadribû bawrazân) used to be by message. At the `id al-Nair, public messages were formerly made by tansirah (pl., tanâsir), by lighting fires in the mountainous districts at, for example, the north and south and in the area of Masjid Dawiid and Masjid al-Shahidayn, on the east and west. Most of the tribes were to be found round about the Sûq al-Bagar or Market when they were in San`ã'. In the city itself a `zâhirah commences with the words, `Ya man samu'a `tâ`lû-`dîn, i.e., `O you who hear the proclamation, bless him...'. This blessing—of the Prophet Mu`hammad—also is part of the formula of proclamations in Hadramawt. 69 70

In Ar`ab the herald is of the dawshân category but it is possible to marry off these women. We made no enquiries into the sensitive question of prostitution, but we did hear that Yemeni prisons are sometimes given names that reveal a sort of grim humour; there is al-Zâ`ir at Ibb—the Chider, probably so named after a Qur`anic verse, the prison of Haddâ is al-Murîdî, the Restraint—perhaps because it was expected to restrain hotheads and the contumacious, al-Jânîh in Sûdah which—now and then, even at the present day. This is described by Rossi. 71

If someone commits adultery (zim`a) they seize him (yashbih-unh) and take him to the Governor (`Amil). The Governor writes to the Imam, and the Imam orders him to be bound and that they should make the rounds (yidardahû) with him. The governor (mudîr) of the prison fetters him and takes soldiers and a muzayyin with him. The (muzayyin) puts a drum on him and they beat it. The children call out, `This year is your lunch (ghadâ). In passing it may be remarked that a garawânah is a big copper pot (dust) used as a drum by children or troops.

Public Proclamations

Proclamations (zâhirah) used, at least up to fairly recent times, to be made publicly in San`ã', mostly in the area of Sûq al-Bagar, near Hammâm al-Sûq, between the Filayhi and Jami` San`ã', on the north and south and in the area of Masjid Dawiûd and Masjid al-Shahidiyyun, on the east and west. Most of the tribes were to be found round about the Sûq al-Bagar or Market when they were in San`ã'. In the city itself a `zâhirah commences with the words, `Ya man samu'a `tâ`lû-`dîn, i.e., `O you who hear the proclamation, bless him...'. This blessing—of the Prophet Mu`ammad—is also part of the formula of proclamations in Hadramawt. 69 70

Public Parading (tashhir) of Offenders against the Law

A curious San`ã' custom is the public parading of offenders and is part of the ta`zir, i.e., the punishment lesser than the hadd punishment which is fixed by statute. The assessing (tashhir) of it is in accordance with the opinion of the hâkim (yarja `i`la ra'y al-hâkim), i.e., the qâdi. Qâdi Isma`il has recorded a proverb, `Dardahû bi `ala `l-shawari` kulli-ha, wa-hâdha `l-shari` ma `âdû-sh, i.e., `Last year is your round all the streets, so this one street (extra) is no mountain pass (to me after that)! That Qâdi says that people mock him as he passes and shout against him in `ay (rhyming prose), appropriate to his offence. On such occasions as I have seen an offender paraded in this way, accompanied by a soldier with a loud hailer, it seemed to me that the people in the streets paid little or no attention to the prisoner. Al-Kirmîî 72 thinks the offender is usually a drunk, and the parading takes place after a whipping, while Nazîh 73 saw children following the parade of a drunk at Hodeidah, mocking him with shouts of `Bakh bakh ya Sharih al-khâm!

The public parading of the thief (zirîq) and fornicator (zawî) is also known as hîmâr (the action being `atumimah, but this is quite different from a political parading (dirâdâh tiyîsî) of the sort which Sayyid Ahmad al-Shami 74 and his companions underwent after the failure of the Wazir house bid for power in 1948 and the assassination of Imam Yahya. They wore a wooden handcuff and were subjected to the abuse of the San`ã' mob.

Billeting Tribes in the Houses of San`ã' Townsfolk

One of the oppressive acts of his predecessors which were removed by the Ottoman Governor, Murâd Pasha, (who left the Yemen in 1958) was the stopping of Turkish troops staying in the houses of San`ã' by force. 68 The Qâr al-San`ã' indeed looks large enough to accommodate considerable numbers of men, but, during the second Ottoman occupation, the `Urjî, a series of large barracks, was constructed south of the town, and

69 Al-Mubarrad, al-Kûmil, Cairo, 1937-56, 935 pàsàm.
71 L’Arabo parlato, 92, with some slips.
72 Imperative, ishbah, catch!
73 Reading sanah for sannah. It means sanat al-hukm, the year of judgement, or the year of judgement for men, but, during the second Ottoman occupation, the `Urjî, a series of large barracks, was constructed south of the town, and
74 Qâdî says that people mock him as he passes and shout against him in `ay (rhyming prose), appropriate to his offence. On such occasions as I have seen an offender paraded in this way, accompanied by a soldier with a loud hailer, it seemed to me that the people in the streets paid little or no attention to the prisoner. Al-Kirmîî 72 thinks the offender is usually a drunk, and the parading takes place after a whipping, while Nazîh 73 saw children following the parade of a drunk at Hodeidah, mocking him with shouts of `Bakh bakh ya Sharih al-khâm!

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77 Unpublished.
78 In notes to his edition of al-`Arshi, Bulûgh al-marâm, 422.
79 `Ilî, 28.
these remain in full occupation by Yemeni troops today.

In the second quarter of the 12th/18th century however, during the reigns of the Imams al-Mutawakkil Qasim and his son al-Manṣūr, the tribes of Ḥashid and Bakil used to lodge in houses of the townfolk of San`ā', and they were directed (ṣuṣraṣa) to stay.52 Zabārah53 says that when troops (ṣuṣraṣa) arrived certain houses were assigned for them in which to dwell and they used to crowd the people of the house. In the Yemen the troops were, and can still be, tribal contingents summoned by an Imām or Government, and just as visitors to a tribal district stay in the house of the local musayyin so, by extension, the tribesmen might perhaps be billeted on citizens of San`ā'.

This practice drew a protest—part of a long list54 of representations against the administrative practices of the ruling house—from the famous scholar Muḥammad b. Isḥāq al-Amīr in Shahārah, in a letter to al-Manṣūr al-Ḥusayn b. al-Mutawakkil in the year 1146/1733. This he had endorsed with the signatures (al-mārāṣ) of the ulema of Shahārah, Ḥuth and Sa`dah, and sent to the ulema of San`ā' who approved it and presented it to al-Manṣūr.

The billeting was not however abandoned until the accession of al-Mahdī `Abbas in 1161/1748 along with other abuses.55 He removed (compulsory) carriages56 (of goods) imposed on the people, it being levied (ṣuṣraṣa) on the merchants, a group of them having been compelled (to go with) the troops, and he prohibited the commandeering of camels (ṣuṣraṣa al-jīmāl), removing part of the offences (jīmāl) against the people.57 al-Mahdī58 is stated to have been moved to take this measure by a sight he had witnessed in the days of the Imām al-Manṣūr when al-Qubay`'s policemen were ejecting a woman from her house near Masjid al-Jadid in San`ā'. The woman had just given birth and had been crying at being put out of her house. al-Mahdī went to the house of the local muzayyin so, by extension, the tribesmen might perhaps be billeted on citizens of San`ā'.

When al-Mahdī took over the Caliphate he prohibited the billeting of the tribes on the houses of the people of San`ā'.59 So the headmen (ṣuṣrāṣ) of Ḥashid and Bakil bought houses in San`ā' for themselves, and mosques in San`ā' abandoned, which were many, were turned over60 to the other tribes arriving in San`ā'. If, on account of the multitude of tribes conditions made it necessary, they were lodged in Masjid `Aqīl and al-Madhhab, etc.

**Waqf (Endowment)**

Waqf (pl. awqāf) is a term referring to property endowed permanently for a religious or charitable purpose.61 Al-Mu'taḍāq defines it as al-tābil li-illāh, i.e., its real owner is Allāh.62 The specific purpose for which waqf is danated is termed maqraṣ or usfurṣ. Waqf property cannot be transferred, sold or mortgaged except in rare cases. The usufruct if specified by a donor can only be altered if a preponderant weal/interest (maṣlahah) requires.

Waqf pays no tax except zabārah which is deducted before the income is shared among the beneficiaries. Some two thirds of San`ā' is waqf of one category or another, and baths and samsarahs almost invariably so, as are many shops. It is therefore important to understand why so much of the city properties are held in this way. On putting this question to Husayn al-ʿAmri he suggested that in the case of a family waqf (waqf al-dhunriyya) the family would benefit from the income of land which could not be divided or sold, and the heirs would not be able to waste their substance.63 Pious persons did of course donate waqfs for religious reasons, but a further reason was that it safe-guarded the waqf from being taken away from the family.

Dr. al-Ṭayyib Zayn al-ʿAbidin64 distinguishes five general types of waqf:

1. **Waqf al-dākhili (The Internal Waqf) and waqf al-aṣṣafī.**

   The entire income of this category of waqf is devoted to maintaining existing mosques or building new ones, and forms the bulk of the revenue of the present day Ministry of Awqāf.

2. **Waqf al-khabarji (The External Waqf).**

   This is controlled by a member of the donor’s family, the Ministry nowadays supervising to ensure that the beneficiaries receive their rightful shares. The Ministry receives five per cent and the remainder is distributed among the donor’s relatives in accordance with the distribution laid down by the sharī’ah for inheritance.

3. **Waqf al-nasīyy (The Trustee’s Waqf).**

   No part of it is given to the Awqāf but the donor specifies a particular pious activity, usually a mosque, to be maintained. The rest of the income is distributed among the relatives according to the law of inheritance. The Ministry hardly interferes in this waqf; it is controlled by a trustee, nasiyya, usually the eldest member of the family, named by the donor. The Awqāf appoints a supervisor to keep a registry of the land and to settle cases of dispute, for which he receives two and a half per cent of the income. Through this and the preceding waqf some tribes attempt to exclude women from inheritance65 by dedicating the waqf to their male descendants. Imām Yāḥyā, and later the Ministry of Justice, ruled against the validity of such an arrangement.

4. **Waqf al-muthalālah (The Three (tenths) Waqf).**

   It derives its title from the fact that three tenths of its income is paid to...
the State, one tenth as zakât and two tenths for the Awgâf, to use for some religious function. The lands of this waqf are transferable by sale if the new owner accepts that he should honour the previous arrangement and on the understanding that he has bought only the utility of the land.

5 Muhallal al-Haramayn (The Three (tenths) of the Holy Cities). This resembles the previous type, except that two tenths go to Mecca and Medina instead of to the Yemeni Awqâf.

The income of the San`a’ district (liwā’), at Yemeni riyāls 1,933,912 in 1972-73, was five times that of Hodeidah.97 There are of course waqfs outside the city in the countryside, the income of which goes towards maintaining certain San`a’ mosques.

Huṣayn al-`Amri writes98 as follows on the issue of the validity of a waqf:

The donor of waqf (al-`awfāq) may adopt more than one way of making his waqf. This has led the ulema of the Yemen, like other Muslim ulema, to form independent judgements (yujahdihūn) over cases (qadāyā) of waqf and the rendering (waqfīyyah) inalienable in such as lands and houses for the good of those benefiting by them, or for the objects for which they have been constituted waqf. Stipulations for the validity of the waqf fall into three categories—those relating to the actual property donated as waqf (al-`ayn al-mawqûfah) and that relating to the disposal of the income of the waqf (al-masraf).

The ulema are in consensus of opinion that the stipulations relating to the waqf donor are five—whether he be an adult (takîf), a Muslim, (donating of) free will (taklîf), of his private possession (mîfik), and that he renounce the right of disposal (iflîq al-tasarruf).

The stipulation relating to the property donated as waqf (al-`awfāq) is the validity of enjoying the usufruct while the property donated remains intact in perpetuity (pihāt al-imtâjā ‘alî ma’a baqā’-‘ayn-hi). Waqf of consumables like gold and silver coin, food, etc., is invalid.

With regard to the third and last stipulation which concerns the disposal (al-masraf) of the income of the waqf, the ulema are agreed that it is invalid to create a waqf which includes [inferences as to how] its income is to be spent—except in one of two instances—one of which is that the usufruct be restricted to the beneficiaries and (defining) what the share of each of them is. The second (instance) in which [the aforementioned] is valid, even though no restriction be made, but the donor of the waqf mentions it, is by inserting/ensuring the relationship (yajtahidūna) over cases (gadaya) of waqf and the rendering (waqfīyyah) inalienable in such as lands and houses for the good of those benefiting by them, or for the objects for which they have been constituted waqf. Stipulations for the validity of the waqf fall into three categories—those relating to the actual property donated as waqf (al-`ayn al-mawqûfah) and that relating to the disposal of the income of the waqf (al-masraf).

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When a waqf is sold half of the price of the land constituting the waqf (qimat `ayn al-`awfāq) is paid to the Waqf, and the other half divided between ‘the hand (al-yad), i.e. the owner(s) by inheritance (wirathah) of the entitlement to the waqf (waqfīyyah) and the cultivator or the qabih in return for the work which he has carried out (muqabil al-amal al-adlī gama `bi-hi).’

The term gâfâyah (pl. gâfâyah) has a long history, but in past time an Imam would, in his capacity as Imam to do so, take over waqf properties of, for example, a ruined mosque, and any such cases where the income was not being or could not be properly applied, and make a property of his own out of them, a

97 The role of Islam, op. cit., p. 227.
99 This phrase seems to mean the relationship of the expending of the waqf income to certain people.
100 Nashr al-`arf, II, 8.
101 See pp. 176, n. 155.
103 See pp. 236-250.
Some of the waqf now administered along with al-Waqf al-Dakhili would be lands belonging to the Hamid al-Din house, sequestrated after 1662. \(\text{Zabarah}^{104}\) writing of the second Ottoman occupation calls the waqf the estates/lands of the Treasury (diyya' Bayt al-Mal) and complains that they were appropriated by the Turks. The Bayt al-Mal always had properties of its own known as Amlak al-Dawlah.

The Jami’ Mosque contains a document of the highest importance for the history of San`a’, the register, usually called Miswaqdat Sinan, of the Turkish Pasha of the first Ottoman occupation (1013-16/1604-07). ‘He it was’, says Yahya b. al-Husayn,\(^{108}\) who compiled a comprehensive roll (daftar jamî`) of the waqf of San`a’, and commanded the qadî to rule on its validity—which they did. He appointed a number of the ulema to bear witness to this roll, including the very learned Sayyid Muhammad b. Iziz al-Din al-Mu’ayyadi and others. One of his merits was his refraining from [taking from the income of] the waqf, and made this a return (marjû`) of some of those holding office or working for the Waqf (ahl al-mswaddat—this did not happen with anyone before him). In December 1973 I saw the Miswaqdat Sinan \(^{107}\) in the Chancellery of the Jâmi`, the Qubbah, which contains only modern furniture and steel cupboards. It is a long, narrow but thick volume nicely bound in probably contemporary plum-coloured leather with an embossed design in the middle of the cover. The paper is polished yellow-brown or buff colour and the writing beautiful and clear to read.

Of Qâdi `Abdullah al-Arâsî (ob. 1187/1773), Zabarah\(^{108}\) notes that ‘all the awqaf of the Yemen were brought under him and he administered them well, dealing with all in accordance with the miswaqdat—this did not happen with anyone before him.\(^{109}\) A small incident in the chequered history of the awqaf is that when Sayyid Muhammad b. Hasan Ha`ah (ob. 1305/1887-8) was in charge of them he lowered the stipends (mugarrarât) of some of those holding office or working for the Waqf (ahi al-awqaf`if wa-mal al-Waqf) and made this a return (marjû`) for the Bayt al-Mal (Treasury of the Waqf)\. A ruefully humorous verse by afaq expresses the feelings of the employees:\(^{110}\)

\[\text{No man speaks well of the Waqf since the Shaykh [took charge].}\]

\[\text{O pity on the Waqf, the workers (there) and the students.}\]

\[\text{It has been productive of neither grain nor grapes}\]

\[\text{Since they planted a lump of firewood (Hayjah) in its land.}\]

The Turks of the second Ottoman occupation considered the Awqaf of sufficient prominence that a qadi, Abu ʻl-Dardâ`, in charge of al-Awqaf al-Khârijiyyah should attend the weekly meetings of the Administrative Council in San`a’, it being the custom that the Nâqr attend with other members.\(^{111}\) Zabarah adds that ‘one of the regulations (qasah`in) of the Turkish Government was that the Mufti should attend the Administrative Council of the vilayet (Ma`lîs İdarát al-Wiliyåh) held on Mondays and the Mufti would give an account of the actions of the Jami’ and the Jami` the Mufti, the Mufti, the Inspector of al-Awqaf al-Khârijiyyah, the Daftarîr (Financial Secretary) and Maktûbî (Chief Secretary of the Province) and other members elected by the notables (dhausar) of the country should attend under the presidency of the Governor (Wali ʻl-Hukmâm) to review certain affairs of the vilayet.\(^{112}\)

What may be the earliest known waqf case in San`a’ has been published by Muhammad al-Akwa’ from an anonymous history.\(^{113}\) A certain Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ma`ads of San`a’ came to the ‘Abbâsid Caliph al-Must`ar (248-328/862-66) at Baghdad, stating that his ancestor Ma`ads b. Kahir al-Sabî`i had founded a waqf known as Ma`ads’ Garden (hazârîdah) and Vines (a`nâb), along with two ghâysîras irrigating them in Mi`hâlî fi Ujral\(^{114}\) and Khawwân at D bah, ‘for his children and their children as long as they beget and for a mosque—waqf, and awqaf which he built in the city of San`a’, and for the poor (ul-mawâqif tar-`lamakîn) if (their line) became extinct.’ He made the manager (waliyy) and the administrator of it (al-qâ`îm `l-umârâh-hi) a son of his called `Abdullah b. Ma`ads. Three individuals took the property from him by force and attempted to annul it and convert it from its purpose. ‘Abdullah took the case to the famous qadi of the ‘Abbâsid Caliph al-Rashîd in San`a’, Mutârrîf b. Mâzin, who decided the case in favour of its people and the mosque ad stwâqa`, which were to receive the half and eighth of it, and he assigned the remainder outright to the heritors of Ma`ads b. Kahir according to what they had inherited from him, confirming ‘Abdullah as realty and registering this in a register (siyall) which he caused people of probity to witness.’

After ‘Abdullah b. Ma`ads’ death the property was again seized by force, the judge’s decision rejected and the maintenance of the mosque and stwâqa` neglected till they fell to ruin. The Caliph wrote requesting that the matter be looked into and settled in a letter dated 249/863. In the document written by Mutârrîf b. Mâzin the bequest (tarkah) of Ma`ads was recorded as 1450 ½ dinars 32 dirhams in coin (ca`mi`, and the value of the two ghâysîras as 6356 ½ dinars.

As`ad b. Abî Yu`fur,\(^{115}\) in 232/944, ‘for the maintenance (amârah) of the Jami’ (of San`a’)’ bestowed it (tsa`uddaqa bi-hi') from the walled garden (hazirah) of Shâhîr and Ghây al-Rishah in Du`a` (Hamdân) of that which had come under division before his death and which he had bestowed, and he wrote the wording concerning it containing his ordering it in his life-time, added to what is provided of the yield (ghallah) of that, for its [the Jami’]s maintenance and the maintenance of that which comes within the same category, for looking after (tafâqqud) the mosque, a thousand dinars, and that is ten thousand dinars. As`ad’s will also included a thousand dinars for the heirs of the Zaydi Imam al-Nâqr (ob. 329/937) and the rest of the ‘Alawîs—the text seems to say that the heirs of al-Nâqr who are house-bound and receive no support are intended.

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Among the documents embodying qādis' decisions in the type of case known as mu'amalat, transactions, al-Akwa\textsuperscript{117} reproduces that of a shop of which a charitable gift has been made (ḥāmil ṣadaqāt) in the market known as Sūq al-Kharrāzīn,\textsuperscript{118} i.e., the Workers in Leather, the income of which is paid to the mosque known as Ya'la 'l-Sammân (the Oil-seller), then as Masjid al-Hindī, and to the sāqātāt at 'Aish al-Sulīl\textsuperscript{119}—this house was a waqf for the Muslim poor of San'ā'. The qādis of San'ā', in 31/792, decided that this property delimited in the sījil before him was waqf. 'Aish is clearly the ghayl discussed already (p.20a) which therefore must still have been in use at this time.

A document dated Rabī' I, 766/December, 1364, is quoted by Zubārān\textsuperscript{120} from the text in the Dārāt al-Awqāf. It confirms a waqf first made by an amīr of San'ā', one of the Ḥamāzah Sayyids of the Jawf, 'Abdullāh b. 'Ali b. Dawūd, and is drawn up by the Ḥākim of San'ā' at a later time and witnessed by fourteen men of probity (tālīl).

The donation was the whole of the village, in ruins at the time, known as Qayrat 'Aṣīr, with all its upper ghayl known as Ghayl 'Aṣīr and the lower (ghayl) known as Sabī by name, all its three wells, all the farms (dīyāt) and arabic lands (ṭayyim musdar-ī) in the domain (daqā'ī) that has been mentioned and the rest of the estate (ṣāqāt), and the whole of its tillage (harth), all of it adjacent part to part, formerly commonly known as al-Nûs yâh,\textsuperscript{121} Shāhadhawān the waqf now mentioned, this being at Jabal 'Aṣīr and its courses (maghrāb) of 'Asīr and the (mountain) sides (ṣawārid) draining into it and west of it, in the hands of 'Īyāl 'Uthmān, students (muta'allimûn) on the average of one third to the stationers of the sayyids the learned 'Imām 'Abdulwād b. Mu'tamim al-Sirājī. 'Abdullāh b. Dawūd laid down the condition that from the beginning of the revenues/returns (ghallah) maintenance of its fixtures ('amārat ushā-h)\textsuperscript{122} should be commenced, and its ghayl and wells made to yield abundance of water, and whatever is requiring of repair, maintenance and looking after, and any surplus revenue (ghallah) from it after all that in any year is to be expected (ṣurāf) in thirds equally (apportioned).

A third is for the poor Sayyids (qu'd āl-Ashrah āl-Fāṭimiy-yn) and the other two thirds to provide means of subsistence (taw'm) at Masjid al-Jamī' in the city of San'ā'; one of these two thirds is for the ulema, students (muṣirāt-allāh), those who instruct and those who learn (al-muṣafūn wāz-ī-mustāfūn), permanently at the afore-said Jamī', by teaching reading/reticual (şirā') of the Qur'ān and reading (şirā') in the afore-said Jamī'. The remaining third is for those wayfarers who come to the afore-said Jamī', each wayfarer to have supper or lunch (asūl um ghadâ'). Any surplus from this last third is to be spent on the needy of the city afore-said, and to (illā) those learned people who go to 'Asīr village to teach reading and read the Qur'ān, as the person in charge (al-mustanwâlī) thinks appropriate. He assigned the charge (ṣawārid) and overseeing of all this to the gā'īm (person in charge) of the afore-said mosque and its properties (amīlāt), one of the virtuous Muslims in the afore-said city who have charge of the affairs of the religion.

Dr. al-'Ṭayyib Zayn al-'Abidīn\textsuperscript{123} notes that the official estimate of the waqf-land is between fifteen to twenty per cent of all the agricultural land in the country. 'An optimistic estimate is that seventy per cent of the agricultural land surrounding San'ā' is waqf. Since waqf is not transferable and continues to grow by additional endowments it is not surprising that al-Awqāf has become the biggest landowner in the country.'

### Taxation

#### General

The history of taxation during the earliest centuries of the Islamic state is still full of problems to resolve, since the Arab administrators of conquered countries merely adopted already existing systems, then took ad hoc measures to deal with new situations and crises requiring a decision. The formulation of an Islamic theory of taxation, commencing even in the first Islamic century, but undergoing its most formative period under the early 'Abbāsids in Iraq, may be at variance with actual administrative practice even outside the main centres of Iraq itself. To understand ancient Islamic taxation in its fullest application it seems to the writer that a knowledge of the land and customary law of irrigation as they remain today are vital, but a knowledge of the latter is rarely devoted to illuminating the former.\textsuperscript{127}

The history of Islamic taxation in the Yemen should properly commence with a study of the pre-Islamic data provided by the ancient South Arabian inscriptions in 'Ḥimyar' characters. Then both Zaydī and Yemenī Shāfi`ī legal works must be surveyed in conjunction with the writings of the Yemenī historians. For the limited objective of attempting to ascertain how San'ā' was taxed during the Islamic era so detailed a study is manifestly impractical and this sketch merely touches upon such issues as have attracted the attention of the historians consulted, and mainly then, the Zaydi historians.

A government controlling the southern Yemen, i.e., the Shāfi`ī districts with the ports of Aden, Mocha and Zābid—the prosperity of each in relation to the other varying with current political circumstance—enjoys a favoured economic situation. Customs duties\textsuperscript{128} collected from foreign shipping, the revenue from which was carried to the southern capital Ta`izz four times a year with great pomp and ceremony\textsuperscript{129} was doubtless less unpopular by far as a form of taxation than agricultural taxes. From the latter is rarely devoted to illuminating the former.\textsuperscript{127}

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The Zaydi Ímãns in San`ã and Šan`ã during the medieval period, not controlling ports, must rely on taxing the countryside and extracting what they could from such cities as they held. To judge by Zaydi practice under the Íhamid al-Dín they probably collected taxes from the Zaydi tribes through the Shaykh al-Qumã, and these certainly deduct a muwasah—a proportion as a recompense. A very significant change in the application of revenue collection method is chronicled under the year 1077/1666, in the tribal territory of al-Haymah west of San`ã.

The Ímãm (al-Mutawakkîl b. Ismã'î) established the majba (tax) and farming (domânah) [of tax by shaykhs] on the district of al-Haymah when, previously, what was charged (masuq-e-hu), on it (went) to the Ímãm by local assessment (bi-l-âmãnah) on account of precedents (susaâli) which they had made with al-Mu`ayyad (1011-13/1602-4) whereby they considered themselves deserving of special favour, and in acknowledgement of the alliance (al-ta`qib wa-l-ta`qib il-l-ya`ad). Some of them were lax about the obligatory dues (al-hajaj al-sa`ib) and unaware that it is absolutely imperative— the public weal (maslakah) (herein) is evident, and the proof (da`il) that assessment (of crops etc., khars) (is obligatory) is clearly distinguished.

The Ímãm obviously preferred to have the revenues in the Haymah district farmed because this would bring in a more ample revenue than would accrue to the Treasury from a system of local self-assessment—which inevitably means that the area receives less than the land can reasonably bear. A case in point is that, in those parts of the Yemen to which assessment (bi-l-âmãnah) has been applied since 1962, the revenue receipts are said to have steeply declined. It looks as if, in the instance of al-Haymah, the Ímãm’s intention was to bring the district into line with other districts, abolishing the favoured position of the tribes there.

It is in the nature of governments as a rule, never to have sufficient financial resources to achieve all that is desired of them. For the reasons advanced above the Zaydi Ímãns were chronically short of money. Their own internal squabbles apart, their own internal squabbles apart, they offered to levy the sum of 6,000 dinars on the Hashid and encountered a body of men assigned for service (li-rasm al-khidmah) ‘. It is in the nature of governments as a rule, never to have sufficient financial resources to achieve all that is desired of them. For the reasons advanced above the Zaydi Ímãns were chronically short of money. Their own internal squabbles apart, they offered to levy the sum of 6,000 dinars on the Hashid and encountered a body of men assigned for service (li-rasm al-khidmah) ‘.

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Zaydi Ílema, 135 who regarded either the way and purpose for which certain taxes were raised, or perhaps a given tax itself, as un-Islamic. The controversies are too detailed and the argument supported by too great a wealth of learning, for analytical discussion here, but the debate centred on taxes called mubâhah (sing., mubâh), 136 mubâhah duties paid on merchandise sold in the market, ma`ûnah (pl., ma`âwin) ‘aid’, and payment of sakãs, or the gift of lucrative assignments, to sayyids. Precedents to justify these are discovered in the practice of the first Zaydi Ímãm in the Yemen, al-Hadã. The Ímãm al-Manṣûr biliîah (ob. 614/1217) remarked that al-Hadã took the ma`ûnah and that led to his going out of Šan`ã because of the weakness of his condition. When he had left Šan`ã and he heard of the reprehensible things they did, he regretted that on account of taking ma`ûnah from them, and when God made him victorious in entering Šan`ã the second time he took the ma`ûnah and levied it (faragga-ha) on the people of Šan`ã to strengthen his troops and soldiers, 137

Other early authorities aver that in the case of ji`āh, usually rendered in English as ‘holy war’, the Ímãm has the right to impose a levy, citing the example again of al-Hadã who, “asked the people of Šan`ã, when (Ali) b. al-Fa`dh the heretic (al-mulhid) left (Šan`ã)”, for a quarter of their property (amwah)—thereby to defend it against the warring (kayd) of their enemy’, i.e. the Qa`dis. 138 The rulers in this period, not controlling ports, must rely on taxing the countryside so as to allot it to the Government Diwan; anyone desirous of this aims at a pipe of 6,000 dinars on the Hashid and Banu Mu`ammar country so long as the Ghuzz (Ayyûbids) had power in Šan`ã. 139 He also mentions a tax called al-khums, the fifth, imposed on territory which ‘oppressors tread’ (yata’û-hû `l-zâlimûn). When the Ghuzz (Ayyûbids) had made a particularly unwelcome raid upon al-Zâhir on the eve of the Fes-e, the ‘díqis of Hamdân said, 140

‘No one will protect us but a person of impregnability (dhû `amrû) like the Imam (al-Manṣûr) so we shall expend for him such and such a sum of money, and at his gate shall be such and such a body of men assigned for service (li-rasm al-khidmah)’. They offered to levy the sum of 6,000 dinars on the Hâshid and Banû Qamard confederations, but al-Manṣûr was informed that their tax (kharaj) ‘in the time of the oppressors’ had been 50,000 dinars and this he asked of them.

Brief allusion should be made here to an extraordinary innovation proposed by the Ayyûbîn sultan, Tughhtain, when he gained possession of the Yemen. He wished to buy all the land in the country so as to allot it to the Government Dîwân; anyone wishing to cultivate it would then rent it from the officials in the Dîwân—as it is in Egypt!” He got as far as sending out assessors (mutâbbîn) to value the land, though there was a great protest from the ulama, but Tughhtain died in 1535/1197 before he could attempt to put his scheme into execution. It was of course utterly
impractical, except, possibly, in some districts of the Lower Yemen only.148

Two other cases of the imposition of ma`ûnah-aid may be quoted—undoubtedly there are many more. In the year 650/1252
the Imam Al-Hajjaz al-Mahmoud, at the instance of the fort Bishah (of San`a') from a relative of the Rasulid sultan of Ta'izz, and distributed the cost of it (farraq thama-na-hu) over all his Imamlic territory, each adult male being charged five dirhms.142 Again, in 869/1464-5, when the first Tahirid sultan, Amir, was about to resume his attack on San`a', the Imam Mujaamad b. Nasir, asked the people of San`a' for 4,000`ugiyah of silver, for 'aid' (`anah) to perform the jihad.143 All this goes to show that the Imamacs considered fighting even a Muslim aggressor a part of jihad under certain conditions, and levied ma`ûnah-aid for such purpose.

It is recorded that, in the early 15th century, San`a', district, al-Sirr, al-Rabahah, the balad of Hamdan, Janb, and Dyafyan, and al-Bawayn paid a tax to the Rasulids in money and raisins (`ayn wa-zabib). In the year 1058/1648 controversies (mu`arrah) and a hausaun of the year 1058-9 (al-ma`aun al-adam) broke out between the Imam al-Mutawakkil Isma`il and the ulema of the time, concerning the taxes known as masuk, mutah, and zakawat; and one of his relatives questioned him about the monthly demands (al-ma`aun al-shahr-riyayah) which he made on the Lower Yemen and the reasons for making them. The Imam replied that it had come under the control of infidels (kuffar), and quoted the Zaydi law book al-Azkar to prove that he could take from it what he wished. As the country had only been occupied by the Ottoman Turks, and that about a quarter of a century earlier, the argument was obviously difficult for the ulema, or certain of them, to accept, as a justification for taxation not laid down in shari`ah.

The controversy is laid out in extenso by the author of al-Sirat al-Mutawakkilryjah,146 The view is proffered that in principle, whatever the Imam imposes on the people for a common interest (ma`lulah) of theirs is lawful, 'even the wages of the guards (jarf al-Jarrarin) to guard against fire, and the raising of walls (nash al-hurur) and gates of streets.' The Yemen, it is argued, requires an Imam to have many soldiers to compel the tribes to return things wrongfully taken (za`am`at) and make them pay the bloodwits (diyar). The Yemen is full of troubles (fitan), even if, during the rule of the Imam al-Mutawakkil, they have lessened because of the respect (haybah) for the Imam. He and the chiefs with him must have ample equipment to carry out their duties. Yemen is poor (qa`ir) and its taxes (sa`ibat), with regard to what goes to the soldiers (`askar), are only a little (ya`sr). The Yemen's disbursement (makhruij) is inadequate (to meet) what the soldiers alone are due. The product (ma`lul) of the Yemen has been totalled up along with what is due to the soldiers and it falls far short—how shall it be with the needs of others with obligatory rights, the writers (ahl al-ta`iff), the fujurad and mas`uk?148

The Imam's critics asserted that the poll-tax payable by the Jews (al-fitan) amounting to 70,000 went to a single person, and half of the income (khara`aj) of Aden, which is over a lac, went to another. (The Zaydi Imam is the recipient of the poll tax on Dhimmis, Jews, in the Yemen to produce such a sum! Aden was not known to have had a revenue (in those days) of over 12,000, most of its revenue going to pay the garrison and assistants, and the rest to meet what comes it, and to the roads of the hinterland (al-harb) and benefaction.149

The attack included the accusation150 that most of the Hashimites have insufficient to meet their needs in the way of food and clothing, and the hijrah151 of Al Yahya b. Yahya (Sayyids) are, all but a few, in the most pressing need. The Imam's reply was that these people receive from him whatever does not get, and if it is restricted to what the lists (boyanai) and registers (daffair) contain in the way of cloth (baza), cash (naqal) and grain (`ad`am m) in respect of stipend (tagir), fee (mawalad), and gifts (jibril)—more comes to them than what they are due.152 There is an attack on the Imam's relatives for monopolizing the properties of Allah under their control and not paying the Imam what he is due.153 A point which is to arise in later history also is the permissibility or otherwise of disbursing the zakat to the poor of the Banu Hashim, or, on account of a (public) advantage, to the rich among them.154 It is noteworthy that the Ijashim of San`a', the learned qadi and imam of the Jam` Mosque, Ibrahim b. Yahya al-Sab`ul,155 came down on the side of approval of aid to indigent Hashimites.

The revenues of the Treasury at this period are specified as ma`ûnah-aid, the fifths (abkhatn) on country formerly under 'oppressors', court fines (naqil), and the obligatory dues (al-hawai al-wajibat) such as zakawat and tithes (mahshar) on those people (liable to pay) them.156 That the Sayyids and others managed to retain a portion of what might have been dispensed as zakat emerges from a measure which the Imam Al-Mutawakkil al-Qasim decided upon in the year 1135/1722-3, namely to collect the dues and zakawat of those who were exempt from payment of tax (qatl va`tiq al-aghar),157 employing his minister, the learned fatiha, Ahmad al-Shijni, as intermediary. These exempt persons held written warrants (mu`adrat) in their possession from the Imams that they should disburse their zakawat to the poor, so numerous complaints were raised to Al-Mutawakkil (supporting) the remaining158 of the exempt persons' zakawat under their surveillance. He, however, paid no attention but determined to put his plan into execution and sent out valuators (khurrat) to the properties of the family of the Imam,159 the ulema, chiefs and all exempt persons. The Lord of Kawabian and others thereupon took action to disappach al-zakawat to Al-Mutawakkil without undergoing valuation (khiri). Al-Mutawakkil's action, however, created such a stir that a number of other notable Sayyids left al-Rawdah for Arhab, as a gesture of rebellion, and he had to abandon his plans. The great censor of morals, the learned Muhammad b. Isma`il al-Amir, far from applauding al-Mutawakkil over this issue, indited a qasidah158 attacking al-Shijni for corrupt practice, and favouritism in excluding the family of the Imam and powerful tribal chiefs from inclusion in the new measure. Zabarah sees the poem as attacking the empowering of al-Shijni to take away any property.159 The qasidah is in a fine piece of invective and of considerable social and historical interest. The question of administrative practices which the ulema considered unjustifiable in Islamic law was taken up by Muhammad b. Isma`il al-Amir in 1146/1733-4. When in Shaharah, he composed a long epistle
to the Imám al-Mansúr al-Husayn b. al-Mutawakkil in Šanʿaʾ
to which he persuaded the ulema of Sháhrah, Húth and Sádab
to append their signatures.162 In this he attacked the innovation
heresy (bid`ah) of the market taxes (mukûs), and majâbi and the
'detriment' (ṣarfîr) they caused, reiterating that it was prohibited
to receive them. He also criticized the assignment of fiefs
(ṣâkârât) to some 'Alawi Sáyyúdis who were of no general use,
and to the rich, the appointment of ignorant governors (ʿummal
and jâhkïms, the billeting (ṣafq) of persons arriving in Šanʿaʾ on
the houses of its inhabitants, the attachment of the assawî to
certain idle persons living in luxurious circumstances, the (silver)
dîrhams which had been struck, and the high (buildings) of the
Jews (taâwul al-Yahûd), etc. In 1181/1767-7 towards the end of
his life he was able to declare,164

> From their unlawful properties I have abstained,
No fief have I assumed. No tax on market trade,
Or yet, from any store, measure of corn obtained,
No complaint of store-man or tax-collector made.165

Whether or not he was influenced by the views of the said
Muhammad b. Ismâʿîl,166 the Amir of Kawkabân,167 some time
before the year 1162/1748, used to urge his father who had put
him in charge of Kawkabân, to collect only the legal dues
(ṣâkârât al-dâwîyyah) from the peasants (miyâsîyyah), without
the addition of what the government taxes (al-qâsinîn al-
dawîyyah) demanded, such as tax on merchandise (mukûs),
muʿûnât-aid, and the customary payments (al-muʿtâdât)168
which the former heads/chiefs had laid down. His father declined
to upset the system/order (nisâr), and to lower what was taken
from the full customary payments (kiṣfot al-muʿtâd) or to
cause a short-fall in the supplies of the districts. The son put
forward the counter-argument that justice would make the country
prosperous; so they agreed to experiment with a village, Hâbâbâh near Thâlî. This village used, after much injustice, to
produce annually 700 qadâh-measures of grain, accompanied by
great ill-feeding from the peasants. Its amil was ordered to
collect only the tithe (ṣâhr) from the threshing floors (ajrân). Next year
1,800 qadâhs were collected accompanied by goodwill, and in
the ensuing year over 2,000. This treatment was then extended
to the rest of the Kawkabân district and there was a great increase
in production. The whole country was brought into cultivation
when much of it had been uncultivated (gâlubâh)169 because of
oppression, and no place was left without being sown so that
even flood-beds (sawâil) and mountains were sown. Abundant
rains also followed.

Local Taxes on Šanʿaʾ City

The wealthy and merchant community of Šanʿaʾ, even its
inhabitants in general, throughout its history were inevitably

162 Ibid, I, 600.
163 By qâṣârî I think he means that easa`f property is made over to Sayyid
control.
164 Dinaw, op. cit., 265. Tatamnak can also mean simply 'arrogance'.
165 "'Alâfîya tu amwâz-ûnîm fu-âfû qur-ûn
Uyûf tu am ukr-mûn (read mul-ûn ?) min al-awâqî
cum kusây-am min ayya miyâsîn fa-lî
cum âhâmî min al-khãzâni wa-`l-sawwâgi.

The kayûd is, judging by other texts, an issue of grain from the Government
stores (mukâhûm). The complaint of the store-man may be explained from
Nâshir al-`arîf, I, 676, where the tax-collectors—the qâfî and the gâdâbî—
are restricted to a fowl to be killed for their supper as entertainment when
touring, and the short measure which those in charge of the (Government)
gross (gâlub) are required to use (mukâhûm) is prohibited. Since the poet accepts no kayûd he does not complain of short measure
The kayûd is not a term known to me, but cf. niyyâ in Qâsim Ghâlib, passion.
Another verse (Dinaw, 214) runs, You have permitted the taking of
customs (mukûs) in our land, and the proliferating (sunawîf) of them, wrong-
fully every mercenary.
167 Many scholars recognize that it is unfortunate that a volume, Ibn al-Amir
mâ-yûm-ûm yurid min kayûd šaʾaʾ al-Yamûn, by (mainly it is avowed)
Qâsim Ghâlib, but with other names included, n.d. and no place of publica-
tion mentioned, but which appeared about 1969, instead of doing justice to
this great scholar, is largely an exercise in anti-Islamic propaganda. Ibn

168 By
169 Diwân, op. cit., 265. Tatawwul can also mean simply `arrogance'.
171 The wealthy and merchant community of Sanʿaʾ, even its
inhabitants in general, throughout its history were inevitably
158

184 Barnamaj Hizb al-Ahrâr al-Yamani, Aden (Fatât al-Jazirah Press), no date

182 E. V. Stace, English Arabic vocabulary, bundah, bunad. Shay mayyit garib al-Mal, literally the Coffer of Money the Treasury how can we San`a’ -An Arabian Islamic City

(1) and their employees. He added that taxes collected in the guarding (hirāsah) of San`a’ and the cleaning of the town (masalih al-balad), roads, watch-service (tanzif). Another person told me that this tax on entry into the town was called zallah and was payable on every beast (‘ala kull qarîrah). Mukās, al-Ghaflârî confirmed, are gamûrîk, customs, and mawâ‘ûnah-aid, he averred, was bi‘l-rida, by choice or consent. Some of theulema considered that the Imam Ya‘hya was not upright (sâlih) because he took mukâs and the Yemeni Liberals in their Programme dated 1357/1938-9 asked Imam Ya‘hya for the abolishment of the customs (jamârik), and being content with the zakât on trading (tiyārah), holding thereby to the statutes (ashkâm) of the Mu’jamudan sharî‘ah. Another clause asks for ‘freedom of trading so that there should be no privilege (imtiyâz) in it for one apart from another’. Another clause demands ‘acceptance of amnânah (good faith) on the part of people in the matter of the open and private zakât (gâ‘irah wa-bâ‘îrah) which Allah made obligatory upon them’.

Ameen al-Rihani describes how these Government and Municipal taxes were collected in Ya‘hya’s time, at the Samsarat al-Baladiyyah, ‘A vast court with stalls and alcoves under arches on all sides, where scribes are writing in books and men of grave aspect everywhere are smoking mada`ahs. In the court and under the arches are piles of bales and boxes, and at one end are large scales with cannon-balls of various sizes and weights. “This is the Custom House of San`a’, says Abdul-Rahman. “Every loaded camel or mule or man entering through one of the seven gates of the city has to come here first to be weighed and cleared.” “The merchandise you mean,” said I, in a reassuring but probably not earlier than 1944.

185 I.e., self-assessment.


187 The role of Islam in the state, op. cit., 206.


than the Yemeni official looking for a regular income.

The imposition of *mukās* and *majābī* or other taxes hits hardest of course at the ordinary townman and farmer. The official and wealthy Yemenis, I am informed, had, and no doubt still have, ways of avoiding the full incidence of taxation. This medieval system is however tempered by charity, public and private, and not to be compared, even remotely, with the grinding oppression of the last years that takes place south of the Yemen Republic's border. My own guess would be that the strictly *shārīʿā* system of taxation, even if strictly operated, would not be sufficient, certainly today, to provide even a modest adequacy for the Government.¹⁹¹

Imām Yahyā’s sources of income were the *zakāt*, the income (*al-maʿāsh*) he drew from the Treasury (*Bayt al-Mal*) and his private property. He would take money from the Treasury to buy a consignment of arms (*aṣfaqat silāḥ*), sell the arms, take the profit and return the principal to the Treasury. The trade in arms was confined to Imām Yahyā (*maṣyūrah ʿalaʿl-Imām Yahyā*). He also received *jīzāyat al-Yahūd* and votive offerings from the tribes (*al-nudhūr min al-gabaʾil*). A tribesman would say, *ʿlaw tādla ʾl-ʿAllāh waad nadharī bi-l-Imām kādaʾahumakh samā*. If God gives me a boy I vow a *jaʿfīʿ* (if rich) of ghee to the Imām. Or if from a coffee-growing district he might say a *ṣinbīl qīr*.

He would manage to get past the guards by saying he had brought a *nadīr* to the Imām—who would receive it, saying *ʿAṣīra-h al-ʿAllāh*. This happened more in the earlier than the later days of his reign.

**The Watch-Tax**

A notable feature of the *Qānūn* or Statute of Sanʿā‘ is the stipulations it lays down for the provision of watchmen and/or of fleece-lined coats, that the Yemeni wears to keep out the bitter night cold of part of the year, for the Watch. Already in Document A (*Basic*) this duty is laid on certain crafts or professions, and it is extended in the Supplementary regulations. It is unlikely that any group provided actual coats, but only paid the levy for them in cash.

No mention is made of watch-tax to be paid by the Horse and Mule Market, Camel Market, Fodder Market, porters, woodchoppers, farriers, locksmiths, builders, potters, and certain declining trades in section 38 such as the barber, cupper, batman, and cotton-carder—this last included probably because it was largely, it might even have been exclusively, a Jewish craft. The only reason that can be suggested for the apparent exemption of these trades is that they had nothing to guard or worth guarding.

The *Qānūn* specifies that watch duties, additional to the watch-tax, must be performed as the town requires, by the Silk Market, Oil and Ghee Market, Coffee Market, Tobacco and Black Tobacco Markets, Rope Fibre Market, Grain Market, Raisin Market, Grape and Fruit Market, Meat Markets and dealers, Firewood Market, Cattle and Donkey Market, dyers and butchers, Brass Market, Sundal and Shoe Market, Pottery and Ovens Market. Sūq al-Halagah is rather imprecisely required to pay what other Markets pay. The commission agents (*dalālī*) are only to pay for the Watch, no charge for coats being mentioned. The wax-smelters pay the wages of the Watch, but the Raisin Market has, in addition to paying for the coats and providing men for the Watch, to pay the Shaykh of the Watch, as does the Cattle and Donkey Market.

Some trades and professions have to provide neither men nor money for the Watch, apart from the fleece-lined coats. For an obvious reason, that they come under the protection of the Muslim community, neither do the Jews or Bāniyāns.

The Jews of Sūq ‘Aqil paid their separate contributions towards the costs for the Watch, but it can only be supposed that if they had premises elsewhere and practised a craft assessed for watch-tax, they paid as ordinary Muslim members of the craft did. There is at least no statement to the contrary. If the document curtly referred to in section 2 as *al-Umm*¹⁹⁴ should contain a full and detailed set of provisions for the Watch duties and tax, as I think was probably the case, this question may have been dealt with there. Perhaps in the Cloth Market where each *ʿaṣīra* paid a fixed contribution, one *ʿaṣīra* might have been Jewish. On the other hand as the Bāniyāns are assessed as a single group the Jews may have also been assessed in the same way.

In the table that follows two contributions are relatively large, those of the Jews and Bāniyāns. This is doubtless in part to be related to the size of the Jewish community working in Sanʿā‘—the Jewish population of the city being estimated by Niebuhr¹⁹⁷ at 2,000, by Cruttenden¹⁹⁸ at 3,000, and in the present century even as high as 10,000. Niebuhr gives the Bāniyāns as about 125, and on the face of things they paid more than the undoubtedly far larger Jewish group in Sūq ‘Aqil.

### Distribution of Watch Duties and Taxes in Sanʿā‘ Markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Watch duties</th>
<th>Tax</th>
<th>Collection charge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cloth Market, each family¹⁹⁷</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resident wholesalers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individuals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>pay for the Watch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1 1/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥadjami Cloth Market</td>
<td>Watch duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 1/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission agents</td>
<td>Pay for the Watch¹⁹⁸</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2 1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wax-smelters</td>
<td>Wage for Watch</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siq al-Halāqaq</td>
<td>Pay as others</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Ghee Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>41 1/2</td>
<td>2 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee Husk Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>12 1/2</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Tobacco Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>3 1/2</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope Fibre Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1 1/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>2 1/2</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raisin Market</td>
<td>Watch duties, pay Shaykh of Watch</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henna Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>2 1/4</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl. Qīl Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grape and Fruit Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat, Sheep and Goat Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewood Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle and Donkey Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>9 1/2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pay Head of Watch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyers and Butchers</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>3 1/8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scavengers Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>5 1/2</td>
<td>5/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailors</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADDLERS</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakers</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>15/16</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee-Ins</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>1 1/4</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse-keepers</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmiths’ Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>2 1/2</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter’s Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunsmiths’ Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandal and Shoemakers’ Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>6 1/2</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews of Sūq ‘Aqil</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2 3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Bāniyāns</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pottery, Ovens, Market</td>
<td>Watch duties</td>
<td>78 1/2</td>
<td>1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>347 3/16</td>
<td>25 15/16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

191 Professor Hans Kroeze's current study of *aṣārūr* documents in Sanʿā' should presumably place us in a better position to comment on the whole taxation problem.
193 See p. 228. Nowadays however this craft is carried on by Muslim Sanʿānīs and seems to have the same status as any other work.
194 This is probably to be identified with the document alluded to in section 2 as *al-Umm*.
195 Descriptions, 1, 336.
196 *Journey from Mecca to Sanʿā‘*, 285. Contradient’s figure seems to refer to the artisans, i.e., the adult males, and one should probably take Niebuhr’s figure in the same sense.
197 *Ar. ḍalālī*.
198 I.e., the tax in col. 3, is for the Watch.
To the totals above would have to be added what the Cloth Market pays, but since the payments required of it as a whole are not specified but only what individuals or groups must contribute, this is not possible. In two cases above the tax paid is specifically stated to be for the Watch, not for the fleece-lined coats, but this might simply be careless wording. There seems to be no consistency in the rate charged for collection as between one market and another.

Al-Sayāghi⁹⁹ points out that the Municipality (Baladiyyah) has recently introduced garrīs (qāri, pl., qawāri) to cart away sweepings from the markets and the streets—this is an arrangement not known to the Qānūn. To pay for this service the Municipality has imposed a new tax, and the two imposts for the upkeep of both garrīs and watch are known as 'Qasāri wa-jurum.' When I saw qār branches and leaves being collected by individuals in the Market I was a little surprised to learn that these are not considered rubbish, but are fed to animals.

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⁹⁹ Preface to his Qānūn San'a', 278.
Chapter 12
The Market, Business Life, Occupations, the Legality and Sale of Stimulants

Proverbs and the Market

The markets in the Yemen are said to be the property of the people of the villages (manâšikah al-âbi al-qarâ') at which they are held, but in the literature one notices that markets were very often under the protection of a tribal lord. Al-Wâsi'i maintains that the Yemen, throughout the whole country, follows San'â'i prices with regard to the cheapness or expensiveness of commodities, and that the same is true of the rains, if they are abundant over San'â' then the whole country enjoys good rains, but if scanty then it suffers with the capital.

The first essential for a market is security, for if there is fighting in the suq the pottery-sellers get the shit (al-darb fi 'l-suq wa-'l-kharâ 'ind al-maddârin)—their pots which are exposed for sale lying in heaps in the open street get smashed in the melee. A Bara' proverb runs, 'Fighting with long knives but not battling in the markets (darb al-tabâyuk wa-lâ dâihu fî 'l-suq).' Some ulema hold that it detracts from one's honour to fight in the market.1

'The market is the store-house of a reliable man (in honouring his debts) (Al-suq mikhaṣṣ al-wâāj). If he wants to buy something from the market but has not got sufficient money merchants will readily give him credit. Alsuq abî marzûq,2 seems to mean that a market is a much better place in which to trade than to go peddling, and it contains everything. 'Do not ask about the price when you are coming to the market (Lâ tas'al `an al-suq ant l--suq).' The market can't be hidden in a box (kalâm al-suq mà yiṭkhâbbâ fî l--sundâq). A mean/miserly man comes back from the market empty-handed (Al-hâdhiq yikhrij min al-suq 'afal).3

Sûq al-Halâqaq

Al-Halâqaq10 is described as 'the heart of the Market (qalb al-Suq). ' Closely associated with it is the little Mosque of 'Ali, said to be named after 'Ali b. Abi Tâlib who became the fourth Caliph of Islam, and is stated by the early 10th/15th century historian Qurrat al-`uyûn to have entered San'â'.41 The same source appears to be responsible for the tale that the lady Umm Sab'âd al-Buzurgiyyah5 in whose house he lodged, became his first convert, demolished her house, and turned the site into a mosque. As however al-Râzi,6 writing in the first half of the 9th/11th century, knows neither the Mosque of 'Ali, nor any such story associated with this lady who belonged to the Persian Abnâ' of San'â', the association with 'Ali looks like a legend that developed in a much later age.7 The Mosque of 'Ali seems to have some importance to the Fâtimi-Tayyibis. Nevertheless the place itself has had some special significance for San'ânis even if this be now forgotten, and the author of al-Badr al-muzil6 declares, 'It (the Mosque of 'Ali) is in the Sûq al-Halâqaq, and the people of San'â' have a firm belief (tâqatâd) in the virtue (fadl) of this mosque and in prayer in it. In this market called al-Halâqaq prayer (du'â) is accepted (mujâbd).'

In this market, he continues, china-ware (jînî) of its various sorts is sold, and kharas, i.e., miscellaneous small wares.8 (I was told in 1972 that kharas and misqâjâh second-hand goods are still sold there). The people of San'â' believe (ya`tagidûn) that in those things there is good fortune (barakah) in this market. Any merchant (tâjir) or vendor (bâ'i) who first of all engages in trading in such things in this market—his trading flourishes and he profits and gains—then he transfers to trading in the other markets.

Al-Halâqaq lies on the eastern edge of the hillock in San'â', which may conceal the ruins of important ancient buildings. Old stones of some size have been dug up near it, and local people suggest it was a corner (rukn) of Ghumdân. It has certainly a central position not far from the Jâmi` Mosque and between it and the Mosque of 'Ali. Furthermore the small size of the mosque would indicate an old foundation. Was there possibly a

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2. Qâdi Ismâ'il's unpublished collection. A verse in al-Badr al-muzil, 8, runs, 'Let there be rain upon San'â' for I know no land where perfume (madnûn) has settled which resembles it for pleasant fi and safety (khafd wa-amn), etc.
3. Suhkâh (plur. sabâyik) is a long narrow dagger not used now except some in the Šâfî 'idh region; it differs from the jambiyah.
4. Both proverbs from Qâdi Ismâ'il's unpublished collection, but cf. jemenica, 88, no. 589.
5. A Thîmâhâsh version of the proverb. A variant is, 'Lâ tas'al `an al-suq ant l-suq.'
6. Both proverbs from Qâdi Ismâ'il's unpublished collection, but cf. jemenica, 72, no. 453, & 131, 962. 'Darâhim-wârid-uh/waâl minnuh. ' Cf. jemenica, 72, no. 453, & 131, 962. 'Darâhim-wârid-uh/waâl minnuh. '161
come in to the Maydân al-Qa‘r, the large open area in front of the market. It was also the usual place to park in the narrow streets in the middle of the Market now. This is also where bunches of grapes, will be taxed on coming in to the San`â Market. If from Aden, at the well known frontier post of al-Râhidah, or if brought by camel caravan from eastern Yemen. Nazih, Rihlah, I, 217, brought by camel caravan from eastern Yemen. Nazih, Rihlah, I, 217, 23 Assuming the girsh to be equivalent to forty bugshahs. Bâ Makhramah’s Fatâwâ, fol. 182a, about the mid 10th/ 16th century. Qâdi Ismail—alladhi yatawassi ̣ bayn al-bâ'i ‘ wa-‘l-mushtari fi tagdir al-thaman. See also R. B. Serjeant, ‘Notes on some aspects of Arab business practice and the evolution of currency in Yemen’, Studia Instituti Anthropos, 28, St. Augustin bei Bonn-Fribourg, 1976, 79, 112, and for yufru, at Bayt al-aabbâhah V, 94, 22. 22 Explained as yufru al-mal. 23 Assuming the yufru to be equivalent to forty bugshahs. Bâ Makhramah’s Fatâwâ, fol. 182a, about the mid 10th/ 16th century. Qâdi Ismail—alladhi yatawassi ̣ bayn al-bâ'i ‘ wa-‘l-mushtari fi tagdir al-thaman. See also R. B. Serjeant, ‘Notes on some aspects of Arab business practice and the evolution of currency in Yemen’, Studia Instituti Anthropos, 28, St. Augustin bei Bonn-Fribourg, 1976, 162

Middle-men—the Dallâl and the Muṣliḥ

The dallâl and muṣliḥ figure frequently in the Qâmiṣ San‘ân, the dallâl being a person who goes round the Market selling on commission—a commission agent—and the muṣliḥ a dealer who ‘acts as a middle-man between the vendor and purchaser in evaluating the price of an article of merchandise.’

Formerly each market and each craft (hirfah) had its own dallâls but the old system seems to be somewhat broken down, though in 1972 the Bayt Mu‘îd and the Bayt al-Rafîq were still operating in the Tobacco Market, and Bayt al-Qarîdi in the Cloth Market (Sîq al-Bazz)—probably there were others also. The San‘ân dallâl goes round to the retailers and informs them that certain goods have arrived, and—do you want them, and how much of them do you want? He offers (yu`rid) them. Then he goes to the merchant whole-saler, the merchant states his price, and the dallâl returns to acquaint the retailer with it. If they arrive at an agreement the matter then lies between the merchant and the retailer, but the dallâl makes a note of the transaction and price—this will be like a sanad, a sort of record or receipt. The dallâl however handles no money, but, as can be seen from the front of the Castle of San‘ân. They would be inspected there by Qâdi ‘Ali al-Akwa‘ when on this job, and he would yusâdar-thâni, i.e., ascertain that what is on their manifest (tâdar) corresponds with what is actually on the lorry, and if there should be anything additional it is impounded (yufru). It appears that the watchmen nowadays act as porters for it and it was stated that the horns would transport the goods on a g Harr safely to whatever place the merchant wishes—i.e., not automatically to the samsarah warehouse as in previous times. This Harr will receive his wage for this, known as hânis. The garries are drawn by mules or donkeys and their wheels, tyres and axle are parts of old motor lorries. It may be remarked that Jedda port in Saudi Arabia is very dependent on Yemeni drivers and their garries.

Qâdi ‘Ali b. ‘Ali b. Ismî‘îl al-Akwa‘ the clerk of commodities imported into San‘ân stated that his grandfather (al-fid = al-jadd) held this post from about a hundred years ago, before the Turks took San‘ân, and it came down in the family till he fell heir to the office. Before his grandfather Ismî‘îl there is said to have been a certain Sîdî Sîd in charge of it, but Qâdi ‘Ali knew nothing more of him than the name.

13 Explained as ujûr al-naql.
15 Qânûn, section 48. The Turkish map of San‘ân is a sort of record or receipt. The dallâl however handles no money, but, as can be seen from the
16 A farâsilah is about 5 kilos.
17 For this route see C. F. Beckingham and R. B. Serjeant, ‘A journey by two Jesuits from Dhufâr to San‘ân in 1590’, Geographical Journal, London, 1950, CXV, 206. There was of course an export of Yemeni wares to Hadramawt, and at Shibâm and even Tarim in 1947 one could buy raisins and almonds from eastern Yemen. Nazih, Rihlah, I, 217, 23 Assuming the girsh to be equivalent to forty bugshahs. Bâ Makhramah’s Fatâwâ, fol. 182a, about the mid 10th/ 16th century. Qâdi Ismail—alladhi yatawassi ̣ bayn al-bâ'i ‘ wa-‘l-mushtari fi tagdir al-thaman. See also R. B. Serjeant, ‘Notes on some aspects of Arab business practice and the evolution of currency in Yemen’, Studia Instituti Anthropos, 28, St. Augustin bei Bonn-Fribourg, 1976, 162

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The retailer may himself in person carry back the goods he has purchased from the whole-saler to his shop—a roll or two of cloth for example—otherwise he may employ a porter as indicated in the Qânûn. Each week there is a settlement day for payment by the retailers of an instalment of the cost of the goods they have purchased from the large whole-sale merchant. In Şan`a' this is the Thursday (Yam) of Khânûn which appears to be the case also in most Yemenite towns. I have been told that prices show an easier trend on Thursday, and if so it would doubtless be for this reason. Reckoning is the soap of hearts (Al-hisâb sâbûn al-ahkâm) as the proverb goes—i.e. settling up helps to keep integrity, is actually a muslih-dealer acting as intermediary in the transaction. The transaction is known as a sulhah, a settlement.

Each gabi`, tribeman, bringing in (gâbi`) produce to Şan`a' goes to the muslih-dealer who has a shop (dallâl) and effects a sale on his behalf, i.e., deals or makes a bargain with the purchaser for him, all this of course in accordance with the statutes (gawanin) of the Market. The importer has no part in haggling over the price. The transaction is known as a jubah, a deal, and al-Sayyâghî defines it as 'a mutual agreement (târikh) between one person and another on the price of an article of merchandise' or 'mushârikah (mutual agreement) between vendor and purchaser'. So therefore it is proper to call a muslih a dealer or broker. Qâdi Ismail says that the term 'adj', rendered as 'man of business', means literally a person who makes peace between two contending parties—a function well known in Islamic law and common in the Yemen and other Arab countries as a cheaper and often far more satisfactory process than going to the courts. To quote Qâdi Ismail:

'Al-adj sayyid al-ahkâm, Conciliation is the lord (legal) of decisions.' That is to say it is the best way of settling a dispute. On the other hand the muslih's judgement (hukm) is not imposed on either of the two parties by force—as the proverb says, 'Sayf al-muslih min khazaj.' The muslih's sword is brushwood. The muslih in fact, to judge by the Qânûn, would seem to do nothing more than to act as the representative of the trader in the function as the intermediary between the tribesman and the Market, rather like the Nuşayr, Al-Qifâyî, Al Há, Al Bî `Ashîn, and other dallal families of Shibâm of Ḥadramawt—these families are intermediaries, selling and purchasing on behalf of particular tribes.

Although the Qânûn does not give any specific designation to persons settling the prices of commodities other than those mentioned above, the term muslih probably applies to those who settle the price of the other country products it discusses, since my informants have alluded to such as muslihin fi `1-`inab, dealers in grapes and the like.

In Şan`a', then, the dallal may be said to deal in manufactured goods of a more or less sophisticated nature imported by merchants, whereas the muslih deals largely with the primary products of the tribesfolk around Şan`a'.

At the time of Nazîh . . . al-Azmi's [90] first visit to Şan`a' the head (ra`is) of the dallal was Ahmad `Abdulláh `Āshîb, the Bayt `Āshîb being a well known family of `San`a' merchants.

The dallal and his trinkets are known to early Arabic literature, witness the saying: 'Everyone has a capital (ras mal) but the dallal's capital is lying.' The `sulh` and munadû in the market-law tend to the same functions to that of the dallal are dealt with by the first Zaydi Imám al-Hâdi. The hsâbah or market-law literature treats the question of the dallal along many of the same lines as the Qânûn. There is, to take an example in point, a section in al-Shayzari's treatise on the dallal and munadû in which the dallal is forbidden to purchase on his own account, or to sell his own goods under the pretext of acting as intermediary for another. On showing the passage in question to my shuykh in Ta`irn he remarked cynically that all the abuses al-Shayzary mentioned are found in the Sûq there. Indeed Isibis is held to have been the first dallal.

Price-fixing (tasîr)

Price-fixing (tasîr) was an issue that attracted the attention of the early jurists of Islam, but the attitude of the two Zaydi Imams who flourished in Daylam province at the south end of the Caspian Sea, and Sa`dah of the Yemen contemporaneously round about the end of the 3rd/early 10th century seems curiously inconsistent.

Urûsh of Daylam in one of the earliest known treatises on market law and public morality states that, 'The ulama of the Prophet's House (ahl al-bayt) have agreed by consensus of opinion that the Imams may not fix prices (yusa`irî). The Prophet also forbade that a man should go out to intercept (yastiqamî) food (ta'âm), commodity, or anything else until it enters the town (balad) when the people have need.' Urûsh quotes the Tradition accepted by Sunnis and Zaydis alike, 'Do not fix prices, for God it is who fixes prices.'

The first Yemeni Imám, al-Hâdi ila `l-Haqiq takes a rather different attitude. He occupied Şan`a' for only the briefest of terms but, in Sa`dah, he would go round the (various) markets and streets, and he used to stop at those selling each commodity (ad-dallal al-bâdiyyah) and order them not to adulterate their wares, ordering them to make them free of fraud (sangiyat-ha min al-ghashah), make clear (tasîrî) what they were selling, and deliver what they were naming in full. They said to him, 'Is price-fixing not prohibited?' To which he replied, 'Are not wrong and fraud prohibited?' 'Yes, indeed,' they answered. He said, 'Those who fulfilled (their obligations) and behave uprightly (ahl al-taqwa) only, were prohibited from price-fixing, but when wrongful acts (zulamat) showed up in buying and selling (buyû `), they were not prohibited. The Imâm said, 'What is the duty of God's chosen (alwâla` Allah) to forbid all corrupt practice (ทำการ) and bring back justice to where they were found.'

In effect al-Hâdi appears to over-rule the strong Traditions against price-fixing to impose his own ruling by right of his
authority of ijtihād.

The question of price-fixing is closely associated by the legal authorities of the Islamic schools with the interpretation of commodities being brought into the markets. These are of course issues dealt with in the Qânûn fanâ'.

To intercept an article imported (talaqqi 'l-jalâbah) to the markets of the Muslims so as to purchase it before it arrives (there) is not permissible. Interception of an imported article is prohibited on two counts only, one being that the importer circumvents them (jalâbah), and the second, that for the poor man (da'lī) of the townsmen (ahl al-masr') interception is permissible. If, however, the importer (jalâbah) has actually reached the edge of the town, this prohibition ceases (to operate) since the two counts upon which it is justified no longer obtain.

Within this (category) falls monopolising the sustenance of man and beast (ṣīkār gīt al-adâmi wa-l-bahāmih). This is prohibited under certain conditions, the first of which is that it be food for man or beast, but if not then it is permissible (to do so) in the case of all foods, without, in our opinion, any distinction. (It is related) on the authority of Zayd b. `Abbâs that there is no monopolising except in wheat and barley. The second (condition) is that one may monopolise what is surplus to his own full requirement and that of those whom he is supplying (yumâwin), up to the (time of) the crop (jalâbah), and if he has no crop then up to a year.

By Abu 'l-Hasan 'Abdullah b. Miftâh, drawn from al-Ghayth al-midrar bi-Kamām al-Azhâr of the Imam al-Mahdi who composed the Qânûn fanâ' itself the gist of the argument of the commentator writing about the middle of the 9th/15th century makes the significant remark, 'So also it is the Imam's duty to bring out the grain (stored in) the fortresses (qâhâ bil-ṣâ'fâ') in such cases unless he be apprehensive that through so doing a loss of the provisions of the Muslims will be eradicated—then he had no duty (to do so).'

The Shâfi'i is, relying on much the same Traditions as the Zaydis, are also of course opposed to both price-fixing and monopolising. Nevertheless the celebrated traveller Johann Burckhardt writing of the second decade of the 19th century, complains of monopolising and lack of control of prices in Mecca, adding, 'In other eastern towns as at Mekka and Dijda, a public officer, called Moteheb, is appointed to watch over the sale of provisions, to take care that they do not rise to immoderate prices, and fix a maximum to all victualling traders, so that they may have a fair but not exorbitant profit. But this is not the case at Medina, because the Moteheb is there without any authority....'

In the Qânûn fanâ' itself the gist of the argument of the Preamble supports price-fixing, which if not adopted leads to injustice and fraud. The author seems to imply that price-fixing had fallen into abeyance before the time of al-Mahdi and Allah (early 13th/19th century), despite the opinions of the Zaydis, are also of course opposed to both price-fixing and monopolising.

A Pre-Islamic Code of Market Regulations

In the ruins of the pre-Islamic city of Timna of the Bay'hân district, in an open space—probably once the marketplace for produce entering from the countryside—stands a square stela, partially eroded, containing market regulations in the ancient south Arabian script. Professor Beeston has re-translated under the title of 'The merchant code of Qataban', and although even his rendering leaves many uncertainties, it suggests similarities to the Islamic prohibition of the interception of commodities coming in to the market.

Beeston has understood the ordinances of the stela to refer to merchandise in the broad sense, but the fuller interpretation of the inscription turns on the use of the root sh t— which in

39 Cf. Zâhrâb, A'mmat al-Yaman, I. ii, for arguments against price-fixing.


41 The commentator says that by this phrase is intended 'the market of the settlers' (ahl al-misr).

42 Cf. `Abd al-Rahmân b. `Ali al-Dayba` al-Shaybani al-Zabidi, in his abbrevia-

43 I have not identified this work, but the commentator of al-Azhâr quotes a

44 Another authority is quoted as stating that price-fixing for the 'two foods' is permissible also.

45 Another authority is quoted as stating that price-fixing for the 'two foods' is permissible also.

46 In Yarim the 'two foods', in 1974, seemed to be grain flour for human consumption and barley for animal food.


51 For the Prophet's appointment of a governor, in later times a mawlûk over the Mecca market and that of Mecca after he took it ever, see 'Ali b. Ibrahim ... Nir al-Din al-Halabi, al-Sirât al-Halajiyah, Cairo, 1349, li, 447. In the first century of Islam Zayd b. `Abbâs obviously concerned himself with prices for his agmas (`ammâl) over the DAR al-Ruzzâ and al-Kâlîh—which were probably grain and fodder markets and he would ask them what had come into DAR al-Ruzzâ and about prices. By implication the word sh fā' would indicate that he would exercise some sort of control over them.

Geez means 'to sell'. Qa'iq Isma'il[53] however informed me that ṣayḥyikh and its derivatives mean 'buying of grain—measuring it out' (šahr al-a'tam—al-iktihāl), and Goitein[54] reports that we "buy" anything, but that anything that belongs to the grain category we nishāt (ayyāt hājk nishārī—amman hājk mā ḫān jihād nishāt)! This alters the whole application of the 'code' if this restricted sense of ṣayṭ be accepted as appropriate. The inscription's list of officials participating in the legislative act includes a slightly ambiguous reference to ḍhakāh[55] land, where grain would be grown. The following are the main provisions of the stela, rendered along the general lines of the Beeston translation, but with adaptations or reinterpretations to suit the Arabic use of ṣayṭ and its derivatives—it need hardly be remarked that these are provisional and, to some extent, conjectural.

Clause 1 stipulates that whoever sells[56] grain (msht) of Timna' or B r m must pay the market-tax/earnest-money, and have a booth/set up a tent (kh d r) in Sh m r (which last Beeston sees as the name of Timna' market-place). Clause 2 requires persons of all tribes that go to Qatabân with (grain) to sell (bmshtm), and fodder (r rm), and sheep-and-goats (gnym) shall occupy a booth/set up a tent, and conduct their business and sell (msht), sees as the name of Timna' market-place). Clause 2 requires persons of all tribes that go to Qatabân with (grain) to sell (bmshtm), and fodder (r rm), and sheep-and-goats (gnym)[57] shall occupy a booth/set up a tent, and conduct their business and sell (msht), of the Market (Agil al-Sûq) who might be a i.e., a commis-

Clause 3 permits such a person, once he has occupied his booth/tent in Sh m r, to sell grain (bshykh) and bargain[58] with any booth/tent-holder and vendor/purchaser of grain (msht), without the intervention[59] of the 'Āhir of Sh m r. This last-named official seems to correspond to the Islamic Headman of the Market (‘Agil al-Sûq) who might be a dāštīl, i.e., a commission agent, broker. Clause 4 (which is not easy to interpret) seems to state that when the Headman (‘Āhir) of Sh m r announces that he authorises the Qatabânians to offer hospitality (perhaps protection?) to the tribes so as to sell (ṣayṭ) at Timna', having set up a tent (or—occupied a booth) with his grain for sale (msht), then Qatabân will purchase grain (yishāţīn) from the tribes.Clause 5 stipulates that when they inform the Headman (‘Āhir) of Sh m r that any stranger[60] tribe has attempted to visit any part of Qatabân with grain to sell (bmshtm) to Qatabân, or that a man has consistently acted to the detriment of his fellow trader by fore-stalling, he shall be fined fifty silver pieces. Clause 6 seems to mean that an inhabitant of Timna' who leases (?) his house or building with a courtyard to sell grain to a stranger tribe instead of dealing with Qatabân or S f, 51 Clause 9 is uncertain, and Clause 10 prohibits trading at night.

It will be perceived that the foregoing ordinances, uncertain as our understanding of their sense still is, do hint, if no more, at resemblances to the Statute of San‘ā’. It seems to me that the object in centralising trading on Timna' market may be less for fiscal reasons than because of security reasons, and perhaps more so as to preserve the rights and interests of the 'Timna' merchant body trading in grains, but this does in part depend on whether 'r b is to be interpreted as paying a tax or putting down earnest-money. Clause 4, discussing asking for hospitality, may indicate a system like that in present-day Hadrami Shibān, a trading entrepôt, where the commission agent/broker lodges the tribesman in his own house during the latter's stay in town. A 'stranger tribe' might be a tribe outside Timna' jurisdiction which yet wished to sell its produce in 'Timna' market but was required to obtain specific permission from the Headman to do so. Clause 5 defines the penalty to be paid by a 'stranger tribe' infringing this rule and the man who goes out to deal with them.

53 Cf. his al-Amrāḥ al-Yamānī,m, L, 201, no. 575, ‘Āhir is named eventhough his greatest preoccupation is his leather bag for carrying (his purchase of) grain’ i.e. All his care is for his daily bread. An unpublished proverb is Qa’id al-ma’ṣr al-ṣayṭ (Law, collected which costs nothing) not grain buying, G. R. Smith, The Aybāh and early Rakhīdīy in the Yemen, Gibb Mem. Series, XXVI, London-Beirut, 1973-8, 40 (al-Sims al-ghat) recounts the events of the close of the 12th/13th century that 'One of the ordinary folk for the market (‘Irma al-lgu) came to (al-Makī al-‘Ālim) complaining that one of the troops (ajād) had come to sell grain (yishment al-ajād), and he offered him to sell it at more than the price, but he refused, saying, 'I am not going to purchase twice over.' So they fell to quarrelling over that, and pride drove the soldier to refuse to sell it except at more than the price. The soldier then broke the man's measure (mikāyāl) and scattered the grain. Here it seems to me the text demands that ṣayṭ means to sell grain (not to buy it). One may deduce further from the text that there was a recognised price for grain, possibly even a fixed price, and this distinguishes the rule of the Thábālīy. Ibid, 201, however seems to use ṣayṭ in the sense of buying wheat.

54 Cf. his al-Amrāḥ al-Yamānī. 56, no. 343. 55 Cf. Ġīlān: das, Besse, watered fields.

56 It seems necessary to understand the root ṣayṭ as used in the inscription in both senses of buying and selling as appropriate to the context. S. D. Goitein, ed. Ḥaṣābus: Travels in Yemen, Jerusalem, 1941, 89, ḥaṣābi, to sell crops, and ḥaṣāti to buy them. The ṣayṭ is reminiscent of ṣarən, earnest money, ṣarənī fi hāji, to give earnest money in the sense of his pasture, and a tribe, to pay in advance.

57 In Landberg's Hadramaut, khāṣī is explained as case, kiện, mainmise en pierces ou en briques.

58 These three commodities are substituted for Beeston's 'merchandise, bales and goods'. Landberg, Al-'Arab, XV, 145-6, gives al-‘Arab as the last part of the plant remaining, a plural of rimm, but there are many indications that it means ṣirāf fodder grass, e.g. ṣirāf al-‘ālī, the canals took fodder (qal’ al-‘ālī), reminiscent al-ka‘ib al-‘ālīh, the cow took the grass in its lips. Ibn al-Athir, Nihāyāt, III, 281, speaks of qanayyal-ghanam sheep-and-goats acquired for making, but qanayy can refer also to shee-cameels. Traditions mention qanayy (foreground) as a fat animal, and the word is precisely what this nomadizes the countryfolk in Wàdī Bayān bring to market, and, unlike my memory deceives me they bring in camel loads of thumām grass for fodder.

59 In proposing to translate this word, equivalent to the Arabic ṣukḥhār as bargain, Professor Beeston writes, 'Jamme military terms contain several instances of ḍhakāh used in the sense of "to make proposals to someone", which, in a mercantile context could easily be "bargaining." I should, however like to say, compare also the following inscription's n `mt bz(w)rtm may be compared with the Arabic in 'âm, a gift. Beeston proposes 'coinage' but in the context the word is used in the sense of 'to make proposals to someone'. 58 Sabaean nky, to strike. Beeston proposes `coinage' but in the context the word is used in the sense of 'to make proposals to someone'. 59 From Beeston's discussion of this word mkhtn it appears that this type of tax is not to be included as part of other imposts, or that no such gift is to be levied at all! In an agreement between a family of Thībī and the local Yāfī Sultan the latter renounce their rights to various customary impositions including a mkhtn, i.e. a sheaf of grain at harvest-time—the situation is not unlike that in ancient Timna'. 61 Perhhaps by soinvention is meant the 'āhir to settle a deal between vendor and purchaser. This clause I interpret rather differently from Beeston, since it seems unlikely that buyers would go out from Timna', but they would rather come into the market.

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63 Stranger (nkr) is parallel to gharib of the Qânûn an 'ã. 64 Beeston proposes this new rendering which has been adopted here in preference to his 'constant cheating' since it could relate to intervention of tribes people going to market, and thereby form a logical sequel to the first part of the clause. 65 Beeston proposes this new rendering which has been adopted here in preference to his 'constant cheating' since it could relate to intervention of tribes people going to market, and thereby form a logical sequel to the first part of the clause. 66 From Beeston's discussion of this word mkhtn it appears that this type of tax is not to be included as part of other imposts, or that no such gift is to be levied at all! In an agreement between a family of Thībī and the local Yāfī Sultan the latter renounce their rights to various customary impositions including a mkhtn, i.e. a sheaf of grain at harvest-time—the situation is not unlike that in ancient Timna'. 67 Beeston proposes this new rendering which has been adopted here in preference to his 'constant wasting' since it could relate to intervention of tribes people going to market, and thereby form a logical sequel to the first part of the clause. 68 From Beeston's discussion of this word mkhtn it appears that this type of tax is not to be included as part of other imposts, or that no such gift is to be levied at all! In an agreement between a family of Thībī and the local Yāfī Sultan the latter renounce their rights to various customary impositions including a mkhtn, i.e. a sheaf of grain at harvest-time—the situation is not unlike that in ancient Timna'. 69 From Beeston's discussion of this word mkhtn it appears that this type of tax is not to be included as part of other imposts, or that no such gift is to be levied at all! In an agreement between a family of Thībī and the local Yāfī Sultan the latter renounce their rights to various customary impositions including a mkhtn, i.e. a sheaf of grain at harvest-time—the situation is not unlike that in ancient Timna'. 70 Al-Sâfil is a common name in south Arabia—perhaps here the lower Wâdī Bayān, equivalent to Wâdī Bayān, equivalent to Wâdī Bayān.
Buying, Selling and Trading in Yemeni Proverbial Literature

How Yemenis look upon the business of buying and selling, commerce, loans and money in general is clearly revealed in the popular expressions and lore of the proverb. Many of these sayings are common to the country at large, some are peculiar to a district, some are described by Qadi Isma'il as current among merchants, and both he and Goitein7 record proverbs special to the Jews, and naturally there are proverbs deriving from some Muslim religious tenet or observance which Jews would not employ and vice-versa.

"Buying and selling are the war of the Believers," since in the clashing over some piece of goods comes out a man's prowess,8 and to bargain is not a matter of shame but of pride. "He who lets his buying be managed by another is only half a man." He is not familiar with the Market and they will "take a loan of him (zudu 'alayh)." The merchant's profession is to be preferred to all other occupations —"the dust on an article of merchandise is musk!" All commerce used formerly to follow that of the capital, so "if San'a' has ophthalmia the World is blind." This apparently means that if trading conditions are bad there then elsewhere they are much worse.

It is wiser to lay out your money in commodities than to hoard it away — goods not money — and live on the profits, but almost the opposite is implied in the proverb, "Preserving capital, not seeking income." However this seems to apply only to investing in business likely to be unprofitable! Don't wait too long in selling your onions, hoping for profit till they go bad, sell at cost. The jahif importing goods which he sells by the score (kazaraja) and who must make an impression on the retailer (misikir (sic)) or petty dealer (baya2-misikir) is advised, "Sell your goods when you are still wearing your sandals/or, the dust (of travel) is still on you/or, you've just arrived." Sell at any price rather than allow anything to remain too long in your trading establishment (matjar), even if you do only to investing in business likely to be unprofitable! "Don't hoard it away — goods not money '77 and live on the profits, but sell at any price rather than allow anything to remain too long in your trading establishment (matjar), even if you do only to investing in business likely to be unprofitable!" Don't hoard it away — goods not money!9

"The power of money is such that "for your baysah (a copper coin of extremely low denomination) you may mount the qâdi."10 That is to say bribery corrupts even so respectable a person as a qâdi from whom justice is to be expected, but perhaps he is to be excused if, according to another saying, "Money binds fast the Jinn!" These sayings have a broader application than market demand brings goods to the market.12 Import goods to the market when it is slack, not when activity is brisk when it will consequently be swamped with commodities — a merchant who imports when the market is dull and holds his wares till the time of demand will make great profits.13 The purchaser prefers to get "two things from one merchant" and go not to many. In Ibb they say, 'Don't sell to two and don't buy from three.' To sell at the price for which you bought something is to sell at a loss — it would be a thief's price (bay' sâriq) — day-light robbery, as one says in English — on the other hand a large profit on a small quantity is really a small profit, because people will not buy from an exorbitant dealer. An intending purchaser should bring his money with him to help settle a bargain quickly — "When (money) is present Ibbis is absent."14 A merchant naturally prefers the man who offers him the highest price — "the door for more is open (bâb al-asâfiy ma'âfûh)." This last proverb is reminiscent of the Zaydi maxim, "Bâb al-ittidâd ma'âfûh, The door of independent judgement is (still) open."15 Of a man who won't lower his prices people say, 'Either my bull fetches a hundred or I take him back to the stable.'16 If you don't believe the price I quote, then try for yourself and see — buqashat-ak wa'l-sât.17 To urge a merchant to compromise and attempt to meet the customer's offer (tasâmuh), they say, "God bless the vanquished," i.e. the one who concedes the point in this "war of the Believers."

"Anything cheap is (really) dear — a donkey costing a qirsh is dear — a donkey costing a hundred is cheap." "Something of top quality is known by its price."18 If it is expensive you should not worry, for "costliness is cheap." There is no point in trying to raise matters that have already been decided for the seller has sold and received the price in full.19 Perhaps also one has bought something on a lucky day.

The merchant is exposed to annoyance by persons who have no work to do but can spend their time bargaining with him.20 An astute merchant21 praises his wares, giving the impression that there is competition to purchase them, but, philosophically enough, another proverb tells us that "a thousand shops are under the protection of the Merciful," i.e., no merchant receives the best aid.22

Many of these sayings are common to the country at large, some are peculiar to Yemen, and S. D. F. Goitein and Jemenica, draw on Muslim and Jewish informants respectively but there is little not common to the communities.

Yemeni有个22, 152, no. 1152, al-munâshabat muqaddâ 'mass rujhal. Qadi Isma'il in al-Amthal al-Yamaniyah, volume I, and further volumes as yet unpublished, and S. D. F. Goitein, Jemenica, draw on Muslim and Jewish informants respectively but there is little not common to the communities.

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8 An Arabian Islamic City
dealing of course and are indicative of the half amused and cynical tolerance Yemenis have for the way in which officials may be bribed, the allegiance of tribes bought, and a good reputation acquired through money judiciously applied. Yet, `al-`amal (owed by him) melts like salt in water,"

The suspicion of the townsman of the tribesman in business transactions is expressed in the saying, `When the Badwi states a price you halve it.'

The Badwi indeed does not ask too high a price for what he is selling, while ` the tribesman's debt (owed by him) melts like salt in water," and you rarely manage to recover it—or so the townsman says. The proverb is quoted in connection with a person who disregards some duty he owes. Therefore he also says, `The market rather than a hundred pladādāwī, traders, or shopkeepers, are your enemies, for they are the ones who sell you what you need. The tribesman, on the other hand, is your enemy, for he sells you what you do not need.'

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Miqâli, wood-chopper.
Mikhañhi, barber, as tāllâq, supra.
Mikhañhi, confectioner, sweet-maker. Cf. hâlwâni, supra.
Mikhiñfi, lavatory cleaner.
Mîrâmî, maker of sheep-skins sewn into a blanket (I have heard this called khtsaj at Rûbûb ‘Arâmûn, but the word may not be Sâñânîn). They made also the fleece-lined coat (sarm) but this was more usually made by the muqâyshâr/muqâyshûr (infra).
Mîkdiñâm, maker of bags (baked in a furun) called kidmâh, pl. kidâm.
Mikabbi, the maker of fuel from dung (kibâ‘iyân) of leather, or green leather thread (tirshâh) are newly made by them and put on the coats. 131
Mîrâqqi, leather worker who makes also bucket and repairs women’s frocks.
Mîrâmî, worker in qâdâg. 128
Mîqâyshûr, maker of shoes called qûlûh, pl. qâwûfîn, of cow hide.
Mîqâyshûr, maker of pear, qurûfshûr—not made in Sânâ‘. 129
Mîqâyshûr, maker of coats called qâzîrâh, pl. qâzîrîyân, and karâh, pl. kartîh, and kartîyân, pl. karâh, sheepskin coats. Strips (sûkkhitîyan) of leather, or green leather thread (tirshâh) are made by them and put on the coats. 131
Miraqqi, leather worker who makes also buckets 132 and repairs them.
Miraqqi, worker in lead.
Mîqaddûsh, soup-maker of jâbin ‘Arabû, manufactured at night because of the unpleasant smell. Sâbûn Turki is (or was) the general name for foreign soap.
Mîhâdî, a man who knew the roads to the villages and the prices of animals, and who would buy or hire beasts for people and guide them on their way. He seems to be equivalent to the maqâmât, 133
Mîshammi, candle-maker.
Mîshammi, plater of silver jewellery with gold. Cf. irtâ ‘134
Mîmisammi, tinsmith. Cf. tanâkîf.
Mîzammi, maker of pottery ovens (tannûr), and bowls for lahûh bread.
Mîzawqûr, 130 man who roughens the surface of mill-stones when they have worn smooth.
Mîzawqûr, 131 stone-cutter, mason. The Hebrew sources state that many Muslims followed this craft.
Mîzawqûr, upholsterers, making wadadhs, mattresses, makkâhib (132) (cushions). The customer buys the materials and the makkâhib comes to work in his house.
Mî’arnî, seller of arâqî and wine.
Mîzawqûr, maker of wîtâf (donkey-saddles stuffed with wâ‘ green).
Nadaf, cotton carter. 133
Naqûr, carpenter.

126 Sweets mentioned are afîqî, precious stones, makhâ, crystal-shaped, hâmiq, acid-casting, miqawwûl, sweets with a filling, tanâmî, tanâmîkh, laqûm, makhab, sweets of various shapes made of white or coloured sugar.

127 Cf. p. 995a, n. 29. This was and is made by Muslim villagers also in Dâlûl Hamdân for instance these flat round cakes of animal dung (kibâ‘iyâh) and small balls of dung called jâmûni (pl. jâmûni) are made, the dung being collected in a hole in the ground called makhabûsh. At the weekly markets in the little villages outside Sânâ‘ one sees small girls going round collecting donkey droppings to make into fuel cakes. Cf. Qânûn Sânâ, section 49, ix, note 397.

128 See comments on the Syrian, mainly Aleppan cloth and French silks in a Jewish shop at Bâb al-Sharârah for women’s dresses. The Jews made their clothes at home and only Muslims ever bought ready-mades at such shops.

131 Cf. Qânûn Sânâ‘, section 3, v.

132-5. For the stones of nearby Himyaritic antiquities in stone. To judge by the large number of forgeries purchased clandestinely by European visitors today, the craft probably flourishes more vigorously than ever in Muslim hands! The Jews also were engaged in cutting and polishing the semi-precious stones for which the Yemen is famous, but in Sânâ‘ this art is now almost gone.

143 Ameen Rihani, Arabian peak and desert, 170. For the stones of near-by Himyaritic antiquities in stone. To judge by the large number of forgeries purchased clandestinely by European visitors today, the craft probably flourishes more vigorously than ever in Muslim hands! The Jews also were engaged in cutting and polishing the semi-precious stones for which the Yemen is famous, but in Sânâ‘ this art is now almost gone.

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145 Ibid, l. 134.
and pitch, a red quartz. The manner for turning out a stone for a ring or seal is as follows. The trip hammer is first used to break up the original into small pieces, which are set in the adhesive substance at the end of a stick; and then the process of formation and polishing is achieved upon four different stones—the first, a flint, cuts away the angles of the gem—the second, less abrasive rounds it, the third, a sandstone cleans it, and the fourth, a chalk, I think, gives it polish—and behold a carnelian which can charm away evil spirits. Specimens of these sticks with the stone set in the end were collected by the late W. H. Ingams.

Naziḥī states that most of the builders in Ṣanʿā' are Jews, but some are Muslims.

Additional Occupations followed in Ṣanʿā'  

Bakhshawan, gardener (Turko-Persian).
Habbāk, or muqaddal, muqallib, muqallī, book binder.
Jammāl, camel-man, probably not a San`a’i.
Nashshad, minstrel.
Nasūq, copypist of books.
Sinnāḏ, mosque attendant.
Munaggil, cobbler, shoe-maker.
Tabīb, native doctor.
Wahd, native doctor.

Another profession is the cattle dealer known as qammāṣ. But it is possible this was not a Ṣanʿā’i profession or not exercised in Ṣanʿā’.

Of Yemeni markets in general the Egyptian writer of the first half of the 8th/14th century, Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Umariūrī observes, perhaps a little contemptuously,

The kings of the Yemen are always bringing in from Egypt and Syria groups of artisans (arbāb al-sināʿāt) because of the few of them to be found in the Yemen. Nor are there adequate perpetual markets in the Yemen—in it there is only a day of the week upon which goods (ajlab) are brought in, artisans and goods of their various categories appear, and markets are held upon that day and buying and selling take place. But anyone lacking something in the middle of the week can scarcely obtain it, except comestibles (ma`a`kil) for these and goods of their various categories appear, and markets are held upon that day and buying and selling take place. But anyone lacking something in the middle of the week can scarcely obtain it, except comestibles (ma`a`kil) for these are always (on sale) as in other countries; manufactured comestibles are little sold in its markets, but on the contrary a person who wants anything makes it for himself.

While in general this seems to be borne out by a few rare remarks of the historians, it is unlikely that there was not a continuous market in either Ṣanʿā’ or Ta`izz even at that period. We know from the historians that the Rasûlids imported weavers and other craftsmen and it is possible that some of the finer Rasûlids metalwork in brass and copper was actually manufactured by such craftsmen in the Yemen itself. In the 1970s the weekly market in Ṣanʿā’ is on Yasem al-Thulūb, Tuesday.

Proverbs about Professions and Occupations

The esteem in which the crafts are held by Yemeni townsfolk is embodied in the proverbs, 'A craft in the hand is security from poverty (ḥirfah fi l-ya`ad amān min al-lajmah), and, 'Any person who is a specialist in his own craft is a sultan', i.e., independent.48 Of a boy who follows the occupation, trade or craft of his father they say, 'Kullūn li-mihrāt sādīkū muta`līm samah',49 no doubt applied to various situations. They prefer 'one whose father and grandfather followed the same craft (understand perhaps, even if he be untrained) to a person who has been learning it for a year (ibn āmār) it will be like a μαναγιτον 

Other crafts cited by S. A. Grohmann, Sudarabien ais Wirtschaftsgebiet, Brünn-Prag-Leipzig-Wien, 1933, II, 67, as vocalised by him, are makawfiyyin, makers of pipe-tubes (gasabah) for tobacco (of leather articles) goes about with torn clothes, and the cobbler (swinging of the) washerman's testes (bīsf wa y) sa` ku

The reverence for the cobbler, however, is indicated in the saying, 'He keeps on coming and going just like the swinging of the (washing) of the washerman' (al-saggal ma yi`ayyib silah).50 Even the bakeresses respect one another ('Ad al-`ammalat yitmayazin). The bakeresses (khahāba) are notorious for her sharp tongue and foul speech. The version reported by Goitein says that one bakeress other than the others (of leather articles) goes about with torn clothes, and the cobbler (swinging of the) washerman's testes (bīsf wa y) sa` ku

The esteem in which the crafts are held by Yemeni townsfolk is embodied in the proverbs, 'A craft in the hand is security from poverty (ḥirfah fi l-ya`ad amān min al-lajmah), and, 'Any person who is a specialist in his own craft is a sultan', i.e., independent. Of a boy who follows the occupation, trade or craft of his father they say, 'Kullūn li-mihrāt sādīkū muta`līm samah', no doubt applied to various situations. They prefer 'one whose father and grandfather followed the same craft (understand perhaps, even if he be untrained) to a person who has been learning it for a year (ibn āmār) it will be like a (Muslim), shammā`in, wax-workers (Muslims and Jews).

The kings of the Yemen are always bringing in from Egypt and Syria groups of artisans (arbāb al-sināʿāt) because of the few of them to be found in the Yemen. Nor are there adequate perpetual markets in the Yemen—in it there is only a day of the week upon which goods (ajlab) are brought in, artisans and goods of their various categories appear, and markets are held upon that day and buying and selling take place. But anyone lacking something in the middle of the week can scarcely obtain it, except comestibles (ma`a`kil) for these and goods of their various categories appear, and markets are held upon that day and buying and selling take place. But anyone lacking something in the middle of the week can scarcely obtain it, except comestibles (ma`a`kil) for these are always (on sale) as in other countries; manufactured comestibles are little sold in its markets, but on the contrary a person who wants anything makes it for himself.

While in general this seems to be borne out by a few rare remarks of the historians, it is unlikely that there was not a continuous market in either Ṣanʿā’ or Ta`izz even at that period. We know from the historians that the Rasûlids imported weavers and other craftsmen and it is possible that some of the finer Rasûlids metalwork in brass and copper was actually manufactured by such craftsmen in the Yemen itself. In the 1970s the weekly market in Ṣanʿā’ is on Yasem al-Thulūb, Tuesday.

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from the city to pasture under the care of a shepheard. Whereas, however, at one time within living memory of such scholars as Sayyid Muhammad al-Dhahafarî, there used to be four families of shepherds (rūtūh) in Ṣan`a', there is now only one family, al-Qaṭ'abî, which follows this occupation. The shepherd’s clients would be scattered over a number of quarters (jārah) of the town more or less in proximity to one another, or else on his way to the pasture-land to which he would conduct the animals. Pasturing over the fields lying fallow is subject to no restrictions in the Yemen by the owners of the land. As the shepherd goes out in the morning he passes by the houses and shouts out his customary call—at which the people of the house open the door and let out their animals. The shepherd collects (ṣayyam-mî-hâ) them from sunrise (al-shurûq) up to high morning (râkzat al-shams), and from 5 p.m. he returns with them to their places—each ghannamah knows the house of its owner. If one of the ghanam gives birth he brings back the lamb under his arm to Ṣan`a'.

If land has the sheep of its owner pasturing on it, others will not be allowed to graze their animals there, and naturally all shepherds know who has sheep and who has not—but in the latter case the landowner will not bother if the shepherd grazes over his land. You cannot graze on pasture belonging to others except by permission previously obtained. If sheep-and-goats enter land and eat of the pasture (marā) the fine is the milk of a night (sa-tahlub) and thus pay the fine. The people of Bir al-`Azâb have their own pasture, those of `Aṣîr theirs, and so also Shu`ûb and the rest of the districts neighbouring Ṣan`a'.

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In the older days the shepherd would receive an eighth of a Maria Theresa dollar (thumur riyal Farâ`arî), i.e., five buqâ`ah, per animal, and as he would sometimes have as many as 200 to 300 head, this would come to quite a tidy sum. Some of the big families (būyârî) would treat the shepherd generously (tukrim) and the rest of the districts neighbouring Ṣan`a’.

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a cow, receiving a quarter in return for feeding it and half of its calves. Where a Ṣanʿānī family had a cow or cows they were kept in a stable (ḥarr) or courtyard (ḥawsh) and looked after by old women (al-miṣār al-awāqīl), but the cow did not go out to pasture.

**Articles Prohibited from Human Consumption**

Islamic ulema have, at various times, prohibited or inveighed against the use of coffee, tea, qāt, tobacco and other substances, but coffee fairly soon became respectable and is even associated with the saint `Ali b. `Umar al-Shadhili (ob. 821/1418) whose tomb at Mocha is well known, and one speaks of qāhwar al-gāfūhīn, the coffee of the pious, it being commended (like qāt in some circles) as an aid to the performance of religious duties in the watches of the night. Tea has also long been accepted and tobacco, if not entirely approved by all, is in general use.

Neither are narcotics, opium and hashish, of course prohibited by Islamic fiqh, but hashish (known as närjūnah) is grown in the countryside round Ibb and smoked after chewing qāt, though this is against the law. Hashish has however a long history in South Arabia and is listed among the commodities taxed at Ḫydn about 1400 A.D. In one case it was evidently associated with Ṣālim for in the early 11th/17th century the Imám al-Mansūr b. Qāsim killed a Ṣūfi in Ṣanʿāʾ whose irreligious conduct included the fact that he used `to eat hashish in the way a donkey eats'.

Grapes grow well in the Yemen and throughout the Islamic period the ulema have waged a long battle against wine-drinking, commencing at least from the days of the first Zaydi Imám al-Hādī ila-ḥaqq, and probably much earlier. To take a case in point, the ruling Imám in 594/1197-8 poured out all the wine in the houses famed for it in Ṣanʿā'.

The Turks of the first Ottoman occupation forbade wine to Muslims, but others of them indulged in it till, about 1034/1624-5, it was sold openly in the Ṣanʿa' markets as if it had never been forbidden in the Holy Book. When the Zayds drove out the Ottomans they took severe measures against the Jews selling wine. Indeed the Jews, who can legally manufacture wine and `aragi for their own consumption in an Islamic state, are recurrently in trouble for selling it to Muslims whether of their own free will or under pressure. During the second Ottoman occupation, Ẓābirān, listing the vices of the Turks, tells us picturesquely that, under their rule, wines appeared like cool water', and `the inviolable graves of the Muslims were destroyed and walls built with the stones from them.'

Jārmūz alludes to wine as being openly sold in the markets of Ḫaḍramawt, though I imagine this was confined to the coastal centres, not the cities of the interior, and the Sultan even imposed a duty (qānīn) on it, but the ḥarith Badr stopped this (kasara-hā). Wine is still made quite widely, but with much secrecy, in the Ṣanʿa' and Ṭā`izzī districts. The argument and evidence of Ẓābirān and the person of Ẓāhir ibn al-Hārubī (852) and the persons apprehended with it would be punished. I discovered a real sentiment of contempt among most northern tribesmen for persons, Muslims, who drink alcoholic beverages. Though the Jews have departed some time ago wine is said still to be sold in the Qā' al-Ṭayḥūd area. Spirits imported from the West have been coming into the Yemen even before 1962 though at that time they were consumed in considerable fear of discovery by the organisation appointed for al-ṣaw bi-l`īmārī wa`l-nahy `an al-munhak.

**Qāt**

Qāt (Catha edulis) has attracted the keen interest of foreign visitors to the Yemen, most of whom discuss the chewing of it with various degrees of prejudice such as the European missionary attitude quoted by Hugh Scott, and the Egyptian propagandist booklet Al-Yaman bayn al-qat wa`l-jābār al-ḥukm. Since as a social habit it plays an important part in Ṣanʿānī life a few observations about it are justified here. Scott, despite his own bias, for he calls qāt chewing 'a noxious form of drug-addiction', provides quite a good description of the chewing of the young leaves, leaf-buds and shoots of Catha edulis, in the thirties which would be true of today. In the cfayr Sayyids and other wealthy people hold large qāt chewing parties, often repeated day after day among the same persons. These parties are usually preceded by lunch and coffee, chewing begins about two o'clock in the afternoon and for those who only work in the morning or do no work at all, it lasts till eight o'clock. Noon and evening prayers are said before the party begins, while the sunset and evening prayers are said together after it ends. 'As many as from twenty to forty persons may be crowded into an ill-ventilated room. Windows and doors are shut and several hubble-bubble pipes are lit. The participants sit round the walls, each with a bundle of qāt and a spittoon in front of him. When a man has chewed for some time, swallowing only the juice of the plant, his cheeks become uncomfortably distended with a green paste of chewed leaves... this paste is then ejected, with the aid of a finger, into a spittoon. The man then drinks noisily from a cruse of water, swilling out the mouth and often also swallowing water to assuage thirst.' The distantic Scott felt for the qāt session is hardly disguised. Foreigners resident in Ṣanʿāʾ in more recent years often take a more liberal attitude to qāt chewing than this, and some even participate. As a social habit the qāt madhābi has many advantages—it is a place where much business is transacted, politics

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167 Properly `wise women' but rendered as ḍaʿāʾis fr l-trum.
168 Al-Shawkani, al-Badr al-lâli , II, 49.
169 Al-Musul al-Dar al-al-sawīn bi-ḥāla, 59, 90, where a man of Ṣālim is said to have eaten eighty lathes and dies, passim.
170 A`msat al-Yaman, 1, 117, al-ṣar al-mashhur bi-dhâlika.
171 Ghayrat al-awāqīl, 810.
172 A`msat al-Yaman, (2), II, 65.
discussed, or literary gatherings, especially before the 1962 coup d'état, take place. Conversation starts in a fairly animated way but as the qāt begins to take effect the company gradually falls silent and a slightly glazed look comes over the eyes—the main sound being the soft bubbling of the water-pipe as the long tube is passed around—but the sense of comfort and relaxation, and, doubtless, the pleasant musings of the participants at this stage described as waking dreams (ḥulum al-yazghah), pleasant atmosphere (jātīr wa-l-qāt), are much more attractive than the stodiness of a Western cocktail party. Less pleasing is the discharge of the qāt-cud into spittoons (maṭāfīl maḍāfīl) and the avid swilling of water to quench the drought that qāt induces—but Yemenis drink water with a sound like the last water swirling down the plug-hole of a bath anyway! Both men and women chew qāt and smoke the water-pipe, not of course at the same madhā in this segregated society.

One of the most balanced reports on the qāt situation is that of the Yemen, published by the Aden Government in 1958, after the ban on the import of qāt to Aden imposed by the Legislative Council at the instance of certain Arab Adenese members. The Report of the United Nations Narcotics Commission having proved unhelpful in view of the conflict of opinion on the qāt question among the delegates, the Commission sought the views of Aden Medical Service doctors. They expressed the opinion that there is no evidence that the qāt habit is dangerously injurious to health. It does cause constipation, but it has never been suggested that it may seriously damage the body as may tobacco, which is alleged to cause lung cancer, or alcohol, which may cause liver complaints. Qāt does not create an addiction, like opium or hashish, in that those who are suddenly deprived of it, do not suffer physical consequences. Deprivation may cause mental distress, but that is all. Confirmed qāt eaters who are deprived of the leaf, when they visit foreign countries, quickly adapt themselves to its absence.

In the first place, then, qāt is not a narcotic in the correct use of the term. Unlike tobacco it does not seem particularly addictive, and Imām Yahyā for instance is stated to have given it up, not because he disapproved of it, but simply on medical advice. Moderate qāt-fanciers will attend or hold a qāt-session as a form of relaxation at varying intervals during which they never touch the leaf: If a person over-indulges in qāt as other individuals might do in other stimulants this in itself is no reason to condemn the leaf. If a person over-indulges in qāt as other individuals might do in other stimulants this in itself is no reason to condemn the leaf. If a person over-indulges in qāt as other individuals might do in other stimulants this in itself is no reason to condemn the leaf. If a person over-indulges in qāt as other individuals might do in other stimulants this in itself is no reason to condemn the leaf. If a person over-indulges in qāt as other individuals might do in other stimulants this in itself is no reason to condemn the leaf. If a person over-indulges in qāt as other individuals might do in other stimulants this in itself is no reason to condemn the leaf.

The most serious accusation against qāt-fanciers is that they spend so much on this expensive diversion that the qāt-fancier who indulges himself beyond his means is left a portion of his income quite inadequate to spend on the purchase of food for his family and himself. This is no new problem—in Aden some thirty years ago one not uncommonly heard qāt-fanciers complain that they spent most of their wages on it. While qāt may be a social problem in San‘ā’ and other parts of the Yemen, the problem of over-indulgence in illegal stimulants, doubtless on a still very restricted scale, mainly in the few larger towns, would or does have similar results. That qāt cultivation takes up an undue amount of agricultural land is patently nonsense when one surveys the country from the air, and this is borne out by the figure of 5% quoted earlier. Moreover the qāt-shrub grows easily and requires little attention.

Although, in general, our study of San‘ā’ does not aim to take us beyond September 1962, it might be remarked that during our stay there in 1972 the Yemeni Government took steps toward an attempt at limiting consumption of qāt and started a campaign against it. This appears to have provoked a sharp reaction from a religious quarter against the importation of alcohol, at that time legitimate, for (ostensibly) foreigners. A lorry-load of bottles was destroyed outside the northern Khanādīq and the privilege withdrawn.

Apart from the literary assemblies, the salons of San‘ā’, where qāt is chewed and tobacco smoked, poems in praise of qāt figure in the Yemeni diwans to be found, for example, in the Vatican Library. Imām Yahyā’s celebrated poetic debate with Amin al-Raybāni’s travelling companion Qusṭantin, in which he defends qāt against the latter’s attacks are fairly widely known in modern Arabic literature. The Mushafkaraḥ bāyym al-Qāṭah al-‘alā qāt, or Boosting Match between Coffee and Qāt, of Ahmad al-Mu’allimi belonging to a Shāfi`i family of ‘Utumāh, that was composed in the 19th century, is a contest in prose and verse between Coffee personified as a woman and Qāt as a man, on their virtues superior the one to the other and is of typical maqāmah genre. Nor was a fondness for qāt any reproach from a respectable viewpoint by about the 12th/18th century, at least to judge by the biography of a grandson of the Imām al-Mutawakkil Ismā’īl who liked well-heaped and literature, tattazzeef, retreat into seclusion, worship, prayer, and who had a fondness for eating qāt (al-wuṣūl bi-‘akl al-qāt).

There is indeed a Yemeni saying, ‘Al-qaṭ qāt al-sāthînin, Qāt is the food of the upright/pious.’ This could be because it enables the man of religion to spend his nights in study or religious exercises. This may be contrasted with the slogan I recall seeing in one of the more modern San‘ā’ eating-places, ‘Al-Qāt qātīl, Qāt kills! A well known adage is ‘Qāt sakhkhaṭ ‘Alāh al-Yahūd bi-l-‘araq wa-l-Muṣlimīn bi-l-qāt, God has troubled the Jews with ‘arṣā and the Muslims with qāt’! This rueful note is also expressed in, ‘Al-Qāt fiṣyūb, mā akhru ma mū‘ām, Qāt is nice, but there is nothing worse than it!’
discussed by no less an authority than the great Shâfl`i scholar and says, `$abah al

use of it was introduced from Abyssinia. Al-Magrizi 189  (ob. 845/

not until 950/1543 that, says the author of Ghayat al-amani i 9°

girls in the morning.

catastrophe, Qat wa-shahi tijlib 'l-dawahi' is said of a person who

the Yemen, but there is more or less general agreement that the

countenance (taghayyar) 191  and he was told that what had made

order people to uproot it because he saw a person who had lost

tithes on it (mu `ashsharat) to the Treasury (Bayt al

Al-Shafâ`i and his work are not very known and the first

tells us that Sharaf al -Din considered it a bid `ah (heretical

innovation) like tobacco and wrote against it, `and commanded

him lose countenance came from eating qat, so the Imam added

'the qat tree appeared and became abundant in the Yemen. The

Al-Shafâ`i's and his work are not very known and the first

and he himself composed (sannaf ) a book, copying down in it

saw qat chews were brought from Ethiopia to Hodeidah in 1430 by a Shaykh Ibrahim Abu 'l-Zahrayn,

Qâdi Ismâ'il's unpublished collection.

Cited by El Attar who, incorrectly, calls it al -Imam. He avers that qat is

first mentioned `dans un manuscrit unique' of Muh. b. `Ali Najib al -Din

Catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Vicenza,

1910-28, I, 356-8. Ibn Hajar prefaces this chapter with an account of a

discussion held in Mecca on the lawfulness of nutmeg (jawzat al -sib),

Arabic history of Guzman, ed. E. Denson Ross, Indian Text Series.London,

1910-28, I, 356-8. Ibn Hajar prefaces this chapter with an account of a

discussion held in Mecca on the lawfulness of nutmeg (jawzat al -sib),

hashishah, sunbul (presumably hyacinth), and mare's milk (laban al-

the Yemen, but as for the noxious/detrimental qualities mentioned of it

in these books I did use to bear that some of them are found in it.

I said to him, that he must make a pronouncement on the question to us in accordance with medical principles

al-qawm's al-qibbiyyah). Thus, he said, 'is impossible because the Imams of medicine and those who made

pronouncements (al-mustakallimun) about herbs and plants have neither mentioned nor discussed this plant.'

The physician adopted the attitude that for a medical opinion to be promulgated experiments must first be made with qat, but Mecca, he argued, was not a suitable place to do so on account of the heat etc., and he refused to give a decision. Ibn Hajar therefore composed his Takhdir al-dhat min akl al-kaftah wa-'l-

Further details follow, and Ibn Hajar continues with their argument,

So that both their mosques and clothing are impure (najisah) and anything else in contact with them. Other (properties)

are that it prevents conception and renders the ability for sexual intercourse (quawsat al-jimah ) ineffective—to such an extent that the women of Ta`izz (a town in the Yemen) went to its Sultan 'Amir b. 'Abd al-Wahhâb b. Tahir (894-923/1489-1517) on the occasion of one of his comings to the city, to complain to him of their husbands' loss of desire for them through over-indulgence in it—so he ordered the men to be prevented from eating it. But their means of subsistence broke down, and the conditions of that kingdom had decayed on account of the ineffectiveness in the powers of its menfolk, and the Sultan took the view that the evil (miftahad) arising from their not eating it was the more acute, so he took into account the greater interest (mu`afah) and permitted the men to eat it. This was the sum of what those books contained.

When I learned that the authors had come to their conclusions solely because of the detrimental/noxious qualities in this, I said, 'Before making any pronouncement in this matter the physicians have to be consulted.' Then I went to the Khalîfah al-Hajî (of Mecca) and related the case to him and showed him those books so as to see what he thought about that from the medical and other points of view, and he spoke about (the case) concerning what was in conformity with principles (gawanîd) in respect of medicine and other things. Then he said, 'The safest thing would be for us to seek clarification by consulting the view of someone concerned with the science of medicine.' So he summoned the Sayyid Muhammad al-

Hakim, the best acquainted with medicine of those in Mecca, and we informed him of the case in its entirety. 'As for qat,' he said, 'I am acquainted with it, since I was in the Yemen, but as for the noxious/detrimental qualities mentioned of it in these books I did use to bear that some of them are found in it.' I said to him, that he must make a pronouncement on the question to us in accordance with medical principles (al-qawm's al-qibbiyyah). Thus, he said, 'is impossible because the Imams of medicine and those who made pronouncements (al-mustakallimun) about herbs and plants have neither mentioned nor discussed this plant.'

As for an outright decision on its being forbidden (al-jam' bi-l-tahrim), before any of those noxious/detrimental qualities are established as existing in it in a legal way (tariq shar'i ), that is a conjecture (mujazaf ah) about religion and a departure from the customary procedures (sunan) of
the practising ulama. As for the adducing proof of the prohibition (tahrim) of it from the (same) proofs the ulama have adduced from the Traditions and other (sources) with regard to the prohibition of hashishah, this is out of place because the ulama have probed into the circumstances of hashishah and what is caused by it, over numerous centuries until they knew (what) judgement was required on it, and came to an outright decision in regard to it, without disagreement among them about it, the physicians concurring with them in regard to the noxious properties/detriment and (effects) of loss of sensation it has. There is no analogy between it and this unknown plant the kayf of which is not known, nor what is caused by it. It is like the drink recently introduced, called qahhasah (coffee)—the ulama of Egypt, Mecca, the Yemen and elsewhere have differed over it, so each proffered an opinion, or wrote regarding it, on such detriment (majarrakah) or benefit (manfa`ah) as was evident to him, but the truth is that no prohibition (tahrim) applies to it except in the case of a person in whose body there is an ailment with which it is incompatible, such as consuming strabiliuseness (al-sawâda` al-mubriqah), seeing that is what is intended, namely the account of the Qanûn San`a`.

The Qânûn aims at making qat available on a fair basis of distribution to a society long used to it. The effects claimed to be produced by qat by the Shafi`i ulema of the Yemen, as he reports, seem fictional. However it may be, there is a vast difference between recognizing at least, by one author.

In Nûr al-ahjâr wa-jilâ=kâwâsir al-asfâhar of the shaykh Al. b. `Abdullah b. Ismail al-Dhanani (?) al-Wagidi al-Harithi, he says, terbatim, ‘Let us return to our present concern, seeing that is what is intended, namely the account of the qât-shrub, its effects (qafî), its parts and special properties. The nature (of qât) is cold, dry in the second degree. The effects and special properties found in it are causing constipation (gabd) and deprivation of sensation (takhdir) accompanied by a slight temperature (barahmah) depending on the degree of costiveness that occurs in the organs, in which there may be a mild temperature. Dry kâfash (pounded qat from which an infusion is made) is more severely constipating than it is. Crushed leaves of it with vinegar and opium alleviates throbbing when it arises from a temperature, and, (when taken) with yoke of egg and saffron, in (the case of) cold.

Swellings and pustules (kuchar) it is efficacious against hot swellings, especially with vinegar and cersa (isfîdah); with flour of beans (kâfi`qah) and gruel (sâqiq) it alleviates the smarring of scrofula (nakhir al-khâmisah) and, with coar-der (kucharbah), resolves the swelling (caused by) it. Wounds and ulcers (qaraf) it helps against them and dries them up, especially when burned and applied in oil of roses. The organs of the head—when taken in a known quantity after food it prevents the vapour that mounts to the head from the phlegm in most things (marjâ`bîn). It cures from epilepsy (qar`), and its efficacy in the (case of) nightmare is tried out by experience.’

(If have) confidence in what he recounts for I have tried it out, and when some sprigs of it are taken on going to sleep this is truly so.

Powder (dharrûn) of dry leaves of it with vinegar stops nose-bleeding, ameliorates lesion (nakhab) in the mouth and drives away bad breath, but there is a sort which causes pustules to break out in the mouth. The organs of the eye—a sprig of it burned with a sprig of quince takes the place of flowers of zinc (majbûr al-nafîs) for sharp sight, itching, tumours of the eye-lid (sulaq), vascular opacity of the cornear (sabul) and for drying watering of (the eye). It prevents (also) throbbing of the eye, and application of its leaves prevents the eye running. The organs of the chest—it brings the heart complete relief, expands the soul, rejoices it, removes depression and melancholy (al-tusbah wa-l-nawwâs), hot palpitation (khâfazqân), introspective thoughts (al-khawatir al-nafsântyâyah), and removes anxieties (kurah) when taken in a known quantity, for you know that all excess is harmful. The alimentary organs—it removes nausea (ghathayhîn), dries up and takes away wateriness of the stomach (bailat al-ma`idah), hardens it, and induces thirst, but it is slow in descending into the intestines and is therefore retentive of the food and sets up borborigma and winds. It (qâr) . . .208 colic (mâghî), binds the bowels and inhibits movement, sets incontinence of urine flowing, is utterly harmful to those affected with haemorrhoids, but it alleviates haemorrhage when a mithqal-weight of dry powder (daqîq) of it is added to four ounces of tamarind water and applied to a hernia (lajat) along with cypress (saw) leaf . . .209 It (qâr) appears to be lawful as I understand, and my discussion of it is occasioned because of the fact that doctors, whether of the ancients or the moderns, have not mentioned it.

According to a prominent Yemeni leader, the use of qâr in the tribal north has greatly increased over the past forty years or so, prior to which it was little known. ‘Tribal soldiers say it is a stimulant not to be war-time during the cold nights when on watch in their mountains or moving from one place to another along rocky roads in the darkness. Al-Sayâghi,210 commenting on the regulations for qâr in the document of a similar type to the Qânûn, remarks that in his earlier days qâr fanciers (mutawallîn) used not to be over fifty per cent of people, but now it is planted under every stone and in every district and all have become qâr fanciers—hardly five per cent of persons do not chew it. The inflation (mughâlah) in the price of it has grown enormously and there is no control on it or qârîn (regulation ?). He considers this harmful (darârâh, harmful things), and thinks that those in power should see to what it is necessary to do about qâr in the public weal. As the proverb quoted above indicates, there are many qâr fanciers who would agree that their penchant for qâr should be curbed.

In both the learned class from which the officials used mainly to be drawn and with the ordinary man in the street qâr

200 The author is referring to the four humours.
201 Conjectural emendation for the text’s mughattam, following Max Meyerhof, The Book of the ten treatises on the eye ascribed to Hunain Ibn Is-haq (809-877 A.D.), Cairo, 1928, 211.
202 Meyerhof, op. cit., 191.
203 The text here is clearly corrupt, inserting a heading, ‘the respiratory organs’. Some words informing of the effect of qâr on colic should probably be supplied.
204 At this point the text is unclear to me for a line and a half, probably corrupt, and therefore omitted.
205 See p. 233 seq. There may be some exaggeration in the way in which this is expressed.

San`a`—An Arabic Islamic City
chewing is associated with that good fellowship the Englishman finds in beer drinking. One might say, 'There was a lot of fun at the qat-session today, (Fi 'l-madkâ kân al yawn nidr kathir).'

The customs associated with qat are numerous, as also ideas. For example the famous treatise of Shaykh Muhammad Hayât al-Sindi (ob. 1163/1750) on the 'prohibition of the use of tobacco which has been brought into the Yemen' and prohibit tobacco and burn the tobacco pipes! He was described as, A sharif whose origin is noble, But one not noble of deed.

The literature of the polemic over tobacco is exemplified in such as the treatise of Shaykh Muhammad Hayât al-Sindi (ob. 1163/1750) on the 'prohibition of the use of tobacco which has spread in these times. ' The celebrated, if somewhat turbulent scholar, Muhammad b. Ismâ`il al-Amir maintained, on the contrary that tobacco is lawful and permitted (kalât mudâbâh).
even writing an essay224 to show the weakness of the indications that tobacco is prohibited by way of refutation of al-Sindi who seems to have followed mostly the Maliki school225 in his arguments. The controversy is discussed by Zabarah226 and the arguments for and against it—of which its expensiveness is one, are set forth. He quotes also, in extenso, a poem by a San`ani or Tihâmi on the curative properties of tobacco which, were the poets to be believed, is a veritable panacea, to be applied to yellow bile, phlegm, coughs, and the ulcer (qarûb) which has baffled all the doctors—to name but a few. It was not prohibited by the Prophets, says the poet, and is permissible (qâ`i`a in shar`i`ah law.

The water-pipe (mada`ah, pl., mada`uyt) has, with the chewing of qâ`, become an integral part of Yemeni social life, and indeed of society anywhere in southern Arabia. Some women also smoke it. The pleasant sound of the bubbling of water as the smoker draws deeply on the long pipe-stem adds a sense of deep physical contentment to the company assembled in the mafraj. It is polite custom in the Yemen to hand one’s mada`ah to a companion to take the first puff,227 and one sees, as the pipe circulates round the company that smokers hold the mouthpiece in the hand so that their lips do not actually come into direct contact with it. When the mada`ah is about to go round in Ḥaḍramawt salons someone will say, ‘Shi habîb, shi sulîh. Is any sayyid or sultan here?’ This is because they would be given precedence. Yemenis say that the pipe of a man with a craving for a smoke won’t light! ‘The morning pipe is the pin that holds the knees together.’228 This latter is of the man who cannot do without a smoke immediately on rising. Of a person with intense craving for tobacco or snuff (nashûq), they say that he has the craving of a sweeper (kharmat khâdimin),229 and the Jews were also credited with intense cravings for tobacco, in the sayings kharÂmat miteaqqi`r, the craving of a (Jewish) stone-mason.230 Sayyid Ahmad ‘Ali ZabârÎ`ah one day in Šan`Î` quoted to me in defence of the habit,

They find fault with me for tobacco and smoking
Stop blaming me, I said, for the case requires it.
Of a truth the Satan of cares stands on my chest
And I smoke against him so as to drive him out.231

There is even one of those literary debates of the maqâmah types beloved by the Arabs called the ‘Evening discourse between the friends about what there is between Qâ`it and Tumbâq,’ cited by Zabarah232 which might throw interesting side-lights on Yemeni attitudes to tobacco.233

The Mada`a`ah (fig. 12.2) Each of the part of the mada`a`ah, a name derived from mada`, a Yemeni word for the coconut, has naturally a name of its own. Qafashah - the conical metal cover pierced with a pattern of small holes, placed over the charcoal and burning tobacco. Bu`rî - the pottery bowl, glazed or unglazed, to hold the charcoal and tobacco. Shabîn - the small round brass tray to catch cinders. Qâfîb - the pipe-stem of turned wood, ornamented in various ways, e.g., inlaid (ma`ṣrû`) with little aluminium nails etc., or plain. It can be made traditionally in Šan`Î` of pear-wood (`umbarûd), walnut (jawz), or apricot (barqûq) wood. Al-Mu`aqa`ah - the join of the stem and coconut. Al-Habbah - the coconut containing the water of the mada`a`ah. Tîlî` (pl. at`) - the brass tripod or stand for the mada`a`ah. Qanabah - the snake-like pipe with a mouthpiece (mashrab) which is ornamented (ma`nagîsh) or inlaid with an aluminium nail pattern (ma`ṣrî`), and has a second mashrab at the other end to be inserted into the hole on the upper side of the coconut (habbah). In Šan`Î` the qasabah is made of wire (jarr) of brass or copper finely twisted, but inferior pipes of plastic are sold also in the siq nowadays; they are less springy than the metal pipe.

Makhamal - the cloth cover of the qasabah-pipe. It is usually made of scraps of brightly coloured cloth of the kinds used for women’s frocks, but nowadays there is a sort of knitted makhamal sold by women in the Šan`Î` suq called khursh - a word also sometimes including the pipe itself.

Al-Dik - the pipe is held in an ornamental brass bracket as called because it has two confronted birds—this it seems is nowadays made in India. The dik is attached to the qasabah.

Mi`aqa` - tweezers of brass or iron, used for removing the charcoal from the charcoal holder (ma`ṣqîd) to place it on the heaped pipe-bowl.

Malash - the wooden tobacco-box with a hinged lid sometimes inset with pieces of mother of pearl. A tobacco pouch is a kis.234

Qâ`iqh Isma`î`il cites several proverbial sayings235 drawn from smoking. ‘Khîyâr maw yakhluq Allah `immâr min kis ghayr-ak, the best things that Allah has created—a fill (of the pipe) from some other person’s pouch.’ ‘Ammur wa jammar236 wa-rabb-ak bâ yijalli-hâ, Fill (your pipe) and light it with a red-hot ember and your Lord will show hot it is.’ The sense is that one should look on the bright side of things and not bother about the difficulties of life which God will remove. On the other hand, ‘Lâ
timakkin 237 masuta’s yirisky lak, ma-là wàzab yakhtub lak. Don’t get a tobacco addict 238 to light (your pipe) for you, nor an unmarried man to ask in betrothal on your behalf!’

There is an amusing tale of a Hadrami who went to Jeddah and took service with a merchant. The merchant told him to change (ghayyar) the pipe—meaning to change the water. The Hádrami, in whose dialect ‘change’ mean ‘break’, asked if the merchant really meant ‘ghayyar’. ‘Certainly’, was the reply, but the merchant was astonished when the servant started to smash the pipe!

In Sán‘, indeed everywhere in northern Yemen one sees on the ground the dried yellow trace of expectorated snuff;纽带qin or纽带qin, which all classes, even those as quiet in the mouth, though it can be taken by snuffing. Nazih al-Mu‘ayyad al-‘Azm 244 saw snuff manufactories in Sán‘ in the days of Imam Yahya—mud houses with a number of small rooms in each of which were three or four handmills (tagbil al-tutun al-tunbak), his taking all the tobacco found in the dughdugah) 240 was added to the tobacco to make the snuff, and the tobacco itself imported by the large merchants from Aden and Suez in quite considerable quantities. Qādi Ismā‘il’s proverb, 245 ‘Là tišah buğqayax bāyn ahl Khawlan, Don’t open your snuff-box when you are among Khawlanis,’ expresses their particular fondness for it, for if you do open your snuff-box all present will ask for a pinch—this is taken with the thumb and forefinger.

Types of tobacco known to the Yemen, apart from that imported from abroad, are al-tutun al-Ḥamnīmi (which grows in the Tihmāth at al-Zaydiyyah), 246 al-Ḥimiyari, 247 and al-Ḫurashi. 248 Al-Ḥimiyari, I was told, is supposed to be an indigenous variety that grew in the Yemen before tobacco came from America—al-Sayāghi calls it tutun aswād. This does not seem very likely.

In Imam Yahya’s day, Nazih 245 considered the tutun and tumbah growing in various parts of the Yemen to be poor varieties for smoking in pipes. The merchant really meant ‘ghayyar’. ‘Certainly’, was the reply, but he was probably usually sold locally by a maqayyiq for 20 buqshash.

Tobacco corns (fifil) - a wagiyyah for 20 buqshash.

Pounded pepper (filfīl madqūq) - a plastic bag for two riyals.

Pounded fenugreek (hulbah/hilbah madqūq), a heaped nafar for 2½ riyals.

Pounded chillies (shattah madqūq) - a plastic bag for two riyals.

Pounded chillies (shattah madqūq) - a plastic bag for two riyals, weight not recorded.

Pounded chillies (bīṣṭān madqūq), as the previous.

Ammi also called wild aniseed or Abyssinian cummin (makhkhushi),

Snuff

Spices, Condiments, Cosmetics

At the main entrance to the old city from the recent Shārī ‘Abd al-Mughni, there used to be stalls selling spices, condiments and cosmetics—by 1975 these had been moved to the high open bank forming the east side of the Sā‘lah, about half a dozen stalls at most, with an identical range of commodities. Samples of each item were purchased for the stall at the Sā‘lah Exhibition. 249 These were:

Turmeric (hurad) - 3 tiquqiyah for a riyal.

Pounded pepper (fifil madqūq) - half a raf 4 for 4 riyals, but it was probably usually sold locally by a maqayyiq for 20 buqshash.

Pounded pepper (fifil) - a wagiyyah for 20 buqshash.

Cummin (kamūn) - a raf 4 for a riyal.

Potash (huqut), 252 made from burning the ḥal al-ṣal plant, used for washing clothes - a raft 4 for two riyals.

Walnuts (jambil), used in tea - sold by the nut, 30 habbahs for 3 riyals.

Pounded pepper (fīfīl) - a wagiyyah for 20 bugshash.

In Sā‘lah to collect the tobacco at Manakhah in 1895-6 was killed, more or less by chance, by tribesman at al-Haymah after a courageous resistance, and his riding animals sent by them to the Imām in the mountains.

The tobacco monopoly imposed by the Ottomans was keenly resented by the Yemenis for, according to Zabarah, 246 ‘the merchant would purchase a holding of Kāzirūn (tobacco) and the like, and from him more than its price would be taken—so that he was obliged to put what was taken from him onto the price, plus expenses (makhkhat), and sell it to poor folk (al-affāj) at several times its (original) price so that his merchandise for a hundred riyals would get sold at over two hundred and fifty riyals’.

Nowadays there is a lively smuggling of cigarettes from Sa`udi Arabia into northern Yemen—this seems to contradict the idea that tobacco is not a profitable article of commerce to move from place to place as expressed in the proverb, ‘Kāzirūn—they lose—every time the donkey farts it loses a rafl (in weight)’ 246 Kāzirūn is presumably tobacco imported from the town of that name in the Fars province of Persia, and since travellers record that the Yemen imported Persian tobacco 252 long before the second Ottoman occupation the proverb itself may be quite old.
used in coffee (gahwah) - a quarter rāfīl for 2 riyāls,
Fennel (shamār), used with coffee - a quarter rāfīl for 2 riyāls
Thyme (za’atar), 2 nafarīs for a riyāl.
Java incense (bakhūr/bukhūr Jāwī), for burning, - half a rāfīl for 3½ riyāls
Water incense (bukhūr mā'), for perfuming water pots or putting in drinking water - a quarter rāfīl for 3½ riyāls.
Henna (hiyā), half a rāfīl for 2½ riyāls.
Cinnamon (qirfah), a wāgīyāh for a riyāl.
Tamarind (tamar Hindi'), a plastic bag for a riyāl, weight not recorded. It is also called ‘humar.
Ginger (zinjabil), half a rāfīl for 6 riyāls.
Garlic (thūmah), a rāfīl for 1½ riyāls.
Coriander (kabsarah), a nafar for 1½ riyāls.

Chillies (bibās) loose, half a rāfīl for 4 riyāls.
Ma’rib salt (milh Ma’ribi), 2 riyāls for 2 riyāls.
Shādhār, unidentified, but this is an ICI product, a white bar with a stamp in Arabic, sold either whole or by a piece broken off it. After henna has been applied to the skin, a mixture of huțum-potash and shādhār pounded together, is applied to the skin to turn the colour black.

Most of these commodities are sold by the small measure called nafar, but they also sell some by the rub' nafar, thumn nafar, and thumn al-thumn if the customer wishes. As Qānūn Ṣan‘ā’ commends, the salesman usually adds a little extra to ensure that he is not selling short measure. For weights lumps of metal, not stamped cast weights are commonly used.
Chapter 13 (1)
The Statute of Šan’a’
(Qânûn Šan’a’)

Introduction

The Statute of Šan’a’, a collection of market regulations, is at present accessible to us in the form published by Qâdi Husayn b. Ahmad al-Sayâghi,2 and in his typescript summary3 containing The Statute of San’ã’. Chapter 13(1)

Introduction

God’s pleasure be upon them), laid down, this taking place present accessible to us in the form published by Qâdi Husayn b. Ahmad al-Sayâghi, though many unsolved problems of language and background remain, and al-Sayâghi’s useful notes and introduction have been drawn upon where relevant.

Two Ms. texts were used by al-Sayâghi, the first of which, Document A (Basic), bore the heading,

1. This is the copy of the Regulation (Qâ `idah) laid down in the Statute (Qânûn) which my father, the Commander of the Faithful, Commander of the Faithful, God bless him, has guided to that to which the Exalted God.

The Statutes of an `â’, a collection of market regulations, is at

The transcription of it (the basic document no. 1), taken from the text of the Statute (Qânûn) which the respected governor

over by him (as governor) and he acted well in it. He fixed its weights and measures (mazâ‘im) and whatever the change in prices in the (present) age necessitates is modified.

1 Qânûn can, by extension, mean majbû, a duty, customs tax. Al-Jarmûzi, Sirah, 300, alludes to a majbû called gânûn taken by governors in the Yemen Tihâmah on those using the roads, and (257) to a gânûn paid on wine to the Hadrami sultan when sold at al-Shihr. Mulahhar b. Muh. al-Jarmûzi in a Ms. copy of the Mocha al-Mahdi, al-Sayâghi—which embodies the previous text of 1161/1748. It was laid down by order of the Imam al-Mahdi `Abdullah b. al-Mutawakkil Aghm b. al-Manfûr ‘Ali b. al-Mahdi b. al-Abbâs (1231-51/1816-35) appears an undated noted, ‘This Statute, established in preserved Šan’a’, the protected of Exalted God in the month of Dhu ‘l-Qa`dah al-Harâm of the year 1261/1650.


3 Qâmûn (Qânûn) mardûq, the protected (al-mahmiyyah) to refrain for one moment, from acting in manner of benefits. So it is not lawful to anyone whosoever it be

4 The text contains a number of printer’s slips owing to hurried publication, but the editing is often insufficient to clarify the text, and the introduction by al-Sayâghi, though containing valuable data, is confused in presentation.

5 Khazindar means amin al-`undiiq, treasurer. Of this official Nashr al-`arf, I, 422, says he was imprisoned for a short time by al-Mahdi. Musājid Šan`a’, 53, mentions a house of the faqiḥ Ahmad Khazindar near Musājid al-Zubayr, perhaps an ancestor.

6 Mursûm also means a diploma.

7 Al-Sayâghi states that this is a rendering of the original ‘a little freer’.

8 Al-Sayâghi quotes a descendant of al-Haymî as stating that the latter was an intelligent man, a good faqiḥ, and that he took over the governorship of Šan’a’ in the time of al-Mahdi ‘Abdullah. It looks as if it was a descendant of his, Muḥ. b. Muḥ. b. Ahmad, who was later a governor of Šan’a’. Cf. Zabârah, A’mmat al-Yaman, (2), I, 35.

9 Indicated by the word (Supplementary) in the translation below.
Historical Antecedents to the Statute of San`a’

It can hardly be doubted that the Qânûn San`a’ had antecedents remaining to quite early Islamic times, perhaps even to the pre-Islamic age. For the Islamic period however no actual document embodying the ordinances for the markets of San`a’ is, as yet, known to have existed prior to the expulsion of the Ottoman Turks from it in 1629-30 A.D. Nevertheless the legal opinions used in the Statute.

1. The pre-Mutawakkil Qânûn, probably the customary law of San`a’ in existence before al-Mutawakkil’s reforms and with fair certainty it may be assumed to have been a written document.

2. Qânûn al-Mutawakkil, issued before 1066/1655.

3. Document B, consisting of A (Basic) plus the Supplement.

4. Document C, consisting of A (Basic) plus the Supplement. This was compiled by ‘Abdullah b. al-Mutawakkil (1231-51/1815-6 to 1835-6), at an unspecified date.

List of Market Statutes (Qânûm) Known to Yemeni History

1. The pre-Mutawakkil Qânûn, probably the customary law of the Markets observed during Ottoman occupation and perhaps even before that.

2. Qânûn al-Mutawakkil, issued before 1066/1655.

3. Document A (Basic), compiled between 1128-39/1716 to 1726-7, and copied in 1161/1748. It was confirmed by ‘Abdullah b. al-Mutawakkil (1231-51/1815-6 to 1835-6), at an unspecified date.

4. Document B, consisting of A (Basic) plus the Supplement. This was compiled by ‘Abdullah b. al-Mutawakkil (1231-51/1815-6 to 1835-6) and contains:

   1. Al-Sahûli’s copy of an original document A (Basic) dated 1161/1748.

   2. A continua regulation against intercepting grain coming in from the countryside. See p.164 seq.


   5. By ‘Abdullah the Islamic-tens are usually meant.


7. Ghâyat al-amani, II, 817, states that in 1051/1642 A.D., the new Turkish governor prevented the people of the Dhimmi, the Jews, from selling wine, and punished a number of persons for drinking it; two years later he had wine in Dhimmi houses poured away and executed a Dhimmi who had sold wine and who had refused to give it up. In 1064/1654, a new Persian, Haydar, not only drank wine himself, but it was openly sold in the markets as if the Qur’an had never prohibited it.
II. The Supplement (Ziyâdah), dated 1234/1819.

It appears then possible to trace back documents of the law of the Markets of San‘â’ to approximately the early 11th/17th Century.

The Style and Language of Qânûn San‘â’

The Qânûn is couched in written colloquial San‘âni, i.e. following the loose grammar of the spoken language and employing colloquial diction, yet also showing the strong influence of the literary language—so that it cannot be characterised as simply the spoken Arabic of the city. There is a large number of technical terms unknown to the lexicons, and the writers, familiar with the background, use short cuts to express what they want to say, much as in speech, giving little explanatory detail even of the briefest sort. (For example an adjective qualifying a defined noun is quite often separated from it by an intervening phrase.) For these reasons the Qânûn, at first sight, often seems cryptic, and, much as in speech, giving little explanatory detail even of the terms unknown to the lexicons, and the writers, familiar with the Arabic, other data have been relegated to the footnotes. The Supplementary pages (al-Za‘amâ‘id) differ a little in style from the basic Qânûn—perhaps one might even detect slight differences in style between parts of the basic Qânûn itself. Al-Sayâghi’s text must be accepted as he has copied it, with, of course, the correction of the obvious misprints, but one occasionally suspects a corrupt phrase going beyond mere printer’s errors. The punctuation, which has doubtless been inserted by the editor, is patently unreliable and frequently better ignored.

Al-Sayâghi’s notes have been used though they are not always very enlightening, and he leaves a number of problematical terms without comment. Some of the vocabulary may be unknown to San‘ânis themselves today—for example I have not as yet found a San‘âni who knew the farriery terms of the Qânûn, though tethernings for horses, mules and donkeys can be seen fixed to many house-walls in the old town. In contrast to the Qânûn, the Preamble by the scholarly Qâçûl is in formal ornate prose, rather pompous, employing rhyme (sa‘j) and some technical legal terms—a rather wearisome style out of which the sense has to be teased.

The Translation

The printed Arabic text indicates each place where additions to Document A (Basic) commence—in the translation these are introduced by the word Supplementary. It has had to be assumed that the end of a Supplementary paragraph actually terminates the addition—and that a next following paragraph not so marked, resumes Document A (Basic). Yet the translator has had doubts whether, in certain places, this is in fact so.

Clauses of Document A (Basic) are given Roman numerals. Supplementary sections have their clauses indicated by letters of the alphabet. None of these numerals appear in the Arabic text which has been arranged arbitrarily into clauses in the English translation. South Arabian documents of this sort do not normally separate their contents into a series of clauses.

Each main section has, for convenience, been numbered in the translation, and one sub-title (no. 38) has been added to those supplied by al-Sayâghi’s text. Al-Sayâghi states that he has added some sub-titles within brackets, but a scrutiny of the printed Arabic text indicates that many bracketed sub-titles can only be part of the original Ms. If not then these sections would have no application—e.g., nos. 39 and 40 have bracketed sub-titles referring to the Jews of ‘Aqil and the Hindu Bâniyân but these are essential to the sections. As the employment of brackets is inconsistent the translation ignores their existence. Words bracketed in the body of the text have been similarly treated.

The translation attempts—as far as possible—to indicate by brackets such words and phrases it is essential to introduce in order to convey the full meaning of the Arabic text. I have attempted to give, if feasible, a uniform English equivalent. Terms equivocal in sense, or technical, are frequently inserted after the English rendering in transliterated Arabic to ensure greater precision.

The numerals following the headings of the various sections refer to the pages of the printed Arabic text.

Analysis of the Sections of the Qânûn by Documents

A (Basic)—early 12th/18th century

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 37, 38, 42, 43, 44, 45, 49, 50.

B (Supplement)—early 13th/19th century

1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48.

List of Contents

Preamble

1. The Cloth Market (Sûq al-Bazz)
2. The Market of Hadrami Cloth (Sûq al-Hadrami)
3. The Silver Market (Sûq al-Fiddah)
4. Commission Fees (Diliyâdah) and the conditions thereof
5. Concerning merchandise which comes with strangers (aqkrâb)
6. The Spicery Market (Sûq al-Mî‘ârah)
7. Wax Melting (Sabâ‘us al-Sham’)
8. The Silk Market (Sûq al-Harîr)
9. Sûq al-Haşâqah
10. Coffee-husk, Oil and Ghee (al-Qi∫r toa-‘l-Sâbî toa-‘l-Saman)
11. The Tobacco Market (Sûq al-Tunbaq)
12. The Market of Black Tobacco (Sûq al-Tutun al-Astrand)
13. The Rope-Fibre Market (Sûq al-Salab)
14. The Grain Market (Sûq al-Habb)
15. The Salt Market (Sûq al-Mîlîy)
16. The Raisin Market (Sûq al-Zabîb)
17. The Henna Market (Sûq al-Hînna)
18. The Qât Market (Sûq al-Qât)
19. Grapes and similar fruits
20. The Meat Market (al-Majzarah) and the Dealers (al-Muslihin)
21. The Firewood Market (Sûq al-Hattah)
22. The Cattle and Donkey Market (Sûq al-Baqar wa-l-Bahâ’im)
23. The Camel Market (Sûq al-Jimîl)
24. The Horse and Mule Market (Sûq al-Khayl wa-l-Bighâl)
25. The Fodder Market (Sûq al-‘Aîf)
27. Craftsmen and Workmen (Ashâb al-Hiraf wa-Ahl al-A ‘mâl)
28. Bakers (Khabbâzin) and the like
29. The Blacksmiths’ Market (al-Mihdâdah)
30. Farriery (al-Baytarah)
31. The Carpenterry Market (al-Minjârâh)
32. Lock and Key Smiths (Sunnâ‘ al-Magha∫lah toa-‘l-Dawâyir)
33. Gun-stock Makers (al-Majrayyin)
34. The Brass Market (Sûq al-Nabâs)
35. The Sandal and Shoemakers’ Market (Sûq al-Minqâlah wa-l-I∫kâ’iyah)
36. Builders’ Wages (Ujrat al-A‘mmâr)
37. Stone and Wages (al-A‘jar toa-‘l-Ujâr)
38. Various
39. The Dhimmiyyin (Jews), the people of ‘Aqil
40. The Hindu Community (Jamâ‘at al-Bâniyân)
41. Pottery and Clay Bread-Ovens (al-Modar toa-‘l-Tunawîr) etc.
The Statue of San‘a’
(Qanûn San‘a’)

Preamble

In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate

Praise to God who, in his Noble Book, revealed, ‘O those who have believed, do not consume your properties among yourselves unprofitably, but let there be trading between you by mutual consent.’ (Qur'an, IV, 29).

But—how far things are from that!

Where does the connection lie between this (verse) and such as he who, if what he has in his hand shows itself to him to be in demand, makes much of it, schemes to cheat the would-be buyer, exaggerating and coercing? Where, too, does the connection lie between (this verse) and him who, when brought some article for sale, looks it over, then frowns, and, if he does chaffer for it, belittles it and does it out of a fair price20 Blessings and peace upon Muhammad the Trustworthy,21 benevolent to the Believers, and upon his Blessed Family and rightly guided Companions!

Now—when the self-interested had mounted to the heights of greed, turning from application and lending an ear to religious law, to plunge for profits into commerce,22 regardless of the (stormy) billows of those seas, refusing to seek the light but staying ever in the dark shades of inflating (prices), be it by false assertions even, forsaking the (considered) views of eminent ulama, abandoning the dicta of the thinkers of the community of Islam, all but perishing in the dark deserts of death while shunning the lamps (that would light them) on those ways—then shone forth the Sun of honourable Approval and the Moon of elevated and lofty approval that he gave. Rajjaha explains bakhasa as bakhasa-hu ilaa idrak ikhnyarat Amir al-Mu'minin, Malba`at al-Ma`arif al-Jalilah, 1356 H., 3-4. Zabârah, 1156 H. 3-4. Zabarah, A`immus al-Yaman, I, 7-8, speaks of the ta'riqah of al-Hadi, the first Imam of the Yemen, whose books and school spread about in al-Jil and al-Daylam as well as the Yemen itself. An example of his tarqâr is given concerning Qur’ân, IX, 29, 0, those who have believed, the Polythiest are unclean (najas-un). Cf. Bukhari, ~ahih, edit. L. Krehl, Leiden, 1862-1908, II, III, (al-shirkah), (passim).

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Text

1. The Cloth Market (Suq al-Bazz) 282

i. Merchandise consisting of cloth arriving from Mocha (al-Mukhâ) and other ports (bandîdir)23—(what costs) ten shall be sold at eleven and a half. Whatever the purchaser (i.e. local merchant) buys in San`â’—of that which he buys by the score (kawrajah) ten (shall be sold at) eleven—one of that which he buys by the bolt (jâqah) ten (shall be sold at) eleven—and of that which he buys by the cubit (dirhâr) ten (shall be sold at) eleven.

Qanûn to be reissued as it is in Document B.

26 M. `Ibrahîm, i.e. marjû `Ibrahîm.

27 Tarjih, cf. f.n. 23.

28 I.e., the Imam who laid down the Qanûn in the first part of the 12th/13th century. The text in this section implies the existence of some sort of licensing or mandate from Mocha with the merchant importing the cloth to San`â’ on the basis of which the retail price was calculated. Bills of lading were in regular use in the 16th century and later (cf. The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast, 34, i, 105, 173-4), and a tasdūr was in use in San`â’ (p.23). See also the matter and the rights of the Qawm in the 15th century and later (cf. The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast, 34, i, 105, 173-4), and a tasdūr was in use in San`â’ (p.23).

29 For these coins see p. 30ba, 309a, seq.

30 Muslim, ahih, Bûlaq, 1290, I, 440 (al-`itq ) quotes Traditions that the Muslim declared that whenever a person bringing belonging to him in a slave, his (the slave's) redemption shall come from his property/money if he'sa has. If he has no property then the slave is valued at the price of the like of (him) (ga`nakese `iyyâdah bâd el-mât al-`âl). Cf. Bukhari, `Ibrahîm, edit. L. Krehl, Leiden, 1862-1908, II, III, (al-shirkah), (passim).

For these coins see p. 30ba, 309a, seq.

31 Bandar, port, is sometimes applied to the inland towns in the Yemen.

32 The text in this section implies the existence of some sort of licensing or mandate from Mocha with the merchant importing the cloth to San`â’ on the basis of which the retail price was calculated. Bills of lading were in regular use in the 16th century and later (cf. The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast, 34, i, 105, 173-4), and a tasdūr was in use in San`â’ (p.23).

33 For these coins see p. 30ba, 309a, seq.

34 Tarjih, cf. f.n. 23.

35 I.e., al-Mu`ammad b. `Abd al-Mu`in b. Mu`awadah, i.e. murtadaka `Abd al-Mu`in. A little cloth (bazz) was getting into Mocha because of the trouble (fitnah) the Franks had been making.
ii. Hadrami cloth—the profit on ten shall be eleven. Head-wraps (mughab)30—to dye these in San`a'31 is prohibited unless they are displayed before the Shaykh of the Market, an honest (amir) man of integrity ('adda), lest a man defraud by (dyeing) an old one (to look new).

iii. (In the case of) Zabid cloth likewise, ten shall be sold for eleven. Hadideh,32 Yarim, and Wujab cloth shall be dealt with in the same way.

(Supplementary) 282
a. Cloth shall be sold by the (iron) dhirā'33 only, stamped with the name of the Commander of the Faithful.

b. No one who is known for slowness34 in payment, or who has gone bankrupt shall buy, but must35 be suspended. If he does buy and the commission agent (dallal)36 displays41 some goods belonging to a stranger (gharib) to him—as soon as the commission agent stands surety (dāman) for42 the goods of the stranger he must be punished43 and severely reprimanded.

c. The people of the Cloth Market are required to provide the watch (būrsak) when the town needs watchmen (burris), paying the customary44 wage of the watch for which they are liable. They are required to provide part of the fleece-lined coats (bugshahs) to the wagiyyah. 57

d. For dealing wholesale (ijbar) in the Cloth Market must pay eleven qirsh plus half a qirsh collection charge. Individual (cloth-merchants) of the Cloth Market must pay eleven qirsh plus half a qirsh collection charge. The allotment (tafrid) of these (rates) shall be effected in accordance with the known regulations (jarā'īd) issued by the respected ākbir54 (and) kept in the hands of the Shaykh al-Mashâyikh.

2. The Market of Hadrami Cloth (Sūq al-Ḥadramî) 283
i. The avoidance of fraudulence over head-wraps (mughab) is stipulatory upon them.

ii. Anyone against whom there is evidence of slowness in payment to the stranger (gharib) shall be suspended from buying until he settles in full.

iii. They are responsible for the watch duty (būrsak) when the town has need (of it). They are required to provide the customary fleece-lined coats for the watch, (contributing) sixteen and a quarter qirsh plus a qirsh collection charge on that, in accordance with the customary payment and the allotment of it in the original document (al-sunn).

3. The Silver Market (Sūq al-Fiṣṣâd) 283
i. Silver purchased from the Jews (Dhimmiyyin) and others, whatever (silver) it be—silver qirsh coin (qirsh hajar),55 or Maghrībi (Western silver),56 or Buhari (Bohran silver),57 consisting of seventy-one in the one thousand (rupees) gafshatless (nafis) plus half a qirsh. The above silver for the owner of the capital (rās al-mal) shall be seven bugsasha to the wasiyah.

ii. Silver other than the afore-going is broken up to become small
San‘a’—An Arabian Islamic City

58 Khasha, broken up pieces (qadī mudânasah). One sees boxes of such broken pieces in the silversmith’s workshops in Hadramout, as well as old coins.

59 Several pieces in my possession seem to have a name and mukhlas stamped on a raised seal applied to the main surface.

60 Reading bi al-fahsh, for yâ’ulîd bâhshah. It is rubbed on a stone to see if there is fraud.

61 i.e. the melting of old and dirty silver white by melting it. Cf. Sûq al-Abyad, the Silver Market.

62 Maqsarah, pelê, magâsir, a sort of ornamental buckle on a brocade belt for women, or nowadays aluminium, nail-like ornament driven into it. Other ornaments are used in the same way, the handle of a dagger, which is decorated with a pattern of small silver, or the handle of a knife, or the handle of a ship, in the same way.

63 A qaflah is a tenth of a wagiyyah.

64 A qafqah is a tenth of a daghah.

65 Sales by the score when sold by the score or by the pound, “two or three half-loads.” Cf. Jemenica, 143, no. 1072.

66 The vendors of harad (also called maqla) stone bowls for cooking in, or the handle of a dagger, which is decorated with a pattern of small silver, or nowadays aluminium, nail-like ornament driven into it. Other ornaments are used in the same way, the handle of a dagger, which is decorated with a pattern of small silver, or the handle of a knife, or the handle of a ship, in the same way.

67 Arabic nazara.

68 Several pieces in my possession seem to have a name and mukhlas stamped on a raised seal applied to the main surface.

69 See f.n. 59, supra. The old Silver Market in San‘a’ is called Sûq al-Mukhlas.

70 In San‘a’ the dallal is not a broker as he is in Hadramawt, the Hadrami dallai having a function closer to that of the San‘ani musliiz, dealers or brokers. Cf. Jemenica, 143, no. 1072.

71 Qâdi Ismail, Al Amthâl al-Yamânîyah, I, 228, no. 645, quotes the Tihâmah proverb, “Am-dallâl ghashsh wâlidat-ih, The dallal cheats his mother.” He is responsable to get back the money or the defaulter.

72 Arabic nazara.

73 So as to guarantee (yaqub) against a hadâd ghishsh, or fraud. He will be responsible to get back the money or the defaulter.

74 Udhâba, i.e., he will probably be fined. Ashab means ghulâma, a fine.

75 Presumably a commission agent from outside San‘a.’

76 I.e. dallais are not allowed to give a wage to the Jews (yislah bayna-yah) to make silver for the dallai’s own use. This seems to mean that the dallal only receives a fee for acting as an intermediary—which he would not be doing were he to purchase for himself.

77 Arabic nazara.

78 Ten bugshahs for women’s necklaces etc. If the ornaments are made from silver of the pure silver standard, 68 and the silver-smith inscribes his name (on the piece of silver jewellery). Anything other than this—if it be in accordance with the pure silver standard—is called mukhlas and the silver-smith inscribes his name. If it be anything else it is treated in the same way to guard against fraud.

79 A qaflah is a tenth of a wagiyyah, the latter being the weight of a Maria Theresa dollar.

80 The prices for the three categories of silver ornament are, per wagiyyah, one and a half and the purchaser one bugshah per qirsh on anything up to ten qirsh or less.

81 Here samsari means sahib al-makhzan, store-keeper. Al-Sayagi says the makhzan is called samsarah in San‘a’. Samsari can also, however, mean mukhlas, prepare of any incident) to the Shaykh of the Market, and that they (the group as a whole) get nothing from the vendor, if he be an unknown person, a man who will introduce (nu’arrif) him, lest something that has been stolen should be sold. They are prohibited

82 Arabic nazara.

83 Al-Mibsâh is where old clothes—for the most part—are spread out on the ground (yufrushûn al-harad, ‘spread out’ their wares going from one part of the town to another as the market wares guarded. I have also seen them going round the San‘a’ market with them as hawkers.

84 Taçlmin—çlamanah means here responsibility for anything that happens.

85 Taçlmin—çlamanah means here responsibility for anything that happens.
ted from purchasing for themselves. They are required to provide for the customary watch (qurunful-an) as required, (at the rate of) thirty-four qirsh per annum, plus two and one eighth ghirsh the customary collection charge on that, as required, (at the rate of) thirty-four qirsh per annum, plus two ghirsh, the customary collection charge on that.

5. Concerning Merchandise Which Comes With Strangers (Aqyab) 285

Any goods coming with strangers, such as merchandise of Syria, al-Nu’mân, and the Persians (Ajam), and such as gold, silk, spicery (mi’tarah), twist (ghazl), frankincense (luban), indigo (nil), etc., shall first be offered for sale to the craftsmen (ahl al-mihar), retailers (kassar) of spicery, the Silk Market (Sûq al-Harir), and weavers for three days, and they will be given first choice to acquire whatever pertains to them as a craft (hirfah). Then after them will come those who display (their goods in boxes in the streets) (al-râsiq). Others apart from these will not be able to acquire any of this till after three days have passed. The charge of this is the responsibility of the commission agents.

6. The Spicery Market (Sûq al-Mî’tarah) 285

a. Goods shall be displayed for three days, and any person known for slovenliness in payment shall be suspended from acquiring property and shall not be allowed any merchandise till after he pays what he owes.

b. The retail (kass) profit in spicery (costing) ten ghirsh is twelve and a half ghirsh, the additional profit being to cover (ila mugabil) and weavers 91 for three days, and they will be given first choice to purchase for themselves. They are not allowed to act as intermediary (wâsiiah) to themselves, so they can be removed easily than the remaining ones.

c. Mi’tarah covers a whole range of wares such as drugs, perfumes (uiûr), incense (bakhûr), finely ground sugar powder (bathth), etc. Cf. Nashr al-`arf, I, 274, for mi’tarah. Qâçii Ismail al-Akwa` quoted the term. Ra’fâf’in are those who display their merchandise laid out on boxes in the streets of the open market. Cf. Gloss. dat., 1289, ralafa, to arrange.

7. Wax Melting (Sâbâbat al-Sham’) 285

i. The payment for the melting of (wax) bees is half a ghirsh on the farâsilah, subject to the usual cleansing and straining, it being stipulatory on the smelter (shammâ`) that he imprint his name upon what he manufactures on account of (possible) fraud.

ii. They are required to pay the customary wages of the watch as the town needs, and they are required to provide fleecelined coats of the watch (hirfas) to the tune of five ghirsh per annum, plus two ghirsh, the customary collection charge on that.

iii. The sale of (bees) wax—the maund (mann) consists of thirty-two uqiyâs equivalent to two pounds (rajîl) in weight, according to the weights. On other things such as spicery and silk, sold by the rajîl and the quarter rajîl the profit shall be (in the ratio of) ten (sold for) eleven. On what is sold by the uqiyâs and the quarter rajîl the profit shall be (in the ratio of) ten (sold for) eleven. Anyone who opens the door to inflation (asylak) incurs punishment.

8. The Silk Market (Sûq al-Harir) 286

i. (The procedure) laid down for them in regard to the merchandise of Syria has already been mentioned.

ii. They are required to provide the fleecelined coats for the watch as they are accustomed to do, to the tune of three ghirsh plus a half as collection charge on that, and (to provide men for) the customary watch (hirfah) of the town when needed.

9. Sûq al-`Alagah 286

i. It is the responsibility of the Shaykh to keep an eye on the cost of goods and assign to them (the vendors) the (rate of) profit imposed on the rest of the goods, on account of the goods being liable to breakage, and to lose where cheap things are concerned. He will inspect them twice a month.

ii. They are required to pay what markets besides theirs pay, and they are required to pay for the fleecelined coats necessary for manufacture.
105 Cf. f.n. 46, supra. Tafa'il al-mablagh is distribution of the (total) sum.
106 This would appear here at least to mean agreed statute, or a procedure.
One says in the Yemen, 'Al-qishr al-jalâsh al-jalâsh al-qishr wa-'l-Saman')
which is six raqs, and on skins of cow ghee (al-baqarri) it is eight raqs on a hundred raqs. The container ('ajal) is returned to its owner when its content is in excess of this amount. Woolsten
sacks (gharâ'ir) also are returned to their owner.

107 Coffee in the Yemen has of course much lore attached to it, but a few useful
notes are to be found in Rosu, L'Arabo parlava, 1634.

108 Persons going out to intercept those (three commodities) and a half on each rail, and the retailer in coffee-husk is entitled to a bugshah from (going out) to any quarter (jihah). The importer (jallâb) is six rails, and on skins of cow ghee (al-baqarri) is six rails, and on skins containing sheep-and-goat ghee (aqzâ) are six rails, and on skins of cow ghee (al-baqarri) it is eight raqs on a hundred raqs. The container ('ajal) is returned to its owner when its content is in excess of this amount. Woolsten
sacks (gharâ'ir) also are returned to their owner.

109 Any person who deprives the people of San`â' of their needs, and undertaking the payment to the vendor of what is due to him (receives) a fee of a quarter ghee a year old or more (al-saman al-dâyil) will be imprisoned and suspended from dealing. So also anyone who adulterates oil and ghee with other oils (dihânah) like bitter almond (al-lave el-qubb) oil ectera, is liable to punishment.

110 The (rate of) profit is as previously mentioned.

vi. The person supervising the distribution of the oil among the people of San`â' (the retailers), and undertaking the payment to the vendor of what is due to him (receives) a fee of a quarter ghee a year old or more (al-saman al-dâyil) will be imprisoned and suspended from dealing. So also anyone who adulterates oil and ghee with other oils (dihânah) like bitter almond (al-lave el-qubb) oil ectera, is liable to punishment.
to increase its weight) is prohibited.

\(\text{c/f. Weighting}\) shall be done with the stamped weights (\text{mazmanat}).

They are required to carry out such watch duties (\text{biru\textsuperscript{u}ah}) as they are accustomed to do, and to provide, of the fleece-lined coats distributed to the watch, fifteen \text{girsch} plus two \text{girsch} collection charge on that, the allotment of which shall be (effected) in accordance with the regulation (\text{kept}) with the Shaykh.

11. The Tobacco Market (\text{S\textsuperscript{u}q al-Tunbaq}) 287

(Supplementary) 287

a. They are entitled to the same (rate of) profit as that previously mentioned in the case of coffee-husk.

b. Blowing water on to it is prohibited, as also is the mixing of poor quality tobacco with good (\text{al-da\textsuperscript{u} `i bi\textsuperscript{-}l-malih}) because this is fraud. Good and poor quality tobacco-powder (\text{duqqah})\textsuperscript{128} shall each be (offered) for sale separately.\textsuperscript{127}

c. They are required to provide the watch duties they customarily do when needed, and they are required to provide the fleece-lined coats of the watch, namely three and a half \text{girsch} ready money, plus a \text{girsch} and a half collection charge on that.

12. The Market of Black Tobacco\textsuperscript{128}

(\text{S\textsuperscript{u}q al-Tutun al-Aswad}) 288

a. They are entitled to the same (rate of) profit as that previously mentioned in the case of the coffee-husk, providing it is the goods of the region (\text{iglim})\textsuperscript{129} and that good quality (tobacco) is not adulterated (\text{yukhlat}) with poor.

b. Weighing shall be done with the weights stamped with the \text{Im\textsuperscript{a}mic} stamp.

c. They are required to provide the watch duties they customarily do when the town needs, and they are required to provide the fleece-lined coats of the watch to the tune of ten qirsh and a quarter qirsh collection charge for that.

13. The Rope-Fibre Market (\text{S\textsuperscript{u}q al-Salab}) 288

(Supplementary) 288

a. Honesty (\text{am\textsuperscript{a}nah}) without deception is stipulatory in the fixing of the price (\text{tas\textsuperscript{u}ir}) of the rail of worked rope-fibre (\text{salab}) being the responsibility of the Shaykh the Market people to deliver the money (\text{m\textsuperscript{a}l}) to the stranger (\text{gharib}) in accordance with the regulation (\text{qa\textsuperscript{-}cid\textsuperscript{a}}).

b. The Shaykh of the Rope-Fibre Market is responsible for fixing the price (\text{tas\textsuperscript{u}ir}) of the rail of worked rope-fibre (\text{salab}) in accordance with what he considers the best interest (\text{ma\textsuperscript{-}la\textsuperscript{a}h}) for the Muslims. The Shaykh is responsible for obliging (\text{jab}) the Market people to deliver the money (\text{m\textsuperscript{a}l}) to the stranger (\text{gharib}) in accordance with the regulation (\text{qa\textsuperscript{-}dah}).

c. They are required to carry out such watch duties (\text{biru\textsuperscript{u}ah}) as they are accustomed to do when the town needs, and they are required to meet the due (\text{hagq}) they customarily pay for the rope-fibre imported (\text{majl\textsuperscript{u}b}) to the town—the regulation on (\text{stipulates}) that the earth (\text{n\textsuperscript{a}y})\textsuperscript{132} shall be shaken off the load of the donkey (\text{bak\textsuperscript{u}ma\textsuperscript{h}})\textsuperscript{133} and the load carried by a man. As for the camel-load a single coil (\text{\textsuperscript{u}y\textsuperscript{-}r}) (only) has the (earth) shaken off it, and (when this coil has been dealt with) the experts\textsuperscript{134} release\textsuperscript{135} the rest (for sale).\textsuperscript{136}

d. If fraud comes to light the (rope-fibre) is not imported, should the importer (\text{\textsuperscript{u}l\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}g}}) be a stranger, the fraud rebounding upon him. If he be a frequenter (\text{mutaraddid}) of the Rope-Market he is liable to imprisonment for fraud.

e. It is sold by weight (of ?) a hundred (coils,\textsuperscript{136} rails ?), the fixing of the price of it being the responsibility of the Shaykh given charge in the Market. He will allow (\text{\textsuperscript{u}l\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}d}) the retailers (\text{kus\textsuperscript{a}r\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}m}) a labour charge (\text{\textsuperscript{u}h\textsuperscript{a}q})\textsuperscript{137} in proportion to the difficulty of the work, for work with it differs, well ropes (\text{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{u}r\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}r}}) in proportion to the amount of work, and nets (\text{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{u}h\textsuperscript{b\textsuperscript{a}d}}}) similarly.

14. The Grain Market (\text{S\textsuperscript{u}q al-Habb}) 288

There shall be twenty persons there, measurers (of grain) (\text{h\textsuperscript{a}y\textsuperscript{-}\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{u}b\textsuperscript{a}n}) honest (\text{\textsuperscript{u}m\textsuperscript{a}n}) men (specialy) selected, known for their honesty (\text{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{u}m\textsuperscript{a}n}) and lack of deception. They will collect the customary measuring charge (\text{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{u}r\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}y\textsuperscript{-}\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{u}l\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}d}}})—an eighth of an
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

eight (i.e. 1/64th) on the qadah 141 on the gadah measure from the vendor, and half an eighth of an eighth (i.e. 1/132nd) from the purchaser.

( Supplementary) 289

a. Nobody but a person of known honesty (amânah), guaranteed (gummina) to the Headman of the Porters (lâqi al-ßhammâlin) will be employed (yashhammal) as a porter.

b. The measurers (of grain) are required to carry out watch duties when the town needs. The porters along with the porters of the Firewood Market (Süq al-ßHarâb) are required to perform watch duties on al-Khanâdiq 144 they are required also to perform watch duties at the Gates when (these) need repair and a gate 144 remains unlocked (min ghayr taghliq)—theirs is the responsibility for watch duties upon it.

c. The lads 144 of the Grain Market—I mean the labourers (shugâh) (working to) the measurers (of grain) are responsible for cleansing the Market by sweeping (it), attending to it every day, and removing the sweepings from it to a place outside 147 far away from being trodden upon by sandals (nílâr),

d. They—I mean the measurers—are required to provide the customary fleece-lined coats of the watch to the tune of thirteen qirsh plus the customary collection charge on that of a qirsh less a quarter and half of an eighth (i.e. less 5/16ths).

15. The Salt Market 148 (Süq al-Millî) 289

a. They are required to carry out the assigned watch duties (al-birîsâl al-mujrâyah) they are accustomed to perform.

b. It is stipulated that their Shaykh should be characterised by honesty (amânah), and without deception, a man who will scrupulously investigate (al-ßâbûrî) the measuring out for (both) the importer (jallâb) and lads 148 of the Market (walad al-Süq). If it be some other person (i.e. not the Shaykh himself) then he must be a man of careful surveillance.

c. They are required to provide those fleece-lined coats of the watch which they are accustomed to do, to the tune of two and a half qirsh plus an eighth of a qirsh collection charge on that.

141 The qadah, according to Rossi, op. cit., 152, is approximately 36 litres. It is divided into 64 nafar. Up to some time before 1602 the following signs were used for its subdivisions:

Qadah—or 64 nafar and so called thâmânîyâh thâmânîyâh, i.e. eight times eight
Qadah nûnâ, three quarters 8
Qadah mûnâ, half
Roll qadah, quarters
Thumm qadah, eighth
Thumn qadah, one sixteenth
Roll thumns, one thirty-second
Najar, (pl. njarâ), also called al-thâmânîyâh min al-thâmânîyâh, The eighth of a qadah
A qadah less one nafar would be written, 7/8.

This has certain similarities to the kirmeh notation as known to Rasûlid Yemen, and studied by Claude Cahen in our `A fiscal survey of the medieval Yemen', Arabica, Leiden, Jan., 1957, IV, i, 31, for the signs for 3/4 and 1/2 being identical, that for 1/4 less close, but for 1/8th rather different, and the signs for the smaller measures not found in his table at all. The late `Ali al-Muâyayyâ, first gave me a list of these signs, but Qâdi `Abd al-ßAbwa has provided the details above, and he characteristically quotes a proverb; Fis-Hash qirsh al-mâdhî, al-tharûn, There is the mark of the sixteenth (part of the qadah) on him. This is said in derision of a person. A specimen of the half qadah, which was purchased in San`a', bears the inscription on him, as also the name carved on the qadah to certify that it was a true measure? An old wooden nafar also purchased in San`a' has qadah, true carved on its side.

In his latter days, when Qâdi `Abd al-ßAbwa tried, by proclamation, to make the San`ani qadah the standard for all the Yemen, but still today in many centres a local qadah is in use. In Dhamar and Ta`izz the qadah is larger than that of San`a'; the Ta`izz nafar appears equivalent to four San`ani qirsh. Caazab, Junemân, 51, no. 294, says that in San`a' they call the thâmânîyâh a ßâbâ, and that the ßâbâ-thâmânîyâh is really a ßâbâ-thâmânîyâh—i.e. the quarter of a quarter is an eighth—all very confusing! The thâmânîyâh is properly the qadah above. The qadah al-Madhâb al-Abban (before 1180/1765), by which it is required to stop the measurers giving defective measure (bachs al-ßayyârî), gave an order concerning the measures that have the grain with which they are filled—smoothed (level by the hand) (makâyil al-mash), i.e. he made, hammered iron (rim) as an obstacle (to fraud) on top of the mouth of the measure. So they used to fill the measure and smooth (it level) over the iron (rim), and there was no short measure (taqjiff, see l.m. no. 78) to the purchaser.

( Supplementary) 289

a. The Shaykh of the Henna Market is charged that he regard (both) the importer and the henna-seller (al-muhanni) with the eye of impartiality when fixing (and estimating) prices. He must be acquainted with the cost of a load in al-Sudah 145 so as to be able to fix its price in the town and he will reckon out (a rate of profit) for it depending upon the opinion at which he arrives after scrutiny of the (charges for animal hire and) octroi-tax (alsudâf) that accrue to the load. After this he will assign to the lads 148 of the Market five qirsh on the qadah-measure, and depending upon the opinion which he has formed—he may alter it? If it be full of stalks (`Sahûn) he will see what should be removed from it, and after checking that (they have been removed) he will fix a suitable (rate of profit) for him/it.

b. They are required to provide those fleece-lined coats of the watch which they customarily do, namely two and a quarter qirsh plus an eighth of a qirsh collection charge on that.


143 He must be guaranteed by another person already known to the `agîl.

144 Explained as yudaqqiq fi çlabt al-magayis wa-'l-makayil, he will take minute scrutiny of the (charges for animal) hire and octroi-tax (alsudâf)." The Salt Market (Süq al-Milh) 289

145 Lit., the Gate.

146 Here the word lad seems only to mean a young boy (sabiyy saghir), but elsewhere in the Qûnûn it appears simply to mean the market folk.

147 Al-Ashâirat f. 50, where murudzah should mean a distant place, and karrâyiz means al-karim the country outside San`ã' town.

148 For Süq al-Milh see pp. 248-9. A Süq al-Mallahin, Saltellers' Market, is mentioned by Nashr al-ßarf, I, 349, but whether this is to be identified with Süq al-Millî is not known.

149 Explained as yudâqqiq fi çlabt al-magayis wa-'l-makayil, he will take minute surveillance of the market folk.

150 The walad al-Süq here must mean market folk trading in salt. Charles Mallingen, Notes of a journey in the Yemen, 121, says that in 1874 rock-salt from Marib was cut for about four months and the San`ani qadah rose to ten hurûf. The problem is: what should be the weight of a hurûf? It is generally considered to be about a quarter of a gramme. The technical term is habîl, but it is not precisely known to Qâdi `Abd al-ßâbî and others.

151 The text seems corrupt here, and jirîzuh must in any case be read jirîzuh (jarîzuh) instead of jirîgâh.

152 Tashkîm, colloquial for tashkâm, means tashkâm tashkâm al-ßayyârî.

153 Al-Sudûf of the region north of San`ã' and wear of Khamir.

154 Qâdi `Abd al-ßâbî thought, though he was not certain, that the jirîzuh meant dues payable to the Süq, i.e. to such persons as the `Agil or the Shaykh of the Salt Market (Süq al-ßHinnâ) 289

The ordinary henna retailer appears intended here.
18. The Qât Market (Suq al-Qât) 290

The price of each bundle (ribtah) for good quality Shabragi is half of the price of the best qat. Free of stalks—along with the packaging (tašjīr) is an eighth of a girsh, its weight being ten ûgiyyahs. In San’ā the gât-sellers (maqâwîth) who purchase a (bundle) receive a buqshah and a half (profit) on each bundle in San’â’. Middling and poor quality gât (will) fetch a price depending on how the man of integrity (al-‘âdî) selected by the importers and the gât-sellers evaluates it (acting) in conjunction with the Shaykh of the gât-sellers.

(Supplementary) 290

a. In this time of ours a pair—two bundles of gât—the finest of the bales of bundles (barâkî) brought from the owner of the gât (plantation?) is the price of the pair from the bales of bundles being eight buqshahs, plus half a buqshah (i.e. uqra) to the town, plus half a buqshah in respect of (qubâl) ta maqâwîth the tithe on the bales of bundles, plus (packing of) utârîn (leaf) and a saddle-bag, plus a buqshah, the profit of the gât-seller—the price of the said (pair) of bundles for the man in San’â’ comes to an eighth of a girsh. So the right price to the consumer (al-mutamârîyâ) for a (single) bundle of the best gât is half of the eighth (of a girsh). Middling quality gât will fetch the price at which the man of integrity responsible (al-‘âd al-muhkhtâb al-mu‘âd âhâd) evaluates it.

b. They are required to provide for such of the fleece-lined coats of the watch which they customarily do per annum, namely three gîrsh plus a quarter gîrsh collection charge on that.

19. Grapes and Similar Fruits 290

i. Eight persons, men of integrity (‘udûl), honest (umâna’), chosen persons, undertake to distribute them and settle the price for the people, and are entitled to the customary fee.

ii. None of the lads of the Market will take anything coming to the Market until after late afternoon when people have fully satisfied their requirements.

(Supplementary) 290

a. In the case of such fruits as mulberries (tîrî), citrons (utrujî) lemons, pomegranates, and other things previously mentioned, the lads of the Market may not buy until after the full satisfaction of the requirements of the people of the town. They will (be allowed) to buy them only at the evaluation the men of integrity (‘udûl) have made in the presence of the Shaykh of the Market. They are sold at the price the Shaykh of the Market fixed for them so that he may settle (the rate of) profit (allowed) on them in accordance with the amount at which he valued them (when bought from?) the importers.

b. They are required to carry out such watch duties as they customarily do when the town needs, and they are required to meet the due (haqqa) they customarily pay for the fleece-lined coats of the watch—seven gîrsh ready money per annum, plus half the gîrsh collection charge for that.


i. The purchase of (live) sheep-and-goats is made from day to day (ba‘l yusum bi-yasmi‘ih) and butchers are prohibited from purchasing sheep-and-goats for a day following. Any sheep-and-goats brought to the Market (al-jâlib) remaining (unsold) remain in the hands of the importer (al-fâ‘il). Buyers (mu‘âd din, middle-men) are prohibited from taking sheep-and-goats from the Market—through which overcharging could result.

ii. For slaughtering an animal the butcher (ja‘iz) receives the skin and head only.

iii. The Shaykh of the Town must inspect the sale of meat (ta‘mîl) every week (ta‘ad). The evaluation of the cattle in the hands of the importer (/âllab). Buyers (mu‘âd din, middle-men) are prohibited from taking sheep-and-goats from the Market—through which overcharging could result.

iv. The butchers’ charge for slaughtering sheep-and-goats at the Feast of the Sacrifices (‘Id al-Nahr) on ‘Arafah day—for a large animal (nâr) the charge is an eighth and half an eighth (i.e. 3/16ths) of a gîrsh, for a middle-sized animal an eighth of a gîrsh, and for a small one five buqshâhî.

v. The Dealers (mu‘âd hin) in the Sheep-and-Goat Market are sixteen (in number)—of these honesty (amânîh) and lack of deception are stipulated. It is their duty to send the vendor of the sheep-and-goats to the Clerk of the Market (Kâtib al-Sûq) to register their arrival at the Market (al-majzarah) and the selling of sheep-and-goats in the sheep-and-goat market (Sûq al-Ghanam) is allowed) to buy them only at the evaluation the men of integrity (‘udûl) have made in the presence of the Shaykh of the Market. They are sold at the price the Shaykh of the Market fixed for them so that he may settle (the rate of) profit (allowed) on them in accordance with the amount at which he valued them (when bought from?) the importers.

The meat of a beast sacrificed as part of their fee. In north Yemen the carcase is not cut up but is conveyed to the merchant in a single piece by the shepherds. These two words are frequently conveyed in this way.

A misrib is one who buys from the sell to the consumer. The qâtib is a mu‘attasir, importer.

Al-mughala’ fi ‘l-si‘r—the sense is—lest the prices rise high.

189. Qat’ al-Majzarah al-Mu‘âd din (mu‘âd hin) the Sheep-and-Goat Market (Suq al-Ghanam) to
acquaint him with how much the price is. Anyone against whom there is evidence of deception or tricks (khīda) or over-charging or shortcomings must pay a fine (qasāmān) to the Treasury (Bayt al-Māl).

vi. The charge for settling the deal (yuqah) on an animal is two bugshahs from the vendor and a bugshah from the purchaser. On a small lamb (qūzi) the vendor is charged a bugshah and the purchaser half a bugshah, but the Sa'īnī townsmen pay no dealer’s charge (yuqah) on what he buys on other days.

(Supplementary) 291
a. They must wash the wooden boards (ṣuṣ) and blocks (ṣafr) for displaying and chopping up meat each day.

b. It is the responsibility of the Deputy (Nīsāb) to observe them carefully at the Scales (al-Mizān) and to inspect what they have slaughtered at the time it is weighed, recording it (in the Market Book) and noting into what category it falls — calf (fādāl) or ewe or goat (mīzā).

c. Anyone disobeying any of this is liable to punishment (ṣiqāb), and they are responsible for removing the bones from the Meat Market and for taking the responsibility herein being upon the Deputy.

d. Anyone who makes a deal (ṣlah) for a butcher in excess of what he slaughters in a single day (fi yawmi-hi) is liable to punishment, since this leads to loss of the importers’ goods. Whatever loss the importer incurs that cannot in no way possibly be recovered, will be rectified (by deduction from) the income (maʿāsh) of the dealers (muslihin).

e. They are required to carry out such watch duties as they customarily do when the town needs, and they are required to provide for such of the fleece-lined coats of the watch as is customary, thirty-two bugshahs per annum plus two qirsh collection charges on that.

21. The Firewood Market (Ṣūq al-Haṭah) 291

i. Buyers (muṣafadn) purchasing direct from importers who are a cause of damage (taqyhir) to the Market and lead to firewood being imported shall be suspended.

ii. Firewood shall be sold only in its accustomed Market. Anyone who sells it outside its own Market shall be imprisoned and liable to punishment, the purchaser shall also receive such punishment as the Governor (Dhu ‘l-Wilayah) considers fit.

f. They are required to carry out such watch duties as they customarily do when the town needs, and they are required to provide for such of the fleece-lined coats of the watch as is customary, thirty-two bugshahs per annum plus two qirsh collection charges on that.

22. The Cattle and Donkey Market (Ṣūq al-Baʿqar wa-l-Bahāim) 292

a. Honesty (amanah) and lack of deception are stipulatory on the dealers (muslihin), and they must acquaint the vendor with the price.

b. On the large head of cattle (the vendor is charged) a quarter qirsh, and the purchaser contributes an eighth of a qirsh.

c. The purchaser of a ploughing bull (al-fādāl al-ṣurāsh) has the right to try out the action of ploughing in one of the gardens. If no trial takes place on one of the gardens he has the option (to rescind the sale). Similarly (he has the right) to test it how it feeds. In the case of a cow the purchaser has the right to test how it milks and how it feeds (al-bahuwa taw-l-ṣalab).

d. If he purchases a female calf (bahmah) which has not yet calved, and at parturition some defect (ṣayb) comes to light such as kicking (al-rakdah), or she does not separate from her calf, or any other defect (ṣayb) that comes to light at parturition, the purchaser has not the right to return (her to her vendor) on account of this defect, since the vendor was unaware of it.

190 Retaining the placenta, in which case the animal would die.

191 Al-Sayyāgh (p. 237) says that each sort of firewood has a fixed measure (previously in those times) and price assigned to it. Of firewood in general he states, ‘When for small bundles (biwāsah) of firewood they set a standard measure (miyār)—a hoop (ṣamūq) of iron, and appointed a stationer (ṣawārār al-ṣafar) (in the measure) in accordance with which the purchase price (baḥrūn al-wāṣiḥ) is exercised for any sort of bundle of any kind of firewood.

192 Ḥasanī al-Murājī, as bada‘i-al-ṣayb.

193 This could be interpreted as ‘the small load of a camel’.

194 This was said to mean alladāl ṣaḥāfiyya ṣad qawī.mi, which are assigned to others.

195 This is the frightful saʿīl al-baʿqar of Ṣa‘īl, 51, to be near Masāʾil Dāvid. The Sūq al-Bahā'im and al-Jabbānah hagq `Ali al-Maniūr, are said to be the same, the base being Ghāzānī castle (qūdīlum—al-ṣarīq). This is the site of Sūq al-Bahā'im (Qur'an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A jubbānah (jubbān) is also called Sūq al-ṣarīq (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A ṣaffān (ṣaffān) is also called Sūq al-ṣarīq (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A ṣaffān (ṣaffān) is also called Sūq al-Maṣām (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris.

196 This is said to mean ṣuṣul al-saḥāfiyya ṣad qawī.mi, which are assigned to others.

197 Ṣūq al-Baʿqar is stated by Mansūr b. Sa‘īl, 51, to be near Masāʾil Dāvid. The Sūq al-Bahā'im and al-Jabbānah bāqī ‘All al-Maṣārī, are said to be ancient, the base being Ghāzānī castle (qūdīlum—al-ṣarīq). This is the site of Sūq al-Bahā'im (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A jubbānah (jubbān) is also called Sūq al-ṣarīq (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A ṣaffān (ṣaffān) is also called Sūq al-ṣarīq (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris.

198 Aklah—testing the animal to see if it is eating its feed (wajbah).

199 This was said to mean alladāl ṣaḥāfiyya ṣad qawī.mi, which are assigned to others.

200 Retaining the placenta, in which case the animal would die.

201 Al-Aklūn (p. 237) says that each sort of firewood has a fixed measure (previously in those times) and price assigned to it. Of firewood in general he states, ‘When for small bundles (biwāsah) of firewood they set a standard measure (miyār)—a hoop (ṣamūq) of iron, and appointed a stationer (ṣawārār al-ṣafar) (in the measure) in accordance with which the purchase price (baḥrūn al-wāṣiḥ) is exercised for any sort of bundle of any kind of firewood.

202 Ḥasanī al-Murājī, as bada‘i-al-ṣayb.

203 This could be interpreted as ‘the small load of a camel’.

204 This was said to mean ṣuṣul al-saḥāfiyya ṣad qawī.mi, which are assigned to others.

205 This is the frightful saʿīl al-baʿqar of Ṣa‘īl, 51, to be near Masāʾil Dāvid. The Sūq al-Bahā'im and al-Jabbānah hagq `Ali al-Maniūr, are said to be the same, the base being Ghāzānī castle (qūdīlum—al-ṣarīq). This is the site of Sūq al-Bahā'im (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A jubbānah (jubbān) is also called Sūq al-ṣarīq (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris. A ṣaffān (ṣaffān) is also called Sūq al-ṣarīq (Qur’an, XXII, 44). It certainly seems to be a mound of debris.
e. The purchaser of a female donkey (atân) has the right to try out its walk (sayr), and he has the right to return it on account of the statutory defect specified in shari `ah law (al-`ayb al-shari ).

f. The dealer (muslih) is entitled to the dealer's charge (sulhah) as in the previous case with cattle. When anyone whose right (to exercise) the option (to rescind a sale) has been established fails to try out the animal accustomed to (?) carrying loads (muhammal), and to test and wind (al-hababah), and there is the customary dealer's charge (gulah).

c. The Cattle and Donkey Market is required to pay such returns (? radad) as they are due to the Head of the Watch (Shaykh al-Haras), and they are required to provide watchmen (ṣurrū`). 202

d. The purchaser has the right to (exercise) the option over an animal accustomed to (?) carrying loads (muhammal), and to test it out in the standings (marâb). 209

f. The dealer (muslih) is entitled to the dealer's charge (sulhah) in accordance with the customary requirement by the town. They are required to provide what they can choose for the coke-lined coasts of the bath to the turn of nine and a half qirsh plus a qirsh collection charges on that.

23. The Camel Market (Sūq al-Jimāl) 292

(Supplementary)

a. What is obligatory in the (case of) cattle is also obligatory in this case.

b. The purchaser has the right to (exercise) the option over an animal accustomed to (?) carrying loads (muhammal), and to test it out in the standings (marâb), and wind (al-hababah), and there is the customary dealer's charge (gulah).

c. The porters of the Coffee-husk, Ghee, Oil, etcetera, Market—the wage of a porter who carries a load from al-Halaqah to the warehouses (samsār) of al-Halaqah is two bugshahs.

d. The wage of a porter who carries a load (‘idlah) of a large camel is four bugshahs from the vendor and two from the purchaser; the (cloth) goes back to the warehouse or to the purchaser’s shop. The wage of the porter who carries (goods) from al-Halaqah to the Samzarat of Sidi Muham-mad b. al-Hasan, 205 God rest him, and the warehouses of the Grape Market is two bugshahs on each load (‘idlah). The wage of the porter who carries (goods) from al-Halaqah to the Oil Warehouse (Samsarat al-Sa`awrah), 217 and the Samsarat of al-Shumālah 218 is two and a half bugshahs on each load (‘idlah). He who carries (goods) from al-Halaqah to the Samsarat of the Shaykh Ahmad al-Hājij 209 and the Samsarat Murid receives three bugshahs on each load (‘idlah), and so, proportionately.

e. The wage for (carrying) iron—he who carries a load (‘idlah) to beside the Sāsqāt (al-Mesā`): (gets) three bugshahs from the vendor and three bugshahs from the purchaser for carrying back to his place.

f. The porter of the Firewood Market—the wage of the porter who carries (firewood) from the Firewood Market to the outskirts of the town is four bugshahs, plus four bugshahs for splitting it (shāqā wa-taflûq).

vi. The porter who carries (goods) from the warehouses to the Samsarat al-Shumālah is four bugshahs, plus four bugshahs for splitting it (shāqā wa-taflûq).

24. The Horse and Mule Market (Sūq al-Khayl wa-l-Bighāl) 293

(Supplementary)

In it the dealer (muslih) is subject to certain recognised conditions. He may not conclude a deal (yuslah) until after the farrier’s (biyar) inspection (of an animal) to acquaint him with (any) defects (ty`ā’ū), and until after it has been riddled if it be a riding beast, and after trying it out in the stables (marāb). 208

25. The Fodder Market (Sūq al-`Alaf) 293

The dealers (muslih) in it shall be ten persons, and the sale of fodder shall take place in its customary original (asr) Market, (al-Ijammālin wa-l-Malāgig wa-l-Saggāyin) 293

26. Porters, Wood-Choppers and Water-Carriers

(i. The porters of the Cattle and Donkey Market—the charge for a net full of straw (al-shabakat al-tibn) a donkey carries is one bugshah. The charge for a man who carries a net (mu`ārah) full of straw is also one bugshah.

ii. Tobacco (nubuy) porters—the charge for a load (‘idlah) of a large camel is four bugshahs from the vendor and the same from the purchaser.

iii. The porters of the Coffee-husk, Ghee, Oil, etcetera, Market—the wage of a porter who carries a load from al-Halaqah to the warehouses (samsār) of al-Halaqah is two bugshahs.

iv. The wage of a porter who carries a load (‘idlah) of cloth from the wholesaler (al-mubtah) to four bugshahs, and the payment to the warehouse proprietor (samsār) is four bugshahs.

v. The wage of the porter who carries (goods) from the warehouses (samsār) to the Scales (al-Misā`n) is two bugshahs from the vendor and two from the purchaser; the (cloth) goes back to the warehouse or to the porter’s shop. The wage of the porter who carries (goods) from al-Halaqah to the Samzarat of Sidi Muham-mad b. al-Hasan, 205 God rest him, and the warehouses of the Grape Market is two bugshahs on each load (‘idlah). The wage of the porter who carries (goods) from al-Halaqah to the Oil Warehouse (Samsarat al-Sa`awrah), 217 and the Samsarat of al-Shumālah is two and a half bugshahs on each load (‘idlah). He who carries (goods) from al-Halaqah to the Samsarat of the Shaykh Ahmad al-Hājij 209 and the Samsarat Murid receives three bugshahs on each load (‘idlah), and so, proportionately.

vi. The wage for (carrying) iron—he who carries a load (‘idlah) to beside the Sāsqāt (al-Mesā`) (gets) three bugshahs from the vendor and three bugshahs from the purchaser for carrying back to his place.

vii. The porter of the Firewood Market—the wage of the porter who carries (firewood) from the Firewood Market to the outskirts of the town is four bugshahs, plus four bugshahs for splitting it (shāqā wa-taflûq).

If it be equal to the Badawi load in bulk it has its own assessment (ra`īm). 220 The wage of the porter who carries (firewood) to the middle of town is three bugshahs for labour and splitting (shaqâ wa-taflûq).
viii. The water-carriers' wages and cost of water—for a short distance half a baghsh—the price of a skin (girbah) (of water) for a middling distance is two thirds of a baghsh—the price for a skin for a long distance is a whole baghsh. Anyone who hires a water-carrier for a whole month—his reckoning (fisd) will be after this pattern. If the water-carrier receives mid-day and evening meals (aswâ wa ghada) half of the wage is deducted to compensate for this.

That is in the houses in al-Qatif (Quarter) in the town—they were known.

27. Craftsmen and Workmen (Ashab al-Hiraf wa-Ahl al-Amal) 294

(Supplementary) 294

a. Dyers and butchers (jabbaghin, qasabin)—they must adhere to the regulations (qawâ'id) in their hands which (emanated) from the governors (jibbâm).

b. They are required to provide the customary fleece-lined coats for the watch to the tune of three and an eighth qirsh plus the customary collection charge, and they are required to carry out the watch duties they usually do when the town needs.

(Supplementary)

a/b. The Head-wraps Market (Sûq al-Mawâwin) —action to fix the price of their manufactured goods (tasir bi' a tar hydrated) is the responsibility of their Shaykh entrusted with the matter, and the men of integrity (yûdul), one from the weavers (kawah) and one from the Market of the Scarf-Makers, chosen to test indigo207 (nîl). They must adhere to the regulations (enunciating) in a succession from the learned governors (al-jibbâm al-alam).

b/b. They are required to provide the fleece-lined coats of the watch which they customarily do to the tune of two and a quarter ghiras plus an eighth by way of collection charge.

224 Till very recently, water carriers drew water from al-Ghayl al-Aswad near Bab al-Mansûr, and some of the water wells outside the walls. This water was only for domestic purposes, not for drinking. Ghayl al-Balsh in Bab al-Salim and had sweet water (ma' bûtî) from Jâlul Qunâm, used for drinking. Bab al-Salim is east of Bab al-Yamam. Burchard, Aus dem Jemen, tafel XI, shows, in 1909, a San'a' water-carrier with two skins.

226 'Aska would consist of a round (qurw) of bread, and ghâsh of bread with some of that relish (zam).

227 It is unclear whether this word (ma'rhûfah) applies to the houses or the wells.

228 The area of San'a' (for which see p. 125) has houses in which there is no water in the drinking (sâqû al-kharb). Most houses in San'a' have wells but some are not used for drinking water. According to al-Razi (5th/11th century), 96, every dwelling had a well or two, and a garden with various kinds of sweet-smelling herbs (rayûh).

229 The text has here siyâgah for the siyâq of the other entries.

230 The maswan was described in San'a' as a rida' ka' al-nigâb used by country women to cover their heads. It is a word known to the Yemenis from at least medieval times.

231 Reading râsh for rash of the text with Nashr al-urjâf, II, 570, which speaks of a Sayyid wearing a turban of cotton—'a coarse one of the weaving of the Sayyids of al-Shaharah, should wear al-gamic al-shuqqah al-sawdâ'.

232 Indigo was widely worn by Yemenis till perhaps some sixty years ago as can be seen in W. B. Harris, A journey through the Yemen, London—Edinburgh, 1809, was given a piece of silver cloth of San'a'.

233 The text has here siyâgah for the siyâq of the other entries.

234 The maswan was described in San'a' as a rida' ka' al-nigâb used by country women to cover their heads. It is a word known to the Yemenis from at least medieval times.

235 The text has here siyâgah for the siyâq of the other entries.

236 The mujahhizin, (a term perhaps derived from the sense of jahhaz, to fit out) are those who perform tailoring work for the big merchant establishments (al-ma'allî al-khâlihah) and do not bother about fine craftsmanship, not working to the requirements of an individual customer desiring good careful workmanship. Al-Sayyaj draws a distinction between jahhaz tailoring (hikaj) and 'amul[hajj]—this latter explained by Qadi Ismail as what is taken over (ma'da'ud bi- hâd) in the way of tailoring.

237 'Ad al-hudiyah sharit, The silver border is only a strip.' Cf. pl. no. 745, 'Ad al-hudiyah sharit, The silver border is only a strip.' Cf. pl. no. 745.

238 Al-Sayaghi describes thejalâbah as a jubbah with wide sleeves made of silk.

239 Al-Sayaghi describes the jalâbah as a jubbah with wide sleeves made of silk.
1_SAN'Â-. A general view of the city from the west with Mount Nuqum rising behind it on the right.

2_SAN'Â-. A general view from a house adjoining Qubbat Talhah looking to the north east. Showing the mafraj on many of the rooftops.
3 San‘ā'. A street scene with houses decorated in gypsum plaster. The vertical pipe on the right was introduced recently over the traditional plaster drain.
4 Şan‘a’. A view over the rooftops with the minarets of Masjid Ṣalāḥ al-Din and Masjid al-Madrasah in the background.

5 Panoramic view of the old city across the Sai‘lah with the city wall in the foreground. The southern Khanāqiyān walls on arches across the flood-course level.
6 The western part of the old city, from the air, showing the typical pattern of city growth. The houses line narrow streets with behind them large open areas for market gardens. Each garden relates to a mosque of which it forms part of the waqf property.

7 The Süq. A panoramic view from one of the highest samsarahs on the western side looking north and east with the foothills of Nuqura on the right. The small cabins projecting above the single storeyed shops contain small rooms for the watch that guards the Süq at night. The facade of Samsarat Muhammad b. Hasan/Absan shows in the centre panel.
Miṣqāmah of al-Mahdi `Abbās mosque, a large market garden with the dome and minaret of the mosque visible in the background.
9 Boys carrying a lamb to market; one is wearing a hat finely woven in the Tihāmah, of bamboo, called *khayzarān*.

10 Qasr al-Silāh. A view of Šan'ā' with the Qasr in the left foreground, clearly elevated high above the town.
11. Șan′a′. A tribesman attending the ʿĪd prayer, wearing a turban dyed with indigo.
Map of San'a' about 1870 by Manzoni. This map is inaccurate in some of its details. The existence of a large open maydan running east to west from the Sûq towards Bab al-Sabîh is confirmed, at least in part, by contemporary photographs.
13 Panorama of the city in 1974 from the extreme western edge of Bir al-'Azab, Jabal Nuqum in the background.
14 Ṣan‘ā’. The Süq. A characteristic scene between the rows of stalls.

15 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. The restaurant and its serving counter inside the south entrance.

16 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. The western side of the restaurant court, with the access to the stairs and the galleries leading to rooms for accommodation above.

17 A corner of the Süq al-Milh, with the domes of the Janāb mosque in the background.
18 Filling a water carrier from a ṣābič.

19 Mosque of Mūsā, Minaret.

20 The Great Mosque. View into the courtyard, with the square Chancellery of the Ottoman Governor Sinān Pasha, known as the Qubbah.

21 The Great Mosque. Section of early ceiling from one of the high western bays.
22 The Great Mosque. Coffered ceiling of the northern prayer hall, with beams decorated with patterns and inscriptions dating from many periods.

23 The Great Mosque. Another section of the coffered and painted ceiling of the northern prayer hall.

24 The Great Mosque. Part of the symmetrical group of five alabaster skylights in the first bay of the northern prayer hall, in front of the qiblah. The alabaster is now black from centuries of exposure to soot and dust.
25 The Great Mosque. High western bay of ceiling, containing fragments of ancient decorated woodwork.

26 The Great Mosque. Part of the coffered and painted ceiling in the northern prayer hall.

27 Mosque of al-Filayhi. Tomb chamber, qiblah wall and mihrab.
Al-Jabbānah. The communal prayer at dawn to mark the end of Ramadān, and 'Īd al-Fiṭr. With guards in red berets mounted on the walls.
30 Mosque of 'Aqil. Minaret on a street corner, seen from the suq.

32 Qubbat 'Alahah (left). Viewed from above with the ablution block at bottom left.

33 Qubbat al-Mahdi 'Abbas (above), highly decorated door.

35 Mosque of al-Mutawakkil. Side of the tomb.

34 Qubbat al-Mahdi 'Abbas. Doors to the prayer hall, viewed from the inside.
38 Mosque of Ibn al-Husayn. Interior of prayer hall.

39 Houses in the Tallah Quarter, seen from the mafraj window of a house.

40 Houses in the Tallah Quarter, seen from a high mafraj, with another on an adjoining house immediately in front.
41 Houses on the bank of the Sā‘īlah.

42 Detail of house.
High houses near Salāḥ al-Dīn mosque.
House W. Bathroom. The lavatory on the left; set in the right foreground two flat stones for one washing to stand upon while scooping water from a large vessel that would rest on the circular stone on right.

Men at an afternoon gathering in the mansar of a small house.
47 A typical coloured glass window from one of the upper rooms in a Sana'a house.

48 House JY. The entrance hall as it appears on first entering it from outside.

49 House JY (centre). The back of the house seen from the bagh at its rear (centre). In front of it is the structure of a well ramp (mima).
50 A typical diwan in a San’a’ house (House N).

51 House JY. A coloured glass window, with six-pointed star in the tracery.

52 House AA. The mirror in the centre of the long wall of the mafraj.

53 House AA. The mafraj.
54 House W. View from the window of the central mazār, looking south west.

55 House W. View from the window of the central mazār, looking south east.
56 A modest room in an old house with its original alabaster upper windows.

57 Dinâm of a small house, with a brass tray prepared for entertaining, with waterpipes, sweetmeat bowls, incense burners and spittoons.
58 Typical manzar of a small house.

59 A manzar in use for an afternoon musical session.
House S. Dinsan, the outer wall. The reinforcing arch carried the cross wall of the floors above.

House B. The mafaq.
62 House B. The mafraj. Looking at the distant view through the west-facing windows in the outer lobby.

63 House B. The lobby to the manzar.

64 House B. The mafraj seen from outside. The small room above it is sometimes called zahrak, a flower.

65 House B. A coloured glass window with crescent in the manzar lobby.
28. Bakers (Khabbanîn) and the Like 295

On social occasions (maquwî) bakers receive eight buqshahs on the Şan'ānī qadâh—measure and for a sheep243 eight buqshahs also.

(Supplementary)

a. Bread-oven men244 and flour millers (al-farrânîn245 wa-‘l-madâqiqah)246—honesty and lack of deception and surveillance247 upon them by the Shaykh of the Town to inspect the flour as a precaution against the adulteration of wheat (qinjah) with millet or barley, are stipulatory upon them.

b. They are required to provide the fleece-lined coats for the watch they customarily do to the tune of two and a half qirsh plus collection charge of an eighth of a qirsh on that.

c. Horse-shoes (na‘î al-khayl)—weighing of the complete set (of shoes) ? ta‘biqah is the responsibility of the man who sells the iron (rafa‘), i.e., the man who holds the horse’s leg, is four buqshahs for a complete shoeing (ta‘biqah), two buqshahs for the forelegs (al-ṣadr), and a buqshah for the one leg (al-fard) etc.

(Supplementary)

a. It is stipulatory on thefarrier that he have a knowledge of the ailments (‘īdal) of the riding animals. The fee for (treating) zafar (on horses) is a quarter qirsh, and in donkeys (bahäyın) an eighth of a qirsh. The (horse)-holder (is paid) as previously mentioned.

b. Medicines (for treating such ailments) as large sires (tihjdî)255 (on the back or chest)—the farrier receives the cost of the medicine and the fee.

c. If the treatment be given in the tethering-place (marbat) he receives for each supplying of medicine (tariqah)256 at the tethering-place a quarter qirsh, and for going round to inspect (the animal) the eighth of a qirsh.

d. Other ailments (are charged up) in the same way and in proportion to (the severity of the ailment).

242 Musâqib, sing., múqib, according to al-Sayyâhi, marriage feasts (maulâ‘īm), but Qâdi ‘Ibâd tells them de fave, invitations to birth, marriage, or death ceremonies.

243 Reading al-râ il-hyamuh for the text’s al-râ al-hyamūn.

244 The khâhêz makes bread on a mikhâhâh (see p.344a) and cooks the bread in a tamar (see f.n. 323) while the farrân makes small bags (kidman, sing., kidmanah) which he bakes in a large masonry oven of a type to be seen in Şan’ā’ or in, for example, a village I visited in the Bani Halid district. This oven is called form and a long ear-shaped pole for removing the bread from the heat is known as a horayk.

245 Fârâ’rân must be read for the text’s qârânîn.

246 Madâqiqah, sing., madâqiqah. Yâdâqiqah fi ‘l-fâ’tam. They make the ground flour soft (ma‘am). Al-fardah was explained as taraddud al-shaykh wa-ta‘ahhuduhu-hum, the shaykh’s frequent visiting and observing of them.

247 Mâqûbîs, sing., mîqâbîs, Mariaqûbîs fi ‘l-wâqfah. Whence they make the ground flour soft (ma‘am).

248 The farrier’s place is al-mîlah (see p.544a) and cooks the bread in a forge in la‘limawt, cf. C. de Landberg, Théâtre de la Cité, p.431, reports that iron ore is found beyond Sa‘d and for ‘rags of hookah snakes’.

249 Arabic tifrij, inspection.

250 The rendering of tariqah here is conjectural, but Dozy, Supplement, quoting Mami, II/1/202, gives it the meaning of a place of ferre, ‘where one employs for ferre these animals (chevaux).

251 This section may be original, and not in the Supplementary part, but the printed text does not make it clear which it is.

252 Reading as in the original, rejecting al-Sayyâhi’s emendation. Schâr, chest, would seem to indicate that the forelegs are meant but this is unconfirmed.

253 The sense given farâd is unconfirmed.

254 An eighth of a qirsh is ten buqshahs.

255 It is the responsibility of the man who sells the iron (rafa‘) to complain if it is not of the complete set (of shoes) (ta‘biqah) for a single leg (al-fard) fiw‘256 buqshahs. The weight of the rafiq (râfîq) i.e., the man who holds the horse’s leg, is four buqshahs for a complete shoeing (ta‘biqah), two buqshahs for the forelegs (al-ṣadr), and a buqshah for the one leg (al-fard).

(Supplementary)

a. It is stipulatory on thefarrier that he have a knowledge of the ailments (‘īdal) of riding animals. The fee for (treating) zafar (on horses) is a quarter qirsh, and in donkeys (bahäyın) an eighth of a qirsh. The (horse)-holder (is paid) as previously mentioned.

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d. Other ailments (are charged up) in the same way and in proportion to (the severity of the ailment).
31. The Carpentry Market (al-Minjarah) 297

The master (al-qadîr) (carpenter) receives a quarter gîrsh and the master-carpenter next to him an eighth of a gîrsh and five buqshahs, and the workman (shâqî) an eighth of a gîrsh.

(Supplementary)

a. Honesty and lack of deception are stipulatory on the Shaykh. It is his duty to set a price for work (al-a'mâl) and to evaluate the (raw) material (al-mawzûh) for the importer (jalâl) also. They (the Shaykh and others?) shall receive the fee previously mentioned.

b. They are required to provide the fleece-lined coats for the work they customarily do, namely three and a half gîrsh plus collection charge of half a gîrsh on that.

32. Lock and Key Smiths (Sunna' al-Maghâliq) 297 wa-1-Dawâyir 271 297

i. They are obliged to contract not to make a key (dâyir) on the pattern of an impressed piece (of wax or clay). Those of the Jews (Dhimmiyûn) who work in brass (nahâj), the yellow smelting (al-sabô al-asfâr), are likewise obliged not to cast (zâbû) a key for anyone. This is because cast keys (al-dawâyir al-sâbû) have been found.

ii. All carpenters, persons engaged in lock-making (ishthâgh al-magâliq) and blacksmiths are also obliged not to transgress, through manufacturing a key with no lock (to it), to a situation wherein ’detriment’ (madâra) to the Muslims lies. Nor may they tacitly avoid taking any transgressor in such direction as this to judgement.

iii. The manufacture (of keys) is confined to those exercising this craft (hîrfâh); the rest of the carpenters are prohibited from engaging in it, in order that the responsibility may remain with those exercising this craft in the event of any contravening of the regulation (qadîrâ al-dawâyir).

iv. Those who have assigned responsibility to the Shaykh of the whole (body) of the Carpenters, the master Yâlîya al-Barâzî and he took the firm oath (al-'ahd al-mughallâ) respectively.

327 By dâyîrâh, male and female donkeys are intended.

328 Bracing khamis for the khâmîs of the text which, as it stands, would make the wage of the 'adûf's mate considerably more than that of the 'adûf itself. 

They would, if the text is corrected, receive then twenty and fifteen buqshahs respectively.

Al-mahâlûn is explained as al-mâshâd, the material.


330 Dâyîrî, dâyîrâh, a key. Cf. Nashir al-yâfî, 216, 262, the dawâyîr, keys of Kawkaban fort.

331 Jûfî, the imprint of a key on clay, or wax impression of it.

332 Cf. al-sabû al-asfâr of silver, supra, section 3, iii.

333 Keys must be made by forging, and not cast, since, if cast duplicates are made they can be used for nefarious purposes such as opening another person’s locks. Al-Anisî, Tarîk al-safa'î, 224, 350, speaks of opening a lock without a key (hashsh al-asfâl) and indicates how this could be done. You stuffed a piece of cotton into the head of the lock (bâshshiyat l-bâyshiyat fi râs al-âsfa) and

334 Presumably this would take place before a Shaykh such as al-Barâzî mentioned below.

335 This section is not marked Supplementary, so one might conclude that ‘We’ is Ahmad al-Khazîdarî of the earlier document of the 18th century, but should there be, by any chance, an omission and this part of the Qur’an in fact be part of the Supplementary matter then ‘We’ can hardly be other than the Qâdi Muhammad al-Haymî who, as well as compiling Document B, was the governor of ‘San’. This is the only piece in the Qur’an where the first person plural is used.

336 The loose wording employed here, bîjami’ hashsh al-mawzûr, stands, apparently, for bî-jami’ jamî 337 which is later translated here.

338 The mishk is to Jabal Barâzî, five days north east of ‘San’, belonging to the master 'Ali carpenters, persons engaged in lock-making (ishtighal al-dawayir, 'al-'ahd al-mughallâ), are likewise obliged not to cast (al-mawnâh al-mukhtabir) since, if cast, duplicates are made they can be used for nefarious purposes such as opening another person’s locks. Al-Anisî, Tarîk al-asfâr, 224, 350, speaks of opening a lock without a key (hashsh al-asfâl) and indicates how this could be done. You stuffed a piece of cotton into the head of the lock (bâshshiyat l-bâyshiyat fi râs al-âsfa) and

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340 It is the duty of the Shaykh responsible to pay special attention to the polishing (jâla) and to be acquainted with what (wage) the brass-worker (al-nâhâj) is entitled to for an individual piece of brass-ware (al-shâkhî 341 al-nâhâj), and (he is responsible) also for (attention to) dealings (al-îjâz). They are required to perform the customary stipend (al-jîra) for the watch to the tune of a gîrsh less a quarter plus collection charge of an eighth on that.

341 The soundest (al-bâshîq) workmanship is priced at half a gîrsh, and also are keys (bâshîq) without any key (al-qirsh) for the lock (al-mawzûh) layer of small pieces of leather, following which (is a poorer quality) priced at a quarter and an eighth (i.e. 3/8ths of a gîrsh). The sandal of (strong) rdhâ leather

Dhî Muhammad and Dhî Husayn tribes, a good description of which appears in Zatafîr al-Iskafîyyah, 350, speaks of opening a lock without a key (hashsh al-asfâl) and indicates how this could be done. You stuffed a piece of cotton into the head of the lock (bâshshiyat l-bâyshiyat fi râs al-âsfa) and

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36. Builders' Wages (Ujrat al-`Amnr) 298
i. The master-builder (al-ustâj`) in chief (receives) a quarter of a qirsh and two and a half buqshahs, to which is added the hire of the gear (kurb al-`iddah). Following which (is a poorer quality) costing two and a half buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear, two buqshahs, and hire of cradle, two buqshahs. The labourer (receives) an eighth of a qirsh, for gear and hire of cradle, two buqshahs.

ii. The workmen (shugah) in Bir al-`Azab—the master-builder in chief (receives) an eighth of a qirsh and two buqshahs, and the labourer (shugah) eight buqshahs.

iii. The workmen (shugah) of al-Rawdah, al-Jiraf and the other harvest-time resorts (makhârij)299—the master-builder (receives) for building and erecting vine-trellises (shir'ah)300 an eighth of a qirsh, and the labourer six buqshahs.

37. Stone and Wages (al-`Aljâr wa-l-Uqr) 299
i. The price of a large habash (stone delivered to the building site) is three buqshahs. The price of the corner-stone (fu`ur) of habash delivered (to the site) is four buqshahs.

ii. The price of cemetery stones300 (set round a grave)—the price of a stone an iron cubit in length is a buqshah and a half. The price of a large white stone delivered (to the site) is two buqshahs. The price of baked brick (ajur) is two qirsh hajar per thousand301 delivered (to the site), (shaped) on the known customary (ma rijf) mould302 for them.

iii. Mud-plasterers (al-malijah)—the wage of the master in chief is a quarter qirsh two buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear two buqshahs, and the cradle (al-`iqal)302 two buqshahs. The wage of the next (the foremost) is an eighth of a qirsh five buqshahs. The wage of a labourer (shugah) is an eighth of a qirsh. The price of water, if it be a single labourer with a water-skin (girah) is two and a half buqshahs. The mix (al-khilfi/khilat)303 (of straw, dung etcetera)—the price of an ass-load or a large woolen sack (girarah) is five buqshahs, and the price of an ass-load of earth (turab) one buqshah.

iv. The Jewish304 mud-plasterers and workers in gypsum-plaster (al-malij Faul al-Dhimmiyyin wa-l-maja’ifah)305—the wage of a master (ustâj) of them is an eighth of a qirsh five buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear. The labourer’s (shugah) wage is eight buqshahs.

The price of water is as previously noted.

v. Plasterers (al-malijah)—the skilled master-plasterer (receives) a qirsh two and a half buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear, two buqshahs, and hire of cradle, two buqshahs. The labourer (receives) an eighth of a qirsh. The price of water for the first work is two and a half qirsh306 (of the plaster) is one buqshah, to be paid by the master (plasterer).

The wage of the master for washing over (a new coating) (al-ga’si)306 of the plaster (jus) is an eighth of a qirsh, and the price of the water is two buqshahs.

vi. ‘Concreters’ (al-Ma’qadd吸d)307—the wage of the master is a stone (of) the best workmanship (of) a Qay’at al-Malijri. Cf. p.468a.

300 Today (1972) a thousand bricks would cost about 200 riylah.

301 He means the mould (ga’l) of standard size. Bricks measured in Sân’i in 1972 were approximately 6” x 4” x 2”, and Zabid bricks are much smaller and of a different shape. See I:17, gives a list of some of those around Sân’i, the ‘Sirah’ (the wages of the master) in chief is a quarter qirsh two and a half buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear two buqshahs, and the cradle (al-`iqal) two buqshahs. The wage of the next (the foremost) is an eighth of a qirsh five buqshahs. The wage of a labourer (shugah) is an eighth of a qirsh. The price of water, if it be a single labourer with a water-skin (girah) is two and a half buqshahs. The mix (al-khilfi/khilat) (of straw, dung etcetera)—the price of an ass-load or a large woolen sack (girarah) is five buqshahs, and the price of an ass-load of earth (turab) one buqshah.

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vi. ‘Concreters’ (al-Ma’qadd吸d) the wage of the master is a stone (of) the best workmanship (of) a Qay’at al-Malijri. Cf. p.468a.

301 Today (1972) a thousand bricks would cost about 200 riylah.

302 He means the mould (ga’l) of standard size. Bricks measured in Sân’i in 1972 were approximately 6” x 4” x 2”, and Zabid bricks are much smaller and of a different shape. See I:17, gives a list of some of those around Sân’i, the ‘Sirah’ (the wages of the master) in chief is a quarter qirsh two and a half buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear two buqshahs, and the cradle (al-`iqal) two buqshahs. The wage of the next (the foremost) is an eighth of a qirsh five buqshahs. The wage of a labourer (shugah) is an eighth of a qirsh. The price of water, if it be a single labourer with a water-skin (girah) is two and a half buqshahs. The mix (al-khilfi/khilat) (of straw, dung etcetera)—the price of an ass-load or a large woolen sack (girarah) is five buqshahs, and the price of an ass-load of earth (turab) one buqshah.

302 The Jewish mud-plasterers and workers in gypsum-plaster (al-malij Faul al-Dhimmiyyin wa-l-maja’ifah) the wage of a master (ustâj) of them is an eighth of a qirsh five buqshahs, to which is added hire of gear. The labourer’s (shugah) wage is eight buqshahs.

The price of water is as previously noted.

303 The price of water for the first work is two and a half qirsh (of the plaster) is one buqshah, to be paid by the master (plasterer).

The wage of the master for washing over (a new coating) (al-ga’si) of the plaster (jus) is an eighth of a qirsh, and the price of the water is two buqshahs.

vi. ‘Concreters’ (al-Ma’qadd吸d) the wage of the master is a stone (of) the best workmanship (of) a Qay’at al-Malijri.
girth, and the price of the ass-load of stones (hashash)\(^{311}\) complete is four buqshahs. The price of the load of small sharp stones (al-
mayyigir)\(^{312}\) is a buqshah and a half. The price of the qadâh\(^{313}\)—measure of lime (mûrah) is an eighth of a girth.

38. (Various) 300

i. The barber (al-hallâj)\(^{14}\)—he receives one buqshah per head.

ii. The cupper (al-hajam)—he receives half a buqshah for each blood-letting (ma'hjam).

iii. The Bath (al-Hammâm)\(^{315}\)—the wage of the bathman (al-
hammâmâr) is one buqshah per person. Cleaning with the bag and massage (kis wa-takbis)\(^{316}\) cost one buqshah.

iv. (Carding)-Carding (al-midâf) —the wage of the carders (al-
addâfar)\(^{317}\) is one buqshah on the pound of cotton ('utb).

For sewing (cotton) into quilts (lubuf) and bed-linen (fursôsh) (the worker) receives a wage plus (the cost of) the thread (hashiish) and a quarter (i.e. 7/8ths) of a girth plus collection charge of an eighth girth on that, the total sum amounting to sixty girth.

39. (Supplementary)

a. They are subject to what has been previously mentioned.\(^{318}\)

b. They are required to provide such of the fleece-lined coats for which they customarily do, to the tune of forty-four buqshahs reckoned out, plus collection charge on that two and a half and a quarter girth, the total sum required of them being forty-six and a half and a quarter girth.\(^{319}\)

40. The Hindu Community (Jama'a at-al-Baniyan) 300

a. They are subject to what has previously been mentioned,\(^{320}\) and one asks for so many 'addah (ladies' fingers) is sold by 

311 Hashash, rendered as hashâsh, small stones. Rossi, op. cit., 171, writes hashâsh, as does Yemenca, 121, no. 870. Al-Râzi, Târîkh, 91, qâfat, and f.n. hashash.

312 Mayâqîn, sing., mîqâr, a new word, small sharp stones placed behind facing stones to keep the latter in position and straigh.

313 Al-Sâyiğhi describes the qadâh as equivalent to two shiîf of paraffin (gâzî), but see f.n. 141.

314 This hallâj, himself, the hammâmâr are all of the mamnoon class and of low social status—though of course not necessarily poor. Masâhîd Sân'a', 129, mentions Bayt 'A'dâh, some of whom are, to this day, merchants, but some are handcraftsmen, an ignoble craft. In 1972-3 the hallâj was paid two riyâls for a haircut.

315 For the hammâm see pp. 501-24.

316 This is the souping with the bag (al-tajbîn bi-'l-kîs), a little glove of the same kind of wool as used in making the 'addah, used for cleaning off the body-dirt. The soap is applied with it—a similar article shown us was a fi'îs palm fibre tuft. Imam Ahmad had a special man to apply massage (takbis) to him. Massage is done especially before going to sleep at night.

317 The naddaf is the man who cleans the cotton used for bedding (fursôsh) with an implement called a naddaf. These cotton carders used mostly to be Jews—hence perhaps their inclusion with the group of money occupations. Cf. W. Leslau, 'Tracts on Yemenite folklore', Proc. Amer. Acad. Jev. Res., Philadelphia, 1944, 227, 15, M. Huyamin Naddaf, the last apparently a family name. Nowadays even tribesmen will do this work.

318 I. e. of the Harît Masid 'Aql (Mwasid 'Snâ', 83), the quarter in old Sân'a' where the Jews used to carry on their business though living in Bîr al-'Abâb.

319 Al-Sâyiğhi considers this is a reference to the regulations for the washin in Section 37.

320 Note the way in which 1/4 is expressed, as in the Makhkkhall al-fisân etc.

321 See the account of the Baniyan, pp. 432-433, and Section 7.

322 Rossi, op. cit., 153, records certain types of pottery.

323 The namar is a baked clay barrel open at the top, and with a hole on one side in the bottom. A fire is let in the bottom which heats the internal sides above it. Flat rounds of bread are slapped on the internal sides of the namar where they quickly cook.

324 This 'addâh belongs to the clan Shu'aysh. Pottery is made today (1972), at al-Surîb village of pot-clay from caves and friable stones pounded up with a long club. Eight hundred Jews are said to have lived in this village at one time. Types of pottery manufactured there include the muharab and madâd.

325 A village about two miles from Sân'a' (al-Sâyiğhi).

326 'Addâh was explained by Qûdi Jama'î as a collection (mâmûa) which is connected with the thil 'addâ (ladies' fingers) is sold by the 'addâh of five in each two hands—eggs and bananas are sold in the same way, and one asks for so many 'addâh of these commodities. Carrots are, however, sold by the mûrîb or bundle.

41. Pottery and Clay Bread-Ovens (al-Madar wa-'l-Tamâ'îr)\(^{322}\) etcetera 301

(i. Pottery)

a. They are required to provide the watch that they are accustomed to do when the town needs, and they are required to provide the fleece-lined coats of the watch to the tune of half and an eighth and a quarter (i.e. 7/8ths) of a girth plus collection charge of an eighth girth on that, the total sum amounting to a girth.

42. Pottery from (Wâdi) al-Sîr\(^{324}\) (al-Madaral-Sirri) 301

i. This is higher in quality than the manufacture of al-Hushayshiy-235 and that of al-Qâ'.\(^{326}\)

ii. The price for it in its place (of manufacture) by the Dhimmi (Jewish) makers is six and a half 'lots' (addâh)\(^{327}\) for a girth coin (girth hajar). The 'lot', according to the regulation (al-ghirân al-ma'rif) customary among the pottery-sellers (al-maddârin), is 4.5 in diameter and the Dhimmi of al-Sirri, is that, when it consists of cooking-pots (buram), cut the kind that hold the half of an eighth\(^{328}\) of the qadâh-measure of grain (qadâh). Then the 'lot' comprises eight cooking-pots. Whereas (the 'lot'), when it consists of coffee-pots (al-jamâ', amounts to sixteen coffee-pots (jama'ah) holding a large raff\(^{329}\) and a quarter of ghee.

iii. In Sân'a' the price of this pottery of al-Sirr from the importers who bring it to the retailers (al-kassârin) in Sân'a', is five 'lots' for a girth coin (girth hajar). The arithmetic is a little complicated, but the correction is important as it resolves a difficulty over the coinage. At this period we know the qadâh consists of 80 buqshahs, and the buqshah consists of 6 harf—this makes the girth equivalent to 480 harf. The text here however says that the change for the girth is 500 harf. When fluctuation in the rate of the harf to the girth is allowed for (cf. my Portuguese, 152-3), it is reasonable to state that the girth is equivalent to 500 harf in round figures. As the harf was worth something like half a farthing at that time the difference between 480 and 500 harf was something like a penny halfpenny.

This paragraph can only refer to coffee-pots.

A 'lot' purchased whole-sale costs about 12 buqshahs.

When each buqshah is worth 6 1/2 harf, then 12 buqshahs are worth 78 harf.

A single coffee-pot in a 'lot' of 16 costs 78/16ths which is just under 5 harf.

When each buqshah is worth 6 1/4 harf, then 12 buqshahs are worth 75 harf.

A single coffee-pot in a 'lot' of 16 costs 75/16ths, which is also a little short of 5 harf.

Coffee-pots retail at 7 1/2 harf, making an apparent profit of about 2 1/2 harf per pot.

This arithmetic is confirmed by the price of cooking-pots given in the next paragraph.

The 'lot' of buqshahs is 8 pieces as opposed to 16 in the case of coffee-pots, and therefore they retail at twice the price at 14 1/2 harf.

It is interesting to remark that the rate of dirhams to the gursh changed in the Sûq al-Madar can but have derived his means to do so not from the humble potier's craft, but by selling pots.

The eighth (huma) is a measure (equivalent to 8 omâr), so clumsy as it is to express 1/16 of a gursh in this way, I have made a literal translation.

Za'im is usually millet.

The large raff is a raff marwî, but at the time of the Turkish innovations this becomes only the medium raff. Cf. f.n. 100.

In both places in this paragraph harf must be read for the text's buqshah.

The arithmetic is a little complicated, but the correction is important as it resolves a difficulty over the coinage. At this period we know the qadâh consisted of 80 buqshahs, and the buqshah consisted of 6 harf—which makes the girth equivalent to 480 harf. The text here however says that the change for the girth is 500 harf. When fluctuation in the rate of the harf to the girth is allowed for (cf. my Portuguese, 152-3), it is reasonable to state that the girth is equivalent to 500 harf in round figures. As the harf was worth something like half a farthing at that time the difference between 480 and 500 harf was something like a penny halfpenny.
Pottery Market, is two and a half buqshahs\(^3\) (read harf). v. The price of the cooking-pot (barmah) which holds half of the eighth\(^3\) of a qadab-measure is fourteen and a half harf. vi. The price of the coffee-pot (jamanah) holding a raft\(i\) and a quarter of a ghee, (measured) by the ‘large’ raft\(i\) equivalent to a small raft\(i\) and a half stands at seven and a half harf, expressible\(^3\) as a buqshah and a quarter, (when sold) to the man of Şan’a’.\(^3\) 43. Pottery of Qa’-al-Yahud 301

i. The large jar (jarrah) which has a capacity of fifteen rafts of ghee (measured) by the ‘large’ raft\(i\) is sold to the retailer at three buqshahs less a quarter, expressible as seventeen harf in this change (raft\(i\)).\(^3\) His profit is two and a half harf, expressible as a third of a buqshah.

ii. The large jar of this capacity is sold to the man of Şan’a’ at twenty harf, expressible as three and a quarter buqshahs.

iii. Anything smaller than thisjar of such capacity (as has been mentioned) fetches a lower price proportionate to its lower capacity.

iv. The price of a bowl (qafnah) holding half of an eighth of a qadab-measure is sold to the man of Şan’a’ Market at three and a half harf, i.e. half a buqshah and a little more.

44. Pottery (Madar) of al-Kharibah\(^3\) 302

i. With the potters (ahl al-madar) the ‘lot’ is what comes to two kneading bowls (ma’ajin), in a single one of which the half of an eighth and the quarter of an eighth\(^3\) of a qadab-measure of flour (daqiq) can be kneaded——or it would hold a measure (virah\(^3\)) of grain (al-ı’âm) consisting of an eighth and a half of an eighth of a qadab-measure—or else appriyaya\(^3\) of similar capacity.

ii. The ‘lot’ (qafnah) sold to the man of Şan’a’ at twenty-five harf, expressible as four buqshahs, and the retailer (al-kasár) gets a profit of a rupee (rubbiyah\(^3\)), two and a half harf. The ‘lot’ is sold to the man of Şan’a’ for thirty harf less\(^3\) a rupee, expressible as four and one third buqshahs.\(^3\)

iii. Small (pieces of pottery) are (priced) proportionately to this, as four and one third

45. Ḥushaysiyyah Pottery 302

Pitchers (abârâq), coffee-pots (jâmín) and jars (ku’ad)—the price of the kawrajah,\(^3\) i.e. four jars or four coffee-pots or four pitchers—the price of them (sold) to the retailer by (?) the people\(^3\) of the Pottery Market is two buqshahs, expressible as twelve harf. They are sold to the man of Şan’a’ at two and a quarter buqshahs, expressible as fourteen harf. The price at which each single pot (is sold) to the man of Şan’a’ is three and a half harf, expressible as a buqshah.

The capacity of a single (pot) is two rafts of ghee (measured) by the ‘large’ raft. The large jar with a capacity of fifteen large rafts (costs) three and a quarter buqshahs, expressible as twenty harf. Anything smaller is proportionate to that. (Supplementary) 302

a. Pottery ovens (al-tanâ’ir)—the pottery oven\(^3\) (suitable) for the half of an eighth of a qadab-measure (costs) a buqshah and a quarter, expressible as seven and a half harf, i.e. three rupees, (when sold) to the man of Şan’a’. The pottery oven (suitable) for an eighth of a qadab-measure (costs) fifteen harf, expressible as two and a third buqshahs. The baker’s (al-khabbâs) pottery oven for the quarter of a qadab-measure costs twenty harf, expressible as three and a quarter buqshahs.

b. When prices of pottery and ovens reach a sum which causes ‘detriment’\(^3\) to the Muslims they will be obliged to adhere to this rule (to sell) at these prices. Anyone who exceeds these, be he potter or retailer, will be restrained and liable to reprimand.

46. Pipe-Bowls (al-Batwar)\(^3\) 302

(Supplementary)

a. Al-Sayyâni\(^3\) workmanship, which is the best workmanship in earthen stone-wares\(^3\)—the largest pipe-bowl with this appellation (al-Sayyâni) sold to the man of Şan’a’ is priced per unit at ten harf, expressible as twelve buqshahs less a third, and costs the buyer\(^3\) (al-mu’asâdaat) (actually) nine and a half harf. The middling size of pipe-bowl of al-Sayyâni workmanship is sold to the man of Şan’a’ for five harf, and to the man who gains his livelihood\(^3\) (by selling pipe-bowls) for four and a half harf. The cheapest (adâb‘ayyanah) of al-Sayyâni workmanship (in earthen stone-wares (ghādir) is sold at two and a half harf to the man of Şan’a’.

The man who gains his livelihood (through selling pipes) receives ten harf\(^3\) on the score (kaṭrajâyah) of al-Sayyâni (pipe-bowls) as has been previously mentioned in regard to the large (pipe-bowls).

b. Sa’ïd Manûr al-Dhimmî (the Jew) manufactures rounded (al-mukâ’abât al-makrûyah)\(^3\) (pipe bowls). (These) ornamented (manqûshâtah) (pipes) of the largest make are sold to the man of Şan’a’ for five harf each, expressible as a buqshah less a quarter, per unit, the middling, (size) at two and a half harf, and the cheapest kind at two for a rupee, expressible as two and a half harf—the work of Isâqâ’ al-Dhimmî of al-Sayyâni.

c. Red pipe-bowls—the largest make of pipe-bowl costs two and a half harf, the middling kinds cost five harf, and the cheapest a pair for a rupee, (i.e.) two and a half harf.

(Supplementary) 303

a. The pipe-bowls of al-Marrân\(^3\) of the tribes—the largest make, the manufacture of which involves labour and the grinding up of pot-stone (ghâdir) and a lathe (? makhrât),\(^3\) is sold at two bars.
bugshahs, expressible as five rupees per single pipe-bowl, the middling size at ten ḥarf, and the small size at three rupees, expressible as seven and a half ḥarf.

This is the price of al-Marrāni.

b. The manufacture of al-Qā' (Qa' al-Yahūd)—the large size sells for 37 rupees, expressible as seven and a half coffee-pots of pot-stone of the best make—the coffee-pot of half a piece, expressible as five rupees. The price of jugs without covers (aqğha), the manufacture of al-Laywi is ten ḥarf (for) the best make. The score (kaqrwajah) of middling quality costs three rupees, and the poorest (a'daf) workmanship costs five ḥarf, expressible as a bugshah less a sixth. The large or small size of the bigger water-coolers (muhrurraṣād) costs the same. The price of coffee-pots of pot-stone of the best make—the coffee-pot of half a ṭalq capacity is a bugshah less a sixth, expressible as five ḥarf; the small ones are two for five ḥarf. So it goes on in the same fashion and following the same rule (qanin).

b. The Dhimmiyyān were obliged to hold to this price (range) when they made demands for an extensive increase—in which big(ger) water-coolers (kaqrwajah) are sold to the man of Ṣan‘ā’ at two bugshahs a piece, expressible as five rupees. The price of jugs without covers (aqğha), the manufacture of al-Laywi is ten ḥarf (for) the best make. The score (kaqrwajah) of middling quality costs three rupees, and the poorest (a'daf) workmanship costs five ḥarf, expressible as a bugshah less a sixth. The large or small size of the bigger water-coolers (muhrurraṣād) costs the same. The price of coffee-pots of pot-stone of the best make—the coffee-pot of half a ṭalq capacity is a bugshah less a sixth, expressible as five ḥarf; the small ones are two for five ḥarf. So it goes on in the same fashion and following the same rule (qanin).

( Supplementary) 303

47. The Pottery of al-Qā'ībi [Madār al-Qā'irah] 303

a. Jugs of pot-stone (θηān ar-γhāṣāf), coffee-pots of the manufacture of al-Laywi (Levi) at al-Qā'irah, covered bowls (khaqraṣīf)385 and large jugs (qanūn) are sold to the man of Ṣan‘ā’ at two bugshahs a piece, expressible as five rupees. The price of jugs without covers (aqğha), the manufacture of al-Laywi is ten ḥarf (for) the best make. The score (kaqrwajah) of middling quality costs three rupees, and the poorest (a'daf) workmanship costs five ḥarf, expressible as a bugshah less a sixth. The large or small size of the bigger water-coolers (muhrurraṣād) costs the same. The price of coffee-pots of pot-stone of the best make—the coffee-pot of half a ṭalq capacity is a bugshah less a sixth, expressible as five ḥarf; the small ones are two for five ḥarf. So it goes on in the same fashion and following the same rule (qanin).

b. The Dhimmīyyān were obliged to hold to this price (range) when they made demands for an extensive increase—in which big(ger) water-coolers (kaqrwajah) are sold to the man of Ṣan‘ā’ at two bugshahs a piece, expressible as five rupees.

( Supplementary) 303

48. Certain Commodities385 304

a. Dye-bowls (mākhādīb)386—(these) are sold to the Dhimmīyyāt (Jewish women), a couple for three rupees, expressible as seven and a half ḥarf. The Dhimmīyyah woman sells them to the man of Ṣan‘ā’ at five ḥarf a piece, and in accordance with the expensive-ness or cheapness of galls (‘ah).

361 Qaryah al-Qā'ībi is the well known village of the lower Wīdī Dahr. There is an interesting but not very accessible fort above the village. No pottery is made there nowadays. The Levi family at Ṣan‘ā’ is known to E. Brauer, Jemenitische Joden, 243. Cf. pp. 400-8, 425a.

At Shābīn Kawkabān pottery is made by hand, as at al-Rawwah, with a wheel. First the clay (al-maṣyaḥ) is taken in a round pat and draped over a pot-shape—(the latter was set in the ground, and there are various sizes and shapes of them). The clay was kneaded over the pot-shape and formed with wooden bats of various sizes called al-maṣyaḥ. The pot was then left to dry and was glazed with a round stone. The maṣyaḥ itself is made of stone. If a coffee-pot is wanted then a long neck is shaped separately with a riṣāq baqṣ al-γman (i.e. round poles or sticks around which the clay is rolled and fashioned to a tube). They are decorated with red paint from plants, a small balqṣ, called which is said to come from Khāwāsh. This balqṣ is also used to decorate homes of adele in the Barat region (Cf. Dode and Strezenc, A fortified town-house in Wadi Jadari). It seems to be from earth or decaying rock. I did not ascertain whether the painting took place before or after firing. This is done in a kiln with dung pats (khib). The potter also showed us an animal skin (nafrah) which is placed on the thigh above the knee, with the smooth side inwards, and the clay is kneaded on this. A woman was painting a jar and it seems that the making of clay vessels is regarded, to some extent, as women’s work. The paint was applied with a rag. The various types of pet were being left in the sun to dry, and three jamānah costs 2 1/2 riql (1972).

362 It is probable that the pottery made at Qaryah al-Qā'ībi was of this sort.

363 Kibnc, a large or small broad flattish bowl. It is a large or small broad flattish bowl. It is seemingly a Yemeni colloquial plural of ghala.

364 This heading is not in al-Sayaghī’s text but has been inserted for greater clarity.

365 This is the price of al-Marrāni.

366 The middling (qualities) are four bundles (kamah) of clay—(the price of a score of which is a buqshah), a single one being sold at four and a third buqshahs.

367 The manufacture of al-Qā’ (Qa’ al-Yahūd)—the large size sells for three buqshahs, expressible as thirty ḥarf and a rupee. (There is another kind) the price of a score of which is a qirsh coin (qirsh ḥajar), a single one being sold at four and a third bugshahs, expressible as twenty-seven and a half ḥarf. (There is a further kind) the price of a score of which is a qirsh less a quarter, a single one being sold at four bugshahs less a third, expressible as twenty-two ḥarf. (There is yet another kind) the price of a score of which is a qirsh coin (qirsh ḥajar), one of these selling at two and a quarter bugshahs. Anything smaller follows this rule (qanin).

b. Brooms (makhāṣāf)388—the largest and broadest389 make of palm broom (is sold) at one a rupee, (i.e.) two and a half ḥarf. The largest palm brush (ḥababah)390 costs five ḥarf.

c. Radā’ matches (al-ḥibrīḥ370 al- Radā‘)371—the thick372 sort, the top quality (anāḥa shay), is two bundles for a rupee, expressible as two and a half ḥarf. The middling (qualities) are four bundles (‘uyr)372 for two and a half ḥarf, and the small ones are five bundles each for a rupee, two and half ḥarf, equivalent to two bundles for a ḥarf.

d. Baskets (khiḥāṣ)373—the price of baskets of reed (kindūṣ)—the largest of these is the kind, a score of which374 sells at a French qirsh (qirsh Prants)375 and a quarter, and is used for (carrying) meat (jaqṣ376 al-baquār). The price of one of them to the man of Ṣan‘ā’ comes to five bugshahs, expressible as thirty ḥarf and a rupee. (There is another kind) the price of a score of which is a qirsh coin (qirsh ḥajar), a single one being sold at four and a third bugshahs, expressible as twenty-seven and a half ḥarf. (There is a further kind) the price of a score of which is a qirsh less a quarter, a single one being sold at four bugshahs less a third, expressible as twenty-two ḥarf. (There is yet another kind) the price of a score of which is a qirsh coin (qirsh ḥajar), one of these selling at two and a quarter bugshahs. Anything smaller follows this rule (qanin).

b. Brooms (makhāṣāf)388—the largest and broadest389 make of palm broom (is sold) at one a rupee, (i.e.) two and a half ḥarf. The largest palm brush (ḥababah)390 costs five ḥarf.

370 New Supplement: (Supplementary) 303

372 It is probable that the pottery made at Qaryah al-Qā'ībi was of this sort.

373 This heading is not in al-Sayaghī’s text but has been inserted for greater clarity.

423 qanadīl), is exposed in the sun about this time to help remove the husk. Cf. classical Arabic, man'amah.

425 Little girls’ hands are mucāhāṣāfah with patterns at the feast of Arufah.


427 Headnote: (Supplementary) 303

428 A‘īmmat al-Yaman, I, 318, A.D. and to Dozy, Supplément.

429 Little girls’ hands are mucāhāṣāfah with patterns at the feast of Arufah.

430 Jazr, a large or small broad flattish bowl. It is seemingly a Yemeni colloquial plural of ghala.

431 It is probable that the pottery made at Qaryah al-Qā'ībi was of this sort.

432 Kibnc, a large or small broad flattish bowl. It is discussed by Anastase-Marie (al-Kīrmil) in his edition of Rūshīq al-mawmūt, 425. It is a term known to the Mekhmīk, Arabian Islamic City.
The responsibilities, or it may be translated, liabilities, of the professions
for the Utrush, the celebrated Tabaristan Imam of the end of the 3rd/9th century
(qaw'id) (al-kasr and 'l-fals) goes missing in the dressing-room
i. The Shaykh of the Police
ii. The Bath proprietor (al-muqaddam) is responsible for what goes missing in the
bath when it is
iii. The woman who decks out the women Bath attendant to
iv. The woman who attends to
v. The woman who attends to
vi. Building labours (shuqar al-imarah) are responsible for the
gear ('iddah) of the master-builder which they use in working as,
for example, (the labourer) sieving (al-nukhul) (gravel out of earth)
is responsible for the adze (mafras) and sieve. The water-skin carrier
is responsible for the water-skin (girah) and if he has to
puddle the (building)-clay (khulab) he is responsible for the shovel
(maqfi). The builder’s mate (munawwil) is responsible for the
pick (faš), the plumb-line (miqān), the cord (khayf) for
vii. The rest of the labours in other crafts such as plasterers
and craftsmen—
ix. The animal-hire broker (al-muqaddam) is responsible for
(providing) whatever he has received an advance fee (qu'ada) for
(borrowing), or getting camels hired out for transport:
the bride to the groom’s (tari') house. She was also described as
Dinah saying in the Qof’s unpublished proverbs, runs, Lū qod ta'ashshat al-shari'ah ismirayn ya nisa, if the
shaší has supplied, then, women, make merry! I.e., the shaší, being the life and soul of parties,
'ammal al-kafatî, must be seen to first, before the festivities can begin. Cf.
Gotte, loc. cit.

She is able to return them (mustamakkin min al-radd).

Nabijah—it has been suggested that nabijah is the same as
sūq al-Zabîl, soundness, be read here.

Tafirîn, explained as tafir. Cf. Dozy, Sulpicien, Negrem, ‘en faisant trop pes.’

Maqfî, Rossi, 154, maqfî, zappã, a spade, syn., miqâf.

See fn. 304.

The plumb-line weighs a piece of iron.

Yamûšûl, pl., hâyshiyî, a load.

A taqdîr in the Yemen is a risâlah, message, with a list of items despatched to
you, carried by the bearer of them to you. Dr. A. A. Maktari has provided
me with the following note on Yemenis, temporary immigrants to
Aden during the days of the British Protectorate. R. B. Serjeant, ‘Notes on some aspects
of Arab buxur in Aden,’ Bulletin of the

Henniger, St. Augustin bei Bonn, 1976, 307-15. In the olden days commu-
nication between the family of the immigrant back in the villages of
the Yemen and the shopkeeper in Aden, called al-jabal who acted as a sort of
post-box, was through the gamali. The latter was a camel-owner who
always travelled at least once a month between Aden and a certain district in
the Yemen. Now they no longer travel on camels but they are still known as
gamali. They come to Aden and collect all the taqdir (sing. taqdir = taqdir of
al-Shadi’s), and they bring back with them on their return to Aden
all the (sing., taqdir), i.e., acknowledgements of delivery of what has been
sent. Hence one often hears Adenis, to poke fun at the Yemenis,
using such phrases as ‘Sadar lâh yadar mawguram wa-masjar, to you we sent a
scooter and a sack of rice, Al-jabal has not seen it, etc.’

The usage is old. S. D. Gotte, Studies in Islamic history and institutions,
London, 1873, 357, cites Ibn al-Sakir, ‘Notes on some aspects
of Arab buxur in Aden,’ Bulletin of the

Explained as yuqdar yuqdaru ha sûlu samarsat al-tiṭjarah, the arrival of which
at the warehouse has been confirmed.

The muqaddam is, in the Yemen, the intermediary between the
hired and the man hired (al-wa'ad abîn al-mustafa 'la wa'ad), but he does not
own the animals hired. I was told of a maqaddim qurush of the Bayt al-Khabir
hired today, and this family also deals in the hire of vehicles. Maqaddim
Sâri, 31, speaks of a maqaddim al-国际贸易 al-Sîyad, called Zubahî, who built
a maqaddim in 'e-sharaf east of the 'Shari'a Jami Mosque, i.e. a shed for drinking
water. From this it is inferred that the

The latter (yuqdar) has to be specified and what coverings are to be used,
mukha or kanabish, etc.
50. The Obligations of the Shaykhs of the Markets and the Chief Shaykh (Masâhîyik al-Aswâq wa-Shaykh al-Masâhîyik)

i. The Shaykhs and Clerks of the Markets must submit (raf'î) the price of every article of merchandise (sold) by the importer and by the retailer, to the Governor (al-'Amîl) so that he can consider how to meet bis obligations.

ii. The Chief Shaykh must pass along to each market to inspect the measurer (kayyîl) of grain etc. at bis measuring (kayl). If there be no unfairness (hayf) then all is well. If (on the other hand) he sees evidence of something into which deceit (is entering), suspicion most frequently falling on this happening in measuring our raisins,—then this may happen.

iii. The measure (kayl) may be two kinds, one for the market man the retailer, and one for the citizen of the town. He must inspect the measure the retailer uses for the customer and if it is equivalent to the measurer's (hayyîl) measure then all is well. Otherwise it is imperative that he raise the matter of the person of whose deception (khiyûnah) he has evidence to the Governor for him to suspend and reprimand him.

iv. Similarly the Chief Shaykh must keep a close check on the weighmen (al-tostaazain) of ghee and oil. The Virtuous Ancestors (al-Salaf al-Sâhih) have established a goodly practice (sunnah hasanah)—namely that the retailer of oil, after measuring out the oil (left in) the funnel (masâhî) into the customer's container, will add a little to make up for what sticks to the funnel.

Indeed, if he finds the seller scrupulous (mutaharri) in such matters—(good and well)! Otherwise he will raise his case to the Governor for him to make (both) of him and the Shaykh of his Market an example which the others will take as a rebuke.

v. It is his duty to keep an eye on the people of the Plaster Market (Suq al-Jusq) so as to inspect them measuring, as also on the rest of the markets, and any person of whom the slightest evidence of deception comes to his notice he will summon him along with his Shaykh before the Governor.

vi. It is the duty of the Deputy of the Meat Market (Nâyib al-Majzarah), at a time when the price of sheep-and-goats drops or falls, to carry out a test, by taking certain of the sheep-and-goats the butchers have already purchased for themselves at a price they have agreed—without their (the butchers') knowing. (An animal) will be slaughtered and weighed (yaqra') on the Scales, and if he discovers that the price of this beast slaughtered has dropped, so that the butcher's wage has risen proportionately above the amount earlier prescribed, the case will be submitted to the Governor to look into fixing the price justly. The reverse case will be similarly treated.

vii. In these matters lies a public benefit (masâlah 'ummah). The Shaykhs of the Market do not fulfill the duties prescribed for them, and the Chief Shaykh likewise (does not perform his duty) of frequent visitation to them (the Shaykhs of the Markets) it is the Governor's bounden duty to relieve them of office because they have not been refraining from the reprehensible things they did.

399 Hayf is explained as in jînâf as mayl, inclination, partiality to buyer or seller.
400 The mere existence of two different measures such as described is in itself a sort of fraud.
401 Another uncompleted condition.
402 The existence of two different measures such as described is in itself a sort of fraud.
403 Cf. Masãjîd San'a', 125, for a certain al-Hajj Ali al-Wazzân of the 14th century H., also a constructor of a maghâirahbab. Such functions are probably hereditary—Nawzân as his family in Subhan Kawkabân whose work was ifâf and wakil. Gathering tax and weighing, he discovered that the price of this beast slaughtered has dropped, so that the butcher's wage has risen proportionately above the amount earlier prescribed, the case will be submitted to the Governor to look into fixing the price justly. The reverse case will be similarly treated.

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Chapter 13(2)
The Statute of Ṣanʿā’

Documents Additional to the Statute (Qānūn) of Ṣanʿā’

1. Ordinance to Regulate the Sale of qāt

Al-Ṣayyāḥī in his typescript summary of Qānūn Ṣanʿā’ has inserted two interesting additional pieces, one of which has to do with trading in qāt and is dated in one of the later half of the 18th century. It is taken from an ordinance (marṣūm) of the Shaykh al-Īslām of his day, the very learned Qāṣī Muḥammad Ṣaliḥ al-Ṣaḥlūlī,3 and runs as follows.

When the ‘deterriment’ (taqūrrut)4 to the generality of Muslims much increased, and the cause of the (said) ‘deterriment’ was determined by the devout persons of those elected,5 and many of the respected ulema and governors6 got to know about it—namely, about the business of the qāt tree imported (maṣṣīb) from ‘Afish7 to the Protected City (al-Madinat al-maḥmīyyah)8—as, too, powerful persons have monopolised9 the best imported picked (maṣṣīf) (qāt), so it became impossible for the weak (ahl al-qātij) to obtain any of it—I mean the good quality—and the importers (jallābīn), comprising some of the owners (mālībūn),10 and those who gain a livelihood (through selling) it (mutasabbībūn), persisted in adulterating inferior with good quality (khālīt al-dāʿīj bi-l-lajīf), thinking fit to sell (it at a high price) and to divert12 imported wares (jallābīb)13 from the Market—which is the Table14 of God, Perfect is He.15 Diversion of imported wares (maṣṣījīb) from markets is one of the things most highly ‘detrimental’ to Muslims, and al-Muṭṭalā al-Amin (the Prophet) and his Caliphs forbade it—as is clearly demonstrated in history (al-athar).

1 See p.179a. A number of typing errors has been encountered in the summary, most of them fairly obvious, but one cannot therefore be absolutely certain of the text.
2 Qāṣī Ismā’il paraphrased marṣūm here as a ṣulāq, communication.
3 This persons does not appear in the printed biographies consulted.
4 Cf. pp.72b, 125b, 164a, 174a, passim.
5 Probably the shaykh and qāsil of the Market or the Sāq al-Qāt. Perhaps ikhtīyār might be read for ikhtīyār, ‘men of experience’ rather than ‘elected’.
6 Aṣ-ṣulāq wa-ṣlākhum al-muṣṭaṣārin.
7 ‘Afish of Bālīd al-Rūs district is known to have been the only place where the qāt-tree was planted at this period (al-Ṣayyāḥī).
8 Ṣanʿā’, see p.40a.
9 Reading istabdāda for istabdalla. By powerful persons means persons of position who are offered the good quality qāt for sale.
10 Owners of qāt plantations.
11 By agents intermediaries (naṣī‘i) for exporting or selling to the towns, are meant.
12 Arabic, al-‘udāl bi, explained as al-taṣarruk bi-. Al-Ṣaḥlūlī seems to mean that they hold back good quality qāt from the market.
13 Sing. jallībāḥ.
14 An allusion to the saying, ‘Al-ṣulāq manā‘īd Allāh fa-man asā-hū ajābā min-hū, Markets are God’s tables and he who comes to them receives from them.’
15 This sentence seems to have no conclusion to the introductory ‘When’—perhaps it should be rendered as 'Whereas'.
16 Qāṣī Ismā’il said that al-bādī was the person who yikdā bi-l-khurā. See p.164a.
17 Interpreted as leaving the good quality to the end and selling the inferior first.
18 Al-Athār al-Yamānīyāh, I, 155, no. 421, raṣāda, yarīkā means saṣā, to record, and an account-book is raṣād. The sorts (ṣafṣāf) and prices of qāt will be so recorded. Cf. the Qānūn, f.n. 185. Perhaps the practice of registering qāt at ‘Afish and not at the Ṣanʿā’ market is disliked.
19 i.e., the leader of the prayer, a respected person.
20 Ba’d al-salāk ‘ulāq-ki. A constant supply and that the bundle of known size, weight, quality, and value.
21 I.e., the bundle of known size, weight, quality, and value.
22 I.e., the bundle of known size, weight, quality, and value.
23 Yu’naf, which might mean rather ‘be made known’ than ‘ascertain’.16 Qadī Ismā’il said that al-bādī was the person who yikdā bi-l-khurā. See p.164a.
what has been registered (suffira)'24 as being in the hands of
every retailer of the qār-sellers each day be ascertained, and
let him be made to display it to the purchaser without
concealment from them, each in turn (li-l'awwal fi
'l-arwaal) of those who come to buy, not admixing (bundles)
of good quality with poor quality (yashash).25

The standard weight of the bundle (miṣān al-marubat)'26
is fixed at ten waqiyahs clear, of anything lesser weight
fetching a lesser price proportionate to the amount by which
it is short (of that), so that the (standard) weight is secure
to avoid deficiency (khalaq).

Whosoever withholds back any imported qār from the
Market will be punished, and anyone selling poor quality
at the price of good quality (qār) will be fined (adāba).

Notwithstanding (the afore-going regulations) the owners
of qār trees are under no compulsion (ijhār) to pick before
they consent to do so of their own accord.27 No new practice
(bid'ah)28 or introduction of a levy (jihādīn) shall be imposed
on them, neither shall a price be arbitrarily imposed
upon them or by them—only the customary approved price
will be adopted. Concluded and date year 1189/1775-6.

2. Butchers and the Şan'a' Meat Market

Yemeni historians say little more about butchers than they do
about other trades, yet the occasional notices scattered over those
Yemeni authors we have read, do add a little to the Qānūn.

Al-Rāzī,29 writing in the first half of the 5th/11th century
indicates the extent of Şan'a' from east to west in the words, 'from
the dam (saddis) of Mount Nuqum, i.e. Talhāt al-Haddād (the
smith's talk-tree), to the Butchers (al-Jazzārūn). This may be
interpreted to show that the butchers had their market
west of city, probably in open ground there. It is tempting also to see
in Maqṣ' (al-Jazzārūn), i.e. the Slaughter-Place of the Butchers,
where today (al-Rāzī's day) oil is sold, a sort of abattoir. The early
Arab authors however, while attributing it to the pre-Islamic Şam
b. Nāţ, this of course clearly legend, see in the name a site where
Muğammad Effendi exerted himself, and the notables of the
area of the later Masjid al-Shahidān, north west of the present­
day Şan'a'-Sūq.

In 1063/1653 or the year after it the abattoit (majazārah) in the
town of Şan'a' was transferred to Bab al-Yaman, and a record
(sajjīl) was made for that and to rectify it (istanāb) over which the
ficḥ Muğammad Effendi exercised himself, and the notables of the
Şan'a' people were written in it. Its location had been the Fire­
wood Market (Şuq' al-Hasāb).30

It is likely that, as Şan'a' developed, the abattoirs (were)
moved on more than one occasion, but the abattoir today is still
outside Bab al-Yaman, though animals are said to be slaughtered
in several places, as well of course as at private houses, especially
at the ʿId al-Nāţ. Al-Ḥamdānī31 has pointed out that the climate
of Şan'a' is so temperate that meat may remain with the butcher
for three, four and three days without going bad.

24 Properly 'ṣūfîna with ḫud. This information would be sent to the head of the
qār-retailers (uṣîr al-maqūzah).
25 Ṭashshu' is explained as ʿāshīha bi-l-ṭayyib min al-ṭayb, some inferior being
mixed with the good quality.
26 Markūs, syn. 'ṭashshu'.
27 It looks as if this provision is intended to allow the owners to sell to the other
groups the poor or medium qualities first if they so wish.
28 Ṣīj (ṣīj) is pluye ma'iṭ, not fixed by custom.
29 Ṣījī (ṣījī) is made of stone, near 'The Butchers' (al-Jazzārūn) of which its (Şan'a's)
location had been the Firewood Market (Şuq' al-Hasāb).
30 This custom which still exists in the country tribal districts is known also as shirkah, and it was described to me as follows.
31 When several persons wanting meat take shares in buying a young sheep-or-goat (talāyyu) the butcher, being expert in the division of
meat, divides it up equitably between those sharing in the cost. The butcher receives his perquisite of head and skin (min ṣāliḥ al-jazzār al-rūs tuft-fyiul) in addition to his fee—which would be more or less proportionate to the size of the beast. He might for instance, ask for five ṭūfyūl, and the conversation would then run,
32 The owner(s) of the lamb, 'No, my brother, not five ṭūfyūl! Let's make it four.'
When the butcher says ‘qabyalah’, he (the purchaser) gives him half a riyyel over what the butcher said in the first place. The butcher then says, ‘Don’t bargain with me. Pay what you wish.’

The lamb (kharif), said Qâdi Isma‘îl, would be divided up into halves, quarters and eighths, and each person partaking in the purchase of the animal would take what he needs. This gives rise to the proverb,43 ‘Shirkah min al-tays, wiid-î al-qârih, Take your share of (i.e. buy) the goat and hand over the money for it.’ This is said to a person who wants to get something for nothing!

In present-day San‘â‘ the custom seems to have disappeared and a sharîkh now merely means a customer, as in the proverb, ‘Ahâjâmîr yiirf wa jîlî al-šarîkhî, The butcher knows his customer’s face.’ That is to say the butcher gives each customer meat according to the way in which he has sized him up—up to the sharp intelligent man the best portions, to the poor man the most inferior quality he has. Another of the Qâqî’s proverbs runs, ‘Al-rajajî yîbân min shirkat-îh, A man’s manliness appears from the meat (he brings home).’ A man, that is, who brings back good meat from the butcher-and is given the proper weight of the amount for which he asked—but if the butcher cheats him, giving him short measure and poor quality, then he is a weak personality (da‘fî al-Mashâqûbih) and unmanly. In al-Mashriq they say, ‘He who doesn’t know butcher meat (shirkah) is pleased with the tail-bone (bu‘jîyyî).’

Geiten’s notes46 made prior to 1934, throw interesting light on conditions in San‘a‘ at that time. ‘When they buy (bîshîrâh) a rafl of beef (baqari) for six buqshahs (somewhere about 3d. in sterling then) the rafl of mutton (ghanami) costs a quarter (riyâl 10 buqshahs)), and goat-meat (ma‘se) costs four—less than beef—with the proviso that when three or four cows are slaughtered they are not all one price—each has its own price. The (official) price-fixer (mussa‘ir) inspects them standing, during the day, and (next) morning they slaughter them and he comes round to inspect the meat and prices (yasa‘ir) each one at what it is worth.’

The man who fixes the price would, one imagines, be a Muslim from the leading men of the butchers as laid down in Qâqîn San‘a‘, but a rather lacunose note of Geiten’s states that in San‘a‘ it is the Chief Rabbi—he must intend this to be for the Jewish community only.

From Jemenica48 several sayings may be quoted to show the Yemeni’s distaste for beef as opposed to mutton, presumably shared by the Jews with the Muslims. But for onions and garlic (thîm) beef (al-baqari) would bring leprosy (jadhâm). The best beef neither harms nor helps (afkhar baqarî la yiç,urr wa-la yinâ‘î). The gâshîkâmîn (sit) by the door of the butchery (al-majzârah)—one does not buy meat (yishrikh) without onions to take back along with the meat (shirk) to the house.

43 Al-Amthal al-Yamaniyah, I, 170, nos. 469-9. He explains the imperative shirk as, to buy meat.

See also the interesting piece entitled el-Jozâ‘ir in C. de Landberg, ’IJaframawt, 378, seq. 629. Jemenica, 157, no. 1204, gives nabz as a share of meat in the tribal areas.

44 Arabic, rajalâh. This and the other proverbs quoted here are from the unpublished part of Qâqî Isma‘îl’s collection.


46 Geiten’s, 5, no. 18.

These prices may be compared with Amin Rihani, Arabien pech und desert, London, 1930, 87—mutton 1/4d per lb., beef 2d, eggs 2d a dozen, butter 3d per lb., wheat two pisatres a mût, maize four pisatres 2 mût. The Maria Theresa dollar is 20 pisatres, about 25 ld. A qadbah of wheat is 155 lbs and is sold for 60 pisatres or six shillings. The qadbah is 40 buqshahs.

47 Section 20, iii.

48 Ibid, 140, no. 1044, but Ibn Rustah, al-‘Afâq al-qâlîsîshih, 112, says they prefer beef (laqib al-baqari) to that of the sheep ewe (dâh) though all is bought at the one price. Both sorts of meat can only be fully cooked over hot coals (sam) since (ordinary) fuel only heats but does not cook them.

49 The mazzab, here a meat-bag, is made of a ewe’s (âu‘â) skin.

For love of meat, an Arab proverb runs, I would eat the leather bag (in which it is brought back from the market), ‘âla mahabbat al-shirkah shâ-âul al-masabbî. The Yemenis speak of a ‘shirkat faqîh’—a faqîh’s portion of meat—because the faqîh is intent and eager to get the full amount of meat he wants, with no shortage in weight, and the butcher’s dog (kaib al-mujâzârah) is, in San‘a‘ as in other countries, a fortunate animal!44

For reasons unknown, butchers have generally names like Mus‘îd, Sa‘îd, Sa‘d, all to do with ‘happiness’, but they would not have names like Qâsim etc.

Today the district known as Bahir Rajraj in the eastern part of San‘a‘ is the place where the butchers and those plying other menial tasks reside. It has not a very good reputation for people say, ‘Sharib min Bahir Rajraj, You’ve drunk from Bahir Rajraj.’ That is to say, ‘Ta‘allâm al-wa‘îqûrah, You’ve learned to be insolent.’ You have been brought up in the Bahir Rajraj Quarter49 and learned its language and ways.

3. Silversmiths

1. The Mint and Jews

That the Jews were silversmiths in south west Arabia is well known, and it is averred that even the silversmiths in Hijramawt are the descendants of Jewish converts to Islam. This is quite possible as the families working silver there in 1948 had names which could indicate either a Jewish or Arabic origin. Brauer53 alludes to a Jewish poet in the latter half of the 16th century who worked as a silversmith, but it can safely be assumed that they were established in this craft in the Yemen centuries before that. Yet it would be an error to suppose that they had a monopoly of the
craft for Dr Paolo Costa purchased a silver gilt knife handle bearing the inscription on the back, 'Amal al-Sayyid Yabû y al-Nînû. The Nûnû Sayyid who made this handle may have flourished in the 18th century to judge from the style of the pattern of the handle, but since no attempt has yet been made or can yet be seriously made at dating styles, this remains speculative.

Costa adds that he has heard that some of Bayt al-Akwa, e.g., Qâdi Muhammad, librarian of the Great Mosque, used to make jambiyahs, meaning probably the silver chasings of the scabbards.

Sayyids, even well known ulama, engaged in many crafts of the city, not in all probability in demeaning occupations—a Sayyid would be a tailor but not a weaver.

When in prison in the Dâr al-Adab (House of Correction) of the Naqib Almâs in 1166/1752-3 al-Amîr al-Šanî composed verses expressing his relief from the perpetual hammering at the Mint in the Qasr near his prison when the Dhimmi had gone home to Bîr al-Âzab for the Sabbath (al-Sabt).

An unwilling neighbour to the Mint (Dâr al-Darb) am I, what an evil (plight) that is.

To be neighbour to the Jews with no one steadfast in the (Islamic) path.

Their hammers (maṣaurâ) is it that come to one by night.

Next to them is no luck for the eye's time of repose.

A most odd thing it is that I should be a Muslim, a Hâmiç but among my best days is the Sabbath.

Jakob Sappîr records that the Jews worked in the Mint during the reign of the Imam 'Abdallah al-Mahdi, and in the period of Thilî under the anti-Imam of that time were Jewish smiths from Šanî under the well-known family of Mori Yûsûf, his Lewî al-Makri. By 1942 al-Hajjar records that the Sabil al-Qirsh (Fountain of the Riyal) under the supervision of the Šanî family of Bayt 'Aisân is located in the Sikkat Dâr al-Darb or 'Mint Street'.

Hayyîm Hâshshâsh, during writing the Second Turkish Occupation, provides an account of the Šanî Mint, the obscurities of which have been removed by Rabbi Qâfîr and communicated to me through the medium of Mrs Aviva Klein-Franke. Under the previous dynasties (dwâ'ol) of the people of the Yemen, says Hâshshâsh,

the Jews had the means of gaining a livelihood through the striking of the currency of the rulers (garîba, sikkah al-duwâl), and many people used to gain a living (yatassabâb) thereby, apart from the money-changers (sayîrâfî), so that some of them acquired property (amâlî) and jewellery (hâby).

Here is a description of how it worked:

54 Cf. Muṣâ, Zafârah, al-Šanî, Cairo, 1370 H., in the essay Nâfil al-Hânâniyyûn, 109, says the Nûnû family is a branch of the Hamazat Sayyids, to which also belong the Ashrâf of the Jawf. There are Nûnû Sayyids in Šanî today.

55 His biography is in Nâshir al-tarf, II, 505 seq. For the verses see his Dânik, edit. 'Ali al-Sayyid Sâbâb al-Madani, Cairo, 1964, 75. Other verses are in Nâshir al-tarf, II, 504, etc.

56 Sing, maqraqah; broser, op. cit., 241-2, lists as the smiths' tools, safiţah, small anvil; mimârîsah (Gloss. dat., mimârîsah, foyâr de charbon), furnace; eqq., bellow; ritual, round iron for making rings; maqraqah, hammer; for biggier silver wire (fäţâ), are used a maqraqah, punch (?), jaws, tweezers, kullabah, pliers, maqraqah, bellow.

57 Arabic maqraqah, parallel to maṣaurî.

58 I have omitted a verse here.

59 I am sure it is by Brauer, op. cit., 242 seq.

60 Maṣaţâl Šanî, op. cit., 96.


62 Brauer, loc. cit., calls these Jews abi al-farâkab, Muznîzîrî, Rossi, L'arabo parlatu ..., 152, calls darîba, money in general.

63 Taâlû, the alloy of silver with copper in the proportions agreed.

64 'Abdulâgîr, long thin tongue-shaped strip that comes out of the moulding (Qâfîr).

65 Glasse, dat., fars, tendre. Cf. the list of tools, p.263. Qâfîr states that faraqa, yârîsah means to cut the metal strips into pieces. It is a denominational verb from frîsah, i.e. a round chisel (tasmîl) with which we cut the strips into small thick pieces, each called a fiţâl, meaning a grain (hâbîb) which is a small round piece like the fiţâl bean.

66 The root dâkama is in Glasse, dat., not dâkâm, knocking with a hammer.

67 Sayed Hamood Hason, Arabic simplified, 2nd edit., Aden, 1941, dakkâm, a blow.

68 Not known to the lexicons consulted.

69 Explained as—because there is no piece wider than the other but all are of one size. Hâbîb, piece is synonymous with fiţâl.

70 Better Mijlâ like mîrabâh and mîrijâbâh supra.

71 Cf. Dory, Supplément, l'hôtel de la monnaie se nomme Dâr al-Sikkah.

72 I.e. the Imam.

73 Ras tawâsif, defined by Qâfîr as—two moulds or dies between which they stamp the coin, the râs being the upper and tawâsif the lower. They strike with a hammer and this is how the coin is stamped/struck. It is an instrument with two iron plates.

74 Laqâm, faire avaler, class. As. Gloss. dat. Here it refers to the action of using the flat round piece of silver between the dies in order to stamp it.

75 Shugghâsh—the last action of stamping (gab) the coin.

76 This might be read yârîsa to distribute, change.

77 For this family see Brauer, op. cit., 243, quoting Saphir.

78 Al-Wāsiţī, Tarîkh al-Yaman, 1st ed., 72, mentions the swap of Šanî, the Shia, who is Abû Zayd, Abû Hanîfî, al-Miqzî as kâhir al-iktar al-tawâsif, very tyrannical and unjust, but he does not mention Muṣâbah; Hâshshâsh speaks of both persons.
When a man marries Qâfii;i states that Cf. note 62, supra. As stated elsewhere, (liqyü) sic). because of acute poverty, especially with ordinary folk. So (iulm) and their sons were not (begotten) in accordance with the law of 2,200 grounds to rights, they made a judgement against the silversmiths of the people of the Yemen. Yûsuf al-Shaykh, the Ma’mûr in charge of the work (of preparing the alloy (shughil)) for the coinage (daribah) pleaded that the silver had already been alloyed with copper (muḥāsas) and they added more copper to it. The ‘Âmil and the Khalifâh were delighted by the adducing of this plea because they would receive their cut (riqâ) from both sides—from the Ma’mûr and from the Jews! So they collected together those Jews, silversmiths, whom they found (lîqûa) to the prison and admonished them harshly on the grounds (bi-TPwâ) that they had defrauded the Muslims and that even their (the Muslims’) women were unlawful (karâm) and their sons were not (begotten) in accordance with the law (sunnah) of the Prophet since they had married (amlâhâ) their women-folk with the adulterated silver, and, since detriment/injury (darâra) requires what will set their condition to rights, they made a judgement against the silversmiths of 2,200 riyâls by way of expiation/compensation (kaflarâh, sic). At that time the riyâl with them was a difficult pass, because of acute poverty, especially with ordinary folk. So when their friends (ma’ârîf) apportioned out (fararaq) that compensation and those persons whose intent was injustice (gubh) had trebled it, their cry for succour (purâkh) rose up to the very heavens (kâbîl al-amîs) because of the lack of the wherewithal in their hands (to pay it), and who would hear their cry except after their paying that? Some of them fled, abandoning their houses, but they took it (the payment) from their houses so flight availed them nothing. Some sold their houses, some pledged their house-deeds (bâyâ’ir) and paid, some sold their tools, some spent a long time in prison until they paid. One of them was this Jew whose brother I found in Qurayt Milb at that time, he being Sulayman al-Maswarâ. When he saw the admonishing and torture (‘adhâb) with which they tortured his companions in the prison, and realising that he had nothing with him to pledge or sell, and none from whom to borrow, he turned his case over in his mind to escape from their torture. He undertook and assented to the judgment of 2,200 riyâls against them for expiation and condemnation (kaflarâh). When he reached his house he took his wife’s razor for shaving and slaughtered himself with it (i.e. cut his throat), the police accompanying him and the household being taken unawares. As soon as they turned to hearing his screams, he was found covered in blood, and his death-rattle was like that of a slaughtered bull. His wife when she saw this shouted at the top of her voice, ‘My husband is slaughtered, my husband is slain.’

In comment on the above it has to be pointed out that the Ma’mûr can have hardly operated without accomplices among the employees of the Mint, or at least with their cognizance. Furthermore the tripling of the fine where a person’s honour is impugned would be in line with tribal customary law practice. 

Habshâsh goes on to say, After the silver (siyagh) has been handed over nothing further has to be done but test the worked pieces by the furnace (tibrat al-asghâl bi-‘l-ribâb) to make clear how much silver and copper they contain lest (? bâh) there should come about bad faith (ghihr) of the sort that happened before. No pieces of worked silver are sold in the markets without being tested (ma’bûrah) in the fire by the ribâb, stamped with the name of the Khalifâh and inscribed with the name of the silversmith. Before this they used to manage with the touchstone (miyâhe) i.e., testing the silver with a whetstone (masânî) of black stone, for the ribâb was not well known. Furthermore, at that time and both before and after it worked silver pieces were extremely few, and only the sultans’ governors (duwa) and lords of the Yemen, none else, used to enquire about them and ask for them. The tribes and commonfolk used to manage with iron, brass (nâhâs) or lead ornaments and glass beads (kharaq) this on account of the lack of money income (madkhal al-falas) coming into people’s hands. However, in this time of ours now, thanks to God and thanks to God again what is made into worked silver (asghâl al-asghâl) is more than the brass and iron of former days. This is under the gracious Ottoman Government (ta’dâr al-Dawlal al-Ahmiyya), may its sublimity/majesty endure, and a time will surely come when they will ask for gold.

The prophecy of Habshâsh has come true, for in San’â’ today it is gold that is in demand for women’s jewellery, not the old-fashioned silver jewellery which appeals so much to the foreigner. At a later date, the qâdi of the Mint being Husayn Jaghmân and the secretary (kâhî) Qâdi Aḥmad Suhâyli, ‘when befell the disorder (rabib) on the part of the Dhimmîs, the Shaykh of the Mint, and the adulteration of the coinage (darâra) the discussion of the case was referred (miyya ta’l-kharaj) to Sharif al-Maqám (the Imam) and the order came back to kill him and cut off his head. This was put into execution on Monday 3rd Jumâda I, 1280/19th November, 1863, at the Gate of Sayf al-Khalifâh at according to Islamic law of having deceived his wife, and she is not legally married. Consequently she is not his wife nor are the children legally his children, but those of a woman not his wife Qâfii;i calls karâm, illegal. Kâfîrâh would be in Trans for the damage they had caused. Ma’mûr—evidently those in charge of the silversmiths, but it is unclear whether they are Muslims or Jews, but probably the latter. Shu’ârâh (cf. Ross, op. cit. 145). Rânrâ for shaving the brow. Yemeni Jewish married women shave some of their hair to make themselves unattractive to outsiders. Sing. hakirah as in Lâ. 81 supra.

Râshkhâr. According to A. Sigel, Arabisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch der Stoffe, Berlin, 1930, 97, Schwedelerb, Treibherd, ‘ičhîn einem Fuddeberd der der...Schreibfeldment für das discourse des ‘amrîr al-khâliy’ in the fire, making the silver alloy (jûthâ/ah muqâghah) of ten sections 3, i. There the copper part of the metal is not however the man later discovers that the silver was adulterated with a larger amount of copper than what is laid down, he is then in the position of 79 Cf. note 62, supra.

80 Masâhir (sing. probably masâhir), probably the conditions laid down in Qanün San’â’, loc. cit.

81 Qâfii;i states that piyagh is the name for the silver alloy with a certain percentage of silver to copper, according to local custom (âdâs al-makham). With this mixture the silversmiths used legally to manufacture all silver jewellery. At one time for example they used to alloy eight parts of silver with two parts of copper, and this used to be called piyaght. There was however a time when they alloyed 3/3 parts of copper to 6/23 parts of silver. This throws light on Qanün San’â’, section 3, i. There the copper part of the metal is not mentioned, but Rabbi Qâfii;i’s note demonstrates that the document has in mind the jûthâ/ah composed of ten parts piyagh. These two parts, copper and silver add up to 10 jûthâ/ah.

82 Fiḍâhâ shughil bâl means the legal alloy for the silversmiths (piyaght).

83 As stated elsewhere, nâhâs in the Yemen usually means brass.

84 When a man marries his wife the payment of the dowry of silver articles, it would be assumed, contains the percentage of actual silver decreed by law in Qanün San’â’ and by custom. (Cf. The Portuguese off the south Arabian coast, ch. 167, p. 237). For Ibn Hajar’s discussion of the article on ma’ârîf 86 it is gold that is in demand for women’s jewellery, not the old-fashioned silver jewellery which appeals so much to the foreigner. At a later date, the qâdi of the Mint being Husayn Jaghmân and the secretary (kâhî) Qâdi Aḥmad Suhâyli, ‘when befell the disorder (rabib) on the part of the Dhimmîs, the Shaykh of the Mint, and the adulteration of the coinage (darâra) the discussion of the case was referred (miyya ta’l-kharaj) to Sharif al-Maqám (the Imam) and the order came back to kill him and cut off his head. This was put into execution on Monday 3rd Jumâda I, 1280/19th November, 1863, at the Gate of Sayf al-Khalifâh at according to Islamic law of having deceived his wife, and she is not legally married. Consequently she is not his wife nor are the children legally his children, but those of a woman not his wife Qâfii;i calls karâm, illegal. Kâfîrâh would be in Trans for the damage they had caused. Ma’mûr—evidently those in charge of the silversmiths, but it is unclear whether they are Muslims or Jews, but probably the latter. Shu’ârâh (cf. Ross, op. cit. 145). Rânrâ for shaving the brow. Yemeni Jewish married women shave some of their hair to make themselves unattractive to outsiders. Sing. hakirah as in Lâ. 81 supra.

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Şartap Yásir, and both the Muslims and Dhimmis were pleased by this, and it had a great effect. His two brothers remained in prison they being detained on the basis that they should undertake to deliver 1,600 qirsh by way of fine (adab) to (aš's yad) the Shaykh Muḥṣin b. 'Abd al-Rahīm. There came about their complaining of injustice and (the money) was reduced from them to 1,000 qirsh.\(^1\)

It is virtually certain that the Jewish silversmiths who drew up the agreement in the document that follows after this event and the condign punishment which ensued, severe as it may have been, were all too well aware of the consequences of fraud by individuals on the whole craft. This at least would be a logical explanation for their fear of loss in Muslim property if members of the craft work for less than standard rates—in that, working at a cut rate below the customary, they might resort to adulterating the alloy with more base metal than the law decreed.

**ii. A Jewish Silversmithery Agreement**

The document to follow (taken by A. Shviviel from a Hebrew source), like so many south Arabian Muslim documents, is an agreement following on a dispute—in this case between the Jewish silversmiths and the Shaykh 'al-mu'tashim b. 'Abd al-Rahīm in al-San'ā'. These at one time numbered no less than three hundred craftsmen but, says Brauer,\(^4\) they had dropped to only thirty by 1934. Both the form and language\(^5\) of the agreement, Hebrew phrases apart, and the actual craft organisation, are identical with parallel Muslim agreements. Its relationship to Qanûn San'ā' compiled, over forty years earlier, in 1819, is obvious, but the remuneration for silversmith work may be slightly higher than that of the Qanûn, section 3. The agreement was concluded during the unsettled times when the Shaykh Muḥṣin b. 'All Muʿīd had been made governor of San'ā', not by the Imām, but by the townsfolk themselves.

The purpose of the agreement is to stop individual Jewish silversmiths from undercutting the established prices paid for worked silver. A feature of the document is the clear intention to avoid any clash with the Muslim authorities, and the reason alleged for wishing to maintain the level of prices is to avoid harm to the Muslim community. An interesting item is that a wage is to be paid the Shaykh while in prison—perhaps when the Jewish community is to be squeezed, or more likely, on account of the misdeemeanour of an individual Jewish silversmith, to judge by the parallel situation in Qanûn San'ā', section 50, iv, where the Governor not only punishes the fraudulent retailer, but his Shaykh also.

Since the payment made to the Shaykh while in prison for a thirty day month (and Jews of course do not work on the Sabbath) would come to 3 2/3 qirsh only, it can hardly been intended to compensate him for his loss of earnings from his craft. This sum would be the same as the wage of a builder's labourer as laid down at the earlier period by Qanûn San'ā', section 36, i, etc.

The 'charges of the prison' are most likely the fees (rasāmah) paid to the soldier gaoler by Muslims and Jews alike.

**Document**

When all the silversmiths who gain their livelihood (al-ṣāyyāqīnīn al-mu'tashimīn)\(^6\) at Sīq 'Aqīl in the Preserved City (al-Madīnāt al-Maḥmīyiyyah) presented themselves at . . . \(^7\) and complained that some of the people (exercising) the craft (miraḥḥ) work at less than the customary price (bi-nāqīṣ 'ala 'l-muṭā'id), and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that. They (the silversmiths) fear insolvency\(^8\) in the property of the Muslims, and because of that they are afraid some will be arrested on account of others, although they (the plaintiffs) have no culpability in the matter.

They now press the shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb),\(^9\) at present Sulaymān b. Abūrahim 'Amir,\(^10\) to take a surety (dāmān)\(^11\) from the offenders (ghurāmā) who work for less, against any (possible) loss at their hands in the property of the Muslims etcetera.

The aforesaid mentioned shaykh took it upon himself to deal (al-qaḥīl)\(^12\) with the aforesaid matter, it being basic customary practice (al-muta'ayyish)\(^13\) that the shaykh in charge takes a surety (dāmān) for that which has been mentioned from anyone of whom this is feared.

Those present have undertaken to proceed according to a single price—two quarters (ru'ub 'ayy)\(^14\) of a qirsh to a quarter and a half of a qirsh, to an eighth. As for the man who makes a living (al-muṭā'ayyish)\(^15\) they allow him (to charge \(?) the quarter of a qirsh.\(^16\)\(^17\) They now press the shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^18\), but in the case of ornaments (zināh) or purses (maḥbūfāt)\(^19\) of fine workmanship (al-shughl al-aghītiyyah)\(^20\), the (wage) for the work will be paid by mutual consent in the matter of a wage in excess of the aforesaid-mentioned Statute (sūṣūd al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^21\)) and then in fractions and multiples thereof. (Qanûn San'ā', section 50, iv, where the title is dubious.)\(^22\)

The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^23\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^24\)\(^25\)\(^26\) and against whom there is evidence\(^27\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^28\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^29\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^30\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^31\)

Those who make appliqué (dharna) are prohibited from using the solder (liyām) called a fīm,\(^32\)\(^33\)\(^34\)\(^35\)\(^36\) and the shaykh will take active measure to prevent this, the responsibility (darah) lying with their headman (āqīl), Mūṣī al-Jarāshī.\(^37\) Anyone against whom there is evidence of this will be arrested (and taken to) the assayer (rāqib) to the soldier gaoler by Muslims and Jews alike.


There is evidence\(^38\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^39\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^40\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^41\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^42\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^43\)\(^44\)\(^45\)\(^46\) and against whom there is evidence\(^47\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^48\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^49\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^50\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^51\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^52\) and against whom there is evidence\(^53\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^54\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^55\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^56\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^57\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^58\) and against whom there is evidence\(^59\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^60\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^61\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^62\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^63\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^64\) and against whom there is evidence\(^65\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^66\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^67\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^68\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^69\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^70\) and against whom there is evidence\(^71\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^72\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^73\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^74\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^75\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^76\) and against whom there is evidence\(^77\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^78\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^79\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^80\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^81\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^82\) and against whom there is evidence\(^83\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^84\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^85\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.\(^86\) The shaykh in charge (al-shaykh al-muṣṭanāb)\(^87\) undertook thus to obligatory upon themselves (that) anyone executing work (shughl) without a stamp (ṯa/lis),\(^88\) and against whom there is evidence\(^89\) of that, will be fined two French rials (mafsūl)\(^90\) (al-shughl al-jāzi',\(^91\)) and that they (the plaintiffs) have no way out of that.
(mukhaqikh) because there is the regulation116 of the ancestors (R.I.P.) where it is feared that thereby forgeries (zayyifim)117 and resemblance to money may occur. Similarly the deduction (maqran) in the ounce (maqiyah) of silver where it still needs cleaning (taṣayb al-ḥamrā)118 is a qafalh.119

They have taken all of this upon themselves of their own free will and assent in accordance with the custom from the time of the ancestors.120

If a levy (faqah)121 should come down on them (and God forbid) each shall pay according to his capacity (bi-qadr-hi), craftsman and travelling worker (ṣaḥīḥ miḥrāb waa-darrah122) and when they want someone to make an estimate (yurâqi)123 between them they shall agree together upon one of them(selves), once they have taken it upon themselves to agree (yitwakhaq).124

If one of them is arrested in Süq 'Aqil,125 be he shaykh, 'Aqil or some other, and imprisoned (which God forbid), they will pay him the wage, an eighth of a qirsh per day, plus the charges126 (gharri) of the prison. If they do not obey this the shaykh will distribute127 the (cost of) the wage among them in turn.

The date is given according to the Hebrew calendar and comes about to the month of March in the year 1862.

iii. Silver Jewellery (see illustrations p. 541)

The list of mainly silver ornaments below has been compiled largely from Hebrew sources—these would no doubt be typical of Jewish manufacture over the Yemen. Nazîh al-Mu'ayyad128 confirms that the Jews in his day were manufacturing the forged coins and 'Himyarite' antiquities still on sale in San'â' today. The study of silver in western Arabia requires much more attention than can be lent to it here. Some beads of the pre-Islamic129 period, it may be remarked in passing, resemble Islamic130 period, it may be remarked in passing, resemble Islamic

The South Arabian dagger, the jambiyah (pl., jambûbi), is an article of dress of an Arab Bedawin of an unusually fine quality, and is one of the most highly prized possessions of the tribe. It is worn by men and women alike and is considered a symbol of power and prestige. The dagger is typically made of silver or gold, and is often decorated with precious stones. It is worn on the belt, and is held in the hand with the hilt facing outward, as a sign of readiness for battle.

iv. The Dagger (Ftahâ)

The South Arabian dagger, the jambiyah (pl., jambûbi), is an article of dress of an Arab Bedawin of an unusually fine quality, and is one of the most highly prized possessions of the tribe. It is worn by men and women alike and is considered a symbol of power and prestige. The dagger is typically made of silver or gold, and is often decorated with precious stones. It is worn on the belt, and is held in the hand with the hilt facing outward, as a sign of readiness for battle.
of his dagger, but it is the quality of the handle that makes the weapon costly. When the Imam Sahib al-Mawlibih had his mazzir arrested in 1121-1700, about two hundred and forty splendid and costly jahbarkhaw were found in his house in Ibb. There is a dagger worn by an ascetic scholar, a qaeet, in the days of al-Mahdi 'Abbâs which it was agreed was not worth a qirsh, but a price of one hundred qirsh, riyals, was paid for a fine dagger at this time. The wages for the silver mountings of the scabbard are laid down in Qanin San'â'.

The following names of the parts of a tribesman's dagger were taken down from a Royalist tribesman in the mountains in 1966. The handle (râs) of the dagger is made of the horns (qurum) of the maraf, an animal from Harashah—the word is not known to Arabic, but it might be a giraffe. The mabsam is the horizontal ornamented silver band covering the foot of the handle and top of the blade—at least once I have seen a mabsam with an Arabic inscription on it. The 'asib (pl. 'insâb) is the upper part of the scabbard. The delicate pea-green leather thongs of tanned sheep-goat skin wound round the scabbard are known as tirsah. —a mabsah is a plated ox-hide rope in general, a term not necessarily applied to a dagger. Jumal was the name given for a dagger scabbard without a crook at the end, the crook of a dagger of another type is called tuzah. Huruf are coins mounted on the dagger handle. Sayyids only were said to me in San'a' to wear the thâmah scabbard without the crooked part which my informant described as 'asifah but this does not seem to be a technical term. Behind the scabbard is a jayb al-hilyah wâ'l-qalam, leather pocket for the pen and the tûlah which last was described as the silver (mukhallat) part of the knife (sikkin) carried behind the dagger. The tîm is a wooden stick used to stir food, often worn behind the dagger also, milâq is pincers for taking coals of charcoal to put on a pipe-bowl, and are made of nakhf which in the north Yemen means brass. Little projections on the knife-handle for ornament are known as zaqrah which might be rendered as rosette, flower. Hûnayshi meaning little snake, is a silver chain sometimes attached to such objects. The yasarah is the dagger-belt, and it has often a hizr (amulet-case at the side), and a mahfaq or purse of silver (laqab) for money; beside it is a kohl-pot (mukkalâh) of silver. The belt has a buckle (hîlqah) with a tongue (ihsim).

The tribesman told me that the dawshân makes the scabbard of leather and wood—it is he who cuts these leather strips into thread (milbâs, pl., mahâbîs) to sew the dagger scabbard. There seems to be no special significance attached to inheriting a dagger—for example if a man leaves two male children they value the dagger and presumably one would take it at the valuation. The dagger with filigree silver mounts and heavily embroidered belt shown at the San'a' Exhibition in 1976 has a handle with silver pins hammered into it (rûs mazziri), huruf or coins, a mabsam, amulet-cases (hira or kika), a sulhah silver guard, a strap (huras), round metal ornaments (zakrah), a buckle (shânfi shânft). Another San'ani word for a buckle on a belt is jwâsh.

The dagger handle made of Sayfânî or zurâf Sayfânî which is mostly rhinoceros horn imported from Kenya, has certain properties—if a snake (banahk) bites you take the handle of the Sayfânî dagger, and dip it in milk (labon) and put it on the wound (gawb) and it cures it. The horn dagger handle can be cleaned with a plant called nuqâm in (Hujariyyah, 'irsim) which has violet flowers with a yellow centre and light green leaves with prickles in them. Dagger blades are re-polished by the saygal (pl. sayâqil) who removes the rust. Al-Ra'iz alludes to a Majsid al-Sayyâqi, possibly their mosque at a remoter time.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghashmi (later President and assassinated in 1978) told me that if you wish to give an 'a'qirah and have no animal to use for this sort of sacrifice you can resort to kass al-jîhâd. You break off the tûlah from the rest of the scabbard and hand it to the person to whom you are making the 'a'qirah. Muhammad al-Ubaydi in fact positively stated that kass al-jîhâd in a tribesman's eyes was stronger than slaughtering an 'a'qirah.

In Muslim law there are certain restrictions on the use of gold, silver and silk in men's apparel, but according to al-Murtadja these are permissible at a time of pitched battles (musaâfah). Silver and gold can be used to ornament bridles, girth-rings, and stirrups. Silver seal-rings (khâsam), a gold nail for a bezel-stone (misnrâl-fajj) are permitted. Other instruments to which silver may be applied (tâfassîr) are the ferrule of a knife (gabat al-shufrîh), the pen case (datwâ), the hilt and handle of a sword and its shoe (hadhu) and rings, bridle, collar (labab) and straps (shafa) of horses. Gold-wash (tamuîn) is permissible, but this should not be applied to the ceilings or walls of a room.

135 Nashr al-'urf, II, 421.
136 Ibid, II, 760.
137 Section 3, iv.
138 It has been suggested that rhinoceros horn is used.
139 A proverb runs, 'Aâd-ih bi-shawir idhnh-ih, it is used of a conceited person (mukhîr bi-infiy-dih).
All turbaned (mu'ammar) persons, like the tribes and some merchants, use this expression.
141 Cf. Ross, op. cit., 171, turshah, green coloured stone.
142 Cf. musîbah exactly like the milâq, used for taking thorns out of the foot, or for plucking hair (Tarjî al-sayyâr, 383).
143 As on the knife-handles shown in City of San'a', 76.
144 Ibid, 71, at top. The function of the sultah is not clear-perhaps originally a silver buckle?
145 Al-'Amrâli al-Yamânîyyah, I, 288, no. 578, calls it ibsim.
146 A plant of the Deadly Nightshade type.
147 Tarshîh, 221, 232.
Chapter 14
Analysis of the Šan‘ā’ Market Today

An attempt is made in the following pages to portray the structural characteristics of the Šan‘ā’ Market. It is based on researches carried out by the writer during the years 1971, 1972, and 1974,* but, inevitably, it leaves many gaps where the more complex aspects of the Market structure are concerned. As no previous studies are available this account is somewhat in the nature of a pioneer study. The Market as the centre of socio-economic interaction gives a good indication of the relationships which form an essential part of the cultural complexity of an urban society. Naturally one looks for the key that will open the door to the understanding and explanation of the economic whole. Economic measures must therefore take account of social attitudes, and the economic system cannot be assessed in isolation from the study of society. Starting from this point one arrives at the concept of alliance-groups as the key to be used in studying the Market. The alliance-group is conceived of as a body of relatives by blood, a professional group tied to the Market, a social class, and a city quarter. The central principle and complex aspects of the Market structure are concerned. As no previous studies are available this account is somewhat in the nature of a pioneer study. The Market as the centre of socio-cultural phenomena, but it at least lays out a pattern for further consideration.

The complexity of urban society necessitates that an individual working in the Market must belong to various groups of associates—e.g., a body of relatives by blood, a professional group tied to the Market, a social class, and a city quarter. The concept of the alliance-group enables us to comprehend the social involvement of the Market with the urban society of Šan‘ā’, and to portray with greater clarity their socio-economic interaction. To demonstrate how the structure of these groups works special attention will be given to the way in which goods circulate within the various groups of associates. No account, of course, however comprehensive, can claim to offer an exact description of any category of socio-cultural phenomena, but it at least lays out a pattern for further consideration.

It is the writer’s pleasant duty to express his thanks to his informants, merchants and artisans, for their ready and willing co-operation, once they had overcome their inherent and natural suspicion of interest taken by a foreigner in economic questions.

* The investigations carried out in 1971 and 1972 were made possible through the support of the Swiss National Funds. The visit in 1974 was subsidised by the support of the Swiss National Funds. The visit in 1974 was subsidised by the World Islamic Festival Trust. I should like to thank both institutions for their help and support.

The Location

The Šan‘ā’ Market is of the type of open markets—the streets of workshops and businesses form a centre that is associated with the peripheral markets, Süq Bāb al-Yaman, Süq al-Baqar and Süq al-Jimāl.

The centre of the market is situated in the south eastern part of Šan‘ā’. The southern limit of the centre of the market abuts on a line to be drawn between the important monuments illustrating the history of the town, al-Jami’ al-Kabir, the site of Ghamdān, the ruins of the Christian church and the castle. Through the interior of the market there run two lines of streets—one along the south-north axis from Bāb al-Yaman to Bāb al-Sha‘ūb, the second along the east-west axis from Bāb al-Qaṣr, via Süq al-baqar, to Bāb al-Šābāb.

With regard to the peripheral markets—Süq Bāb al-Yaman lies south of the market centre and is connected with it through the Süq al-Naṣṣār; Süq al-Zumur (Süq al-Jimāl), situated in the north, is linked to the centre of the market by the Süq al-Madār and Süq ‘Aql; Süq al-Baqar is situated west of the market centre and can be reached from it by Süq Taḥlah. The Firewood Market lies outside the walls.

From this description the suburban markets such as Süq Bāb al-Šābāb are excluded, as also the business streets with new shops that have been opened outside the old market area.

According to information yielded by the map, Šan‘ā’ 4 (Health Organization, Yemen Arab Republic, 1:5000), the ground on which the market centre is situated ascends slightly along the south-north axis from 2252 to 2260m. The incline diminishes very little northwards (2259m) and eastwards (2258m). The western part of the market centre where the joiners, shoemakers and smiths have their workshops, shows a slight rise (2260-2261m) compared with the eastern part.

The following mosques are situated around the market centre—al-Jami’ al-Kabir, al-Madhhab, al-Shahidayn and ‘Aql. Within the market centre is situated ‘Ali. According to information from Masjīd Šan‘ā’, there was in the present Süq al-‘Ala‘ an earlier mosque of which nothing remains today. The Masjīd al-Najār mentioned in the same work is likewise unknown.

Within the area of the peripheral markets are situated the following mosques—in Süq Bāb al-Yaman, al-Ruṣwān, in Süq al-Baqar, Masjīd Maḥmūd and in Süq al-Zumur (Süq al-Jimāl), al-Zumur.

1 Cf. E. Wirth, 224.
3 See Map no. 6, in C. Rathjens & H. von Wissmann.
The Spatial Organization of the Market

Before going into the question of the organization of the market centre the names of the individual markets existing today may be mentioned. First the names of markets may be noted; such as Süq al-Mukhaṣṣ for Süq al-Fīḏẖah (No. 6). Furthermore some new names are used alongside the old, for example Süq al-Humaydi (No. 47) is calle Süq al-Jadid or Süq al-Thawrah; Süq al-Jadid (No. 19) is also calle Süq al-Thawrah; Süq Bāb al-Yaman (No. 60) is calle Süq al-Hurriyyah. For Süq al-Jamāl (No. 30) the name Süq al-Zumur is used, as, in the place of the old camel market, trade is carried on in a new range of wares (assorted goods, western products of a technical nature, e.g. water piping, etc.). These examples indicate that the new names of the present day reflect both political change and economic transformation.

Features characterizing the market centre are a well-defined separation from the residential quarters; the prohibition from entering the market area at night except where the joiners, shoemakers and smiths have their workshops, which is controlled by a guard; organization in production and trade zones; differentiation between markets with a specific supply of capital goods and those offering consumer goods; fixed sites for specific agricultural products (qat, grapes, etc.); the presence of customs-houses, of a safe depository and numerous warehouses.

Production Zones

The boundary between production and trading zones is not very clearly distinguished. Only those handicrafts involving noise and smell, such as joinery, smithery, including tinsmiths, and the shoemakers' shops, are separate from the trading zone. With regard to location a production zone in the western sector (I) of the market centre can be distinguished from one in the eastern sector (II).

I Classified in accordance with the type of raw materials to be processed the following handicrafts come within the production zone:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Craft/Career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Naḥās</td>
<td>Coppersmiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Haddādin</td>
<td>Blacksmiths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Mawāṣiqid</td>
<td>Tinsmiths (mawāṣiqid is a tinned copper charcoal brazier)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Janābī</td>
<td>Daggersmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Aswāb</td>
<td>Makers of leather covers for dagger-sheaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Minqaḥla</td>
<td>Cobblers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Māḥāzin</td>
<td>Belt-makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq Ĥārat al-Mādar</td>
<td>Saddlers (Originals the Pottery Market)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Najārīn</td>
<td>Joiners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Mīkhrājah</td>
<td>Turners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Qaṣīb</td>
<td>Makers of pipes for water-pipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Jīlā/Jālā</td>
<td>Tailors, also some cloth merchants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Kawāfī</td>
<td>Cap-makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Salāb</td>
<td>Ropemakers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II In this production zone are concentrated the craftsmen specializing in the manufacture of veils and silver ornaments. It includes Süq al-Fīḏẖah (No. 6), the silversmiths, and Süq al-Miyāḥi (No. 5), and the plangi-dyers.

To the list above certain additions must be made. Tailors' workshops are found today in the following markets—Süq al-Fīḏẖah, Süq al-Humaydi and Süq al-Brāz; not all tailors working in the town are included, as much cottage industry is carried on.

Three goldsmiths' workshops lie outside the Süq al-Fīḏẖah, two in a street in Ħarāt Mūsā, and one in a square in front of Masjid al-Madīḥah, which is also called Süq al-Khubz (No. 3).

Among the service occupations must be mentioned cuppers or blood-letters (khajūm), in Süq al-Mīkhrājah, barbers in the following markets: Süq al-Qāṣ, Süq al-Fīḏẖah, Süq al-Miḥāḥ and Süq al-Naḥās. Eating-houses are concentrated in Süq al-'Aṣy—I also Süq al-Lūṣmah (No. 11); some are also scattered about Süq al-Naḥās (No. 46) and Süq al-Naḥās (No. 45). In Süq al-Khubz, mentioned above, bread and boiled potatoes are on sale.

Tanneries are situated mainly in Ħarāt Tawâshīl, while butchers, brickmakers and lime-burners have their workshops outside the walls.

Trading Zones

The trading zone proves to be more differentiated in consequence of the more varied supply of goods. To make the survey clearer the markets are grouped in accordance with the types of commodity.

1 Provisions and specialties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Habb</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Ḥīlah</td>
<td>Spices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa-l-Mīlīḥ</td>
<td>Raisins, various provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Zabīb</td>
<td>Oils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Saḥm</td>
<td>Coffee, coffee bowls, sugar and other provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Qishr</td>
<td>Grapes, fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq Ḥaqil</td>
<td>Grapes, fruit, provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Qāṣ</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Assorted goods (Provisions, specialties, tinned goods, other imported goods, e.g. lighters, soap, combs etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Naḥās</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Hinnā</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Mīlīḥ</td>
<td>Coffee, coffee bowls, sugar and other provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Jadīd</td>
<td>Grapes, fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Humaydi</td>
<td>Grapes, fruit, provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Jabbānah</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq Tālḥah</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Cloth and clothing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Bazz</td>
<td>with the following sub-markets:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Abyåd</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Ṣayārīfah</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Maṣāwín</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Jīlā/Jālā</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Fīlīh</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq Dār al-Jāmī</td>
<td>wool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Household and other goods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Halaqah</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Mīyāḥi</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Barūt/Bārūd</td>
<td>Qat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq al-Qusāṣ</td>
<td>Plaster market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Süq Dār al-Jamī</td>
<td>Import business (Western products of a technical nature)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between Süq al-Qishr and Süq Ḥaqil is situated Süq al-Mīsbaṭah/Süq al-Qamālah (No. 17). In this market private individuals display articles of their own property for sale; commission agents also auction their goods there.

Agricultural products are sold in the following markets: Süq al-Ināb, Süq al-Zabīb, Süq al-Hinnā, Süq Ḥaqil, Süq al-Qāṣ, and Süq al-Ṣanā (No. 135), the Fodder Market. On the north side of al-Jamī al-Kabīr a sheep market is held annually before al-Īd
al-Kahir. It is also known as Sūq Mawsim al-Īḍā. Sheep are sold there by individual vendors.

The peripheral markets are distinguished from the market centre by the following important features: their location in the side-streets leading to the market centre; their having no distinct separation from the residential quarters and no guard; the existence of peripatetic traders alongside fixed premises; the provision of supplementary supply of goods, except in the case of the Cattle and Fodder Markets.

Sūq Bāb al-Yaman:
In this side-street leading to the market centre, the oil presses (ma‘ṣarāt/mu‘āṣir) are found, as they are supplied by the farmers with the raw material (khardal) for extracting vegetable oil (ṣafīj). As well as the farmers who offer their produce for sale, there is also a large number of peripatetic traders in different country products, as well as vendors of pottery from the Tihāmah, butchers and peripatetic shoemakers. In the fixed shops assorted goods and country products are sold; nearby also is a business specialising in charcoal, petroleum and a radio-business opened also a large number of peripatetic traders in different country goods and imported technical goods are offered for sale. Only the goods and country products are sold; nearby also are businesses of emigrants from Adrar. The day to day activity of the market is today bears the name of Süq al-Zumur; in it mainly assorted street singers (nashshād) and occasionally by a woman fortune-teller (muja‘awila, pl., -āt) who foretells the future by means of sea-shells.

Sūq al-Baqar:
The Donkey Market (Sūq al-Bahā‘īm) is part of the Cattle Market proper. Both markets are always held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. At present only the Donkey Market is held in its traditional place, while the Cattle Market has been removed outside the town to the vicinity of Bāb al-Sha‘ūb.

Sūq al-Jumál:
The former camel market—also called Ḥawshat al-Rubū‘ī—today bears the name of Sūq al-Zumur; in it mainly assorted goods and imported technical goods are offered for sale. Only the stalls of some firewood merchants' stores recall the former market for country products. In earlier times the Camel Market was usually held on a Wednesday.

Within the market centre are sited certain institutions of great economic significance, the custom posts, of which two are working at present—Jumruk al-Qishr and Jumruk al-Zabīb. The former was previously called Samsarat al-Shāmī, but it was also known as Samsarat al-Qishr wa-l-Bun. Following oral traditions it was converted by order of Imam al-Qāsim into a customs office and equipped with scales and since then it has been known as al-Mīzan. Formerly it was used as a store for qishr and safīj (oil), but today qishr only is stored there. Since the establishment of the Republic all imported goods are weighed outside the market, near Bāb al-Sirān. Only Jumruk al-Zabīb, where raisins and grapes imported to Sā‘īr were subjected to customs clearance, has completely retained its function and it also serves as the office of the Shaykh al-Layl who is responsible for the security of the market at night.

Near the customs offices the place where the warehouses (wilāyāt) of money were made Samsarat Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn, a magnificent building (cf. p.278a), constituted an important market institution.6 As it was plundered by the soldiers of Imam Aḥmad in 1948,7 the merchants use the bank situated outside the market area. The warehouses (samsirāt, pl., samāsir) are also to be reckoned as institutions of economic importance. A distinction is made between a) warehouses, b) warehouses in which accommodation is provided and c) warehouses in which accommodation is provided for man and beast (samsirāt li‘l-dawāb). In all 1 was able to count 27 warehouses, of which two bore the term makhzan, one was used for storing safīj (oil), the second as a granary. The latter was a gift by Bayt al-Bilālī, a respected family of the town. Of the above-mentioned total, 16 lie within the market centre the others are to be found in the side-streets leading to the market. Cf. Appendix 1, p.275

A description of the most important institutions of the market would be incomplete, if the water supply, so important for the daily life of the market were omitted. Altogether 18 wells, gifts of different persons, ensure the water supply. Appendix 2 gives an inventory of the wells. Worth mentioning is the existence of a house for providing drinking water in the Sūq al-Misbahāt, called by the ordinary name of such buildings Bayt al-Sharbah, which especially provides the Sūq al-Qāt with the water that one has to drink when chewing qāt. The owner has the water brought from his well outside the market in a two-wheeled cart (qārī) specially constructed for the transport of water and he decants it into small jugs, the contents of which he sells.

### Property Relationships in the Market

To make an appreciation of the economic basis of the people operating in the market, in both the productive and in the commercial sectors, a glance at the law of property is necessary. The results presented below, are based on an investigation carried out in the year 1974, in the course of which I questioned 238 people operating in the market. In this study I shall refer to other results of this inquiry. The immediate purpose is to examine, as far as one can, the particular variants of property law that apply to work-places and shops. The results of my enquiry are collated in the following table.

#### Table: Property Relationships in the Market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Artisans (N=157)</th>
<th>Merchants (N=81)</th>
<th>Total (N=238)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lease</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waqf</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**N** = number of those questioned

The percentage with ownership, at 23.93% among craftsmen, is higher than 16.05% among merchants.

As I understand matters two factors suggest an explanation for this discrepancy: 1) The workshops have been in possession of the family of several generations; 2) The economic importance of handicrafts before competition with the increased import of factory-produced goods allowed workshops to be kept in family possession.

Common to both groups is roughly the same percentage of leased property and the surprisingly high percentage of waqfih property. With regard to the latter type of lease both groups differ as to the percentage of the two existing types of waqf—waqf al-arjād and waqf kāmil. In the case of waqf al-arjād only the site of the workplace or shop concerned is waqfih, whereas the premises erected thereon come under private ownership. Even a wall on the site is not part of the waqf. In the table this property relationship is designed as partial waqf. Waqf kāmil includes the site as well as the premises erected thereon—hence we have called it total waqf. The percentage of waqf in the case of merchants at 64.19% is slightly higher than the 58.59% for craftsmen.

Considerable differences can be discerned in the proportion of waqf al-arjād to waqf kāmil. In the case of craftsmen waqf kāmil exceeds arjād by 6.37% whereas in the cases of merchants the percentage rises to 17.28% in favour of waqf kāmil, i.e. the latter
Asa mustawfi al-awqaf bi-San'a

the economically favoured position of the merchants. In the statements received in explanation of this situation, reference was made in the majority of cases to the fact that many merchants belong to the socially privileged class of the Sadah and therefore access to the waqf kāmil is easier for them. As this information could not be verified, it will have to be treated with caution.

It is always valuable to check results obtained from informants against data provided by other sources, and my results can be checked by reference to the Awqaf Ministry. In the compilation, Asāṣ mutansūf al-awqaf bi-Ṣanʿā', (1390/1970-71) of this authority, the number of awqaf in the market is given as 1,025 bringing in receipts of 4,751 riyāds per month (an average of 4.6 riyāds per waqf). Unfortunately no distinction is made in the lists between waqaf ar-ṣarāḥ and waqf kāmil. If on this number of awqaf of 1,025 there is based the number of active craftsmen and merchants in the market of 1,741—the number produced by my calculations in my 1971 enquiries—the percentage of awqaf amounts to 58.87%. The figure of 60.50% (waqf ar-ṣarāḥ 25.21%, waqf kāmil 35.29%) obtained by my random tests confirm the relative accuracy of my results.

The waqif holder pays a monthly sum to the Ministry of Awqaf, the amount of which is determined, on the one hand by my 1971 enquiries—the percentage of awqaf and on the other hand by the estimated income. This sum can be paid off through service in the mosque—by reciting the Qur'ān (qirā'ah). In the market there are also other waqfs—mostly wells/fountains (sabil) and stores (makhzan) donated as sadaqah or maş'inah for public use.

It is evident then that the institution of waqaf seems to play a necessary economic part in the market life but the question why remains unanswered. Any answer presupposes a knowledge of the development of waqaf in the market area and requires some indication of the conditions that led to this high percentage of waqaf. Here we are faced with a problem, namely, the lack or in accessibility of sources. In this context a source proved to be useful only insofar as it provided the basis for an inference. This latter we find in al-Rāzi who, in the Ms. of his work Tarikh madinat Ṣanʿā' (Ambrosiana Ms.) recorded the names of a number of people who specifically donated businesses as sadaqah, presumably the sites intended are in the market area.8 It is significant that these persons are people of high social standing who must certainly have exercised political influence, such as Ibn Misâd (sic) al-Ḫajari or Maš'ūṣ b. Ahmad b. Tāhir.9 We have, of course, no effective answer to the question as to what motive induced these personalities to donate as waqaf plots of land in the market area. We are therefore thrown onto more conjecture. I interpret the indications we have as pointing to the use of the waqaf as an economic and political instrument to stimulate the development of the market. In order to render the activity attractive to the groups essential to the market, such as craftsmen and merchants, first of all such property relationships had to be created in the market area as made its use economically acceptable. If one realizes that, in the widespread economic system of rentier capitalism in the Near East, as first described by H. Bobek,9 such high deductions had to be paid from the yield that those liable to payment frequently hardly gained a bare subsistence, it will be understood that measures had to be taken to reduce the private share in land. In this sense these donations constitute the transference of the private share in land ownership to the public. Only through such a solution was one of the most important conditions created for the activity of craftsmen and merchants without landed property in the market area. This explanation may perhaps enable one to understand the motives underlying the establishment of awqaf in the market area. But it still remains hypothetical. Only one thing is certain—the institution of the pious donation played a decisive part in the development of the market.

The Development of the Market

The records of the Market of Ṣanʿā as sources at our disposal prove frequently to be inaccurate and incomplete. This obviously is the cause of the hypothetical character of any statement based on such data. In order to arrive at a fairly valid assessment I start from the axiom that the passages concerned reproduce an order that, consciously or unconsciously, relates to the reality observed. If, for example, al-Rāzi puts the sheep-and-goat market along with the butchers and cuppers or blood-letters, then I assume this passage reproduces a grouping observed by him.

The Market in the 5th/11th Century

The earliest Arabic source containing references to the market is the Tarikh madinat Ṣanʿā' of al-Rāzi. Of this work the manuscript (Ambr. MS.G.15) in the Ambrosiana Library and printed edition were used. The spatial arrangement of the market, which can be reconstructed from the data abovementioned, is evident from Table 1. It shows a simpler organization in accordance with the type of production of commodities and goods offered for sale that will be observed in later phases of its development.

The following features appear worthy of note:-

Craft Groupings

Joiners, smiths, lance-makers, makers of dagger-sheath covers and druggists. Cuppers, blood-letters, butchers and the sheep-and-goat market form one unit. Silversmiths and manufacturers of dagger blade are adjacent to one another. Shoemakers are separate from the other crafts.

Banana sellers have their shops in the Silversmiths' Market. This is evidence that organization by occupation is not always consistently followed.

The Straw Market, Sūq al-Tiḫn(?) and the unidentified Sūq al-Lasāsīn constitute a market formation that seems to lie outside the markets already mentioned. The same applies to the Sūq al-Ṭrāqī which was probably an import market.

The Cloth Market is separate from the craftsmen's markets, provision markets and the sheep-and-goat market. Al-Rāzi does not mention the markets of our own day: tailors, turnsmiths, water-pipe manufacturers, tailors, cap-makers and ropemakers, nor yet the Qāṭ Market, Grain Market, Grape Market, Cattle, Donkey, and Camel Market.

Instructive references are made by al-Rāzi about the change of sites of some occupations, effected in his time: a) the Oil Market located at the earlier Meat Market, where also the cuppers and blood-letters pursued their professions.13) b) on the same site, i.e. the earlier Butchers'-Cuppers'-Bloodletters' Market were located the druggists' shops.12 It is implied that certain occupational groups had close relationships with mosques when for example, a Masjīd al-Baqqālīn13 is called the Provision Merchants' Mosque and a Masjīd al-Ṣaṣ-ṣaṣīl the Dagger-blade Polishes' Mosque.14 At the time of al-Rāzi the latter was situated in the Firewood Market. With regard to the Masjīd Sūq al-Lasāsīn al-Rāzi notes that the 'Abbāsīd governor in Ṣanʿā', Muhammad b. Khalīl al-Barmākī, had built a mint (Dār al-Dār or Dār al-Barmākī) in the

8 Al-Rāzi, a, fol., 109b-110 b, 112 b, 117 b.


10 H. Bobek, 283.

11 Al-Rāzi, b, 27.


Table 1 The grouping of occupations in the Market according to al-Râzï

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Market Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joiners</td>
<td>Süq al-Najärîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiths</td>
<td>Süq al-Haddûrin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lance shops</td>
<td>Hâniût al-Jârub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belt makers</td>
<td>Süq al-Kharzârin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Druggists</td>
<td>Süq al-Âtîjarîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuppers and blood-letters</td>
<td>Süq al-Sawaghî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blade polishers</td>
<td>Süq al-Sayâqîî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinsmiths</td>
<td>Süq al-Ma'rasî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun-barrel manufacturers</td>
<td>Süq al-Shawwâyîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key-makers</td>
<td>Süq al-Baqîqîî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saddlers</td>
<td>Süq al-Summârîn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sword makers</td>
<td>Süq al-Mârsî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana market</td>
<td>Süq ibn Mârî</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Market in the Eighteenth Century

For this period the Qânûn Şan‘â‘ constitutes the most important primary source. The market structure, as revealed by the Qânûn, approximates closely to the present pattern in its basic characteristics. Compared with the market at the time of al-Râzï the organization of the occupational groups appears more diverse and more rigid (Table II). Three producer groups are clearly perceptible—metal workers, wood and textile processing, bakers and millers. The silversmiths are treated next to the cloth market. The commodity markets can be classified into four distinct groups of goods—provisions, speciality markets, cloth markets, livestock markets including a firewood and fodder market, and the import market comprising the shops of druggists, silk merchants and dealers in household furnishings. For a knowledge of the social structure of the market it is an important fact that in the Qânûn the institution of the Shaykh al-Süq is mentioned for the first time, which will be dealt with more closely later. The same applies to the Bâniyâns, for whom see pp. 432-5.17

Craftsmanship in the markets shows a greater degree of specialisation evident in the trades not mentioned by al-Râzï which have emerged since his time—coppersmiths, farriers, tinsmiths, gun-barrel manufacturers, key-makers, saddlers, tailors, ropemakers, makers of water-pipes, plangi-dyers, bakers with farrânîn and millers. Instead of lance manufacture which is no longer mentioned, we find a new occupation, gun-stock makers. This new craft reflects the change in armaments of the Yemenis since the Ottoman occupation, for the Mamlûks made the inhabitants of Yemen acquainted with firearms. In the Qânûn we do not find al-Lâsâsin or the designation Hadhdhâîn. The shoemakers are included with the tinsmiths in Süq al-Minqâlah wa-l-Iskâfîyyah.

In contrast to al-Râzï the veterinary surgeons are mentioned as a new profession. The trade in provisions, fruit and such specialities as stimulants and fine wares shows itself very much subdivided. There is a grain market, raisin market, tobacco market, a salt market (Süq al-Milîbî) and, for the first time, şīt and the henna markets appear, yet there is no banana market.

In the cloth trade the more varied supply of goods is evidenced by the fact that, alongside the cloth market (Süq al-Bazz) already mentioned by al-Râzï, the following textile markets are distin-

16 Kâfir Şan‘î, 274, no. 1, ii.

The Market in non-Arabian Sources

In the earliest European description written by the Bolognese, Lodovico di Varthema, who visited Şan‘â‘ in the early 16th century, we find no information about the market. The Englishman, John Jourdain, who stayed in Şan‘â‘ about 100 years later—in June 1609—refers to the market in his report:

The trade of this cittie is cheiflie with the Benaines of Guzaratt, which bringeth yearly all kinde of comodities, as bastues, shasses, cotton wool, with other stuffs of their countrye, and lye here as factours for the Banians of Aden, Moucha, Zida, to whom they yeild there accompts; for in each of those places before mentioned there is one cheife Banaane as Consull or such like, which doth all the businesys in each place. With the Banians marchannts I had some conference concerninge their trade and our countrye comodities, whoe told me that this cittie would vent yeare aboute 2000 bahars of yron and greate store of tynne, and lead alsoe would sell at a good rate, broad cloth about 100 peeces of violett or stamell and Venice reds, with some steele; this cittie yealdinge little comodities for marchandize, onlie some fua alias Bua, which the Banans doe use to carrie much to the Indies to dye red withall, and make great proporty therof.19

Two facts deserve our attention: first, the part played by the Bâniyâns20 in the commercial sector, and second, the small yield from trade. Now there is not a single representative of this Indian merchant caste in Şan‘â‘.

The report by Carstein Niebuhr, who stayed in Şan‘î from 16th to 26th July 1763, constitutes an additional source. His description does not prove very detailed, as he was under severe

19 Winter Jones; see farther L. Forrer, 20.
20 Cf. section on Bâniyâns, pp. 432-5.
mental strain on account of the tragic fate that had pursued the members of the Danish expedition. In this, local circumstances also played a part, by which he felt handicapped during his stay. "I wish I had been able to make an exact ground-plan of this city. But when I went into the street, I was immediately surrounded by a crowd of inquisitive people and accompanied by them everywhere, and under these circumstances I did not consider it advisable to look at the compass very often and to note the lines and angles... Most of the streets on the ground-plan have, as may be supposed, been indicated at discretion." From this reference, critical as to source, it becomes clear that we cannot use his plan of the town for evaluation. There remains only the short rendering of his observations.

Moreover, we find in Sana, as in all large eastern commercial towns, big caravanserais (Simsera, Oqal) for merchants and travellers, likewise special sites and quarters of the town, where wood, charcoal, iron, grapes, corn, butter, salt or bread are sold. In the bread market there are only women sitting. We can also find in Sana a market where old clothes can be exchanged for new. There are also those who deal in Indian, Persian, Turkish, and other goods; also those who sell all kinds of spices and medicaments, who sell kaad leaves, all kinds of dried and fresh fruit such as pears, apricots, peaches, figs etc.; carpenters, smiths, shoemakers, saddlers, tailors, cap-makers, trestomasons, goldsmiths, barbers, cooks, book-binders, even writers who for a few stivers compose a petition to the Imam or to some other notability, who also teach to the children and copy books, and in the daytime sit in their small booths in a certain quarter of the town.

Two facts stand out from this description. The series of craftsmen mentioned—joiners, smiths, shoemakers, saddlers corresponds to the order previously established. The order of the remaining craftsmen remains unclear.

The sources quoted so far belong to the 17th and 18th centuries and have hardly added to our picture in any extent worthy of mention, apart from some information obtained from Arabic sources. For the situation in the 19th century the description of the market by R. Manzoni proves informative, especially as for the time being we have no Arabic sources at our disposal for this period.

Es-suq, or the market, is in the centre of the town. It consists of intersecting streets. The Arabs are divided into as many corporations as there are Arabs who practice them (at the head of each stands a Sheikh); hence there are to be found in the same streets workers in the same occupations and dealers in the same goods. Cabinet makers, mechanics, manufacturers of shovels and knives, traders in pipes, candlesticks and metal cooking utensils, druggists (traders in coffee, incense, perfumes and drugs), coal merchants, cloth merchants, ropemakers, pipe cleaners etc., always have their shops and businesses next to one another in the same streets. On the main square there is situated the corn market; on another, by Bab al-Yemen, the market for stoves of burnt clay, near it the fruit and vegetable market (on the Makhaszem er-Rebali Square). Near the Et-Tauasci (al-Tawashi) Square there is situated the bread market and the one for green fodder. The only slaughter-house of Sana-el-Medine is situated immediately on the right side of the entrance to Bab al-Yemen.

It is difficult to derive a satisfactory picture of the exact location of the crafts mentioned by R. Manzoni since he first refers to the organization by occupation, but he then goes on to the craftsmen and merchants whose workplaces and shops were generally in un altro, verso Bab el-Yemen, il mercato delle stoviglie di terra cotta; vicino a questo il mercato delle frutta ed erbaggi (nell’atollo del Makhaszem er-Rebali). Verso piazza El-Tauasci (al-Tawashi) Square there is situated the bread market and the one for green fodder. The only slaughter-house of Sana-el-Medine is situated immediately on the right side of the entrance to Bab al-Yemen.
situated in the same street. Hence this part of the description should perhaps not be taken into account because of its vagueness. On the other hand, the following information is important: 1) the existence of a market in which pottery ovens were sold and of a fruit and vegetable market in the Bab al-Yaman, except that the latter is now adapted to present-day conditions. 2) the location of the Bread Market and fodder Market at al-Tawashi Square. 3) the location of the abattoir east of Bab al-Yaman.

Manzioni’s town plan of 1879 contains several mistakes in the location of the mosques and hence must be treated with caution, and be regarded as a source based on the older Turkish town plan made during the governorship of Muṣṭaẓ-ʿAlī Pāšā 1291/1874. From it we derive important information: 1) The connecting road between the Bab al-Yaman and the Market is marked as Tārīq al-Sūq. Nowadays this quarter forms part of Sūq Bab al-Yaman. 2) The present Sūq al-Naqārah is entered as Sūq al-Miṣr; its southern boundary corresponds to the present line of demarcation between Sūq Naṣrah and Sūq Bab al-Yaman. This circumstance suggests that this part of the market in Sūq al-Naqārah must have been so named only after 1874. 3) The Grape Market, Sūq al-Ināb, is situated north of Sūq al-Miṣr. 4) The market area entered on the town plan corresponds approximately to the present market centre.

Both sources, R. Manzioni’s description and the Turkish town plan, accordingly prove relevant to the discovery of changes in the market’s structure. Belonging to the preceding century, they provide an important prerequisite for the evaluation of oral information which perhaps does not link up chronologically but goes back to the end of the 13th/19th century.

The Market in Ottoman and pre-Republic Times

According to Oral Tradition

The earlier history of Sūq al-Ḥalaqah and legends associated with it are discussed on p. 159a seq.

According to my authorities Sūq al-Ḥalaqah is said to have been called Sūq al-Ḥaraj in earlier times because goods were auctioned there. On this area there are said to have been no shops. The traders sat before their booths, tent-like constructions, surrounded by low stone walls, or they offered their wares in the open air. This information corresponds to al-Qādī ʿAbd al-Samīʿ’s observation that traders in the market sat on chairs before their booths because there were no shops.

We shall now summarize the recollections of my informants about the market in general:

The Qat Market was situated in the same place as it is today. On the area of the present Sūq Bab al-Yaman there were no shops, only peripatetic traders (mujarrakihin), who offered chiefly vegetables for sale. Hence this part was called Sūq al-Khāraḥ, the Vegetable Market.

By al-Qāṭṭāl well oil lamps (misraḥāj, pl., masārij) were sold. The present fodder Market (Sūq al-ʿAla) placed to be called Sūq al-Qamarīyyah because alabaster windows were sold there. Between the present Sūq al-Janābī and Sūq al-Bazz lay the Sūq al-Balās, where prickly pears and oranges were on sale.

In Sūq al-Ḥumaydī and Sūq al-Ḥajdī was a big warehouse (samsarat) which was also called al-Khānī. In the part still preserved wholesalers have today established themselves.

Opposite Sūq al-Ḥumaydī lay Samsarat al-Bārūt, a powder magazine that was destroyed by an explosion during the Turkish Occupation. On the site of Sūq al-Ḥajdī (No. 19) there stood a warehouse, Samsarat al-Khārūmānī.

Jumruq al-Qishr used to be called Samsarat al-Shāmīnī, where oil and qışr were kept. Coffee beans and especially qışr were

Summary

The present market organization is the result of various structural and spatial changes. These changes are to be seen in close association with the emergence of new needs, e.g. qūṭ consumption, the use of firearms, with the expansion of the import trade and the extension of business relations with the rural interior. The growth of these relations can be explained by the continuing reduction of urban areas suitable to cultivation in consequence of increased building. This tendency is causing a progressive dependence of the urban population on the inflow of agricultural produce from the country. The extent of this becomes clear when it is realized that in 1973 the share of country products in the gross annual expenditure amounted to 36.35% of all expenditure, which corresponds to a percentage of 66.98% of the total quota of foodstuffs. The ratio of the foodstuffs in the total expenditure comes to 54.27%.

Worthy of comment, moreover, is the large percentage of araqāf, which underlines the economic significance of this institution. The waqf institution has probably exercised a permanent influence on the rise of the Ṣan‘ā’ market as we may deduce by examination of the data provided by al-Rāzī.

Taking al-Rāzī’s work as a starting point, from which the development of the market can be sketched, we can establish three phases of changes relevant to its organization: 1) the phase that Qānin Ṣan‘ā’ reflects in the 12th-13th/18th-19th century, 2) the 13th/late 19th century phase, 3) the phase after the proclamation of the Republic.

1 The market organization in Qānin Ṣan‘ā’ is characterized essentially by the following feature compared with the situation that al-Rāzī portrays in the 11th century, namely increased differentiation of the commodity markets. What is striking is the relatively large percentage of the supply of rural products, which is reflected in the corresponding number of markets. The various branches of handicraft production have become more differentiated because of increased specialization and are relocated. The spatial organization, particularly the division into two production zones, could roughly correspond to that of the present day.

2 The market in the 19th century is distinguished primarily by the extension of the southern peripheral market, Sūq Bab al-Yaman, where certain agricultural products, mostly fruit and vegetables, were exposed for sale and in fact are still sold there today. As contrasted with the present situation individual specialised markets formerly in the market centre, e.g. the Grape Market and the Bread Market, are today located on other sites.

3 With regard to the present organization of the Market certain essential characteristics are to be remarked. These include the transfer of individual markets within the market centre, e.g. the Grape Market and the Bread Market; the vacating of markets in which indigenous products such as oil lamps and alabaster windows were sold, due to the town's being supplied with electricity and the importation of petroleum and other goods such as glass windows; the establishment of new markets in which imported manufactured goods are sold (in connection with which much must be mentioned the change-over of technical equipment of some craftsmen, especially joiners, due to the adoption of machinery); structural transformation of the Camel Market into a place for dealing in industrial imported manufactures of a technical nature and assorted goods; the absence of a Horse and Mule Market in consequence of the mechanization of the means
Map of the Süq

- Watchman's cabin
  - Samsarah
- Süq Border
- Jumruk al-Qishr
- Jumruk al-Zabib
- Oil Press
- Garden

Mosques
1 Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr
2 Masjid al-Rudwān
3 Masjid al-Madhhab
4 Masjid 'Ali
5 Masjid Mahmūd
6 Masjid al-Shahidayn
7 Masjid 'Aqil
8 Masjid al-Zumur

Süqs
1 Earlier Süq al-Nasārā
2 Süq al-Mīlīh
3 Süq al-Khubz
4 Süq al-Qat
5 Süq al-Misbaγahah
6 Süq al-Fiddah
7 Süq 'Aqil
8 Süq al-Sāmān
9 Süq al-'Aysh
10 Süq al-Sāmān
11 Süq al-Barūt
12 Süq al-Habb
13 Süq al-Ḥilbah wa-'l-Mīlīh
14 Süq al-Mīṭārah
15 Süq al-Mālīm
16 Süq al-Qishr
17 Süq al-Mīsbaγahah
18 Süq al-Fittah
19 Süq al-Jādīd
20 Süq al-Naḥās
21 Süq al-Jīlā/Jalā
22 Süq al-Bazz
23 Süq al-Qasīb
24 Süq al-Maḥāzīm
25 Süq al-Mikhrātah
26 Süq al-Kawāfī
27 Süq al-Saλab
28 Süq al-Qūs
29 Süq Ḥarāt al-Mādār
30 Süq al-Zumur
31 Süq al-Baqār
32 Süq al-Tahīn
33 Süq al-Bahā'īm
34 Süq al-Jabbānāh
35 Süq al-'Alaf
36 Süq al-Halqāh
37 Süq al-Janābī
38 Süq al-Islwāb
39 Süq al-Mavāqīd
40 Süq al-Najjārin
41 Süq al-Minqālah
42 Süq Haddādīn
43 Süq al-'Ināb
44 Süq al-Hīnnā
45 Süq al-Naẓārah
46 Süq al-Naḥās
47 Süq al-Ḥumaydī
48 Süq Bāb al-Yāmān
49 Süq Ḥarāt Dar al-Jāmī'
1. S. al-Qüzï
2. S. al-Imám al-Mahdí
3. S. Yahyá b. Qásím
4. 'Ali al-Tinah
5. S. al-Mansúri
6. 'Ali b. al-Sháwi
7. S. Suq al-Mínqâlah
8. S. al-Zubâyri
9. S. Muhammad Lutf al-Dhirayrah
10. S. Yahyá al-Na'ámi
11. S. Wardah
12. S. al-Baw'áni
13. S. al-Mutarrib
14. S. Muhammad b. Hasan
15. S. al-Qát
16. S. al-Sawd (Charcoal store-house—today a café)
17. S. al-Muqtrân
18. S. Ahmad al-'Awádí
19. 'Atiyáyah
20. S. 'Ali al-Shámi
21. S. al-'Umári
22. S. Wardah
23. S. Sa'ádah
24. S. al-Dawmári
25. S. al-Hidayyid
26. S. Bayt al-Jindâri
27. S. al-Táyífí
28. Makhzan al-Sulít
29. Makhzan al-Ḫabb
of transport (of the other livestock markets there remains only the Donkey Market, whilst the Cattle Market is mostly outside the town); the increasing integration of the peripheral market into the market centre; the transfer of the customs office outside the town, and the transfer of the money depository since Samsarat Muhammad b. Hasan (cf. pp. 191 b, 278 a), which served as one, was plundered in 1948.

### The Market and its Socio-economic Connection with Urban Society

As set forth in the Introduction, it will be attempted to portray the involvement of the Market with the complexity of urban society by applying the concept of alliance groups.

The kinship group, the corporative group bound to the Market, the social classes and the organization by residence are to be understood as groups of associates.

#### The Kinship Group

Patrilineal descent forms the basis of the kinship group. In order to understand the inner structure of the kinship group it is necessary to set out the terms of relationship employed. The terms are rendered by a descriptive notation the principle of which must be explained to the reader unacquainted with anthropological literature. This notation is based on the following designations: Fa = Father, Mo = Mother, So = Son, Da = Daughter, Chi = children, Br = Brother, Si = Sister, Hu = Husband, Wi = Wife; age relative to the person is rendered by e = elder, y = younger. By the combination of these designations a kinship term, always regarded as ego-centric, can be exactly defined. For the better understanding of the kinship terminology used in San‘i’ attention should be drawn to the fact that these terms come into the category of reference terms, i.e. the terms with which one designates a relative in the presence of a third party. Terms of address, used in speaking to a relative, are, as far as I could determine, identical with the reference terms—apart from a few designations. Thus the person addresses his stepfather as ‘amm (FaBr), a custom probably rooted in the Levirate marriage. In a polygynous family group the person calls his father’s wives—apart from his mother—khālah (MoSi). That this form of address is derivable from sororal polygyny would be quite conceivable, but for the time being it must remain an open question. Address terms are Si = shaqīqa, if the person is male and Br = sīnaya if the person is female.

#### Blood Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 First ascending generation</th>
<th>2 First ascending generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fa</td>
<td>ab, wāhil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>umm, wāhilidah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaBr</td>
<td>‘amm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaSi</td>
<td>‘ammah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoSi</td>
<td>khālah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoBr</td>
<td>khal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Second ascending generation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaFa</td>
<td>sid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoFa</td>
<td>sid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaMo</td>
<td>jaddah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoMo</td>
<td>jaddah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 First descending generation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So e</td>
<td>ibn, wālad kabir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So y</td>
<td>ibn, wālad ḥaghar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da e</td>
<td>bint kabir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da y</td>
<td>bint ḥaghar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrSo</td>
<td>ibn al-akh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrDa</td>
<td>bint al-akh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SiSo</td>
<td>ibn al-akht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SiDa</td>
<td>bint al-akht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Second descending generation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SoSo</td>
<td>ibn al-ibn, ibn al-wālad, ḥafid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SoDa</td>
<td>bint al-ibn, bint al-wālad, ḥafid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DaSo</td>
<td>ibn al-bint, sīt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DaDa</td>
<td>bint al-bint, sītah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Relations by Marriage

| FaBrWi                      | zawjat al-akh, ḥamāh         |
| SiHu                       | nasib, zīhr                |
| HuBr                       | ḥamāyā (lit., my brother in law) |
| HuSi                       | zīhr                      |
| WiBr                       | nasib                    |
| WiSi                       | nasibah                  |
| HuFa                       | ‘amm                    |
| HuMo                       | ‘ammah                  |
| WiFa                       | ‘amm                   |
| WiMo                       | ‘ammah                  |
| FaBrWi                     | ‘ammah                   |
| FaSiHu                     | zawj al-‘ammah, nasib      |
| MoSiHu                     | zawj al-khālah, nasib      |
| MoBrWi                     | zawjah al-ḥālah, ḥālah, nasib |
| FaWi                       | ḥālah in remarriage or polygany |
| MoHu                       | ‘amm in remarriage        |
| WiSi                       | rabīb in remarriage       |
| WiDa                       | rabībā in remarriage      |

Analysis of the kinship terms enables us to reveal the inner structure of the kinship group, and the legal obligations resulting from membership and status. The legal rights do not signify rights in respect of members only; this would be rather too simple. Economic considerations come into play too. In such a group consanguinity and affinity are not merely mechanisms for establishing descent, but also regulate the economic relations within the descent group and determine the external economic relations with it. Conceptually, primacy goes to ensuring the fundamentals of existence, but regard has to be made to the important fact that the obligations to render assistance, deriving from the status of a member, involve lasting consequences for his economic actions. One should think of blood money, for example, for the contribution to which legal action can be taken against the members of one’s descent group. Hence our primary interest lies in the economic regulations affecting the relations between kinsfolk. First of all, however, the aim is to reveal the fundamental features of the present system of relationship.
In accordance with patrilineal descent there is first a sharp distinction between paternal and maternal relatives. This distinction is expressed etymologically in the designation laẖîm (my flesh) for the paternal line, and ahil my family, or bayy al-khâl for the maternal group of relatives. The use of laẖîm, flesh, in this sense is ancient, for in al-Waqidi’s al-Maghâzî, ed. Marsden Jones, Cairo-Oxford, 1966, II, 612, Subayl speaks to the Prophet of ‘those relatives and flesh of ours (ka’na’ in aqāribu-nā wa-lahŷnu’-nā).’

The criterion of relative age, i.e. senior and junior, is expressed only in the ego generation and in the first ascending generation by the adjectives old and young. The relationship terms for relatives of the ascending generation designate the actual status at the same time.

The terms in the ego generation, in the first ascending generation and in the descending generation are characterized by bifurcation, by which it is clearly indicated whether anyone is connected with the person by a male or female relation. In the second generation the grouping follows the merging principle, by which the lineal and collateral relatives are subsumed under one classificatory term. Among affinal relatives we find it also in the term for parent-in-law, ‘amn or ‘ammah, a designation that must be understood from the preferences for paternal parallel-cousin-marriage.

Where consanguinity becomes clear, for example, is in the obligation to call on their parents which arises among the agnates when neo-local residence is established (i.e. residence in a new locality). The same applies for married women who live separated from their parents in consequence of patri- or viri-local residence.

Attention must now be directed to the structure of the economic units firstly to the types of family that can be seen from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Craftsmen (N=152)</th>
<th>Merchants (N=81)</th>
<th>Total (N=233)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family type</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
<td>Number %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear family (independent)</td>
<td>48 31.58</td>
<td>29 35.81</td>
<td>77 33.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>72 47.37</td>
<td>34 41.97</td>
<td>106 45.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraternal joint family</td>
<td>32 21.05</td>
<td>18 22.22</td>
<td>50 21.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>152 100.00</td>
<td>81 100.00</td>
<td>233 100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of our random test reveal the following order of family types according to their frequency: extended family—independent nuclear family—fraternal joint family. The following were the reasons for the remarkably high percentage of fraternal joint family: a) lack of financial basis for founding a neo-local residence; in most cases the elder brother, who is favoured by primogeniture owing to the rules of inheritance, is in a position not to pay the younger brother his share; b) the extension of the house in the father’s lifetime involving living together and c) joint management of the paternal business established by the rules of inheritance.

The fraternal joint family is based by the law of property on the milk mushṭarah, joint ownership by brothers. Common ownership includes the paternal dwelling with all its dependencies and, as explicitly mentioned under point c) includes the father’s workplace and shop. Consequently a distinction must be made between the fraternal joint family as resident community and as an economic unit. Inquiries have shown that of a total of fraternal joint families of 50 only 22% come in the last category. In a fraternal joint family that forms a resident community the brothers manage their affairs independently of one another; yet the circulation of goods on the basis of distribution is naturally more intensive27 than among the blood (consanguineous) relatives. Yet if a fraternal joint family is also based on an economic unit, the redistribution in equal shares of the income by the elder brother ensues.

Where the types of marriage are concerned I have at my disposal information on 119 persons (80 craftsmen, 39 merchants). Of these, 112 persons lived in monogamy (94.11%), only 7 of my informants had married a second wife; hence the percentage of the total of polygynous households among the persons questioned amounts to 5.89%. Parallel-cousin-marriage (FaBrDa) with 48 cases attains a relatively high frequency of 40.34%. Regarding the stability of marriage, a count showed that 24 men had had a divorce, which corresponds to a percentage of 20.17%. As grounds for divorce, allegations were, incompatibility of the wife (11/45.83%), laziness (9/37.50%) and sterility (4/16.67%).

After acquainting ourselves with the types of family upon which the economic unit is constituted, the question arises as to what extent the choice of profession follows the family tradition. To answer this question we must exclude those craftsmen (34) and merchants (25) who have moved to San‘ā’ and pursue none of the occupations associated with the family tradition, and likewise, the silver and goldsmiths engaged in an occupation not based on family tradition. From the table below it is evident that choice of occupation associated with family tradition prevails over individual choice. An important difference between craftsmen and merchants is evident in the higher percentage of individual choice among craftsmen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family tradition</th>
<th>Craftsmen (N=123)</th>
<th>Merchants (N=56)</th>
<th>Total (N=179)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual choice</td>
<td>82 66.67</td>
<td>45 80.36</td>
<td>127 70.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>123 100.00</td>
<td>56 100.00</td>
<td>179 100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question naturally concerns the size of the economic unit. For this we have the following statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business with:</th>
<th>Craftsmen (N=157)</th>
<th>Merchants (N=81)</th>
<th>Total (N=238)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-man businesses</td>
<td>113 71.98</td>
<td>65 80.24</td>
<td>178 74.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business with: 1 Associate</td>
<td>11 7.01</td>
<td>1 1.24</td>
<td>12 5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Associates</td>
<td>25 15.92</td>
<td>11 13.58</td>
<td>36 15.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Associates</td>
<td>6 3.82</td>
<td>3 3.70</td>
<td>9 3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Associates</td>
<td>2 1.27</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>2 0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Associates</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 1.24</td>
<td>1 0.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greater part of the economic units, 74.79%, consists of one-man businesses; only 25.21% are classed as businesses run by two or more persons. In the case of craftsmen and merchants, businesses involving two associates predominate. We are naturally interested to know how the businesses that come into the plural category are composed with regard to connections with relatives. The result of my inquiries are set out in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business with:</th>
<th>Craftsmen (N=49)</th>
<th>Merchants (N=16)</th>
<th>Total (N=60)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>31 70.45</td>
<td>12 75.00</td>
<td>43 71.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives and non-relatives</td>
<td>6 13.64</td>
<td>2 12.50</td>
<td>8 13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-relatives</td>
<td>7 15.91</td>
<td>2 12.50</td>
<td>9 15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44 100.00</td>
<td>16 100.00</td>
<td>66 100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27 Cf. A. Bornstein, 15, with samples from four different regions which only show slight deviations from the rate of divorce ascertained by the author.
28 This conclusion is as an antithesis of the possible generalisation of Cl. Meillassoux’s model.
As one can gather from the table, in the majority of cases in which associates are running a business they are relatives (71.66%). Further research shows that they are mostly (consanguineous) relatives. Apart from sons and brothers other consanguineous relatives are paid, exactly like workers, not relatives, on the basis of the current agreement for the occupational group concerned.

The compass of the economic unit is flexible: it is determined by the type of family, the extended family, the nuclear family and the fraternal joint family. In the extended family we can see the predominant type of basis for the economic unit. However, by the family types mentioned there is given only the social framework for possibilities of economic integration within a group of relatives. The function of the family economic unit is affected by an economic order of size, the size of the business, which determines its production. Our research has yielded a numerically high proportion of one-man businesses. But this signifies nothing more than the male parent's ownership of the means of production and his consequent exertion of social control on the members of his family unit, as also that the economic status of the family depends exclusively on his industry and efficiency.

To assess the consequences arising from this situation it is first necessary to examine a further economic component, the division of labour between the sexes within the family, and then to clarify the structure of authority rooted in the extended family.

With regard to the division of labour between man and wife we have to limit ourselves to noting that the production of goods and trading, viz. the activities by which the economic basis of the family is assured, come exclusively within the competence of the man. Within the wife's domain belong household affairs and bringing up children. As a worker she is therefore excluded from the process of production and the commercial sector. This, however, does not mean that her social status is thereby held to be inferior, for we must not overlook her function as mother, through which not only is the continuation of the line/lineage ensured, but the labour force potential for the economic unit is guaranteed.

The authority of the genitor in the family is based on three factors. Firstly, from an economic point of view it is decisively furthered by patrilineal descent by reason of the inheritance settlement associated with this descent. Secondly, it is supported by the fact that he exercises effective control of the capital (rūs al-mal) and thirdly, by the right of distribution of income, which he exercises through his control of the means of production. Since he controls the means of production and distribution of income his agnates fall into a state of dependence especially apparent in the case of a marriage when the requisite bride price is transferred to another economic unit, the family of the bride. One must not make the mistake of interpreting this dependence, with its inferior, for we must not overlook her function as mother, through which not only is the continuation of the line/lineage ensured, but the labour force potential for the economic unit is guaranteed.

With regard to paternal authority one point, viz. the possible control of the marriage, needs clarification. The bestowal of the bride price ensues independently of the work performed by the agnate because of the relatively early age of marriage between the ages of 16 and 18. The family economic unit is only dissolved, of course, if the father dies when the agnate leaves the community house based on the patri-local residence to start a neo-local household in a new district. The possibilities of independence outside the paternal family are economically limited. As a rule this is possible only when there is not enough room available for the agnate's family in the paternal home. In such a case the agnate receives an advance from the share of the inheritance due to him, even when the agnate is striving for economic independence. The economic dependence on the father is presumably terminated by this, yet the social obligation (fark) to render assistance implied by membership of a group of relatives remains in force. These include both legal obligations (payment of blood money, standing surety, etc.) and economic assistance (sadaqah or musa'idah), obligatory upon all (consanguineal) relatives of a person. The significance of consanguinity, to which repeated reference is made, is also expressed in the ritual visitation for the exchange of gifts (stiyarat al-arqam). On the occasion of al-Id al-Kabir one must visit all married women of the group (FaMo, MoMo, FaSi, MoSi, MoSiDa, MoBrDa), and in case of marriage to another man, also FaBrDa and give a present. One receives gifts in return.

The circulation of goods within the kinship group, including affinal relatives is limited to the reciprocal distribution (badal) of the means of existence.

**Groups of Alliance Bound to the Market**

Producers and merchants, united through dealing in certain goods manufactured and supplied, form groups of alliance with exclusively occupational interests. Consequently every craftsmen and merchant belongs to such a group. These groups of alliance bear no name of their own, but are called after the respective craft or market in which they are located, e.g. the People of the Cloth Market (Ahli Suq al-Bazz).

All members of a group of associates are on equal footing (mutākābīf) and when they infringe its resolutions they are liable to legal disciplinary proceedings (mutaqqadān), should provision be made for the prosecution of an offender. Cooperation with other sectors of the craft, and agreements individually concluded with customers, are not affected by a resolution of a group of associates.

Every group of associates is presided over by an 'aqil. The holders of this office are elected by the members; they are personalities who appear suitable by reason of their social reputation and their qualities. Before such elections parties often form within the group of associates; yet the 'aqil elected by a simple majority of votes is generally respected by all members of the group. Elections take place when the 'aqil in office resigns, or is accused of acting contrary to the interests of the group. The latter occurs if he ignores its resolutions (khiyānat al-qarār). In such cases he receives a letter signed by all members of the group communicating to him his removal from the office. The 'aqil is thereby obliged to convene an election meeting.

The election meeting and extraordinary meetings summoned in case of need are mostly held in the court of a mosque.

Among the functions of the 'aqil are: 1) supervising the implementation of resolutions passed at meetings by group members (qi'dah al-majmū'ah). 2) arbitrating in disputes between group members; in disputes between members of different groups of associates the 'aqil of the group concerned
intervenes as mediator; 3) convening meetings should the economic situation or ordinance require; at these meetings, among other things, price regulations are agreed in order to guarantee a fair basis for competition for all group members; 4) representing the economic interests of the group before other groups of associates and before the authorities; 5) collecting the zakāt tax from members of the group. For performing his office the 'āqil receives remuneration. As a rule it amounts to one tenth of the yield of the zakāt tax. There are, however, other regulations, as can be seen from Article 10 of the resolution (qarār) of the joiners' association, infra, which affords us an insight into the kind of resolution carried by a meeting. This document concerns the associate group of joiners, and was placed at my disposal by the 'Aqil, al-Ḥājj Iḥsān ‘Alī al-Tawil. It was drawn up on the occasion of his election. Emphasis is laid on the regulations for raw material procurement of timber imports and on fair distribution of the timber to members of this group of associates. The import of timber is controlled collectively by a veto on individual purchase. A specially appointed committee supervises the distribution of the timber, which is stored in two yards, the common property of the group of associates. By controlling the distribution of timber a common set of conditions guarantees a fair basis of competition between individual joiners.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

This is a decision of all the joiners in the capital, Ṣan‘ā’, after a meeting held by all the signatories below, on the following articles:

Article 1
The 'āqil elected is spokesman on behalf of all the joiners, he being al-Ḥājj Husayn ‘Alī al-Ṭawil.

Article 2
The dealers (muqūlūn) in the sale of punāb-timber as a committee with the 'āqil are al-Ḥājj Sāliḥ Muṣīn al-Baylī and al-Ḥājj Mānsūr al-Baylī for Bir al-'Azāb, and the Sayyid Luḥf ‘Abbas and al-Ḥājj Muhammad Ḥamzāh for Ṣan‘ā’. All four will meet together when need requires.

Article 3
All of us affirm that it is obligatory to collect all the punāb-timber imported to Ṣan‘ā’ in two depots, one in Ṣan‘ā’ and the other Bāb al-Balaqāh. No importer may deposit punāb-timber in any but these two depots.

Article 4
After the arrival of the punāb-timber in the depot, the 'āqil, accompanied by two honest men ('udūl) to be elected by the joiners, will come and then the price-fixing (tas’ir) at the price appropriate to the commodity will take place in the presence of the vendor.

Article 5
After price-fixing the punāb-timber imported will be distributed to the joiners, each according to his demand if what is imported is (sufficient) to meet the entire demand, but, if not, it will be distributed by shares in portions, none having the right to receive more than his portion.

Article 6
No joiner is permitted to purchase from any importer for himself before the arrival of the punāb-timber at the depot. Anyone who bargains with any importer or dealer of the first-mentioned is liable to be fined 500 ārāds and to a week’s imprisonment.

Article 7
No joiner is permitted to advance any sum of money to any importer to purchase punāb-timber for himself exclusively or to import on his own account.

Article 8
These decisions must be observed and be officially put into execution by the district (mubā'ārah) of Ṣan‘ā’ and the Ministry of the Interior after they have been put into execution by the Ministry of Supply, as required by the clauses of the order (Gī‘ah) issued by the Supply (Ministry), dated ....... no ....... Anything which is neglected and not put into execution is one of the matters that allows the section intent to defraud, influence to upset the crafts and to attempt to render the order of the (Ministry of) Supply ineffective.

Article 9
Whosoever purchases from any (place) but the official depot, be the purchase in Ṣan‘ā’ or from the road outside (it), or from the punāb-timber place of Bājil, al-Ḥaymah or ‘Amrān has no right to do so, and if any one of the joiners transgresses or by purchasing elsewhere than (in) Ṣan‘ā’ he is liable to a fine of 500 ārāds and to a week’s imprisonment. Even if he should have an agent who has any sum of money of his he has no right to purchase for himself exclusively, but is obliged to import the punāb-timber to the depot. Supervision is the (duty of) the committee constituted under the superintendence of the 'āqil, and they have the right to
dispose of the imports in the way consonant with the interest of the people.

Article 10
In return for undertaking these tasks the 'aql receives duties on the ḥum-timber (of) 20 ṣoqūshahs on every load, as also the yard charge (khārij) (of) 20 ṣoqūshahs on every load, deducted from the price.

The meeting mentioned in the brief introduction to the document may have been held in the Masjid Qubbat al-Mahdi which is now a favourite place for the joiners to meet. All the persons mentioned in Article 2 are joiners, but the last-named has his price.

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Bani 'l-Khums who are considered as being without ancestry. For this reason the word 'Arab' is frequently used instead of Manṣūb.

The Manṣūb are engaged in the following occupations—commerce, and as silversmiths, goldsmiths, coppersmiths, and blacksmiths, tinsmiths, blade-polishers, dagger-hilt makers, joiners, turners, water-pipe-makers, mattress-fillers, plangi-dyers, inscription painters, stonemasons, bricklayers, porters; tombstones are made by two families (Bayt Bādiyy and Bayt U斯塔).

Men among the Manṣūb capable of bearing arms were compelled to do military service, if the town was attacked. In such a case an 'Aqīl al-Ḥarb was elected who had to organize the defence.

To the Bani 'l-Khums group belong the shoemakers, dagger-sheath cover makers, belt makers, saddlers, tanners, brickmakers, barbers, bath attendants, cuppers or blood-letters, café proprietors, butchers, also the qashšāmin (sing., qashšām), i.e. leek, onion and vegetable growers of the mosque gardens. In disputes within the groups of the Manṣūb members of the Bani 'l-Khums act as mediators. In the common law of the urban population the killing of a member of the Bani 'l-Khums by a Manṣūb is reckoned as a discreditable act.

The Akhḍām are a numerically small group in Ṣanʿā' mostly employed as street cleaners. They may neither acquire houses nor purchase land. Entry into other occupations is forbidden to them. In contrast to members of other classes they are not allowed to carry arms.

Apart from the typical dress of the Sādah, the dagger, the kind and the way it is worn constitute a social status symbol. There are three distinct types of dagger: thūmah (a), jiḥāz (b) and sīḥ (c). The thūmah is regarded as the mark of rank of the Sādah, the jiḥāz or the Manṣūb and the third type, sīḥ, for the Bani 'l-Khums.

The social estimation of the occupations, already mentioned in the introductory observations to this section proves ethnologically important insofar as it coincides with the estimation of occupations by the tribes. Here a short digression is necessary to compare the material gathered in my researches among the Bani Ḥushaysh tribe of the mountainous district north east of Ṣanʿā'.

The Bani Ḥushaysh live in a community with two socially inferior groups: the Muzayyina and Dawshān. The legal basis of this community is constituted by the jiṣār (protection)—relationships conferred on these groups by the tribe. This protection relationship guarantees them sojourn in the tribal territory, free practice of their occupations and safety of life and property. Of the Dawshān there is only one family that wanders in Bani Ḥushaysh territory and keeps body and soul together acting as strolling singers, musicians and as casual workers. The Muzayyina live often in seclusion in their settlements. They engage in the following occupations: butchers, tanners, shoemakers, weavers, potters, cuppers or blood-letters and barbers. What is significant for us is that important crafts of the peasant economy such as those of joiner, smith, bricklayer and mason are limited to members of the tribe. As a rule some peasant families have for generations specialized in the crafts just mentioned, which they practise along with their farm work. These peasant-craftsmen together with the Muzayyainah create favourable conditions for internal self-sufficiency in essential goods in the peasant tribal community.

The occupations of the Manṣūb of the urban population of Ṣanʿā' correspond, as far as their social evaluation is concerned, to those found among the peasant-craftsmen, while the occupations of the Bani 'l-Khums coincide with those of the Muzayyina. In this respect the class system stands out clearly differentiated from the already known urban society of Tarim in Wādī Ḥadramawt—to quote a South Arabian example. There the hierarchic organization of the population is as follows. 1) Sādah, 2) Mashāyikh, 3) Qābā'il, 4) Masākin ḫḍar, 5) Masākin ḫḍah, and 6) 'Abīd. The bulk of the Tarim population consists of the Masākin ḫḍar and Masākin ḫḍah classes. Among the Masākin ḫḍar, besides the merchants, the following occupations are found—silversmiths, joiners, turners and tailors; the occupations of the Masākin ḫḍah are by contrast: smiths, weavers, tanners, butchers, shoemakers, bricklayers, stonemasons, barbers, cuppers, blood-letters and the landless farm workers. As contrasted with the scale of social values of the occupations in Ṣanʿā', the smiths, bricklayers and the stonemasons in Tarim are deemed socially discriminating occupations. Contrary to Tarim society influenced by rent-capitalism wide-spread in the Middle East, the class society in Ṣanʿā' corresponds with the social structure of the free peasant tribes. This coincidence discovered in social rating between tribal and urban society must clearly be taken into account in reflections on the development of urban society in Ṣanʿā'.

Urban District Organization

Ṣanʿā' is organized in urban districts. An urban district can be described as a locality bound group of alliance formations (jamā'at al-ḥārāb) consisting of leagues of families of different descent unrelated to one another. This means that with regard to identical range of interests no class differences appear. Urban district organization is founded on the principle of neighbourly understanding (ḥukm al-jiṣār). Apart from the general interests of such local groups it can be established that mutual aid, ḥanāḥ, lies in the centre of their range of interests. The members of an urban district are under an obligation to render mutual aid. This includes giving goods and money to members who have fallen on evil days (mankhub, pl., -in) in cases of calamity, also gifts for weddings and for defraying funeral costs. This aid is not given direct but distributed through a central authority, the 'Aqīl of the urban district.

The male enfranchised members (by legal rights or by military service) of an urban district elect the 'Aqīl. It is quite possible—as can be seen from the roll of the urban district—for several urban districts to elect the same 'Aqīl.

The following come within the competence of the 'Aqīl:

1. Relations with the urban administration. He represents the interests of his district before the authority and also before other districts.
2. Mediation between disputing parties (mutanāzi'n in) in his district.

34 Cf. R. B. Serjeant, 1950.
3 Collecting contributions for the neighbourhood’s aid. If need be, the ‘Āqil calls at every house in his district (anaqaql ilā kulli l-bayyūr).

5 Collecting the zakāt tax. The following taxes are collected: zakāt al-māl (property tax), zakāt al-hablāh (tax on grapes and vines) and levy for Ramadān. (zakāt al-fīrāh at the end of Ramadān). From the property and grape-vine tax he receives expenses amounting to 5% of the sum gathered.

The heads of the urban districts constitute a council (majlis al-uqqāl) that meets only when circumstances require.

Since the urban district organization differs from that of the towns of Ḥaḍramawt, to quote a South Arabian example, it is necessary to give a sketch of the individual character of the urban district of San‘ā.

1 The size of an urban district varies and may in general be described as relatively small. Hence the tendency to merge with the members of several urban districts agree on one ‘Āqil.

3 Membership of the urban district acquired by birth is not permanent; in contrast with the local laws of the Tarim urban district organization the members of an urban district in San‘ā can move without the permission of the ‘Āqil and settle in another district. To what extent an older local law is here concerned must for the present remain an open question, for in the tribal domain a member cannot leave his tribal district without authorization.

The following list of urban districts must be preceded by the observation that at present the number of urban districts is uncertain because of the rapid growth of the town. Therefore a distinction is made terminologically between the urban districts (hārāt) and newly formed ones (mintaqah). At the time of my last stay in 1975 54 hārāt and 12 mina‘ātīq could be counted.

The list is based on a compilation, ‘Uqāq ilā hārāt wa-aswāq wa-fānāq wa-majā‘īm of 1.vi.1971 in San‘ā, of the authority ‘Mas‘ābūl il‘-shu‘ūn al-Baladiyyah wa-l-qarawiyah’ of Maktab Baladiyyat Liwā San‘ā. This compilation had to be supplemented by oral statements of informants as it proved on checking to be incomplete. The additions are indicated thus *.

A Hārāt

1 H. al-Bāshah
2 H. al-Nuṣayr
3 H. Ghurqat al-Qalīs
4 H. al-Maydān
5 H. al-Zumur
6 H. al-Fīlaybī
7 H. Ghuzl al-Bāsh
8 H. Sha‘b q Mūṣayr
9 H. Kubās
10 H. Sha‘b al-Dīn
11 H. al-Maftūn

12 H. Ya‘ṣīr
13 H. al-Maddasah
14 H. Qībhī al-Ma‘īdān
15 H. al-Sha‘hūd
16 H. Ma‘ṣūm
17 H. Mūsā
18 H. al-Humaydi
19 H. Bai‘r Rajjrāj
20 H. al-Hasūsah
21 H. al-Ṭawāshī
22 H. Dār al-Jāmī ‘
23 H. Dāwūd
24 H. al-Qarābī
25 H. Ibn al-Ḥusayn
26 H. al-Khārī’īb
27 H. al-Jilā‘jalāl
28 H. Khu‘dāyī
29 H. al-Khārijah
30 H. Ṭalbāh
31 H. Tawūs
32 H. al-Jawāfīh
33 H. Ma‘ād
34 H. al-‘Alamī
35 H. al-Tubārī
36 H. al-Ḥurqān
37 H. Samrāh
38 H. Mu‘ammār
39 H. al-Aḥbaḥr
40 H. al-Jadīd
41 H. Barrūm (Abī l-Rūm)
42 H. Bāb al-Nahrayn
43 H. Bāb al-Šābāb
44 H. al-Sū‘īlah
45 H. al-Ma‘ājīt
46 H. Qubbāt al-Maḥdi
47 H. Būṣān al-Suljān
48 H. al-Mansūrah
49 H. ‘Āqīl*
50 H. Jāmāl al-Dīn*
51 H. al-Wushālī*
52 H. Sārbaḥ Ḥawā‘ījī*
53 H. al-Kharrāz*
54 H. al-Quzālī*

B Ma‘āṭiq

1 M. Khārij Bāb al-Ḥurriyyah
2 M. Bāb al-Salām
3 M. Shārī‘ al-Zubayri
4 M. al-Zumur
5 M. Bāb Sha‘b ‘āb
6 M. Farwāh
7 M. Musayr
8 M. al-Ṭārīq al-Mu‘addī
9 M. Ṭārīq San‘ā ilā Ta‘izz
10 M. al-Sa‘dī
11 M. al-Sāfiyyah al-Sharqiyyah
12 M. ʿila l-Afrān

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28 H. Khu‘dāyī
29 H. al-Khārijah
30 H. Ṭalbāh
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33 H. Ma‘ād
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44 H. al-Sū‘īlah
45 H. al-Ma‘ājīt
46 H. Qubbāt al-Maḥdi
47 H. Būṣān al-Suljān
48 H. al-Mansūrah
49 H. ‘Āqīl*
50 H. Jāmāl al-Dīn*
51 H. al-Wushālī*
52 H. Sārbaḥ Ḥawā‘ījī*
53 H. al-Kharrāz*
54 H. al-Quzālī*

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9 M. Ṭārīq San‘ā ilā Ta‘izz
10 M. al-Sa‘dī
11 M. al-Sāfiyyah al-Sharqiyyah
12 M. ʿila l-Afrān

The concept of the group of alliances, I believe, enables the social positions, rights and duties in which a person is involved—in the sense of an individual engaged in the market—to be shown
in its actual social frame of reference. In this commercial context there operate from the economic angle, different forms of commodity circulation as follows:

Family
Redistribution of income.

Kinship group
Reciprocal distribution of stuffs.
Exchange of gifts.

Group of alliances bound to the Market
Distribution of means of production by an elected central authority.

Social class
Exchange of reciprocal goods payment for women.

Urban District
Distribution of reciprocal aid by an elected central authority.

We can clearly observe the transformation of individual distribution into one effected by a central authority in those group domains in which distribution independent of individual interests seems necessary for the common benefit of all group members.

Socio-economic Aspects of the Market Structure

The relations outlined in the preceding sections remain disconnected and unintelligible without a knowledge of the market structure. Consequently several points relevant to an assessment of the market economy will be singled out to arrive at a balanced exposition. The following pages deal with the quantitative proportions of the handicraft and commercial sectors; the technological level of the craftsmen; the organization of trade; the nature of the relations between the urban market and its rural hinterland and finally the features peculiar to the urban market.

The Quantitative Proportion of the Handicraft and Commercial Sectors

To describe the position more concretely a tabular summary is used of results based on research carried out in March 1971. Quantitatively considered they reflect a demand situation, though only in a general form.

The Commercial Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of shops</th>
<th>% of the total of the group</th>
<th>% of the total of all business in the market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Foodstuffs and specialties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils (taman, salt)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar and sweets</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foodstuffs and miscellaneous</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>43.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qubr</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qubr and sundry</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry fruit</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates and Sundry</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables, Fruit</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qit</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>18.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco (local)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chewing tobacco (local)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Clothing

Textiles
301 | 89.58 | 17.895 |
Woollens | 22 | 6.55 | 1.308 |
Shoes (imported) | 13 | 3.87 | 0.773 |
| Total | 336 | 100.00 | 19.976 |

3 Household goods

Crockery | 56 | 44.45 | 3.329 |
Technical equipment | 30 | 23.81 | 1.784 |
Copperware and books | 9 | 7.14 | 0.535 |
Pottery (local) | 6 | 4.76 | 0.357 |
Bedclothes | 1 | 0.79 | 0.059 |
Wood | 5 | 3.97 | 0.297 |
Coal, charcoal | 2 | 1.59 | 0.119 |
Petroleum | 17 | 13.49 | 1.011 |
| Total | 126 | 100.00 | 7.491 |

4 Various

Henna | 6 | 22.22 | 0.357 |
Druggists | 4 | 14.81 | 0.238 |
Second-hand goods | 14 | 51.86 | 0.852 |
Paper | 3 | 11.11 | 0.178 |
| Total | 27 | 100.00 | 1.605 |

Grand total | 1016 | 100.00 | 60.404 |

Handicraft Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of workshops</th>
<th>% of total of the group</th>
<th>% of total of businesses in the market*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Metal working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiths</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>34.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinsmiths</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppersmiths</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digger makers</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>26.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silversmiths</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldsmiths</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Wood working

Joiners | 74 | 81.32 | 4.399 |
Locksmiths-joiners | 4 | 4.39 | 0.238 |
Turners | 9 | 9.89 | 0.535 |
Dagger sheath makers | 2 | 2.20 | 0.119 |
Basket weavers | 2 | 2.20 | 0.119 |
| Total | 91 | 100.00 | 5.410 |

3 Textiles

Tailors | 69 | 57.03 | 4.102 |
Cap makers | 20 | 16.53 | 1.189 |
Mattress fillers | 3 | 2.48 | 0.178 |
Pangli-dyers | 2 | 1.65 | 0.119 |
Woolen dyers | 1 | 0.82 | 0.059 |
Ropemakers | 26 | 21.49 | 1.546 |
| Total | 121 | 100.00 | 7.193 |

4 Leather workers

Shoemakers | 44 | 42.72 | 2.616 |
Makers of rubber buckets | 9 | 8.74 | 0.535 |
Saddlers | 5 | 4.85 | 0.297 |
Dagger sheath cover makers | 45 | 43.69 | 2.675 |
and belt makers | | |
| Total | 103 | 100.00 | 6.123 |

5 Various

Oil presses | 4 | 9.30 | 0.237 |
Bakers | 1 | 2.32 | 0.059 |
Bookbinders | 2 | 4.65 | 0.119 |
Barbers | 24 | 55.82 | 1.427 |
Radio repair shops | 10 | 23.26 | 0.595 |
Photographers | 2 | 4.65 | 0.119 |
| Total | 43 | 100.00 | 2.556 |

Grand total | 537 | 100.00 | 31.923 |

* the grand total of all workshops, businesses and service establishments = 1682 (March, 1971).

The number of businesses closed during the inquiry amounted to 74, but it was not established whether they were temporarily closed or consisted of handicraft and commercial concerns permanently closed down.
Service Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of shops</th>
<th>% of the total of the group</th>
<th>% of the total of all businesses in the market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warehouses (samsarah)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29.46</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating houses</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38.76</td>
<td>2.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>0.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>0.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drink purveyors</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.18</td>
<td>1.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money changers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>0.178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>7.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>1682</td>
<td>99.99</td>
<td>7.694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first fact to be noted is that the commercial sector with 60.40% of the total of 1,682 businesses is proportionately the largest; contrasted with this the production sector amounts to only 31.93%. The proportion of service industries essential for the daily life of the market amounts to 7.67%. Thus the basic features of the market emerge. Our attention is now directed to considering to what extent typical characteristics of the demand position can be discovered. That means we must both examine the quotas within the handicraft and commercial sector and evaluate the quotas within the categories of these sectors. A breakdown of the quotas of the commercial sector indicates the following order based on a classification of 1,016 business premises—foodstuffs and stimulants (51.87%), clothing (33.07%), household goods (12.40%). The businesses entered under 'various', standing at 2.66%, are left for further consideration. In considering the foodstuffs and stimulants the percentage of qat-shops is striking when compared with the understandably high proportion of provision shops (43.45%), particularly when they are compared with the extraordinary low quotas of businesses selling important foodstuffs such as oil, sugar or vegetables. This remarkably high proportion of the trade in qat reflects the great demand for this stimulant and illuminates one of the most important economic difficulties of the country. The demand for qat, which, from a social point of view, bears those features known to us from the problem of alcoholism in Europe, leads to the result that the farmers restrict the cultivation of cereals in favour of qat because it yields a higher profit coupled with a considerably smaller expenditure of labour. Resort to this mono-cultivation naturally involves increasing dependence of the tribal economy on the urban market, the consequences of which are at present not yet calculable.

In general the provision market is dominated by imported goods for the proportion of locally produced goods amounts to only 21.63%. The same applies to the clothing and household goods sector. With regard to the latter we must note from the viewpoint of cultural change the modest percentage of shops selling local pottery supplied by potters from Wädi Sirr and Khawlın. They were ousted by metal utensils and plastic ware, as can be seen in the proportion of 44.45% of the shops stocking these new kinds of goods. We have also to look at the high proportion of shops selling industrial technical equipment (23.81%) as a consequence of the increasing change. On the other hand it is doubtful whether the quota of petrol stations should also be considered from the aspect of cultural change as I have no information about the proportion of these in earlier times.

The breakdown of the quotas for the handicraft sector reveals the following order in a total of 537 businesses—metal working (33.33%), textiles (22.53%), leather working (19.18%), wood working (16.99%), the remainder (8.01%) includes various occupations such as barbers, etc.

Of particular ethnological interest are those branches of handicraft connected with the manufacture of daggers. The proportion of these in the metal industry amounts to 26.26%, in leather working to 43.69%. These relatively high quotas are evidence of the extent to which people, even today, adhere to the tradition of wearing a dagger as a social status symbol. In the category of 'various' in the handicraft sector the proportion of radio repair shops (23.26%) is striking: it is, though, understandable when one remembers that the import of radios has been increasing by leaps and bounds since the setting up of the Republic.

35 Compare Qanûn San‘a’, 301, passim.
Finally, we must look again at the service industries. The proportion (61.24%) of eating houses and purveyors of soft drinks to warehouses (samarah) at 29.46% underlines the importance of this service to the market.

Handicraft Technology and Organization of Production

General Observations

The continually increasing import of machine-made goods has reduced many branches of handicraft to a situation that confronts them with the threat of possible loss of existence. It is a familiar case that, with the flooding in of machine-made goods, the demand for locally manufactured products falls. The extent of the threat to the existence of some occupations becomes evident when, for example, among imported goods are found products that prove to be machine made imitations of goods of initially Yemen pattern and origin, such as sickles (sharim) produced in China.36 The fact that, under such conditions, the indigenous craft still remains competitive, needs, I daresay, no further explanation. The first to be hit by this crisis are those craftsmen who, on the one hand, cannot undertake the changeover to modern techniques because of the high costs of procurement of the necessary machinery, yet on the other hand because of lack of technical knowledge cannot withstand the competition when confronted with imported supplies. Only a few joiners have succeeded in adapting themselves to the new situation and to increasing production by the acquisition of machinery. Unaffected by the threat are those branches of handicraft the products of which are not in competition with industrial goods to the same extent. Among those are saddlers, plangi-dyers, craftsmen concerned with dagger production and tinsmiths. Tailors also were able to carry on to some extent until about the time of my research, although faced with large imports of ready-made clothing. The reason is to be found, I suppose, in the attitude of the indigenous population in preferring mass-produced garments to tailor-made suiting. The same applies also to the cap makers. On the other hand the ropemakers have ceased producing rope and string and now confine themselves to manufacturing muzzles (fīdāmah, pl. fādayim) and carrier nets (shabakah) made from imported nylon cord. The turners, who specialize in making pipe stems and water-pipe tubes (qa‘ib), suffer from the spread of cigarette smoking. In this survey of the present state of handicrafts in Ṣan‘a the situation of the silversmith must be briefly examined. Until 1949 the silversmith craft was largely in the hands of the Jews, and their work has not been adequately replaced (cf. p.397a). Of the 27 shopkeepers on the Suq al-Fiṣlālah only six (22%) served a short apprenticeship with Jewish silversmiths; the rest limited themselves to dealing in silver jewellery; most of them are already engaged in different occupations. The standard of their technical ability is therefore very low, barely enough to carry out simpler repair work on old ornaments. In contrast to the silversmiths the few goldsmiths still make jewellery.

Technology

Technological development is reflected in the multiplicity of types of tool used in handicraft. To demonstrate more accurately the quality of handicraft equipment they are divided into four categories: 1. tools made by the craftsmen themselves; 2. locally produced equipment; 3. imported tools and 4. imported equipment altered in function and form. The last category is evidence of the creative activity released in this economically poor region to meet certain technical requirements. Imported tools are particularly valuable in such a region and the economic position does not allow them to be cast aside when worn out. For example, chisels and other tools are forged from files. The analysis of the technical equipment of the craftsmen as can be seen from the list below, reveals a very varied distribution of the categories of tools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Smiths</th>
<th>Daggermakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-produced</td>
<td>Locally produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>76.20%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-produced</td>
<td>Locally produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36 Bernisch Historisches Museum, Ethnographical Department, Inv. Nr. Es. 75.312.157. My thanks to Herr Dr. E. Klaey, Curator, for the information regarding inventory numbers.
37 E. Macro, 87, passim; see further E. Brauer: 233 passim, especially 239.
38 For analysis of manual tools see W. Dostal, 1972, 26 passim.
In this breakdown can be perceived the varying degree of dependence of the craftsmen investigated, with regard to the supply of tools. Only the smiths prove largely self-sufficient. The proportion of imported tools in a total of 124, in fact amounting to 41.13%, cannot be neglected in considering the dependence on imported equipment.

**Fig. 14.2 Turners’ Tools:** 1 Adze, mazraqah, pl. mas'iriq. Hammer head: 1. 8cm, hammer face — pneum. 3cm; 2cm, eye: w. 1.7cm, handle: 27cm. 2 Adze, gaddim. Blade: 1. 18cm; face: 6 x 3cm; cutting edge: 1.14cm, eye: w. 2cm; handle: 50cm. 3 Chisel, mishir, maqaddah. Blade: 1. 14cm; cutting edge: 1cm. 4 Chisel, maqaddah/maqaddat. Blade: 1. 9cm; cutting edge: 1.6cm. 5 Revolving knife, hadid. Blade: a 1.18cm; br. 2.5cm. b 1.15cm; br. 2cm, c 1.12cm; br. 1.5cm, d 1.10cm; br. 1cm, e 1.12cm; br. 0.6cm. 6 Fretsaw, mawzad, pl. saqhirah. 1. 20cm. 7 Foxtail saw, mawzarah. 1. 48cm. 8 Flat file, ma'bad, pl. mas'ir; 1. 32cm. 9 Rasps, masram, pl. mashkun. 1. 30cm; br. 3cm. 10 Drill, mas'ir, pl. mashkun; a wooden handle: 1. 20cm; w. 2cm, drill: 1. 20cm; b wooden handle: 1. 20cm; w. 2.5cm, drill: 1. 20cm; c wooden handle: 1. 24cm; w. 3cm, drill: 1. 20cm; d wooden handle: 1. 8cm; w. 3cm, drill: 1. 25cm; e wooden handle: 1. 29cm; w. 3.3cm, drill: 33cm; f wooden handle: 1. 25cm; w. 3cm, drill: w. 41cm. 11 Yemeni (pipe-turner) lathe, mashrabi, pl. mas'hur (properly mas'hur mas'hur). 1. 143cm; br. 29cm; h. 25cm; a) rubbub, pl. rubab — wooden blocks 1.7cm; h. 8.5cm; b) gharab — centre; c) sayyār — slider (centre); d) sī'īd/sana'i'd — slider (outer). The ends of the lathe are two wooden blocks (rubub pl. rubab) about 205 mm x 125 mm x 125 mm. At the bottom are three cut-outs for three wooden bars about 50 mm x 50 mm which run between the two blocks. Two of these, the outside ones, are fixed to one block and the centre one which has peg-holes drilled vertically through it, is fixed to the other. The outer bars (sī'īd pl. sana'i'd) are sliders while the centre one (sayyār) is used to set the spacing of the two centres. The centres (gharab (sing.)) are two right-angled brackets of metal set into the blocks at each end. On the operator’s side of the centres is a bar (tanab) upon which the operator rests his tools as he turns the lathe. These are on the top surface of the blocks. The lathe is turned with a gurūr (pl. aqūr) which the operator holds in his right hand while guiding the chisel with his left. The larger chisel (about 20 mm wide) is called hadidah or qalum, while the small chisel (about 7 mm wide) is the mashkun.

The tool used for drilling the centre of the pipe is the mas'hur.
Carpenters' Tools: 1 hammer, matraqah/masqâr; hammer head: 1.13cm, hammer face – peen: 3cm, eye: w. 1.5cm, handle: 36cm. 2 hammer, nasak/tas'ûq; possibly also wayâsik; hammer head: 1.16cm, hammer face: 1.5cm; peen: 0.5cm, eye: w. 1.5cm, handle: 30cm. 3 Adze, qaddâm; blade: 1.16cm; face: 5 x 3.5cm; cutting edge: 13cm, eye: w. 2cm, handle: 56cm. 4 Foxtail saw, maqsarah, pl. maqâsr; blade: 1.54cm. 5 Fretsaw, maqsarah sâghîrah; I. 1.31cm. 6 Broad saw, takhriqah, pl. takhrîq; 1.31cm. 7 Frame saw, minshâr, pl. manâshîr; 1.120m; br. 60cm. 8 Flat file, mabrad/mabârid, mudhât; 1.21cm; br. 2.3cm. 9 Rasp, mashramah/mashârim; 1.27cm; br. 3cm. 10 Three-sided file, mabrad mathlût; 1.13cm; br. 1.5cm. 11 Plane, mamshaq/mamâshiq; 1.21cm; br. 5.5cm. 12 Rabbet plane, akhârê/khuwâîr; 1.20cm; br. 4cm. 13 Chisel, minqâr/manâqîr; blade: 1.15cm; cutting edge: 1cm. 14 Chisel, maqaddâh/maqaddât; Blade: 1.105cm; cutting edge: 1.5cm. 15 Chisel, furâsî furâsîr; a) 1.8cm; br. 3cm; b) 1.5cm; br. 4cm. 16 Round seal or stamp. 'Round cutter'. (It is then stamped with the ornament by a stamp called mismâr li-‘l-zafrâh. (K.W.J.)Zumbah/pl.-ât; 1.6cm; w. 1cm. 17 Bow/curve for drill, qisâ; also aquat; I. of the wooden bow: 68cm; I. of the leather cord: 75cm. 18 Drill, makhâdir, pl. makhâdir; a) wooden handle: 1.34cm; w. 2cm, drill: 1.25cm; b) wooden handle: 1.37.5cm; w. 2cm, drill: 1.13cm; c) wooden handle: 1.31cm; w. 2.5cm, drill: 1.16cm; d) wooden handle: 1.24cm; w. 2cm, drill: 1.8.5cm. 19 Pliers, ka/bah; 1.16cm. 20 Flat tongs, aarâdyuk, pl. aarâdyûs; 1.10cm. 21 Tongs, tarbek, pl. tarbêk; 1.28cm.

Gobbler's Tools. 1 Hammer, matraqah, pl. masqar 'aftiyuk; hammer head: 1.9cm, hammer face: 3.5cm; peen: 5cm, eye: w. 1.8cm, handle: 22cm. 2 Knife, maf'rad, pl. maf'rad; blade: 1.12.5cm; br. 2cm. 3 Shears, maqasî, pl. maqassî; 1.20cm. 4 Scraper, kasîn, pl. kasînh; blade: 1.13cm; width of cutting edge: 15cm. 5 Scraper, kasîn, pl. kasînh; blade: 1.10cm; width of cutting edge: 11cm. 6 Engraving tool, mashfa, pl. mashfâ; 1.7cm. 7 Awl, makhazâq, pl. makhâzîq; 1.8cm. 8 Tongs, kalbatayn; tongs jaws: 1.9.5cm; tongs shanks: 1.15.5cm.
Fig. 14.5 Systematic ground plan of a smithy (forge) work-shop: A Working area, sun'ah; B Bellows & forge, al-kîr; C Forge, kiinûn; D Coal store, al­maymanah; E Iron store; F Stone water container, hawd.

Fig. 14.6 Blacksmith Tools. 1 Sledge-hammer, dasd/disii/ ( dasd/dusûd ); hammer head: 1. 16cm, hammer face - peen: 4cm, 3cm, eye: w. 3cm, handle ( hrâstcoh, pl. harzeg); 60cm. 2 Forging hammer, mahadd/mahaddâd; hammer head: 1. 14cm, hammer face - peen: 4 x 4cm, eye: w. 2.5cm, handle: 50cm. 3 Forging hammer, maraqah, pl. matriiq; hammer head: 14cm, hammer face: 3cm, peen: 1cm, eye: 1.5cm, handle: 40cm. 4 Cross-chisel for cold metal, furas/furs/furus/surisar; a) 1. 8.5cm; cutting edge: 2cm, b) 1. 6cm; cutting edge: 2.5cm. 5 Cross-chisel for hot metal, sahji/sahjia/sahjî/sahjîn; a) 1. 12cm; w. 3.5 - 2.5cm, b) 1. 10cm; w. 1.7 - 1.5cm, c) 1. 8cm; w. 2.5 - 0.5cm, d) 1. 7cm; w. 1. 2 - 0.7cm. 6 Flat file, mabrad/mabiirid; 1. 28cm. 7 One or single-edged file, marthamah/mushûlî; 1. 22cm. 8 Back saw, minshir/minshikir; length of saw-blade: 49cm. 9 Forge tongs, used for holding the forge, tarbî/jarabî; a) tongs jaws: 1. 13cm; tongs arms: 1. 51cm, b) tongs jaws: 1. 8cm; tongs arms: 1. 48cm. 10 Bent tongs, used for holding objects like axeheads through the hole, mahraj/mahrajî; tongs jaws: 1. 8cm; tongs arms: 1. 38cm. 11 Blacksmith’s straight tongs, mahkâabah/mahkâbî; tongs jaws: 1. 2.7cm; tongs arms: 1. 43cm. 12 Blacksmith’s small tongs, basimah/basimât or basûnîm; tongs jaws: 1. 7cm; tongs arms: 1. 38cm. 13 Forge tongs, mûqajîlalîqî; tongs jaws: 1. 4.6cm; tongs arms: 1. 56cm. 14 Poker, kubâsh; 1. 63cm. 15 Anvil, sulfiâ/sulâfî; h. 20cm; circumference 15 x 16cm. 16 Bellows and Forge, kîr ( pl. kiyar); a) protective shield swifflsuru; 1. 1.5cm, h. 60cm, br. 15cm; b) mud wall/ tsaqa/tsoaq’atî; c) hanûyah: w. 60cm; hanûyah seems to be the word for the exit-hole of air from the bellows, although, on this point no-one was very clear. Air then passes into one kumîn (pl. kumîn al-akmiim) of the mahraj (pl. mahraj) and out of the other into a hole in the wall called râq’ah, the wall being called râq’at. d) wooden board, qamarîyyah/qamarîyyat; e) handle, yadd; f) wooden piece, thâshîba; g) leather tongue, mûqajîlalîqî/ma’dahîf; h) hole in wall, râq’ah; i) forge, kiunûn. (R.W.)
The Organization of Production

Specialization within individual crafts must now be examined. The research has revealed a high degree of specialization in the crafts of smith and joiner only. Special branches among blacksmiths are: the sakkak, smiths who manufacture only window and door fittings; the 'abbal, whose production is limited to agricultural implements ('iblah is the process of re-sharpening or renewing a used agricultural instrument) and the hadad al-nil'al, the daggersmiths. Specialization appears less pronounced among joiners, among whom we find makers of dagger-sheaths (najir al-iswab), wooden locksmiths (najir al-maqhaliq) and joiners who make only wooden combs (mushif, mushu) and bird cages (birj).

Among tailors specialization appears only insofar as individuals have concentrated on making fleece coats (kark), jackets (küt, pl. akwat) or shirts (shamis, shamis).

An additional specialization can be observed in the adaptation to new materials among shoemakers, as some have changed over to making water buckets (dalu) out of rubber tyres. Let us demonstrate how production is organised by taking the example of a complex process of production—dagger-making—and of a simple process—dyeing a veil.

Schematic representation of the organization for manufacturing a dagger.

As may be gathered from the schematic representation of the process of producing a dagger, the manufacture of the blade proceeds independently of the sheath. Below we shall attempt to describe the essential stages of production.

A Dagger-making

1. Dagger-maker
   Widening the blade
  Forging the point
   Reducing the upper end of the blade
   in order to shape the tang
   Hammering the tang short
   Forging the blade
   Forging the shaft
   Filing the edge while red hot
   Shaping the cold blade

2. Blade polishers
   The blade is fastened to a wooden support base (gurub, gurub) with a leather thong
   Smoothing the blade, into which oil is previously rubbed with a stone (samawi)

Polishing
a) with the polishing steel of the type arkah
b) with the polishing steel of the type laqah
c) with the polishing steel of the type sudan

3. Dagger haft makers
   For material a horn imported from Kenya is used
   For finer finishing the object is fastened to a specially constructed wooden support base (tarbū')
   Sawing out the shape of the haft
   Fine working of the haft with the reamer
   Fine working: filing the object fastened to the tarbū'
   Ornamenting the haft:
   Burning in holes
   Hammering in small nails
   Filing off nail heads
   With the same technique a small coin or a piece of coral (mirjan) can be inserted
   Soldering of the haft joint (mabsam, mabasim)

B Making the dagger sheaths

1. Dagger sheath joiners
   A strongish board (about 5cm) is used as material and later sawn up
   Laying the pattern (qalib, qawalib) and marking in the shape
   Sawing out the shape
   Fine working with the big reamer
   Boring the holes for the wooden pegs
   Sawing the material in pieces
   Hollowing out the inner surface with a small reamer (ghurab, ghurab)
   Fastening both parts with wooden pegs
   Smoothing the outer surfaces with a file
2 Dagger-sheath cover makers
For covering material calf leather is used; a mixture of flour and sugar serves as adhesive (ghara)
Glueing a piece on the upper part of the sheath
Rasping out a piece of leather fitting the size of the sheath
Glueing the leather
Drying (2 hours)
Cutting to shape the leather strips intended for sewing (syrūr/siyūr)
Perforating the glued-on leather at the edges
Sewing with the prepared leather strips
Three different techniques are used for decoration:
  a Imprinting
  kharrāz, kharrāzin
  yiqshar bi-‘l-kazān
  yiqshī al-jīlād
  yībās
  yīquu al-siyūr
  yikhzuq
  yībabbis
  yā‘ajjil
  kharra.z, kharra.zin

b Laying small lengths of wood on the dagger sheath, covering the sheath with leather, pressing the leather with graving tool to produce an embossed effect
  ya‘ammid

c Scoring the decorative pattern with a needle
  yikhaff bi-‘l-bīz
14.11 Marking out the shape of the dagger sheath.

14.12 Mounting the leather covered wooden dagger sheath.

14.13 Offering a dagger for sale in Siiq al-Mibsâfah, the old Clothes Market.

As an example of a simple process of production may be cited a craft typical of Sân‘â‘, the craft of the plangi-dyer (šabbâgh, pl., in). This process—a technique in which those parts of the material not subjected to the actual dyeing are tied off so that they do not absorb dye, in order to obtain a certain pattern—is employed for making veils (maghmûq, maghâmiq). The dyers start with white cotton material which they dye black and red. This material is supplied direct by the manufacturer. Mineral and vegetable dyes are employed. The dyers procure the minerals themselves; the vegetable material they buy in the market. For the red dye a mixture of shabb (alum), fuwwah (madder) and hurnd (turmeric, Indian saffron) is used; for the red dye they prepare a mixture of ’awsaj (yellowish dye) and kurkum (saffron, curcuma).

The dyeing process

Tying off
Dyeing with red dye; circular patterns in red are created
Removing the binding
Tying off the places that are to stay red and white
Dyeing with black dye
Removing the binding
Steeping the dyed cloth in a stone receptacle filled with water and fulling it
Beating the cloth with a wooden mallet to make it supple

3 Belt-makers

The belt consist of a lining of sacking/hessian (šurâdi) and the covering material (bazz). The lining is cut out (yismâj) and sewn (yikhayyîj) to the material. A second kind of belt was also noted, in which embroidered material is sewn on.39

39 Interesting details to be found viz. A. Klein.
Fig. 14.7 Dagger Forge Tools. 1 Forge hammer, *matraqah*; hammer head: 1. 16cm, hammer face: 2cm; peen: 1cm, eye: w. 1.5cm, handle: 20cm. 2 Round hammer, *masbat*; hammer head: 1. 13cm; w. 4cm, hammer face: 4 x 4cm, eye: w. 1.5cm, handle: 34cm. 3 Swaging hammer, *matba'ah*; hammer head: 1. 4cm, hammer face: 5 x 3cm; peen: 4 x 4cm, depth of swaging die: 0.9cm, eye: w. 1.5cm, handle: 16cm. 4 Cross-chisel for hot metal, *Juras*; 1. 11cm; length of cutting edge: 2cm. 5 Polishing iron, *maqshis*; 1. 7cm; length of cutting edge: 2cm, handle: 15cm, w. 2cm. 6 Polishing iron, *maqshis*; 1. 8cm; length of cutting edge: 1cm, handle: 12cm, w. 2.5cm. 7 Flat file, *maqshis*; 1. 27cm. 8 Anvil, *Suflah*; h. 30cm; circumference: 16 x 16cm. 9 Swage anvil, *matba'ah*; h. 11cm; circumference: 7.5 x 8cm. 10 Leather forge bellows, *minfah*; 1. 40cm.

Fig. 14.8 Tools of Dagger Blade Polishers. Polishing stone, *'adhiiqi*; 1. 5dm; br. 3.8cm, b) 1. 5cm; br. 3.3 - 1.5cm, c) 1. 6cm; br. 3 - 1cm. 2 Shears, *maqass*; 1. 19cm. 3 Scraper, *kaziin*; 1. 3cm; br. 3.5 - 1.5cm. 4 Cross-chisel for hot metal, *Juras*; 1. 11cm; length of cutting edge: 2cm. 5 Polishing iron, *maqshis*; 1. 8cm; length of cutting edge: 1cm, handle: 12cm, w. 2.5cm. 7 Flat file, *maqshis*; 1. 27cm. 8 Anvil, *Suflah*; h. 30cm; circumference: 16 x 16cm. 9 Swage anvil, *matba'ah*; h. 11cm; circumference: 7.5 x 8cm. 10 Leather forge bellows, *minfah*; 1. 40cm.
The Organization of Trade

Of the total of 1682 businesses in the market area 1016 are engaged in trade, corresponding to a proportion of 60.40%. Of these 741 shops in all (72.93%) stock imported goods. The adverse trade balance between the years 1969-1973 shows an ever-growing deficit as between imports and exports. The increasing trend of imports led to a change of the traditional trade, insofar as only certain newly established trading companies monopolized the imports. As many of these trading companies are located in Hodeidah, the country's main harbour, the import trade in San'a' is dependent on these external companies and their relations to the local government of the Hodeidah district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Deficit</th>
<th>Increase of trade deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969/70</td>
<td>166.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>143.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>174.6</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>161.1</td>
<td>109.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>204.4</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>169.7</td>
<td>122.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>411.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>385.8</td>
<td>262.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in millions of riyals

The San'a' Chamber of Commerce (Ghurfat al-Tijarah) has provided data distinguishing seven categories based on financial criteria, namely the annual contribution (ishtirāk) a merchant has to pay to the Chamber of Commerce. The division is based on the distinction between the merchant (tājir) and the retailer (kassar). As a rendering into European terms appears impossible because of the heterogenous trade structure, the Arabic designations only are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Contribution in riyals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tājir kabir</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tājir mutawassit</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tājir taht al-mutawassit</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40 Yemen Arab Republic, *The Three Years Programme*, 91.
The above includes only merchants who pay this contribution, but there are also the following categories of merchant who play an important part in the life of the market:

- kassar kahir: wholesale commission agent
- dailal/dalil: retail commission agent
- muharrij/muharrijin: auctioneer of retail goods
- mufarrish/mufarrishin: peripatetic trader

The last mentioned category of mufarrishin, also includes the peasants in the market because they offer their goods for sale spread out on the ground. Sometimes the mufarrish is also called basij (pl., -in).

The fact that a distinction between two groups of traders exists—the merchants linked to the Chamber of Commerce and those not linked in this way-needs explanation. This classification becomes intelligible if we see it in connection with two different market systems. The first group is to be coordinated with the urban market system; it could have developed from the specific needs of urban society. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the costs of the watch organization, with which we shall deal later, are borne by this group. These merchants contrast with the unorganized traders whose function corresponds to that of the middlemen (mušlih, mušliḥ) operating in the rural weekly markets. This group of traders forms an important pattern of urban trade insofar as it follows the traditional rules, which, in fact, are broken today. If the traditional customs are observed, delivery of goods is effected through such middlemen as have naturally specialized in dealing in certain goods. From this trade custom it follows that we have to reckon with a market system similar to that of the rural weekly market. In the present commercial sector of the commercial market it will be conceded that two market systems exist—the system of trade that is carried on by the merchants organized in the Chamber of Commerce and the market system corresponding to that of the rural weekly markets. It is to be assumed that the latter system is probably the older.

It is suggested therefore that the urban market developed as follows. From a market system similar to that of the rural weekly market a market system developed with organized trade that could best satisfy an urban society's demand for consumer goods. The merchants organized in sectional markets from a group of associates. This becomes remarkably clear in the Chamber of Commerce—the common interest of which, alongside the regulation of the supply of goods, lies in the safety of these goods stored in the shops. If on the other hand the correctness of the assumption be conceded that the group of unorganized traders belongs to the older system, then it can be explained why the traders in this group, even today, perform such important functions in the commercial sector. To indicate the nature of this latter group something must first be said about certain aspects of the rural weekly market.

The fact that the chief products of the peasant economy are handled through intermediaries gains an importance. The Shaykh al-Siqiq, responsible for order and security in the market, nominates four men as mušliḥ, the intermediaries. These men are confirmed in their functions as mušliḥ by vote of the tribal members of the district in which the market lies. They are mostly tribal members with commercial experience well informed about the actual state of supply and demand and therefore able to influence and regulate prices. One can distinguish between two kinds of intermediaries—the mušliḥ and kayai. The men acting as mušliḥ are free tribal members, for the kayai a member of the socially inferior muqayyarah is preferred. The competence of the

three mušaliḥ is exactly defined—the sale of cattle, sheep-and-goats and wood. The kayai mediates exclusively in the sale of grain. All other products such as vegetables, grapes, cattle fodder etc., are offered for sale direct by the peasant. This function of intermediaries in maintaining order is doubtless rooted in the tendency of the tribal community to avoid, from the outset, disputes having an economic basis. This means that the institution of intermediaries can be explained by the attitude of tribal law.

Let this short digression conclude discussion of the evidence for a supposedly older system in the urban market as, for the time being, we can produce no further facts to confirm or refute this assumption. In the presentation of the class system I have referred to the correspondence of the urban class order in Ṣan‘ā’ with that of the tribes. If the assumption be accepted as feasible then the continuing influence of the weekly rural market on the urban market is yet another indication of the correspondence between the two class orders—urban and tribal.

The Organization of the Merchant Class

In the Council of the Chamber of Commerce (Ghufrat al-Tiijarah) the merchant class is clearly demarcated from the other occupational groups operating in the market. The Chamber of Commerce, whose articles came into force in the year 1963, is the organization which succeeded the Assembly of Merchants (Majlis al-Tiijarah) that functioned in pre-Republican times. It is based on the traditional Arādık organization asofar as the members of the Chamber are elected from among the Shaykhās of the market sector. Every two years the merchants meet to elect representatives to the Chamber. These then nominate from among themselves the President of the Chamber. This office is usually held by members of respected families such as Bayt Salāḥ or Bayt Da’ūman; today the Chamber is presided over by Ḫusayn ‘All al-Watārī whose family enjoys great respect.

Besides the representation of the interests of the merchants the following functions are part of the work of the Chamber.

1 Supervision of balance of prices (mutu’ādīl al-asʿār) of foreign goods by an official paid by the Chamber.
2 Collecting the zakāt tax by the Amin al-Ṣundūq. The tax receipts are remitted to the Government. One tenth of the total amount is retained for payment of the staff. The amount of the tax receipts is estimated at approximately 1,700,000 riyāls.
3 Election and payment of the Shaykh al-Layl, who bears the responsibility for the policing of the commercial sector at night.

In consequence of the specialization of many traders in certain goods the merchant class proves sharply differentiated. From this factor there developed communication systems by which, for example, price agreements between two merchants are not divulged to a third party: it concerns the custom of communication by gesture and of a secret language specific to a group. Communication by gesture is called al-habi bi-t-tiṣāb. With their hands under a piece of cloth both partners come to an understanding about the price by means of finger movements. Each finger or part of a finger stands for a certain number, as can be seen from the illustrations. Simultaneously, rejection or agreement are signalled by the eyes.

Concerning the secret language, al-lughah al-istilāhīyyah, I was unable, for understandable reasons, to obtain any information.

One riyal, or, one hundred riyals, or, one thousand riyals, etc.

Two riyals, or, two hundred riyals, or, two thousand riyals, etc.

Three riyals, etc., as previous.

Four riyals, etc.

Five riyals, etc.

Six riyals, etc. Grasping the little finger indicates one over five.

Seven riyals, etc. Grasping the little finger and third finger indicates plus two over five.

Eight riyals, etc. Grasping the three end fingers indicates plus three over five.

Nine riyals, etc. Grasping all four fingers, but not the thumb, indicates plus four over five.

Ten riyals, etc. Placing the palm of the hand on the palm indicates ten.

Fig. 14.11. Al-Haš bi'-l-yad
the mušših, dealer, middleman puts his hand under the sleeve (kumrn), or a piece of cloth, with that of the purchaser or vendor, and the two communicate by touch without the bystanders being aware of the progress of the transaction.
The Policing System

As can be perceived by an observer, the policing system is exercised by means of watch posts (maḥras, maḥāris). On the map the policed area is clearly demarcated from the unprotected parts of the market, in which the workshops of the joiners, shoe-makers and smiths are situated. These watch posts are built on parts of the market, in which the workshops of the joiners, shoemakers and smiths are situated. They lie close enough together for the watchmen to communicate with one another.

This policing system is legally established in the veto prohibiting all shopkeepers from entering the market area after evening prayer and during the night. This regulation is already exemplified in pre-Islamic times in the market regulations of Timna '. From the organizational point of view this system is based on the institution of Shaykh al-Layl and the watchman. The Shaykh al-Layl is elected and paid by the Chamber of Commerce. For this office the candidate must possess the following qualifications: he must count as trustworthy (maṣūdā') in the judgement of the merchants since goods are entrusted to his care; he must also be in a position to stand security (jamānāh) for these goods. This latter requirement follows from the obligation of the Shaykh al-Layl to make good any loss caused by theft during the night. For this reason the financial resources of each candidate for this office are checked to ascertain to what extent he can assume such liabilities. In fact the Shaykh al-Layl cannot be sued for the full amount if the loss is excessively high. In such a case the Council of the Chamber of Commerce functioning as mediator decides that the loss is excessively high. As a rule candidates for this office, which is associated with high social prestige, come from such families as enjoy great respect in San'a' society, as, for example: Bayt Qubban, Bayt Qatta', Bayt al-Sallāl, Bayt al-DalJman, Bayt al-Dabab and Bayt al-I;Iabarī. At present Yahya Qubban occupies this office. The Shaykh al-Layl receives a monthly remuneration of 500 ṭiyāls paid by the Chamber of Commerce. This income is augmented by fees the merchants have to pay on goods imported into the market. These duties (marjū'ah) amount to 4 ṭiyāls for a big truck load, 2 ṭiyāls for a small truck load, 2 ṭiyāls for a sack of qishr.

The watchmen (ḥaris, ḥarasah), today about 120 strong, are recruited exclusively from among the porters (ḥamīl, ḥamalah). They receive no remuneration for their watch duties. This is included in payment for transport of goods (ḥamīlah). It is a question of an extension of the responsibility of the porters, who are likewise responsible for the safety of goods in transit—to the warehouse and from the warehouse to the business premises. For this reason only the porters are permitted to enter the warehouses (samārah) during loading and unloading of goods: only on this condition can they assume the burden of responsibility.

This responsibility confers high social prestige on the porters, surpassed only by that of the watchmen. The porters are, without exception, free tribal members, and only such men are accepted as can provide security (kafil). Members of the Bani 'l-Khums and the Muzayyinah are not admitted to this occupation. When a porter decides to enter the watch service, he usually gives the Shaykh al-Layl a small present (eggs, ghee). The watchmen are granted ten holidays (qiyāb) on Islamic festivals. The Shaykh al-Layl must himself find substitutes for this period, whom he pays himself. For this he receives contributions from the merchants (mas'adah li-shaykh al-layl min šān al-hirāsah).

The watchmen choose an 'Aqil al-Hirāsah from among themselves. He acts as the representative of the Shaykh al-Layl and allot the watchmen's duty periods. Within the market area the watchmen now have at their disposal a room, situated in the top left is a cabin in brick for the night watchman.

Grain Market (Sūq al-Ḥabb), in which they can stay and make tea. While on patrol they are only armed with sticks. A captured thief is handed over to the police the next morning.

The Economic Relations of the Urban Market to its Rural Hinterland

We are concerned in the first place, with the mechanism of the disposal of agricultural products on the urban market. For better understanding one must start with some observations on agricultural production in the hinterland of San'ā'. Valuable information on this point is provided by figures of the yield from the cultivation and the planting of the most important products as given to me by thirty-six authorities: according to them a field of half a hectare of qūr produces an annual yield of 9,000 to 13,000 ṭiyāls, a vineyard of the same size about 3,600 ṭiyāls, a half-hectare field of ḍhurah between 1,200 and 2,500 ṭiyāls, of barley about 960 ṭiyāls.

Caution must always be exercised with regard to statistics but it emerges that qūr and grapes (raisins) are the most important agricultural products. Among other products and crops impor-
 tant as foodstuffs must be mentioned vegetables, various kinds of fruit, ghee and sesame for extracting oil, as also sheep-and-goats. The disposal of products follows the customs already mentioned as characteristic in the description of the rural weekly markets. The chief products, qât and grapes (raisins) are handled through middlemen; all other products are offered directly on the market by the peasants (vitasawuq), this means that the products are converted into money (yitsarraf). Let us now consider the regulations on the sale of qât. In Ṣan‘ā’ they consider three kinds of qât, to be of the most excellent quality—Qaryah, Wâdi and Dûlâ‘i.\(^{45}\)

The description follows the origin, for example: Ḥarâži, Ḥaymi, Sawdi, Ḥaddi, Khawlañi, Rijâmi, Sirri etc. Qât is offered for sale in three ways: (a) big bundles (marbah, marâbiq) (b) small bundles (ribah, ribâq, ḥabbâq, ḥabbâr, the latter seemingly more of Ta‘izz than a Ṣan‘ā’i term); (c) lots of 10 ḥabbâr wrapped in banana leaves, the bundle being known as qarn, pl., qurün.

The traders specializing in the sale of qât (muqawwit) are organized as wholesale commission agents (wakîl, wukala‘) and as retail traders (mufawid, pl., mufawidîn). The sale is organized as follows: the peasant delivers the goods to the wakil. The wakil receives a 10% share (‘amülah) of the proceeds of the sale. That means that the peasant receives a return on the qât supplied by him only after the sale by the wakil. This practice demands a relationship of mutual trust, which usually leads to the result that the peasants mostly enter into business relations with a wakil well known to them. The wakil sells the goods to the retailers, but can also offer it direct to the buyers. The retailer’s margin amounts to 10%. The price fixed is by bargaining (mughalah).

Today a partial change in the sale process is already becoming noticeable, as the peasants are changing over to offering their goods direct on the market. Thereby they save 10% commission to the wakil, though instead they must put up with a considerable loss of time in the sale of the article. As already recorded grapes and raisins are the next most important agricultural products. In the north east hinterland of Ṣan‘ā’, in the district of the Bani Ḥushaysh, 14 different kinds of grapes are grown. The following list gives an idea of the quantitative distribution of the individual kinds of grapes: it is based on the evidence of 6 random tests in a total of 1281 grape-vines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of grape</th>
<th>Number of grape-vines</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Râziqî</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>60.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Âṣâni</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>13.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awsad</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>9.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayqî</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>6.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Irqî</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥâlimî</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jawfî</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adhârî</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaytûn</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Âtrafî</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 1281

Râziqî grapes are preeminently suitable for raisins as are Awsad and Bayqî grapes, whereas the ‘Âṣâni grapes are taken fresh to the market. From the table of the numerical distribution of the types of grape it emerges that viticulture is predominantly concentrated on the production of raisins.

The process of converting into raisins is very simple. The peasant constructs rectangular wooden platforms (‘awshah, ‘awashat) in open spaces in the vineyards or near the houses. The grapes are either hung under the lattice work of this platform or strewn on it. In the latter case they must be covered with bushes to protect them from too intense a sun. After 50 or 60 days the grapes are dry. As a rule the peasants sell two-thirds of the raisins: the rest they keep to cover their own needs.

\(^{45}\) I. Tâhir, S. M. Yacoub & A. Akil, 26, passim.
The sale follows the procedure of the middleman. The latter sells the grapes or raisins with an addition of 10 baghshaks per rafid. In contrast to the sale of qat, in this case the peasant receives an agreed sum on delivery of goods to the middleman. Today it can be observed, exactly as in the case of the sale of qat, that many peasants bring fresh grapes to the market themselves, a sign that they are beginning to transform the traditional sales procedures.

Until now only two examples have been given, describing the economic relations between town and country from the viewpoint of agricultural production, but these by no means exhaust all aspects of this relationship. Hand made products play a fairly important part in the economy as well. For instance wicker-work for bread cushions (makhba zah) is to be mentioned, which the peasants’ wives weave as a cottage industry.

The woven parts are delivered to the saddlers, who take over the finishing. In the urban market we find various other wicker-work produced as home industry besides the makhba zah.

However, the proportion of products manufactured by home industry is very small. The economic significance is so slight that the proceeds can be described as casual earnings. Two sectors of peasant production prove of greater economic importance in relation to the urban market—pottery and agate polishing. To avoid any vagueness that might result from the concept of ‘peasant production’, it must be indicated that these two industries have a clear social ranking. Agate polishing is in the hands of free tribal members, whereas pottery making is carried on by the socially inferior muzayyinah. It is of some interest to outline the techniques of both these products as, to the best of my knowledge, no descriptions of them are yet available.

I will demonstrate the pottery techniques by the example of the local industry of al-Šurab, lying in Wādi Sirr, and almost exclusively inhabited by potters. From al-Šurab comes most pottery on sale in the market of Šan’a’. It goes under the name of ‘Surab’. An essential characteristic of the pottery technique in al-Šurab is the manufacturing process without the use of the potter’s wheel. Here the process known as the paddle-anvil technique is employed, based on the following principle—the clay is flattened out, laid on a base and shaped on it with a mallet (masfaḥāb, pl., masfāfī). This base (manṣa‘ah, manṣa‘ū) has the shape of a hemisphere and is made of clay. It is a simple matrix process by which a considerable volume of production can be attained in a relatively short time. The daily production of an economic unit comprises 30 pots or 15 coffee pots. Following the division of labour between the sexes, the women prepare the clay and do the shaping, the men take on the decorating, burning and sale of the pottery.

On the production process:

A Preparing the clay
Cleaning the clay by mixing with water yihiru al-τrāb
Drying the clay (24 hours) yahas al-τrāb
Breaking up the clay with a stick yalbis al-τin
Sifting by means of two sieves of different sizes (mihkhal, manākhī)
yinkhul
Thinning the clay by adding chopped straw or donkey dung yuhhallib

B Shaping the clay
Flattening the lump of clay yinta‘
Leaving the clay on the base, shaping the side of the vessel, first with the hands, then with a mallet yisfāḥ
Letting the shaped object dry yifadhits fi-‘l-shams
Shaping the edge yisfāḥ

46 Bernisch Historisches Museum, Ethnographical Department, Inv. Nr. Do. 71.212.99.
pottery has in the household utensils sector.

For the description of the technical process that is used by the agate polishers I depend on the notes that I took in 1971 during my stay in Asafi, a place in the Wadi Srr.

The raw agate stones ('aqiq) come from the Ānis country, where they are collected by the agate polishers themselves or bought from the peasants living there.

Agate polishing is carried on only by men. Their technical equipment consists of: a twin hammer (ma'raqah), a holding stick (lak) 48 on the end of which a stone is always fastened with a mixture of frankincense, clay and oil. Also four surfaces about 90cm high consisting of different kinds of stone.

Polishing a stone takes about 1 to 2 hours so that a day's production reaches a maximum of 6 to 8 polished agate stones.

The production process

Heating the agate over a fire

Polishing on a red limestone

Polishing on white limestone

Polishing on grey limestone

Polishing on a yellow limestone

Nowadays the agate polishers sell most of their production to the silversmiths in the urban market, also to the antique dealers as a result of the stream of tourists. Tribesfolk mostly buy the stones direct from the agate polisher.

The Special Feature of Ṣan‘ā’ Market

This paragraph is concerned with what may be designated as 'typical' of the urban Market of Ṣan‘ā’. Two market systems now function intact in the central highlands of which Ṣan‘ā’ constitutes the urban centre: the network of rural weekly markets, which begins at al-Rawgah, about 8km outside Ṣan‘ā’, and the Ṣan‘ā’ market itself. In view of the geographical coexistence of these two market systems it seems advisable to tackle the problem to be treated here from this position. This coexistence poses the question as to whether the specific conditions of the ecology of the central highlands exercise an influence on the market structure there. I shall deal with this question because only when it has been cleared up will it be possible to bring into prominence the distinctive socio-economic features with greater lucidity. For this reason I have decided to compare five of the weekly markets I studied in the highlands with the same number of weekly markets in the Tihamah studied by H. Escher, and finally to compare them with the Ṣan‘ā’ market. To do this I had to adopt H. Escher's code of market classifications, which is adapted to the offer of goods in the Tihamah and therefore does not always correspond to that of the central highlands. 49 To make this comparison possible I could not avoid some inaccuracies.

Table 3 The weekly markets in the Tihamah

The first number in the columns of the actual weekly markets refers to the number of traders.

The second number to the percentage of the total of all traders in the weekly market concerned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of goods</th>
<th>Weekly markets of the Tihamah</th>
<th>Weekly markets of the Central Highlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>6.68</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>8.27</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household goods</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 The weekly markets of the central highlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of goods</th>
<th>Weekly markets</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household goods</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 Percentage of the categories of goods of the total of all traders in the weekly markets and in the Ṣan‘ā’ Market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of goods</th>
<th>Weekly markets of the Tihamah</th>
<th>Weekly markets of the Central Highlands</th>
<th>Ṣan‘ā’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>13.84</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>11.98</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>9.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>11.98</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>9.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household goods</td>
<td>9.61</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78.57%</td>
<td>44.43%</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

San’ā‘—An Arabian Islamic City

Explanation:

Cereals: dhuruh, dhubh, maize, wheat, rice, flours, fulbah, sesame
Sugar: salt, biscuits, sweets, cakes, sweets, honey, sugar, cane syrup
Fats: ghee, sesame oil, local oil, local ghee, foreign oils
Vegetables: pulses, onions, potatoes, vegetables, lady’s fingers, tomatoes
Spices: pepper, ginger, dried fish, local spices, foreign spices
Stimulants: cigarettes, opium, alcohol, tobacco, snuff, dhurum (bhanggum)
Textiles: clothes, blankets, sewing notions, zippers, hats
Shoes: sandals, leather and plastic belts, leather products, plastic shoes and slippers
House wares: baskets, mats, ropes, strings, plastic ropes, empty sacks, hats, pots, plates, waterpipes, aluminium wares: cooking pots, pans, plastic canisters, buckets, cups, glasses, feeding bottles (plastic), china ware

We begin with the comparison of the weekly market on the basis of the classified material in Table 3. The Tihamah markets have two striking peculiarities: 1) the numerical preponderance of the categories of goods selected for the comparison with 78.57% of the total supply of goods on the markets; 2) the high proportion of cereals within the categories of goods recorded, standing at more than one third. With regard to the weekly markets of the central highlands the following facts stand out prominently: 1) the numerically small proportion of the selected categories of goods (only 44.43%) and 2) the strikingly high proportion of stimulants (11.38%). The interpretation of these varied characteristics can, of course, be only hypothetical since the present position of research makes more precise statements impossible. In the comparative tables the variety of the ecological zones clearly shows, on the one hand, the coastal plains of the Tihamah with its oasis culture, on the other, the central highlands with an agriculture blessed by rainfall, and, today, supplemented by pump irrigation. Without wishing to underestimate the influence of environmental factors, we shall produce evidence that, in connection with the characteristics shown by the tables, certain socio-cultural requirements are also formative factors. To explain the strikingly high percentage of cereals on the markets of the Tihamah, in addition to the favourable environmental conditions for productive cereal cultivation, it must be taken into account that the peasants dispose of cereals in the market to be able to meet their debts. Even if the economic unit concerned must forego essential means of existence, a large part of life; presumably the causes for this could be found in the conflict between the traditional and the new order of values. In my opinion the high proportion of stimulants on the markets of the highlands is to be viewed in connection with the low quota of


For our purpose it is important first to establish in what respect the two market systems differ structurally from each other.

1 In the urban market handicraft production assumes an importance lacking in the rural weekly markets. Only occasionally do some craftsmen offer their products at the latter. This is understandable if we consider the customs in tribal territory, in accordance with which tribal members, in the capacity of principals, deal direct with the craftsmen in their territory, who in turn supply direct. In connection with handicraft production a peculiarity must be borne in mind with far-reaching consequences for the importance of the urban market, namely the fact that the production of arms is concentrated there.

2 The organization in handicraft and merchant sectors in the urban market bears the imprint of a pronounced differentiation. The sectional organization of the market is, however, much less pronounced in the structure of the weekly markets.

3 At the urban market imported goods predominate, whereas, at the weekly markets, domestic products are extremely important.

4 The institutions important for urban market life, such as the money depository, warehouses, wholesale organizations, are lacking in the weekly markets, which are co-ordinated with intra-tribal and inter-tribal exchange of commodities.
Finally, the urban market is distinguished from the weekly markets by the level of the buildings and by the siting of the market with the market centre proper and peripheral markets.

The features common to both market systems must, of course, also be considered. They all originate—except in the geographical separation of residential and market zones proper—in the nature of Yemeni society.

1. The institution of the Shaykh al-Sūq.
2. The institution of intermediaries (mušlih, dallūl) in business transactions.
3. The haram (inviolate) status of the market. Its social function is to be seen in the fact that thereby involvement in conflict is said to be prevented. During my stay in Ṣan‘ā’ Market I observed no real quarrels except during Ramaḍān. With regard to quarrels during Ramaḍān one must realise that people become more irritable because of the complete reversal of their customary way of life.

I have described some characteristics that fit naturally into the frame of reference of what can be designated as an urban market, but some go beyond this frame of reference, among which I mean resemblances to the weekly market systems. It is this very relationship that deserves our special consideration when contemplating the development of urban society of Ṣan‘ā’.

---

### Appendix 1

**The Warehouses (samāsir)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market Centre</th>
<th>Warehouse Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Qūzī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Imām al-Mahdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Yaḥūḥ b. Qāsim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. ‘Arifī al-Tināh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Manṣūrī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. ‘Ali b. al-Shāwī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Sūq al-Mīnqālah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Zubayrī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Muhammad Luṭf al-Dhīrāyah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Yaḥūḥ al-Nā‘āmī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Wardah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Bawānī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Mutarrīb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Qāt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Sawd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Muqṭrān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. ‘Arifī al-‘Awādī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. ’Aṭīyah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. ‘Arifī al-Shāmī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-‘Umarī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Wardah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Sa’ādah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Dawmārī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Hajādāyid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. Bayt al-Jindārī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S. al-Tayyīf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following warehouses are situated in the Market centre (makhzan):

- Makhzan al-Salīf
- Makhzan al-Ḥabb

---

### Appendix 2

**The Most Important Wells in the Market**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Well Name</th>
<th>Donor:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Süq Bāb al-Yaman</td>
<td>Sabīl ‘Aḥmad al-Suwaydī donated 1343/1924-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Süq al-‘Aṣrār      | one well donated by al-Ḥājj Ḥusayn al-
|                   | Ahjīrī                                      |
| Süq al-Ḥinnā       | one well donated 1349/1930-31               |
| Süq al-Ḥalaqāh     | Sabīl Sayyīd Ismā‘īl b. Muḥammad al-
|                   | Ghumdān donated 1319/1918-19                |
| Süq al-Jabbānāh    | Sabīl Bayt ‘Amr donated 1369/1941 by al-
|                   | Ḥājj ‘Aṭī ‘Amr                           |
| Süq al-Baṣṣār      | Sabīl ‘Aḥmad al-‘Irayhī                 |
| Süq Ḥārat al-Maddār| Sabīl al-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-Maddār         |
| Süq al-Salāb       | Sabīl Ḥusayn al-‘Umāyri               |
| Süq al-Bazz        | Sabīl al-Qirsh                           |
| Süq Ja‘lān al-Qaytā | Sabīl Bayt al-Qaṣṭa                  |
| Süq al-Jilā‘Jilā   | Sabīl Dağbas donated by al-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-
|                   | Sāliḥ al-Sayyād                      |
| Süq al-Ẓāḥīt       | Sabīl Ḥusayn b. Qāsim al-Yamānī         |
| Süq al-Ḥabb        | donated 1358/1939-40                    |
| Süq al-Ṭīfādah     | Sabīl al-Ḥājj ʿAbd al-Baṭṭar           |
| Süq al-Ṣawwānī     | Sabīl al-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-Ṣawwānī        |
| Süq al-Fāṣṣān      | One well                                 |
| Süq al-Ghāṣān      | Sabīl al-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-Ṣawwānī        |
| Süq al-Qamārī      | Sabīl constructed by al-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-
|                   | al-Ṣawwānī                               |

(Masājid Ṣan‘ā’, 86)
Chapter 15
The Buildings of the Sūq/Market

The sūq has the lowest buildings of any part of Šan‘ā’, most of them single-storeyed. Rising out of this area of low roofs, however, are the great blocks of the largest buildings in the city, the public warehouses, the samsarahs which tower above the shops. In addition to these two types of buildings there is a number of other types scattered through the sūq, tea shops, eating places and inns or hostries, communal apartment buildings, watchtowers, drinking basins, sesame mills and workshops for craftsmen. This chapter deals not only with these types of building, but also refers to a type of public ‘building’ not specifically connected with the sūq, but serving it as well as the rest of the city. This is the large well with a long ramp down which animals walk as they draw water to the top.

(A) The Sūq, its Shops and Workshops

The alleyways between the shops are narrow, seldom more than three metres wide, though in places they open into clearings in which public drinking basins may be situated. Each Quarter has an open space (li-kull ūrah ġarih), for air, children to play in, etc., but it is not a sūq. Coming through from Ħārat al-Abhar to Ħārat al-Ĵāmi’ there is a ġarih with the tallest house in Šan‘ā’ belonging to the merchant family al-Sinaydar.

The shops are seldom more than three metres square, sometimes as small as one metre by one and a half metres. They are raised on a masonry plinth 50cm or more high which often projects in the form of one or two steps. The structure of the shop is usually in brick, plastered and painted white. Wooden doors close the front of the shop, which has a wooden counter, a wooden cupboard on one side to contain the water-pipe for smoking (see pl.15.15) and sometimes a set of built-in drawers for money on the other side. Separate chests of drawers in which goods such as spices are kept are called mi‘ārah. We were told of fine examples made with inlay of bone actually manufactured in the Yemen at one time. The remainder of the space is lined with shelves. Only in the larger shops is there a door leading to a store-room at the rear.

Workshops for many crafts take the same form. For example, the crafts of dagger-mounting, belt-making, shoe-making, silver and goldsmithery are carried on in the small floor areas in the shops between the counter and the shelves. Crafts such as forging metal, making plaster tracery windows, etc., have workshops of the same size and type without the counter and shelves.

The age of the buildings in the sūq is difficult to establish. On architectural grounds parts of it are ancient. The construction of the stonework, laced with large wooden baulks, of part of the Carpentry Market (Sūq al-Minjarah), the Shoemakers’ Market (Sūq al-Minqalah) and the Blacksmiths’ Market (Sūq al-Miḥdādh) seems some of the oldest stone and timber construction surviving in Šan‘ā’. It is accepted as such by some
travelling in the days before the motor car the wayfarer would

find, besides the samsarahs, the miqhayah—mostly in the Thahamah or its low foothills—little more than a large shelter on poles with charpoy beds, cool in the hot weather, and a cabin or two for the proprietor and his family. In the northern mountains he would be able to use the daymah, often a pious foundation, a hut constructed on stone arches, with flat stones to roof it, often in a primitive dome form. It would have a plaster-cemented cistern for water close at hand. The samsarahs constructed round a central court is more suited to the mountains and districts where security at night is a problem.

The caravanserai in the Yemen is generally called samsarah, but the word may be no more than a few centuries old, and as early an author as Ibn Rustah (3rd/9th century) says that San'a' has many samsarahs, cool in the hot weather, and a cabin or two for the

local scholars. Pieces of pre-Islamic stone such as column drums can be seen lying about in parts of the suq, sometimes incorporated into a structure.

(B) Samsarahs

The caravanserai in the Yemen is generally called samsarah, but the word may be no more than a few centuries old, and as early an author as Ibn Rustah (3rd/9th century) says that San'a' has many samsarahs, a word still used sometimes even in the present century. Travelling in the days before the motor car the wayfarer would find, besides the samsarahs, the miqhayah—mostly in the Thahamah or its low foothills—little more than a large shelter on poles with charpoy beds, cool in the hot weather, and a cabin or two for the proprietor and his family. In the northern mountains he would be able to use the daymah, often a pious foundation, a hut constructed on stone arches, with flat stones to roof it, often in a primitive dome form. It would have a plaster-cemented cistern for water close at hand. The samsarahs constructed round a central court is more suited to the mountains and districts where security at night is a problem.

The transport of goods and persons over long distances in the Yemen was well organized as may be seen from the regulations in Qanun San'a'. The distances between city and city were exactly measured out in terms of time taken to move from point to point, and in the days of caravans the stages were so well arranged that from the last stop before San'a', the donkeys, being quicker, would arrive there before noon, and the camels about 'ashr time.

Niebuhr, on his way from Mocha to San'a', stayed at inns known as matrikh, which simply appear to have been houses, but after al-Qā'idah, north of Ta'izz, his party came to the samsarah he calls Mharras.

Depuis Mharras jusqu'à Sana on trouve presque à chaque journée, et même à des demi-journées de chemin une grosse Simsera bâtie de briques cuites. Ces édifices ont été bâtis ainsi que les Chans ou Karwanseras en Turquie, par des personnes riches pour la commodité des voyageurs. Mais ces Simseras ne fournissent pas même les aisons, qu'on trouve dans une Hôtellerie en Europe. Un voyageur qui ne peut se contenter de Caffé, de Ris, de Pain, et de Beurre doit se munir d'autres provisions, car se sont là les seules qu'on puisse se procurer à ces auberges. Au reste on peut compter d'y être dans une parfait sûreté. Il n'y a à chacun de ces édifices qu'une seule porte, sur la ferme régulièrement tous les soirs, et lorsqu'on est prêt de la revirer le matin, c'est la coûte mon dans quelques endroits d'en donner avis aux voyageurs auparavant, afin que chacun puisse examiner s'il a rien perdu.

One of the very large establishments marked on Niebuhr's map is the Samsarat Majil al-Qubbatayn between Nakhlat al-Ḥamra' and San'a' on the San'a'-Ta'izz road route prior to the construction of the present motor road. This is evidently medieval, with stone cornicing, and it is recorded that the Imam al-Mu'ayyad (ob. 1053/1643-4) repaired Samsarat al-Qubbatayn after al-Ḥajj Aḥmad al-Asādī had destroyed it, and built the paved stepped road (muduraj) to Shahārah.5 There are great cisterns full of water, a miqhayah, and drinking troughs for animals, but since 1972 the samsarah itself is said to have been demolished for building stone.

The northern road from San'a' is Samsarat Mā'mar of which it is suggested that it was built by Queen 'Arwā—this place is probably Ibn al-Mujawir's Marmal, three farsabs from San'a', and it is here that Imam Yahyā assembled his supporters before entering San'a' in late 1918 when the Turks left the Yemen after World War I. Between it and San'a' is a stone misabar, built by Sinān Pasha during the first Ottoman occupation, for it seems the Turks could not reach Amrān from San'a' in one day.

In Wādī Dahr is the well-known Samsarat al-Miqahwī where tribes, and I think the Imam's own guards, the 'Ukhfah, used to stay before visiting Imam Yahyā at Dār al-Hajar there.

In San'a' the samsarahs are waqf property. One of the pious benefactions of Aḥmad, son of the Imam al-Manṣūr, who died in 1006/1597 at Sa'dah, was to set up the Jami' Mosque of al-Rawḍah. He made a waqf to it whereby it would be maintained,

1 Qādi 'Ali Abu 'l-Rijāl, Deputy Minister of Public Works, for example, who also thinks that the Spicery Market (Sūq al-Miṣir) and the Sūq of the water-pipes (matūd) for smoking are ancient.
2 Al-dī'āq al-nafīsh, 112. Cf. Stern's Rāzī, p.112 above. Al-Rāzī, op. cit., speaks of kābi mausāl which may be a sort of samsarah, the latter word being unknown to him.
3 Zābareh, Nashr al-urf, gives these distances when he inserts a geographical note on a town or village.
4 Description, 1, 314.
5 Tabāq al-qubās, 16 a.
6 Tarīkh al-mustabiir, 202. Cfr. al-Rāzī, Turāk, 82. Ḍīn (the qiblah of San'a') is Ḍabāl Marmal.
7 Tabāq al-qubās, 31 a.
San'a': An Arabian Islamic City

part of which was the Samsarah of the Grape Market (Siqāq al-'Inab) etc. Among his benefactions was Samsarat al-Azaqayn which he constructed following a recommendation from his wife, Bint al-Mutawakkil, the samsarah of Raydah, and others.

When the Imam al-Madrasat al-Sharafiyyah (kayfīyāt) enlarged the Jamī' Mosque of a place called al-Hüayyan in 1068/1657-8, he ordered a great cistern (birhāh) and lavatories (majāhūr) to be made. He set up also a siqāyāh near the Jamī' for drinking as well as a samsarah in the Market which he made a waqf to the Jamī' Mosque, after God had made, at his hands, the springs (ghuyūl) running to the Jamī' abundant.

The most famous of all the samsarahs however, this also being founded in the great days of al-Mutawakkil, was Samsarat Muḥammad b. al-Hasān b. al-Qāsim, sometimes called Samsarat Muhammad b. Abṣān. It was a renowned Amir of the house of al-Qāsim, Sayyid Muḥammad b. Ḥasan, who, some time between 1054/1644 and his death in 1079/1668, built this samsarah named after him, the like of which has never been built in San'a', nor in the Yemen is there anything resembling it in the height of its elevation and spaciousness, for it includes storeys (largehouses) containing about one hundred and twenty-two (kayfīyāt) and each storey is of a fashion (kayfīyāt) different from the other. It became one of the highest castles (qaṣār) in San'a', and not only in the Yemen is it still the case that all three serve others.

The second great samsarahs were the Masjid al-'Alamān and the Maṣjid al-Baqar or Cattle Market. In Yarim today the bakhkhar, store, goes, seems the term used for the samsarah in the sense of a warehouse.

The samsarı rented, as he still does, the samsarah from the Waqf, being known as the holder (qabīt al-samsarah). Since samsarahs are generally known by the name of their tenant proprietor it is difficult to trace their history, though certainly references to waqf documents could probably answer this question. Like the miqabihī and the muṣayyīn, this is one of the despised occupations—this of course does not mean that it was unproductive. One says contemptuously of somebody one considers as bad as another evil person, 'Dhi bi-l-majannah min dhi bi-l-samsarah.' That is to say his forbears (salaf) just as bad as he, their successor (khulula), is. The stigma probably comes through the fact that all three serve others.

Country Jews used to dwell the somewhat hesitating hospitality of the San'a' Jews, with the saying, 'Ḥayyā' ibn 'ammī, at-tjī 'inda-na aro la-l-samsarah adfa lak? Come cousin, will you come to my house, or (do you find) the samsarah warmer for you?' Similarly Muslims not from San'a' tend to think disparagingly of the hospitality of San'a' folk. This sentiment is expressed in one of Qādirī Samī'ī's proverbs from Dhamar, 'Sāhīb San'a' yākul wa-la-gi yūkūl. The San'a' eats but does not make (others) eat'. He is entertained when outside the city, but he does not entertain in San'a' anyone who has entertained him.

Whether the Jews had samsarahs of their own or not: we cannot at present say, but al-Khafajī, the noted colloquial poet of the first half of the 12th/18th century in his famous Dialogue between Bil al-Azab and al-Rawdah, has Bir al-Azab boast, 'I have a bath (hammām), market with a lane (sikkah), a samsarah belonging to the Bāniyān, and a market.' To this al-Rawdah makes riposte, 'O you lacking in honour (ya naqīqah) ... you are a perpetual road to the Jews ... What is this profession (mirkah) of yours of samsarah?' The large warehouses (samsarah, pl., samsārī) were, as stated above, until recent times, not only stores but also hostelry for merchants and innkeepers. The ground floor housed animals, with in some cases rows of small storerooms around the perimeter. Double or triple volumes often rose through the building above the central animal...
Fig. 15.1 Samsarat al-Baw'ani in Suq al-Mibsah. Ground floor plans and sections through the building.

Key to all figures

- a animal stalls
- cu court upper level
- eu entrance hall upper level
- gh ghayl—water level
- k kitchen
- m mafraj
- o loading and mounting animals
- plr cold pool room
- rl library
- t terrace
- v rain water cistern
- wr well ramp
- b bathroom
- ch changing room
- f warm room
- h excrement room
- l lobby
- ma minaret
- or restaurant/eating place
- p public ablution area
- s store
- tm tomb
- vm man in charge
- x minbar
- br boiler
- d dîwan
- fr furnace room
- h hot room
- l laundry terrace
- n mihrab
- p passage
- r room-general use and sleeping
- sh sheep pens
- tr treasury
- w well
- y women's room and wardrobe
- c court
- e entrance hall
- g grinding mills
- j grain and fruit store
- lb lavatory/bathroom
- nw washing floor
- pl pool
- rr reception room and business
- sp shop
- u shaft
- wb water cooling box
- z manzar
stables, and these were ringed by balconies from which opened further rows of storerooms. Usually a separate staircase giving access to these storerooms was provided related to each high volume. The staircases continued through the roof of these lower areas, the roofs being pierced with openings to provide top light on the activities below.

Emerging at roof level, the visitor found himself in a courtyard (over each high volume below), open to the sky and surrounded by living quarters for travelling merchants and their servants. These courtyards were sometimes given an appearance of some elegance by surrounding them with arcades (pl.15.11). Water reservoirs, bathrooms and lavatories were usually provided at this level. Occasionally domed rooms ornamented the skyline; these appear to have been used by the manager of the warehouse, or perhaps rented to wealthy merchants.
This hostelry is in Süq al-Mibsātah, after which comes Süq al-Bazz, the Cloth Market. It is believed to be the oldest market in Ṣanʿā', and architectural evidence certainly supports the legend that this is the oldest samsarah surviving in Ṣanʿā' in something like its original state. It differs from the other large samsaraha in being simpler in several ways (fig. 15.1, pl. 15.4-11). A typical samsarah hostelry—it has a masmar a platform described as makhān al-rīqādah upon which lodgers sit to talk or sleep, a marwan or donkey trough, and a harr in which firewood was kept, though this usually means a stable. The ground floor is entirely devoted to animal stables, except for the two raised masonry platforms for sleeping and storing goods. A room at the entrance is used for the guard of the warehouse, who controls the entry and removal of all goods and animals, and charges dues.

This lower level is extremely high, and crossed by a lofty arcade with pointed arches. It is dimly lit by means of two small

24 Lit., the Samsarah of the Baw’ānī (man). Baw’ānī is a wadi which the Hudaydah road crosses, west of Ṣanʿā'.
openings in the ceiling, through which shafts of sunlight enter the dusty interior (pl.15.9). A staircase on either side leads up to the large open courtyard above, with a deep arced loggia on the north side and a colonnade on the east. The loggia seems to have been used as a large sheltered store. On the eastern and northern sides there are further storerooms, possibly sometimes used for sleeping accommodation.

At the rear of the warehouse, and entered from a street on the northern side, there is a completely separate area of accommodation on the ground floor, shops and workrooms (for gypsum-plaster window-tracery makers) with a staircase leading up to the loggia just described. An intermediate level, possible because of the great height of the stables, appears to be devoted to storerooms.

Over the whole of the northern and eastern sides of the building there is a higher storey, which contained rooms used for sleeping accommodation or storage.

The construction of the southern, and half of the eastern and western, walls of this building is of ancient much-weathered stonework braced with huge baulks of timber. A perishable sandstone seems to have been used, which may accentuate the appearance of great age. The stonework extends to the top of the first storey above the upper courtyard. The whole of the back (northern) part of the building has been re-erected in a smooth ashlar up to courtyard level. Above, there are two storeys in baked brick, whereas on the southern and half of the eastern sides only the top-most storey is in brick. The arches of the oldest parts are simple four-centred arches, those of the brick and stone rebuildings semicircular. The decoration on this rebuilt brickwork section closely resembles that of the better houses.

(ii) Samsarat al-Majjah

More typical of the remaining large samsarahs is this fine building, described as a store for trade goods (makhzan li-'l-tjârah), and reputedly in use for more than three hundred years (fig. 15.3, pl. 15.12-21). It is next to Samsar Muhammad Hashim al-Manṣūrí.

On the street facade it has a number of shops flanking an entrance which is slightly off-centre. A wide passage leads into the building past the guard’s room, in which he often smokes a water-pipe—enclosed in a wooden cupboard while he is watching the loading and unloading of goods (pl.15.15). The passage opens into a high central stable area, with a roof supported by a central row of three columns, made of pre-Islamic fragments (pl.15.16).

It is surrounded on four sides by storerooms on two levels, those on the mezzanine reached by ascending a flight of steps at the far end. Top lights in the ceiling allow shafts of sunlight to illuminate the interior.

Opposite the entrance passage a broad doorway opens into another stable, larger and higher than the first (pl.15.17). The ceiling is carried on a colonnade which is repeated on three levels around the sides, so that it also supports access balconies to the storerooms, and there are two tall free-standing columns in the centre built up from stone drums. A second staircase at the far end gives access to the two upper levels of storerooms.

Emerging from the staircases onto the roofs of the stable-storeroom areas, the visitor discovers that the same pattern is repeated as occurs below. There are again two central spaces, now open to the sky (pl.15.18-15.21). One is built on three levels, and the other on two, and each is surrounded by rooms which were, until a few years ago, used almost entirely for living accommodation for travelling merchants and their servants. Today the old traditional patterns of trade are rapidly vanishing; the top floors of the big warehouses are hardly used and crumbling through neglect.

The building is constructed of stone up to the top of the stable.
Fig. 15.3 Samsarat al-Majjah. Plans at ground level and third floor level. Section through entrance and two courts and stables.

volumes, with baked brickwork above. The large blank areas of brickwork have been moulded into a series of fine patterns, which are incorporated into the large arches that frame the first row of habitable rooms on the roof (pl.15.14).

(iii) Samsarat Muhammad b. Hasan

This is the largest warehouse in Ṣanʿā', but, as already stated, was sacked in 1948. Since then it has been closed, so that it has not been possible to enter it for study. However, a good deal can be learnt from outside and from photographs. The building, above one and a half times the size of Samsarat al-Majjah, had also two stables with two courts over them, one behind the other. It was entered through a narrow façade from the Sūq of the Money-changers. The style of the building resembles closely that of Samsarat al-Majjah, but the decoration is derivative and less fine and therefore possibly from a more recent date.

(iv) Other Samāsir

Two of the largest warehouses in Ṣanʿā', Samsarat Muḥammad Ḥāshim Maṣṣūr, said to be jād al-Imām Yakhya, his grandfather, and Samsarat al-Najār, the Brass Warehouse, have spacious central volumes rising through three floors, surrounded by arcades which allow access to storerooms. There are similarly courtyards and habitable rooms on the roof. They are both built of flush ashlar stonework to a high level, and appear more recent in date than the warehouses described above.

Some of the smaller warehouses contain ancient stonework. Samsarat Yakhya Thabit has the same form as the two just mentioned (pl.15.22). It is a waef property and legend says it goes back to the time of ʿAlī Ṣayf Dhi Yazan. Samsarat al-Ḥāwiyij (the Spice Warehouse), said to be older than Sūq al-Mizān, has a small interior courtyard extending to the ground (fig.15.3, pls. 15.23-26). Al-Ḥājari mentions a Sarbat al-Sayrāfī. Samsarat al-ʿAmrāni, Samsarat Wardah/Wirdah, Samsarat Yakhya b. Qasim, etc., are smaller warehouses which seem to belong to the type of Samsarat al-Bawānī.

There is a considerable number of other warehouses, not merely in the area of the Sūq of the old city, but in other main shopping areas, such as Bāb Shuʿūb, Bāb al-Ṣabāḥ, al-Bawāniyah

25 ʿAbdīddīn Ṣanʿī', 58.
26 Ibid., 86.
San'ā'—An Arabian Islamic City

Only the smaller ones are still used as stables and for overnight accommodation. The largest warehouses are now devoted to the storage of goods alone.

(C) Warehouses for Controlled Commodities

Although the same Arabic word is used for them (samsarah, pl. samāsir), there is a number of warehouses which are markedly different in design and use. These are the warehouses for weighing and controlling particular commodities.

There are three of these in the old Sūq of San‘ā’, one controlling coffee, and two controlling raisins.

(i) Samsarat al-Mīzān

Sometimes called Samsarat al-Qishr (The Coffee-Husk Samsarah) this is described as the most famous in San‘ā’. At one time all merchandise entering San‘ā’ used to be weighed here and the Mizān al-Dawlah, the Government Scales, was located here—the movement of merchandise between the Samsarat al-Mīzān and the warehouses is to be found in Qānūn San‘ā’. Even now some weighing is done here, but only of coffee, whether berry (bunn) or qishr (husk). Facing the entrance is Sūq al-Ṭa‘ām, the Grain Market, with an arched building said to be three hundred years old, but on architectural grounds, probably to be considered a structure of the Ḥamīḏ al-Dīn period—though of course the actual location of the Grain Market here is likely to be as old as the Samsarat al-Mīzān. In Sūq al-Ṭa‘ām are the kāyyūls who measure out the grain.
15.16 Samsarat al-Majjah. First stable, now used as a warehouse.

15.17 Samsarat al-Majjah. Inner stable from above, with staircase on left.

San'a—An Arabian Islamic City

15.19 Samsarat al-Majjah. Upper courtyards. Looking across the area above the inner stable from the first courtyard. Now delapidated.


15.21 Samsarat al-Majjah. Upper living courtyard with an arcaded gallery providing access to temporary accommodation, above the inner stable.

15.22 Samsarat Yahya Thabit. The stable, surrounded by storerooms. Now used as a warehouse.

15.23 Samsarat al-Hawa'i. The suq outside the entrance.

It is suggested that this samsarah is at least six centuries old. 28 It is a waqf property of the Masjid Salah al-Din, not Saladin the Ayyubid as some people suppose, but the Imam Salah al-Din Muhammad b. Ali (ob. 793/1391). 29 It is constructed of black habash stone and blocks of the same stone are used for the pavement. This looks like pre-Islamic building material re-used, and there are ancient columns and a fragment of a Himyarite inscription set in the wall near the entrance-door.

The Samsarat al-Mizan consists of a large courtyard approximately nine metres square, open to the sky, and the present building itself.

28 Qadi Isma'il and Qadi Husayn al-Sayaghli would concur in this dating, but Qadi ‘Ali Abu l-Rijal believes the present building dates from the time of Muhammad b. Hasan in the 10th/11th century. There is always the possibility that the location of a Government Scales here is considerably older than

29 Cf. Masajid San'a', 61. Ayman Fu'ad Sayyid, Majādir tarīkh al-Yaman, 409, gives a list of biographical notices on this Salah al-Din.
surrounded by a single-storeyed arcade, behind which are the storerooms for coffee berry and husk. The Scales are situated in the northern arcade directly opposite the main entrance which is on the southern side (fig. 15.4b, pls. 15.29-32). The arcades have highly original carved capitals, all different—which in itself suggests a certain antiquity. A second entrance on the east which opens onto the Silversmiths' Market (Sūq al-Mikhla‘) is no longer used (pl. 15.27). The bags of coffee and qishr are kept in the warehouse stores. There are two loading platforms built of stone adjacent to the Scales upon which porters may rest sacks while awaiting their turn. At the southern entrance, on the left as one enters, is a small raised drinking basin (ṣiqa‘ayh) which has a small cistern (ḥawż) for the spill-over. This is next to the Ottoman Muqall al-Mīrī, or point where the Government duty was collected, but it seems only used as a store now; it is built into the arches also on the left side as one enters. On the right is where the guard (ḥārīs), sits—described as al-bawwāb al-mustalim ḫaqq al-samsarah, the doorman who receives what is due to the samsarah. It is his business to oversee all that is leaving the building and inform the owner of the bags what is going out so as to avoid theft (māṣa‘rā‘). On each bag (tawwāl, pls., tawwāl/tawwālāt) he receives a ḥaṣṣa‘a riyal fee.

The weights (wāziyyah), which look like cannon-balls though they are not, are a large weight of 55 ṭarā‘īs and a small one of 7 ṭarā‘īs. The wāziyyah it was confirmed is the same as the Maria Theresa dollar (tībārāh an al-Fārānī), and the ṭarā‘īs was stated to be 17 wāziyyahs. This was said to have been established in the time of (ma‘a ‘ahd) al-Shaykh al-Ḥaymī mentioned in the text (al-naqīf), i.e., in Qanūn San‘ā‘. The Shaykh of the Samsarah in 1972 was Ḥusayn al-Zirājī, but there was also another Shaykh called ʿAlīmad al-Muḥāqirī. The Shaykh deals with all the weighing, etc. This post is in no sense hereditary, and the Shaykh in fact can be unseated and another Shaykh chosen in his place. The place is open (European time) from 7 to 12 a.m. and from 2 to 7 p.m.

In the centre of the northern side there is a wide staircase leading to the upper level, which has a further set of storerooms and some living rooms surrounding the flat roof above the arcades. This level has also a range of lavatories on the southern side. The small rooms are known as makhāṣīn (stores) or dakhākin (shops).
Fig. 15.4a Samsarat al-Hawā’ij. Plans of ground, first and second floor levels and sections (adjoining building shown opposite).
Fig. 15.4b Samsarat al-Mizān. Plans of ground and first floor levels and sections.
(ii) The Samsarat al-Zabib and the Jumruk al-Zabib
This is also called Samsarat Yabûb b. Qâsim al-Ghawdânî, or Sûq al-'Inab and is in al-Harâr al-Jâmi'. These two buildings have the same open courtyard as the preceding building, but without upper storerooms. They were rebuilt during the present century, the eastern one with a fine arched gateway. Only a few stones survive from earlier buildings.30

(D) Open-air Storage Yards
The same Arabic term, samsarah, is used to describe open-air storage yards. These are generally found on the outskirts of the sūq. Some are used for storing wood, some house the animals (camels) in the open air and provide small storerooms on the periphery for goods (pl.15.37). The present Samsarat al-Mutawakkil is one of the largest.

(E) Tea-shops, Eating Places and Inns/Hostelries
Within the sūq and throughout the rest of the town are establishments known as samsarah. They fall into two categories, those in which tea and Yemen coffee are served and qâr is chewed during the daytime, the same couches serving as beds for sleeping at night, and those following the basic traditional pattern of samsarah accommodation for travelers' animals, and also providing tea and food; this type has private rooms for sleeping.

(i) Tea-shops and Eating Places
A number of teashops and eating places exist which do not have provision for, or allow, qâr chewing; there are therefore no couches, and sleeping is not permitted at night. These go by the ordinary Arabic term ma'tam (pl., ma'tâm). Others, roughly an equal number, provide hot beverages and pipes for smoking; a few also prepare food. Instead of squatting on benches or sitting on chairs at tables, western-style, the patrons squat or recline on blanket-covered mattresses on straw wooden beds (ga'addh) or couches. The same quarters are converted for sleeping after the evening prayer. Premises of this type usually have a single open interior, sometimes crossed by masonry arches which support the roof. The couches are crowded close together throughout the space. The owner sits on a plastered brick platform near the entrance. There he has a masonry stove for heating water and providing hot coals for the water-pipes.

(ii) Inns/Hostelries
Typical inns are illustrated in figs.15.5 and 15.6. They have in common rows of habitable rooms on an upper level overlooking a central court on which patrons relax and drink or eat.

Samsarat al-Khân, also called Samsarat al-Muzayyin, is in Harâr al-Sülayyî, which earlier in the days of the Ottoman Turkish Empire was called Sûq al-Naṣârâ or the Christians' Market because Greeks and Italians like the Caprotti brothers used to live about this area. The proprietor when we first visited it in 1972 was either Muḥammad al-Ḥamâsi or Aḥmad al-Muṣaadîli. It has two entrances, from the south and west respectively (fig.15.5, pls.15.38-46). It has a sâqiyah next to the street entrance on the south. The western door is used for travelers' animals and small quantities of goods, which are housed in a small courtyard overlooked by the galleries giving access to the patrons' rooms, or in storerooms underneath the galleries. The eastern door opens onto the main east-west street through the old city and is flanked by shops. It provides access for the public through the restaurant to the rooms above. There is a kitchen on the eastern side of the

or Cattle Market—but where we found donkeys being sold (1972)—Buyah is in the Shâhârah district and there is much traffic in cattle there. At Samsarat Hašâfah in Shâhârah we found cows for slaughter being kept. A green mark is made on their shoulders to show that they are approved fit for slaughter. There was also Samsarat Mâṣjid Ḥajar, a sâqiyah to this mosque it seems (found in the first half of the 11th/17th century), but the mosque itself was demolished in the unfortunate and ill-conceived alterations to the Shâhârah and Bâb al-Sabâbah area in which it lay, after the 1962 coup.

In summer awnings are stretched across part of the courtyard so that the porters do not have to work under intolerable conditions.

30 Outher samsarah we saw were Samsarat al-'Ilâqah at the side of Sûq al-Mîlâh, Samsarat Dîr al-Jâmi', near the Jâmi' Mosque, now used as a carpenters' workshop, Samsarat al-Dhîrayrah run by Muḥammad al-Dhîrayrah, affording accommodation to travellers from the country (maṣūfīrīn jâyín min al-ḥâlînîd), Samsarat al-Ḥîlayyîd (cf. Mûṣûrīd Şanî 'U, 137), Samsarat al-Qûfâm, Samsarat Hûsâyn al-Qûdi, Samsarat al-Dhawmâri, Samsarat 'Abd al-Rejîmîn al-Jândî, Samsarat Dâlîh, Samsarat 'Abdullah al-Sâmînâh. By the samsarah of 'Ali Hûsâyn al-Butnî whom we met, is a lane that contained the old Sûq al-Qârî.
The Buildings of the Süq/Market

15.29 Samsarat al-Mizān. General view from the southern entrance.

A restaurant, serving hot beverages and preparing food carried in stone pots (harad/maqlâ),31 for serving from the masonry counter near the entrance; there are holes in this counter into which the stone pots are placed, where they are kept hot by burning coals inserted under them through openings in the side of the counter (pl. 15.40). This is an ancient Mediterranean arrangement, well preserved, to take a case in point, in Pompeii and earlier archaeological sites, and persisting in the Middle East down to the present day. Behind the counter there are shelves made of slats into which condiments and garnishes are placed. On the opposite side of the restaurant there is a hole in the wall behind which lies a small basin of fresh water for the use of patrons. Adjoining it is a well under the staircase. There are three dining rooms opening off the courtyard masonry benches. When meals are not being served these rooms are used for drinking hot beverages and for playing dominoes or games with counters. The courtyard is also provided with some masonry seats, as is the entrance, and patrons sit in these areas as well, the courtyard being shaded with awnings in hot weather.

A wall penetrated by a door separates this courtyard from the service courtyard of the inn. From this opens a large storeroom on the southern side.

A staircase in the south west corner leads up to the sleeping rooms, bathroom and owner's apartment. The latter is over the entrance, and has its own courtyard at the head of the stairs, overlooking the restaurant court through two arches. From it a private corridor leads to the bathroom and lavatory on the east.

Patrons walk to their rooms along arcaded galleries flanking the courtyards. That on the northern side is reached from the head of the stairs by crossing a bridge with handrails made of low plastered arcades. The rooms are small and plain, lit only through tiny windows on the courtyard side, or through the doorway. At the eastern end of the northern gallery a door gives access to the bathroom and lavatory.

31 The madhulah (pl., maddûllû) are awâlin al-harad, as in p.544b.
15.31 Samsarat al-Mizān. The north-eastern area of the courtyard, with the scale for weighing grain under the arcade in the corner.

15.32 Samsarat al-Mizān. The scales, with weights of 55 rajīs and 7 rajīs.

15.33 Samsarat al-Mizān. A column capital.
Communal Apartment Buildings

Among foundations owned and maintained by the Ministry of Awqāf, which manages mosque properties, there is a number of communal lodging houses in the süq. These provide accommodation for poorer shopkeepers and their families, and for workers in the süq. They are two or three storeys high, sometimes incorporating shops on the ground floor (pls. 15.1 and 19.52). The inhabitants use a communal stair, and communal lavatories. Their apartments merely consist of one or two rooms.

Similar buildings for students from outside Sā'ā called mulūjīrīn are provided in most of the teaching mosques, frequently along the street and flanking the doorway through which the mosque is entered (pls. 15.55, 19.36, figs. 15.9 and 19.4).

Watchtowers

Rising above the general low level of the süq is a number of the small brick watchtowers (mibrās, pl. mabrās) in which the watchmen of the Market take up their position (pl. 15.55).

Sesame Mills

A number of sesame (simsim) mills (maṣṣārah, pl., maṣṣārīn) are situated around the periphery of the süq. In the north khardal (brassica campestris) is a much used oil-seed. Each has one or two camels turning one or two mills (fig. 15.7, pls. 15.49 and 15.50). The building is usually a large single-storeyed barn, crossed with wide masonry arches to strengthen the roof. Sometimes there is a second room on one side used as a stable for the camels, and possibly a cow, sheep and goats. Masonry platforms flank the entrance and the mills. These are used for storing bags of sesame seed and vessels for oil, and for sitting and sleeping.

The mill is a raised stone mortar over a metre high and wide. In it sits a heavy wooden pestle with a stone base. To this is bound an elaborate harness which maintains the pestle in a nearly vertical position while the forces necessary to turn it are transferred horizontally onto the neck of the camel. The animal wears blinders (usually metal bowls) so that it will not suffer from giddiness, and moves in a relentless circle as grain is poured into the top of the mortar and the oil is extracted from a lip on one side.

Drinking Basins

Drinking basins, numerous in the süq and throughout the city, are provided as charitable foundations by pious citizens and maintained by the Ministry of Awqāf. They are properly termed sabil (pl., sabūl), but in Sā'ā the word sīgāyah (pron. sīgāyah) is more commonly used. They vary from small basins set behind

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32 In 381/991, al-Rāzi, Ṭārikh, 115, gives the number of presses in Sā'ā as fifty-four.
Fig. 15.38 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. View from above.

Fig. 15.5 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. Plans at ground and first floor levels. Sections through both wings.
15.39 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. South entrance.

15.40 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. The restaurant and its serving counter inside the south entrance.

15.41 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. The restaurant court seen from above, with the kitchen on the right.
openings in walls, to large free-standing basins contained in a stone or brick structure covered with a dome, then called *qubbah* (dome). Frequently a door is set to close the opening and keep out dust from the water.

Occasionally a well is found next to a basin (fig. 15.8, pls. 15.51 and 52). The remainder are kept filled by water carriers specially employed for the purpose. In some cases there is also a large open basin at a low level to provide drinking water for animals.
Fig. 15.6 Samsarat Yāhū b. Qāsim. Plan of ground, first and second floors, with four sections.
San'a—An Arabian Islamic City

**Fig. 15.7** Sesame mill. Plan and section.

**Fig. 15.8** Sabil at Bab al-Balaqah. Plan and two elevations.

15.46 Samsarat al-Muzayyin. The upper level of the accommodation court, with an area for animals and goods below.

15.47 Samsarat Yahyā b. Qāsim. Exterior with the main doorway flanked by shops.
15.48 Characteristic watch tower in the sīq, above the shops. (Photo: R.B. Serjeant)

15.50 Sesame mill. The mill room.

15.49 Sesame mill. The stable.

15.51 Sabil at Bab al-Balaqah. End view, showing the opening to the cistern. Animal drinking trough at left.
15.52 Sabil at Bāb al-Balaqah. Side view, with the access to the well.

15.53 Mirna' Tālibā. View from above, showing the rooms on the roof used for student accommodation.

15.54 Bustān al-Jamī‘ al-Kabīr, showing the mirna', the well ramp building, in the foreground.

15.55 Mirna' Tālibah. The street alongside, with the entrance to the rooms for students (mukāhirūn) at the far end, and the windows of the rooms in the upper part of the facade.

15.56 Mirna' Tālibah. The well.
Fig. 15.9 Mina' Tulbah. Plan of the ground and first floors, and elevation with the section at broken lines.
San‘ā’—An Arabian Islamic City

15.57 Mima‘ Tallah. A view from the well looking down the ramp which animals descend while drawing the water.

(J) Well Ramps

In the city, and in the countryside, long buildings with stepped roofs are frequently seen (pl. 15.54). These have at one end the high masonry piers necessary to carry the pulley beam over a well. The building then reduces in height as the ramp it shelters slopes underground.

Normally such a well structure (mirna‘, pl., marānī’) is built of layered clay or clay brick, but in the old city some of the finest examples are constructed of stone and baked brick. The ramps are frequently extremely long—as much as thirty-five metres: as the water table has dropped during this century they have been extended under ground level.

The wells are usually worked by camels, but donkeys are sometimes used, and even man-power is employed, three or four men being needed to lift the heavy bucket. The slope of the ramp compensates for the extra weight of the leather buckets when they are filled with water. As the bucket is drawn to the head of the well, a rope is pulled to jerk the bucket so that it spills its contents into a basin (marjāw)33 from which the water is conducted to where it is required. The ramp is re-ascended when the buckets are empty and as they are dropping back into the well.

The Mima‘ Tallah is part of the mosque complex (fig. 15.9 and pls. 15.55-57). It has a drinking basin for animals on one side and communal apartments above the stepped-down roof. The back of the building butts into the ablution building of the mosque, for which it supplies the water, as well as providing water for the houses and gardens of the quarter in which the mosque is situated. A pool at the top of the ramp provides drinking water for two camels which draw the water. Their driver has a little room adjoining, approached up a short flight of steps. In this he keeps their fodder, and sleeps. The camels have a stable reached through a door from the street and situated under the highest part of the well-ramp.

Under Ottoman rule in the 10th/16th century several mirna‘s were built entirely of stone, that of Hammām al-Maydān having fine pointed barrel vaults. In the last twenty years many wells in the city have been mechanized and their mirna‘s have fallen into disuse.

33 Ḥṣd II, ed. Muh. al-Akwa‘, 73, says that some of Himyar change the final all of words with a final radical nān, into nān, and say rajā‘ and marjāw for rajā, the side of a well. Akwa‘ says the word marjāw is used in Dhamār and the Najd of the Yemen also. He gives it the sense of ḥarf al-bī‘r, so perhaps it is not quite correct to call it the ‘basin’.
Chapter 16
The Mint of Şan‘a’: A Historical Outline

Şan‘a’ has at different periods ranked as the chief mint city of the Yemen, striking in gold, silver and bronze. The number of surviving coins suggests that, if its output was not always large compared with that of other Islamic mints, in the 3rd/9th century, at any rate, it was responsible for a substantial proportion of all the gold being coined in the territories of the caliph. The Yemen was rich in resources of precious metal, as is clear from a treatise on gold and silver by the 4th/10th century author al-Hamdânî, who was born at Şan‘a’. He lists, for southern Arabia, eight gold and three silver mines: of these, mount Ḥaṣūr (or Ḥaṣūr) near Şan‘a’ yielded two in gold and mount Ḥaṣūr, further to the south, one in silver. Gold is also known to have been mined in the Hijaz and it would seem that a mint for gold existed there as early as the Umayyad period—witness a recently published Umayyad dinar bearing the remarkable inscription ma’din amir al-mu’minin bi-l-Hijâz (the Mine of the Commander of the Faithful in the Hijâz). The Yemen itself, however, appears not to have had a mint before the early ‘Abbâsid period.

The reason d’être of the ‘Abbâsid mint of Şan‘a’, like that of other provincial mints, was primarily fiscal. Taxes collected in the Yemen by the ‘Abbâsid governors were doubtless largely in kind, but the resulting revenues (forwarded twice yearly to the caliph) probably took the form of coined money, chiefly gold. In the Umayyad period gold had been supplied to the whole of the Caliphate by the mint of Damascus, possibly aided by other mints (the absence of a mint signature on the standard post-reform dinars leaves some doubt as to their place of issue). Under al-Mansûr the central mint was moved to Baghdad. The earliest coins which may be assigned to Şan‘a’ are fals (coppers) dated 156-8/772-4, carrying the mint signature al-yaman (plate 16.1, 1). They are of metropolitan style, and it is likely that the dies were prepared in Baghdad, even if the coins themselves were struck locally. The earliest mint mentioned in literary sources was established by Mu‘ammad b. Khâlid al-Barmakî, who was dispatched to the Yemen in 221/835, but despite its late appearance was to remain the principal metal coined in the Yemen for over three centuries, down to the Ayyûbid conquest. The absence during much of this period of a supporting coinage in silver and copper may be interpreted as a sign that the purpose of the mint was to supply money for tax payments rather than to facilitate everyday transactions.

The early coins of Şan‘a’ conform to the standard ‘Abbâsid pattern. They show the profession of faith (‘There is no god but God; Muḥammad is the Apostle of God’), the date and latterly the caliph’s name, which features regularly on the coins from 221/835 onwards. Of considerable interest is the inclusion from time to time, in the spaces above and below the area legends, of personal names, most of which can be matched with those of governors of the Yemen named in literary sources. Those in the table that follow are abstracted, with a few corrections and additions, from Ramzi Bikhazi’s important study Coins of al-Yaman, 132-569 A.H. (see footnote 3), which also discusses the historical background to each issue.

al-Ghûṣrī, with Yazîd

al-‘Abbâs b. Muhammad

‘Abdullâh b. Mu‘āghabb

Hammâd

Hâshibb. ‘Abdullâh

Bârâ‘ al-Wâdâyâ

I特殊的, ‘Abdullâh

Jâ‘far

Mu‘affâr b. Ḥâjî

Muhammad b.

al-Mu‘affâr

al-Ghûṣrī b. ‘Atî‘ al-Kindî, 170-173

al-‘Abbâs b. Muhammad, 179-180

‘Abdullâh b. Mu‘âghabb, 180-181

Hammâd al-Barbâ‘i, 184-193

al-Ghûṣrî b. ‘Abdullâh, 194-195

‘Abdullâh b. Mu‘âghabb, 207

Itâh

Ja‘far

Mu‘affâr b. Ḥâjî

Muhammad b.

not identified

not identified; brother of ‘Abdullâh

not identified

not identified

Not identified

son of the above, 295

The above list does not include the names of the ‘Abbâsid throne and members of the caliph’s family who for reasons of propaganda were named on the coins of Şan‘a’ as on those of other mints: amongst these were al-Mahdî (son of al-Mansûr), Abû ‘Abdullâh (later al-Mu’tazz) and al-Mu‘awwafiq (brother of al-Mu’tsamid) with his son Ahmâd, the future al-Mu’taqqîd. A number of additions to the list of governors will doubtless have to be made as the corpus of Şan‘a’ issues is expanded.

The relationship between the silver and copper denominations in the ‘Abbâsid Yemen is complicated by the fact that

1 Abî Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. ‘Abîjad al-Ḥamîdîn, Khisb al-fajharasayn al-šarqayn al-mârîyayn min al-ghûṣr wa-l-ḥâsîl (Die beiden Edelmetalle Gold und Silber), ed. and trans. Christopher Toll, Úppsala, 1968, 136 f. Ḥamîdîn also gives an important account of refining and coining techniques, based on his observations at the mints of Şan‘a’ and Sûq al-Tabbâsin. Silver dirhams of Şan‘a’ dating from 171/787 onward are, however, extant. Gold was not struck at Şan‘a’ until 221/835, but despite its late appearance was to remain the principal metal coined in the Yemen for over three centuries, down to the Ayyûbid conquest. The absence during place of the Prophet, on the evidence of a recently discovered Umayyad fals struck at al-madînayn ma’din amîr al-mu’mînîn.

3 Ramzi J. Bikhazi, ‘Coins of al-Yaman, 132-569 A.H.’, Al-Abârîth, Beirut, XXXIII, 1970, 3-127; also published separately. It has not been thought necessary to give references to this except in special instances.

4 A hitherto unpublished coin in the collection of Stephen Album, California.

5 The name Hâṣîm is quite distinct on the coin of 194 in Stephen Album’s collection and is, I believe, also to be read on the 195 specimen, Bikhazi no. 11.

6 Mrs. Helen Mitchell Brown informs me that this name can be read on several unpublished dirham fractions in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.
the province adopted lighter standards for both the dinar and the dirham from the rest of the caliphate. Ibn Rustah, writing in or soon after 300/912, says that the people of Ṣan`ā` carried out their transactions in ṣultan and sawayn dirhams and fīlas. The ratio of the dirham to the dinar rose at times from 60 to 100, the weight of each dirham being one sixth of a (regular) dirham. 24 fīlas went to one dinar. Christopher Toll, in a discussion of the ṣultan, cites al-Hamdānī and al-ʿAlawī, the former of whom gives the weight of the ṣultan as seven tenths of a mithqāl or one dirham qāfīlah. Toll reckons the qāfīlah to have been 2.97 grammes or the weight of the post-reform umayyad dirham, and lists a large number of 3rd-4th century/9th-10th century dirhams of Ṣan`ā`, the weights of which approximate to that of the qāfīlah. 8 The derivation of the term ṣultan, discussed by Toll, is uncertain. Al-Hamdānī and al-ʿAlawī value the ṣultan as seven tenths of a dirham qāfīlah (or 120 sixths of a dirham). This gives a gold-to-silver ratio of 1 to 20, as opposed to between 1 to 10 and 1 to 16 in Ibn Rustah’s time.

The sawāy[n] (“little sixth”) dirham should have weighed .49 or .32 grammes, depending on whether the standard was that of the post-reform (qāfīlah) or the Yemeni dirham. No such coins are extant from the 3rd/9th century, but the Rassids did mint coins of about this weight at Ṣa`dah, and their coins may have been current at Ṣan`ā`. Most of the scarce “Abbasid silver coins of Ṣan`ā” weigh a little over .7 grammes. They may have been quarters of the dirham qāfīlah. However, one such piece (7.5 grammes), published by Miles, is clearly inscribed thulth, “one third.” This may be an overweight third of a Yemeni dirham of ten qāfīlahs (.95 grammes). The same dirham standard was used in 8th/14th century Yemen. It seems logical that the one-sixth dirhams, mentioned by Ibn Rustah and al-ʿAlawī, used in 293/905-06, were a possible post-reform. The issue pre­

Reconstruction of the Yemen’s monetary system under the ‘Abbasids

GOLD

dinar ṣultan 2.97 grammes

SILVER

dirham qāfīlah 2.97 grammes
one third of the above 0.99 gramme
one quarter of the above 0.74 gramme
one sixth of the above 0.49 gramme
Yemeni dirham of 10 qāfīlah 1.95 gramme
one third of the above 0.65 gramme
one sixth of the above 0.32 gramme

During the second half of the 3rd/9th century the power of the ‘Abbasid governors was increasingly eclipsed by that of local dynasts: Ṣan`ā` was ruled by Muḥammād b. Yuʾfīr and his descendants, who were obliged from time to time to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Ziyāiidīs, a Sunni dynasty established at Zabīd. The champion of Shiʾism in the Yemen was the Rassid Imam al-Ḥadīlāl b. al-I’llāq, ruler of al-Muṭaffī in his account of the year 288/900. These Ziyāiidīs, a Sunni dynasty established at Zabīd. The champion of Shiʾism in the Yemen was the Rassid Imam al-Ḥadīlāl b. al-I’llāq, ruler of al-Muṭaffī in his account of the year 288/900. These

8 “Emic metrological and meteorological Termin in Arabische”, Orientalia 18, 1949, 144-47.
10 Bikhazi, op. cit., 65.
12 Bikhazi, op. cit., 66-68.

the Qarmatian invader Ibn Fadl (pl.16.1,4). The issue pre­ludes a similar one at Ṣa`dah in 298/910, in which year Ṣan`ā was again briefly occupied by the Qarmatians. It is conceivable, in the light of the city’s minting activity at this time, that numismatic evidence of one or both of these Qarmatian occupations must eventually be forthcoming.

The decay of the ‘Abbasid state and the usurpation by local princes of privileges which had formerly rested with the Caliph’s governor at Ṣan`ā` is mirrored by the proliferation, during the 4th/10th century, of mints in other parts of the Yemen: Bishāh, Dhammār, Surdūd, ‘Aṭhtar, ‘Adan (Aden) and Zabīd. The two last named are particularly noteworthy, for Zabīd, headquarters of the Ziyāiidīs, is otherwise unknown. The coins of the other mints do not show a local ruler’s name, but they are unlikely to be straightforward ‘Abbasid issues. As for Ṣan`ā, its coinage underwent a change from 311/923 onwards, at which time the ‘Abbasid governorship fell into abeyance. New lightweight dirhams (about 1.8 grammes) were introduced, still naming the caliph, but of a distinctive pattern; specimens dated 325 and later show the phrase amara bi-hi-l-ʾamir (ordered by the amir) in the space surrounding the margin (pl.16.1,5). Bikhazi, who discusses at length the question of their attribution, terms them ṣawāy[n] for want of a better designation and concludes that they were issued by some local ruler who wished to underline his autonomous status. 10 He leaves open the question of whether this ruler was the resident Yuʾfīrid prince Asʾād or whether he was the Ziyāiidī Abuʾl-Jaysh, to whom the Yuʾfīrid may have seen fit to defer. That Asʾād was immediately responsible for the striking of the dirhams admits of little doubt; but that he and his successors styled themselves ‘amiri is less sure. However, Asʾād’s dirhams are mentioned by the author of the Ghayat al-amāni fī akhbar al-quraisy al-Yamanī in his account of the year 458/1065-66; 11 and since coins of Asʾād are otherwise unknown there is a distinct possibility that they are the ones dubbed amiri by Bikhazi, especially as the latter are of a distinctive type which was doubtless still well known in the Yemen a century or more later. An alternative explanation, since the coins continue to name the ‘Abbasid Caliph as a formality, is that the amir concerned is his governor, even though the latter was by now bereft of all real authority. The officials of the mint, perplexed by the vagaries of the internal power struggle, may have opted for an innominate-sounding and largely meaningless formula as a solution to the problem of allegiances, as happened elsewhere in Islam at times of political confusion.

The Asʾād (?) dirhams struck at Ṣan`ā and at neighbouring Dhammār between 325 and 340 A.H.—or perhaps, even later—present the further complication that some name the Caliph al-Mustakfi, who was deposed in 334, while others, minted contemporaneously, name his successor al-Muʾfī. Bikhazi, rejecting the idea that this anomaly reflects the struggle between factions in Iraq, believes that opposing parties in the Yemen may have been responsible for the two series. He suggests that some may have been minted by the legitimate government of the city and others by rebels. 12 It is doubtful however (as Bikhazi admits) how far the dates of the coins are reliable. Two specimens dated 325, in the name of al-Mustakfi, were obviously struck from old obverse dies, since coins of Asʾād are otherwise unknown.
The Mint of San'a'- A Historical Outline

The conquest of the Yemen by Tūrānshāh, brother of Saladin, in 569/1174, marks something of a watershed in the Yemen's monetary history. The mints, which had hitherto operated independently, striking coins for different local dynasties, were brought under central control and their issues were henceforth of uniform type, naming the sultan and the 'Abbasid caliph. Even more important, from an economic standpoint, was the change of metal. The preceding coinage of the Yemen had consisted, with the exception of some 'Abbasid and Rassid dirhams, entirely of gold dinars of varying quality. The Ayyūbid, by contrast, almost exclusively struck silver, and subsequent dynasties followed suit, striking gold on rare occasions only. The causes of this change lie outside the Yemen, in the monetary conditions of the Middle East as a whole in later medieval times. Until the end of the 6th/12th century gold formed the basis of Islam's currency. Indeed, for a period of something like a century and a half (corresponding to the duration of Sulīq rule in Iran), virtually no silver was minted in the Islamic world, whereas gold remained in plentiful supply. The reasons for the 'silver famine' are imperfectly understood, but may have to do with the difference in the value ratio of gold to silver in Europe and the Middle East, which caused silver to be exported from Islam to Europe.14 The revival of silver as a constituent of Islamic currency began in Syria, where in the years following 570/1174-75 Saladin issued a substantial coinage of pure silver dirhams at Damascus and other mints. In the century that followed virtually every Islamic country adopted silver as its chief currency metal, importing large quantities from Europe. Gold, especially dinars of the Almoravids and their successors in North Africa, tended to flow the other way, across the Mediterranean to France, Italy and northern Europe. This process continued unchecked through the later Middle Ages and received extra impetus when, in the 1580s, the Ottomans lifted the import tax on silver, causing masses of cheap metal to flood the Near East from sources in the New World and Europe. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the Yemen, which for so long had coined little but gold, should have changed so decisively to silver as its chief metal. Very possibly it was the arrival of bulk silver from Mediterranean sources which enabled it to do so.

Our knowledge of Ayyūbid coinage in the Yemen derives very largely from a single hoard published by G. C. Miles in 1939.15 Out of seventy-seven dirhams, thirty-five were struck at Zabid, nineteen at Aden, ten at Ta'izz, eight at San'a' and one at Raydah (sic). The figures probably give a fair idea of the relative importance of the different mints, of which Zabid and Aden appear to have been pre-eminent, as in the period before the Ayyūbid conquest. Several smaller groups of Yemeni Ayyūbid coins have been published, but they do not alter the picture where mint representation is concerned. The extant coins of San'a', which are all of silver, remain few:

As noticed by Miles, there is a time-lag in the naming of the rulers, since al-'Adil had been dead two years when the coin of 617 was struck, while al-Mas'ūd Yūsuf, who has a coin dated 626 (and 627, from Zabid), may have died in 625. Whether this anomaly is to be put down to political factors, or to the negligent retention in use of old dies, is debatable.

18 The coin is one of a small group brought back from the Yemen by Dr. Alphonse Mangana. Fuller publication, by H. W. Mitchell Brown and D. Blythe, is expected soon.

16 The problem has been studied by Andrew S. Watson, 'Back to Gold—and

ones. The problem cannot be resolved on the existing evidence.

Two dinars dated 343 and 344, in the name of al-Mu'āfi', are the last extant coins of the San'ā' mint for a period of almost a century. However it would be false to assume that the mint was inactive during all that time. According to the A'mmat al-Yaman,13 coins were minted at San'ā' in the name of al-Mahdī al-Ḥusayn, a rival of the Rassids, in 402/1011. The Rassids, Yu‘ārisids and Ziyādīds continued to dispute control of the city and there is every reason to suppose that they, too, struck coins there to proclaim their authority.

The next surviving specimens, however, were issued by the Khawālīdīd Yāḥyā b. Abī Ḥāshid, who ruled the city from about 422/1030 to 440/1048 (plate 16.1, 6). The issue, identified by Cassanova, was excluded by Bikhazi14 from the body of his catalogue on the grounds of its poor style; but there is no doubt that the inscription includes the name Yaḥyā b. Abī Ḥāshid and the mint signature San'ā'. The dies were probably executed by an illiterate engraver copying blindly from the model before him.

The Sūlayhīds, under whom the Yemen first acknowledges Egyptian suzerainty, are not known to have minted coins at San'ā', although they (and the Zuray'īds) struck large numbers of malīkī dinars at Aden. Sūlayhīd control of San'ā' ended in 481/1088-89, after which the city was ruled by the Ḥamdīdīs (or Banū Ḥātim) until the Ayyūbid conquest in 569/1173-74. Again we are dependent on literary sources for our knowledge of the coinage. It is recorded that there were Ḥātimī dinars, presumably struck at San'ā', each of which equalled four Saba‘ī dinars—the Saba‘ī being probably dinars of the malīkī type struck by the Sūlayhīd Saba‘ b. Ahmad (484/92 A.H.).15 Extant malīkī dinars average 2.38 grammes, so the Ḥātimī, if the differences was simply one of weight, would have weighed 9.56 grammes or twice a normal dinar of the period. However, since the malīkī dinars are of poor quality gold, it is possible that the Ḥātimī was a purer coin of lesser weight, perhaps not exceeding 5 grammes.

The paucity of coins from the San'ā' mint assignable to the 5th and 6th centuries A.H. is probably due in part to the fact that no large hoard of this period has yet been placed on record. Yet bearing in mind that the mints of Aden and Zabid have left many coins of the Sūlayhīds and others, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that San'ā', if not totally inactive, was minting far less than it had clone under the 'Abbasid governors. Two possible reasons offer themselves for this state of affairs. The first is political. The weakening of caliphal growth of independent princedoms led to the setting-up of mints, of which Zabid and Aden appear to have been pre-eminent, as in the period before the Ayyūbid conquest. Several smaller groups of Yemeni Ayyūbid coins have been published, but they do not alter the picture where mint representation is concerned. The extant coins of San'ā', which are all of silver, remain few:

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<th>Ruler</th>
<th>Date A.H.</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ismā'īl b. Tugḥanākī</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>Coins Hoard 1 (1975, no. 291)18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ayyūbī b. Tugḥanākī</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>P. Balog, 'Dirhems ayoubides inédits du Yémen', no. 6. Miles, no. 43</td>
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<td>al-'Adil with al-Kamil 617</td>
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<td>Miles, nos. 44-45</td>
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<tr>
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<td>621</td>
<td>Miles, nos. 46-47</td>
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<td>al-Kamil with 621</td>
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<td>Miles, nos. 48</td>
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<td>al-Mas'ūd Yūsuf 623</td>
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<td>Zabid &amp; Aden</td>
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14 Bikhazi, op. cit., nos. 277, 280. The two coins are alike.
15 G. R. Smith, The Ayyūbīs and early Rassīlīs in the Yemen, Gibb Memorial Series XXVI, 1973, I, 27; see also comment in II, ch. 5, 31, line 6. I am indebted to Dr. Smith for this information.
16 The problem has been studied by Andrew S. Watson, 'Back to Gold—and
16.1 The Mint of San'a'

A manuscript alleges that the Ayyubid Sunqur established a mint at San'a' (wa-aqama dara <jarbin bi-ha) about 604/1207. But that an Ayyubid mint existed there earlier is proved by the dirham of Isma'il b. Tughtakin dated 595. Ibn al-Mujawir reports that Isma'il b. Tughtakin was the first monarch to strike the dirham kabir, the weight of which was 13 qirats or about 2.4 grammes. The 595 coin may be one of these dirhams, though contemporary specimens minted at Ta'izz, 'Adan and Zabid seem to be normal Yemeni dirhams of 10 qirats.

During the greater part of the 7th/13th century San'a' was disputed between the Rasulids, who held the coastal and southern districts of the Yemen, and the Zaydi Imams who controlled the northern highlands. Few coins of the San'a' mint have survived from this period. Dirhams of the Hamzite branch of the Zaydi family were struck at Ṣa'dah, Ẓafar and Kuhlīn, but apparently not at San'a'.

A Rasulid dirham of al-Mansur 'Umar, founder of the dynasty, was minted at San'a' in 643 and Nützel records coppers dated 631 and 643. In 648/1250 the Imam al-Mahdi Al-Mu'ayyad b. al-Husayn seized San'a' during the absence of its Rasulid governor. The latter was induced to side with the Imam against the Sultan, and their pact, broken in 649, was renewed in 650. Dirhams of the Imam struck at San'a' in 648 and 650 survive to commemorate these events (pl. 16.1,7). San'a' subsequently reverted to the Rasulids, and we have dirhams of al-Muqaffar Yusuf, second of the dynasty, dated 650, 651 (plate 16.1, 8) and 654. These are the last recorded Rasulid coins of San'a'. It was evidently not a prolific mint compared with 'Adan, Zabid, Ta'izz and al-Mahjam, each of which produced a long series of silver coins under the later Rasulids. The sparseness of its issues may be connected with the fact that it lay on the northern fringes of Rasulid territory, constantly threatened and sometimes occupied by other powers.

2. Serjeant, The Portuguese off the south Arabian Coast, 147.
3. S. M. Stew, 'Some unrecognized dirhems of the Zaydis of the Yemen', Numismatic Chronicle, 6th series, IX, 1949, 180-188. The coins of Kuhlīn are unpublished. I have seen specimens dated 632, 645, 647 and 670, all in private hands.
the Zaydis. The Imam al-Nāṣir Shāh al-Dini Muḥammad (773-93/1371-90), who captured Ṣan‘a’ and established his court there, is credited with having issued coins of pure silver.²⁴ One of his dirhams, showing the mint name Ṣan‘a’ and the date 789, has recently come to light (pl.16.1.9). A 9th/15th century work, al-Tarjumān al-mufattib mentions a type of dirham known as the Māḥādī, which weighed 2/3 qafṭaš or 2.08 grammes.²⁵ This may have been issued by any of several Zaydi Imams of the period. The latest pre-Ottoman coins of Ṣan‘a’ are dirhams of the Imam al-Muwattakil Shāxar al-Din Yāḥyā (912-965/1506-1550) dated 937.²⁶ Their discovery evokes the possibility of a whole series of coins in the names of the 9th/15th and 10th/16th century Imams.

The coastal parts of the Yemen were occupied by the Ottomans in 945/1538, but Ṣan‘a’ did not fall to them until 953/1545. The numismatic evidence for coinage in the Yemen during this period is rather scanty. The Ottomans established mints for gold at Zābid, and later silver coins of Ṣan‘a’ have come to light, in the name of Sultan Sulaymān b. Salīm and dated 926, 993 and 994.²⁷ The date 926, corresponding to 1520, must be regarded as the Sultan’s accession date, not as the actual year of striking. The dates 993 and 994 fall in the reign of Sulaymān’s successor Murūd III and the coins of those years are therefore posthumous issues. Ṣan‘a’ coins of Murūd III himself are not known, but there are silver coins of Muṣṭafī I and Murūd IV dated 1031 and 1032²⁸ respectively: the dates here may represent either the Sultan’s accession year or the actual year of striking. The Ottomans struck silver coins of Ṣan‘a’ weigh 0.2-0.3 grammes and are obviously counterparts to the ḥaṣābin mentioned in some provinces of the Empire. However they may also be examples of the Yemeni buqshah, a small silver denomination several types of which are said to have circulated during the 10th/16th century.²⁹ There are, further, thick copiers of the time of Sulaymān I inscribed ṣarīb Ṣan‘a’ al-majrūsah (coin of Ṣan‘a’s the well-defended). These are presumably identical with the Sulaymānī manāṣir (plural of manāṣir = ḥaṣābin) mentioned in a contemporary legal text.³⁰ They closely resemble 10th/16th century copper coins of Cairo, which may have been dispatched dies or moneys to the Yemen at this time. Similar copiers were minted at Ṣā’dah and Kawkaban. It may be significant that no gold is attested from any highland mint during the period of Ottoman domination, though alāms (sequins) of Zābid and Ḥodeidah are common.

The coinage of the new line of Ṣan‘a’ Imāms, from the time that they expelled the Ottomans, ca. 1040/1630, until the ‘Turkish recession of the Yemen in the mid-19th century, is characterised by Lane-Poole as ‘of small interest’. This can no longer be considered a fair judgement: when closely examined, the coins offer numerous features of interest and raise questions of historical as well as metrological importance. Initially the coinage was struck at a variety of highland mints, some of which are not known to have operated at any other period: Ṣan‘a’ itself, Dhamār, Shāhārā, Rasd, Kawkbān and al-Khādrā’.³¹ But by the mid-12th/18th century, if not earlier, Ṣan‘a’ was the sole mint in operation. The Zaydi Imams may therefore be said to have reversed the process of decentralisation which took place centuries earlier, restoring to Ṣan‘a’ a status it had not enjoyed since ‘Abbasid times. Gold was struck, although rarely: the largest silver coins, issued by al-Mahdi ‘Abbas in 1176/1762, weigh 19.5-19.6 grammes, and are clearly the local equivalent of the dollar (or rather, its Ottoman counterpart, which weighed just that amount at the time). The smallest coins, minted by al-Mahdi Muḥammad, weigh 0.1 gramme and must represent some subdivision of the buqshah, of which between 48 and 80 went to a dollar.³² The largest number of coins falls into the 1-1.5 gramme bracket, and it is tempting to identify these as ‘cammashees’ (i.e. khumsiyyahs or fifths) which according to 18th century sources (Brooks and Bruce) were the current coins of the Yemen.³³ However, Brooks also says that there were about ten of these to a dollar, by which reckoning the coins in question would be too small. The khumsiyyah should have weighed 2.6-2.8 grammes, and indeed we have coins of al-Mahdi Muḥammad of about that weight; but they do not seem to have been minted later. In the face of conflicting evidence, the best course would seem to be to list the coins of each ruler together with the dates and weights (where known), in the hope that a larger corpus of material may ultimately allow the various problems of metrology and denomination to be resolved.

Al-Muṣṭafī Muḥammad (1029-54/1619-44)
(no coins of Šan‘a’ known; one of Dhamār extant)
Al-Muwattakil Ismā‘īl (1054-87/1644-76)
Silver. Ṣan‘a’, 1071 (0.57), 1072 (0.33), 1084 (0.34)
Gold. No mint name (Ṣan‘a’). Years 1091 (0.45), no date (0.46, 0.47, 0.25).
Al-Mahdi Muḥammad b. al-Haṣan (1089-1130/1676-1718)
Silver. No mint name (probably Šan‘a’). Years 1107 (0.25), 1108, 1110 (0.84, 0.23), 1114 (3.26), 1115 (3.92), 1118, 1122 (0.49), 1123 (2.78), 1126; no date (4.51, 2.31, 1.54, 0.57, 0.19, 0.18, 0.14, 0.13,

²⁴ Yāḥyā b. al-Husayn, op. cit., 538; Nützel, op. cit., 97.
²⁵ Serjeant, op. cit., 181.
²⁷ In private hands, Germany.
²⁸ N. Peré, Osmanli larnda Mâdeni Paralar (Coins of the Ottoman Empire), Istanbul, 1968, 159 (Murūd IV, 1032); the coin of Muṣṭafī I is in private hands.
²⁹ Serjeant, op. cit., 149, note 5.
³⁰ Ibid, 141.
³¹ I have seen the following specimens (all in private hands): al-Muṣṭafī Muḥammad (1029-54/1619-44); Dhamār; date missing; al-Muwattakil Ismā‘īl (1054-87/1644-76); Ṣan‘a’ al-mabrusah (fi qadr al-dirham) ( satin al-Dirham (al-Mahdi, Abmad b. al-Jf asan (1087-92/1676-81) (no coins of Ṣan‘a’ known; one of Dhamār extant) (Brooks and Bruce) were the current coins of the Yemen. ³⁴
³² Yet it is surprisingly hard to relate these denominations to the extant coins. To begin with, the values of the coins mentioned in the records were always changing, as market conditions altered and the coins were debased or reduced in weight. It is not easy to distinguish actual coins from theoretical units of account, and to know, where values are given, what standard is being used. Finally, the surviving coins are extremely diverse in weight, even amongst coins of the same issue. Evidently, as in earlier times, the coin blanks were not weighed out exactly. The only way to establish the standard of an issue would be to calculate the average weight of a large number of specimens; and of these, usually, not enough are available.
³³ The largest silver coins, issued by al-Mahdi ‘Abdīs in 1176/1762, weigh 19.5-19.6 grammes, and are clearly the local equivalent of the dollar (or rather, its Ottoman counterpart, which weighed just that amount at the time). The smallest coins, minted by al-Mahdi Muḥammad, weigh 0.1 gramme and must represent some subdivision of the buqshah, of which between 43 and 80 went to a dollar. ³⁴ Yet it is surprisingly hard to relate these denominations to the extant coins. To begin with, the values of the coins mentioned in the records were always changing, as market conditions altered and the coins were debased or reduced in weight. It is not easy to distinguish actual coins from theoretical units of account, and to know, where values are given, what standard is being used. Finally, the surviving coins are extremely diverse in weight, even amongst coins of the same issue. Evidently, as in earlier times, the coin blanks were not weighed out exactly. The only way to establish the standard of an issue would be to calculate the average weight of a large number of specimens; and of these, usually, not enough are available.
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36 The coins were presented by O. Bakewell to the British Museum in 1919. They weigh 0.82 and 0.55 gramme.
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Appendix

Copper Coin in the Third Quarter of the 19th Century

For the near quarter century before the second Turkish Occupation, the chronicle Ṣafāḥī's notes fluctuations in the exchange rate of copper coin to the silver riyāḍ. Since the latter was a foreign coin of, for practical purposes, unvarying standard, the Ṣanʿāʾ mint could not tamper with it at the behest of the current ruler. The ḥarf, a copper unit, may have been by this time only a notional coin, struck in denominations of multiples of ḥarf.7

At the time of the final redaction of Ḥanīf Ṣanʿāʾ, not later than 1836, there were about 500 ḥarf to the qirsh/riyāḍ.8 In weight of copper coin, it appears that the agreed ratio to the qirsh (which weighs one ounce (iqyâyâh), had been, before August 1853, sixteen ounces, but this was lowered to 3,200 ḥarf. How can it be explained that a few years later, in 1276/1859-60, copper was 3¾ ḥarf, the ḥarf probably being sixteen iqyâyâhs or ounces, to the ounce weight of the silver riyāḍ/qirsh? There are many imponderable factors which render it difficult to draw conclusions from the statements of the anonymous author of the Ṣafāḥī. Until now no examples of the copper coin of the period have been reported.

The two smaller figures in 1274/1858 and 1276/1859, if correctly transmitted, of 420 and 320 ḥarf may possibly indicate that the term ḥarf was being applied to a larger coin, a multiple of the smaller ḥarf. In 1868 the figure is 680 ḥarf.

If the ḥarf was unadulterated copper it may be assumed that it could not, at worst, drop far below the price for raw copper in Aden or Mocha.

Fiddling with the currency was of course no novelty in the Yemen, and bartering of commodities in some parts of the country was still practised as late as 1962, so in this light must be considered al-Sayghi's8 appreciation of the economic situation of over a century ago. He refers to the distress which the Yemen suffered from 'the currency (umlah) of copper (nahâ)' which the caliphs and leaders, contending with one another for rule could not, at worst, drop far below the price for raw copper in Aden and people with accounts for their crops or sale for it could not expect 4,200 ḥarf. It is however possible that some new unexplained circumstances as, for example, the striking of a greater ḥarf-piece, could confirm what seems an inconsistently low figure.

Qumād al-Shaml, 1269/13 May, 1853

'The minting was altered (qubhat al-darbah) and the change for the qirsh issued at 4,000 ḥarf, reaching from the first, 9,600 ḥarf.'

16 Dhu 'l-Qa'dah, 1269/21 August, 1853

'The coinage was issued and they made a proclamation fixing the change for the qirsh at [min] 3,200 ḥarf, and the first [bar/]' was at sixteen iqyâyâhs (ounces) to a qirsh. This was one of the greatest disasters to the town and its citizens.'

This should mean apparently that one lb. weight of copper coin was required by way of change for the ṣafāh of silver. It led to scarcities of every commodity. The authorities attempted to cope with the situation by imprisoning, fettering, and setting a restriction on the city gates, but, after a week, 'the affair resorted to levying (jarq) 3,000 qirsh and releasing the rate of exchange (ṣafā) to them. They paid this (levy) with great hardship.'

Dhu 'l-Qa'dah, 1274/11 June, 1858

'The rate of exchange turned over (ṣaqqalab al-ṣafā) until, in the Qa'dah month, change for the qirsh reached somewhere over 420 [bar/] and everything became expensive.'

The figure 420 looks incorrect for, in the general context, one would have expected 4,200 ḥarf. It is however possible that some new unexplained circumstances as, for example, the striking of a larger ḥarf-piece, could confirm what seems an inconsistently low figure.

Qumād, 1276/December, 1859

The herald in Ṣanʿāʾ proclaimed that the first/former small change (al-ḥaf lid-lī) was 3¾ pounds (naft) to the qirsh and the new to be 320 ḥarf.

End of Rajah, 1277/11 February, 1861

As a result of interference with the Mint the exchange rate (ṣafā) for the qirsh reached 2,200 ḥarf and everything became dear and scarce.

Jumādā I, 1279/November, 1862

'The Mint was opened and coin (ṣikẖa) impressed (nub/a) with the name of the Imam al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allah, and change for the qirsh was at 2,000 ḥarf like the first (ṣikẖa). At the close of Jumādā I the exchange rate (ṣafā) increased by about a quarter over the ordinance (qanūn) upon which it was constructed ... and it was agreed to close the Mint on 5 Jumādā II 28 November.'

1284/1867-68

The coinage (daribah) was a cause of detriment to both great and small. This was because it was at the exchange-rate (ṣafā)y of 2,500 ḥarf of pure copper (nahâ khâlid) to a riwâḍ. As a result grown commodities (ṣafā) became scarce. This coinage did not even reach so near a place as al-Rawâḏah. The exchange-rate kept on increasing secretly, bit by bit, until Sha'bān 17/December 14, when it was proclaimed to consist of 3,200 ḥarf, but it did not remain stabilized and went on secretly to over 4,000. Everything was wanting unless paid for by the qirsh hajar.12

Ca. Rajah, 1285/November, 1868

'The minting (daribah) was at 660 ḥarf. This was used for living expenses (nuṣquq) in al-Rawâḏah, al-Hajmah and so on. That was after everything had become scarce.'

2 Cf. Qāsim Sīwālī, p. 133, for khab burāf, ḥarf.
3 Ibid, n. 332. At this period there were 80 ḥafāsh to the qirsh.
4 Ṣafāḥī, 15 seq.
5 It has been assumed that naft in the Ṣafāḥī means copper not brass.
6 Of Imam ʿAlī b. al-Mahdi ʿAbdallah.
7 This looks like a corruption of the title Usī-dār.
8 The Mint was in the Qaʻlāh/Qayf as in the days of the Hamid al-Din.
9 Reading shawārī for shawārī. Aqab means to proclaim in the streets and the markets; shawārī is a proclamation (cf. p. 148a).
10 Usūs-ul-hādī min— the sense is not clear to me.
11 Actual silver specie. cf. p. 138b, n. 54.

The Ratio of Copper Coinage to the Silver Riyāḍ, 1849-1868

24 Shawwāl, 1265/12 September, 1849

'The Mahdāwā (copper) coinage (daribah) was issued by the hand of Wāṣṭāt al-Dār (i.e., the Agent (Waḥi) of the Treasury (Bayt al-Māl) and the Imam's special Agent, Sayyid Ḥusayn Muḥammad al-Shāmī, the change (ṣafā) of the qirsh being 2,400 ḥarf of it; but this lasted only a few days till it returned to what it had (previously) been, 3,000 ḥarf.'
Chapter 17
The Mosques of Ṣan‘ā’
The Yemeni Islamic Setting

i Introduction

In a traditional Islamic city the mosque, need it be said, has a central place in people’s lives—and nowhere more so than in Ṣan‘ā’. This volume only touches upon the immense lore of Islamic practice, rites, tenets, and a little only is said of popular creeds, many inherited from the pagan ages, as Yemenis themselves recognise. An analytical study of al-Rāzī’s history should, in itself, yield data on early religious developments and memories, even when faint, of ancient controversies. These prefatory pages pick out a few items of significance, making no claim to be an all-over survey. If they mingle grave with gay this reflects how it is with Yemenis who do, mostly, take Islam seriously and attempt, in greater or lesser degree, to follow its precepts, but, sensibly, they do not see this incompatible with a certain sense of humour over religious matters.

The ordinary Ṣan‘āni man goes, or used to go to the mosque before sunrise at the Adhān al-Fajr call to prayer and the ʿSalāt al-Ẓuhr will often be prayed at the qāt session (fī ʿmaqātīl), but on finishing his work a man will go to the mosque, pray the Maghrib prayer and stay on till after the ʿAshrār prayer. He will then get home for his simple supper of ʿaṭṭār qishr-coffee.

Any visitor to San‘ā’ will recall being wakened by the muezzins of the mosques calling out, more or less in unison, the three tasbīḥahs which are accompanied by the barking of the dogs, the first at 1.30 a.m., the second at 3 a.m., and the third ending at five minutes before dawn. This is not a practice followed in the Shāfi’i parts of the Yemen which content themselves with the adhān.

The Arabic texts given below contain praise of God and perhaps to be translated as hymns, and perhaps recital of parts of the Prophet’s life, sung at various joyous occasions, such as a birth, a new arrival from abroad etc. This seems to be common amongst women and one might say that she makes a votive offering (tundhir) of a mawlīd. A nashkhdāwād would be engaged to sing on such occasions.

ii Mawlids

The Mawlid al-Nabīyy is read in the mosques on the Prophet’s Birthday (12th Rabi’ I). The term mawlīd however seems to be loosely applied to various adhān, perhaps to be translated as hymns, and perhaps recital of parts of the Prophet’s life, sung at various joyous occasions, such as a birth, a new arrival from abroad etc. This seems to be common amongst women and one might say that she makes a votive offering (tundhir) of a mawlīd. A nashkhdāwād would be engaged to sing on such occasions.

iii The Three Collects (Tasbīḥah)

Any visitor to San‘ā’ will recall being wakened by the muezzins of the mosques calling out, more or less in unison, the three tasbīḥahs which are accompanied by the barking of the dogs, the first at 1.30 a.m., the second at 3 a.m., and the third ending at five minutes before dawn. This is not a practice followed in the Shāfi’i parts of the Yemen which content themselves with the adhān. The Arabic texts given below contain praise of God and his omnipotence, the petition for his mercy and benevolence to mankind whose only resource is He. They include Qur’ān quotations (sūrahs XXXIII, 56, XVII, 111, XXXIII, 14). Husayn al-ʿAmrī who provided the text, remarked that the delivery would vary in accordance with the competence of the individual muezzin in classical Arabic. The text is printed with its pausal forms as he recited it, but the punctuation is inserted.

The First Tasbīḥah

Bismillahi ‘l-Rahmanī ‘l-Rahīm.
Ya man yarā mā fī ʿl-dāmiri wa-samānu, An-ta ʿl-muʿṣādūn li-kullī mā yuṣrūwaqqu, Ya man ṣīl-ka ʿl-mūhābhā wa-ʿl-mafṣūtū, Wa-ṣīl-ka ṣinna ʿl-khālīj aʿītu, Ya man khāzūni ṣirāqī-hi fi qattī ʿKun,

1 Rossi, L’arabo parlato, 186, has a few notes on popular religion.

2 Al-Amīnī al-Yamānīyā, 400, no. 1193.
The Mosques of San‘a‘ - The Yemeni Islamic Setting

**Subhāna illāhi lā manjā wa-la maljā’i min-hu ulla ilāy-h, Subhāna illāhi wa-bi-hamdi-hi, Subhāna illāhi l‘izām.**

[repeated five times]

Subhāna illāhi. [repeated ten times]

Subhāna illāhi lā yanbāghi ‘l-tashbihu illa la-h, Subhāna hu-ta‘alā ‘l-tubārakā la‘lā’ah ašsama ‘l-khālíqin."

**iv The Adhān, Qiblah, pre-Islamic and Islamic Masjids**

The call to prayer (adhān) is mostly delivered in the court (saz) of the mosque, even in those mosques which have a minaret—almost the only mosques where the adhān is delivered from the minaret are the Jāmi‘ itself, Qubbat al-Mahdi, Ṭailāb, and al-Filayhi. Where a minaret has two balconies, an upper (dawwar a’la) and a lower (dawwar aṣafūl), both above its square base, the lower is used by the muezzin in such circumstances as rain or cold. The qibla of San‘a‘ is Jābl Dīn which tradition relates was appointed so by the Prophet, but al-Hamdu‘ī notes the ancient (pre-Islamic) masjid on the top of Jābl Dīn in a list of other pre-Islamic mosques including that of Shu‘ayb (identified with Jabel ‘Arūs) on Ḥaḍar Mountain. On Jābl Dīn is the shrine of Qudm b. Qādim of Hamdān an eponymous ancestor of one of the Hāshid groups. Before 1962 it had an intendant (ṣawī‘) and votive offerings (ṣawī‘) were taken there. The Islamic masjids are San‘a‘, Ṣad‘ah and al-Janad, built on places where the Apostles’ camel couched, and the Mansak (a place of devotions and offering of sacrifices) of Farwah b. Musayk al-Murādī at the Jabbānah of San‘a’—which is a mosque where no distressed person (makrūb) prays but his prayer is answered. The term ‘blessed mosques’ (al-masajid al-mubarakah) means those where prayers are answered (al-muṣṭafāb ‘al-ṣā‘i‘). If a mosque is blessed in this way it is an indication of the uprightness (ṣawī‘) of its founder as having used ‘lawful’ money (al-māl al-halal), i.e., not acquired by unjust means, to construct it.

In the ʻUrdu-Barracks south of the city is the mosque of Wāh b. Munabbi b. Kāmil al-ʻAbnawī, and his tomb, reputed to have been founded by Wāh himself—this we were unable to visit so we do not know if the existing structure is old or not. It seems that only the location of the tomb itself has any claim to antiquity. Wāh (34/114/654-5 to 732-3), said to have been born in Dhamar, is credited with great local importance in his age, but not much is known of him. Al-Rāzī calls him Sayyid al-ʻAṣimā‘ and Imam of the people of San‘a’ in his day, adding that he was in charge of the Queensland (qadhā‘) of the city during the reign of the Umayyad ‘Umar b. ʻAbd al-ʻAṣimā‘ and Imam of the Qur’an readers (qadhā‘). He was of Persian descent but considered of the people of the Yemen. Fragments of the Sirah he composed have recently been edited—Professor Kister sees in it the attempt to reconcile Sunni and Shi‘ah tradition—very significant since San‘a’ is credited with Shi‘ah attitudes from an early age—some holding that this goes back to the time of ‘Alī himself. Another famous early traditionist contemporary with him was ʻAbd al-ʻAṣimā‘ and Imam of the Qur’an readers (qadhā‘). His father was a Persian who married a mawāli woman of the Hijāriye Al Hid, but ʻAbdūl ‘Alī denies being of the mawāli. 11

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3 This formula throughout the Islamic world is repeated seven times before the sharī‘a sun-rise before Ṣalāt al-‘Iṣra‘.
4 Iklīl VIII, 86.
5 See E. Griffini, ‘Il poema di Qudm Ben Qadim’, RSO, Roma, 1916-18, 293-96. It contains a prophecy that from the family of Am[ad will come to see another. To a person who says he is going to get married, you might say, Ma‘a barakat Allahī.
6 This may be compared the usage of ‘alā barakat Allah = bi-sunu‘ ‘llāh, meaning ‘go with the protection of God’, said to a person departing or going to see another. To a person who says he is going to get married, you might say, Ma‘a barakat Allahī.
7 Sīra San‘a‘, 223, 367, 375, 415, 416. He is said to have been in charge of Bayt Māl al-Yaman, the Treasury. (Ah. Zakayi, Şafatlı, Şenkerur rasühl ar-‘Arab, Cairo, 1356/1937, II, 233. Nahār al-arj, II, 960, records in 1118/1709 the first man to be buried at the new cemetery near Turbat Wāh b. Munabbi.)
8 Al-Majāl, 1556, 255.
10 Mansūr San‘a‘, 66.
11 Al-Rāzī, op. cit., 326.
v Shi‘ism and the Zaydis

Writing about 290/903, Ibn Rustah12 says that ‘Shi‘ism (tashayyu‘)’ is the predominant (doctrine) with most of its inhabitants. The anti-‘Alawi al-Hamdanî13 states the case rather differently. ‘There has never ceased to be there an ‘ilim, faqih, hakim, ascetic (ṣāhid) and one loving God with an exceeding excellence. They have a Šan‘îni calligraphy (khatt) for the majâbîs (of the Qur‘ân), disjoined (mukassar)14 and with an accomplishment (tashîmî)15 which cannot be attained (elsewhere), with correct pointing (ḥaqiq al-shâhî) for which al-Khalîl praised them. They have stipulations which no others have, nor is there any stipulation for a faqih among the inhabitants of the countries but they have one more eloquent, sweeter in pronunciation.’

Ali b. Abî Tâlib was of course sent by the Prophet to the Yemen and one of the oldest mosques in the city at Süq al-‘I‘lalaqah is associated with his name—it is certainly an old foundation.

It is perhaps not widely realised for how long the Sharîfîs of Mecca followed the Zaydi rite, but it looks as if the last vestige of Zaydi leadership ended during the imāmat of al-Mahdi Mu‘âmmâr b. al-Mutâjhir (701-29/1301-28) who is also claimed to have been the last Imam to fight with ‘Ali’s sword Dhu ‘l-Fiqar. On this account Sultan ‘Umar b. ‘Ali al-Rasûl (7th/13th century) said, ‘Šan‘î is Zaydi to its (very) stones’ .

During the ‘Blessed Month’ the routine of life in Şan‘î is completely altered. Official business is nearly at a standstill since Government offices only open for 4 hours (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) in the morning. Since Şan‘î stands so high the fast is not the hardship, even when it falls in the summer season, that it is in Ha‘framawt, and in some ways it is almost a month of holiday.

The daily routine in Ramâqân is that you sleep up to mid-day, then you pray the Zuhur Prayer. Rossi14 says that before the prayer one goes out to buy meat (yishrak). Then there is a reading (durîs)15 of the Qur‘ân until the Şalât al-‘Aṣr in the late afternoon. After this you go to the Süq if you have things to do there, and then you go for a walk (dawrah) in the town or the suburbs. When you hear the gun you take the iftar/futur, always something light to break the fast, such as a few dates, about the time of the adhan16 or before the Evening call to prayer and Şalât al-Maghrib, then comes ‘ashâ supper.

Supper would be soup of wheat in the husk with milk (shurbâ bi-qisr wa-l-kabsh)—this was stated usually to be eaten in Ramâqân only, and hibbat hamâjif, fenugreek with vinegar etc., dates. In a house in comfortable circumstances there would be meat dishes or perhaps liver, ram’s kidneys (ka'idh al-kalâwî 'l-kabsh), ginger, cardamom, cummin (qumîb), hayl, hamman17 and qushna—onions fried with ghee (al-balqal al-ma‘a l-‘aman)—when the meat is fried they add vegetables. This is for the āfâr, the evening meal.

The ‘Aşâ-Prayer is now prayed, after which you go to the mosque for two hours to read the Qur‘ân, then you go home and read ‘Iftîr or ‘Hadîth or the Life of the Prophet, etc. until midnight. You stay in the mosque till the midja‘ al-sâhîr, the pre-dawn gun, fires, then go home and take the pre-dawn meal (‘a‘m al-sâhîr) which would be bihlat, wheat bread (ma‘âš), and, in wealthier houses, sha‘riyyat.22 You now pray the Dawn Prayer (Şalât al-Fajr) and go to sleep. In Ramâqân the mosque is closed after this prayer until 8 a.m.

The above is traditionally how a man of learning would pass his time, but for ordinary folk night is turned into day, the shops are open most of the night and there are lights everywhere. In the early morning a man comes round to wake people up to take the pre-dawn meal—in Şan‘î he is known as al-musabbirât—and he collects a return from each household at the close of the ‘Blessed Month’.

In Wâdî Dahr during Ramâqân the intending pilgrims (hujjâj) or their families set up a swing (al-madrâb) upon which women swing (yitadarrah al-‘ayy-ku) by day and men by night, songs being sung about the hajj. In the country these swings are set up by the street-side or in the field (jirbah) but in Şan‘î in courtyards (hawiyyat) or suspended from a beam in the larger rooms. People often used customarily to fast on ‘the day of doubt’, the 30th of Sha‘bân, fearing that Sha‘bân might be short, and that the last day of Sha‘bân was in actual fact the 1st of Ramâqân. This gave rise to a saying, ‘In kân min Ramâqân–t‘illâ, If it is Ramâqân (—ifl), if not, then it is for God (and should bring its reward).’22

The ‘Id al-‘I‘tîr, often called ‘the Small Feast’ (al-‘Id al-Şaghîr) celebrates the conclusion of Ramâqân, and there is a distribution of presents, always of money, called ‘asb al-‘I‘tîr—one might say ‘asb min ‘ummat Aḥmad, a gift from your paternal uncle Aḥmad. The ‘tawâdhu’ (verb, ‘yu‘awd’) is the gift to the wife, relations and children (‘a‘m al-nakhl al-qih al-qir) or the Life of the Prophet, etc. until midday, ‘Darâhîm al-‘Id sadaqâh, What you spend on the feast is alms,’ runs one of Qâdi Ismâ‘îl’s proverbs, for which of course you will be rewarded. The poor and needy console themselves if they cannot afford an animal to slaughter (known as ‘id) by saying, ‘Dhâ ma‘a‘ah ‘id yiqîd al-‘Id al-‘I‘tîr—’which means in brief that health is the greatest riches.

12 Al-‘Id al-‘I‘tîr, BGA, VII, ed. de Goeje, Leiden, 1892, 112.

13 Siyah, 55-6.

14 Perhaps some of the early Küfî Qur’âns illustrated in Martin Lings, The Qur‘anic art of calligraphy and illumination, London, 1976, might fit this description, but actual Yemenis of the period of the Yemen discovered when the ‘Jami‘ were first available to be studied.

15 Ṭabih might refer to decoration of course.

16 See al-Zubayrî and his anti-‘Imâmî polemic, Arabian Studies, 1978, V, 1.‘

17 L‘Arabo parlando, 188.

18 Yemenis say that a cat purring is, reciting Qur‘ân chok (chok yimânyok), a prayer of praise.

19 Palestinian proverb ‘asb ‘ayyad.

20 Yemenis say that a cat purring is, reciting Qur‘ân chok (chok yimânyok), a prayer of praise.

21 You now pray the Dawn Prayer (Şalât al-Fajr) and go to sleep. In Ramâqân the mosque is closed after this prayer until 8 a.m.

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Al-Dhabhâni and the Kabsh al-‘Id Poem

No better impression of how ordinary folk see the Great Feast can be given than by quoting the contemporary humorous poet of the colloquial, Muḥammad al-Dhabhâni, a Šan‘âni hailing originally from the Banā Ḥuḥaysh.

A neighbour of al-Dhabhâni’s, on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacrifices in 1968, bought a kabsh—a ram—at the Friday Market in Ta‘izz, but when he brought it to the house he discovered that his butcher was a sheep—for the Feast a male animal needs be slaughtered. This so tickled al-Dhabhâni’s humourous fancy that he composed the verses below on the comedi-tragedy.

The lack of strict time sequence, in the latter half of the poem especially, arises from the probability that the poet did not apply himself to draft it as an integrated whole. The likelihood is that, sitting in the mafraj, the company would suggest and press him to describe the incident. Verse of this type is often composed by poets going on a picnic led on by the enthusiasm of his audience, improvising quatrain after quatrain regardless of any consideration of poetic unity.

One person would sing a line and the rest repeat it after him.

1. On the Feast of Sacrifices—noblest salutations
Fresh nosegays of flowers, jewel-like,
Greetings more glorious than the sun resplendent
Despatched to the houses of al-Jahmaliyyah

2. Come an-entering through their windows and their doors
Rising like sweet basil flowers upon every roof-top
The spirits of the dear folk rejoice in their perfume,
Those above all, whose faces to see lights up one’s heart.

3. To Ta‘izz we set out, expressly to visit you
Making our way towards the house of al-‘Iyânî,
The weather cold, coming down in bag-fulls,
Bitter cold! The hire too was a bit expensive.

4. Palm-straw mats we brought with us, and cushions
Warm lined coats, blankets and charpoy beds.
Just come to the kitchen and I’ll let you see the dishes,
The plates, the covers and the Bâriq28 pots.

5. The Feast-cake we laid out on round trays,
Four copper-pots of kubûn29 maize-cake we’ve made,
We’ve brought the Feast dessert-cake, the sweet basil,
We set up everything for the feast—but WE’VE NO BEAST TO KILL!

6. Of lucky chance met I my good friend Muḥammad.
Said he to me, ‘Have not a fear—the kabsh is there,
A lamb stall-fed, so stout filled out, he cannot stand’.

7. We’ve brought the stone stew-pots,30 the dishes,
We’ve ranged the cooking pans on the braziers,
All and sundry we’ve invited from the mosques,
Any one from the centre of the markets, and the farmers.

8. At the round-about the headmen discussed (the kabsh)
It was the topic of the room when they went to chew the afternoon gât.31
What a complaining they made that there was no soup,
Nor any toasted bits of tripe, or meat fried, free of fat.

9. God preserve us (from the evil eye), may Ya-Sîn do so too.32
In the butchers’ hands how many a knife there is there.
See how the neighbours and the poorer folk
Come hastening up to the top of al-Jahmaliyyah!

10. In this one’s hand is a cowry-decorated basket,
Into the pen went (the butcher)—at his presentiment
Of verse 5’s33 kabsh-ut al-sayyâni
They’ve poured you into metal pots,

11. To a person who sneezes, ‘Yii-Sîn!’ A proverb,
One says to a person who sneezes, ‘Yii-Sîn!’ A proverb,
To recite against the evil eye. The verse comments
‘Trust in God and keep your powder dry.’

30 The mashaqir (pl. mashaqir) are espresso machines, as in Qâinûn Šan‘âni’i, p. 544a.
31 This is hyperbole—such widespread invitations are not given!

32 A jâsole, clearly a new word, is a round-about for traffic. This discussion by the headmen seems to have taken place after the awful discovery that the kabsh was a ewe.
33 Alhâ, to recline at the masqil al-gâr (colloquial masqul).
And, seeing the lamb, fell dumb and dismayed,
This lamb,' she said, 'tis sweet and plump, tis true,
But its face—why, tis the face of a girl!

12 Amazed I am (to think) how quickly her end had come,
The grand smell before you taste the soup made from her!
No doubt but the man who bought her fell in love with her,
Made her his sweet-heart for her enchanting Babylonian eyes.

13 Come listen now—what jokes there were
When we saw her shoes and her sitarah wrap,
In the middle of the dihilie she had her smoking cigarettes
Since she has a penchant for cigarettes.

14 Henna-ed her feet are, and her hands
Are decorated with rust-coloured patterns.
A repertoire she has too, Lebanese and Indian tunes.
They say, 'Her voice is sweeter than Hadiyyah's.'

15 'She has four tits,' they say, 'and one to spare',
A very reservoir of milk, falling down in scree-like spouts.
Rearred by sharing she was too, arranged with a baker,
So he's got (meat) when the Evening arrives.

16 A kid too, at her side, kohl-coloured round the eyes,
And a husband—a veritable MAX, replete with many powers.
Some person has resorted to trickery against her,
She will, she says, raise a complaint against him.

17 Before the Shaykh of the Ewes, the Headman of Shararah,
To represent her she has appointed Rizq al-Ghirarah.
'Don't let the expense bother you.' She said,
'I want a judgement made in this case of mine.'

18 She is filled with anger at the man who came and bought her,
'He terrified her—adding to her distress
Why ever did you not let us know at the time?
You've publicly exposed us before the whole town,
You have shamed us in front of the farm-folk.'

19 They said to her, 'How comes it you are so grieved?
And, seeing the lamb, fell dumb and dismayed,
When we saw ber shoes and her
A repertoire she bas too, Lebanese and lndian tunes.
Sorne person has resorted to trickery against ber,
To represent her she bas appointed Rizq al-Ghirarah.
Why ever did you not let us know at the time?
You've publicly exposed us before the whole town,
You have shamed us in front of the farm-folk.'

20 'Mine is an astonishing tale,' said she,
'How shall I rest when l'm a stranger
And my children are lambs in the pen?'

21 The Shaykh rose, and the Headman summoned her,
She should seek recourse to the Best of Creation, Tâbi,
Who delivers us from awkwardnesses and evil.

A tale that illustrates a little of the practice of slaughtering at the Feast is recounted by Qâdî Ismâ'îl. A man bought a beast to slaughter for the Feast. He commissioned a butcher to kill it, telling him to say, 'Bismillâh, Allâhu'mma, this is on behalf of so and so', naming himself as the donor. The butcher however, instead of naming him, mentioned his own name. So the owner of the beast said to him, 'round off your killing of it with, 'And God knows best who the person is that paid the money (Allâh 'al'am bi-naqqâd it-tulâs)!"

viii The Jabbânbâh: Šalât al-Istisqâ'

It is a custom generally in the Yemen to go outside the city to an open place to pray at the two Feast-times. The Šalât al-Id prayer takes place at the Šan'â Jabbânbâh mosque before first light (al-shurq). In Imâm Yâhya's time it was still in open country but now it is surrounded by houses.

Another important occasion upon which they repair to the Jabbânbâh is at the istisqâ' or prayer for rain at the periodic droughts. An older rite almost certainly pre-Islamic and ancestor to the Muslim istisqâ' is the tasqiyah described by Rossâ and the writer. In some places in South Yemen I have remarked that the villagers go out to the wadi-bed for the istisqâ'. A story is told that a year of drought befell Šan'â and the Governor ordered the people to go out and pray for rain (yatsqisîh). So the Muslims went to the Jabbânbâh and the Jews went out to the area to the west. The distress caused by the drought went on for a long time so the Governor commanded the Jews to go out along with the Muslims, and follow them in whatever they said. The Muslims were shouting, 'Bi-Muhammadin yâ Allâh, minna 'alay-nâ bi-l-amrân, By Muhammad O God grant us rain!' The Jews kept turning round to the rear, speaking to one another secretly and they said, 'We should say, "And the Muslims are shouting, 'Bi-Muhammadin O God',"' We should say, "(and they are shouting), 'By Allâh O God!'" etcetera. The intention of the Jews is of course to avoid uttering the oath by the Prophet of Islam. The formula is used first with the oath by Muhammad, then 'Ali, then al-Zahra' (Fatimah), but does not go on to mention Al-Sibâyân, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. On the other hand all five are mentioned in the formula used by mourners at al-miqâbâr, which is a term covering a funeral 'from the Jamie' to the grave.'
The Administration and Maintenance of a Mosque

Mosques are maintained from the income of the various waqfs which were administered by the Nāṣīr al-Awqāf or Inspector, and today by the Wazir al-Awqāf with a budget separate from that of the state—in effect the office is the same. Zaydī Imāms before the second Ottoman occupation seem to have appointed to this office and al-Mahdī Abū 'l-Abbas for instance maintained that control of the nāṣīr al-waqf was his prerogative. The Nāṣīr before his day used to receive a commission (anwālah) of one tenth, but al-Mahdī reduced this to two thirds of a tenth and when he offered the appointment to Sayyid 'Ali 'Amīr he offered him only half of the tenth (a twentieth) but the Sayyid refused to accept anything but the full tenth which was the 'recognised commission'. Imām Yāḥyā Ḥamīd al-Dīn in taking over from the Ottomans continued to appoint to the Inspectorate of Waqfs. The post of nāṣīr in charge of nāṣīr al-waqf fi Shu'āb Ṣanʿā' in the present century is mentioned by Zābirābī—he seems to have been a sort of assessor like the muhtāmmin or muvbarrī sent out by the Government to assess crops for taxation purposes. On the behalf of the Aqūf the Nāṣīr looks after the lands (araq) and jā āmi, including of course the large waqf holdings in Ṣanʿā' itself. He would report to his hospital, making sure that the charge of the building, including the maintenance of the property. Basically his duty was to convey water to the buildings in general (al-firash wa-šulqan il wa-jawr al-sadin) and work at the buildings in general (al-sham').

The Nāṣīr is in charge of maintenance of the mosque, so he sells his produce on his own account. A good inspection of the buildings, like the mināṭūf al-shahr, is of humble standing monetarily (mutawārid mītiyy-an) but he had to have virtue and religion (faḍl wa-diyāna). They mostly held their office by inheritance. They would of course report to the nāṣīr when anything in the mosque required repair or renewal, but it is to be remarked that when the mosque is in need of new carpets these are generally asked for, and given to it as gifts. Mosque furniture included the large alabaster lamps from Ghurās, Sāda'ah or Rādā, the ṣārīj of Aṣār stone also—sometimes very large lamps which were given as waqfs, they might be nearly two feet in diameter and had a wick (fāṭilah) in each incision so that they gave a fine light. Three-branched copper candle-holders were on show at the City of Ṣanʿā' Exhibition, London, 1976-8. The large lamps were used at marriages (yasāfah bi-hā). Apart from this there would be kūrīya to hold an open Qur'ān, cupboards for books and sometimes chests of drawers.

The qashqām is so called because he grows qumkhi (known in other parts of the north as fiḍ but not in Ṣanʿā'), the white radish in the mosque vegetable garden called miṣğḥāmah but he also grows hayāyam-leeks, buyālah a red onion with much hotness (fāṭalab) and an onion called barāq which is not very hot. His crop is entirely his own to dispose of unless there should happen to be, under some conditions, part to be paid towards the upkeep of the mosque, so he sells his produce on his own account. A small house beside the mosque, bayt al-qashqām, is milk al-waqf, waqf property. Basically his duty was to convey water to the mosque and release it on the vegetable garden at the end of the day (yinqul al-miṣwād ila baṣmasi wa-yīfūr al-mā ila miṣghāmah akhurst il-yām). He used to draw the water tending down the long inclined plane of the well-ramp (mīna) for the ablution places. There are some big mīnās near Bāb al-Yaman, not used nowadays of course, because the mechanical pump has entirely replaced human and animal labour. Ross has an example of verses sung by the sāmi or well-worker, and probably also by the qashqām. If the garden is large enough the qashqām receives no pay for his water-drawing, if it is small he receives kūlāh of grain, always a specified quantity, to make up the difference.

Though the qashqām belongs to the Bani 'l-Khumrus class, probably because he works with ablation-water which is not clean, today he has become very prosperous because of the current high price of vegetables, and sometimes even owns a lorry or two. During the siege of Ṣanʿā' in 1323/1905 which coincided with a famine in the Yemen when it is said that more than half of the inhabitants of the city died, there were only about twenty of them not working properly the sināyādar complains to the nāṣīr. In a small mosque the sināyādār might do the sweeping. In general he is responsible for guarding the mosque and his house will be close to it.

To the sināyādār the nāṣīr would issue the monthly supplies (maṣūf al-shahr), oil (ṣālūf), perfumes for the lamps (qānīl il-ba'lambāt), wicks (al-dhāba'il), candles (al-sham') and his 'measure' (al-qāyyūl haaq-ah) usually grain (ḥabīb), rarely cash. Since this was so small allowance for their office they would have other occupations especially weaving (ḥiyyāyah) and they would spin (ṣayyākh) il-filal, and also be barm il-filal, and work at mīṭāryā (as druggists)—both being regarded as respectable ('amal sharīf). The sināyādār was of humble standing monetarily (mutawāfī naʾīf) but he had to have virtue and religion (faḍl wa-diyāna). They mostly held their office by inheritance.
the well-workers (sunāḥ), ‘who in the Yemen are called gushtamān’, left, and all those found there today are new. The Jami’ had thirty gushtamān, but only five children survived, their fathers having perished during the siege.69

A jingle runs, Nuzul Waahi’i al-Sharī’ I came down to al-Shām valley, Left gushtamān I met a gushtamān, Hazartī gushtamān I snatched radishes (from him), Hāzār bi-kummi He snatched at my sleeve.

The gushtamān is not going to let anyone take his vegetables from him by force!

In 1976 the Ministry of Awqāf reported its work in conservation, repair, and replacement of a large number of carpets in the mosques and jāwāmī in many provinces, the capital being foremost. It also had undertaken the listing, and enumeration of all the real estate (‘aqāra‘) and the muṣlaqafat of the Awqāf in the principal towns, including the capital, the defining of the rents and entering them in large registers (ṣijillât), regularising them quarter by quarter (ḥarāh), market by market, and raising the rents to double (aḍāf) what they were previously.

x Mosque Teachers and Scholars

The nāṣir would also provide the stipend for the Imām who conducts the prayer and is known as Imām miṣrāb, or the ordinary Imām al-masjid. Kaylah in fixed amount would be given him and the muezzin, in accordance with circumstances. The Jami’ is of course where instruction is given in the wide field of ‘ilm, the religious sciences, and most scholars teach without any other reward than gifts from pupils.70 Some needy scholars (fugahā muḥāfajān) may however receive kaylah. The present muqri ‘l-Jāmi’ al-Kabīr, Sayda-nā Muḥammad ‘Amir,71 reads the Qur’ān before the ṣalat al-Fajr in Ramadān and before the ṣalat al-Fajr in the middle. It is indeed the analogical deduction (istinbīṣh) of the shar‘ī laws (aḍkhām) from clear proofs (adillāt taṣfīṣiyā) the person engaged in which is not called faqih until he becomes a master (imām) in all the transmitted sciences (al-ṣulûm al-naqfiyyā) such as Arabic, the Usul, Ḥadīth, Qur’ān Commentary (taṣfīr) and what is connected with this, in addition to the essentials of the science of Scholastic Theology (Kāfam).72

Of course the term faqih is applied in practice to a wide range of persons from the outstanding scholar to the village dominie whose learning is not very deep. It is said that the Qādī class at one time were simply known as faqahā’. Sayyid Ahmad al-Shāmī says that Sayyid scholars would teach in the mosque in the early morning, gratis, then leave and engage in embroidering caps (taṣrif al-kawfāf), after which they would go and chew qat (yakbasain). Even the Muṣṭir, the ancestor of the Ḥamīd al-Dīn Imāms used at one time to work at this in a narrow lane in San‘ā’, and al-Shāmī himself can do so, though he says he is not very expert at it. The best kawfāf come from this of the Ahnūm and Shahāhār districts where there are Sayyids who practise the embroidery craft (mīhanat al-tāqisf), making the caps known as marrūq (pl., marrūq). The Qudāh used to ply the craft of binding books (ṣabāk, yadhūk) and indeed an Ahnūmī qaḍī is recorded by Zabārah as ‘eating by the toil of his hand at repairing and binding books’ (early 12th/18th century). Some Sayyids also bound books. After teaching at the mosque in the early morning one would see Sayyids and others of standing going off with their large turbans and bundle of books to work as carpenters and blacksmiths—this in no way was considered demeaning them.

The big teaching mosques like the Jāmi’ of San‘ā’ have a row of cells for students who are known in the Yemen as muḥāfajīn. They seem generally to exist on charity from individuals, mostly in the form of food, but they do not receive anything from the Awqāf. One of these however who used to teach (yaṣīr) and live in the San‘ā’ Jami’, is recorded as receiving something from the zaqāk and Awqāf.73

xi ‘Ilm, Religious Learning

In the northern part of the Yemen the study year—the academic year—is six months from Muḥarram to Jumād 1.74 The Zaydis study al-Faṣrā‘ (laws of inheritance) during Rajab over approximately 26 days, each with its specified period (ṣuṣyāb mu‘ayyana‘) until completed.75 The Shāfi‘īs in the Tihamah however study during Rajab, al-Ummahāt al-Sitt, the ‘Six Books’ of Tradition, especially al-Bukhārī whose Saḥīh has in their eyes most virtue (tabarruk). Shābān and Ramaḍān are a holiday period, but Ramaḍān is a vacation for worship (ṣaḥāḥa‘) bādāh. After ‘Id al-Fī‘r on the 5th Shawwāl a study period commences, continuing to Dhu ‘l-Qa‘dah, known as the study period between the small and great feast (Dirisat bayan al-Tayyab).

A sample of the course of studies followed by an ‘Ilm in San‘ā’ in the first half of the 12th/18th century and probably similar to other scholars even up to the present day is that of ‘Abdullāh Luṭ al-Bārī al-Kisbānī76 who included al-Kashīshāf of al-Zamakhshāri, Shāhī al-Raqīqī, and some of al-Ummahāt al-Sitt. Before he was twenty he had completed grammar, syntax and rhetoric (ḥayān). He then went on to study the Usulā (see Ef, wujūl), logic, fiqīh, Ḥadīth and Qur’ān commentary. After completing reading the ṣuṣyāb al-ījāthā, he occupied himself with learning the Qur’ān by heart, and the Seven Readings (of the Qur’ān) with the Shawkī al-Qurā‘—no doubt in the Jāmi’.

The Shaykh al-Qurān, the same as Shaykh al-Qur‘rā, specialises in the Seven Readings in Tajwid of Qur‘ān Recitation, the Zaydis using the reading of Na‘īf, the same as Ḥāfṣ is also known.

Ordinarily the mosques are open from before daybreak (waqt al-sahūr) till 3 a.m. (Arab time = 9 p.m.) being closed after ṣalat al-Ashur, but some remain open if they are teaching mosques—one door of the Jāmi’ on the east side remains open all the time.

xii Al-Masmūrah and al-Manqūrah

Al-Wāsī tells us that ‘It has been said that in the rear hall (mu‘ākhkhar) of the Jāmi’ there is one of the gardens of Paradise, it being the (area) known today commonly held (to lie) between al-Masmūrah and al-Manqūrah; it is bounded by four columns with the miṣrāb of the rear hall of the Jāmi’ in the middle. It is

69 Al-Wāsī, Tarīkh al-Yaman, 2nd ed., 303—he was writing in 1927.
70 Hāzor, yahzir, to snatch. Al-‘Eizī Shīrī al-Šūyādīyāt, Amīd al-Yaman, II, Aden (z), 18, vi, 61, quotes a proverb, Qushtamān San‘ā’i nee-lū šaykh al-hilād, the sense of which is that the life of a poor townman (madārī) is better than that of a rich man who is a hadārī. The Jews have the same proverb but for shawkī they substitute mānī.
72 Al-Mahdī ‘Abbas is recorded as ordering the prayer (qaḍī) to be taught in San‘ā’ and the villages and countryside (baḥāfīd) and he gave the teachers a stipend (ṣuṣyāb) from the Bayt al-Māl (Nasr al-‘Arf, II, 519).
73 A man of this type would be called faqih in the restricted sense that he would know the Qur’ān by heart and various anāṣir nabawīyyah, etc.
74 See p. 533b (n), 561b.
75 Nashr al-‘Arf, II, 483.
76 Ibid, II, 159 Ibid, II, 274, notes a San‘ā’i faqih who worked as a merchant till he lost his capital.
77 Ibid, II, 217.
78 This form is used for ernesadi.
79 It was a custom with scholars reading a text when they decided to stop at a point which they would later resume, to say, lla huna wa-nazid, wa-bi-’llih ilā hamāt, ilā hamāt.
80 Nashr al-‘Arf, II, 143.
82 Al-Badral-mu‘īlil fī-’l-Yaman, Cairo, 1358, 12.
commonly known to people through experience that anyone who swears a false oath (yamin-an fajratar-an) by God Exalted at this place will not remain three days before being struck by leprosy (yuhäm), or the falling off of his arms and legs, or a great disease in his organs. Al-Masmūrah is a nail (misnār) in a side on the right of the mihrāb and al-Manqūrah is a hollow in a side on the left of the mihrāb, to the west—and this is the original mosque which was built by the command of the Prophet. It is tried fact that about this place that prayer is responded to—you see no disturbed person or one weighed down by cares who sincerely addresses himself to God in this place but it is dispelled from him straightway. You see the Ṣanʿā’ people recommending one another in this place to offer prayer and study the Qurʾān. A certain person told me of himself that he was sitting alone in this place behind the mihrāb in the last third of the night after the opening of the Jāmi’ but before people had arrived, there only being the servant (khādim) who swears a false oath commonly known to people through experience that anyone who

swears a false oath.

With regard to oath-taking in general, the author of al-Bahr al-zakkhhār86 cites the Tradition that oaths may be taken ‘alā minbari, va‘lat my minbar’. They may be taken in mosques on account of their honour (sharaf) and on Qurʾāns (masaṭif) on account of their sanctity (kūrmah) and the swearer puts his hand on the masqaf out of veneration (i‘ām-an). ‘The picking out of any particular stone is disapproved, since in this there is similarity to the idolaters (waštahiyān), as is done in the rear hall (mušakhor) of the Jāmi’ of Ṣanʿā’ at the Green Stone (al-Hajar al-Askha).’ Whether this reference in the first half of the 9th/15th century is to a separate stone from these two columns is unknown to us.

In the maqṣūmah of ‘Ali Šāliḥ Abu ‘l-Riāl, writing about the first half of the 12th/18th century, the Jāmi’ Mosque is made to say, ‘Don’t you see that between al-Masmūrah and al-Manqūrah they have put an ugly wooden grille (shubhāk) only suitable for the garden of a qashāh or one of the castle stables (qal min šubāl al-an’am)’? It does not seem to be there now.84

The way in which the oath is taken at al-Masmūrah and al-Manqūrah was described to me by Sayyid Aḥmad al-Marwānī as follows. The muballaf—the person who has brought his opponent to take the oath (of denial of an offence) and the muballaf— the person persuaded to take the oath, sit between the two pillars facing the qiblah. If the muballaf is uncertain he trembles in fear (yartaţif). The formula of the oath which he swears would be, ‘Aṣām bīllah al-ẓaţim al-ḥākim al-ziţam al-muštaţam, qasam-an, akhruju min bawli ‘llāh wa-quwwat-ih ilā tumaţam, maʻa gharîm-ih, fulân bin fulân, li-tablif al-Zubayriyyah, iubü/ al-an‘ām)?’ The

Mosques of Ṣanʿā’

The mosques of Ṣanʿā’ are treated in a lighter vein by the poet wit, ‘Ali b. Ḥasan al-Khaṭfağī86 in his verses on Addīl Mosque in Bir al-‘Azab on the Bawmiyyah side, not far from Bāb al-Balaqah, the Gate to the Jewish Quarter. It seems this was an old building87 renovated by Imām al-Mansūr (ob. 1224/1809-10), son of al-Mahdi ‘Abbās. The saţīl after the court (sawwā) was built by Imām al-Mutawakkil in 1266/1849-50. The poem, composed about mid 18th century, faithfully reflects Ṣanʿānī life, the place the mosque occupies in society, and numerous little customs of the people. The name, Addīl, of the mosque which makes a plea to the Jāmi’ Mosque is curious. It is the imperative of ‘addal meaning to lay down as a pledge at a dispute of a bundug or jambiyah, the two contending parties being known as ‘ādīl.88 The language is colloquial but not patois and it is attempted to convey this in fairly literal prose.

84 Nashr al-‘arīf, II, 322.
85 Ghayrat al-amān, 64, calls it ‘al-Ḥajar al-Malûmamah which is under the arch (al-faţa) on the left of the person facing the qiblah (al-muṣṭaţaf).’ Tāj al-‘Arūs, IX, 63, defines a ḥajar musaylamah as musaylamah (smooth and round), sub (hard) and musaylamah (round).
86 A descendant from Imām al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad.
87 Masājīd, 70.
88 I know no reason why the mosque is so called.
San'a—An Arabian Islamic City

The plot
Al-Khafajin turns certain San'a mosques into personages—this mosque-poem is not a genre confined to the Yemen99—I have come across it in Ḥaḍramawt, and doubtless it would be found frequently elsewhere in Arabic literature. Sharaf al-Dīn98 says that all the names of mosques in San'a are the names of city Quarters and this may have some significance. Political satire that could endanger a poet's life and chattels is said often to have been expressed in verse and maqāmāt of this kind. Since no Yemeni author consulted suggests that there is a satire underlying the plain sense I can discern no ulterior motive in the verses unless it be to complain of the poverty and neglect of some San'a mosques and propose that part of the income of richer foundations like the wealthy Jāmī should be diverted to renovating the poorer mosques. At the time there does appear to have been a movement to enlarge and improve older mosques of simple structure. Criticism of the inspectors of mosque waqfs for converting their incomes to private use may there be, but the literature shows this was so common that an honest nāẓir might be rare.91

The Jāmī Mosque is portrayed as a personage of great wealth and consequence—perhaps even in the role of an Imām himself. 'Adīdīfī, his author, sends to complain to him of his neglected condition, and the Jāmī', in kindly way, consents to make him a visit of inspection.

On the Yemeni feast of the first Friday in Rajab, the Jāmī' issues forth with great pomp and circumstance from Bāb al-Yaman on the south side of the city at the head of a retinue that includes several other notable San'a mosques—others come running up to join the cortège—just as children do, even adults.

While the Jāmī' rests for brief refreshment, a complainant, the Nizaylī mosque, about the entrance to Bir al-'Azab, arrives with a small douceur for the Jāmī'—as is customary when a person wants a hearing, not a bribe. His case has presumably been dragging on for some time for the Jāmī' tells him the relevant waqf documents are mislaid. 'Adīdīfī, alarmed lest his own case be postponed by the business of the new complainant, now interposes. Characteristically of an approach. I have heard many a time, he does not do so in his own name, but begs that the Jāmī' be allowed to take his due need of rest. Nizaylī snubs him by implying that 'Adīdīfī is not of the same category as himself and his much superior wealth.

However he seems to withdraw.

The Jāmī' resumes his journey joined by yet more mosques. 'Adīdīfī now pleads his poverty asking the Jāmī' to take action about it—this he consents to do. An interruption is caused by the Shayā'īd mosque, seemingly in the role of a clerk of the Waqf, rushing up with a document and asking the Jāmī' to assist 'Adīdīfī. The Jāmī' promises to send for San'a building contractors. 'Adīdīfī blesses and praises the Jāmī' who goes on speaking of his arrangements.

98 For Yemeni poems on the same theme see ʿAbdallah b. ʿUsayn al-Shāmī (12th/13th century) on the same Qaṣīda Mouqadda and a contest between mosques, (Nashr al-ʿurf, II, 92 seq., and 224), the marriage of al-Madhīb al-ʿArsī and al-Muṣāfiyyah mosques. See al-Dhahābī, al-Awhām al-ṣāḥiḥ, 34, for a political poem entitled Manṣūr al-Ashāb.
100 While I was working on this poem in 1974 in San'a', and in early 1975 with Sayyid ʿĀlim al-Shāmī in Beirut, I was unaware that Harald Vocke, 'Die Beschwerder der Adīdīfī-Mosche', ZDMG, 1973, CCXIII, 56-73, had already published a text, translation and excellent commentary based on the Sharaf al-Dīn text. My versions were those in Manṣūr al-Ṣanāʾ, 71-73, Sharaf al-Dīn, and Sayyid ʿĀlim al-Shāmī's edition, in preparation, of the Dīdīn al-Khaṣṣāṣ based on a Ms. superior to either which we read in Beirut and later in London. Dr Vocke's article contains material not used here. A biography is to be found in Nashr al-ʿurf, II, 193-98. Notes here contain only the material from Vocke's article. The Shāmī text does not include verses 25 and the first hemistich of 26, but has entirely different lines which have been included, numbered numbered 2a and b. Further verses omitted by Manṣūr al-Ṣanāʾ are numbered 56a and b. They commence 'The apricot trees joyously trilled' seem to me to fit better in the second place where they appear, but as they are aesthetically satisfying in both places they are left so.

101 This and the following verse mean that the mosques upped and left, carrying their congregations with them.

Muṣāfī mosque now tells of the visions of 'Adīdīfī's coming prosperity that he had in dreams on which he consulted an expert in interpretation of dreams at Zumur mosque. Either he or a person unnamed, perhaps the Jāmī', describes 'Adīdīfī's rosy future fulsomely and at length. The trees and birds applaud the Jāmī's decision—in their trilling there is clear allusion to the ululations of the womenfolk.

Well satisfied with a sound piece of work, the Jāmī' starts on his way back to San'a', but again as he proceeds, this time along the north side of the city, he is confronted by further petitions from San'a mosques. He puts off these fresh complainants, re-enters San'a and is greeted by trilling cries of joy by the women of the city.

* * *

1 Says 'Adīdīfī, 'We'-l-salām, a greeting
Proffered to the Jāmī' in sincerity.'
2 When he arrives I'll lay the case before him.
3 'Adīdīfī says he's got a complaint to make,
4 First let him build for me ablution-places,
5 Second, have them clean out the well.
6 If you've anything, your friend's the one on whom to spend it.97
7 Oh Jāmī', if only—when you honour me by visiting
8 To get to know and verify the state I'm in—
9 You'd favour a fellow, with your kindly face.9
10 The Jāmī', turning98 to him, said, 'Why not?
11 Already people have acquainted me with your condition.
12 Assuredly! You're welcome—full willingly.
13 To come to Bir al-'Azab is little trouble99 to me.'
14 Till the Friday of Rajab910 he tarried, then, of a sudden, came.
15 Out from the Wall he went,91 passed through the open countrysid,
16 On his right Madrashā and Abzār.102
17 Resplendent as the moon was his appearance.
18 Hearing each from the other of his venture forth, the Mosques
19 Came running up to join him with the still protrate in prayer.103
On went the Jâmi',108 bearing with him all worshippers and their belongings; their wish, his need, and their desire he knew. The Jâmi' sat himself down,109 saying, 'Ya gharaniq,110 

He presented a gift--a seductive musk,108 which is explained as follows. Tribes dancing the zaghrûtah,129 a joyous or sad occasion. Cf. Qanbar, English-Arabic vocabulary, 358. 

When one is in bad circumstances, one says, 'May the Lord guard you from the glances of the evil. 

Shami's text reads for the first time, 'I am endowed with gifts of incense, cupboards for books, sweepers' wages. 

Both plains and (mountain) short cuts, which is explained as follows. Tribes dancing the zaghrûtah, a joyous or sad occasion. Cf. Qanbar, English-Arabic vocabulary, 358. 

Adding to his protest against his own plight, the Jâmi',108 said, 'I am not'utilisateur, a person or thing not utilizing. Cf. gloss. dâl., to utilize.' 

Confusion comes from the same root. 

It is identified by Mr G. C. Pope of the Centre for Overseas Pest Research as the cattle egret. There are no gharaniq in Bir al-'Azab at the present day, but this shows that there was much water in Bir al-'Azab then, as indeed living memory today asserts there was. 

‘Aq[à'a' = muqaddam, which has been adopted here, means the courtyard. 

A presentation be brought—a gift of seductive musk, 108 and throw it at someone's feet. 

A long sheet of paper, gummed, in his band, a fair copy wherein were matters set forth clearly. 

'At harm' is explained as follows. Tribes dancing the zaghrûtah, a joyous or sad occasion. Cf. Qanbar, English-Arabic vocabulary, 358. 

A long sheet of paper, gummed, in his band, a fair copy wherein were matters set forth clearly. 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you). 

'ta}zjab 'alayk, to cover you over' (so that no evil person may see you).
40 With these words of yours you have relieved my heart, for you are of those versed in the law, sensitive of their honour.

41 The Jāmī' turned to him, said laughingly, 'A splendid thing to have relieved your heart!

42 Negotiations to pave your court with someone I've begun already, and to extend it westwards of the building. Since you are neeedy and must have more revenue.

43 They say that worship in you is acceptable (to God), yet no (sweat) do you own of land, or hostelry.

45 Said Mu'āṣir, 'I saw good fortune for you in a dream, that you were standing beside the door of Abū Tāyir.'

46 When Abū l-Khayr stopped in your prayer-niche and the minaret that belongs to you was like Khuwānāq. That you were standing beside the door of Abū Tāyir.

47 This must mean that 'Addil is one of the people unknown, unless possibly he is the policeman more or less.

48 A faqīh who knows all things has one who disposes—Compared with him Ibn Sirin doesn't come up to here! To him I said, 'I've seen a vision that 'Addil has come into conjunction with the Pleiades, perhaps correctly as they are weak.'

49 Said Mu'āṣir, 'I saw good fortune for you in a dream, that you were standing beside the door of Abū Tāyir.'

50 When Abū l-Khayr stopped in your prayer-niche and the minaret that belongs to you was like Khuwānāq. That you were standing beside the door of Abū Tāyir.

51 Said the Jāmī', 'This is the best of the things you've seen. If what you say be realised you have (indeed) re-built him.'

52 Summoned him to well-being and prosperity. Favourable regard must be accorded him.

53 His position is beside the Enlightened (Jāmī'). He must receive favourable consideration, be re-furbished, and has courts like those built by 'Amīr.

54 His position is beside the Enlightened (Jāmī'). He must have the field of 'Iyāl Jassār, beside the door of Abū Tāyir.

55 He must have the field of 'Iyāl Jassār, in which they'll plant onions and (fruit) trees. In which they'll plant onions and (fruit) trees.

56 There they'll study al-Bayyān and al-Ashār, Do the Muḥā-jab and the Shāfī'īyyah.

57 Mu'āṣir offered them a book cupboard they'll make at his prayer-niche, A store too, they'll make for the waqf.

58 Oil (for his lamps) they have assured to him, God preserve and protect his fair and noble brow, For graciousness was ever of his nature.

59 The Jāmī' took his stately way to San'a', 'Addil accompanying him, running by his side.

60 He must have the field of 'Iyāl Jassār, in which they'll plant onions and (fruit) trees. In which they'll plant onions and (fruit) trees.

61 His way took him opposite Shamālūf, Passing Shu'ūb north (of the city) on his left.

62 A deal of kindness had he done, and charity, With kind intent attended to his purpose.

63 Onward he proceeded till he passed by the Khanādiq, When he has a companion within the walls; he's like an open yard.

64 That he is poverty-stricken, the most fortunate evening being When he has a companion within the walls; he's like an open yard.

65 At once Farwāḥ addressed herself to him, Waving flags, flag-poles from Shu'ūb to San'a'.

143 Shafayyā'īdhabayt (Shāmī and Sharaf al-Dīn). The variant means literally, 'You have nourished', but the sense is eerie, eased, relieved.

144 Al-ʻurūf wa-ṣaḥāyāt—this is ʻurūf recognised by shāmī, saqādī, traditional practices of trading, tribes, etc.

146 Abu Tāyir is Masjid Ibn al-Iyār Ibn al-Iyār. Shāmī and Sharaf al-Dīn's reading may mean literally, 'to stop, stand. Shāmī and Sharaf al-Dīn read jāmī' al-Mansurawī'.

148 Even with the classical sense of ringing, buzzing etc. would also be interpreted.


153 The Damascus Mosque.

154 They say that worship in you is acceptable (to God), for graciousness was ever of his nature.

155 To him I said, 'I've seen a vision that 'Addil has come into conjunction with the Pleiades, perhaps correctly as they are weak.'

156 Mu'āṣir offered them a book cupboard they'll make at his prayer-niche, A store too, they'll make for the waqf.

158 They must have the field of 'Iyāl Jassār, beside the door of Abū Tāyir.'

159 A deal of kindness had he done, and charity, With kind intent attended to his purpose.

160 That you were standing beside the door of Abū Tāyir.

161 The Jāmī' took his stately way to San'a', 'Addil accompanying him, running by his side.

162 God preserve and protect his fair and noble brow, For graciousness was ever of his nature.

164 The Jāmī' took his stately way to San'a', 'Addil accompanying him, running by his side.

167 San'anā—is San'a', the capital of the modern Republic of Yemen, a place of great significance in the history of Islam? San'ā', An Arabian Islamic City

168 A store too, they'll make for the waqf.

169 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

170 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

171 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

172 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

173 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

174 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

175 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

176 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

177 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

178 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.

179 San'anā is in the Bustan al-Sultan Quarter, west of the Sa'ilah which had large garden areas.
Some Observations on the Development of the Šan‘ā’ Mosque

From his researches al-Ĥajarî arrived at the conclusion that, the Holy Šan‘ā’ Mosque apart, the mosques of the city were small, many and close together, devoid of ablution-places (ma‘ṣâhir), pools and wells, except in rare cases, and people used to perform their ritual ablutions in their houses before repairing to the mosque. The multiplicity of small mosques is evidently due to the part they played in the life of the ordinary Šan‘īni. Al-Ĥajarî adds that after the 9th/15th century conditions began to improve. Following the plague of 933/1526-7, Imâm al-Mutawakkil Sharaf al-Dîn Yâbiyî indicated that many properties left without owners should be applied to the utilities (maṣâlîh) of the mosques. In each Quarter (Ĥîrah) he ordered wells should be dug, pools and ablution-places (birik, maṣâhir, mustakhadhâhî) to be constructed, while sadanah, imâms, muezzins and well-workers (sunâh) to draw water daily from the wells to the ablution-places were appointed, and gardens (introduced ?) irrigated with the used water each day which was replaced by clean water from the wells. As a result people abandoned the smaller mosques without wells and ablution-places, they fell to ruin and were lost without trace. These the Šan‘înis called al-Masjid al-Mansîyâ, the Forgotten Mosques. Whether it is so simple as he says, his Mîṣjîd provides ample evidence of additions and enlargements made to the older foundations, to say nothing of the construction of new ones. There seems to have been considerable re-founding of old mosques, often with a change of name. Benefactions are known as maṣûnîn (pl., ma‘ṣâhirîn); a sadan a draw-well, sometimes with a dome over it, in which case it is called al-qubbat al-sabîlî, would be a typical benefaction and a typical inscription on it would run, Ghaflar Allâhî fi-fâ’îl al-maṣûnîn, May God pardon the benefactor.

In December 1973 I saw the famous Mîsaddat Sinânî in the cube-shaped Chancellery of the Šan‘î Mosque. It is a long narrow book bound in, probably contemporary, plum-coloured leather, an embossed design in the middle of the cover. The paper is of old mosques, often with a change of name. Benefactions are known as maṣûnîn (pl., ma‘ṣâhirîn); a sadan a draw-well, sometimes with a dome over it, in which case it is called al-qubbat al-sabîlî, would be a typical benefaction and a typical inscription on it would run, Ghaflar Allâhî fi-fâ’îl al-maṣûnîn, May God pardon the benefactor.

In connection with al-Utrüsh’s prohibition of decorative plasterwork, al-Râzi reports that there had been splendid plasterwork, al-Razî 190 reports that there had been splendid plasterwork, al-Razî 190 recording that a little before his time (he died in 460/1068) the Masjid al-Šâyâqî of the Sûq al-Ĥâbîb of Šan‘â’ was restored by a certain Abî Ayyûb of the city, adds, ‘It had a minaret but he did not put it back’. Unfortunately he does not say why. Al-Ĥajarî from time to time records the addition of minarets to mosques.

An interesting feature of many mosques in the north is a sort of bin constructed inside the mosque and plastered over, to act as a repository for discarded religious literature, mainly torn Qur’âns. In Šan‘â’ fragments of old Qur’âns are kept in khaż‘în al-maṣâif, cupboards made from recesses in the walls, and they are never burned. Sayyid Alîmad al-Shami informs me that in his boyhood scraps of paper were not seen lying about the Šan‘î streets but were picked up and put in a respectable place if found, because the name of Allâh might be written on them. This once calls to mind the genizah but it should not be assumed without proof that it derives from Jewish practice. There are

source for the history of the mosques until the beginning of the 11th/17th century.

A problem of architectural history in the Yemen concerns the Zaydî attitude towards the minaret. Al-Utrüsh, the warlike and learned Imâm of Šābristân, in his treatise on ʿîṣâbîh, gave injunctions that mosques must not be made like churches, ornate, pictures, be ornamented with gold, hung with curtains or decorated with plaster-work. Minarets must not be raised above the roof-level of the mosque. Al-Ḥâdî ila ‘l-Hâqq, the first Imâm of the Yemen and contemporary with al-Utrüsh, when in Šadâh, prayed in the mosque which had a sawâma’ah. Certain would-be assassins planned to shoot him from this sawâma’ah and escape by the wall of the mosque. šawâma’ah basically means a cell or chamber, but comes to mean a minaret in the usually understood sense. The text describing the attempted assassination does not clearly indicate whether the sawâma’ah was a tower or a roof-cabinet, but it looks as if it were the latter. In Ḥâdîr for instance, and quite a number of other centres, the place of the call to prayer is merely a low cabinet at the top of a stair to the roof, but as stated above, in Šan‘î itself the call to prayer is mostly made from the crescent moon on the buildings, without proof that it derives from Jewish practice. There are

182 The Jâmi’ enters Šan‘â’ and is welcomed by the ulamas of its womenfolk. Verses 69 and 70 are not found in Sharaf al-Dîn’s version.
183 Qurrât al-ʿuyün, ed. M. al-Âkwa’, I, 138, records that in the celebrated teaching Jâmi’ of Šabîrî, there was no pool (birik) until Malik al-Âshârî (last quarter of the 9th/14th century) set up a small mabâlî yubti, an iwaṣma’ah. This mabâlî yubti was in the light of a passage in Sirat al-Hadi, XXVIII, 1-34.
184 BSOAS, 1959, XXII, 1-34.
185 Sirat al-Hadi, 387.
186 Masajid, 44.
187 Târîkh Šan‘î, 323.
188 Al-malib yubti, waiting.
189 Al-malib yubti, waiting.
190 Al-malib yubti, waiting.
191 For the discussion of mîbrâb in general, see R. B. Serjeant, ‘Mîbrâb’, BSOAS, 1959, XXII, iii, 459-53.
many of these repositories in Ṣanʿāʾ mosques. The wooden muballigh or platform in the northern aisle has already been mentioned, where the adhan could be repeated after the imām (juradd al-adhan baʿda l-imām), but it was said to have been introduced to hold additional worshippers.¹⁹² This was built in the days of Imām Yaḥyā, who was a great renovator of mosques, but it has since regrettably been removed.

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¹⁹² In 1166/1753 even the Ṣanʿāʾ Jamiʿ was so crowded at the Friday Prayer that some prayed on the roof (Nasīḥat al-ʿaraf, II, 519).
Chapter 18
The Architectural History and Description of  Sản‘āʾ Mosques: The Great Mosque

Introduction

According to al-Rāzi there were 106 mosques in  Sản‘āʾ in the 5th/11th century.1 There is approximately the same number today. Of these, thirty-four are large mosques of some age, and two are recently built. The remainder are small shrines most of which have little historic or architectural interest.

Only two Sản‘āʾ mosques, apart from the Great Mosque, can be dated earlier than the 4th/10th century from literary sources. One is the open-air Jabbanah, which was founded by Farwah b. Musayk al-Murādi, Companion of the Prophet, and the other is the nearby Mosque of Farwah, in which he is reputedly buried.

In spite of the lack of documentary evidence, there is a number of other Sản‘āʾ mosques which can be observed to incorporate remains of early buildings, datable on stylistic grounds, and a few, which remain relatively unaltered, closely resemble ancient mosques which can be accurately dated in other parts of the highland area.

The Great Mosque (al-Jāmiʿ al-Kabir)

Foundation

According to the traditions as reported by the early historians, the Great Mosque of Sản‘āʾ was built on the order of the Prophet Muhammad during his lifetime. As for the man who carried out the Prophet’s wishes in building a mosque in Sản‘āʾ, the traditions are not unanimous and several names are suggested for the builder of the original structure. The most popular choice, however, would appear to be Wabr b. Yūḥannis al-Khuza‘ī, one of the Prophet’s early governors in Sản‘āʾ.2 Other names mentioned in connection with the building of the Mosque are Farwah b. Musayk al-Murādi, who built a mosque bearing his own name and is also reputed to have been responsible for the erection of the Jabbanah,3 Abān b. Sa‘īd and al-Muhāji b. Umayyah.4

If we are not sure of the actual builder of the original mosque, there is no doubt about its location. It was built in the garden of Bādhān, that is of Bādhān b. Sasan, who had been the Persian governor at the time Islam came to the Yemen, and who had been retained as governor in Sản‘āʾ by Muḥammad. The mosque was to be built between the rock called al-Mulāmāmah as far as the palace of Ghumdān. The position of al-Mulāmāmah is still pointed out today, on the outside edge of the western wall of the Great Mosque within the ablation court (pl. 18.59).5 The tell which would appear to be that of Ghumdān begins a few metres to the east of its present eastern wall. The qiblah was fixed on a line running through Jabal Ġīrin.6

Early Reconstruction

After the early foundation of the Great Mosque on the instructions of the Prophet, it underwent alterations and additions on three occasions during the next three hundred years.

Late 1st/early 8th century

When the Umayyad caliph, al-Walid b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (86-96/705-715) appointed Ayyūb b. Yaḥyā al-Thaqqāfī as governor in Sản‘āʾ,6 he later received a letter with instructions to enlarge the Great Mosque. Ayyūb enlarged the mosque by extending it on the north side—he extended it from its first qiblah to where its qiblah is now,7 as Rāzi describes it, writing in the 5th/11th century.8 Rāzi quotes from one source that after the building of this extension the qiblah was a cubit and a half off the true direction to the right. The same writer mentions that Ayyūb included a miḥrāb in the new northern wall,9 containing decorations and inscriptions. These were removed by the Qaḍī of Sản‘āʾ, Yaḥyā b. Abdūllāh b. Isma‘īl b. Kulayb, who died in 341/952-53 and who had insisted that such decorations would distract the Believers as they said their prayers.10 This act of extending the area of the mosque necessitated the demolition of a tomb belonging to one of the prophets. Indeed it might well have been thus extended in order to cover the position of the tomb completely and, in this way, to prevent the tomb continuing as an object of veneration.10

1 Al-Rāzī, Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, Damascus, 1974, 4, r. ca. 460/1073, 113, in that is almost the most accurate set of statistics of Sản‘āʾ which have come down to us. The same paragraph gives the number of baths as 12, as against 17 today. There are other, conflicting, statistics given by al-Rāzī, but those seem to be merely quotations from earlier sources which he includes for the sake of impartiality.
2 Al-Rāzī, Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, 70, 75; al-Hajār, Masājid Ṣan‘āʾ, 23. See above, p.52a.
3 Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, loc. cit.; Masājid Ṣan‘āʾ, 24, 3.
4 Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, loc. cit., suggesting also that Wabr and Abān worked together in having the Mosque built.
5 Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, 81; Masājid, loc. cit.
6 See p.317b.
7 Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, 70, 73, 75-6 passim; Masājid, loc. cit. The rock is now one metre below ground level, its position being indicated by a later rock placed on top of it.
8 Tārīkh Ṣan‘āʾ, 85; Masājid, 24.
9 If correct this would make it one of the earliest miḥrābs built into a mosque.
10 Ibn Rustah, al-Aḥāl al-Nafizah.
2nd/mid 8th century

Doors were provided for the first time in the mosque by the second 'Abbasid governor, 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Majid al-'Adwi. From the Kufic inscription still to be found in the courtyard of the mosque, we know that the third 'Abbasid Caliph, al-Mahdî, gave instructions to his governor, 'Ali b. al-Rabi', in 136/754 to have the repairs carried out to the mosques of San'â'. We can safely assume that the Great Mosque would be included in those mosques to have been repaired.

3rd/late 9th century

A great flood swept through San'â' in 262/875-76 and the Great Mosque was ruined completely. In 265/878-79 extensive rebuilding took place, described as a new building commissioned by Muhammad b. Yu'fir or his son, Ibrahim. All the timbers were of teak (sağ), while the main structure was of stone and gypsum. It was a large and impressive building. The main point to bear in mind here is the installation of new timbers. Al-Razi, our main source, suggests that the flood damage made new timbers necessary, or that they were installed after the damage done to the Mosque by 'Ali b. al-Fadîl after his second conquest of San'â' in 299/911-12.

The great flood of 262/875-76, therefore, may have been the cause of the replacement of the timbers and other major works in the mosque. It may, however, have been caused by the wanton damage done to it by 'Ali b. al-Fadîl, after his conquest of 'San'â' in 299/911-12, when he is said to have flooded the mosque so that 'the water . . . filled the building up to the ceiling'. We also cannot exclude the possibility that both events actually took place and that the Great Mosque therefore suffered two serious floodings in a period of just over thirty years.

That the walls of stone and gypsum may date from an earlier period is suggested by Ibn Rustah, who visited San'â' in 290/903, when he stated that the large mosque he saw was 'built at the command of the God of his lifetime'—had such a fundamental part of the building as the main walls been erected within the preceding twenty-four years he could hardly have failed to have known about it. Al-Janadî's assertion that traces of the level to which water had risen in the mosque could still be perceived in his day (ca. 732/1331-32) confirms that no major rebuilding of the central part of the mosque took place between 299/911-12 and the 8th/14th century.

6th/12th century repairs carried out by the Sulayhid

The Zaydi historian, Yaḥyâ b. al-Ḥusayn, who died in 1100/1689, records that the Sulayhid queen, Arwâ bint Ahmad, built the eastern side (al-ṣanîh al-ṣarqî) in the year 525/1130-31. Certainly the structure of the mosque has been extended on the eastern side, but the statements that the work was done by the Sulayhid queen should nevertheless be regarded with caution. Firstly, there is no record of such a rebuilding in the earlier historians who deal with the Sulayhid period. Secondly, the inscriptions built into the eastern wall are undoubtedly pre-Sulayhid.

The Rebuilding of the Minarets in Ayyûbid Times, 569-628/1173-1231

At least one of the minarets seems to have been in existence in 299/911-2, although whether in its present form is uncertain. The minarets which now exist were repaired in 603/1206-7, according to two inscriptions preserved in their walls, which indicate that both were rebuilt by the Ayyûbid amir, Wudurshar b. Sâmi, with whose source is Janadî's Al-Hurrah al-Malikah which it is interesting to quote at this point. Sayadna Taher Saifuddin Saheb says of al-Hurrah al-Malikah (Queen Arwâ), 'She it was who extended the building of San'â'.

The Renovation of the Mihrâb in 665/1266-67

Al-Hajarî states that he saw above the mihrâb in the Great Mosque a plaster inscription which indicated that it was remade by Qâdî Diya' al-Din 'Umar b. Sa'id al-Rabi' in 665/1266-67. There is no longer any sign of such an inscription above or near the mihrâb as it is at present, though it is clear that the mihrâb and its surrounding area on the northern wall have been recently redecorated and replastered. Al-Hajarî compiled his book, as is the style of the five exterior doorways. In view of the omission of any reference to a Šulayḥid rebuilding in the earlier sources and in view of the antiquity of the inscriptions (nos. 4-10, infra), it might be suggested that any rebuilding of the eastern wall in Queen Arwâ's day was of a minor nature, involving only repairs to an existing wall, and leaving the inscriptions intact. However, the magnificent ceiling of the whole eastern side was a major reconstruction which can be ascribed to the 6th/12th century with reasonable certainty. Some of the ceiling inscriptions in the northern hall are also datable to the Šulayḥid period, as is, almost certainly, the foliated Kufic inscription above the central doorway on the outside of the northern wall, and hence, probably, the doorway itself.

The Fâtimi Tawhîb Dâwâ' has a tradition independent of the Zaydis concerning the Jâmi' which they call Masjid Hurrât al-Malikah which it is interesting to quote at this point. Sayadna Taher Saifuddin Saheb says of al-Hurrah al-Malikah (Queen Arwâ), 'She it was who extended the Jâmi' of San'â', restored its structure, decorated (sazâyam) it and ordered that the names of all the Imâms, from 'Ali b. Abi Talib up to the Imâm of her age, be inscribed in it. So that was recorded/written on the north wall of al-Masjid al-Jâmi' by her order. Then it was removed (hushîja) in the days of Aṣçâm b. Sulaymân (532-66/1138-71), the Imâm of the Zaydiyyah, in tyranny (baghy), aggression, envy and oppression. It was put back with plaster (jijj) and ashârāh (a plant of which shoe-maker's or binder's paste is made (Steingass)) in the rule (dawlah) of Hâtim b. Aṣçâm b. Arwâ. Then it was removed in the rule (dawlah) of the Al Yaḥyâ of the Ashârâh (Yaḥyâ b. Hamzâ or ?) for that is the innate disposition of deviation and misguidedness. The names of the Imâms, on them be peace, are written on the ceiling (sağ) of that Jâmi' up till now, in Kufic script, which is not noticed, as one of the brethren who (actually) saw it has verified to me.'
Masājid San‘ā, in the period after 1358/1939-40 and these renovations on the mīhrāb and its wall clearly were carried out since that time. It seems that the inscription he refers to here was plastered over during this renovation. One further complication is that there appear to have been, at various dates, three mīhrābs built into the northern wall of the Great Mosque.

The Renovation of the Ablution Room and the Water Reservoir

According to the Masajid the ablution room and water reservoir (birkah) were renovated by Imam al-Nāṣir Sali‘ al-Dīn Muhammad (773-93/1372-91). His only source for this statement, however, is an Imam of the Great Mosque early in the 14th/late 19th century, ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. I‘lām al-Ruqay‘ī.

The Repair of the Minbar, 984/1576-77

The minbar of the Great Mosque was repaired by the Ottoman governor, Murād Pāshā in 984/1576-77. This is attested by an inscription carved in the minbar itself.

Subsequent Rebuilding of the Mosque

There are no subsequent references in the histories to substantial rebuilding until the Ottoman governor Sinūn Pāshā rebuilt the small building called simply the Qubbah in the courtyard, and repaved it, in 1012-16/1603-08. Only in the twentieth century was further extensive rebuilding undertaken, according to the historians, and this affected only the southern hall, over which was constructed a library, necessitating a new row of columns on the southern side of the courtyard. This work was done by Imām Yahyā in 1355/1936-37. He further strengthened the roofs of the eastern and western halls so that they could be used for prayers when the mosque was full, and constructed a staircase up to them in the south western corner.

The Architecture of the Great Mosque

Externally the mosque is a rectangle of high stone walls, broken by only one opening on each of the north and south sides, by three openings on the west, and by four on the east (pls.18.1-8 and 18.58).

The walls measure slightly less than 66m by 78m, and are built of two facings of squared basalt stones ranging from 68cm wide and 53cm high to 31cm wide and 35cm high with a central packing of rubble. It is possible that some of the basalt is re-used from a previous building. The stonework is laid in the curious manner practised in the Yemen in early Islamic times, though still in use until a relatively recent date, in which the outer face of each stone leans slightly outwards, to create an apparent projection, or step, at the top, of approximately half a centimetre (pl. 18.6). Possibly this technique of laying the stones was meant to ensure greater stability if the foundations settled or if there were earthquakes. It has some resemblance to pre-Islamic stonework.

There are remains of a cresting of brick and plaster finials on the southern wall (pl.18.8). The ablution area lies to the west of the mosque.

26 'The extent of the Fami from the south to the north is 127 cubits (šikā'ī) and from the east to the west 104 arm-lengths (madkara) by the iron cubit (šibī').

27 The style of the stonework in the Ghayl al-Barmaki, 1827/989-9 is very similar (plate Cf. p.469b).
18.2 The Great Mosque. Exterior. The north, qiblah, wall. Note the central doorway and the blocked-up door on the right.

18.3 The Great Mosque. Exterior. Detail of the north, qiblah, wall, showing the vertical drainage chutes (mashalah) for rainwater from the roof.

18.4 The Great Mosque. Exterior. The south-west corner, including the domed tombs to the south of the western minaret.

18.5 The Great Mosque. Exterior. The south-east corner. The stepped impression created by leaning out each course of stones is clearly visible.

18.6 The Great Mosque. External wall. Detail showing the ledge formed at the top of each course of stones by leaning them outwards.

Within the walls are arcaded spaces on all four sides of a central courtyard (fig.18.1, pls.18.8-15). A monumental door with an early, carved wooden lintel (pl.18.18) is protected by a porch in the centre of the south wall. This leads into the southern hall which extends the full width of the building and is divided longitudinally into four aisles (pl.18.14). The western minaret projects into this space at the western end, while the eastern minaret blocks off the eastern corner of the courtyard.

A mihrab in the southern hall was destroyed in the reconstruction of 1355/1936-37. The upper part of it, somewhat damaged,
The Great Mosque

The arcading rests on a great variety of columns taken from earlier buildings or made up from fragments (pls. 18.14-15, 20-21, 27-29). One column is even made by turning a pre-Islamic stone inscription on its side. The advantage of re-using stone columns and fragments, a practice followed elsewhere in the mosque, especially in the northern prayer hall, seems to have been that solid stone columns permitted the minimum obstruction of sightlines to the Imam leading the prayer against the qiblah wall.

When large stone fragments were not available, a circular pier of diameter 70 or 80cms was made up of a rough rubble core compacted with a thick layer of gypsum plaster. These piers tend to predominate on the eastern and western sides of the south (and north) hall, and are used without exception in the two outer arcades of the eastern and western side halls of the mosque. Traces of the wooden tie-beams which originally joined the arches, but which were cut at some later date, have been found during recent restoration.

The side halls are entered without interruption from the southern hall. But after a short distance, approximately 12 metres on the west and 8½ metres on the east, walls cross the arcades to close off the southern part of the building from the northern. Both these crosswalls contain mihrābs, that on the east is a plain niche, while the western mihrāb has a richly embellished surround (pl.18.22).

Small doors near the central courtyard penetrate the cross walls to link the southern and northern areas of the mosque. There is also access through doorways28 from the street on the east, and through a single doorway from the ablution area on the west. The eastern doorways have angled reveals, which line up with the line of the east to west arcades, and counteract the angle of the eastern wall. The arches of the doorways on the outside are pointed horseshoe arches, with the bottom voussoirs acting as impost blocks and projecting past the reveals by 3cms (pl.18.23).

In the south western corner of the mosque are four tombs. One, now closed, is under a dome to the south of the ablution area (pl.18.4). According to al-Hājari, 'it is known as the qubba of al-‘Awaṣṣal and is the grave of the Imam al-Qāsim al-Mukhtar son of Imām al-Nāṣir Aḥmad, son of the Imām al-Hadi Yāhiya who died at Dhū Marmar in 728/1327-28. Then the people of Ṣan‘a’ after a short time transferred his grave to the side of the Jāmi’, and at his side is the grave of his son the Imām al-Muṭṭāhhar b. Muḥammad b. Muṭṭāhhar, who died in the year 781/1379-80 and the grave of Ṣidī Yāḥyā, son of the Imām Muḥammad al-Muntṣar29 son of the Imām al-Qāsim al-Mukhtar buried in the grave mentioned above, who died in 729/1328-29. Finally there is the grave of Ṣidī Muḥammad b. Idrīs b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥamāz, who died in 714/1314-15. Of these tombs, the best preserved is the last, approached through a richly decorated door from the ablution area (pl.18.24).

On the north side of the western minaret is another and very early tomb, reputedly that of the Prophet Ḥanzalah b. Ṣafwān.31 Al-Hājari32 describes what he calls a 'structure' of baked brick and plaster above the tomb and separate from the minaret, although this is now incorporated into it. Perhaps this was a crude form of dome. A small arch is preserved in the wall of the minaret, probably the original opening to the tomb, blocked in the 11th/17th century (pl.18.25).

In several of the western corners are banks of students' lockers for books, roughly built up in brick and plaster and closed with small wooden doors.

The northern halls: The eastern and western sides of the central courtyard are flanked by halls of three-aisle width which open into the northern prayer hall without a break. The two outer arcades have plain round piers. The arcades onto the courtyard

28 Originally two, one is now blocked.
29 Mosājid, 30.
30 Author of Gharīl al-nādi‘ al-mash*hah al-Hādi (ibid, loc. cit.).
31 Mentioned by al-Rāzī, op. cit. There are at least four other tombs reputed to be his in various parts of Arabia, one of which is west of Bōr in Ṣadī Ḥadrāmawt. Ḥanzalah is a pre-Islamic prophet.
18.9 The Great Mosque. View into the courtyard from the eastern side.

18.10 The Great Mosque. View into the courtyard from the western minaret, with Sinan Pasha's Qubba in the centre.
18.11 The Great Mosque. View of the northern and eastern prayer halls across the courtyard, with the qubbah on the left.

18.12 The Great Mosque. View in the court from the western prayer hall. Note the ancient column and capital in the northern prayer hall on the left.
Fig. 18.1 The Great Mosque. Plan and sections.

Key to all figures

- animal stalls
- court upper level
- entrance hall upper level
- ghay—water level
- kitchen
- mafraj
- loading and mounting animals
- cold pool room
- library
- terrace
- rain water cistern
- well ramp
- bathroom
- changing room
- warm room
- excrement room
- lobby
- minaret
- restaurant/eating place
- public ablution area
- store
- tomb
- man in charge
- man car
- boiler
- divan
- furnace room
- hot room
- laundry terrace
- mihrah
- passage
- room—general use and sleeping
- sheep pens
- treasury
- well
- women's room and wardrobe
- court
- entrance hall
- grinding mills
- grain and fruit store
- lavatory/bathroom
- washing floor
- pool
- reception room and business
- shop
- shaft
- water cooling box
- manger
are quite different, having for the most part plain square columns made of single large pieces of stone. Those in the western hall have plain capitals, those in the eastern hall have curious, roughly-carved capitals in vaguely-shaped leaf forms (pl. 18.15). In the centre, however, is a re-used pre-Islamic circular column standing on an upturned capital and carrying another of different design (pl. 18.27). The shaft of this column is entirely covered with an entwined ornament with a central belt of twisted strapwork, while the capitals are of vague composite type with stylized acanthus leaves. It seems likely that the shaft and the capital did not originally belong to each other.

The column adjoining this on the south is also circular, a sixteen-sided polygonal shaft of pre-Islamic type.

The northern hall has five aisles, the four northern arcades of which are similar to those of the southern hall, with an assortment of pre-Islamic stone columns, and sometimes capitals, in the centre, changing to larger circular piers with rough cores at the western and eastern ends of the hall (pls. 18.12, 16, 17, 29).

The southern row of columns, on the courtyard side, are square single-stone slabs with plain capitals, like those flanking the western side of the courtyard, with the single exception of the column in the north western corner, which has a pre-Islamic (?) capital of bold conventionalized Corinthian type (pl. 18.16). There is another similar capital in the third arcade of the northern
The Great Mosque

18.17 The Great Mosque. The northern prayer hall.

18.18 The Great Mosque. The wooden lintel of the main door in the centre of the south facade. In an ancient style, it contains, among vine tendrils and leaves, rosettes and what appear to be foliated Latin crosses.


The qiblah wall has the mihrab more than five metres to the west of the centre. The upper mouldings of an earlier mihrab remain on the wall two bays further east (pl.18.30).

The decoration and calligraphy of the present mihrab are very crude; it is modern work (pl.18.31). Its position, however, is probably quite close to that of the original mihrab of the mosque. This may be deduced from the fact that the large dome of the ceiling, described below, has a centre-line which is only slightly to the west of it.

To the west of the mihrab are two superimposed bands of splendid naskhi script nearly 14m long, each band being approximately 25cms high (pls.18.32-33). These inscriptions contain two raised bosses of a type roughly contemporary

18.20 The Great Mosque. A Christian column and capital in the southern prayer hall, bearing a Greek cross in the centre of each side.

18.21 The Great Mosque. A column shaft in the southern prayer hall, with an overall vine pattern, probably early Islamic.

333
The Great Mosque. A prayer niche in the western arm of the southern prayer hall.

The Great Mosque. One of the eastern doorways in the external wall. Note the slight horse-shoe shaping of the arches.

The Great Mosque. A screen of wood across the entrance to one of the domed south-western tomb chambers.

The Great Mosque. Traces of the plaster niching in the north wall of the western minaret, now removed.

To the east of the present mihrab is the wooden minbar, repaired in the year 984/1576, according to an inscription over its gate, by the Ottoman governor Murad Pasha (pl. 18.30). On the wall behind the minbar and to the east is another short inscription in plaster relief; this is above the remains of the eastern mihrab.

Between the minbar and the mihrab is the door through which the Imam entered the mosque, the door itself plated with metal of pre-Islamic design and workmanship containing Himyaritic...
The Great Mosque: Horseshoe arches on double columns executed in plaster in the north wall of the eastern minaret, now removed. (Photo: P. Costa)

The Great Mosque. Pre-Islamic or early Islamic column and capital in the eastern prayer hall, with an overall vine pattern.

The three doors of the northern end of the eastern range resemble those further south in having angled reveals externally, surmounted by pointed horseshoe arches which are slightly narrower at their bases than the reveals below (pl.18.23).

The Ceilings: All of the ceilings of the mosque are of wood. Those of the northern and southern halls vary from 4.50 to 5.80m in height to the soffit of the beams, those of the eastern and western halls are higher, the eastern 6.95m and the western 6.11m. The construction of most of the ceilings of the southern and northern halls is a series of beams approx. 20cms square in cross-section running north-south (that is, between the arcades, which run east-west) supporting a series of small cross beams which carry infilling panels of wood. In some cases the latter are decorated, in others not. The decoration usually takes the simple form of a square recess turned diagonally to the surrounding frame of beams, with a painted star or circle within it (pl.23). Painted inscriptions, some of them in Kufic script, cover many of the beams of the first, second and third aisles from the qiblah wall (pl.22).

The main exceptions to this type of ceiling are the ceiling in the first bay in front of the mihrab and to the west of it, and the ceilings of the last four bays to the west in the northern hall (omitting the most northerly bay, which conforms to the type typical of most of the mosque).

The ceiling in front of the mihrab and to the west of it is composed of a large corbelled flat ‘dome’, or ‘lantern’, flanked on either side by a pair of smaller flat ‘domes’ (pls.24,18.35). On close examination the corbeling is seen to be made of large flat pieces of wood resting on beams, while the flat circular ‘dome’ or ‘lantern’ in the centre is of ancient alabaster, long since turned

33 Cf. pp. 337, 346a
18.29 The Great Mosque. Capital and polygonal column shaft in one piece in the northern prayer hall from an ancient South Arabian building. The base is an inverted capital of later pre-Islamic date.

18.30 The Great Mosque. Minbar in the north prayer hall.

18.31 The Great Mosque. Mihrab in the centre of the qiblah wall. Redecorated in the present century. Note the adjoining door, and the early Kufic inscription on the wooden strip which runs right around the building under the beams.

18.32 The Great Mosque. Beginning of the naskhi inscription on the qiblah wall to the west of the mihrab.
black and thickly plastered over on the outside, but originally
doubtless translucent so that the light poured in on the centre of
the qiblah wall.34 Two further beams were introduced at some
subsequent date to help support the central 'dome', disguising the
original appearance which was of a square placed diagonally in a
square formed by beams, qiblah and arcade wall, from which the
corbeling rose up. The whole 'dome' structure has parallels with
similar constructions in Central Asia, which Benjamin Rowland
thinks were probably invented in Persia35 (pls.18.36,38). But
three-corner brackets under the central 'dome', which have strong
redolences of the pre-Islamic architectural style unique to the
Yemen, remind us that we as yet know nothing of pre-Islamic
timber ceiling constructions in this area (pl.18.37).
The last four bays in the south west corner of the northern hall
are higher than the rest of the ceilings in the northern hall. At
approximately 7m they are even higher than the ceilings of the
eastern and western halls.36 They consist of a palimpsest of
fragments of decorated wood, some areas of which are certainly
original ceiling panels complete with frame and beams (pls.25,
18.43). It is tempting to believe that some of the beams and
panels remain in their original position, but it is impossible to be
sure of this without detailed archaeological examination of the
structure, impossible at present. Certainly, this theory would
help to explain why only this one section of the ceiling should be
so much higher, by allowing us to suppose that to stabilize the
ancient structure later architects lowered the height of the rest of
the ceilings.37 It is possible that a restorer, centuries ago, allowed
four bays of the original ceiling height to remain immediately
adjacent to the western wall, and that into these bays were
collected all the finest fragments of the original ceiling that were
not decayed or eaten by insect-attack (pls.21,25,18.35-49).
The ceilings of the western and eastern halls are more richly
decorated in carved and painted ornament than the bulk of the
ceilings in the northern and southern halls. The ceiling of the
eastern hall is the finer of the two (pl.18.48).
Throughout the eastern and northern halls, and in areas of the
western and southern halls, long wooden Kufic inscriptions run
along the walls immediately below the ceiling beams. These are
of two types (pls.18.41,49, fig.18.2). Those of the eastern,
western and southern halls are in a rounded Kufic; those in the
northern hall are in a form of Kufic which has borders and a
hollowed-out central space to each letter.
The central courtyard: The central courtyard is roughly square,
38.5m from east to west and 40.3m from north to south on the
eastern side. It is paved with stone, and contains a qubbah slightly
off-centre, towards the south west. In the south eastern corner,
against the flanking arcades, rises the eastern minaret.
The qubbah in the centre of the courtyard is a simple building
6m by 5m with walls of banded basalt and tufa, two storeys in
height and surmounted by a plain dome (pl.20). There is no
decoration internally, the function of the qubbah being to serve as
a safe repository for precious books and records belonging to the
Awqaf. In its present form it does not appear to have ever had
any special religious or symbolic significance. There are two

34 The lanterns of al-Sarhah mosque (ca. 2nd/8th century) were clearly also of
translucent alabaster (cf. P. Costa, 'La Moscha Grande di San'a', Annali dell'
Istituto Orientale di Napoli, 1974, XXXLV, 493). One is reminded that al-
Hamdání in his Sijh gives a description of the ancient palace of Ghumdan,
which stood alongside the Great Mosque until destroyed in the early days of
Islam, as having a ceiling at the top, of alabaster so translucent that one could
see through it birds flying against the sky.
35 Benjamin Rowland, The Art and Architecture of India, Harmondsworth,
1967, 173.
36 The 1st/7th century mosques of Basrah and Kufah 'exhibited close affinities
to Sasanian royal halls because of their very high ceilings.' D. Kuban, Muslim
37 In a space above this ceiling were found, during the recent restoration, large
quantities of early manuscripts, many of them in Kufic characters and dating
from the early centuries of Islam. Included among this material, however,
were more recent manuscripts and matter printed up to the end of the last
century.
floors, each consisting of a single space, the upper one reached only by placing a moveable ladder on the outside wall.

The libraries: Above the south western arcades of the mosque there is a second storey, providing accommodation for the library of the mosque, and approached up a long flight of stairs from the south western corner of the courtyard.

Along almost the full length of the southern side of the courtyard, above the arcades of the hall, there rises the dark grey facade of Imam Yahya’s library, a gift to the mosque added in 1355/1936-7. It is approached up a staircase from the south eastern corner (adjoining the minaret), or from the south western staircase of the other library (pl.18.15).

The minarets: The western minaret rises against the western wall, and thus penetrates the roof to emerge well away from the courtyard.

This minaret is approx. 4.25m square at the base externally, and internally is a brick cylinder approximately 2.75m in diameter tapering to slightly more than 1.5m in diameter at the top. It contains a central cylindrical brick core tapering from 1.08m to 0.75m. The whole construction appears to have been done at one period. Externally a square base rises from the paving of the mosque, passes through the roof and rises to a height of approx. 5.5m above it (pl.18.50). The cornice was originally decorated with pointed arches containing scalloped
18.38 Bamiyan. Lantern roof c. 500 A.D. A stone-cut replica of a type of diagonal braced lantern construction closely related to the Parthian example at Nisai and to that in the Great Mosque.

18.39 The Great Mosque. One of the high western bays of the north prayer hall ceiling, containing fragments of ancient woodwork, including two early ceiling bays.

18.40 The Great Mosque. Another of the high western bays of the north prayer hall ceiling, containing fragments of ancient woodwork including two early ceiling bays.

18.41 The Great Mosque. Section of the continuous Kufic inscription encircling the walls beneath the ceiling beams.

18.42 The Great Mosque. Wooden fanlight with plaited interlace.

18.43 The Great Mosque. Another of the high western bays of the north prayer hall ceiling. Containing bays and other fragments of an early ceiling.
The Architectural Origins of the Great Mosque

The Great Mosque is the only Ṣan‘ā’ mosque known to date from before the 7th/13th century which has arcades instead of columns supporting the roof.39 The arcades in the Great Mosque are of two types, semi-circular and pointed. The semi-circular arches are lower than the others and restricted to the south and north prayer halls, which might suggest that they date from the rebuilding completed about 265/878, the earliest likely date for any major part of the upper structure to have survived, if the historical sources quoted earlier are to be believed. On the other hand, there is evidence that the ceiling of the northern hall was originally higher and was lowered at a later date, probably in the 5th/11th century. There is, therefore, a possibility that these semi-circular arches may have been lowered at the same time.

The pointed arches certainly date from a later period, probably most of them from the rebuilding done by Arwā bint Abmad, the Sulayl).id queen in the 6th/l 1 th century. There is evidence referred to on p.324a. The latest likely date for the masque was likely to have been repaired, according to the evidence given by the qiblah wall fixed. The latest likely date for the walls is 136-145/749-754, when doors were added, and the masque was likely to have been repaired, according to the evidence referred to on p.324a.

It was an early tradition that the entrance of the imām into a masque should be made on the qiblah side of the building: 'It is not fitting that the imām should pass through the people.'43 The existence of a qiblah doorway in the Great Mosque of Ṣan‘ā’ is likely to date back to an early period if only because of the ancient door which was used.

However, there are three doorways on the qiblah side of the mosque, the central one being the one last used by the imām, the two others being blocked. Of the three doorways, that on the north west appears the oldest (pls.18.2,52). It is flanked on the exterior by curious emblems. A pair of pigeons or doves face each other in a bas-relief in basalt on either of the openings.44 There are rosettes in the top corners of each block. Each bird stands on one leg and stretches one leg towards the bird opposite. Their claws do not touch, however, and it is possible that they held an emblem which has since been removed. Better evidence for dating the opening is given by the capitals of the columns flanking the doorway, which are almost completely built-in by the closing of the entrance. These have lobes very reminiscent of Samarra I type ornament. This would place them in the second quarter of the 3rd/9th century.

The projecting central doorway itself contains no such evidence of an early date, but on the contrary is apparently rather late (pl.18.54). A deep niche containing a crude stone semi-dome with scalloped fluting is framed by an ogee arch of unrefined shape. A band of polygons serves as decoration above the door; they have shallow holes in the centre, which may suggest that they were once the bases of polygonal columns. Alternatively, they may have once been decorated with plaques grouted into the front of the polygons. The ogee arch has pronounced roll...
The Great Mosque. Fragments of early woodwork, including a carved beam end, from a high western ceiling bay.

The Great Mosque. A second section of early ceiling from one of the high western bays.
18.47 The Great Mosque. Fragments of early woodwork from one of the high western bays.

18.48 The Great Mosque. Part of the carved and painted ceiling of the eastern side of the mosque, dating from the reconstruction of the mid-6th/12th century.

18.49 The Great Mosque. Fragments of early decoration and epigraphy from one of the high western bays.
moulding on its outer edge. Two blocks serve as capitals and terminate the row of polygons. On the inside they have circular shields in circular recesses, while on the face each has a bas-relief of a small arch rising from a pair of columns. The frame of the arch has a knotted ornament, which combined with the bold roll moulding on the arch suggests a date no earlier than the 5th/11th or 6th/12th centuries for most of the doorway. Within the arches are two curious emblems of birds holding the inside column with their feet, so that they are perching sideways. The symbolism is difficult to explain, but they are clearly Islamic. There is a Kufic inscription above the doorway (pl.18.53, fig.18.2c) which is discussed below. On either side, in the main wall of the mosque, there are single large blocks containing what appear to be the remains of bas-reliefs of bulls.

The third doorway, that on the north east, looks as though it was merely a simplified copy of the north western door, meant to balance the facade after alterations at some date later than that of the north western door (pl.18.3). On the other hand, this doorway is not false, for it does penetrate right through the wall thickness, and the reveal is now used on the inside as a cupboard, as is the reveal of the north western door.

The arch over this doorway is an ogee, which the north western of the three arches is not. It springs from the two bas-reliefs each showing a pointed arch with a double frame rising from a pair of columns. The relief is deeper than that on the bas-reliefs of the central doorway, and the work does not appear to date from the same period. The arches on these little blocks are not ogee like the main arch, so that these stones may have been moved from another position.

The rebuilding of the eastern side is clearly seen in the structure. Not only is there an increased height in the eastern hall reflected in the outside wall, which was rebuilt with smaller stones (16 courses in the height of 13 of the older wall), but there is a straight joint on the southern wall between the constructions of different dates. The five doorways of the eastern side are large and fine in construction externally. Their slight horseshoe shape resembles doorway heads of the 3rd/9th century in Egypt and elsewhere. The inner stone-moulding, into which the wooden doors are actually fitted, does not seem to be original, but a reconstruction of a later date, probably the Ottoman period.

The inner reveals of the door heads of the Bakiriyyah and Hammam al-Maydan (1005/1597) are exactly the same. These doors have between them, high up on the outside of the wall, carved tufa panels with raised Kufic inscriptions, the writing on all of which was subsequently chipped off, except for the basmalah (i.e., bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim) and another pious phrase (see pl.18.55). The ceiling of the eastern wing is the finest complete ceiling in carving and richness in the whole mosque (pl.18.48), and almost certainly dates from Arwa's rebuilding of 525/1130-1.

The date of the rebuilding of the western wing is uncertain, but it is not unlike the eastern wing in height and construction. Although it is not executed with such skilled workmanship, it seems probable that this rebuilding dates from the same period, a conclusion supported by the painted decoration on the ceiling, which has exactly the same patterns as the carved decoration in the eastern wing.

The central axis of the mosque running south to north was apparently moved to the east to accord with the extra space provided by the re-erection of the eastern wing. The southern door, the mihrāb and the qubbah in the courtyard were all now west of the centre. Some attempt was made to correct this by moving the mihrāb in the southern and northern halls towards the east. The original position of the northern mihrāb, to judge by the domes in front of it, was now more than 5m off-centre, so that the new eastern wing apparently extended the mosque by more than 10m towards the east.

The eastern hall is 11.70m wide. If we were to assume that the original outside wall ran along the present edge of the courtyard, so that the eastern mihrāb touched the outside wall, as the western mihrāt still does, then the centre line of the mihrāb dome would lie almost exactly on the centre line of the mosque.

All this evidence seems to confirm that the eastern wall was moved, and that the whole eastern hall is an addition of extra space to the original mosque. The intercolumnations of the last two bays in the northern and southern halls are highly irregular, as would be the case if they had to accommodate the removal of an outside wall 1.35m wide and its replacement by piers averaging 0.75m.

It now seems reasonable to visualize the earlier mosque as 54m wide instead of 66.

45 By Arwa in 525/1130-1, or possibly the smaller stones of the eastern wall and the straight joint referred to below date from an earlier rebuilding.
46 Cf. the mosque of Ibn Tulun, Cairo, mid 3rd/9th century.
Mosques of the first century after Muhammad were usually perfect squares in plan. The historians mention that the qibla wall of the San’ā’ mosque was moved forward to the position it is in today. Therefore its first position seems likely to have been roughly 54m north of the present southern wall, or 24m south of the present qibla wall, i.e. within the present courtyard.

The turning of the qibla wall slightly towards the north west during the subsequent rebuilding of approximately 266/879 is evident in the plan. It led to an increase in the intercolumnations at the eastern end of the northern wall to accommodate it.

One or two hundred years after this Yu’firid rebuilding, the beautiful ceiling of the northern hall was taken down and replaced by the present beamed ceiling, the height of the walls possibly being reduced at the same time. The most likely date mentioned in the histories when this might have been done is the four year period 389-93/999-1002 when the Amir al-Ḥusayn b. Salamah is said to have repaired the Great Mosque. It is unlikely that it is work done for Arwā bint Aḥmad in the 6th/12th century, for the craftsmanship is far inferior in conception and execution to the alterations undertaken under her patronage—if we accept the

48 Cf. al-Ṭabarî quoted in Creswell, EMA, I, 25f. Both the Basrah and the Kufah mosques (45 and 50/665 and 670) had five aisles on the qibla side and two on each of the other sides, with flat wooden roofs. The mosque at Wāsit was also square (82/701)(ibid, 40-42). Cf. J. Sauvaget, La Mosquée omeyyade de Médine, Paris, 1947.

49 Masajid, 27.
The Great Masque. Interior of the eastern minaret at the lower level.

eastern ceiling as hers—and is also generally earlier in style. There is decoration on these beams which is mainly limited to inscriptions containing passages from the Qur'an and to small areas of ornamentation. This beam decoration seems to date from several periods; most of it is early, some of it, however, is demonstrably from the date of the Arwā redecoration, because patterns and calligraphic styles closely related to those in the eastern hall may be observed, while a few beams have decorations in much later styles.

The mihrāb of the northern hall was completely constructed in the present century. Two bays to the east is the upper part of an earlier mihrāb decoration. This latter mihrāb appears to have been that of the widened mosque, and was possibly that redecoration in 665/1266-67 according to the inscription mentioned by al-Ḥajari which has now disappeared. Two of the mihrābs in the southern hall have decoration which seems to be relatively late. That in the approximate centre of the hall, destroyed by Imam Yaliya so that only the top part remains, perhaps dates from the Ottoman work of 1012-16/1603-08. The mihrāb in the western arm seems to have been built in its present form a century or so afterwards.

The Central Courtyard

According to al-Ḥajari the middle court was 'built' by the Ottoman governor Sinān Pāshā in 1012-6/1603-7 'and he paved it with the stone which is there now'. The same governor also built the dome (qubbah) situated in the middle of the court, although whether it replaced an earlier structure on the same site is not clear. The low walls between the columns which flank the courtyard were, according to al-Ḥajari, built by Aḥmad Aṯār in 1326/1908-9. The columns themselves, the square single stones with plain or simplified plant-leaf capitals referred to earlier, may have been part of the work of 'building' the courtyard and contemporary with the qubbah, or they may be more recent still. In either case the earlier columns exposed to the weather must have deteriorated so much that they had to be replaced, for the ceilings are on every side earlier than the 11th/17th century, except the part of the southern ceiling replaced by Imam Yahyā. That the square columns are unlikely to date from the period of rebuilding of the eastern side, either originally or by Arwā bint Aḥmad in 525/1130-31, is suggested both by their totally different stylistic character from anything medieval known in the Yemen, and by the crude, conventionalized nature of the decorated capitals. The latter fact indeed favours a late attribution for this work, but no later than 1326/1908-9, as no further rebuilding is recorded, other than that within living memory.

The Minarets

The date of the original foundation of the minarets is not known. The western minaret, situated against the western wall on the outside, but a separate structure in brick down to the ground, incorporated two columns of an arcade on its eastern side, as well as the supposed tomb of the Prophet Ḥanẓalah mentioned on p.327b. It is therefore clearly a late addition to the

50 Arwā's redecoration of part of this ceiling is confirmed by al-Badr al-muzil.
51 Masjīd, 28. See discussion p.348a.
52 Masjīd, 29.
53 The references to a large tomb of a prophet on the site of the first mihrāb raises the question whether, when the qubbah wall was moved forward to its present position, there was not a tomb rebuilt on the site of the original one, which later was demoted, for reasons unknown, to the present qubbah.
mosque, but not as late as the inscription built into its eastern side, 603/1206-7. This inscription includes the sentence ‘the western minaret was restored from its foundation to the top part by order of the Amir ‘Alam al-Din... Wurdashār’ and is discussed below under ‘Inscriptions’. The wording of the sentence is not such as would have been used if the minaret were a new construction. (Similarly, the wording presupposes the existence of an eastern minaret at that time).54 The eastern minaret was repaired by the same Amir Wurdashār in the early years of the 7th/13th century.55 Both minarets must have been in a considerable state of decay to have warranted this work, which suggests they had reached an age of at least several hundred years. A minaret was built in the Great Mosque before 299/911-2, if we accept the evidence of a key event in al-Janadī’s description of the capture of Šan‘ā’ by the ‘Qarmatian’, actually an Ismā‘īlī, ‘Ali b. Faḍl.56

It could possibly have been added as early as the original building of al-Walīd’s mosque.57 It seems clear that the eastern minaret was built first and the western one was a copy of it, reduced in size to fit into a bay in the existing southern prayer hall.

The Archaeological Study of the Great Mosque

No archaeological study has so far been possible on the building. During the recent extensive restoration, during which almost all the plaster was removed, it was possible to see some of the joints in the construction and observe the manner of building piers and arches. Three trenches were dug, two along the western wall, and one in the north western corner in the second bay of the northern arcade, which yielded some information about successive floor levels. The lowest observed level was about 95cms below the present floor, and made of packed gravel. Several intermediate floor levels of plaster were observed.58 It is to be hoped that systematic researches will be permitted at some future date.

The pre-Islamic Relics in the Great Mosque

In the building of the Great Mosque of Šan‘ā’ a great number of fragments were re-used from pre-Islamic buildings, as described above. These pieces are mainly capitals and fragments or drums of columns. In shape and decoration they display a certain variety of types, but can be grouped in two main categories: Sabaean and Ḥijāmatī.

To the first belong stepped capitals, square or circular in section, decorated with horizontal louvres, and columns with eight or sixteen sides.

To the group of the Ḥijāmatī antiques belong capitals decorated with acanthus leaves, displaying different degrees of formalization, and columns covered with intricate plant-motifs.

It is to be noted that while capitals and columns of the Sabaean group are monolith, in the Ḥijāmatī group the two architectural elements are always separated. It is also worth notice that the Sabaean pieces are all made of the same kind of limestone, whereas the Ḥijāmatī show different kinds of stone.59

Early Islamic Relics in the Great Mosque

Several fragments of wood decoration in the four raised bays at the south western edge of the northern hall appear to date from the 6th/7th century. In the second bay from the south there is an edge moulding decorated with a running vine motif which spirals one and a half times, and contains grapes, vine-leaves and tendrils (pl. 18.47). This is close in style to decorations on the bronze soffit of the south doorway of the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, 72/691.60 In bay 3 there are several brackets decorated with motifs in the same style (pl. 18.45).61 These all presumably date from the rebuilding of the Great Mosque ca. 87/705 under al-Walīd.

The intertwining strap ornament on the underneath of the beam over the south door incorporates very conventionalized vine leaves; it is even possible that they may be meant to be interlocked cherubim wings (pl. 18.18). There are rosettes in the interstices between the straps. This decoration clearly relates to decoration of the century immediately preceding Islam, an attribution which seems confirmed by the presence of a Latin cross (left hand side). Apparently this is a re-used jamb from a Christian church.

Almost all of the remaining woodwork in ceiling panels 1 to 4 dates from the rebuilding of about 265/879. Several small rich pieces probably belong to the following century and may come from early tombs (pls. 18.43-47).

The domes in front of the mihrāb have already been discussed. Their age is difficult to establish. An objection might be made to a very early date for them on the grounds that the ceiling in which they are placed is lower. But it should be noticed that the four high bays against the western wall do not include the aisle against the qiblah. So that, even if the theory of an original higher ceiling is accepted, this would not preclude the qiblah aisle, and therefore the domes, from being as early as 265/879. The objection to this date would be better founded on the absence of rich decoration similar to that on the beams and panels of the four higher western bays. Following this clue, the domes are either earlier, re-used from another position or even another building, or later, dating possibly from the rebuilding of the northern hall ceiling, which we have tentatively placed at 389-93/999-1002 (p. 344b). This seems to conform better with the little decoration which may be observed on the beams. Perhaps the whole dome construction is an exact copy of a ruined construction of three centuries earlier ca. 87/705, with only the beam decoration changed. Some of the decoration on the dome beams dates from Arwā’s redecoration of the 9th/12th century. Even so, they are remarkable examples of early ‘dome’ construction in front of a mihrāb, incorporating in at least three brackets some even older construction.

Above the outside of the northern door on the western side is a curious projecting bracket in basalt (pl. 18.56). It represents an animal’s head, possibly a bull. It appears to have no function in its present position, although it has been duplicated in a later crude copy on the other side of the doorhead as though serving as the support for a canopy over the door. A similar pair of projecting stone brackets occurs above a very old door, now blocked up, in Bayt Mui‘ahhar in the Tall_iah quarter (see p. 494a).

The early example on the Great Mosque may be a re-used bracket from an interior reveal, like those above the eastern doors, in which case it might date from Arwā’s reconstruction (525/1130-31). But as there is nothing else like it in the work done at that time, this seems highly unlikely, and it should probably be grouped with the defaced bas-reliefs of animals around the central door on the northern side, as an early part of the mosque that may have been re-used from another building.

In the National Museum in Šan‘ā’ is preserved a number of wooden fragments from early ceilings, one from the late 6th/7th or 2nd/8th centuries, and a strip of the early Kufic from under the beams of the northern hall.62

54 Al-Janadī, in his biography of the Qādī al-Sarqīy b. ʻAbdallāh al-ʻArshānī, says that Wurdashār built the two minarets—the two minarets not existing before that. But this seems to be contradicted by the inscription. Cfr. Marajfī, 28.
55 Marajfī, 28.
57 Square minarets were built onto the Mosque of ‘Amr in Cairo in 54/673. They were called sawmātāb, sing., the name still usual for a minaret in Šan‘ā’, and northern Yemen in general.
58 P. Costa, op. cit., 496.
59 The pre-Islamic antiquities in the Great Mosque of Šan‘ā’ are described in detail by P. Costa, op. cit., 494.
60 Creswell, plate 4a.
61 Creswell, fig. 4.
62 Although not early Islamic, there was in the National Museum an important relic in the form of a cupboard removed from the Great Mosque which carries an inscription recording that it is a gift of Sulaymān the Magnificent.
The Great Mosque

The Great Mosque. Western doorway to the northern prayer hall. Seen from outside with flanking consoles on either side above it.

The Great Mosque. Inscription on boss set in fragment of coupled columns, now in the courtyard, built into the wall.

The Great Mosque. Ablution Court, showing on the left the stone along the western wall marking the position of al-Hajar al-Mulamlamah, now reputedly more than a metre underground.

Some of the Inscriptions of the Great Mosque

Most important in Sana'a from both the historical and palaeographical points of view are the inscriptions of the Great Jami' Mosque.

When the Umayyad Caliph al-Walid b. 'Abd al-Malik (705-15) appointed Ayyub b. Yahya al-Thaqafi as governor in Sana'a, the latter received a letter with instructions to enlarge the Great Mosque. Ayyub enlarged the mosque by extending it on the north side—'he extended it from its first qiblah to where its qiblah is now.' The new northern wall contained inscriptions and decorations which were removed in the 4th/10th century by the Qadi of Sana'a who insisted that they would distract the believers as they prayed.

Doors were provided for the first time in the early 'Abbasid era and the Kufic inscription in courtyard (no. 1 infra) tells us that the governor, 'Ali b. al-Rabi', was instructed in 136/753-754 to have repairs carried out to the mosques of Sana'a. We can safely assume that the Great Mosque would be included in those mosques to have been repaired.

We are told by an 11th/17th century Zaydi historian that the Sulayhid queen, Arwa bint Ahmad, built the eastern side (al-janib al-sharqi). Certainly the structure of the Great Mosque has been extended on the eastern side, but this statement should nevertheless be regarded with caution as stated above. Since there is no record of such a rebuilding in the earlier historians who deal with the Sulayhids and since the inscriptions in the eastern wall are of undoubted antiquity (nos. 4-10 below) and must pre-date the Sulayhids, it is suggested that any rebuilding of the eastern
San’a’—An Arabian Islamic City

wall during Shu’ayhid times was of a minor nature. If we take a brief look at the inscriptions of the ceiling, however, in the northern prayer-hall, these can be ascribed stylistically to the Shu’ayhidics and are clearly 6th/12th century work. This theory is strengthened by the phrase, taforarq a’ād’ Allah, ‘may God’s enemies be scattered’ or perhaps even ‘God’s enemies have been scattered’, a not uncommon Ismii’il/Fātimi slogan.

Cf. al-Jaarî, Incription no. 1

...and originally referring to the Fātimid capture of the Aghlabid residence of Raaqidah al-Qayrawânî, North Africa. All this would seem to point to considerable Shu’ayhid repair work on the ceiling ruined by ‘Alî b. al-Faqî, the so-called Qarmatian leader, but in fact the official Fātimid dā’ī, after his conquest of San’a’ a century before.

Two inscriptions (nos. 2 and 3 below) are preserved in the walls of the minarets, both indicating that they were rebuilt by the Ayyūbid amîr, Wurdashâr b. Sâmi. We know too from written sources that the ablution rooms (maṣâḥîr) were rebuilt during this period by the Qâdî of San’a’.64

The evidence for the renovation of the miḥrâb in 665/1266 seems to have been covered over now by plaster, for it rests simply on the report of a scholar writing in the 1930s that an inscription on the miḥrâb gives this date for the renovation. This inscription can no longer be found.

Inscription no. 1

13 lines, simple Kufic.

Situated on the north wall in the chamber of tombs called al-Awsajah in the courtyard next to the east minaret.

Cf. al-Hajari, Masâjid, 26.

See pl. 18.57

Arabic text

1 In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.
2 There is no god but God alone; no partner
3 does he have. Muḥammad is the Apostle of God. He
4 sent them with the Guidance and the Faith of Truth and
5 to make it triumph over every (other) religion, even though
6 the polytheists are averse.
7 Al-Mahdî, the servant of God, ordered
8 -Commander of the Faithful, may God make him noble—
9 the mosques and their constructions to be repaired
10 at the hands of A’mîr ‘Alî b. al-Ra’
11 bi’may God make him righteous, the year
12 one hundred and thirty-six. May God make ready
13 the reward of al-Mahdî and accept his deed.

Commentary

lines 3-6. Qur’ân, IX, 33.

line 7. There is a scribal error here, with no loop for the bâ’ of ‘abd. The scribe has, therefore, followed the normal practice of repeating the phrase correctly.

line 8. The ‘Abbasid Caliph we know by the name al-Mahdî was not the Caliph in 136/753-54 when this inscription was supposedly made. He became Caliph in 158/775, succeeding al-Mansûr who must have been Caliph when the stone was inscribed.


Inscription no. 2

7 and 2 lines, nasılı, no dots.

Situated in the eastern wall of the east minaret.

See pl. 18.51

Arabic text

1 ... the building of this [ ... ]
2 [minaret] Amir, he of the highest rank,
3 the great, the mightiest, the chosen one, king
4 of the Kurds, Muṣṭafâ, Am (?)
5 ir (?) ‘Alam al-Din Wur[d]
6 -ashâr b. Sâmi al-Shâkâni.
7 He spent from his own wealth on it for ...
8 year six hundred and three
9

Commentary

lines 2-4. These are indeed strange and extravagant epithets used for the governor of San’a’ under the Ayyūbids. Cf. above chap. 7, ‘History of San’a’, ‘The period of the Ayyūbids’. They are used again in Inscription no. 3, line 6. There are clearly only two indentations here in the first letter of Wurđshâr’s father’s name, giving rise to al-Hajari’s invention, Masâjid, 27, Banâmi’! This is a scribal error and it is evident from the histories that his father’s name was Sâmi; cf. Smith, Ayyûbids, I, passim and personal name index.

line 8. 603/1206-07.

Inscription no. 3

21 lines, rough nasılı, no dots.

Situated in the eastern wall at the base of the west minaret.

Arabic text

1 ... the building of this [ ... ]
2 [minaret] Amir, he of the highest rank,
3 the great, the mightiest, the chosen one, king
4 of the Kurds, Muṣṭafâ, Am (?)
5 ... the building of this [ ... ]
6 -ashâr b. Sâmi al-Shâkâni.
7 He spent from his own wealth on it for ...
8 year six hundred and three
9

Commentary

lines 3-5. Qur’ân, IX, 33.

line 7. There is a scribal error here, with no loop for the bâ’ of ‘abd. The scribe has, therefore, followed the normal practice of repeating the phrase correctly.

line 8. The ‘Abbasid Caliph we know by the name al-Mahdî was not the Caliph in 136/753-54 when this inscription was supposedly made. He became Caliph in 158/775, succeeding al-Mansûr who must have been Caliph when the stone was inscribed.

65 Masâjid, 28.
The Great Mosque

Summary of the History of the Great Mosque

Of the earliest mosque, built at the order of the Prophet Muhammad, probably nothing remains unless it be a few fragments of ornament now gathered with others in the high western ceiling. From the position of the natural rock al-Mulamlamah, which still survives beneath a later marking-stone, it seems likely that the western edge of the mosque has not changed from this earliest building. Its qiblah wall lay across the present courtyard, with the building probably encircling a smaller square courtyard. The southern limit of the mosque apparently coincided with the present southern wall. To the north of the qiblah wall, half under the present prayer hall and partly beyond it, was the large tomb of an early prophet. It is possible that some of the arcading may survive from this earliest building, reincorporated in the second mosque—but, as that mosque is reported to have been a new structure, this seems unlikely.

The rebuilding of al-Walid, ca. 86-96/705-715, was probably responsible for the general external character of the mosque as it remains today. Much of the stonework of the eastern, western and southern sides may date from this time, and in the remainder of the walls, many of the stones. In al-Walid’s mosque the plan was greatly enlarged, and took the shape it has today, except that it was later widened to the east. The prophet’s tomb to the north of the mosque was demolished, perhaps only partially at first, to make way for the moving of the qiblah wall and the whole of the prayer hall further north, more than doubling the size of the courtyard. The general character of the arcading probably dates from this period, when capitals, shafts, bases, wooden decoration and possibly at least one door were removed from the ruins of the

The masques and the expression barakah min Allah, they have been deliberately mutilated and the remainder of the inscription has been systematically chipped away. Stories fairly current in San‘a’ tell that these inscriptions were tampered with by the late Imam of this western minaret from its foundation to its very top at the command of one late historian that the eastern side of the Great Mosque was demolished, perhaps only partially at first, to make way for the moving of the qiblah wall and the whole of the prayer hall further north, more than doubling the size of the courtyard. The general character of the arcading probably dates from this period, when capitals, shafts, bases, wooden decoration and possibly at least one door were removed from the ruins of the
Christian cathedral further east (from which some mosaics had already been removed in 65/684 to decorate the Ka'bah in Mecca). This Christian material was mixed indiscriminately with other pre-Islamic material of indigenous South Arabian style, taken from the great ruined palace of Ghumdān alongside, and possibly from some Sabean temples, and this pre-Islamic material was used to build the columns under the brick arcading. There was a richly decorated mibrāb to this mosque, which was afterwards stripped of its ornament by a zealous Qaṣlī. The five lanterns allowing top light to fall on the centre of the ceiling and replace it by one of plainer design, preserving only the form and construction of the openings themselves, with their close stylistic similarity to those of the Great Mosque in Damascus, argue for an Umayyad date, before 133/750.

The mosque was subsequently repaired on the order of the 'Abbāsīd Caliph in 136/753-4, according to the inscription preserved in the courtyard. This phase may have seen the erection of a single minaret, the eastern, standing when the Qarmatians came in 299/911-12. Alternatively, this minaret could have originally been built during al-Walīd’s building (84-96/705-715), which would be the only likely date if the eastern minaret was enlarged before 133/750.

In 262/875-6, the mosque was ruined in a great flood, and had to be extensively repaired, but was not completely rebuilt, to judge by a remark of Ibn Rustah. The close resemblance between the fragments in the western bays of the prayer hall and the ceiling of the Shibām mosque, known to have been built at about this time, suggest that the Šan‘ā’ mosque was given a similar high, richly decorated ceiling, afterwards destroyed and lowered.

While the colour on the ceiling was still fresh and bright the mosque was deliberately flooded by a leader of the Qarmatians in 299/911-12. He allowed the water to remain ‘until the freshness of the decoration in the ceiling was lost.’ This doubtless caused considerable damage to the structure, and may have directly resulted in the need, probably within a century, to lower the ceiling and replace it by one of plainer design, preserving only the form and construction of the openings themselves, with their close stylistic similarity to those of the Great Mosque in Damascus, argue for an Umayyad date, before 133/750.

The eastern wing was rebuilt and the northern wall, or its central portion, altered by Queen Arwā bint ʿ Alāmad in 525/1130-31. She added a magnificently carved, painted and gilded ceiling to the eastern wing, and probably the slightly less splendid one on the old western wing. The ceiling of the northern prayer hall was partly redecorated with painting in the same style, and some calligraphy.

The two minarets were ‘restored’ in the early years of the 7th/13th century. They do not seem to have been substantially altered since, except for repairs after damage to the eastern minaret in the 11th/17th century.

A new mibrāb was made in 655/1266-67, which was removed when the present mibrāb was added during this century.

The domed building for waqf documents in the courtyard was built in 1012-16/1603-7, and the courtyard (re-)paved. It is possible that a central building existed in the courtyard before this date, and not inconceivable that it originally had some other function, probably again on the pattern of al-Walīd’s other mosques, such as that at Damascus, and later mosques at Aleppo and Homs, a treasury raised on columns or arches, possibly with a fountain underneath it.

In 1355/1936-7, Imām Yahyā built a library over the first aisle of the southern hall, and an extra aisle was built into the courtyard at the same time to support it.

Supplementary Note

At the moment of going to press, radio carbon dates for certain wooden panels of the Great Mosque were received from the Research Laboratory of the British Museum. The three samples of wood submitted to the Laboratory came from the Šan‘ā’ Museum to which they were removed, at the suggestion of Dr Paolo Costa, at the time of the extensive restoration of the northern prayer-hall in 1974. The three dated pieces are as follows:

1 A section of the wooden frieze running continuously round the upper wall of the northern prayer-hall immediately below the beams, with a carved Kufic inscription (see p. 339, pl. 18-42).
2 A projecting end beam, ornamented with winged motifs, from the four high panels at the extreme western side of the northern prayer-hall (exhibited in London at the Nomad and City Exhibition at the British Museum of Mankind in 1976 (see Kirkman, City of Šan‘ā’, 72). The radio-carbon dating is 1160 A.D. ± 60 years, i.e., between 1110-1210 A.D. It might therefore fall in the Hamdānid or Ayyūbid period.
3 A carved, pierced, tympanum, a fanlight from the four high panels (p. 339, pl. 18-42) at the extreme western side of the northern prayer-hall also, likewise exhibited in London (see City of Šan‘ā’, loc. cit.). The radio-carbon dating is 1170 A.D. ± 60 years, i.e., between 1110-1230 A.D. It might therefore fall in the Hamdānid or Ayyūbid period.

The authors wish to express their grateful appreciation of the work carried out on these specimens and the valuable results obtained, to the Trustees of the British Museum and in particular, to Dr Richard Burleigh, Director of the Research Laboratory.
Chapter 19
The Smaller Mosques of Ṣanʿāʾ

Smaller Early Mosques

The Jabbanah or Musulūlá al-'Idayn (fig. 19.1, pls. 19.2-3, 29) is a large open-air prayer place outside the walls to the north of the city. It was originally built during the lifetime of the Prophet, by one of the Companions, Farwah b. Musayyik al-Murādī, acting on his direct instruction, according to al-Râzi.1 The site, tradition asserts, was the camp of the Abyssinians.2 Al-Râzi says it was called Jabbanah Bani Juraysh, i.e. Juraysh b. Ghazwiin. It is said they were the people of Khurāsān and they were rich. The original building consisted of a paved courtyard surrounded by four walls, with a single entrance, through the qiblah wall.3 When the Great Mosque was rebuilt during the reign of al-Walid, the Umayyad Caliph (86-96/705-15), the Jabbanah was 'renovated' at the same time.4 It was then repaired in 280/893-4, and again in 407/1015-16, when it was 'surrounded with plaster and stones'.5

The next renovation was in 602/1205-6, a fact recorded in a stone inscription in the qiblah wall; at the same time a wasf garden was created adjoining it to the west, together with a wall and pool.6 Another stone inscription tells of the destruction of the Jabbanah in 965/1557-8, after which it remained in a ruinous state for two years, before it was restored in 967/1559-60.7 by the Amir Iskandar al-Kurdi. It was repaired again in the period 1098-1130/1686-1718.

The present Jabbanah is twice as big as the Jabbanah referred to above, it having been enlarged by Imam Yalũ in the early 14th/20th century by moving the southern wall. It is reported that he built the wall 'of a firm, well-built construction according to the lines of the previous building'.8 This probably does not mean that the whole Jabbanah was rebuilt; crenellations, doorways and other features may be an accurate reflection of the early designs. The mibrāb was rebuilt and redecorated ca. 1387/1968. The doorway in the qiblah wall next to the mibrāb remains, but after the period of the earliest building other entrances were built, and there are now two new in the eastern wall and three in the southern wall. The minbar incorporates a curious throne made of a pre-Islamic capital. There is a pre-Islamic (Sabæan) inscription built into the outside of the qiblah wall.

The Mosque of Farwah b. Musayyik al-Murādī (pls. 19.4-6) was built by one of the Companions of the Prophet while he was building the Jabbanah, 'and he used to sit on it, on the days when the building was going on in the Jabbanah'.9 Today women go to it, among other mosques, with votive offerings (nadhr). If Farwah was indeed buried there, his tomb is no longer identified. But in the tenth century al-Râzi regarded this as one of the four early mosques in the Yemen,10 this suggests that the original building was still standing at this time; it was renovated by Muhammad b. Husayn al-Iṣfahāni in 407/1016-7.11

There are two parts of the mosque which could date back to this period, if not to the earliest building. These are the columned area next to the ablution pools, apparently an early porch, which incorporates pre-Islamic material, and the two-domed chamber near it to the east. The latter has a stepped wall of black basalt on the inside, which resembles the wall of the Great Mosque. In addition it has rough stalactite-type pendentives under the dome which appear to be early examples of this feature, a muqarnas (pl. 19.6).12 In 997/1588-9 the mosque was altered again.13 The large domed prayer hall was built by the Ottoman governor Ḥasan Pasha of the same type as those of the Janâl}. mosque (see below p. 375) and apparently the porch was roofed with eight domes at the same time, that is early in the 11th/17th century according to al-Ḫujari.14 In 1390/1970 the domed porch was demolished, the walls of the domed chamber were pierced on two sides by wide arched openings, and a modern flat-roofed prayer hall was built on the northern and western sides, through which the minaret now rises. In the course of these alterations most of the seventeenth century mibrāb was destroyed, and a new mibrāb built to the north.

Two domes which cover tomb chambers in the north east

1 Ob. 460/1073. That this is still on its original site is testif ied by Mašājīd Ṣanʿāʾ, 39.
2 Muḥaskar al-Ḥabashi. Mašājīd, 39. 'It was a field belonging to Abû Ḥanāmil al-Abnaway which he gifted to God and His Apostles.' It was in the Persian part of Ṣanʿāʾ.
3 Cf. description of al-Hamdānī, Ikš VIII, Baghdad, 1931, 86.
4 Mašājīd, 39, quoting al-Râzi.
5 Ibid.
6 See also p. 349a.
7 Mašājīd, 41. It should be noted that the Jabbanah contains only one inscription today, and this is too worn to be read. Cf. 19.2.
8 Mašājīd, 41.
9 Ibid, 39. According to al-Râzi, 142, Farwah said to the Prophet, 'Iam fi bayt qawmī wa-‘adadi-him, I am the head of the house of my tribe and the greatest number of them.' This is an expression often used in the genealogies of a ruling house in a tribe, perhaps also exercising spiritual authority. If so the implications are interesting.
11 Ibid, 224.
12 The earliest perfect forms of this architectural element known are on the tomb of Davâdshāh Imān at Yazd in Persia, 427/1037.
13 Date given on the inscription at the bottom of the minaret.
14 Mašājīd, 89.
corner of the building date from the 11th/17th century, and are those of the son the governor Ḥasan Pasha and Iskandar b. Ḥusain al-Kurdi (ob. 971/1563-4).

Other mosques, for which no early documentary references exist, may yet be grouped into the general category of an early type by comparing them with mosques in other Yemeni towns for which an early date can be established with certainty, such as Shibām-Kawkabān. Mosques of this early type—the apadāna type, named after and partly derived from the Persian royal hall—have roofs with beams which rest directly on stone or wooden columns, without the introduction of arches. This was a widely spread type in early Islam, the mosques of Kufah, Wāsiṯ, Baghdad and Samarra conforming to it. Typical of this early style in Ṣanʿāʾ are the mosques of al-Ṭawūs and al-Jila.

Ṭawūs mosque (fig. 19.2, pls. 19.8-11) was named after one of the second generation Companions (ʿābiʾ), Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ṭawūs b. Kaysān al-Yāmānī, who died at Mecca in 106/724-5. His father was of Fars and married a mawla woman of Al Hüd. He was probably of the Abnīʿ. It is therefore possible, from his nisba, that this mosque was founded to house his tomb. A tomb chamber indeed survives at the southern end of the prayer hall covered by two domes, and still containing a plaster tomb, without, however, retaining any identification.

The mosque is built as a columned hall with an entrance court and a porch opening onto the street. The hall is high, with two rows of two tall columns, perhaps built up of pre-Islamic fragments and afterwards plastered, which carry transverse beams supporting the roof. Light enters the room through six small alabaster windows with semi-circular heads, high in the side walls. In addition there are two fanlights made of three circles of gypsum tracery containing coloured glass.

The qiblah wall has a strongly articulated treatment, dividing the surface into a central miḥrāb, flanked by two cupboard recesses. The miḥrāb, with a heavily-moulded, scalloped niche fronted by a low pointed arch carried on two colonnettes with high capitals, is framed in a larger arch carried on larger columns with the same capitals; that in turn is set within the

15 The Shibām mosque almost certainly dates from the mid-third/mid-ninth century with, possibly, later embellishments, such as the ceiling, in the early 4th/10th century; see Lewcock, Ronald, and Smith, G. R., 'Two Early Mosques in the Yemen', AARP, London, 1973, IV, 117-130.
16 al-Rāzī, 319.
19.1 Al-Jabbânah as it was, in a photograph taken fifty years ago. (Mittwoch)

19.2 Al-Jabbânah. The inscription to the west of the mihrab. There are two brackets for lamps on either side of the mihrab. Above these, and above the cupboard recesses, strips of what were once calligraphic ornament run across the flanking wall spaces, surmounted by pointed arches of the same calligraphic bands, containing inner scalloped arches with ornamental beaker patterns inside them.

The whole of this decoration, which is very fine in proportion and general design, is so obscured by centuries of whitewashing that it is difficult to discern the detail. It seems likely to be work of the 9th or 10th/15th or 16th century. It is possible, however, that this plaster ornament is redecoration retaining the general form of an earlier scheme.

The tomb chamber is composed of two rooms, an outer room covered by a dome supported on a combination of squinch arches and stepped pendentives, and an inner tomb-room of truncated triangular shape with a lesser dome. The tomb is of plaster, aligned along the north wall. Originally the two rooms were separated only by a wide archway. There are three high windows of alabaster and one low metal grille opening into the street outside.

19.3 Al-Jabbânah. Showing its greatly enlarged form after the alterations made under Imam Yahya.

19.4 Mosque of Farwah b. Musayk. The porch leading to the ablution area, containing pre-Islamic column shafts.

At-Jila‘/al-Jili‘ mosque (fig. 19.3, pls. 19.12-14) was originally a synagogue. There is no record in Arabic sources available to us of the date of its original construction, but just as Jewish houses in the old city of San‘a‘ closely resemble Muslim houses, synagogues were similar to mosques. Whatever distinguishing features this synagogue once had were completely removed when it was converted, and the structural shell remains which belongs to the early apadana type. The Arabic sources maintain that this mosque was built 'in the place of the synagogue of the Jews', but architectural evidence points rather to alteration and adaptation than a completely new building.

Al-Jili‘ mosque has three rows of four columns carrying transverse beams across the prayer hall. All the columns are built up of pre-Islamic fragments which in most cases have been simply plastered and whitewashed. Only the two columns flanking the mihrab have a plaster palmette capital overlaying the original stone forms. There are small plaster bracketed shelves for lamps on some of the columns. At the eastern end of the qiblah wall there is a blocked-up doorway which once led in from the street; presumably this was a door of the synagogue, which was closed when it became a mosque in order to ensure passage through the
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

19.5 Mosque of Farwah b. Musayk. Interior of the tomb chamber.

19.6 Mosque of Farwah b. Musayk. Rough stalactite (muqamas) supports for the corners of the dome in the tomb chamber.

19.7 Mosque of al-Tawis. Exterior, with the tomb in the foreground.

19.8 Mosque of al-Tawis. Interior before repair.

Ablution area. This doorway has a low curved head; a plaster shelf for a lamp has since been built across part of it. During its life as a synagogue this building would have had one section of the floor higher than the rest, to act as a women's area. The columns which seem least likely to have been truncated by a later general raising of the floor to make it level throughout are those at the eastern end, and this indeed appears to be an area of the building which was added subsequently as it is distinct in construction (see pls. 19.12 and 19.13); it was apparently partitioned

19.9 Mosque of al-Tawüs. Another view of the interior, showing the decoration of the qiblah wall.

19.10 Mosque of al-Tawüs. The interior of the tomb at the narrow end, the floor covered with fragments of old manuscripts. The tomb platform on the right.

Key to all figures

- a: animal stalls
- cu: court upper level
- eu: entrance hall upper level
- gh: ghayl—water level
- k: kitchen
- m: mafraj
- o: loading and mounting animals
- plr: cold pool room
- rl: library
- t: terrace
- v: rain water cistern
- wr: well ramp

- b: bathroom
- ch: changing room
- f: warm room
- h: excrement room
- l: lobby
- mn: minaret
- or: restaurant/eating place
- q: public ablution area
- s: store
- tm: tomb
- vm: man in charge
- x: minbar

- br: boiler
- d: diwan
- fr: furnace room
- hr: hot room
- lt: laundry terrace
- nh: miḥrāb
- p: passage
- r: room—general use and sleeping
- sh: sheep pens
- sw: store
- tm: tomb
- tr: treasury
- w: well
- y: women’s room and wardrobe

- c: court
- e: entrance hall
- g: grinding mills
- j: grain and fruit store
- lb: lavatory/bathroom
- nw: washing floor
- pl: pool
- rr: reception room and business
- sp: shop
- u: shaft
- wb: water cooling box
- z: manṣūr
off from the rest of the hall, the partition being where the second row of columns now stands.

In synagogues there was a raised 'ark' for storing holy scrolls along the northern wall. In the remainder of the walls there were small cupboards for books. There was a court in front of the synagogue with a basin for washing the hands, and lavatories were on the far side of the court away from the prayer hall.

In al-Jilā' all of these features were easily converted for the use of the Muslim community after the decision had been taken to remove the Jews from the old city and prohibit them from returning there.

In 1091/1680-1, the Imam al-Mahdi Ahmad b. al-Hasan turned the synagogue into a mosque, an event recorded in verse inscribed on the inside wall of the mosque. 18

The plaster decoration of the qiblah wall contains panels of very fine patterning, and a fluid calligraphy. The mīhrāb is a typical example of the work of the late 11th/17th century.

Another early mosque of the apadāna type is the mosque of Ma'ād. This has a pre-Islamic inscription incorporated in the outside of the east wall, the construction of which resembles that of the Great Mosque. Internally, the front pair of columns consists of pre-Islamic column drums, sixteen-sided below and eight-sided above. The back pair of columns is a modern replacement. One of the front columns stands directly in front of the mīhrāb, as happens also at Shibām. 19

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18 p. 400a.
19 Lewcock and Smith, op. cit. al-Hajari, Masajid, 114, says of this mosque that it was one of the buildings erected by the ancestor of the Ma'ād family, who are found today in the district of Hamdān. Its ablution places were built in the 10th/16th century by the Imam Sharaf al-Din Yaḥyā.
Fig. 19.3 Mosque of al-Jalî. Plan and section.
Jami' al-Tawashi is also of the apadana type, with high plastered columns originally grouped in two rows of three carrying transverse beams (pl.19.15). It is recorded that the mosque was built by an ambassador of the Sultan of India, named al-Tawashi, in 1028/1618-9 during the latter’s stay in San’ā’. An extension at an early date added four columns, with longitudinal beams to the southern side. A still later extension was made with low arcades, in 1103/1691-2. The external wall has been rebuilt in this century. The capitals of the columns are plain, and the mihrāb and decorative inscriptions on the walls are dated 1098/1686-7; they contain work by the same hand as that which executed the mihrāb at al-Jīla’ mosque described above. The minaret is an addition made by Shaykh ‘Abdullāh b. Aḥmad al-Dīla’ī al-Sirayṣī in 1103/1691-2.

None of the ceilings of this group of apadana mosques is decorated in the elaborate manner of the mosque of Shibām, Sarhah, or the early Great Mosque (pls.22,23,25,26;18.41-47). Instead they are the humblest kind of utility construction, rough beams plastered over and painted with whitewash.

Arcaded Mosques Earlier than the 10th/16th Century

The foundation of the mosque of al-Shahidayn near the market may be dated to an early period by the ancient calligraphy on some of the remaining inscriptions built into its walls. The name (‘the Two Martyrs’) comes from an incident which is recorded as happening about 40/660-1, when two infant sons of the ‘Alīīd governor of the house of Hāshim were murdered by
19.16 Mosque of al-Shahidayn. Early inscription in the southern entrance on the outside wall of the tomb chamber.

19.17 Mosque of al-Shahidayn. Interior of the tomb chamber adjoining the southern door of the prayer hall.


19.19 Mosque of al-Madrasah. The lower storey of the minaret from the south-eastern side.
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

Fig. 19.4 Mosque of al-Madrasah. Plan and sections.
the incoming Umayyad governor.24

Although the building was extensively rebuilt in 1321/1903, much of the original mosque remains. The prayer hall is constructed with four rows of three columns (with an annex containing another three columns); the stones of the columns are largely pre-Islamic, including some fine capitals and shafts (pl. 19.14). The arcades run transversely across the columns, and rest on modern plaster capitals of vaguely palmette design a favourite pattern used in decoration after the 12th/18th century. Again the mihrāb stands directly behind the central row of columns, a feature characteristic of early mosques.

A tomb chamber built into the south west corner of the mosque is entered from the courtyard. It contains three small wooden tombs which are simple and unembellished (pl. 19.17). The minaret was built after 1302/1884-5.

The mosque of Ibn al-Husayn near the Sā'īlah is another ancient foundation, known originally as Masjīd al-Šawmâ'ah. It was built, or rebuilt, by al-Ḥusayn b. Śalamâh, a mawâlî of the Banû Ziyâd, the rulers of Zabid, at the close of the 4th/10th century.25 It was further renovated by Imām al-Muhammad b. al-Imām al-Qasim who died in 1123/1711-12.

The minaret, entirely built in baked brick, rises in three levels the minaret continues in polygonal form before being capped by a fluted dome. The lower square storey has the same height and separates it from the polygon which rises above. This in turn has an arched niche within a rectangular field on each face.

25 Masjīd Śawmâ’ah, 4.
26 Masjīd, 96; Ghiyath al-‘amînî, 662.
27 Ibid, loc. cit., says the son was Ḥafîz who died in 933/1526-7.
28 The style is similar to work of the 6th/12th century in Cairo, e.g. Mosque of Sā‘îlah Tâlî‘î.
29 Although there is a no mihrāb exactly like it, the curious large circular curves of the mihrāb are reminiscent of the floor patterns of the Tomb of Ghâni b. Āshadî in Cairo, 890-1/1487. In particular the low relief pattern at the back of the mihrāb closely resembles those of the doors in this Cairo tomb.
30 Cf. p. 69a seq.
31 Cf. p. 44.
32 Lewiscock, and Smith, op. cit.
A smaller cornice with tri-lobed pinnacles completes this storey. The high cylindrical shaft is patterned on a theme of diamonds and chevrons, the diamonds reappearing on the outside wall of the balcony. A single arched niche in each side of the polygon above is penetrated by a high lancet window; the dome is fluted with sixteen deep flutes which relate to the geometry of the polygon below. The minaret was originally crowned, as the minaret of the neighbouring Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn mosque still is, by a bronze pigeon or dove which swung as a weather vane.\footnote{For the possible symbolism of this feature see p. 340, n. 44.}

This minaret is believed to be the earliest example in Ṣan'ā' of the patterned brick minaret which has since become the commonest type. The practice of picking out the relief patterning in whitewash against the red brick may not go back to its original design, but may be derived from the habit of using this type of decoration on Ṣan'ā' houses.\footnote{Cf. p. 340b.} Evidence that the whitewashing of the relief on the minarets is fairly recent may be seen from the minaret of the Mūsā mosque (pl. 19), which was picked out in white for the first time in 1973, and from the minarets of Jāmi' Ibn al-Ḥusayn\footnote{Built 1355/1936-7. See p. 361a.} and Jāmi' al-'Alamā',\footnote{Built ca.1240/1824.} which retain their original brick relief without white painting.

The origins of the patterned brick minaret are eastern Islamic. Patterned brickwork characterized the minarets of the Ghaznavids
19.23 Mosque of al-Madrasah. The mihrab of the prayer hall.


19.25 Mosque of al-Madrasah. The wall opposite the mihrab in the side chamber, containing a blind five-lobed arch.

in the early 6th/12th century, and appeared at about the same time in Iran and Iraq, in which countries it remained fashionable for many centuries.

Between the minaret of al-Madrasah and the large domed tomb a narrower tomb with two domes separated by an arch was inserted. This seems to have been done some time afterwards, and is a lower and thinner-walled, though richly decorated, plastered construction. The domes are carried on squinch arches filled with stalactite ornament, and fine calligraphic bands run around the walls above and below the squinches. The transverse
arch separating the two domes has a scalloped archivolt with an ornamented lower face.

The early 12th/18th century tomb of Sayyid Zayd38 is now in ruins, but appears to have been decorated in a simplified form of the same style.

The ablution area is well arranged, with a large pool backed by a row of smaller pools divided by walls for private ablutions. A low domed ablution room terminates the row at either end (pls. 19.20, 21).

Al-Filayhi mosque (fig. 19.5, pls. 19.34-48;27) is said by al-Hajari39 to have been built by al-Hajj Ahmad b. 'Abdullâh al-Filayî, of a family from the Thulâ district, who was afterwards buried there, in 665/1266-7, a date recorded on an inscription inside the mosque. It was extended in the first half of the 10th/16th century, the Imam al-Mutawakkil adding areas to the north and west.

The prayer hall of the mosque is very large, extending more than 18 by 20m, with three rows of six columns in the front part and two rows by five columns behind.

The shafts of the columns are made of small circular blocks of hard stone mortared together. Above them rise capitals of two types. The two transverse rows on the south, and the two on the north, have capitals similar to those described in the mosque of al-Madrasah (above), although painted differently in recent times. The central row has capitals of a different type, an exaggerated

38 See p. 361a
Fig. 19.5 Mosque of al-Filayhi. Plan and sections.
palmette which in other mosques seems characteristic of the 12th/18th centuries or later. There is relief decoration on the upper arches of the arcades which is apparently work of the same century.

The arcades are stilted high above the capitals, those of the southern two rows having four-centred arches like those of the mosque of al-Madrasah, while the remainder have semi-circular arches. Furthermore, only the first four arches in each row inside the door have pointed arches; the two eastern arches in each of these southern rows are semi-circular.

From this evidence and a consideration of the plan it seems likely that the original mosque survives in the south western part of the prayer hall, the original qiblah wall being replaced by the present central transverse row of columns at the same time as the tomb chamber to the west was built, that is in the first half of the 10th/16th century.

Subsequently, the mosque was repaired, and the capitals in the central row of columns (which at that time stood next to the qiblah wall) were replaced by more ornate examples. Al-Hajari mentions that Imam al-Mahdi 'Abbás 'added to it and rebuilt its
The northern part of the present prayer hall seems to be work of the late 12th/18th century, when the qibla wall was moved forward again adding two transverse bays in which the capitals of the new columns were made to match those of the south.\textsuperscript{41} Al-Hajari reports that in 1194/1780-81, Sidi Muhsin b. Muhammad Fâyi made a "useful" extension to the north of the previous ablution places' in 1170/1756-57.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 90.

\textsuperscript{41} The southern capitals were then in a much better state of preservation than they are now, apparently, for the northern capitals have roll mouldings and impost blocks of which only the faintest traces remain in the southern ones.
The most interesting part of the masque is the domed tomb chamber to the west (pl. 27, pls. 19.38-48), which is magnificently decorated in gypsum plaster. Following Al-Hajari, this appears to have been built by al-Imam al-Mutawakkil ‘ala Allah Sharaf al-Din Zayya in the first half of the 10th/16th century. This dating accords with a certain similarity of the decoration to that of the ‘Amiriyyah mosque at Rada', known to have been built ca. 918/1512. It is a style which owes a good deal to the precedent of the Rasulid royal tombs of the Ashrafiyyah in Ta‘izz, built in the 8th/14th century.

Although the dome has lost all its ornament, the walls below that level, the mihrab and the squinch arches supporting the dome retain their original splendour. Panels of intricate geometrical and floral ornament intermingle with bands of calligraphy in two contrasting styles, elaborated Kufic and flowing superimposed naskhi. An unusual feature is the use of linenfold pattern in some of the arches of the large scalloped arch which frames the mihrab. This has the aesthetic advantage that folds resemble the flutes of the squinch arches above, thus linking the two elements across the varied wall-space between them.

The decoration of the soffit of the arch separating the tomb chamber from the main domed space is outstanding. The stucco relief retains its ancient colouring, much faded, of olive, blue and vermillion, outlined in white. The design and workmanship of this pattern place it among the finest of its kind in the Yemen, although many other areas of pattern and calligraphy in the room almost equal it.

The mihrab (pl. 27) is visually recessed by being set within its scalloped arch. It is beautifully designed and proportioned, one arch on columns being set within another, the height of the first, the top of the mihrab niche, being emphasized by circular bosses at the same level in the surrounding calligraphic frame. These mark half the height of the outer frame, which turns at the upper corners by the felicitous device of curving the line of the inner frame up and outwards to form a lozenge-shape on each side. Finally the inner and outer bands of the frame intertwine, so that they appear to be made of two continuous straps passing under and over each other.

The four tombs in the adjoining chamber are entirely plain. Al-Hajari mentions two ‘graves’ near (?) the masque, both dating from the 8th/14th century, one of which is the grave of the father of Imam Ahmad b. Yahya. It is possible that the tomb chamber referred to above was originally built to house his tomb, although the decoration is apparently later. The other tomb is probably that which is now closed, in the south western corner between the entrances to the prayer hall and the tomb.

The prayer hall retains only a little decoration that equals in quality that of the tomb, partly, no doubt, because it was several times rebuilt subsequently. Even so, the mihrab has good late

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42 Ibid, 90.
43 Ibid, 90.
45 There is some resemblance in this work to the decoration of the Mausoleum of Sbibi‘ A‘z in Konya, Turkey. 679/1280, cf. O. Aslanapa, Turkish Art and Architecture, London, 1971, plate 211.
46 Ibid, 91.
ornament, and there are remains of ornate naskhi inscriptions.

Between the mosque and the street outside is a range of buildings with internal ablution facilities below and lodgings for poor members of the community above.

The minaret is strongly reminiscent of that of the mosque of Farwah b. Musayy (see above). It is therefore likely to be work of the 10th/16th century.

The mosque of al-Washali, known after the Imam al-Washali (ob. 910/1054-5), the Washalis being a famous Sayyid house, is a well-preserved mosque dating from 696/1296-7, and closely resembles the mosque of al-Madrasah in style, plan, and detailed design (pl. 28, pl. 19.49). There is a small adjoining prayer hall with a second mihrāb of the same date. There is no minaret. The arcade adjoining the mosque to the east is possibly the work of the renovations of the Imam al-Mutawakkil Sharaf al-Dīn in the early 10th/16th century referred to by Allahārī. 47

The mosque of Salāh al-Dīn was built by Imam Salāh al-Dīn Muḥammad, son of Imam al-Mahdi ‘Alī b. Muḥammad. The former died in 793/1390; his large domed tomb lies to the west of the entrance courtyard, and contains both his tomb and that of his son al-Mansūr ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, who died in 840/1436, as well as the tomb of his wife and other relatives. 48

The prayer hall, on the east of the courtyard, belongs to the same type as the 7th/13th century parts of al-Madrasah and al-Filāhī. That is, it has transverse arcades with characteristic capitals (closely resembling those of the other two mosques) above which are high stilted four-centred arches. The latter have been re-decorated with scallops in relief around the edges, apparently during work on an extension made by Shaykh Ḫasan b. Muḥammad al-Shāṭibī in 1128/1715. There is an inscription in plaster recording this extension inside the mosque. The mihrāb dates from the same period.

The tomb chamber is not open; externally it has fine scalloped arches retaining traces of ogee frames in deep relief and an alabaster plaster dado of strong key patterning (pls. 19.51-2).

The chief glory of the mosque is its minaret, which rivals that of al-Madrasah and is in a closely parallel style. It was built by the Ottoman governor Sinān Pasha, in the early 11th/late 16th century, as is recorded on a white carved stone inscription above the doorway. The minaret is crowned by a deeply fluted dome which carries a bronze weather-vane in the form of a pigeon or a dove.

Like al-Filāhī and a number of other mosques, this mosque has above its entrance a range of rooms intended as lodgings for students (pl. 19.50).

The mosque of al-Abhar (pls. 19.54-55) was built by Imam Salāh al-Dīn Muḥammad’s wife, al-Sayyidah Fāṭimah, daughter of the leader of the Kurds of Dhamār, in 776/1374-5; it was known originally as the mosque of Bint al-Amīr. 49

This first building survives on the northern end of the site, and the minaret over the entrance arch appears contemporary with it. The latter is modelled on the minarets of the Great Mosque, with the addition of a high band of fluting around the base of the main cylindrical shaft. The prayer hall was extended to the south by the Imam al-Mansūr al-Husayn (d.1161/1748),

48 Masājid, 61.
49 Masājid, 5.
who also built the domed tomb (see below). The interior of the prayer hall has been redecorated recently.

The mosque of Jamāl al-Dīn was built before 793/1390, for in that year the oath of allegiance to the new Imām, al-Mahdī Aḥmad, was taken there. There is no minaret. The small prayer hall is fronted by a double arcade which appears to be a later addition (pl. 19.55). The interior is well preserved with high arcades of the Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn mosque type, without later decoration, resting on simple capitals on cylindrical columns (pl. 19.57).
The mosque of 'Alî in the famous Sūq al-Halaqah is probably of very ancient foundation. It is attributed to 'Ali b. Abî Talib, who is reputed to have stayed in a house on this site during a visit to Ṣan‘ā', according to a relatively late historian. Architecturally it conforms to the same type and the arcading of the prayer hall appears to belong to the 6th or 7th/12th or 13th centuries. There is a quaint low minaret with decoration of a type that is elsewhere thought to belong to the early 10th/16th century (pl. 19.58). In 1350/1932, its well being no longer serviceable, water was led to it from Bîr al-'Abîdîn, by an underground channel.

The mosques of Nuṣayr, ‘Aqîl and Dawûd belong to this same type, but were subsequently redecorated. The first mosque (pls. 19.60-61), in the ancient south eastern corner of the city, was built before the 9th/15th century; it was ‘renewed’ by the Imam al-Manṣûr in 1161/1748, and it has some good decoration from this period. The original columns and capitals were preserved, but the stilted arches are semicircular, probably having been rebuilt. The mosque is without a minaret, as were most mosques built during the period of the Zaydî government. Its court (janāb) has the tomb of an al-Wazir Suyyîd, killed by a stone cannon (?) ball during the siege of the Tâhirîd ‘Amîr (10th/16th century). The second, a small mosque in the süq near to ruin in the early 10th/16th century, retains its ancient form, although it was rebuilt and extended by Shams al-Dîn, the son of the Imam Sharaf al-Dîn Yaḥyâ, in 947/1540. It has a splendid minaret (pl. 30, pl. 19.62), built in 967/1560 by the Amir Iskandar al-Kurdi (as recorded by an inscription in the Jabrah), smaller
than, but with general links to, the slightly earlier minaret of al-Madrasah. The third mosque of Dāwūd near the cattle market, was originally built in the 7th/12th century. It was added to by the Imām al-Mutawakkil  Shara’a’l-Dīn Ya’qūb in the first half of the 10th/16th century. It was extensively renovated in the present century, when the minaret was built by al-Ḥājj ‘Abd al­Karīm b. Muṭahhar ‘Uqbah, a merchant of Ṣanʿā’ of the learned ulema family ‘Uqbah of the Bani Bahlūl.
San'a'—An Arabian Islamic City

19.60 Mosque of Nusayr. Exterior of the prayer hall from the courtyard.


19.59 Mosque of 'Ali. View of the interior looking towards the qiblah wall.

19.61 Mosque of Nusayr. Interior.
The Smaller Mosques of Ṣanʿa’

Mosques of the First Ottoman Occupation

The twin mosques of Ḣanāfī and al-Madhhab, which share one minaret, stand on one side of Sūq al-Milh (fig. 19.6, pls. 17; 19.63-72). The former seems to be an ancient foundation, as its floor and its courtyard are more than a metre lower than the general level of the sīq, and also than the level of the other mosque, which was built in the 10th/17th century. Unfortunately its ancient name is not identifiable from the early histories, although it may be the mosque referred to by al-Rāzī, but not named by him, which was ‘in the lane of Ghumdān’. Al-Rāzī says of the latter, that it was founded about 380-90/990-1000, and renovated after the so-called Qarmatian occupation by the son or nephew of Yazid b. Mašūr al-Himyari who ‘put the roof over the mosque which it has today.’

The whole of the present mosque belongs to the style which is later than the 5th/11th century. Its earliest parallel in the Yemen is the Rašīdī style of the 7th/13th to 9th/15th centuries, which it resembles in some respects quite closely. The earliest building of its type in Ṣanʿa’, however, is the tomb at al-Filayhi, dating apparently from the first half of the 10th/16th century. The name of this mosque is said by al-Ḥajari to be taken from Shaykh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ahmad b. Ḫanāfa Ḫamādi al-Qādiri, who died in 991/1583. His commemorative stone inscription is inserted in the south wall (pl. 19.70).

The mosque is reached by leaving the sīq down a wide passage-way which passes under the minaret. On the left (east) lies the mosque of al-Madhhab, on the right (west) the mosque of Ḣanāfī, while directly ahead the passage-way opens into an area of public lavatories serving the southern sīq as well as the mosques.

A number of archways containing blocked openings are built into the wall separating the passage-way from the mosque of Ḣanāfī and its arcaded courtyard. The lintels of the openings are now less than a metre above the floor of the passage-way. The last arch is higher and through this a door leads to a short flight of steps, down which the visitor descends to the domed walkway surrounding the courtyard, which is now used as a madrasah. The ablution area consists of a long room adjoining this to the south.

The courtyard has three domed bays on each arm of the ambulatory surrounding it, giving, together with the corner bays, a total of sixteen domes. Pointed arches front the court. The domes placed over the bays on the northern side are so rectangular in shape that they are approaching groined vaults in form.

The prayer hall is composed of two domed rooms, each with its own miḥrāb. The western room is considerably smaller than the eastern one, suggesting that it may be older; the inscription of 991/1583 is built into the outside wall of the larger room. A wide arch links the two domed spaces. A row of twenty-four small arched niches encircles the base of each dome above the double squinch arches at the corners. Some of the former contain shell motifs; the remainder are blank or fitted with tiny tracery patterns of hard gypsum containing coloured glass—they were perhaps once windows.

On the eastern side of the passage-way two doors lead into the courtyard of the mosque of al-Madhhab, which is on the same level as the passage. This mosque is ascribed by al-Ḥajari to the period of the first Ottoman occupation, but conforms to the pre-Ottoman type in form; five transverse aisles are separated by high circular arched arcades carried on pairs of columns containing some pre-Islamic fragments.

The minaret is unique in several ways. Not only does it straddle the passage-way, but it has no balcony for the muezzin—he has to perform the call to prayer from an internal platform through the small window openings. Its dome differs in shape from the high pointed cones of the Ḣanāfī mosque alongside.

Qubbat al-Murādiyyah in the citadel (the Qaṣr) (pls. 10 and 11) was built by the governor Murād Pasha in 984/1576, again on the site of an ancient mosque, of which one outside wall remains to the north of the qubbat. The minaret was built at the same time. The dome is of an exaggeratedly parabolic shape, of the same type as those of the Ḣanāfī referred to above.

Al-Bakīriyyah mosque was built by the Ottoman governor Ḥasan Pasha; he named it, as well as the public baths built as a mawqf to support it, which are now called the Ḥammāmāt al-Maydān, after a client (masāla) of his, Bakir Bey, to whom he was much attached, who was thrown from his horse during cavalry games in Ṣanʿa’. Ḥasan Pasha built his tomb, and alongside it the mosque was begun in 1005/1597 (fig. 19.7 and pls. 19.73-81).

The design is so completely Ottoman in style that it seems likely to be the work of a Turk, and may even be based, together with the baths, on drawings prepared in Istanbul. The only possible exceptions are the minaret, which belongs to the eastern tradition of patterned brickwork started in Ṣanʿa’ as far as we

52 As Sūq al-Milh lies on the ancient street running from Ghumdān, next to the Great Mosque, to the Qaṣr, it seems more than likely that the Ḣanāfī mosque is on the site of the mosque referred to, cf. al-Rāzī, op. cit., 232.
54 Mašūr, 43.
55 Ibid., 99.
56 Ibid., 113-4.
57 Ibid., 17.
58 Loc. cit.
Fig. 19.6 Mosques of Janāh and al-Madhhab. Plan and section, Janāh on the left and al-Madhhab on the right.
know, at the Madrasah mosque seventy years earlier, and the hot
and temperate rooms of the baths, which conform to the Yemeni
rather than to the Turkish pattern.

The mosque has a wide square prayer hall roofed with a single
dome seventeen metres in diameter, with an annex covered by
two smaller domes on the northern side. A third small dome in
the north eastern corner is built over the sealed tomb chamber.
A porch with three decorated domes fronts the mosque on the
south.

The paved forecourt is sixty centimetres below the floor level
of the mosque, and is completely enclosed, on the east by a
covered walkway with the minaret behind it, on the south by the
ablution block roofed with four domes and fronted by an open-air
ablution pool approached up three steps, and on the west by a
large domed porch projecting halfway into the court.

Externally, the mosque is reached from the western side, the
porch lying centrally between symmetrical, domed rooms added
during the second Turkish occupation, probably at the same time
as the redecoration of 1298/1880 which is recorded in an inscrip-
tion in the prayer hall.
The external massing of the forms, cubes surmounted by octagons carrying domes, which build up in scale to the dominating mass of the great dome, is reminiscent of the largest mosques in Istanbul, and particularly of the work of the architect Sinān. There is precedent in Istanbul, too, for the four octagonal turrets at the corners; although in Sinān’s mosque of Sulayman I they are not so clearly visible, in his Sokollu mosque they have become clusters of three, and in his Salim Mosque at Edirne there are two of them on each corner.

59 Sinān died in 996/1588.

The mosque of al-Bakiriyyah has areas of plaster bas-relief decoration on the outside, somewhat more lavishly applied than is normal in contemporary work in Islam. The porch has a row of decorative fleur-de-lis finials against the sky, for which there is precedent in Sinān’s decorations of the Şehzade mosque, although it is a prominent feature of the ‘Amiriyyah mosque in Rada’, 125km south east of Şan‘a’, built in 918/1512. There is also decorative patterning in two coloured stones, characteristically Ottoman in type, but also existing a thousand years earlier in
San'a', according to descriptions by historians of al-Qalîs church. Doubtless Byzantine influence played a part in its use in both cases.

The three domes above the porch have fine plaster decorations, the central one being the most elaborate (pl. 19.77). They combine Ottoman motifs with overall geometric patterns of a type that had been used earlier in the Yemen.

The architectural treatment of the interior conforms closely with the ideas of Sinan. Decoration is concentrated around windows, doors, and the large arches of the octagon which rises within the square and the mihrâb. An important exception is the stalactite ornament of the pendentures, a feature used by Sinan to draw attention to the transition from the square plan to the octagon and thence the circle of the dome, a transition which might otherwise pass unnoticed, so cleverly are the columns of the octagon fitted within the square (pl. 19.78). The panel ornaments of mihrâb, doors and windows are again of pure Ottoman type (pl. 19.80). The throne intended for the use of the Turkish governor stands in front of the south wall. From its top, reached up a tiny staircase, the imam of the mosque still leads the prayer (pl. 19.79). Almost identical thrones survive in mosques designed by Sinan, such as the mosque of Çoban Mustafa at

19.72 Mosque of al-Madhhab. Interior of the prayer hall, looking towards the qiblah wall.

19.73 Mosque of al-Bakiriyyah. First Ottoman occupation.

Fig. 19.7 Mosque of al-Bakiriyyah. Plan, elevation and section (see also next page).
The Smaller Masques of San'a'

Although the minaret conforms to the existing Yemeni type in general character and type of decoration, it has a more austere line and a nobler unity than most of the others, and is conceivably the work of the same Turkish architect. There is no cylindrical shaft; instead the minaret rises from its square base first eight-sided, then sixteen-sided to the sixteen-sided balcony. Above it continues sixteen-sided until it meets the dome which vanishes to a point in sixteen flutes. There is some structural evidence that the minaret was built later than the eastern wall of the courtyard.

The history of the fine Qubbat Tallah is confused (fig. 19.8; pls. 2, 3, and pls. 19.82-85). According to al-Hajari it was an ancient mosque which remained small for many centuries. It was then enlarged and its minaret was built by the Ottoman governor Muḥammad Pāšā in 1029/1619-20. He furnished the mosque with precious carpets. There is then a gap in the record of its history until 1247/1831-2, when the Imam al-Mahdī 'Abdullah b. al-Imām al-Mutawakkil Aḥmad renovated or partly rebuilt it, a fact recorded on an inscription added to the interior south wall of the prayer-hall.

The mosque consists of a domed prayer hall of the same type as at al-Bakīriyyah, but without the side annexes. It is fronted on the western side by a two-arched porch with four domes. The arches in this case are semi-circular, and the doors, windows, and internal furnishings differ in design from al-Bakīriyyah type.

Externally the resemblance between the two prayer halls is quite strong, Qubbat Tallah having a dome of the same shape, with similar octagonal turrets at the corners. As in al-Bakiriyyah the minaret is in the traditional Yemeni style. In this case, however, it does not appear to have been the work of the same architect as the qubbah, nor to have been integrated into its design. For although the minaret touches the prayer hall eastern wall, the latter is slightly higher, and the stonework is quite different, that of the minaret being horizontally striped, by building alternate courses of light and dark stone, while the wall of the prayer hall is plain. The proportions of the minaret are also strange, the base being unusually high and the polygonal stage and the main cylindrical shaft above very squat.

61 Ṣafī, O, op. cit., p. 218.
62 Al-Hajari, however, claims that the minbar was a part of the redecoration ordered by Sūṭān ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd during the second Ottoman occupation, in 1298/1880-1. Al-Hajari further mentions that Turkish (Rūmī) carpets were added at this time. (Masājid, 17; A'immat al-Yaman, (2), 1, 14.)
Accepting that the minaret was not built at the same time as the prayer hall, it seems likely that the minaret was built first, as al-Ḥajari suggests, and that later the height of the lower parts was raised by casing the original structure, to bring the square base to the height of the prayer hall. The date of the erection of the domed main building is unknown, but it has a number of architectural features which suggest an 11th/17th century attribution (see below).

Nothing remains of the earliest mosque, nor of the enlargement made to it when the minaret was built in 1029/1619-20, although the open-air ablutions, the covered ablutions, the well-ramp (*mirna'*) and the poor lodgings above it may date from before this period.

Externally the prayer hall has fine decorative plasterwork on the dome and octagonal turrets, the dome appears to have been pierced originally with four rows of small openings to let in top light, which would have created a most beautiful and unusual effect. A high brass finial with a crescent surmounts the dome; another, carrying a ring, crowns the minaret.

Four pairs of doors with two different decorative patterns give access to the interior. All seem to have been meant to have protecting porches, but that on the south no longer exists, if it was ever built. The doors are internally exceptionally well decorated, and set in deep recesses so that, when open, the exterior decorations of the door faces line the reveals. A single step leads up onto the praying floor of the mosque. Internally, equally splendid panelled window shutters and cupboard doors are set in wide decorative frames.

The design of the *minbar* is unusual in being recessed into the wall thickness. A flight of steps rises internally from the easternmost doors to the high doors to the right of the *mihrāb* (pl. 19.85).

The *mihrāb* has a particularly fine design (pl. 19.86) resembling in its upper part that of the mosque of al-Madrasah.

The high windows in the drum of the dome are quite unusual in San'a in the strictly geometric design of their tracery, based on pure circles, and also in the careful harmony of colours, ranging from honey-coloured to dark orange (pl. 19.85). They are reminiscent of Ottoman work in Istanbul and Cairo.65

**Later Mosques**

After the Ottoman conquest there was a return to a taste for simpler mosques, with transverse arcades, usually with scalloped ornaments, carrying flat roofs supported on beams. Tombs, however, were roofed with domes, and these frequently bore evidence of influence from the surviving Ottoman buildings. In

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65 E.g. in Istanbul, Üsküdar, Yeni Valide Mosque, lower windows 1012/1603, and Cairo, Mosque of Sinan Pasha 989/1581 and Mosque of Malike Safiye 1019/1619.
several cases the entire mosque was conceived in forms derived from al-Bakiriyah.

The mosque and qubbah of al-Mutawakkil were built in two stages. The original building, to the east, was built by the Imam al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allah al-Qasim in 1139/1726-7, and served both as his tomb chamber containing his tomb, and as the mosque (pl. 35; 19.87-90). The upper walls of the interior, the pendentives and the mihrab are richly decorated in calligraphy and patterning of generally good quality, although already there are some hints of decline. The doors, shutters and cupboard are relatively unembellished. The tomb is surrounded by a splendidly carved wooden screen which shields it from the rest of the prayer space.

This original building has its own forecourt, with an arcade on one side, through which one passes to the forecourt of the second building, a grander prayer hall built in the 14th/20th century. This has a large central dome standing on four piers linked by wide arches, surrounded by eight slightly smaller domes, making a most impressive ensemble externally. It has a minbar of the Taljah mosque type, and a vigorous treatment of the mihrab below the quality of that in the neighbouring tomb.

There was an architect for the Mosque of al-Mutawakkil in Ṣanʿāʾ when it was built in ca. 1936. He was the muhandis al-Ḥaymî. But he made the plans directly on the earth and there were no drawings or models.

The Qubbah al-MahdiʿAbbas was built by the Imam al-Mahdi li-Din Allāh al-ʿAbbās in 1164/1750-51. It is in external form close to the main volume of al-Bakiriyah, though with an asymmetrical court and without a porch or porūco. There is a fine minaret derived from al-Bakiriyah but lacking its tautness in design (pl. 8).

Internally, the plaster surfaces are relatively plain; there is no great octagon supporting the dome, which instead rises straight from plain pendentures, as it does in Qubbat Taljah, but the woodwork of doors, windows and shutters is splendidly decorated (pls. 33, 34). The minbar is built within the wall as it is in Qubbat Taljah.

The separate domed tomb of the Imam was apparently built before his death in 1189/1775-6. The interior is relatively plain, presumably to set off the magnificent tomb (pls. 36, 37). The wide range of decoration on this tomb is paralleled by door, shutter and cupboard designs in the palaces and houses of Ṣanʿāʾ from this time, but its perfect state of preservation allows a much clearer idea of the quality of craftsmanship and finish. Opposite

66 Masjid, 91-2.
67 Testified by a chronogram quoted by al-Ḥajari, op. cit., 70.
The Imam's tomb is that of one of his wives, a traditional tomb which is strangely moving in the simplicity of its worn boulders (pl. 19.95).

The extension of al-ABhar mosque by the Imam al-Manṣūr al-Ḥusayn in 1171/1757-8 conformed to the original medieval design. His domed tomb chamber is richly decorated, but already there are signs of decadence in the undisciplined extravagance and even crudity of the designs. The tomb itself, although less well-preserved, is apparently the precursor of that of al-Mahdi al-ʿAbbās (pl. 19.94).

In later mosques decoration tends to rely more on bright colour than on refinement of pattern. Bas-relief decoration disappears entirely from such late mosques as that of the Bāb al-Qāʾ, in which the garrison used to pray, the miḥrāb being simply ornamented with a painted calligraphic surround in royal blue, silver and gold. Ornament of a folk-art type, incorporating flowers and birds in strong expressive conventionalized drawing, begins to make its appearance in late mosques, along with bright colouring; this appears to be an aftermath of the second occupation by the Turks, and an indication of the breakdown of traditional culture and tastes (e.g. the repainting of the Mosque of Ibn al-Ḥusayn in 1355/1936-7, pl. 38), although this bold folk decoration has its own appeal.

The continuing interest in the embellishment of mosques in Ṣanʿa is evidenced both by the way in which fine new minarets have been added within living memory (Ibn al-Ḥusayn, 1355/1936-7), and by the way in which old minarets have been doubled in height and much richer ornament added (the minaret of al-Zumur, originally built 1205/1790-1, heightened ca. 1365/1945 pl. 19.96). Some old minarets which retained unpainted brick patterns have recently had the pattern picked out and emphasized in whitewash. The Mosque of Mūsā, an 8th/14th century mosque to which a splendid high minaret was added by the Imam al-Manṣūr al-Ḥusayn in 1160/1747-8, was redecorated and the minaret repainted in 1393/1973. The great change this brought
to one of the major monuments of the city may be judged by comparing the visual effect of the minaret before (pl. 54) and after repainting (pl. 19).

Besides a number of new mosques, generally small and undistinguished, which were built in the newer quarters of Ṣan‘ā’ in the 13th/19th and 14th/20th centuries, there are two recently erected reinforced concrete mosques designed by foreigners. These introduce a jarring note, but their minarets are fortunately well hidden from the skyline of the old city.

**List of Ṣan‘ā’ Mosques**

The numbers in brackets refer to al-Ḥajari, *Masājid Ṣan‘ā’*:

- al-Abzar (3)
- Ibn al-Ḥusayn (4)
- al-Abhar (5)
- al-Abyadayn (6)
- Ibn al-Ra‘ī (7)
- Abu ‘l-Rūm (7)
- Abu ‘l-Sāḥi (8)
- Abū Shamlah (9)
- al-Akhgar (9)
- Izdamur/Zumur (14)
- Qubbat Iskandar (14)
- Bāb al-Qārī (16)
- al-Badawi (16)
- Baghalān (16), ruined

Qubbat al-Bakiriyah (17)
- al-Bilayl (21)
- al-Bahmah (22)
- al-Taqwī (22)
- Tawfiq (23)
- al-Jariyah (23)
- Jami‘ Ṣan‘ā’ al-Kabīr al-Muqaddas (23)
- Jabbānāt Ṣan‘ā’ (39)
San'ā’—An Arabian Islamic City


19.85 Qubbat Ṭāḥah. The prayer hall.

19.86 Qubbat Ṭāḥah. The qiblah wall, with the mīḥrāb.


- Ḥajar (43)
- al-Ḥurqān (48)
- al-Ḥumaydī (48)
- Ḥanṣal (49)
- al-Ḥaymī (50)
- al-Khwādī (50), ruined
- al-Kharrāz (51)
- Dāwūd (51)
- al-Dahīnah/Duhammad (52), ruined
- al-Raḍābī (52)
al-Ruḍwān (52)
al-Rummānah (53), ruined
al-Zubayr (53), ruined
al-Ṣa’di (53)
al-Shāhīd (58)
al-Sharīfah (58)
al-Shahīdayn (59)
al-Ṣuffah (60), ruined
Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (61)
al-Ṣayyād (62)
Fig. 19.8 Qubbat Talhah. Plan and sections (showing relationship to Mima' Talhah).
19.93 Qubbat al-Mahdi 'Abbas. Interior of the prayer hall.

19.94 Mosque of al-Abhar. Tomb in the qubbah adjoining the prayer hall.

19.95 Qubbat al-Mahdi 'Abbas. The small tomb alongside that of al-Mahdi 'Abbas.


al-Ḍubbî (66)
al-Ṭāq (66)
al-Ṭawwûs (66)
Taibah (68)
al-Tawâshî (69)
Qubbat al-Imâm al-Mahdi ‘Abbas (70)
‘Addîl (70)
al-‘Urâji (82)
al-‘Urâji al-Jâdîd al-Dîfâ’i (83)

‘Aqîl (83)
‘Ukâshah (84), ruined
al-‘Alami (84)
‘Alî (86)
‘Iyâd (86)
Ghuzl al-Bâsh (87)
al-Fâl (87)
Fâyi’ (87)
Farwah b.Musayk (89)
al-Filayhi (90)
Qarish (91)
Qubbat al-Mutawakkil Qasim b. al-I;Iusayn (91)
al-Qasimï (92)
al-Qa<;l.ï (93)
al-Qa~r (93)
al-Qu<;l.at (93)
Qui:ayb ( 94 ) , ( voc. uncertain), ruined.
al-Qiliib ( 94 ), ( Qalliib?, uncertain ) , ruined.
al-Kubbanï (94)
al-Ka'bï ( 95 ) , ( voc . uncertain), ruined
al-Maçamid (95)
Maçmiid (95)
al-Madrasah (96)
al-Madhhab (99)
al-Muradiyyah (113)
al-Mustashfa ( 114)
Ma'ad (114)
Mu'awiyah (114), ruined
Mu'ï<;l. (114) , ruined
al-Maftiin ( 115)
al-Muqaddam (115), ruined
al-Muntaqim ( 115), ruined
Locations of 8 forgotten masques given in al-l;Iajarï, pp. 115-6.
Musa (121)
al-Nizaylï/Nuzaylï ( 122)
Nu~ayr (122)
Nuqum (123)
al-Nahrayn (125)
Nîh (125)
al-Niz (126)
al-Hâdi Muçammad b. al-Mutawakkil (126)
al-Hâdi Yahyá (126)
al-Washali/Wushtali (127)
al-W dynasty (129)
Qubbat al-Imâm Yahyá (130)
al-Ruqaymi (136)
The following Masajid Mansiyyah (forgotten) are mentioned (136 seq.).
Râzi mentions (Masajid, id, 139), M. Ma'n b. Zâ'idah, repaired in 407/1016-17, 'Ali b. Abi Bakr where biers are prayed over, Bis al-'Azab, Ibn Yazid unknown place, al-Sayyâq, M. Muçammad b. Khâlid al-Barmaki, in a place known in Râzi's day as Sûq al-Lassân, M. Ibn Miçâd Ismâ'il b. Sh rús, M. al-Amir al-Baghdaï.
These names are in themselves of some interest and further investigation of their history and possible location might bring some results.

Some Technical Terms Relating to Mosques
Barîkah/barik, ablation pool open to the sky.
Bawwabah, = madkhal al-masjid, entrance.
Taqdimah, portico in front of a building.
Hîjâj, garden (of mosque).
Hawyiyyah(pl., hawiyá), court.
Dâyir = davwar.
Datweâr, balcony of minaret, a’lâ wa-asfal, upper and lower.
Zuwâwah = qurnah, internal corner of room.
Sauh(ah) (pl., saaâh), court of mosque = sah ât or shamsiyah.
Sawmâ‘ah (pl., sawami‘), minaret.
Mu’akkhhar, southern hall of mosque.
Muttakhidhah = mihâr, ablation-place.
Majnab = janâh, wing.
Mishrâq = madkhal al-bâb al-sharqî, eastern entrance. This word, from Masajid, 69, does not seem in general use today.
Masfâ (pl., masfî), foot-pool. See p. 318, n. 93.
Maqqirah, an enclosure made within a mosque in some appropriate place where one can pray at night or in winter and which can be lit without having to light up the whole mosque.
Mihâr (masâfîr/masâfîr), ablation place.
Miswaddah, northern hall of a mosque.
Mamshâ (pl., mamshî), ablation place, = mihâr/muttakhidhah.
Miçâfîr (pl., mayâsîr), ablation place.
Chapter 20
The Jews of San‘a’

Introduction

An account of the Islamic city of San‘a’ would be sadly lacking if its one time large Jewish community, essential to its communal life for centuries, were ignored. The Jewish community in the Yemen and in San‘a’ in particular, though it departed the city in 1949-1950, played an integral part in its life for centuries. Judaism in the Yemen has, of course, a relatively well-known history before Islam, and according to Jewish tradition Jews had settled in Barakah, the mountain next to Jabal Nuqum, centuries earlier. It seems safe to assume there was a Jewish community in San‘a’ when the Yemen adopted Islam, and there is in fact an allusion to Jews in the first Hijrah century by the historian of the early period of San‘a’, al-Razi. For the last three centuries or so—for which we have a relative abundance of historical data on the city’s Jewish community—it has evidently been engaged mainly in commerce and the crafts, forming a part of its urban civilization as a whole. With the departure of the Jews many traditional crafts, such as the polishing of jewel-stones and native silversmith work, have disappeared from San‘a’, though a little gem-polishing is said still to be carried on by Muslims. Moreover in the neighbouring Aden Protectorates over the years before 1962 many traditional crafts gave way to imported manufactured articles; this factor no doubt also helped the disappearance of traditional crafts from the Yemen.

The Yemenite Jews seem, in the main, to have been descendants of the native population who had embraced Judaism in the pre-Islamic period, as for instance in the case of the Hamdân tribe who ‘were near San‘a’ and mixed with Ḥimyar, adopting with them the religion of Judaism in the days when Dhû Nuwás adopted Judaism and they adopted Judaism with him.’ Yet there were also non-Arabian elements in the community as names like Fāyûmî and ‘Irāqî indicate. Nevertheless it is to be accounted as much Yemenite as the Muslims themselves—the community’s language was basically the colloquial Arabic of the country and in their daily life the Jews were closely associated with the Muslim population, more especially perhaps in the country districts.

The Jewish Settlements in San‘a’

One of the earliest indications of the existence of Jews in San‘a’ is Ibn al-A‘tham’s statement that the general Jāriyah b. Qudāmah, after the opposition to the Caliph ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭālib in western Arabia had been settled, dealt with people (ẓaqam—perhaps tribal Jews?) who had accepted Islam, then apostatized from it, so he killed them and burned them with fire after the killing.’ Verses composed on the event declare that,

Folk (ẓaqam) in San‘a’ adopted Judaism (tahawwudah) after they had acknowledged the signs of the Book and accepted Islam.

At first the Jewish community in Islamic San‘a’ may not have been very large for al-Razi, writing of the year 381/991, put the number of Jewish houses at only 35.

Goitein-Rathjens quote the Jewish tradition that the first Jewish Quarter was in or near the Qaṣr—by which latter the present citadel area is probably to be understood, but of course this is not substantiated by literary evidence remounting to an early date. Al-Razi specifically mentions in his own day (first half of the 5th/11th century) the synagogue (bi‘at al-Yahūd) at the south end of the Tinners’ Lane (Zuqaq al-Mubayyidin) opposite the ruined Christian church. Assuming the Tinsmiths were then more or less where they are now, this would place the synagogue somewhere south of the present Sūq; this is not really near the Qaṣr, but it would be near Ghumdān.

Jewish sources claim that the Jews moved at an unstated period from the Qaṣr area to al-Marbaki, a variant of the name al-Barmaki, because of a dispute between an Imam and a head of the community. If ‘Imām’ means Zaydi Imām, the move could hardly have taken place before 723/1323 but a Jewish source places the move before the time of Maimonides (12th century). All Jewish documents, says Goitein, call the town officially ‘San‘a’, which is situated on the watercourse al-Marbaki. A marginal note to the Ghayat al-amānī under the annals for the year 601/1204-5 says that Masjid Ibn al-Ḥusayn, also called

2 Ibn al-Kalbi, Kībīb al-Ālamîn, Cairo, 1914, 10, etc.
5 Jewish domestic architecture in San‘a’, Yemen, Jerusalem, 1957, 68.
7 In San‘a’ one also says zwaqāf, a lane, and in Hodniah, musaqār.
8 This is possibly the Coppersmiths’ Sūq of today.
9 This does not seem to be the Qaṣr but another church.
10 Goitein-Rathjens, loc. cit.
11 Ibid, loc. cit. Professor Goitein has referred us to Sa‘arat Teman, 138, for a document dated Monday, 16 October, 1356, mentioning the Barmaki.
12 Of Yahya b. al-Ḥusayn, ed. Ashur and Ziyadah, Cairo, 1388/1968, I, 388. Of course this does not mean that the actual note is any earlier than the last date in this chronicle, 1647/1636.
Masjid al-Ṣawma‘ah (a little east of the Sā’ilah) and south of the road leading from the Sā’ilah to al-Filayhī Quarter is west of the Jewish houses (Buyût Ahl al-Dhimmah). If, in former times, they lived in al-Filayhī as Qâfih relates and in Dar al-Tawashi this would have been the Barmaki ghayrī round about the open area leading to Sha‘ib. Jewish houses still existed to al-Marbaki up to before 1679 but Gotein says that in the later part of the seventeenth century the name al-Marbaki figures no more. He quotes a Jewish source saying that the Jews were asked to leave al-Marbaki and move to al-Qazālī—but as this is close to al-Filayhī the move could not have been far, and there is a document showing that they were in al-Quzzāl before 1670. From al-Quzzāl it is not far to Masjid al-Jalâ, and they settled also west of the Sā’ilah in the Nahrâyn area. They are said by the poet al-Dhahlînî26 to have lived in Shukr, mixed with Muslims.

These movements might point to an increase in the Jewish population of Šan`ā‘ and perhaps also to growth in their industries under the secure and prosperous rule of the great Zaydi Imams of the period. The settlement in Bir al-`Azab Quarter took place after the expulsion from Šan`ā‘ in 1091/1680.

Outline History of the Šan`ā‘ Jewish Community

In the long history of Šan`ā‘ the normally good relations between Jews and Muslims were, from time to time, disturbed by events such as the looting of Jewish property, or by excessive zeal of some officials, or by the excitement created by Messianic movements among the Jews themselves. Correspondingly there was a tendency among Muslims that manifested itself from time to time to wish to see Jews convert to Islam, but when this appeared to overstep what the share‘ah had ordained for the peaceful coexistence of the two faiths there were Muslim critics as well as Jewish complaints. The common culture of both communities and their tolerance of each other is impressive. It must be remembered too that if the Jews suffered from tribal depredations they were also faithfully protected by tribal custom when they had relations with a tribe, and the Jews were subject to the same treatment as the non-arms-bearing Muslim craftsmen, traders and others—and if Jewish wealth was squeezed by officials from time to time these officials would mete out similar treatment to their fellow-Muslims of the corresponding class. It has even been asserted that the distinctive dress17 of the Jews had the effect of protecting them during inter-tribal strife among the Muslims. In the proverbs current among both Jews and Muslims the human side of the relationship is well evinced—the Muslim has a sort of rueful and humorous appreciation of the Jew as a smart human being. It is said that Jews have a good sense of humor even if they converted into a mosque (Masjid al-Jalâ‘), the great bath had been taken over by the Waqf (now Hammam al-Jala‘) and in the following year, a number of district governors, with the governor of ‘Amrān at their head, were urging the Imam to permit the Jews to return to Šan`ā‘. It is said that the governor of ‘Amrān was particularly pressing in this matter because the heavy rains from which his district was suffering at this time were thought to be a punishment for the treatment which the Jews had suffered. Other governors were anxious about the economic plight of their districts, which had been deprived of vital trades carried on by Jews.

Within the report, the Jews were allowed to return to Šan`ā‘ though they were not permitted to return to their former homes. Jewish sources vary widely as to the number of survivors of the starvation and disease of the Tihāmah. In Šan`ā‘, the Kansar al-‘Ummah, the only synagogue to escape demolition, had been converted into a mosque (Masjid al-Jalâ‘), the great bath had been taken over by the Waqf (now Hammam al-Jala‘) and in the following year, a number of district governors, with the governor of ‘Amrān at their head, were urging the Imam to permit the Jews to return to Šan`ā‘. It is said that the governor of ‘Amrān was particularly pressing in this matter because the heavy rains from which his district was suffering at this time were thought to be a punishment for the treatment which the Jews had suffered. Other governors were anxious about the economic plight of their districts, which had been deprived of vital trades carried on by Jews.

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The Jews of Šanā‘a

This diagram corresponds approximately with von Wissmann’s map (p. 118) though distances to the city walls appear inaccurate. The concentration of markets includes al-Mazarah, the Abattoir, al-Haddadin, the Blacksmiths, S. al-‘Inab, Grape Market, S. al-‘Abb, Grain Market, S. al-Quṣ, Plasterers. The western Bath is presumably al-Makhlafah, that near al-Sulīr (Qīr al-‘Ulfī) was the Jewish Hammām al-Uṣūrī, now H. al-Fayš, fayš meaning land not owned or cultivated. Most synagogues are identifiable from Brauer (pp. 306-7) who gives Kūšar for Qassar, al-Mas‘ā, the walking place was for recreation. Al-Mahārij should mean kilns and Majārī al-Mirmidah where rubbish is dumped to be carried off by floods. Streets bear names of known Jewish families.
there but in Qa‘ al-Yahûd, west of Bir ‘Arab. Their greatest concentration was in the ‘Agil Quarter, where the Silver Market was, and near the Sûq al-Zabîb or Raisin Market (there was a Customs post or Gumruk in this latter). Sûq al-Misrâbah (the Old Market) was close by. They also had shops in other parts of old Šan‘ and mixed freely with the Muslims in the times of the Hamid al-Din, besides having shops in Qa‘ al-Yahûd to which they returned at night. 22 In the planning of the new quarter, priority was given to considerations of security; houses were built so as to be easily defensible: each had its own well, while some had more than one. The concern with defence reflects not so much anxiety about the attitude of the Muslim authorities, as the troubled state of the country during this period. Jews suffered, not so much from official policy as from the riots and affrays which frequently broke out among the Arab tribes. A wealthy community forbidden to bear arms would naturally suffer at such times. Jews were forbidden to build higher than two storeys 23 and hence many houses were built with a cellar. Life in such towns as Kuhlân, Hajjâj, Sabrâh, Hâbûr, Zulaymân, and al-Sâdah proved so precarious for defenceless craftsmen during the years 1717-25 that the Jews were obliged to leave, or assimilate themselves to the Muslim community. That the Jewish community in Šan‘ was able to survive this difficult period may well be due to the protection of the Imam, who, as their Sayyid, would be personally responsible for the redress of their grievances. During this period no attempt was made to force conversion on the Jews, though we are told by Sa‘îd Yahûda ben Shelomo al-Sâ’dî in his chronicle Dofî ha-Zeman 24 that, during these years of drought and famine, Jews were offered material support on condition that they embrace Islam.

Having survived this difficult period, the Jews of Šan‘ enjoyed nearly forty years of growing prosperity. No fewer than twenty-two synagogues were built in Šan‘ 25 after the return from Mawzû‘a. So in 1762 the Imam al-Mahdi, Abbâs ordered the destruction of all synagogues, though thirty years later his son, al-Mansûr Âli was induced, in return for a subscription from the Jewish community, to allow them to be rebuilt.

At this time most Šan‘i Jews were craftsmen: 25 there were very few traders. It was usual for a son to follow his father’s trade, though the prestigious and profitable occupation of silversmith regularly recruited those whose fathers had followed other trades. It was normal for apprentices to silversmiths to work for a year without pay, or even to pay a premium for the privilege. Women of all classes seem to have worked at embroidery. There are frequent references in the Beth Din 26 documents to widows of quite wealthy families supporting themselves by their handiwork. It is possible, on the basis of documents from the Beth Din in Šan‘, dating from the latter decade of the 12th/13th century, to detect the existence of three classes of wealth among the Jews. It would seem that the community was divided in the proportion 9:40:11, in ascending order of wealth. The typical member of the second class was three times wealthier than a typical member of the first, while a typical member of the third class was eight times wealthier. There may have been a few families very wealthy. Unfortunately it has not proved possible to relate these classes to specific occupations and trades. For instance it is not clear whether the poorest Jews—and some are known to have been very poor—appear in those figures at all. A plausible estimate of the number of Jews belonging to wealthy families would be about 1,700 persons. And some of these families must have been very wealthy indeed by Yemen standards. Some Jews owned extensive property, houses and shops, not only in the Qa‘ al-Yahûd, but also in the rest of the town. Thus the property of one of the wealthy ‘Uzayri family at his death in the last decade of the 12th/13th century amounted to a house, valued at 500 riyâds; four shops in the town valued at 520 riyâds; and eighteen shops in the Qa‘ al-Yahûd valued at 355 riyâds. The property included a shop in the ‘Agil quarter valued at 120 riyâds and one in the Sûq of Hamid al-Din, valued at 200 riyâds. In addition there was an indented plot of land in Sûq al-Hatab. Since the average price for a house in the Qa‘ at this period was 150 riyâds, this was obviously a very wealthy man indeed.

Some Jews also owned considerable holdings of agricultural land. Thus Mûsâ and Yûsuf al-Uzayri divided between themselves an estate left by their late father, Sâlim, valued in all at 386 riyâds.

The relationship of clientage between the Zaydi Imams and the Jewish community was not entirely to the advantage of the latter. It was customary, after the expulsion of the Turks, for the ruling Imam to pay an annual subsidy to the leaders of those tribes which had taken part in the revolt. In 1818 the Imam ‘Abdallah b. al-Mutawakkil, who was a very weak ruler, decided to discontinue the practice. Accordingly he gave orders that when the representatives of the tribes presented themselves to receive their subsidy they should be thrown into prison. His agents in this plot were Jews who carried out his orders with zeal in their anxiety to show loyalty. The tribes rioted, and, when the Imam refused to give way, they attacked the Jewish Quarter. 27

At some time in the latter half of the 18th or the earlier half of the 19th century the duty was imposed on the Jewish community to see to the removal of excrement from the privies of the city, and to remove dead animals. The earlier history of this service is obscure: it would seem originally to have been performed within Qa‘ al-Yahûd itself by Jews, and in the city by Muslim bath-keepers. The question of the legality of imposing the duty on the Jews was the subject of extensive controversy among the ulema in the latter half of the 12th/13th century, notably between the qa‘î Muhammad ‘Ali al-Shawkani and ‘Abdallah b. Sâ‘î al-Kawbâkî. 28 The matter was certainly discussed as early as 1788.
Şan'ânîs today who still recall the Jews, confirm that the community was considered to belong to three social classes, the upper (tevir), middle (emwilā) and lower (duyûk) class Jews. The squad (fersah) in charge of cleansing was drawn from the lower class which dealt with the privies (marâqābh) and dragged out the dead animals (mayyâk al-hayawânh), roped by the four legs, outside the walls (galâmâr). Rossi30 says the Bayt al-Mâl paid the Jews to remove dead dogs from Şan'î, a function a Muslim would be loath to perform. There were two places for dumping refuse of this sort, one to the north and one to the south of Şan'î.

In the early twenties of this century Rihani31 notes that 20 USA cents a donkey load was paid to the Jews who supplied the bathkeepers. ‘In recent years,’ says Barer,32 when they went on strike against low wages, the leaders of the Jewish community in Şan’î were imprisoned until they could be prevailed upon to return. Imprisonment of its leaders was the normal action rulers took against an offending group to bring it back to order or to punish it for any sort of misdemeanour—this can be observed for instance in Qâmûn Şan’î. Nowadays (1972) ordinary dirt and sweepings (kans) are taken away from the city by lorries. Local farmers spread the town refuse on their fields and as, today, it contains many tin cans and plastics, the result is unsightly.

The Jews fared better under the Zaydi regime which ousted the Turks. The Imam took a benevolent attitude towards the Jews—Jewish agents of the Imam had risked their lives in rousing the tribes against the Turks—and guaranteed security to the Jews in return for various taxes and the imposition of the social restrictions of the ‘Covenant of ‘Umar’. An annual jizyah was to be levied on every Jew over the age of thirteen. For the purposes of this tax the Jews were divided into three classes: the wealthiest to pay a 20 per cent tax on the profits. (These classes might be maintained. See the restrictions of Yemeni scholars infra.)

In addition the ‘decrees of the orphans’ was enforced according to which orphans were to be brought up in the Islamic faith. Between the years 1921-5 there were many such cases. Jews resorted to various shifts to evade the decree, such as marrying the orphans when young or sending them secretly to Aden. Though officials could be overzealous in the execution of such decrees it should be pointed out that the Imam himself tempered their enthusiasm. Indeed, despite the various disabilities placed on them, the Jews were never more secure in their property than under this Imam. For example, it is said that when a Jew, who had been robbed by a Muslim, complained to the local governor, the case was referred to the Imam, who ordered the arrest of all the local shaykhs, whereupon the property was recovered within a matter of days.

The Imam passed regularly through the Jewish quarter, usually on the way to Friday prayers, when he would receive petitions from Jews. Twice a year, at the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles, the Jews were accustomed to send a letter of thanks to the Imam as their patron, together with a present, usually a live ox.

Though the Jewish community in the Yemen was never completely isolated from foreign contacts, it is not until the 13th/19th century that European influences began seriously to affect the lives of the Jews of Şan’î. Europeans such as the French professor Joseph Halévy and the Austrian Edward Glaser visited the country on visits partly sponsored by the Alliance Israélite Universelle and became personally involved with the fate of the Jewish communities. (Glaser even in fact went so far as to recommend, in an article in a German newspaper, the setting up in the Yemen of a Jewish state under German protection, so as to fill the vacuum that was being created by the decline of the Ottoman Empire!)

Both of these scholars formed close friendships with Hayyim Ḥabhshū, who served them each faithfully as a guide and who has left us his own account of his travels with Halévy, written at the request of Glaser. It was through such men as Ḥabhshū that Halévy and Glaser introduced the Jews of Şan’î to ideas and movements in the wider Jewish world, notably those of the Hasidim, (a 19th century movement to reform Jewish education in the light of modern scholarship), and the Hâbbat Zion (the Aspiration for Zion) movement. There are said to have been six prominent Jews in Şan’î who were the principal leaders of the movement for reform, among them Rabbi Sa‘îd al-‘Ariûsî and Rabbi Ya‘âyî Qâîî. Naturally in the conditions prevailing in Şan’î, these men by themselves could do little to realize their educational ambitions (Ḥabhshū tells of attempts to master chemistry to which the father of al-‘Ariûsî devoted most of his time quite fruitlessly). This activity eventually crystallized in a...
movement to open a Jewish school organized on modern lines. In 1903 the Ṣan`a' community as a body was in correspondence with the Alliance Israélite Universelle to negotiate the establishment of a school which would "save the rising generation from the ignorance and stupidity which have reduced us to the lowest degree." Eventually in 1908, without the assistance of the Alliance, the leaders of the community entered into negotiations with the Turkish authorities (emancipation had recently been proclaimed by the Young Turks) for the establishment of a school. The negotiations were successful and a school opened in 1910. The Principal was Rabbi Yaḥyā Qāqīḵ and the curriculum included Hebrew and Arabic and there was a Turkish teacher of arithmetic, history, geography and the Turkish language. Yaḥyā Qāqīḵ states that the curriculum of the school consisted of the Bible, the Mishnah, Maimonides, grammar, Turkish language (taught by Ḥaṣīl Effendi, and later by Zayīl Bey, with great diligence). The fifty boys who were admitted to the school were examined in proficiency in Turkish, once a year, by examiners appointed by the Government (who were impressed by their progress). On the following day, they were examined in Hebrew and Arabic. There was, however, considerable opposition to the enterprise among the Jews, partly on account of the school's Turkish connections; many parents refused to send their children on the (not altogether unreasonable) suspicion that they might become liable to conscription into the Turkish army.

Qāqīḵ admits, however, that the teaching methods were in fact no improvement on those of the traditional Jewish schools in that most of the teaching was carried on by the parents of the pupils. He insists that there was no tendency in the content of the education to pervert the principles of religion: rumours to the contrary, he claims, were founded on such superficial matters as the fact that some pupils had cut off their distinctive rings (sumūr) and the school experienced serious difficulties after 1911, when the Turks ceded control of Ṣan`a' to Imām Yaḥyā. The Imām, who was suspicious of all agencies of modernization, appointed a Muslim as Director of the school. This seems to have aroused resentment in some circles, as did the Turkish teacher. The Turkish affiliations of the school were not to the liking of the Zaydi qaḍī, who objected to the uniforms worn by the pupils. When the pupils refused to change their dress, they were attacked in the street by Muslim children.

The school was also the target of criticism on the part of those in the Jewish community who were hostile to the ideas of the Ḥaskalāh, and its tendency to estrange pupils from traditional Jewish values. Qāqīḵ states that opposition to the school developed in the third year of its life when slanderers were spread about it and ignorant pupils, who had been withdrawn by their parents, alleged that the teachers were irreligious. 'The school', he says, 'worked for three years; in the fourth it was run down and in the fifth it was closed'.

The controversy over the school illustrates the ambivalent attitude of the Jews to such matters as emancipation and modernization. Many Jews were obviously deeply disturbed at the prospect of the breakdown of the old communal disciplines which had given structure to their lives and which were symbolized and enforced by such matters as distinctive dress. Indeed, Qāqīḵ himself admits that there were young Jews who argued that the emancipation proclaimed by the Turks had freed them from Judaism itself. This consideration suggests the question of how far the Jewish attitude towards such restrictions as they had been under before emancipation, and which were reimposed by the Imām, was one of resentment. Jews were evidently not slow to realize that equal rights before the law implied equal duties (such as military service) and many seem to have concluded that they were better off as they were. In this anxiety to preserve their way of life they were at one with the Imām Yaḥyā, who throughout his long reign, consistently pursued a policy of insulating all Yemenis, Jews and Muslims alike, from disruptive influences from abroad. Thus when the Chief Rabbi of Turkey, at the instance of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, approached the Imām on the subject of re-opening the school, he received the reply that, while the Imām had no objections in principle, the project was likely to offend Muslim feeling, and hence be detrimental to Jewish interests. 'Perhaps', he said, 'it is better and more fitting for them to educate their children . . . in accordance with established custom.' An interesting reply was given to Abraham Galanti by a Yemeni envoy in Turkey with whom he discussed the general question of improving the position of Jews: 'Your request is very reasonable. But how would you explain it to the citizens of this country, that is, that a Jew should have equal rights with a Muslim? They will say to you 'If God discriminates between the prophets, why should we not distinguish between a Jew and a Muslim?" After all, the distinction was made by God himself." It is likely that most Yemeni Jews would have agreed.

However, the European idea of the Ḥaskalāh infiltrated the Jewish community. Yemeni Jewish spirituality had for centuries been inspired by the Qabbalah, and especially by the Zohar. Much of the synagogue ritual was permeated by Cabalistic symbolism. A group of Jews, led by Rabbi Yaḥyā Qāqīḵ (whose work Milhamoth ha-Shem was a sustained attack on the Qabbalah) were anxious to remove what it regarded as superstitious features from the public prayers. Qāqīḵ explicitly credits Joseph Halevy with the inspiring of this group. Dissension in the community reached such a pitch that, in 1914, the matter was referred to the Imām. The Muslim judge, Yaḥyā b. Muhammad b. Ἀｂbās, who was appointed by the Imām to deal with the case, stated in the preamble to his judgement that his purpose was to remove all sources of strife from the community. The judge calls on all Jews to tolerate differing opinions but to proceed with their lives according to the traditions of their ancestors. The various synagogues are to follow traditional usage, but anyone who wishes may pray in private as he pleases. Five allegedly 'modernist' synagogues were to be investigated by the Muslim judge together with Jewish leaders, and, if the allegations were substantiated, destroyed. No such synagogues were to be opened in future. This is a very instructive case of co-operation between Muslims and Jews in defiance of the traditional way of life in Ṣan`a'. Indeed throughout the present century, hostility between Jewish factions was the main source of disturbance in the life of the community. The Muslim authorities (whose sole concern in these matters seems to have been for public order) acted as umpire in these contests.

The career of Rabbi Yaḥyā Isaac, who was the leader of conservative opinion in the debate over the Qabbalah, is also instructive as to relations between the Jews and the Muslim authorities. He was elected Ḥakham-bāshi (effectively Chief Rabbi) in 1906, but the modernizing party challenged his election, as not being truly representative of communal opinion. Hence in 1910 the Muslim authorities, anxious to preserve order, arranged a referendum (the opposing candidate being Rabbi Yaḥyā Qāqīḵ) which confirmed Rabbi Yaḥyā in office. He seems to have been a man of outstanding ability, and, what is more, to have wielded considerable influence with the new Imām and his ministers (naturally enough in view of the substantial coincidence of their attitudes) and his advice was valued in matters relating to Jewish affairs. His influence he was able to use to the advantage of the Jewish community in certain difficult matters. The extent of his diplomatic gifts may be judged from the fact that in matters requiring negotiation with the Muslim authorities it became customary for

35 In the thirties Naḥṣ al-ʿArūn, Ṣan`a', Cairo, n.d., I, 142, counted fifteen schools and nineteen synagogues.

36 Shem Tov, ed. I. Yeshayahu and A. Zadoq, Tel Aviv, 1945, 217.
the leaders of the community to consult at his house, and then for the Rabbi to go alone, or with one companion, to meet the Imam, whereas formerly a delegation of Jews would have gone. He was notably successful in arriving at a compromise over the question of the bringing up as Muslims the orphans of non-Muslim parents, though arguably his most important service to the community was in the question of the ownership of Qa‘ al-Yahûd. The authorities claimed that the land had been waqf property and that was in the question of the ownership of the Rabbi to al-Fayyûmi, head of the Yemenite Jewish community about 1172 A.D. This dealt with a situation summarised by the editors of the Epistle as follows, 'A forced conversion to Islam, inaugurated about 1165 (A.D.) by 'Abd al-Nabiyy b. Mâhibî, who had gained control over most of the Yemen, threw the Jews into a panic. The campaign conducted by a recent convert to win them to his new faith, coupled with a Messianic movement started by a native of the country who claimed he was the Messiah, increased the confusion within the Jewish community.'

Arabic sources consulted by us make no reference to this. 'Abd al-Nabiyy (who did not control San‘a‘), A’den and al-Durnulhah, a Hanafî by school, was, as ‘Umârî describes him a strange fanatical character who held that the penalty of death was to be inflicted upon all professing Muslims who opposed his teaching, that it was lawful to reduce their captured women to the condition of concubines, their children to slavery. . . . So it need not be doubted, a fortiori, that he did take measures forcibly to convert the Jews to Islam. In dialectic after the mediæval fashion Maimonides sought to counter Muslim polemics against Judaism those in brief terms that God’s dispensation to Muhammad abrogated the law of Moses, and that the Jewish scriptures contained predictions of the coming of Muhammad.

‘Abd al-Nabiyy’s attitude, however, is out of line with policies of most later rulers who thought of expelling the Jews on the grounds that they had broken their covenant (takhr), or that the Prophet, on his deathbed, had given an instruction to expel them from the Peninsula. Exceptionally, nevertheless, the Ayyûbid Ismâ‘îl b. Tughakîn, in the last decade of the 6th/12th century is recorded as ordering the conversion of Christians and Jews to Islam. That the Jews had prospered in the Yemen is evident from Maimonides statement that, “Men of business and traffic unanimously declare to all inquirers that they had made no attempt to check. However, the spread of Zionist propaganda in the Yemen during the latter half of the 13th/19th century, led, in 1882, to the first organized emigration. The events of 1948 in Palestine and the establishment of the state of Israel, preceded by the Arab–Jewish troubles in A’den late in 1947, created a situation of potential danger for the Jewish communities in the Yemen. Jews were very anxious about their position in the country, although a charge of murder of two Muslims, by the Jews, was rejected by the Imam’s court.

Although anti-Jewish feeling seems not to have spread wholesale emigration seemed to hold out the safest future and this was arranged with the agreement of the new Imam, A’bfîn. For most of the population the only conditions which he imposed were that they should sell their property in advance, and if they had a trade, that they should teach it to a Muslim before leaving.

**Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Yemen**

**Messianic Movements and Muslim Rulers**

The earliest document of importance on relations between Muslims and Jews at present known to us, is the Epistle of Maimonides to al-Fayyûmi, head of the Yemenite Jewish community. 37

37 Nazîh, op. cit., I, 292-93, says that the Imam has prohibited the emigration of Yemeni Jews to Palestine but some Jews go without the Imam’s knowledge, via A’den.

38 Today there is only one, perhaps two Jews in San‘a‘ (A.D. 1137-1202), as contrasted with Nazîh, op. cit., I, 144, 10,000 males, and Mohammedan Hasan, Qa‘ al-Yahûd, 167, 5,000.

39 There were one thousand silversmiths among the forty-five thousand Yemenite settlers in 1499—the proportion is much larger than it seems for Yemenite families are large—but at present time only fifty pip their ancestral skills.” The story of Zechariah is typical. He belongs to a group of silversmiths, . . . who were not allowed to leave until they had taught the Muslims the secrets of their calling. He has been settled in his cottage for two hours run south of T’ahân for five years now and he is not happy. “In Yemen”, he says, “I made ten bracelets a month and I had enough money to feed my family, and leisure to study the Holy Law. There I work every day, all day long and I cannot ends meet.” (Nobham Pundâh, “The Jewish silversmiths from the Yemen”, Arêl, Jerusalem, 1966, XV, 26.)

40 A’immat al-l’aman, Ta’izz, 1372/1952, I, 360. Zabarah is drawing on Ms. Michael L. Bates, “Yemen and its conquest by the Ayyubids of Egypt in 905/1499-1500 a Yahûdi appeared in Bayhân of the eastern parts (Mashariq) of the Yemen, as an impostor (muwawwih-an). The rabble (al-‘rabîbîsh) collected around him and he became a place of refuge to him who had committed offences (a’dath al-a’dâtah). So Sultan ‘Amîr b. ‘Abd al-Wahhaab, the Tahirîd, went to Bayhân with a band of soldiers, making a show of going to the hunt, and for recreation (mu’âshah), but the Yahûdi took warning and removed from the place at which he thought the Sultan would alight. This Yahûdi behaved haughtily and overbearing (tazhabbar wa-takhabbar), rode horses with saddles with silver mounts (turajî mu’dâفادâfi), and every Jew supported him. The place where he had hidden was pointed out to the Sultan and he sent men who drove him out and seized him and his children and those who had joined him. They brought him humiliatingly (dhu’tan) to the Sultan, and he ordered him to be executed. A Hadrâmî writer adds that he was insolent to (yataf’awa) to

41 BSOAS, 1952, 1. Michael L. Bates, “Yemen and its conquest by the Ayyubids of Egypt in 905/1499-1500 a Yahûdi appeared in Bayhân of the eastern parts (Mashariq) of the Yemen, as an impostor (muwawwih-an). The rabble (al-‘rabîbîsh) collected around him and he became a place of refuge to him who had committed offences (a’dath al-a’dâtah). So Sultan ‘Amîr b. ‘Abd al-Wahhaab, the Tahirîd, went to Bayhân with a band of soldiers, making a show of going to the hunt, and for recreation (mu’âshah), but the Yahûdi took warning and removed from the place at which he thought the Sultan would alight. This Yahûdi behaved haughtily and overbearing (tazhabbar wa-takhabbar), rode horses with saddles with silver mounts (turajî mu’dâfadâfi), and every Jew supported him. The place where he had hidden was pointed out to the Sultan and he sent men who drove him out and seized him and his children and those who had joined him. They brought him humiliatingly (dhu’tan) to the Sultan, and he ordered him to be executed. A Hadrâmî writer adds that he was insolent to (yataf’awa) to

42 Ibid, loc. cit.

43 In an article in the Literary Supplement to Ha-Aretz, 17, ix, 50.

44 For these two see al-Mu`izz li-Dîn Allah, Al-Nabiyy (who did not control San‘a‘, A’den and al-Durnulhah), a Hanafî by school, was, as ‘Umârî describes him a strange fanatical character who held that the penalty of death was to be inflicted upon all professing Muslims who opposed his teaching, that it was lawful to reduce their captured women to the condition of concubines, their children to slavery. . . . So it need not be doubted, a fortiori, that he did take measures forcibly to convert the Jews to Islam. In dialectic after the mediæval fashion Maimonides sought to counter Muslim polemics against Judaism those in brief terms that God’s dispensation to Muhammad abrogated the law of Moses, and that the Jewish scriptures contained predictions of the coming of Muhammad.

45 BSOAS, loc. cit.
the Muslims, and was followed by many Jews, especially those who had become Jews after turning Muslim, i.e., apostates from Islam.44

Perhaps, over the next decades, there may have been recurrences of agitation among the Yemenite Jews, Messianic or otherwise, involving them in antagonism with the Muslims. If it was, then the chroniclers have ignored it until the Ghuyat al-umânî45 in the entries for the year 945/1538-9, remarks, ‘During this period declarations and disputations (al-aqâdis wa-l-murâqât)46 on account of the dwelling of the Jews of the Ahl al-Dhimmah in the Arabian Peninsula were frequent. So the Imam Shara' al-Din and the Qâdi Muhammad b. 'AbdALLAH Râwa'47 composed a decree (marsum) deciding that they be allowed to remain on the basis of their covenant and religion as formerly, and that they have stayed established according to this up until now (i.e. 1045/1636). The ulama of the two factions agree, that what is intended by Jazirat al-'Arab is the Hijaz only. God is most knowing.’ This decree then was issued a little after a decade from the destruction of the Tahirid dynasty, in that era of Zaydi dominance of the Yemen just before the Ottomans took San`ã'.

Round about this time, possibly, it could be that Ibn HAJAR al-HAYRAMI48 (911-73/1505 to 1565-6) delivered his pronouncement on synagogues, though whether this Shafi'i ahm had any direct links with the Zaydis does not seem to be known. The question was put to him, ‘One of them has given a jur'â on the demolition of all the synagogues of the Yemen—is what he said correct or not?’ He replied, may Exalted God, far from imperfection, benefit us and the Muslims through his knowledge ('ilm), with the words, ‘The Yemen is one of the places whose people accepted Islam at his (the Prophet's) hands, and the two Shafis49 have linked up this section with what is known to have been introduced in Islam, in that whatever synagogue, about the innovation or antiquity (gidad50) of which there is doubt, is not to be demolished because of the possibility that it was (originally) in an open piece of country (barriyyah), and building (timârah) has extended up to it. But Ibn al-Ridâ'51 and those who followed him (in the matter of) the synagogues of Cairo, took the course that declares all of the synagogues of Aden should be demolished, because of the utter impossibility of that eventuality in their case, since the wall surrounding it (Aden) is ancient, pre-Islamic, (the wall) being enclosed by the mountains and sea, so that it is not possible that Aden's synagogues were anything else but the buildings (timârah) of the town, and that (the buildings) extended up to them.’

In the 11th/17th century however, it was a disturbance outside the Yemen in Jewry, which had repercussions among the Jews of the Yemenite community. A certain Shabbatai Shavitt born at Smyrna in 1626, a mystic, proclaimed himself Messiah when aged only 22 and foretold that 1648 would be the ‘Year of Salvation’. Driven from Smyrna by the rabbinate, he went to Smyrna in 1626, a mystic, proclaimed himself Messiah when he went to Jerusalem where a young student recognised him as Messiah, and proclaimed 1666 to be the apocalyptic year. Shabbatai returned to Smyrna and his movement spread to Jewish communities in Europe and the cities of North Africa. In the vital apocalyptic year he went to Istanbul, but was imprisoned, and, taken before the Ottoman Sultan in Adrianople where he was threatened with torture, he became converted to Islam. The Sultan re-named him Mehem Rexadilli and appointed him his personal door-keeper. Few of his disciples were not disillusioned by his apostacy, and he is regarded by the Jews as a false Messiah.

Jewish writers have described the effect of Shabbatai's Messianic movement on the communities of the Yemen, but let it be described as the Zaydi ulama and administrators saw it from the chronicles of Tabag al-halwâ which follow. The Jewish challenger to the Qâr of San`ã' may, it seems, be identified with a certain scholar, chief and Nagid (headman) called Moshe who lived in San`ã', or the Head of the San`ã' community, Muli Shlaiman al-Jamali, who, the Jewish source tells us, dressed in royal clothing, was arrested, led out, and, with the words, 'This is your Messiah', executed.52

The Tabag al-halwâ describes the event in the following terms:

In Rajab 1076/January-February 1666, the Jews made preparation to leave (the) abode (al-muwâm) and join their brethren in Jerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis) and Syria (al-Shâm), alleging that their king the Messiah (al-Masî) Ibn Dawûd had appeared there and that complete sovereignty had been assured him. They sold their goods at low prices and made preparations to assemble to go on the road of Satan.53 Some of them spread news that he (the Messiah) would bring them what would bear little real significance. Here the author interposes a reference to the Jews in the Qur'ân verse54 ‘Fi sudurî him illa kha'r-un, In their hearts is naught but arrogance’, citing also the Kashshâf of al-Zamakhshari, to refute their Messianic claims. He then continues, ‘The Qâdi Shâhâb al-Din Ahmad b. Sa'd al-Dinî55 wrote down a question to the Imam. In the response (of the Imam) there occurred what decides that their not abiding by the customs of protection (rusûm al-dhimmah) annuls (automatically) that protection. This judgement (kalâm) was passed from one to another until it reached Kawkabân and Shibîb, so they raped (hatakû) the women of those Jews there with them and seized what they had in the way of furnishings, jewellery and money, and when the crier in Shibîb proclaimed56 that this was by order of the Imam the people of Hâsh, al-Ghurzâh57 and al-'Arîs set energetically to robbing those (Jews) with them. A body of Hamdan and Hajûd arrived at San`ã', but the pasture was afflicted with drought in their case and the attempt in vain, for the Amir of the town, Sayyid Jamail al-Din 'Ali b. al-Mu'ayyad held them back. When the Imam heard of their robbing he closed that door, reminding that he had not commanded robbery (of the Jews), and punishments (zâdîb) were meted out to those who had robbed them. When the fire of their folly had begun to die down and no (further) attention was being paid to their overt58 action, they

46 Goitein's article suggests that von Maltzan's statement that Jews were not promoters of the 1949-50 exodus, as even in the title Magic Carpet of Shlomo 47 Al-Fatawa al-kubra, Cairo, 1938, IV, 248, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Risalah 48 Reading confirmed by Robert Wilson for the text's 'rzah. 49 Reading Rawa` for the editors' Dawa`, following Zabarah. 50 While not wishing to enter into the theoretical problem as to whether the Hadith antiquity (gidad) of which there is doubt, is not to be demolished 51 Al-Fatawa al-kubra, Cairo, 1938, IV, 248, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Risalah 52 Brauer, JemenitischenJuden, 375-6. 53 This phrase is capable of a variety of interpretations. 54 Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Rif`ah al-Misri al-Shafi`i, ob. 710/1310, was in charge of hisbah in Egypt. 55 Reading confirmed by Robert Wilson for the text's 'rzah. 56 This traditional belief of the Yemenite Jews was skilfully utilised by the 57 The Tabag being composed in rhymed prose, 'Satan' fits the rhyme, but has little real significance. 58 Tabaq al-halwâ, fol. 63a. 59 Qur'an, XL, 56. 60 Bukeysh and Shibim, 56 Tabaq al-halwâ, fol. 63a. 61 Sarakh al-sarikh . 62 Reading confirmed by Robert Wilson for the text's 'rzah. 63 'Overt' is probably inserted only to rhyme.
returned to a man of theirs and decked him out in the most splendid clothing and circulated the cups of drink about him. Then once the evil spirit of wine (gambil al-khamr) had possessed him and brought him into an exuberant state, he went up to al-Qaṣr al-Kabir, desiring to ascend its seat and throne, summoning (both) those serving (al-maʿmûr) and the Amir to obey him. He addressed the Sayyid Jamāl al-Islāmī in Hebrew with a speech the purport of which was that your sovereignty is ended, so strike your tents, come out of al-Qaṣr and surrender the command to me! Those people around (ahl al-kharṣ) hastened to pull him down and each of them applied himself to his sandals and poured upon him a rain without a spring-time by ways of desert for this disgraceful and impudent act. Then they went with him to al-Bustān Prison where they lodged him in the lodgings of abasement, taking off the silken robes he was wearing. Thus was his authority (riyāṣah) metamorphosed into chastisement (taʿṣīr) just as his brethren were metamorphosed into aces and pigeons.

His case was brought up to the Imam (al-Mutawakkil Ismail b. al-Qāsim) whose answer returned containing satisfaction for the people for the evil of him, and giving him to taste of the consequences of his breaking (the covenant with the Jews) and his trickery. So they brought him to al-Ejallīqah and struck off his head; he was strung up at Bab Shāb where he remained some time in the position of one who had been hung (maṣlūb).

At this (same time) the Imam doubled the penalties/fines (ṣūdūd) on the Jews, removed their turbans from (their) heads and sent up their chiefs (kibār) to the prisons.

The reprisals taken against the Yemeni Jews, probably mainly in San`a’, seem to have been severe, for about three years later, in 1086/1675-6, the Imam ordered that the property of the Dhimmis throughout the country should be evaluated (tugawwam) and the

64 Presumably the same as `All al-Mu`ayyad, supra.
65 Cf. al-Tha`ālibi, Thimar al-qulûb, Cairo, 1965, 655, no. 1108, Spring rain is the most advantageous rain.
66 i.e. Bustān al-Sultan.
67 Qur`ān, V, 66.
68 `Abdullah Muhammad al-Habshi, `Wathigah tārikhiyyah `an Yahdū al-Yaman`, al-Bayan, Kuwait, May, 1974, XVCI, 52-8, describes this event. Al-Jīrāf`ah’s account (Muqājāt, 163) of the 1077/1666 episode provides some further particulars. The Jews of San`a’ and other parts of the Yemen broke the treaty, and corresponded with each other in all districts of the country, claiming that al-Maṣāf al-Dawālī had appeared and they had become his supporters. The era of the Muslims had come to an end so they began to sell their possessions and angry sayings (bawādir) and reprehensible acts appeared over and above the poll-tax (al-sād` al-lā`iyyah). However, in 1086/1675-6, the Imam ordered that the property of the Dhimmis be evaluated (nuqawwam) and the

tithe (ṣabr) be taken from them—all of which he collected a lot. A likely explanation of this entry in the chronicle is that the Imam, after restoring their property to the Jews, allowed them about two years in which to bring it back into productivity, free of tax.

Al-Mutawakkil was succeeded by the warrior Imam al-Mahdi Ahmad b. al-Hasan, and it is recorded that in Sha`bān, 1088/September, 1677, the Imam ordered the Jews to leave al-Iṣār23 Muḥammad b. al-Mutawakkil `alā Allāh to expel the Jews and destroy their synagogues. After the order to do this, he entered into their case with the San`a’ ulema, and, of these latter, Qaḍī Muḥammad b. Abī Qays al-Thālibī and, with him in this, Qaḍī Muḥammad b. ʿAḥmad and Qaḍī Ahmad b. Sāliḥ Abī `Irājī27 inclined to the Imam’s opinion (raft). This view was also conveyed (muqāl), by the authority of the Qaḍī Abū Zakariyyā,27 from the ulama of the Shāfī`īyyah, but some of them said, ‘This is not found in his writings (mu`allaf), and support for this is (to be looked for) in the Tradition which was the last speech the Prophet uttered, containing `Akhriju `l-Yahūd min Jazīrat al-`Arab,79 Expel the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula’, to be construed as preserving the sense of ‘Jazīrah’ in its plain meaning. A group of the ulama of the time inclined (to consider) the ‘expulsion’ of them, occurring in the first part, was from the Hijaz,79 only, and that not to obstruct them in other parts of the rest of the lands of the Peninsula40 is tantamount to a rule (ḥukm).”79

‘So the Imam took active steps to demolish those synagogues he found in al-Bawān and when he came to a decision on the matter the Imam made them travel to Mawza’, and a scholar of theirs perished. Then after a while they returned to their places, but most of these had been sold, and there was selected for the Jews of San`a’ their quarters (maṣlūh) of Qīl San`a’, known to the present day.89

A little later—in these days (1090/1679) the synagogue (bāqiyah) of the Jews in San`a’ was (re-) opened after the Imam had ordered it to be nailed up, and those of their books it contained were taken out, and the wine that was in its store (miḥkhān)84 poured into its latrines (maṣlūh).85 He ordered the Jews to go out (from San`a’) and they went out in bands.86 They sold such of their houses as would sell well (nafāqa) and destroyed what

76 Bukhārī, Sahīh, ed. Krahl, II, 295, Akhriju `l-mustakhfi min Tamīr al-Ar`ūb, among other parts of the Yemen ‘broke

77 Muhammad al-Ansāri al-Nawawi, ob. 676/1278, the celebrated `alim. The scholar who perished would be Mori Yahyā al-Abyad (ibid, 104).
78 According to Goitein, From the land of Sheba, New York, 1949, 105, Sultan Sa`d al-Din took the Jews back from Mawza to San`a’. This is also noted by Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil who succeeded al-Mahdi Ahmad in 1092/1681.
79 The scholar who perished would be Mori Yahyā al-Abyad (ibid, 104).
80 Al-Shābī` is quoted as saying, ‘I do not know anyone who expelled any of the Abī al-Dhimmah from the Yemen,’ by Muhammad b. Abī al-Awāl, al-Waṭḥāb `alā al-Awāl, al-Bayan, Kuwait, 1976, 105, Sultan Sa`d al-Din took the Jews back from Mawza to San`a’. This is also noted by Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil who succeeded al-Mahdi Ahmad in 1092/1681.
81 An involved hair-splitting grammatical argument has been omitted here.
82 According to Goitein, From the land of Sheba, New York, 1949, 105, Sultan Sa`d al-Din took the Jews back from Mawza to San`a’. This is also noted by Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil who succeeded al-Mahdi Ahmad in 1092/1681.
83 The Jews of San`a’ are called Qa`dī San`a’, al-Bayan, Kuwait, May, 1974, XVCI, 52-8, describes this event.
85 Dozy, Supplément, gives this sense.
86 For Muhammad b. Abī `Aṣūr, see al-Badr al-Tali`, II, 95. For Abī Ahmad b. Abī `Ri`āj, see ibid, I, 59, and Brockelmann, Gai., Supp., II, 561. He flourished from 1029/1620-1092/1681, and, in his latter years, was secretary to al-Maghribi al-San`i, Abī `Ri`āj is a celebrated Qadi family. Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil, al-Nawâ`is al-ṭârīkhîyî fi al-Yahud al-ṣâbī`î, (Ambrosiana, D. 500) is probably written by him, and not by his descendant of the same name (al-Badr al-Tali`, I, 61). Another treatise, al-Fishāh al-miṣrî bi mu`aqadda al-`Athīr, al-Mutawakkil Ismail. Abu `l-Rijâl is a celebrated Qadi family. A work known to

87 Al-Shābī` is quoted as saying, ‘I do not know anyone who expelled any of the Abī al-Dhimmah from the Yemen,’ by Muhammad b. Abī al-Awāl, al-Waṭḥāb `alā al-Awāl, al-Bayan, Kuwait, 1976, 105, Sultan Sa`d al-Din took the Jews back from Mawza to San`a’. This is also noted by Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil who succeeded al-Mahdi Ahmad in 1092/1681.
88 The scholar who perished would be Mori Yahyā al-Abyad (ibid, 104).
89 Akhriju `l-mustakhfi min Tamīr al-Ar`ūb, in this, taking his stand on the reading (masāb) ‘al-Husayn’, he argued that the intention was to expel them from the Hijaz only.
90 Al-Shābī` is quoted as saying, ‘I do not know anyone who expelled any of the Abī al-Dhimmah from the Yemen,’ by Muhammad b. Abī al-Awāl, al-Waṭḥāb `alā al-Awāl, al-Bayan, Kuwait, 1976, 105, Sultan Sa`d al-Din took the Jews back from Mawza to San`a’. This is also noted by Muhammad b. al-Mutawakkil who succeeded al-Mahdi Ahmad in 1092/1681.
did not sell. The synagogue was destroyed and ‘Izz al-İslām Muḥammad b. al-Muṣṭaḏwukhīl held a discussion on it on account of its antiquity (ṣaqāḍum) as it is in al-Rāzi’s Tariqī and other (histories). Then the İmām resolved on that which was desired, so it was demolished and in its place was built the mosque known today as Maṣjid al-Jālā (the Mosque of the Expulsion), and on its frieze (jīwā) were inscribed (the following verses) by the Qāḍī, the very learned Muḥammad  İbrahīm al-Ṣahābī.88

Our İmām is al-İmhādī, sun of (religious) guidance, Āḥmad, (grand-) son of him who rose (al-Qā‘īm)90 al-Qāsim. Exalted miracles are his, such as were not Accorded before to (any) Ḥādīdawī or Qāsimī.90 Were there none of them but his expulsion of the Jews of Ṣan‘a’, the wickedest of the World, And his conversion of their synagogue (bī ʿah) into a mosque For those prostrating themselves to God, and those rising (qā‘īm) (to prayer), Triumphant he would have been with the ordering of it, And the passing away of it.

Among others the eminent poet and Cabalist of the Jews, Mūrī SiĪlim Ṣahābāzī,93 has left a lament on the expulsion of the Ṣan‘a’í Jews to Mawza’ which took place when he was in his later twenties. Shābāzī went with Rabī’i Sulaymān Naqqāḥ to negotiate permission to settle there for the Jews who had gone to Dhamār until they could sell their Ṣan‘a’ property as described in the verses, I shall pour out my tears—like rain they pour—on all the sons of desire who have gone into exile. They have forgotten happiness and are humiliated: they were uprooted in haste, in the desert they tread. On the day when Uzal (Ṣan‘a’ī) went into exile, and they bore the burden. Sun and Moon were extinguished at their coming forth... Mihrāsh, Tahlud and Torah they have abrogated, clerk and elder are dragged away... Hādramī (i.e. Dhamār), to thee the congregation of God is dragged away...

Hābūsh claims that the İmām’s original intention was to deport the community to Zaylā’, but this was altered to Mawza’ on intercession of the tribes. It is by no means certain that all the Ṣan‘a’ī Jews settled there for there are also reports of their settling at Ta‘izz and Jiblāh which are far more congenial than Mawza’.92

Hābūsh claims that the Imam’s original intention was to deport the community to Zaylā’, but this was altered to Mawza’ on intercession of the tribes. It is by no means certain that all the Ṣan‘a’ī Jews settled there for there are also reports of their settling at Ta‘izz and Jīblāh which are far more congenial than Mawza’.92

While the temporary expulsion of the Ṣan‘a’ī Jews to Mawza’ is the most significant event in their history, it is presented by Jewish writers,94 basing themselves on Yemeni Jewish sources, as a sudden act of tyranny on the part of the Ṣazīd Ḥādīm, but this attitude must be modified in the light of the Muslim sources now at our disposal. The Ṣan‘a’ī Jew whose tales, recorded by Leslau,95

87 The allusion is not clear. Al-Rāzi, op. cit., 32, speaks of Bī‘rat al-.Sideh at the lower end of the Copper-trading Mark distinguishes no Christian example, but this cannot be identified with the synagogue converted into Maṣjid al-Jālā. For the point about antiquity, cf. Ibn Ḥaṣār, supra, p. 173 infra.

88 For al-Suḥlī, see p. 542b. The verses are quoted also in maṣṣūd San‘a’, 42.

89 Al-Qā‘īm—probably alluding to his rising against the Ottomans.

90 A Ḥādīdawī is a follower of al-Ḥādī, al-Qasimi a member of the House of al-Qasim.

91 Al-Badr b. al-Amīr and the Ṣan‘a’ī Jews

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96 Ḥadhī means the open countryside, rather than a desert region. Mawza’ is a large village not far from Mocha. There is quite a lot of cultivation in the area.

97 Leslau, loc. cit.

98 Other sources seem to indicate that Ṣagār means, rather, to roughen a mill-stone.

99 Ṣa‘īr—made bricks, of Genesis, XI, 2; Exodus, V, 714. (Compare with Genesis, X, 16.)

100 Brauer, op. cit., 38.

101 Qurān, section 47. a.

102 Al-Ḥārīmī, History and customs of the Jews in the Yemen, op. cit., 56; Brassier, Yemenitisches Studien, 351. For the verses, see Tāj al-Ḥulūl, vol. 1, 434b.

103 Ṣa‘īr—made bricks, of Genesis, XI, 2; Exodus, V, 714. I have made slight adjustments to the translation.

104 Brauer, op. cit., 38.

105 Qa‘am Ṣan‘a’, section 47. a.

106 Al-Ḥārīmī, History and customs of the Jews in the Yemen, op. cit., 56; Brassier, Yemenitisches Studien, 351. For the verses, see Tāj al-Ḥulūl, vol. 1, 434b.
66 House H. Entrance hall.

67 House H. Foot of main staircase.

68 House H. Diwān, with carpets (fard) of black goat-hair and bands of decoration in white wool.
House F. Alabaster windows on the landing.

House F. Staircase.

House A. The north walls, looking up.

Characteristic diwan in an old San'ā' house, with a brass tray prepared with waterpipes, spittoons and sweetmeat bowls.

House A. The north walls, looking up.
73 House A. The mafraj, with the distant view to the north across the lobby.

74 House N. The entrance elevation with another house on the left.

75 House M. The doors to the diwan, carved and decorated with metal bosses.
76 House B'T. A typical lobby, with a small gypsum staircase leading up to the clothing wardrobe above a bathroom.

77 A typical exterior of a kitchen in San'ā'.

78 A typical villa in the gardens outside the western walls of the old city.
79 House at al-Rawdah. The pool seen from the mafraj.

80 Construction of a house. Detail of a house front, showing the brickwork decoration and gypsum window grilles (House M).

81 Construction of a house. Executing repairs high up on the outside of a building from a cradle (mujlah).

82 Children playing in front of a house with a beautifully decorated upper storey.
Figure 83: Houses and minarets.
84 Finely decorated house near al-Tawashi.

85 House with large alabaster upper windows.

86 Typical upper window of coloured glass in a San'a house.

87 Another example of a coloured glass window in San'a with 'Allah' in the plaster tracery.
88 A semi-circular diwan inside a nôbah.

89 Houses in the Jewish quarter at al-Qâ'.

90 Hammâm Shukr (centre right). Scene from the entrance outside.

91 Hammâm Saba' (bottom right). The domes on the roof.
92 *Hammām Shukr.* The interior of the hot room in use.

93 *Hammām al-Maydān.* View of the baths from the Maydān.
94 Hammām al-Maydān (top). A view of the building from the rear showing the yard into which fuel is delivered by donkey-drawn garry and, behind, the well from which water is drawn.

95 Hammām Saba’ (bottom). The interior of the changing room.
96 Hammám al-Sultan. The cold pool room with the central fountain throwing a thin jet high in the air; warm shafts of sunlight filter through small lights in the dome above.
A man of the Sayyid or Qadi class wearing an 'umâmah mudar' cloth and over his white gamis a fine wool shâl. He is carrying a bunch of horse-radish (qūlān) from the market.
A girl wearing a šafrān ghanumī over her lithmah veil without a maugmīq face-panel.
A woman of the Khàdim class, wearing a frock of lower Yemeni type, who with two companions entertained the public with songs accompanied by a tambourine.

(Photo: D. Hoppe.)
*Ushah* headdress, comprising the makhwāq cloth wound under the chin and over the head, through which pins (marâtiq) are pierced, the qashībah muṣantar, of silk worked with sequins, the tazjah, silver embroidered band behind it, and the maqramah shawl. Al-mushāqīp is the name for the lower bunch of shadhāb, rue, and the upper bunch of rūb, sweet basil. The necklaces include hawāb, amber, and ṣud mirjān, coral and silver beads. (Photo: M. Mundy, 1975.)
Led by a Mamlûk Turk, prisoners in the Qasr break out of jail to join Nagib Qatrân, an adherent of Mutahhar, but are slain by Ottoman horsemen outside San`ã′ walls during the first Ottoman Occupation. (Courtesy of Kemal Çığ, Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi.)
mujāhid was posed the question about an adult who had left off performing the five prayers, drinks wine and has one of the Jews residing in his house to make wine. When he is put in charge of the giving of judgement (al-qāḍī) in a certain town (balad min al-mudāṭ), he gives judgement there while in this condition. Is his judgement valid, and if this statement (kalām) is to be established before the İfendi of the town (balad) whose deputy (nāṯib) he is, and he deposes him for lack of religion (diyānah) is he recompensed on that account? The question uncovers a very lax attitude on the part of the Ottoman authorities, though it be couched in carefully anonymous language so that we do not know to whom the questioner was referring. The Zaydi Imāms in respect of the prohibition of wine to Muslims, were certainly far stricter than the Ottomans of either occupation.

To return however, to the accident that again raised the question of expelling the Jews, Zabarāḥ105 tells how Ibn al-İmār came to take the initiative against them. He (İbn al-İmār) set himself with great zeal to put into practice the testament (waṣāyiyah) of the Apostle of God commanding the expulsion of the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula, and compelling them to wear demeaning clothing (ahnīr al-dhullah), because of their openly behaving in a manner contrary to that through the neglect (those in authority?) of taking (measures to) humiliate106 them as indicated by inductive proofs.

It chanced that an incident took place on account of which al-İdār urged the Imām to expel the Jews. The long and short of this was that a drunken man sprang on a boy in one of the ablation places (maṣāḥir) of a certain mosque intending to commit an assault (fāḥisah) upon him, but his cry for help was answered (isqīna kadhibīn) and he got away from him. The matter was brought before al-Muṭawakkil who was angered and sent for Sālim al-İraq,107 the chief (kabir) and shaykh of the Jews, to whom he said, ‘We have already prohibited the Jews from selling wine to Muslims, and yet you permit them to sell it.’ To this the Jew replied, “The Sayyid Muḥammad al-İmār and the Sayyid al-Iṣān b. Ṣaḥḥār gave us a fatwâ permitting the sale of it to them.” It appearing that one of those jealous (hussād) of al-İdār had instructed him to make this answer.

When (al-İdār b. al-İmār) heard of the Jew’s retort he went to al-Muṭawakkil and said, ‘I hear the Jew said to you that I issued a fatwâ permitting the sale of wine to Muslims. This is a lie against me, so make him attend at once so that you may learn of the fact he is lying (baqīqa kadhibīn) and learn what the Jews have done contrary to abasement and humiliation (al-qaghar wa-l-dhillah),108 making many synagogues (kañisah) with buildings, ostling Muslims in the streets, etc.’ So the Khalīfah (Imām) did summon him, asking him, ‘How many synagogues are there in your village (gāryah)?’ The Jew began to count them by their names while al-Badr b. al-İmār said, ‘I was about to send Sayyid Ahmad b. ‘Abd al- RETURNS

105 Nashr al-İraf, II, 513-4.
106 Cf. Qur’an, IX, 30, ‘Ijatta yu-tu ‘l jizyata ‘an yad-in wa-hum ghirūna. This
107 Incomplete sentence.
108 Cf. Qânu san’â, n. 23.

The Attempt to Expel the Jews or Demolish the Synagogues

Then al-İdār al-İmār (sic) advised al-Muṭawakkil that it was his duty to expel the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula (of which the Yemen is a part) as the Prophet had commenced in his last testament (ṣayfā) and, if he did not completely accomplish their expulsion, at least humiliation (qaghar) should be imposed upon them along with the destruction of those synagogues for which permission had not been given, that they had added. Thereupon al-Muṭawakkil ordered the synagogues to be destroyed. Al-İdār then said, ‘This Jew spends money profusely on his helpers111 and each one will come back to you again over his case.’ Then he left, and when he was part of his way al-Muṭawakkil sent him the first letter (maḥārah) to the mufti (muktar) of the town (balad min al-mudāṭ) of al-Ra’ūshah, commanding the expulsion of the Jews from the town (balad) and al-Muṭawakkil ordered that the Jew should not be fettered, this taking place on the Friday. Now after the Friday prayer al-İdār heard that al-Muṭawakkil had commanded the destruction of the synagogues to stop, those ordered to do this having already started, so he entered al-Muṭawakkil’s presence, and (the latter) said to him, ‘I was about to send Sayyid Ahmad b. ‘Abd al-İrahmān al-İṣām to you because (my) boy, Yusuf b. al-Muṭawakkil came to me to the midrāb in the Jāmi’ Mosque, and said, “It is not lawful to destroy the synagogues since the Imāms have previously confirmed them [in the right to] have them.” Al-İdār replied, ‘ Summon him to your Court (Maqām) to debate (the question).’ Al-Muṭawakkil was delighted at this and sent to him, and when he entered his presence, said to him, ‘This Sayyid Muḥammad is the one who guided (al-mursīd) you to destroy the synagogues.’ The Lord Yusuf b. al-Muṭawakkil said, addressing al-İdār, ‘How is it that this comes from you?’ Al-İdār replied, ‘As for the destruction of the synagogues that is a simple matter. I request of the Imām only that he put the last testament (waṣāyiyah) of the Apostle of God, to expel the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula, into execution.’ And where is this Tradition (Hadith)?’ asked Yusuf. ‘It is in the books of Tradition and others, including the Sharḥ al-Âthmār,112 al-İdār replied. So al-Muṭawakkil ordered Sayyid ‘Abī113 b. ‘Abd al-İrahmān al-İṣām to produce the Sharḥ al-Âthmār. He brought it and opened at the Tradition, and the Lord Yusuf said, ‘Sayyid Muḥammad is a man of eloquence, and I cannot stand up to the eloquent.114 But al-Muṭawakkil said, ‘Why then did you come to the midrāb?’ And the sitting came to an end inconclusively.

The very learned Sayyid ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Alī al-Wāzir115 then composed a treatise in which he came down on the side of (ṣayfā), confirming the remaining of the Jews in the Yemen, adding also (in support of his views) and sent it to the Qādi ‘Yahyā b. Ṣaḥḥār Sayyād116 to deliver to al-Muṭawakkil. The messenger passed it on his way to the

110 Ar., Wa-āria ‘ala ‘I-mintiq
112 Cf. Qânu san’â, n. 65.
Lord (al-Mawla) the very learned al-Hasan b. Isâq who informed al-Badr about it. So al-Badr ordered a man whose handwriting resembled that of the treatise to write down what he dictated to him to invalidate it, and he wrote the translation (radâ`id) on the margin of it following each disquisition (ma`bâth), 119 making a sound refutation at the end of the disquisition (kahtâk), making it seem as if it were part of the original. Then he gave it back to the messenger asking him to keep it secret. When the Qadi Ya`fâ Saylân delivered it to al-Mutawakkil he ordered him to read it. Then al-Mutawakkil said, 'Read what is on the margin of it.' And there it was — contradicting the original (text), so al-Mutawakkil asked, 'How is it that one part of this contradicts the rest?' 'I do not know,' replied (Saylân).

Al-Badr apparently did not cease to inveigh against the abuse of the law by the Jews, as he saw it, for in the protest he made in 1146/1733-34 from Shahârah, backed by a number of ulema, to Imam al-Mansûr, he includes, at the end of a long list of malpractices, the attempting of the Jews to act in a way to which they have no right (isâqonul-Yahâhid).

The question of whether to expel the Jews came up again during the first decade of the reign of al-Mahdî `Abbas (1161-89/1748-75) when, as Zâbîrah 118 says, 'Abdullâh Lu`f Allâh al-Kibûsî entered into expelling the Jews and Bûnîyân from the Arabian Peninsula along with al-Mahdî `Abbas himself.' 119 Ainsa formulated a question to which al-Badr Mu``âmmad b. Ismâ`îl al-Amîrî, the Lord Ajjâb 120 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Shâmî and others responded. Al-Mahdî imprisoned a body of their Mashayikh, and wished to expel them from Yemen. 'What is the meaning of this?' asked a body of their Mashayikh, to which Muhammad b. `Abd al-Rahmân composed a reply (mu`âqal) which found its way to the Imam at Shahârah, 128 are indicative of this.

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Protection and the Imam

The basis upon which a Jewish or Christian community could live in symbiosis within an Islamic state was early established. 124 The first Zaydi Imam, al-Hâdi, was merely re-affirming what had long been already fixed when his biographer 127 says, 'He said to the Jews and the Christians, “If anyone molests you (adâh-hum) refer back to me (irji `û ilayya) so that I can give you justice from me.” ’ This has been mandatory for the Imams from that time, they for their part enjoying financial benefit from Dhimmi communities as will be discussed infra. Jewish sentiment seems loyal to the Imams in consequence of their protection. Incidents like that during the first Ottoman Occupation when 'Jews who were armed with slings fought for the Imam,' and during the famine of 1028/1619 when Jews were allowed to share in the charity of the Imam at Shahârah, 126 are indicatives of this.

Among modern writers reporting on the system of protection, Nazîh 125 describes bearing a boy at Manâkkah call a Jew an evil person and wine drinker (khabith wa-shârîb al-khamis). This angered the Jew who retorted, 'Come with me, and let's go to the `emî so that I can complain to him of you, and this stranger will be witness against you.' Nazîh comments that the boy did not

119 Ma`bâth, literally, probably meaning—the place of each enquiry. Doyy. Suppûlmas, preface.
120 Na`îr al-`arîf, II, 144.
121 Sa`arat Teman, 223.
123 In an idealised account in From the land of Sheba, 111, it is called Mûrî Yehudo. The Arabic version is from Sa`arat ma`bâth min `alîsh al-Yaman, ed. Husayn al-Sayyîbî, Beirut, 1978, 92.
125 For pseudo-Messiahs see Rabbi A. Qôrah, Sa`arat Teman, with notes by S. Gridî, Jerusalem, 1954, 181; M. Zadok, op. cit., 89-94.
126 Barer, op. cit., 117, presumably quoting from From the land of Sheba, 97 seq., refers to a letter of protection which 'Abd b. Abî Tîlîb is supposed to have written for the Jews at Mu`âmmad's command in the year 5 of the hijra; it however does not seem to correspond with surviving early Islamic documents, though some particulars are common to both.
127 Sîrîk, 622, cf. 388.
129 Rijbîh, 1, 60.
A Jewish family photographed in San`a' before the emigration.

dare, because the special ḍābhīḥah, i.e. either a cow, camel or ewe which he would have to bring to be slaughtered and its flesh distributed to the poor. Mohammed Hassan adds that if a Muslim attacks a Jew and the latter says, 'Ānā ʃ iṣmāt al-Imām,' or 'Ānā ʃ iṣmāt al-ʿāmil, I am under the protection of the Imam/Governor,' then both parties must go to the Imam’s/ʿĀmil’s castle. Bad consequences ensue for the Muslim who does not present himself at once, and soldiers are sent out in the customary way, to live off him.

Barer himself, reporting on the Jews at Ḥaṣḥid Camp in Aden Colony at the time of the 1949-50 exodus, says of the Ṣan`ā’i emigrants, ‘They had no complaint to make against the King of the Yemen. On the contrary they praised him as a wise and good ruler. ‘But in the Yemen, unfortunately,’ they add, “there is a sultan or ʿāmil who defends us, gives us justice, prevents all aggressions, and sharply punishes anyone molesting us. On the other hand he reports Jews as claiming that in Shafi‘i areas, treatment of the Jews by the Shafi‘i is bad, but one Jew added he had heard it was good (nāḥî parks) in Zaydi country, and of Turkish governors it was said that some had treated them well, others badly.

Of Barer’s closeness to Ṣan`ā’ it is said that half of the villagers were Muslim, half Jewish, and their children used to play together. One day a Jewish child threw a stone at a Muslim child which damaged his eye. The case came before Imam Yahya under whose protection the Jews were in the general way described. The Muslims said that retaliation must be exacted, and the Imam quoted the principle that an eye should be exacted for an eye, but to his surprise they said that al-Yahûdi Bawsi wa-’l-Bawsi Yahâdû, by which they meant that the Jews were considered an integral part of the tribe, and rejected the idea. This seems to be the attitude broadly speaking, in the north outside the large towns.

On recent visits to the Yemen a Shafi‘i said to me—the Jews we have with us still today (1974) we value (mâqaddh-hum) and when we were small children, if we struck them, our fathers would beat us. He added that the ǧisṭah we Muslims pay is just like the ǧisṭah the Jews pay. Not long ago too, another Muslim told me he had recently met a Yemeni Jew from al-Ḥaymat al-Dāḥilíyyah by chance, and he noticed that the Jew wore weapons, a dagger, and his ʾanwar log was tucked under his turban so that he would beat us. He added that the fitrāt we Muslims pay is just like the fitrāt the Jews pay. Not long ago too, another Muslim told me he had recently met a Yemeni Jew from al-Ḥaymat al-Dāḥilíyyah by chance, and he noticed that the Jew wore weapons, a dagger, and his ʾanwar log was tucked under his turban so that he would beat us. He added that the fitrāt we Muslims pay is just like the fitrāt the Jews pay.

The Jews were often protected by tribal chiefs and during the anarcho-penal period of the 19th century with its multiplicity of Imams the recent publication Ṣafahāt majhûlah shows that tribesmen sometimes protected them in Ṣan`ā’i itself. In 1277/1861 about the time Imām Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥāḍir entered Ṣan`ā’, his wazīr, Shaykh Muhammad Abū Ǧâbir, demanded entertainment (diṭjhah) of two Jews who were protected persons (rubā’i, ḫaṭīr) of Shaykh Ṣâḥib Dughaysh. This led to a squabble between the wazir and Dughaysh, the upshot being that the dagger belt of the latter was ‘imprisoned’ (ḥâbûs ʿāḡm Dughaysh) along with (those of?) three of his fellow tribesmen of Banu ‘l-Ḥâfizh sharing with him in the protection of the Jews. This of course put shame on communities, the opportunity for ‘squeeze’ was too attractive to miss.

130 Qalb al-Yaman, Baghdad, 1947, 167.
131 Maghribi, 100.
132 Qalîb’s excellent, ‘Portrait of a weavers’ village’, Jewish social studies, New York, 1955, XVII, 1, 9, states that the village studied, al-Ǧadîs (al-Gades) in the Ḥabd ḡâdâd, inhabited almost exclusively by Jews, was a ḩukm enclave, thus being the result of a privilege granted by al-Imām al-Manlûr in the mid-19th century. It is likely from what Qalîb says that it was nevertheless under tribal chiefly protection as well as the more general protection of the Imam. Much of the time the chief’s protection of such a village ḡâdâd would be more effective than that of the Imam. Cf. From the land of Sheba, 34. With regard to the chiefs mistreating the Jewish emigrants, let it be said that in the West Aden Protectorate tells were taken by each ruler on Muslims passing through his territory, not only Jews, until these were abolished at the time of the Federation. I have little doubt though, that, at the emigration of whole communities, the opportunity for ‘squeeze’ was too attractive to miss.
134 Rihlah, 41.
135 Barer tries to demonstrate that each Turkish occupation made conditions better for the Jews—this is certainly not borne out by all writers, and I find it difficult to credit Jacob, Perfumes of Arabia, 229, when he says, ‘The Turks treat the Jews with great deference.’ That there are Jewish headmen of Jewish villages, which he seems to consider Turkish policy, has of course nothing to do with it, this being part of native Yemeni social structure. Jacob’s verdict, loc. cit., ‘The Jew is not liked by the Arabs but he is seldom maltreated,’ is fairly near the truth.
136 Rihlah, 202-3.
Dughaysh. About this time in general the *naqib* in charge of the city prison made many pretenses (*musabbabât*) against the people, especially the Jews, for 'they treat them wrongly'—no doubt to extract what they could from the *šanânîs*. In this unsettled sector of *šanâl*’s history *Imâm* Husayn’s control of the city seems to have been brief and when his supporters left it, the *šanânîs* who took over stopped the delivery to anyone of the Jewish *jizyah* until they had the decision of the Shaykh al-Islam. *Muḥsin Maqâṣî*, appointed governor of the city by the townsfolk, decided that the *jizyah* should be above the outgoings and obligations of the town (*fayy makhrjât al-madimah wa-lauzaâznî-hâ*). I am not certain exactly what is meant. In a passage, also not very explicit, it is noted that in 1283/1867 ‘Abdullâh al-Šâr (the *Šâr* are a well known family of the *‘Arman* district) arrived in *šanâl* to help the Dhimmi, al-Mansûrah, over a theft of gold stolen from him in Qâ’ al-Yahîd. They hastened to investigate the theft and to cut off the heads of the thieves. The anonymous writer complains that other robbers have been let go free and have even been honoured and respected.

### The Poll-tax (*jizyah*)

A peace (*jalâb*)138 i.e., a treaty with the Jews and Christians of Najrân was made in 284/897, of which al-Hâdî, the first Zaydi *Imâm* of the Yemen, is reported to have said, 'I hope the *shâb* will be a *maṣâh* after me.'139 That is to say he hoped it would be an established legal precedent and practice in Zaydi Yemen. An important economic issue enters into the formulation of the treaty. The weather of the Najrân Dhimmi had purchased much (landed) property after Islam. Whereas the Muslims had to pay the *zakât*, i.e., the tithes (*a`shâr*) on crops while the Dhimmi were free of them, this had diminished the revenues paid into the Treasury. Al-Hâdî first proposed that the Dhimmi be obliged to sell their land to Muslims, but as there was a vigorous protest against such a measure, the Dhimmi expressed their readiness to pay the ordinary tithe. Al-Hâdî had, in law, to reject this since it looked as if Dhimmi were paying the Muslim *zakât*, but he solved the problem by charging them a ninth ( *tâs* )140 and permitting them not only to keep the land they had purchased since Islam, but even to buy more if they wished.

The poll-tax (*jizyah*) to be paid by the Dhimmi was 'on the heads of their free men not the dirt from their women, slaves, and boys (*tâs al-šari‘ī-hây-hîn al-`ajîf141 dînā nisât wa-l-bâdîna*). Their 'kings (*mawal*) paid forty-eight dirham-*qaflâsh*,142 the middle group (*awstâ`) twenty-four dirham-*qaflâsh*, and those earning a bare living (*mu‘a‘ayyishâk*) twelve only.143 Al-Hâdî insists that this gives them protection for their persons and property, binding on Muslims who may not take anything from them, nor prevent them purchasing anything.144

Al-Hâdî’s biographer states that the poll-tax of the Christians and Jews belongs to him and the people of his House, and he has the right to expend it on whatever he wishes and to divert it to whatsoever he wills, but he used not to eat nor drink from it.145

Indeed al-Hâdî claimed, 'I never ate anything or drank water from what I taxed (*jahayt*) from the Yemen.'

The Zaydi *Imâm*s in point of fact received the *jizyah* as their private income, but the *zakât* of course goes to the Muslim Treasury. So, apart from the motive of enforcing the *shari‘a* relating to the Dhimmi, the *Imâm*s had a direct financial interest in protecting Jewish communities, further strengthened by presents offered the *Imâm*s by the Jews on certain occasions. This is not dissimilar to conditions in 12th and 13th century England of the Normans, when the Jews acted as financial agents for the Crown, especially under the first Plantagenet ruler.146

In the acute controversy over taxation and other issues in the days of al-Mutawakkil Ismâ‘îl (third quarter of the 11th/17th century), the *Imâm*s’ critics asserted that, ‘The revenue (*khârij*) of the Yemen from the poll-taxes (*al-jizâ`) is 70,000 *qirsh* (going to) one single person (*li-khâṣṣat nafar*), while half the Aden revenue, over a *lahb*,147 goes to another.148 The *Imâm* retorted that this is gross ignorance, and even the poll-tax of the far greater number of Dhimmi in the rest of the Yemen would not come up to the last-named sum. ‘As for Aden during this (present) period it is unknown ever to have exceeded 12,000 (*qirsh*), most of its income (*ma‘ṣûl*) going on the garrison (*ruhab*) and assistants there. What remains there is spent on its costs (*ma‘ṣûl*).’149

While in theory the *Imâm*s could not use the *zakât* for their private purposes, and no doubt many *Imám*s, perhaps including the late *Imâm* Ahmad Râmid al-Dîn, attempted to keep to the strict letter of the law, a humorous tale150 of al-Mahdî Muhammad b. Ahmad, known as Ṣâjîb al-Mawâbîh (1098-1130/1667-1718), if not apocryphal, reveals that at least one *Imâm* was not so scrupulous. When informed by the Treasurer (Khâzîn Bayt al-Mâ‘l) that he had set aside the poll-tax money (*amwâl al-jizâ*) of which the *Imâm* has the right to ‘eat’ in a special place by itself, apart from the *zakât* money, the *Imâm* told him, ‘Mix them up, Qâdî, the whole lot belongs to me anyway (*Ukhtîs, ya faqîr, kullu-ha ḥaqqa-nâ*!)’

The case of Sayyid Yâbî al-Husayn al-Qâism (1035-1100/1623-1689) is indicative of how the *Imâm*s might dispose of the poll-tax revenue. Although this Sayyid did not pay al-Mutawakkil Ismâ‘îl’s allegiance (*ba‘yâ*), the *Imâm* confirmed him in his allowances (*jirayî*), probably of grain etc. He had the poll-tax of the Jews in the district (*bilâd*) of *San‘â* entirely, and he was able to live upon this until God took him unto Himself.151

Of the Jews of al-Jâdás under the *Imâm*s, Goitein152 tells us they ‘were freed from the normal duties of citizens’ ‘Nor did they pay a sort of income-tax for business which had been levied on Muslims.’ Jews paid no tithe on their fields and were exempt from military service and corvée. He adds, however, that the Turks decreed the Jews should pay tithes on crops. As Nazih153 puts the matter—the Jews, in answer to his query in many parts of the Yemen, if they were pleased with their treatment by the *Imâm*s.

*Imâm*s treated the Jews in al-Yahûd. They hastened to investigate the theft and to cut *off the heads of the thieves.* The anonymous writer complains that other robbers have been let go free and have even been honoured and respected.
light compared with what a Muslim has to pay. This is a far cry from such assertions as, 'Jews, though paying proportionately more taxes than anyone else, had none of the few political and civil rights the Imam allowed his other subjects.'

**Sumptuary Laws**

In the first Islamic centuries certain sumptuary laws were evolved as a curb on Jewish and Christian communities subject to the Islamic state and to stand as a visible reminder of their political inferiority to the dominant Muslim group. There are indications that, in ancient Arabia, in the matter of costume, there may have been social distinctions observed between classes, whether merely as a habit or imposed from above, these going back even as far as pre-Islamic times. It is not relevant here to examine this issue, but the legendary belief of Ḥaḍramis is that the 'Abbasid governor Ma`n b. Zādāh punished the Ḥaḍramis by requiring their womenfolk to wear frocks only about knee-length in front. The qualification of this belief as legendary is advisedly introduced, because, to a visitor, it seems plain that women's frocks are short in front because they have to do so much work in the fields that anything longer would impede their movement. Both in the Yemen and Ḥaḍramawt in the centuries nearer our own time, class structure was reflected in distinctive dress; a story illustrative of this is related in the chapter on costume. The wearing of costume appropriate to one's social class does not appear, insofar as one can see from the literature, to have been the subject of regulation in the Muslim community. It is to be surmised that a man would be restricted by conventional custom to a certain form of dress and/or by written or verbal agreements concluded among the headmen of a community. Such are the indications—provisional until the subject can be researched.

It is in relation to the likelihood that such distinctions in early times were observed in the Muslim community, as they indeed are in South Arabian society, even to some extent today, that one should regard the sumptuary laws applied to the Ahl al-Dhimmah. For Dhimmis the laws were perhaps not more than mildly irksome unless the occasional fanatic was involved. The very re-enforcement of these laws, recurring from time to time in the histories, shows how they tended to fall into desuetude. The sumptuary laws imposed on the Dhimmis in the third Islamic century may be consulted in the Ḥāfiẓ manual of Ulūf, the celebrated Zaydi Imam of Persian Ṭabaristan. As to how the law was applied to the Jewish communities of the Yemen during the first half of the 9th/10th century, let the author of Kitāb al-Asahr speak.

'They are obliged to (adopt) a dress/appearance (irrī) by which they are distinguishable, wherein lies humiliation (ṣaghar), consisting of side-locks (znmār), wearing a badge (ṣhiyār) and cutting of the middle of the forehead (nṣiyah). They are not to ride on asses-saddles (ala `l-khumf) but broad-wise/sideways. They will not openly perform their religious rites (ṣhrār) except in their synagogues (kana'is). They will not make a new synagogue (bři`ah), but they can renovate what has fallen into ruin. They are not to dwell anywhere but in their quarters, except by permission of the Muslims. For those, as for Muslims, were not to prevent their horses raising their houses over those of the Muslims. They will sell a Muslim slave they have bought or owned in any way.'

Al-Muṭṭaḍā, in another work, describes the restrictions on Dhimmis, some of which do not seem to apply to the Yemen and may be theoretical rather than practice. The saddles they use are to be of wood with thongs of palm-fibre. They are not permitted to take the chief places at assemblies (jūdūr al-maqāṭil), nor to extend the height of their buildings till they are level with those of the Muslims, nor to ornament them, nor to decorate (taḥṣīn) their doors, nor to drink wine openly, or sell it. They must not wind their turbans more than three folds (qāqī) and let the ends hang loose, nor may they let their hair hang down. They may not wear silver and gold seal-rings (khawātīm), or have bezels, unless it be what has no ornament in it like glass.

Jews are not to be prevented from sailing on the Hijaz Sea and passing by it in ships, but they are not allowed to stay on the Hijaz coast. If the Imam makes a guarantee/pact for kitābis (here Jews) their numbers, description and names are to be recorded in his Diwān and a Muslim nagib is to be placed over them to report on those who have died and those living.

Al-Shāhārī, one of the 'shāhārī' of today, remarks that they were allowed to bear arms, but this is true de facto of large numbers of the Yemeni Muslim community. Only rarely, he says, were they allowed to possess land—which would be cultivated by Yemeni Arabs. They had to live in a specially isolated quarter and might only build two storeys high. Al-Shāhārī's assertions are partial in tone, and generalisations. Barer maintained that the Islamic sumptuary laws were not enforced during the Second Ottoman Occupation, and this could be correct, but Imām Yāhiyyī, his good relations with the Šanā' Jews notwithstanding, is likely to have been much stricter.

A point upon which all writers seem agreed is that, when passing by a Muslim, a Jew had to dismount from his beast and ask permission of him to re-mount with the words, 'Āli ra`ya-k, yā Šāhī. Nazhi merely says that when they meet a Suyyid they have to dismount out of respect for him, adding that they may not ride on camels or horses.

The regulation that a Jewish house must not overlook a Muslim house is re-iterated in the histories from time to time, but the Imām al-Mahdī Ahmad b. al-Ḥasan issued a ruling in the form of a document permitting the Jews of Bir al-ʿAzāb zu to build more than one storey because their houses did not overlook any Muslim house. Only a few years later, in the last decade of the 11th/17th century the Imām al-Muʿayyad wrote to the Qāḏi Ḥusayn Dāfān who was in charge of the judiciary (qādī) of Dhamār, instructing him that a Suyyid was coming to take certain actions, including 'to expel the Jews from the houses raised above the houses of the Muslims, even if they be their own property. As for those houses mixed with Muslim houses without being raised above them, if they are property of theirs (the Jews) they (may) remain in them, but if they rent (them) they are to be ejected and segregated to a side removed from the Muslims.'

The Jewish Quarter of Šanā', called Qâ' al-Yahūd after the large open square on the city's western flank, but also known, at one

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153 Magic carpet, 134.
154 Cf. p. 529 seq.
155 A contract in point is that of a Šāhī, Sulṭān ... al-Abīyari (ob. 780/1379-90) killed the Jew whom the Sultan had made governor (qalī allāh) in whose service the Muslims used to walk under his stirrup, wherever he was. Sulṭān tried to force this Jew to utter the Muslim profession of faith and, when he refused, he murdered him. The Amir and his soldiers were unable, for supernatural reasons, to reach Sulṭān in the Jāmiʿ where he had taken refuge—this being one of his karāmāt. Suyyān succeeded in escaping punishment by the law which he had flouted. (Al-Shāri, abagat, Cairo, 1883, 56; al-Yāfiʿi, Mirʿat as-sirr, Beirut, 1934, 139).
158 Infra, p. 430b.
159 A. Zaidi manual of hisbah of the 3rd Century, Rivista degli studi orientali, Roma, 1953, XXVIII, i-iv, 29.
161 Al-ʻAbār al-ṣulṭānī, V, 461.
162 Tarīq al-bawāysh al-Muṣṭaṣradiḥ al-Yâfiʿi, Beirut, 1934, 139.
163 Rihlah, I, 58.
164 Infra, p. 430b.
165 Nashr al-ʿarf, I, 570.
166 Al-ʻAbār al-ṣulṭānī, V, 461.
167 Tarīq al-bawāysh al-Muṣṭaṣradiḥ al-Yâfiʿi, Beirut, 1934, 139.
time as Qā’al-San‘ā’ contains houses where the Jews dug down into the ground to make a cellar and so give the house three stories. Despite what al-Shahāri says, however, it seems that some Jewish houses in the Yemen did have three or more stories and in old San‘ā’ itself where some Arab owners of mansions say these once belonged to Jews it would be interesting to discover if the restriction to two stories applied to them. At Jabal ‘Amr, a short ride from Mabiyah, I was shown in 1966 the Jewish houses overlooked by Muslim houses on the ridge, and in Habbān the Jewish Quarter was directly overlooked by Arab houses. Mohamed Hassan states that the Jewish house must be of adobe, or one story of stone and the next of adobe. It would be interesting to see how strictly this was observed in Bīr al-‘Azab.

Today some of the historic and architecturally interesting Jewish houses looking onto the Qā’ have been demolished, including that alleged to have been the property of Hābūshah.

The Gates of the Qā’ al-Yahūd were shut from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. When Imām Ahmad’s victorious tribes entered San‘ā’ the Qā’ was sacked, not for the first time in its history, suffering the fate of Muslim San‘ā’. After the departure of the community for Palestine al-Dhahbāni says it was called Qā’ Nāṣir!

Conversion to Islam

Islam, like Christianity is a proselytising religion, and indications go to show that, in pre-Islamic Arabia, in practice at least, so also was Judaism. Though, in the Islamic era, Judaism could not legally convert Muslims to the Jewish faith, yet it is alleged that the ‘false messiahs’ had sometimes many Muslim adherents, not necessarily of course converts. South Arabian Muslims generally would have liked to persuade their Jewish countrymen to join Islam, and over the centuries there was a steady trickle of converts though pressures to convert were occasional only, at certain periods. In the Yemen a Jewish convert to Islam is known as mukhādi, guided, but the term Musātimi that I heard applied to families in Bayhān converted many generations ago, would, in the Yemen, be considered a term of abuse applied to a Muslim, equivalent to calling him a Jew. In the mediaeval tribal law Musātimi I am editing, penalties are laid down for calling a Muslim a Jew or a Christian. Yet any day in San‘ā’ Sūq you will hear ‘Yūsuf Yārubū’ (so pronounced), a relatively mild term of abuse, bandied about jocularly or seriously, without thought of its meaning. This is well brought out in the current joke of the Yemeni Royalists about the one or two northern Jews serving with their forces. When addressed as ‘Yūsuf Yārubū’, the Jew indignantly retorted, ‘Mā anā Yārubū—al-Misrī Yārubū!’

Other stories treat the question of conversion with a certain levity. An ignorant man persisted in trying to persuade a Jew to become a Muslim—after numerous attempts the Jew assented and asked, ‘How do I become a Muslim?’ The man’s astonished reply, ‘Anā dāri kāf yūsul, How do I know how you can become a Muslim?’ has become proverbial. To judge by the story that follows, persuasion was sometimes brought into play at a higher level.

An eminent scholar (‘ālim j dil) besought one of the Imams for aid from the Trinity (Mal al-Muslīmīn) but the Imam paid no attention to him although at the same time he was receiving some Jews who had turned Muslim with honour and entertaining them. The scholar, annoyed at this, disguised himself as a Jew, came to the Imām’s Majlis, and made a display of wishing to adopt Islam, so the Imām entertained him and gave him a fine present. As the conversation went round in the Majlis and the ulema discussed the various branches of learning (‘ilm)—as is the custom at gatherings of ulema in the Yemen—this scholar took part, and the Imām soon found he was an ‘‘ātim tāfīl’’ and having his suspicions about him, asked, ‘Aren’t you so and so? ’ ‘Yes,’ the scholar replied. ‘Why then did you resort to this trick?’ asked the Imām. ‘Hīr lāh Misḥīn bājil, Get yourself a ready-made Muslim,’ the scholar retorted, meaning that I resorted to this trick because I found you receiving Jews when they embraced Islam, but neglecting the ulema of the pre-eminent (judūlat) among the Muslims themselves.

If, in the spirit of this tale, a converted Jew was rewarded in some way for his act, contrarywise, other reasons than simple devotion to the faith, what may, could make conversion unattractive. In the first place a Jewish convert would lose the protection and support of his own community without gaining comparable standing in the Islamic community. This is a factor that has done much to preserve Christian minority communities also in Arab countries of the Middle East. It is illustrable from the tale of a Jew who became a Muslim but died the next day. His mother wept for him, so the Jews asked her, ‘Why do you weep for him when he had left the Jewish faith?’ To which she replied, ‘Lā tajammal minnuh Mūsā wa-lâ shafa `lūh Muhammad.’ She meant that she wept because Moses is not pleased with him any more, and Muhammad doesn’t know he has joined his religion!

Another material reason for not quitting Judaism was that in return for the really light jizyah poll-tax the Jew, as has been seen, was accorded the Imām’s protection and this when an Imām was strong was rigidly enforced. In periods of anarchy and tribal independence they relied on protection from the tribal Mashūykh. Baret doubts informed by emigrants’ reports, says an Arab shaykh in some regions would give his Jews real protection of life and property in return for more special taxes—he indicates that these are not jizyah.

Jews in business in San‘ā’, it may be surmised, would equally find it awkward to break economic ties with their co-religionists to join a group of Muslim merchants or craftsmen.

A sore point with the Jews was the obligatory conversion of Jewish orphan minors to Islam, as has been seen above. Goitein could find no hint of any such rule in the Zaydi fiqh books available to him—he suggests that this rule is based on the Hadīṣ that states that every man was born according to natural religion (scilicet Islam) and only his fathers made him Jew or Christian. This was however a subject of discussion among Yemeni Zaydi ulema. One of the Mudhakārāt (Discussions) between Qāḍī al-Husayn al-Maghibī and Qāḍī Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Hādī Dha‘fān of Dhamar towards the end of the 11th/18th century is embodied in a treatise, entitled, The problem of the minor Dhimmi child when his parents have died in Dār al-Islām. Again in the latter half of the 12th/19th century no less a person than Qāḍī Yahyā b. Sāliḥ al-Salālī composed a work entitled, The tearing away of infant children of the Dhimmis at the death of both parents.

The Jews married off orphan minors to evade this measure.

167 Qāb al-Yaman, 158.
170 Qūl ‘an Dīl, al-Amthal al-Yamāniyah, I, 238, no. 676.
171 Ibid, I, 409, no. 1214. ‘Fātih is ready, to hand.
1379, ‘Al-Yahābū sīd qad kharaj min al-khuṣq kharaj. The Jew when he goes out of the circle (khūṣ = dhīr) is lost irretrievably.’ Goitein adds a comment by his Jewish informant that, in the case of a Muslim, Muḥāmmad will intercede for him.
174 Bukhari, Sahih, and al-Husayn al-Maghibi, ‘Abd al-Hadi Dha‘fan of Dhamar towards the end of the 11th/18th century is embodied in a treatise, entitled, The problem of the minor Dhimmi child when his parents have died in Dār al-Islām. Again in the latter half of the 12th/19th century no less a person than Qāḍī Yahyā b. Sāliḥ al-Salālī composed a work entitled, The tearing away of infant children of the Dhimmis at the death of both parents. 178

The Jews married off orphan minors to evade this measure.

177 op. cit., 125.
as we know, and even tried to smuggle them to Aden but I imagine that, as in Ḥabbān, an orphan would be taken into a Muslim household as a pious act, and in this way perhaps assimilation to the Muslim majority would be the easier. Ḥabbāshī tells of an old man in the Najrān area who came there originally from Ṣan`ā' about the beginning of the 19th century, to escape from Imām al-Manṣūr `Allī’s orders that Jewish orphan children should be taken to be Muslims with him so that he might settle them as servants (khuḍūdīm) and attendants (dānādīrah) in the houses and castles.

Forms of Address, Names, Etc.

The Muslims address the Jews as Yā Sa`līm, says Mohammad Hassan, as we in Baghdad call them khamāža. If a Jew’s name was known he was simply called by it, but ‘Yā usūf’ would be used when politeness required it. A Jew is also known as Abū Zinnār because of the side-locks which distinguish them from the Muslims—over which they wore a kūfiyyah with a tail (’adhabah) technically known as gīrřīḥah. A strange word maqīs is said to mean a Jew or a ḥālālā—which it is, if it had a derogatory implication, and a Muslim in mentioning a Jew would add some such deprecatory formula for alluding to him as yānāh Allah. God guard you.’ There are several such phrases used in South Arabia and indeed in other parts of the Arab world.

The Jews are also known as Abī al-Sabbāt, and Muslims are well aware of the Jewish care for the Sabbath. Qādī Isāmīl reports a saying, ‘Ayūbahārīm al-Sabbāt, It will break the Sabbath.’ This means the Jews will do nothing that breaks their Sabbath, and it is used by a person who is breaking the bounds of custom (ḥudūd al-`urf). Another saying, ‘A-yibayyin-al-Sabt, The Sabbath will make it clear,’ is explained as a reply to a question whether a man is a qūbāt or a Yāhidī. This would be said when in doubt as to a person and one wishes to find out about him before giving any opinion on him.

If asked about something of which you know nothing you say, ‘Ḥaqq Sa`dāl-Yahūdī, Belonging to the Jew Sa`dā,’ and Sa`dā also seems to be used as a name for a Jew just as one would say ‘Paddy’ for an Irishman. As both documents show, and Naẓīr remarks, the majority of Jewish names are like those of Muslims.

A curious word al-mihrām occurs in some sayings reported by Qādī Isāmīl, which seems to be arrived at by metathesis of the Hebrew mīrāḥam, the late (so and so). ‘Hālat bint mihram, the late (so and so).’ An experienced political officer, Harold Jacob, demonstrates incontrovertibly that the Muslim regards the Jew as clean, quoting the proverb, ‘Walk with a Khādim but don’t sit down to a meal with him. The Khādim is a scavenger; he is clean; the Jew, not a fighting man, would be no use on a journey through dangerous country. Perhaps a Muslim’s sentiments appear best in the tale of the man who entered a Jew’s house and the Jew invited him to share in a meal. The man didn’t like very much to eat meat slaughtered by a Jew, doubtless for ritual reasons also, but when the Jew pressed him he said, ‘If it’s got to be (eating) in the Jewish way, then let it be the chicken-breast (Ida qad al-bīna `a1a Yahawdah fa-`l-šukkābī).’

Social and Business Relations between Muslims and Jews

While the tendentious assertions in a highly emotional book like Shlomo Barer’s Magic carpet” that attempts to create a pathetic picture of Jewish emigrants from south Arabia, are easily dismissed, statements of a scholar of Goetze’s calibre seem to require some modification. In the Yemen, he avers, Jews lived in separate villages and quarters surrounded by a sect of Muslims with even stricter taboos who would not even drink a cup of coffee touched by a non Muslim, but he informs me, this applies to the Zaydis only. Yet, even with them, it is likely this would be confined to a minority of over-zealous ulama. There are historical allusions, moreover, to Jews living among Muslims, and if they generally do live in Quarters of their own or separate villages so do separate groups of the Muslim population.

For my own part, in 1947, I saw Jews drinking coffee with the Muslims in Ḥabbān at the reception for the Sultan Nāṣīr al-Wāhīdī. They however withdrew before the arrival of the meal since this was unlawful for them to eat. On asking a Bir al-`Azab Muslim of the Bayt al-Uṣṭā family if Muslims would eat meat of animals slaughtered by Jews he replied that this was completely impossible, remarking ‘because theirs is a different qiblāh (l’anna qiblat-hum ġāṣy),’ alluding to the usage whereby an animal or bird is slaughtered facing the qiblāh. This is a simple ritual difference. Jews and Muslims in Ṣan`ā could and often did eat together, except that neither would touch meat slaughtered by the other. Muslims used to buy many comestibles prepared by Jews, including sweetsmuts (kalāwāyid) in particular. An experienced political officer, Harold Jacob, demonstrates incontrovertibly that the Muslim regards the Jew as clean, quoting the proverb, ‘Walk with a Khādim but don’t sit down to a meal with him. The Khādim is a scavenger; he is clean; the Jew, not a fighting man, would be no use on a journey through dangerous country. Perhaps a Muslim’s sentiments appear best in the tale of the man who entered a Jew’s house and the Jew invited him to share in his meal. The man didn’t like very much to eat meat slaughtered by a Jew, doubtless for ritual reasons also, but when the Jew pressed him he said, ‘If it’s got to be (eating) in the Jewish way, then let it be the chicken-breast (Itdā qad al-bīna `a1a Yahawdah fa-`l-šukkābī).’

177 Cf. ‘A Judeo-Arab house-deed from Ḥabbān’, op. cit., 120.
178 A strange case indeed seems to be recorded in Renato Traini, I manoscritti arabi..., della Fondazione Caetani, Roma, 1967, 69, Collective response of the ulema, ‘al quesito circa la condanna da infliggere ad un tale che, per rendere nub con matrimonio della sorellastra con un cugino, l’ha indotta ad apostatare e a convertirsi alla religione ebraica, appena raggiunta la maggiore età,’ (dated 1296/1879).
179 Qaai Hassan, as we in Baghdad call them khawâjah. If a Jew’s name was known he was simply called by it, but ‘Yā usūf’ would be used when politeness required it. A Jew is also known as Abī Zinnār because of the side-locks which distinguish them from the Muslims—over which they wore a kūfiyyah with a tail (’adhabah) technically known as gīrřīḥah. A strange word maqīs is said to mean a Jew or a ḥālālā—which it is, if it had a derogatory implication, and a Muslim in mentioning a Jew would add some such deprecatory formula for alluding to him as yānāh Allah. God guard you.’ There are several such phrases used in South Arabia and indeed in other parts of the Arab world.
180 Cf. p. 421b.
181 Jacob, Perfumes of Araby, London, 1915, 228-9. Phrases such as this were also used by older Muslims when mentioning a woman (imra`ah, sana-kum Allah), used by older Muslims when mentioning a woman (imra`ah, sana-kum Allah), used by older Muslims when mentioning a woman (imra`ah, sana-kum Allah).
182 Qaai Wâhidi. They however withdrew before the arrival of the meal since this was unlawful for them to eat. On asking a Bir al-`Azab Muslim of the Bayt al-Uṣṭā family if Muslims would eat meat of animals slaughtered by Jews he replied that this was completely impossible, remarking ‘because theirs is a different qiblāh (l’anna qiblat-hum ġāṣy),’ alluding to the usage whereby an animal or bird is slaughtered facing the qiblāh. This is a simple ritual difference. Jews and Muslims in Ṣan`ā could and often did eat together, except that neither would touch meat slaughtered by the other. Muslims used to buy many comestibles prepared by Jews, including sweetsmuts (kalāwāyid) in particular. An experienced political officer, Harold Jacob, demonstrates incontrovertibly that the Muslim regards the Jew as clean, quoting the proverb, ‘Walk with a Khādim but don’t sit down to a meal with him. The Khādim is a scavenger; he is clean; the Jew, not a fighting man, would be no use on a journey through dangerous country. Perhaps a Muslim’s sentiments appear best in the tale of the man who entered a Jew’s house and the Jew invited him to share in his meal. The man didn’t like very much to eat meat slaughtered by a Jew, doubtless for ritual reasons also, but when the Jew pressed him he said, ‘If it’s got to be (eating) in the Jewish way, then let it be the chicken-breast (Itdā qad al-bīna `a1a Yahawdah fa-`l-šukkābī).’
A story published by Leslau195 contains the expression "Yā Yahādā, yā nāṣī', You Jew, you unclean person." This, I think, is a simple error for "Yā nāṣī', You person of low degree." The 4 and 3 being pronounced as 'g' in garden it is easy to confuse them. In any case a Jew, if insulted in this way, could claim justice against the offender. Imām Yāḥyā even had the Great Mosque of San`ā' white-washed by Jewish plasterers so presumably he had no misgivings as to their ritual cleanliness.196 Nor have I come across anything in the literature to support in any way Barer's assertion that the Muslims regard the Jews as unclean.

To this day the merchant Ḥāḥashūn, colloquially 'Ijībhashūn', is popularly remembered as a majlis, a 'crony' of Imām Yāḥyā.197 He was an astrologer (falākū) and the Imām would ask him for his prognostications, or so it is said, as to the favourability or not of times and actions. While many Jews were falākū so were many noble Sayyids.198 Yemeni Muslims and Jews alike believe in magic and the Jinns. Al-Jarāshī199 tells a humorous story of a Jew, Sālim al-Badīhī, a representative for the Jews at the daily Majlis of the Imām composed of Mashāykh and Qādis of the Qaṣāyīl, as he says at least, for the story appears apocryphal, who discomfited the Muslim members there but was prevented from being attacked by them.

An Iraqi writer200 says of the Jewish woman that her duty is in the house, and in the houses of the Sayyids and governors (ḥukkām) of the Yemen for a small wage of not more than half a dinar a month. The Jews act as washermen and ironers, perform the bringing up (tārbiyyah) of the children of the notables and are employed at housework.201

To what extent amicable relations could prevail in the Yemen between the two communities whatever theories the ulama might have, is strikingly revealed in a question put to the scholar Ibn Ja`mān202 (ob. 1034/1624-5) in, of course, a tone of strong disapproval—the questioner one imagines would be himself an Ulām. It runs,

A question from a Muslim district (ijīhah) over the people of which uprightness, virtue and obedience to the pure shari`ah predominate, except that their districts are devoid of ulama, in which are Jews dwelling there, mingling with them in a single village. From these (Jews) disapproved things have begun to appear, but the people of the districts say nothing, not reproving them because of their lack of knowledge of the statutes (ahkām) of the shari`ah. One of these is that they raise their voices above the Muslims, making their meetings conspicuous and raising their voices in reading/reciting and putting effort into this. Another is that they have synagogues there, all of them new since (the coming of) our mosques, and even more. [Nor] do they show reverence of the statues of the Muslim gods in their houses or ordinary folk (al khawā `l-`amm)—to such an extent that if one of the Muslims wishes to enter them (the synagogues) for some necessary purpose they do not make this possible for him, though they go on entering our mosques, by permission, even though it be without any necessary purpose. A further thing is that if one of their dead should die, they bury him in day-time, raised up and respected (mu`āqqam) among the Muslims. Yet a further thing is that the Muslims have trust in them, let refuge be taken in excited God, over their seceded women (mahārīm-him min al-nissâ), so that the Jew, be he young or an old man (shabb-`an atu sheybak), enters to ('ind) women, young girls or old women, in a private room (khātlisah) or elsewhere, mingling and conversing with them, without their veiling from him at all. When a Muslim (girl) is married to a distant place the Jew takes the bride (arīsī) on his back, by night or by day, lagging behind the bridal escort (shawā `ah) with her. When he tires he sets her down and talks to her without a veil (hijbah) or anything. Is it permitted them to commit these forbidden things or are they most severely prohibited, committing them not being permitted, root and branch (az-`an wa-`aṣl-`an)? Is it the duty of the lord (wahīyy) of the district and other competent persons (gūdīrayn) to reprove all of this and stop them from it, and to act actively and energetically to prohibit them and retrain them from these matters or not?

Ibn Ja`mān, in a lengthy reply, answers of course that the reprehensible acts described are illegal and to be stopped. The districts in question are almost certainly Ṣa`da`. In the country districts such relationships are likely to have continued up to modern times, for Nazīh204 had heard that, on the borders of `Aṣīr, Jews and Muslims were still living check by jowl, each community celebrating the other's feasts205 as well as their own, and in olden time there was even intermarriage between them.

After this it comes as less of a surprise to find the Jews of Aden at the British conquest in 1839 taking refuge on the day of the attack in the `Āydarūs Mosque along with the Bānīyāns and womenfolk.206

Commerce and the Crafts: Relations with the Muslims

Al-Shāhārī,207 not an unbiased writer, avers that the Jews had a near monopoly of trade along with the Imām, and that after they left the Yemen, it became the monopoly of the Royal House with their waqāl, 'Ali Muhammad al-Jabālī, and that this aroused jealousies. Certainly al-Jabālī was the most prominent of Yemeni-Aden merchants, but there were others used by Imām Aḥmad. Al-Shāhārī says, correctly, that their activities ranged from the sale of old clothes to the import of Japanese ready-mades, and that they also paid hardly any tax compared with the Yemeni trader. Both he and Nazīh208 confirm that most of the crafts were in their hands—the carpenters, blacksmiths, jewellers, builders (bannā), architects (minā`, merchants (tā'ir) and money-changers (ṣayyraf); he comments that they made wine freely but were not allowed to sell it to Muslims. Nazīh209 himself visited the Jewish quarter

women; he had known a Jew who had a ninth wife aged eight although himself a man of nearly fifty. It is common, so he says, for Jews to marry girls aged nine and upwards.

In Ḥobban the Sultan had a Jewish servant who looked after the water-pipes and dad other duties.

Fasānī, 363a, seq. He was mufti of Zāhīd, see my Portuguese, 32, passim.

It seems necessary to supply this negative to complete the sense.

Rīškī, I, 143.

In a stress copy of a Ms. of miscellaneous calendrical treatises from the Yarım region in my possession is a short discussion on the fasts and feasts of the Yemene Jews, entitled Mawqif al-`Ubad bi lam-`an-`ahum al-Ālih, taw-qattum al-`afā`l ilā-`l-hamm "Ibn-i Ṣam`ah bi-`l-khur al-Rūmīyyah. The corresponding dates are not only given according to the Yemene months but also according to the Zodiac.


Rīškī, I, 140.

Ibid, II, 140.
Jewish headmen (‘uggal al-Yahûd), and he does not recall that with a Jewish dallal or commission agent. Sayyid Ahmad al-Shâmi of the Jewish Sabbath. ‘AI--Sabt Sabt, wa-law bayna ‘l-khamsayn, to this day.

The Sabbath/Saturday is the Sabbath even if it come between two fives. This is explained as the first five days of Dhû ‘l-Hijjah and the second five days, the Great ‘Id falling on the 10th of Dhû ‘l-Hijjah. If the Sabbath/Saturday should fall then, it being a day when there is little trading and a general dullness in the market, even if the Feast is coming the Sabbath will still be kept because it is a holiday with the Jews, though the Muslims are crowding into the ri’s to buy their requirements for the Feast.

Nazîh visited a Jewish cloth-shop about two metres high (like many shops today in $an`â') near Bab al-Shararah in which to which day - today business dealings were affected by the keeping of life and her many debts, a fashshar is a boaster. A tale, doubtless apocryphal, tells of a woman, the story runs, once asked a Jew to renew the roughening (khushûnah) of her quena (mâqarn), but when he finished his task the woman began to retell him all the hardships (matâ’tâb) of her life and her many debts, hoping the Jew would take pity and only charge her lightly for his work. But when she finished the Jew answered, ‘Kull-ah cubad, yâ jârî, qîmî adday shuqâ al-qaṣârah. Everything is hardships, neighbour, go fetch the wage for the roughening.’

A host of sayings alludes to the Jew’s keen business sense. ‘La tahtâh illâ bâd’ Yahûdî. Don’t buy grain till a Jew has bought.’ This is because the Jew knows how to pick a good bargain. A proverb that can only have been heard from Jews, used of a person who prefers a quick return and small profit to a larger sum to be paid him later, is, ‘Hfirâm nadj waw-la bârâh-khâdai. This is understood by Qâdi Ismâ’il to mean something like ‘Unlawful money in cash, not money owed one with a blessing.’

The give-and-take humour of the market is expressed in tales such as that of the Jew who bought a donkey only to find it lazy, liking to remain in the stable rather than work. He went to the vendor to ask his money back but was refused. So he went to the hâkim (gâfî) complaining the vendor had cheated him. When the qâdi questioned him about the donkey’s vices (‘uyûb) for which he could legally claim that the sale be rescinded (faskh) the Jew answered, ‘Khâyım-ihî al-khayyâr, waw-rîh-i al-bârî. He hates walking and his heart’s in the stable!’

A remark made by our driver Jhûsûn b. Sa'îd, as a tribesman, as we passed the village of ‘Athrâh, formerly entirely Jewish, was that all Jews were well off in possessing a trade (horkhâf) upon which they could rely for a living whereas, he meant, people like himself had not. He cited the Jewish craft of repairing china with metal rivers, and indeed one still finds old china-ware mended in this craft in the $an`â’ shops.

Yet another tale arises from the popular saying from Qâdi Ismâ’il’s collection, be it factual or not, shows that kindly relations could exist between Jew and Muslim, as the writer’s impression is that they often did. A poor man’s wife had just borne him a child and he possessed not even the least of the requirements of a woman after parturition (nufas). So he went out to seek whatever he could bring his wife and a friend of his directed him to go to the Imam al-Mutawakkil Aḥmîd b. al-Manṣûr ‘Ali (early 19th century) to lay his problem before him so that the Imam would help him. He complained of his condition to the Imam who gave him only one single ryâl (hârâm lâhu ryâl-an wâhid-an), and the man left not knowing what to buy with it. He was pondering when one of the Jewish merchants of $an`â’ happened to pass by and, realising his dilemma, at once left and sent off to the poor man’s house a quantity of wheat and much ghee (saman) and honey, and so with twenty ryâls in coin. Taking the ryâl the Imam had given

215 Qâdi Ismâ’il, unpublished. Kushâd, sâgî, kubâdah.

216 The proverb looks Jewish. A Jew, addressing a Muslim, would use the term Yâ臈în.

217 Qâdi Ismâ’il, unpublished. Kusâh, sâgî, kubâdah.

218 The proverb looks Jewish. A Jew, addressing a Muslim, would use the term Yâ Yâmîn.

219 Qâdi Ismâ’il, unpublished.


221 Qâdi Ismâ’il, unpublished. These are trade-names for the type of pottery, al-Sayyânî, and that of al-Laywi manufactured at Qaryat al-Qâbil. Jewish women acted as middle-(wo)men dealing in dye-bowls. Probably this craft was brought here via the Suez Canal, and daym Jdima al-Shami, mostly Aleppo manufacture.

222 A host of sayings alludes to the Jew’s keen business sense, one of Qâdi Ismâ’il’s unpublished proverbs shows the extent to which day-to-day business dealings were affected by the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath. ‘Ali-Sabt Sabt, wa-law bayna ‘l-khamsayn, the Sabbath/Saturday is the Sabbath even if it come between two fives. This is explained as the first five days of Dhû ‘l-Hijjah and the second five days, the Great ‘Id falling on the 10th of Dhû ‘l-Hijjah. If the Sabbath/Saturday should fall then, it being a day when there is little trading and a general dullness in the market, even if the Feast is coming the Sabbath will still be kept because it is a holiday with the Jews, though the Muslims are crowding into the ri’s to buy their requirements for the Feast.

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him in his left hand and the Jew's gift in his right, he said, 'Qallad-kum Allah min al-Yahudi.' I adjure you by God, which is the Jew!228 Is it he who gave this (twenty) or he who gave me that one rijal? The passers-by who had of course no idea whence the gifts came, gave the obvious reply.

However good relations may be between Muslim and Jew, popular lore ascribes a violent hatred of Jews to dogs, and the expression halb wa-Yahaydî227 has something of the sense of our fighting like cat and dog. It is said that when a Jew passes by the Quarters of the Muslims the dogs bark at him and drive him away, especially if he be one of the country Jews (Yahûd al-bozûdû!)

Documents

Arrangements for Slaughtering Animals

Outside San'a'229 slaughterers in the villages and small towns were respected by the community and used even to be addressed as Mâri (teachers), but in San'a' itself and the larger cities no special honour was attached to the profession. Every slaughterer had studied the 'laws of slaughtering' and only became qualified to perform after passing an examination. The sellers of meat, butchers, bought animals and would ask one of the slaughterers qualified in this way to kill them. The evening before an animal was slaughtered it was fed a large quantity of salt in the belief that this would render the flesh more tasty.230

To engage in the slaughter of animals was considered an honorary post rather than a source of income among the Jewish communities. The slaughterer of cattle and sheep was paid partially in kind with parts of the animal slaughtered, but a person killing poultry received no fee.232

The Muslim attitude to the profession and trade of butchery evidently differs radically from that of the Jews who, for religious reasons, give it such higher consideration. We are informed that the followers of the Hâdâwi Zaydi school would not purchase meat of animals slaughtered by Jews, although in Muslim law it is lawful to eat their meat.233

An agreement231 between two Jewish slaughterers dated the 8th of Shubah, 1872, lays down that the fee for slaughtering is to be divided in halves between them. He who slaughters a dhabîbah, be it cattle or sheep and goats gives his fellow half (nâqfâ), be he present or absent. If he does not follow this and give the money to his fellow his penalty (adab) would be suspended from the slaughter by the Shaykh Yahûyâ 'Ali is two rijals (girshayn bajar), and he will be suspended from slaughtering. This they agreed to of their free will and choice, 'according to the regulation of our rabbis.' Among the witnesses—Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahmân, 'Ali Ahsân, Râqâbî, and Mahâfiz Mûsâ, there are two Muslims and two Jews. 'This is strange for such a typically ritual Jewish case. Moreover the fine is entrusted to the Muslim Shaykh Yahûyâ 'Ali because, it is suggested, the Muslim authority was more effective than the Jewish. Jews rarely take a case to the Hukûmah,234 and this was settled by the Mâri. The similarity of this form of agreement to the provisions of Qanûn San'a' is apparent.

A document in Hebrew character from late 12th/18th century San'a' of the time of Imam al-Manûr 'Ali b. 'Abbas, a period of scorn (fa `ath 238 (?) wa-ta `bith) used to come their way. So the head of cattle or sheep—goats gives his fellow half (nasifah), be he present or absent. If he does not follow this and give the money to his fellow his penalty (adab) to the Shaykh Yahûyâ 'Ali is two rijals (girshayn bajar), and he will be suspended from slaughtering. This they agreed to of their free will and choice, 'according to the regulation of our rabbis.' Among the witnesses—Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahmân, 'Ali Ahsân, Râqâbî, and Mahâfiz Mûsâ, there are two Muslims and two Jews. 'This is strange for such a typically ritual Jewish case. Moreover the fine is entrusted to the Muslim Shaykh Yahûyâ 'Ali because, it is suggested, the Muslim authority was more effective than the Jewish. Jews rarely take a case to the Hukûmah,234 and this was settled by the Mâri. The similarity of this form of agreement to the provisions of Qanûn San'a' is apparent.

The Text of the Document

When Sulaymân son of his honour the Rabbi Yûsuf son of the Shaykh Sâlim al-Tâ'îqî235 the trustee (wakil) for the poor of Qâm Bir al-Âzab, claimed from Sulaymân son of the Shaykh Sa'id al-Kulânî the latter acting as his father's trustee, that he had over what he holds of the poor-fund (haft al-tûsyyim), Sulaymân al-Kulânî alleged that he was holding it against what he had lent to Sulaymân son of his honour the Rabbi Yûsuf afore-mentioned, from the money for the taxes/imposts and sites/plots (min haq al-mawjû bi-`l-wa'âr)236 on each head of cattle (slaughtered)—because the income arising (al-thâ'ir) on the plot and tax/impost is paid to the Shaykh (al-Kulânî)237, in accordance with what the ancestors, one after the other (al-awwal bi-'l-awwal) collected.

Sulaymân son of his honour the Rabbi Yûsuf counter-claimed that the (income) arising (al-thâ'ir) is returned to the Jews—for in what way has the Shaykh any claim to it? When the Mashâyiikh, the ancestors, used it (qudamû?), this is not (to be considered as) evidence from them, since they used it (illegally), not (adhering to) any legal principle (taqaj sharâ). After these claims (were put forward) we demanded evidence upon what principle this half-girsh was originally fixed (muktaqû).238

Then Mûri Yâhûb b. Mûri Yûdâ al-Sâ'di and Mûri Mas'ûd al-Hamidî attended, God preserve them, and testified that initially there was as impost (maqût)239 on each head of cattle (slaughtered) only an eighth of a girsh. The site-tax (haq al-`arâsâq) used to be fixed on the owners of houses (ba`ale ha-batim240) by the Waqf people—but some poor orphans and widows were unable to pay what they owed, and, because of this, raggedness and ill-treatment/scarce (sa'târ)241 wa-ta'bi' used to come their way. So the head-
men, the ancestors (al-`aqâq, al-qadâmûnîn) considered that a quarter plus an eighth of a qirsh should be imposed (yasaqa' `adah) on each head of cattle (slaughtered) and from this (money) should be taken the site-tax for the whole Jewish community so as to preserve the poor from inability to pay what the Waqf demands.

In addition, Sâlim b. Srâfih al-Qârîn testified on behalf of his father that the quarter plus an eighth (of a qirsh) fixed, was for the poor only, to preserve them from raggedness.

Sulaymân b. Yûsuf al-U`ayyir testified that this quarter and eighth (of a qirsh) was initially fixed for the poor. Any of it that used to be left over after paying the site (tax) (taslim al-`ara`ih) would be shared out for the poor under the supervision of Sâyâda-nâ the Shaykh Sâlim b. Härûn al-Itrâ`î, may he rest in peace. Yahyâ b. Ma`dîn also testified that this quarter and eighth was fixed for the sake of the poor and any of it left over after paying for the site would be shared out for the poor.

The Court's decision was that the eighth of a qirsh out of that half qirsh should be delivered to the Shaykh—i.e., the customary imposts (al-majzâ`ah al-mu`âlâ`ah) upon each head (of cattle slaughtered). From the remaining quarter and eighth (≈ 3/60th) the customary ten qirsh per mensem for the sites should be delivered to the Governor (wilâ`ah) of the Waqf. The remainder (after that) goes to the collector for charity (hajedagah) for alms to the poor.

The Mushâyîkh have no right whatsoever in it, either in respect of the beasts slaughtered on ordinary occasions (dhaba`ih al-sa`îr), beasts slaughtered at the feasts (dhaba`ih al-a`yâd), or in abattoir (ma`azarah) or (in private) houses. All reverts to the poor and the charity fund (tesaa` ha-sa`daghah) between the lines. All is decided and settled.

Signed By Shlomo b. Yeshû`ah, God preserve him. Shlomo b. Yûsuf Turki, God preserve him. (Signature no. 3 unclear—all three, judges) Mûrî Yahyâ b. Mûrî Yûsuf Sâlim, 1787 A.D. (Chief Rabbi)

An Agreement Between Owners of Adjoining Houses

It was not feasible, during our researches in San`â', to launch into the study of property deeds. This would involve persuading individuals or bodies like the Waqf to allow us access to them, then the lengthy process of clarification of the vocabulary and import of the deeds, the vocalisation of names, etc. However the following agreement in Arabic in Hebrew characters, but with some Hebrew phrases, put at our disposal by Professor Ratzaby, is similar in type to parallel Arabic Muslim documents. It deals with the kind of problem arising in a closely knit city.

The agreement, taken from the Jewish 'Mismaddâh' of San`â', was drawn up on Sunday, 12th of Aylûl, 1770 A.D. Our assumption is that the law applied here is local custom common to Muslims and Jews alike, but probably acceptable in both codes. Clauses 1 and 2 are self-explanatory. Clause 3 gives temporary permission for certain windows to look on to a neighbour's roof-terrace; it is linked with clause 5 which lays down that if the windows were not already there a charge for the admission of sunlight by means of them will be paid to the neighbour. In Muslim San`â', we are informed, if A opens a window in a house-wall overlooking the property of B, then B has the right to build a wall directly in front of A's new window so that B is no longer overlooked.

Clause 4 deals with an ancient feature of South Arabian customary law, the question of ownership of the air-space above one's property. It seems that Abraham is granted the grace and favour use of Yûdâ's well and permitted to open an access door to it, but this is not a right and can be withdrawn at Yûdâ's pleasure. The final clause regulates the passage of rain-water draining away from one property through another, seemingly from one open court at the back of Abraham's house to the corresponding court behind Yûdâ's house—to judge by typical Jewish houses in the Qa`a today.

The Text of the Document

1. Agreement took place between Yûdâ Hababarâ and Abraham al-I. b. Hûd, that they will undertake the building of the wall of the court (imarat jadr al-hawiyyah) (248) (dividing the courts) into two halves. The clay (turâb) for the wall is (to come) from Abraham.

2. A quarter qirsh has been charged against Abraham which he will pay to Yûdâ to meet Yûdâ's complaint against him that his beam (khathabah) was broken by Abraham, owing to his putting clay bats (lîbûm) and clay on top of Yûdâ's roof-terrace (jâbab).

3. The wall which is between them in the access passage/hall (hijrah/biyrah)249—there is no objection to Abraham putting up (yu`llil) the qamaryâq windows which Abraham opened up facing Yûdâ's roof-terrace (tâ`al jâbab Yûdâ), temporarily permitted to (lit., as a loan (arâ`h) in the hand of) Abraham.

4. The upper (part of the roof) of the well (al-bir `al-`alâ`)250 belongs solely to Yûdâ, both the air (Heb. avir) and structure of it (the well). Yûdâ, allowed him (lit., loaned him (a'ra`hu)) to open a door (to the well?) until (such time) a Yûdâ wishes to prevent access to the upper (part of) the well absolutely (yamma` al-bir mîh bûd `al-kîl (Heb.), al-tulûb). Abraham will withdraw when Yûdâ refuses (access). Abraham will erect a half-door/shutter (daraf) to the door of the well from his side (min yâhâ = `arûz, min yâhâ).

5. The light (Heb., `inah) of the qamaryâq windows—Abraham will produce evidence (yu`w ah râ`iyyah (Heb.)) that they were (already) in the stair-way and with a ceiling over them (fi `l-darâ`j wa-masqûf `alay-hin). If not (idhâ lam), he will pay a charge for light (Heb., dem` `inah) to Yûdâ.

6. The draining-runnel (siyaq)251 of Yûdâ's access-passage (bijrah), for rain only, would be at the disposal of Abraham, and for that (water) running at the Feast (sawq al-`Id) only. Whenever there is a lot of rain-water in Abraham's court Yûdâ will make an opening252 to his court for that quantity of rain-water which the drainage-runnel of Yûdâ's access-passage can hold, to enter. The repair of the passage for the flood-water (tiqû` (Heb.) ma`azah al-sayl) to Yûdâ's court, wherever it is (too) much, is the responsibility of Abraham (to repair), that being the extent of the drainage-runnel of Yûdâ's access-passage. Wa`z-talam.

Waqf Claims to Ownership of Qa`al-Yahûd Disputed by the Jewish Community

The collection of documents that follows is important to the social history of San`â'. It is, in summary, the papers relating to the case brought by the Department of Waqf against the Jews of Bir al-Azab, alleging that they have not been paying the full rent for the site of the Jewish Quarter which they occupy, coupled with a claim for arrears of rent going back to the first years of the Second Ottoman Occupation. The Jews counter with a denial that the area is Waqf land. The Waqf Department then produces...
When a free property gets confused with a waqf property (ihatbasan min al-amwal hurran bi-waqf-in) without possibility of distinction, the whole goes to the Treasury of the Muslims. We command the Qadi al-Fakhri to send persons of probity (‘udûl) and surveyors to establish the extent of the (property in question) and arrange that (i.e., their findings) in a comprehensive document (mistwaddah shâmīlah). Dated 27th of the month of Safar, 1337/2nd December, 1918.

The needy of God, praise to Him,
Abdullah b. Ahmad b. Sâñî, may God pardon them both.

* * *

Praise to God in all assignments.

By command of our Lord, His Majesty the Imam, may God prolong the shade of his benevolence, and after receiving permission from the Eminent and Exalted Seat of Government (Maqâm al-Wilâyah), there attended before me (bi-tarafi) Qâdi al-Fakhri `Abdullâh b. Ahmad b. Sâñî b. Abi `l-Rijâl, Secretary of the Waqf, deputising agent for the Inspector of the Internal Waqfs (Nûzîr al-Awqâf al-Dâkhiliyyah) the very learned Sidi Qâsim b. Husayn al-‘Izzi Abû Talib, presenting a case (mudda`iy-an) against the two Dhimmis (Jews) attending along with him, Háyim son of Sulaymân al-Mashrigi, and ‘Awad son of Sâlim al-Sârim, representing themselves and acting as deputising agents for the Jews of Qa`ah Yahûd San`ã', after their headman (‘âgil), known as the Hâkkâm, Yahyâ Yishâq, and others, had verified before me that he had heard the empowering (of these men) by the majority of the Jews, to act as agents. Then there subsequently arrived also a power to act as agent (mukālah) penned by the trustworthly al-Hâjî Muhammad b. Mushibb, Alâmah containing the empowerment of the afore-said (Jews) to act as agents, issued by twenty Jews.

Legal procedure, one can see from these papers, is admirably well established and, basically, Islamic law governing the relation of the Muslim and Jewish communities is justly observed. Though Islamic law does stipulate that the Jews be held in ‘abasement and humiliation’ in a limited number of respects, these do not apply here, and the case has every appearance of being impartially conducted and judged.

These papers show that about the end of the 18th century the Bir al-‘Azâb Jews were paying the Waqf 247.65 plus 5.7 riyâls, probably per annum, running from Rajab to Rajab. By 1918 they were only paying the Waqf 5 riyâls per mensum (60 riyâls per annum) which was in actual fact handed to the collector of human excrement. The purchase-price for the whole area of the Qa‘ in 1919 was 8,000 riyâls less a rebate of 500 riyâls, probably approximately equivalent to something over £600 at that time.
This plea by the deputy of the Inspector (of Waqfs) against the two aforesaid was that the Dhimmis had not paid the Waqf rent of the site (‘arąqah) upon which are built the houses of Qa‘ al-Yahûd like others of the rest of the sites (‘arąqah)—but nevertheless they have come to paying a little of what is due from them all (mimma yajma‘u-hum). He furthermore demanded the rent for the past from the date, year (12)89/1872 up270 to date. He demanded that the legal (sharī‘) rent for the future be calculated.

The site concerning which the plea is made, bounded on the east by the Square (al-Maydan) extending from north to south (min al-qiblah al-šī‘ ‘adan) and the well of the house of al-Man̲ûr al-Husayn, behind which, on the eastern side, are the gardens, on the west by the wall (dd‘r) of Qa‘ al-Yahûd and the Gate of al-Qa‘, on the south by the wall of al-Qa‘ behind the mosque at the Gate of al-Qa‘ (i.e. Bāb al-Balāqah) and on the west, belongs to the Waqf and the private owners (al-mullakā).

The gist of the counter-plea (įşbā‘) of the two agents (acting for the Jews) was denial that the aforesaid site is a waqf, denial of leasing and of knowledge of payment.

The agent of the Waqf produced the bound Miswaddah271 of Waqf containing verdicts and evidential documents (ruqūmat wa-‘a‘lāj)272 in the hands of the Waqf, of various dates, in various handwritings, the bulk of them penned by the very learned ‘Ali Hājir,273 and the report of Qādī the very learned Ahmad b. Muḥammad Misẓhīm274 at the head of these was a quire (daffar)275 with a writing (khatt) at the end of it penned by the well known Qādī the very learned Ahmad b. Muḥammad Qāţīn in accordance with the noble Manqūrī command (al-amr al-sharī‘ al-Manqūrī).276 He cited the names of the houses and courtyards (hawaya) etc., a total comprising five hundred and ninety sites (‘a‘rąqā‘)277 six buqrah in accordance with the noble Qāţīn’s command (al-amr al-sharī‘ al-Manqūrī).278

Then following that come the names of the open sites (‘a‘rąqā‘) totalling about thirty-eight libnahs. Underneath this was a paper copied out in the handwriting of Sayyid al-Dī‘y ‘Abd al-Shāmād b. ‘Abd al-Na‘īf279 and ‘Abd Tālib from the original of it in the handwriting of the Faqih ‘Ali b. Yāhūyā al-Rāzīqī,279 the date of the original being the eighth of the month of (Rajab)280 year 1296/1879, the substance of which was that the Dhimmi Sālim b. Mūsā al-Sirri and the Dhimmi Šlōmû Shlōmō280 attended on that date and undertook responsibility to the Inspector of the Waqfs for the rent of the site of the waqf of Qa‘ al-Yahûd (wurāt ‘arąqā‘ al-waqf haqq Qa‘ al-Yahûd), five riyaḍs per month from the commencement of Rajab,281 (12)96/21st June, 1879, for the period during which they are appointed to the abattoir (mustānibin fi ‘l-majzarah).

The agent of the Waqf brought out the register of leaseings of sites (Miwasaddat ‘arąqā‘),282 in which there were documents of leases of various dates to numerous Dhimmis, containing the lease of each one from the Inspectors of the Waqf at the date it (was made) of what was in his hands.283 In one of these it was stated verbatim: ‘We have leased to Yaqūb al-Hamadānī, the Dhimmi, three buqrah less a quarter in the waqf field (jirbah) west of Qa‘ al-Yahûd, next the north (of it).’ He then stated the amount of the rent, (continuing) until he said, ‘On the north Sā‘īd al-Mu‘ālîmi284 borders this plot (‘arąqah), on the south Sālim al-Mu‘ālîmi, and, on east and west, the two thorough roads, the whole contained in the plot of the lessors.’ Then, among the recent papers (awraq), there is, verbatim, ‘In the field (jirbah) of the Waqf west of Qa‘ al-Yahûd next the northern side, bounded on the east by the Masqū‘ of (haqq) al-Sha‘īkh Sālim al-‘Irāqī,285 and, on the west, by the path left for them in the middle of the field, north and south being Waqf (land).’ (There are as well) other papers in which the (description) of the boundaries follows this form.

Since ignorance arises as to what the two registers (Miwasaddah) comprise it was up to us to survey (kashf) the place in dispute. So I set out, accompanied by the agent of the Waqf and the agents of the Dhimmis along with some of their notables. Scrutiny of the registers and enquiry as to the names of the sites was made, having regard to what they (the registers) contained, but I was unable to find any clarification of the matter.

Then came the production by the agent of the Waqf of witnesses for what is well known (shukrah)—witnesses concerning the place in dispute, they being Sayyid Muḥammad b. Īsā al-Shāhīd al-Maḥdī ‘Abbasī, Sayyid ‘Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. Imām al-Manqūrī and Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Tiḥā.286 The testimony of Sayyid Muḥammad b. Īsā covered al-Qa‘ and its bounds in general (‘umūm-an). The testimony of the rest was to the Waqf receiving (qa‘b) five riyaḍs every month in the name of site-rent. He (the agent) produced a verification (taqā‘q) in the hand of the very learned Sālim Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Kībī.287 God protect him, (stating) verbatim,

That which I know is, during my tenure of the inspectorship (naqrā‘) of the Waqf, the Dhimmis used to pay five riyaḍs due to the Waqf each month by way of rent for the site of Qa‘ al-Yahûd to the Dhimmi cleaner (mulayyib),288 by a transfer (taqā‘q) from us to the butchers in Qa‘ al-Yahûd from what is due from them all (mimma yajma‘u-hum). It was the same during the tenure of my father the very learned al-Sharāfī.289 God preserve them.

When the Dhimmis heard what the agent of the Waqf had produced they countered it with numerous references back (muṣrawnā‘),290 one of which was that their paying of the five riyaḍs was in pursuance of custom (jārī-an ‘ala ‘l-‘a‘dah) only, and that they did not recognise this as being on account of the site. Other points were that they request that the waqf and name of the donor (naqrī) be specified, and that their original documents (waṣlī) and old papers were among what was lost to them in the well known

270 I.e., from the first year of the Ottoman occupation of Sana‘a.
271 This must be a miswaddah subsequent to that of Sain, and I have in fact seen that Sain’s register in the Fam‘ Museum.
272 Sing., naym = wathiqah, which the Šālīm issues (waṣū‘i‘-šarī‘). Haqq is, literally, Yaqūb’s house.
273 Zabarah, Nāqūl al-waṣawr, Cairo, 1348-50 H., IV, 122, has a summary notice that he flourished from 1180-1225/766-1819 to 20 and died in Sana‘a.
274 Misẓhīm was born in 1155/1742-3. Al-Maḥdī ‘Abbasī made him qād in the Mutawakkil prison, but released by his son al-Mansūr in 1196/1782.
275 Rossi, L’arabo parlato, 152, makes the libnah ten dhirā‘. Ḥusayn al-‘Amrī says ten square metres or fourteen square dhirā‘ equal one Sana‘ libnah.
276 AI-Badr al-Talī‘, I, 113 seq.; Nashr al-‘arf, I, 274 seq., a celebrated personage, as is, with due respect, the very learned Ahmad b. Muḥammad Qalin.
277 Rossi’s summary that Zabarah, A‘immat (al-Badr al-Talī‘, 1, 95).
278 Hebrew character N. He must be of the well known family at al-Rawclah.
279 This appears to be an error for al-Razzāqī.
280 This name in the published text is dubious.
281 Mutayyibis euphemistic name for a collector of human excrement. See 562a, v. 25.
282 In the text as published the name of the month has dropped out, and ‘Rajab’ is suggested as from below.
283 Al-Sirri and Šlōmō were money collectors for the community in charge of the abattoir. They sold skins and fat to people and thereby collected money to pay the collectors of excrement.
284 This is the official, known as Salīm al-Usā‘, who had charge of the Royal Mint in the time of al-Maḥdī ‘Abbasī.
285 This plea by the deputy of the Inspector (of Waqfs) against the two aforesaid was that the Dhimmis had not paid the Waqf rent of the site (‘arąqā‘) upon which are built the houses of Qa‘ al-Yahûd like others of the rest of the sites (‘arąqā‘) but nevertheless they have come to paying a little of what is due from them all (mimma yajma‘u-hum). He furthermore demanded the rent for the past from the date, year (12)89/1872 up to date. He demanded that the legal (sharī‘) rent for the future be calculated.
286 al-‘Irāqī, I, 399. He was Nāṣr al-‘Arāqī.
287 This is the official, known as Sālim al-Qa‘ī, who had charge of the Royal Mint in the time of al-Maḥdī ‘Abbasī.
288 This plea by the deputy of the Inspector (of Waqfs) against the two aforesaid was that the Dhimmis had not paid the Waqf rent of the site (‘arąqā‘) upon which are built the houses of Qa‘ al-Yahûd like others of the rest of the sites (‘arąqā‘) but nevertheless they have come to paying a little of what is due from them all (mimma yajma‘u-hum). He furthermore demanded the rent for the past from the date, year (12)89/1872 up to date. He demanded that the legal (sharī‘) rent for the future be calculated.
looting in olden years, bringing out copies which they stated to be of the documents (in question). These give information on the existence of transactions (tāpuruf) of sale and leasing between themselves. In these there is allusion to the sites of some of the houses about which there is dispute, or something of the sort, with regard to tawqīf, but the dates of these originals are post-1200/1785,292 and only relate to matters between themselves, with the exception of a copy of a Question in which (the questioner) says, *verbatim*,

What is the opinion (qawāl) of the ulema of Islam who discriminate between lawful and unlawful (al-faṣl wa-l-farām), through whose presence God, praise to Him, kept alive the *ṣāri‘ah*—law of the Lord of Kindom (the Prophet), concerning the Jews of the city of Ṣan`a‘, may God protect it through the uprightness among His servants? Since they are segregated from the Muslims, outside the city in a village by themselves, no Muslims being mixed with them, or building in their vicinity, they may build houses on the open land (tāraṣq)293 which the Imam al-Mahdi li-Din Allāh ʿAymad b. al-Ḥasan (1087-92/1676-81), God’s pleasure and mercy be upon him, assigned to them, and erect a storey over a storey above them (wa-allāhū ‘alay-ha sagf-an294 fawqa saqf-in), especially since they are afraid of the295 of their effects (qatā’i) from their houses as they have no security for these on the ground floor (al-sagf al-asfal) because they are beside a large city outside its wall? Is their possession (milkh) of the house-sites like that of the Muslims, ‘from the earth to the Pleiades (min al-tharā ila ‘l-Thurayyq),296 and only relate to matters between themselves, with the humiliation (~saghar)297 imposed upon the people of the Dhimma? The response is requested from the ulema of Islam, God increase them, and from their Head and Imam, the Commander of the Faithful and Lord of the Muslims, the Muslims li-Din Allāh. Lord of the Worlds, may God Exalted preserve him from the vicissitudes of the days and the nights, may he never cease to be the Cave298 of widows and orphans and guardian of the *ṣhar‘iyah*-law of his ancestor Muhammad, upon whom and his Family be the most esteemed blessings and peace . . . O God, the Commander of the Faithful.

At the top of this is the seal (ʿarmah) of the Imam al-Mahdi, God’s pleasure be upon him, and underneath it, *verbatim*, the response as mentioned.

Let the afore-said (Jews) continue in that which my father established the same—in God’s and our security (awān) as long as they continue under our covenant of protection (dhimmah) held in abasement and humiliation (fāzinān alṣagf wa-l-dhillaq).299 They have the right to erect (additional storeys) on their houses, and none of our governors (ummal) has the right to obstruct them. Let this be known. God, the Commander of the Faithful.

Whatever Mawlā-nā the Imam al-Mahdi li-Din Allāh and the ulema pronounce is to be acted upon for it is law (ṣhar‘). Whatever they (the Jews) construct in consonance with the afore-said precept (waqf) they have the right to do so. God is most knowing. Sayyid ʿAymad b. Ḥusayn al-Kūbātī wrote this.

Alongside this is (written), *verbatim*,

Praise is God’s alone. What al-Mawlā (the Imam) pronounced, may God Exalted preserve him, is to be applied. They are prohibited from building higher than the houses (dir) of the Muslims only when their houses are neighbour to the Muslim houses. God is most knowing. The humble (ḥaqiq ʿilâ) before God Exalted, Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Maghribī wrote this.

There was also, above the Question, the following, *verbatim*, By God who guides to what is right, whatever follows this description they have the right to erect (additional storeys) upon, they being prohibited only from what is inconsistent with the abasement and humiliation, such as raising their houses above the houses of the Muslims. Their possession of the possessions over which their right has been established is similar to the possession by Muslims, especially since the Imam al-Mahdi, God’s pleasure be upon him, had already established them (on it); his decision eliminates difference of opinion and anyone objecting is left no way to do so. God, praise to Him, is most knowing. The humble before God Exalted wrote this.

This is the copy of what was stated, word for word, without addition or subtraction. This was transcribed in the month of Shawwāl the Blessed, year 1336/July, 1918. The humble (ḥaqiq) [ʿAlī b.] ‘Alī b. ʿAymad al-Yamānī291 wrote this. (concluded)

* * *

This is what the two sides put forward, and they request the positive302 *ṣhar‘* verdict.

I state that, when I studied all the papers in the hands of the Waqq and those the Dhimma produced, obscurity entered and it was impossible for me to distinguish what is private property exclusively (owned) by the Jews, from what belongs to the Waqq—seeing that what the Register (Mīsawaddah) contains about the site of Qā‘ al-Yahūd, this being that of which the Register has given an account above, evidently belongs to the Waqq—yet also the Dhimma own that which the Imam al-Mahdi ʿAymad b. al-Ḥasan placed in their possession, and that is clear. Now when the afore-said confusion arose, the Register (ḥaqiq) [required] turned into being concerned with that which had got mixed up. For private property (milkh) ‘had become confused with tawqīf’,303 and no (party) involved in the confusion challenged that when a free property is (confused) with tawqīf the sale/subject-sold (maḥbūb) should go to the (public) utilities (maṣāliḥ),304 as is laid down (by law) (manṣūb ‘alayh). On this basis the correct view (mutawajjah) according to *ṣhar‘*-law is that the whole of the Qā‘ site goes for an incitement to persecution.

* Cave* means a refuge. This is just a form of blessing with no special significance. 298 *Cave* means a refuge. This is just a form of blessing with no special significance.

297 See n. 106 supra.

299 The probable date of Qā‘a’s note supra.

300 Al-‘Umrān according to Ratzaby, was a secretary of the Imam. Probably *al-‘Umrān* should be read for *Mahdi*—he would then be the same person as written in n. 285.

301 ‘Ali b. ‘Ali al-Yamānī al-Yadhumi al-San‘ānī al-Hudumi was Shaykh al-Islam, an office original to the Yemeni, but introduced apparently by the Turks. His father’s biography is in Zabārah, Nayl al-‘avār, II, 119. This is a well-known San‘ānī family. Rashāb calls him one of the famous qādis and a teacher of Imam Yahyā. The published text omits the second “Ali” but the name is correctly identified as given at the end of the document.

302 al-‘iyāb, explained as *la‘ārubu wa-l-nafy*, affirmation or denial.

303 A legal cliché.

304 Al-‘iyāb, rendered as *public utilities*, could comprise such as fountains (sabil), khanaqāhs, sahābah—courts, open spaces, etc., under the appropriate bodies charged with the supervision of them.
the (public) utilities, under the supervision of the Imam of the Muslims, God succour him, and they must be satisfied with this (decision).

I have communicated the report orally (in person) and am of the opinion that it should be submitted to royal scrutiny (al-nazar al-sharif), may God give it support, and whatever (ruling) preponderates (tarajjih)\(^{305}\) is to be applied. Written upon its date, the month of Safar al-Khayr of the year 1337/December, 1918.

* * * * *

In the name of God the Compassionate the Merciful

Seven thousand five hundred riyals have been received from the Dhimmis. We have given a rebate of five hundred riyals to such whose inability to pay is recognised or whose grey hair gives him a special claim.

Written on its date, on the 10th Rajab, 1337/11th April, 1919. God's is the praise. 'Abdul-lah b. Husayn al-'Amri\(^{306}\) (signature).

* * * * *

Scrutiny of the written document (al-muharrar) inside\(^{307}\) and what is on it has been made by the Presence of our Lord the Commander of the Faithful, God succour him, and this conforms with the precept of the noble shar 'law. Then (came) what followed by way of the sale of the site, under the royal seal (al-khatm al-sharif), and receipt of the payment in full. Thereby the validity of the ownership of the Dhimmis of the whole site is established in its entirety to dispose of it as they will. Let this be depended upon. Written upon its date, the month of Rajab al-Fard, 1337/April, 1919.

After praise of God whose right praise is. When it became established that Qâ' al-Yahûd, enclosed within the road leading to Bâb al-Qâ' on the south side, the wall (da'ir) on the west, the hard ground (sulb) of the well known Qâ' al-Yahûd on the east, and, on the north, by the garden of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Yahyâ al-Kibsi\(^{308}\) and the garden of Yusuf Efsendi, is part of the properties of the public utilities (al-masalih) on account of the confusion of the waqf with (privately) owned property (between which) it was impossible to distinguish, despite much search, and the establishing beyond doubt that in part (of it) was waqf, though it could not be distinguished separately—there took place the sale by us to the agent of the Jews dwelling in the houses afore-said on the site visited (al-'ara'ah al-mazbûrah),\(^{309}\) he being the Ḥawthâm Yahyâ Ishaq, a valid legally effective contract by affirmation from us to all those appointing him (their) agent, and acceptance on his part. Each one owns the site of what he holds in the way of houses, shops (hanawit), hostels (samasir), synagogues (kanâ'is), baths, roads, courts (ahwâsh), gardens, and all the boundaries afore-said comprise in the way of what is in the hands of the Jews afore-said. The contract has been concluded according to the completest and most valid procedures (mawaqî) in return for a price amounting to eight thousand riyals, half of which, forty hundred riyals, goes to the public utilities because it is concluded that the greater advantage lies in selling. This took place in the presence of al-Mawla Shaykh al-İslâm the Qâdi 'Ali b. 'Ali al-Yamani and the Qâdi al-Fakhri 'Abdullaḥ b. Husayn al-'Amri.

We have assigned the cost of the roads to be (charged) on the Jews, excluding the weak (fu'afa') and needy, under the supervision of the Ḥawthâm Yahyâ Ishaq and those men of integrity (wa'il) of the Dhimmis with him who have allotted out the costs (faraq 'l-athman).

(Written) on its date, Rabî' I, year 1337/December, 1918.

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305 *Al-hakim yurajjih al-maslahah fi 'l-bay` fa yabi' li-sâlih al-waq f, The judge comes to the conclusion arrives at the view that the advantage lies in selling so he sells in the interest of the Waqf*. For instance, in a quite different circumstance from the Waqf, that of an orphan's property, it may, if in his interest, be sold. For *tarajjih*, cf. p. 182a, n. 23.

306 Imam Yahyâ's Prime Minister, murdered along with him at Hizyaz in 1948, father of Husayn al-'Amri.

307 It looks as if this endorsement was penned on the back of the general collection of documents.

308 The Kibsi garden is at the present day Wizârat al-Khârijiyyah on the east side of the Qâ'.

309 Perhaps mazbûrah should read mazbûrah, i.e., 'visited' should be 'afore-said/recorded'.

431
Chapter 21
The Hindu, Bāniyān, Merchants and Traders

Hindu merchants have doubtless settled in the ports of the southern Arabian littoral from ancient times long before Islam. A Hindu Quarter (Ḩâfār al-Bāniyān) was in 786/1384 so long established in Aden as to be the location mentioned in a will for a property owned by a Muslim, and the problems posed by the existence of a colony of pagan merchants living in a Muslim community figure here and there in the Fatâwâ of the Shâfi`i. Al-Jârîmîzî reported a Bāniyâns’ return to the Yemen; but if so it was long ago, since the agricultural treatise Bâghyat al-fâlāhin of the 8th/14th century already gives detailed instructions for cultivating it. Al-Jârmûzî writing of the second half of the 11th/17th century, cites an eye-witness as saying that at al-Shihr or its coast there are about three hundred merchants of the Bāniyâns, God humiliate them, they being Brahmins (Barâhimâh).

The earliest notice of an Indian at San`â’ at present to hand is a reference to a certain Ahmad al-Zawm said to have come there in the days of the Turkish Pashas (al-bawsh min al-Atrak) but he may have been of Hindu origin. Another, Ibrâhîm al-Hindî al-Shâfî`i (ob. 1101/1689-90) was born of a father who had been one of the number of Bâniyâns who had come to San`â’ and adopted Islam at the hands of one of the family of the Imâms. Al-Jârmûzî however gives a very enlightening account of the Bâniyâns in the reign of al-Mutawakkîl Isâ‘î under the events (Barahimah). The Bâniyâns, God humiliate them, they being Brahmins (Barâhimâh).

The Bâniyâns sect of the Barâhimî of India had grown numerous in the Yemen because of the security (amân) they perceived for themselves and their property as, too, the justice accorded them and others. A town or market on land, sea, mountain and plain, without them was rare, to the extent that they had settled in the Shâhârah market and people turned to them so as to buy from them, to seek to borrow (irasâdîn), and to ‘give property on condition that the gain should be divided between them’ (wa`l-fadl), saying, ‘The Imam’s friends (a`hab) support infidels (kuffar) against Muslims and they have deceived the Commander of the Faithful.’ Or whatever they (actually) said.

The Imam ordered they should be allowed to remain in their places although the San`â’ people had decided that San`â’ is not large enough to hold both us and them. When the Bâniyâns returned to San`â’ people who had business (hâjât) went to them all the more to buy what they had and do business with them. Often indeed they became the kinder and friendlier to them. The San`â’ people however spoke and complained much to the learned and virtuous (ahl al-`ilm wa-`l-fadl), saying, ‘The Imam’s friends (a`hab) support infidels (kuffar) against Muslims and they have deceived the Commander of the Faithful.’ Or whatever they (actually) said.

Now the very learned Qâqî, the virtuous (fâdîlî) Sharaf al-Dîn al-Husayn b. Yahyâ al-Sâbahî used to frequent al-Jâmi` al-Kabîr, attending the recital of the Qur`ân and the litany (rizâh) the performance of which was observed (al-mubâhâf âlay-hi) in those days, few people not attending the litany in the days of the victorious emergence (al-makhraj) because of the eagerness people have to seek out the least in price and procure advantage (tayyir) in business dealings (mu`âmalah). This had a serious effect on many of the Muslim traders (ahl al-bay‘ wa-‘l-shîra‘) because of the great in San`â’ the Preserved, so they complained of it to the Imam who ordered that places confined to them (maqârîn ‘alay-kum) should be set aside for the Bâniyâns. Notwithstanding, those who had business (hâjât) approached them as their custom, and the San`â’ people again complained to the Imam, the heads (kibar) of the Bâniyâns attending. ‘What offence to the people of San`â’ is ours,’ they said, ‘except that they have been excessive in their evasion and deceit (tahayyul wa-gharar), whereas we have accepted small profits (zâ‘id) and given the poor (wa`l-dîn) respite (to pay); in return for goods (bâ‘ah) we have accepted goods, out of consideration for what is easiest for those having dealings with us’.

1 Abû Makhramah, Târikh thaghr `Adan, ed. O. Löfgren, Arabische Texte, II, 155.
2 Cf. my Portuguese, 32 seq.
3 L’Arabo parlato, 168.
4 Al-Stiri al-Mu`ta-wakkiliyyah, 257. A. S. Tritton, Rise of the Imam of Sanaa, London-Madras, 1925, 117. ‘There are apparently a few references to Banians—Indian merchants’ in the 10th-11th H. history he has used.
5 Nashr al-`arf, I, 181-2. Zanâm means boiled curdled milk (Arabian Studies, Cambridge-London, 1974, I, 62). This al-Zawm was commissioned to have made for the Pasha’s son a maqaj, waist-wrapper (cf. Glos. dat.) to match one of the weaves of al-Dirayhami (near Hodeidas) which he already had. This would probably be similar to the maqaj manufactured today at Bayt al-Faqîh, evidently imported to San`â’ in these days also.
6 Ibid, I, 30. He was of the Hanafi rite, common in India, but one would have expected him to be a Zaydi under the circumstances mentioned.
8 Mubâhâf, the translation is from Lane’s Lexion, but I do not know what sort of transaction this was in Yemen at that time.
9 The Imam was not in San`â’ at this time.
10 Barter in the country districts of the Yemen was quite common until at least 1962.
11 The Imam had ordered the rizâh al-Qur`ân to be read in the mosques, especially in San`â’, and people made to assemble to hear it.
12 This is the Imam’s conquest of al-Mashriq and parts of Haçlramawt (ibid, I, 129).
mansûr) of the Imam. Crowds of all sorts of San`a’ people who had nothing to do with buying and selling, even their maintenance (na‘faqah) perhaps coming from the Treasury (Bayt al-Mal), collected along with this public gathering, to the Holy Jami’, with lighted candles in their hands and shouted at those attending the râhî, saying, ‘Let your recitation and prayer be against those who support infidels against Muslims!' They shouted at the Qâdi and demanded he send for (their antagonists), but turned away before he could reply to them—as is the usual way of the likes of the townsfolk.

There was tender-heartedness (rîqqah), patience14 and gentleness in the Qâdi (God succour him) and he could do nothing other than keep silent before them. Then, with candles in their hands, they went on in the same fashion, directing themselves towards the Mashhad al-Imam Šâli‘ al-Din, one of the irresponsibles (sufahâ') having ascended the minaret of the Jami’-Mosque to make (public) announcement of the calamity to Islam and of condolences to the people of (Islam).

So our lord ‘Ali, son of the Commander of the Faithful (God succour him), ordered them to be arrested, and certain horsemen rode out and plundered such of their cloth/clothes (tībâyah) as they were able, arresting some of them. But the rascals (ahi al-bařâlah) had extinguished the candles and stolen away under cover of darkness. Many of the San`â’ people and those of virtue (fâdil) wrote to the Imam dissociating themselves (tablarru‘) from what had happened. The Imam ordered those who had committed most of the deeds and those first to speak and act, to be sent up (to him at Shâhârâh), and he punished them and imprisoned some of them, taking severe measures with them. After this the town quietened down and most of the talk was directed against the Qâdi Sharaf al-Din, that he had allowed them to speak (freely) when they began to leave his house attacking the Imam’s person and the virtuous (fâdil) also.

Prior to this incident, in the year (10)59/1649 it had happened that one of the San`â’ people had come across something in the shape of idols with one of the Baniyâns—this latter having hung it up in a place in his shop (hânîr) and inside the warehouse (samsarah). In (his) disapproval the an`ani fâqih having business (a`mâl) in the Market and samsarah), ‘but’, he said, ‘I wasn’t able to pass through since the streets and mouths of the lanes filled (with people)—so it wasn’t possible to do so except with helpers15 and with difficulty.’ He went on, ‘We seized it—and there it turned out to be a thing of brass (nahâs) like a pair of scissors of medium (size) or rather smaller than that, in which was some resemblance to men (âdamiyyûn). So we arrested16 him, locked up the Baniyan’s goods in his shop, shutting it up tightly, and sent up the news about him to our lord ‘Ali, son of the Commander of the Faithful.' So our lord ‘Ali, son of the Commander of the Faithful (God succour him), ordered them to be arrested, and certain horsemen rode out and plundered such of their cloth/clothes (tībâyah) as they were able, arresting some of them. But the rascals (ahi al-bařâlah) had extinguished the candles and stolen away under cover of darkness. Many of the San`â’ people and those of virtue (fâdil) wrote to the Imam dissociating themselves (tablarru‘) from what had happened. The Imam ordered those who had committed most of the deeds and those first to speak and act, to be sent up (to him at Shâhârâh), and he punished them and imprisoned some of them, taking severe measures with them. After this the town quietened down and most of the talk was directed against the Qâdi Sharaf al-Din, that he had allowed them to speak (freely) when they began to leave his house attacking the Imam’s person and the virtuous (fâdil) also.

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13 Those maintained by the Treasury would presumably be holders of minor religious offices, etc., and may be identified with the Sufis of the parallel account infra.

14 Riqqah also means weakness, and gentleness might also be rendered as ‘patience’, reading ‘azâyah for the text’s ra‘yah is conjectural.

15 For khirah, cf. p. 147a.

16 By helpers, an officer, armed attendant may be meant.

17 Or it could mean, ‘seized it’. A nailing up of the khânîr of the Baniyân money changers (reading al-Bâniyân al-sawâ‘irî) at Raynâh for some unstated reason, is mentioned in Nashr al-‘urf, I, 730.

18 Perhaps to be understood as a block sum imposed on the community but the individuals would contribute according to their means.


20 Arabic: ar-râ‘î.

21 Nashr al-‘urf, I, 555.

22 Ibid, I, 42. Ibrahim was from hijrâ al-Mahâyârî.

23 Al-Šâlahb is al-Šâlahb; from an agricultural point of view a palâbah is a place not planned.

their Fortune by Trade. 'There are among them very rich Merchants, many Weighers of Gold and Silver, and Men in short of all sorts of Trades. For the rest, they are the cleverest Arithmeticians in the World: for, out of three or four Characters traced upon the Thumb Nail, when they are in haste, they sum up an exact Account in the twinkling of an Eye. Nevertheless, it behoves one to be upon the Guard with them, for they cheat with a wonderful deal of Skill. For my Part, I believe that the Commerce of these People has spoil’d the Arabs, who are naturally sincere and honest, making it a point of Honour to appear such; but they have found the way to cheat also, when they can do it with Safety.'

'The Arabs, who abhor these Bâniyâns, and suffer them among them only on account of Trade, do not permit them to marry in Arabia, nor to have any correspondence with their Women; so that they are oblig’d to return to the Indies, when they have a mind to marry, and have made some Fortune in Arabia.'

In the very year that de la Roque arrived at Aden the town of Ibb was sacked by the Yâﬁ’i tribe who took everything there was in its market and the Kibish of the Baniyan and the mosques. In the 12th/18th century there rose to influence one of the strictest, yet greatest of the Zaydi ulema, al-Badr Muhammad b. İsmâ’il al-Amîr al-Şârî‘î, a mujtahid and mujaddid, and the author of a large number of treatises. He took a severe attitude to both Bâniyâns and Jews—in the case of the latter he had some provocation as recounted above, but where the Bâniyâns are concerned he seems to have been motivated by the desire to see a strict application of Islamic law. The Qâги Abdullah b. Muḥyî ‘l-Dîn al-‘Arâ‘î put the question to him in verse30, as to whether it is lawful ‘to extend security to the polytheist . . . like the Bâniyân(s) and their like—those who worship other than the Guardian (Aîtîh).’ ‘Nay’, he asserts, ‘there came to us the prohibition that anyone who rejects the shari‘ah should remain in our island’. In verse two came the rejoinder, that there were three categories of non-Muslims. Of these the Aḥl al-Kâtîb, here the Jews, have the right to live in quarters of their own far from the Muslims, but he denies that by analogy that the foreigner like Bîshram and one who worships the calf and the light -innovation (? badda ‘a) with them, but subsequently they sought to go through with it. ‘I have only 600 riyals’, he said. To which they replied, ‘We shall grant you a stay up to the coming season (mawsim) for the greater part of the price, but bring what you wish to purchase goods, so the headmen of the Market (‘uggâl), and the inferior quality of cloth (al-bazz al-‘aţî) he had in his place had been transferred to the port (bandar). Now the shaykh, Sa‘d al-Dîn (al-‘Udaynî), had about 600 riyals with which he wished to purchase goods, so the headmen of the Market (‘uqâqîl al-Sâ‘îr) urged him to purchase the property of the (deceased) Indian merchant—which he found to be of inferior quality, yet was obliged to go through with it. ‘I have only 600 riyals’, he said. To which they replied, ‘We shall grant you a stay up to the coming season (mawsim) for the greater part of the price, but bring what you have in hand.’ The cloth was valued at 3,000 riyals.31

27 Diwan al-Amir al-San‘âni, 2 fi, a mujtahid and mujaddid, and the strictest, yet greatest of the Zaydi ulema, al-Badr Muhammad b. İsmâ’il al-Amîr al-Şârî‘î, a mujtahid and mujaddid, and the author of a valuable treatise on this. Al-Mahdi promptly ordered them to be removed, and al-Badr (Muhammad b. İsmâ’il al-Amîr) composed a treatise on this,32 paid 300 écus to the Imam. It was they, no doubt, who dealt largely in the Indian, Persian and Turkish merchandise that Niebuhr found in the San‘a’ markets, and of course in the 19th century the Qânûn San‘a’ shows that they were paying watch-tax plus collection charges of 60 qirsh, whereas the Jews of Sûq ‘Agil, with whom he found to be of inferior quality, whereas charged on the Market, but some indication of the relative wealth of the two communities. Cruttenden33 (1836) found that, ‘The Banians are also numerous, but they are compelled, like the Jews, to conceal what they really possess, and however wealthy they may be, to put on an outward appearance of abject poverty.’ Cruttenden and other Western travellers were probably inclined to consider the situation of Bâniyâns and Jews in detachment from that of the Muslim merchants and shopkeepers vis-à-vis Government officials and soldiers able and liable to ‘squeeze’ traders of any of the three religions alike, as will be seen in the case of the Mocha merchant Sa‘d al-Dîn al-‘Udaynî.

On the whole Muslim society seems to have treated Bâniyâns and Jews with toleration, but whereas with the Jews this was often accompanied by a certain respect and affectation to judge by the proverbial literature and what I have heard many times from Yemenis of today themselves, de la Roque’s summing up of their sentiments towards the Bâniyâns who were foreigners and with no real stake in the country in contradistinction to the Jews who may be called simply non-Muslim Yemenis, must be accepted as valid. The Arab proverb34 says, ‘Mâ kân fi ‘l-naza qawwâq wa-Sa‘î fi ‘l-Hindi muwarwâq, There is no strength (good) in rice, but no manliness/chivalry/honour in the Indian.’

A tale illustrative of business activities and inter-relations of Indians, Muslim Arabs and the Government official, is related by Zâbârah,35 and is to be dated some time after 1141 H./1728 A.D. One of the foreign Indian merchants (aghrab al-Hunûd) died at Mocha, leaving no heir other than the Treasury (Bays al-Mal), and the inferior quality of cloth (al-bazz al-‘aţî) he had in his place had been transferred to the port (bandar). Now the shaykh, Sa‘d al-Dîn (al-‘Udaynî), had about 600 riyals with which he wished to purchase goods, so the headmen of the Market (‘uqâqîl al-Sâ‘îr) urged him to purchase the property of the (deceased) Indian merchant—which he found to be of inferior quality, yet was obliged to go through with it. ‘I have only 600 riyals’, he said. To which they replied, ‘We shall grant you a stay up to the coming season (mawsim)36 for the greater part of the price, but bring what you have in hand.’ The cloth was valued at 3,000 riyals.

30 ‘Journey from Mocha to San‘a’, 284-5.
31 The property of the temples seems attended.
32 Nashr al-arif, II, 519.
33 ‘Journey from Mocha to San‘a’, p. 294-5.
34 Arabian Studies, 1, 72.
35 Nashr al-arif, I, 727.
36 Zabarah is a term also used in Qânûn San‘a’, p. 183a, passim. By Hûnûd the Bânîyâns are usually meant.
37 The mawmûm/mawmûm is the time of the arrival of the Indian trading fleet with the monsoon. See my Forçatville, 82.
When he arrived back at his place with what he had brought (ajlabah) he decided to give alms (zadakah) to the needy from it, but he pledged himself to God not to sell any of it before covering any defects in it. So he examined it and inside each piece he found some sort of the most splendid, expensive and finest qualities (of cloth) with which the Indian had done this for fear it might be discovered—the price of this came to many thousands in money.

The rest of the tale, though it has nothing to do with the deceased Indian Bâniyan, is too characteristic of life in the Yemen to omit. Sa'ed al-Din who had started life by de-husking coffee (khalaq al-bunn min gishri-hi) when he became rich, was along sive cloth! He decided to give alms (~adagah) to the needy from it, averting any trouble by the Amir, beseeching God to aid them with the Amir. As they entered the Gate of Ta'izz they heard the Amir's death being announced, and they realised that their prayer had been answered!

Yemeni comment to me on this story was that at the customs post of al-Râhidah today, people try to outwit the customs in concealing valuables inside inexpensive cloth!

A curious sidelight is thrown on the business practice of the Bâniyâns in San`a' by another of Qâdi Ismâ'il's proverbs. *Iḏhâ sâṛṛ/harab al-Hindi f-ibnih `ice,* If the Indian runs away I still have his son. One customarily says this of a debtor delaying repayment, but the creditor has something that ensures he will obtain his due. Goitein gives other interpretations of the proverb but reports that it applies to the insolvent Hindu Bânîyân banker.

It is to be noted that Bânîyân warehouses are more often perhaps known as khâns and not *samaṣrahs*. In the Ḥâdfarnî port of al-Shihr a Sûq al-Khân is known to historians, but not to Shiḥrîs whom I have asked today—there is however a Sûq al-Hunûd. Al-Khâfanji the gifted poet of *malhûn* verse of the 12th/18th century speaks of a *samaṣrah* belonging to the Bânîyân in Bir al-Azab.

In the disorders about 1850 in San`a' 'the Jews and foreign merchants were disposed of all they possessed', and even after the election of al-Ḥaŷmî the anarchy was such that 'but three Bâniyan merchants remained in the city; and of these two were murdered during his (the Rev. Stern's) stay, and their property seized by the governor; the third, a very old man, was on the point of abjuring his religion, in the hope of saving his life.' Nevertheless there were still many Bânîyâns in the Yemen until after World War I, following which their numbers are stated to have greatly diminished, but one still sees a few in the newer parts of San`a'. During Ḫimâm `Aʻlî's 'Journey' in the Tihmârah in Ḫimâm Yahyâ's day there were Bânîyâns and Bohrah in Ḥodeidah.

An eye-witness at the British conquest of Aden reports that 'Aden contained 600 inhabitants before hostilities commenced of whom 250 were Jews, 50 Banyans, and the remainder Arabs.' At the taking of the town, 'The Banyans and Jews took refuge in a mosque with a flag of truce flying and were unmolested.' He further describes the Hindu place of worship in Crater. This does seem to imply the existence of a great measure of practical tolerance by the Arab Muslims there of other religions.

39 By covering the defects the author probably means making them good, not cancelling them.
41 I surmise that he means the second Ottoman occupation. Wellsted, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1837, says of the Bâniyâns of Muscat that a bankruptcy sits in his shop with candles lit while his creditors come and beat him, cf. P. Helfer, *Travels*, London, 1878, II, 6. It is interesting to note that they controlled the coffee trade and dealt in Persian tobacco.
42 Ibid, I, 88, no. 247, *Yemenica*, 22, no. 111, the latter adding that in San`a' they do not often appear.
43 *Nasth al-`arf*, II, 103.
45 Ibid, 156.
46 In J. Kirkman and B. Doe, 'The first days of British Aden', *Arabian Studies*, Cambridge-London, 1975, p. 179ff. This is the account of John Studdyleigh, discovered by J. Kirkman. It is interesting to compare with statistics I have quoted in Michael Adams, *The Middle East*, London, 1971, a little after the conquest. The Bânîyâns numbered 35, the Somalis 26 males, 37 females, the Jews 257 males, 301 females. The Arab population was 276 males, 341 females and formed only some 44% of the total population.
Chapter 22
The Houses of Ṣanʿāʾ

Introduction

Yemeni towns are usually concentrations of high houses, slightly more sophisticated in structure and decoration than rural houses, but in most respects quite like them. From a fairly dense centre, the houses spread out to merge into the scattered tower-house farms at the edge of the town. In the old city of Ṣanʿāʾ, the presence of a surrounding wall produced a fairly sharp demarcation between city and country. The ease with which extensions to the area of the city were provided westward by building new walls, whenever these were necessary, suggests that congestion was not a primary factor in the upward growth of the houses.

The characteristic type of house in Ṣanʿāʾ is a tall, square, tower house with an entertaining room or rooms at the top (pl. 2). There is a second type of house, of which there are very few within the walls of old city, but a larger number in the ‘new’ quarters of Bir al-ʿAzāb, Bir al-Bahmi and Bir al-Shams. These are lower, and have their entertaining rooms on the ground, looking out across vine-shaded pools with fountains (pl. 79, 22.111). A third type, also rare in the old city, has been identified by Rathjens as the Jewish type with a courtyard at the topmost level, from which a number of rooms are approached up and down short flights of steps (pl. 22.137 & 140). Finally, outside the city walls, there are cylindrical tower houses belonging to the farm building tradition (pl. 22.112 and 117).

Most Ṣanʿāʾ houses are built of stone in the lower storeys with burnt brick walls above (pls. 3, 18, 43). Less common is the use of coursed rammed-earth and plastered mud brick above; some have coursed random rubble stonework below and mud brick for the upper storeys (pl. 22.131). Most Jewish houses, after the Jewish population had been resettled in al-Qāʾ, were built of rammed-earth and plastered mud brick (pl. 89). The cylindrical farmhouses were almost always of the same simple materials (pl. 22.113).

The predominant square tower houses impress the visitor with their height. Many houses are more than five storeys high, the largest commonly having seven, eight or even nine storeys (pl. 40). A view of the city from a distance, with many hundreds of these houses soaring behind each other above the city wall, makes an unforgettable impression (pl. 5).

The Typical Islamic House in Ṣanʿāʾ

The Concept of the Tower House

The ground floor is reserved for animals and timber storage, the first upper level is usually used for grain storage and a guard room, if the house is large and important enough to warrant one. The second floor, the first habitable level, has one room in which strangers are received, as well as an ancillary room. Above that is usually the main family room, used for ceremonial occasions, and other living rooms. The kitchen is on the floor below the top-most level, so that it can serve either up or down. The top floor has one or more rooms for afternoon entertainment of guests to chew ʿqāṭ. The staircase usually, but not always, rises through the full height of the building in a square stairshaft surrounded by thick walls, and with a solid central pier. It is placed in the darkest corner of the site, that is, against neighbouring houses, but some natural light is provided through a side wall or a neighbouring light shaft. Small peep-hole-like windows in a stairway are called ṭibār and ṭībāyāt.

Women are not restricted within a special part of the house, but the second level from the top, which contains the kitchen, is more their regular preserve than any other. This level is often provided with an adjacent open courtyard with high screen walls in which laundry and drying can take place, and the women can enjoy some sun without being seen from the street or other houses. Because the walls of the houses are of masonry, and thickly plastered, the extremes of heat and cold experienced from noon to midnight are rarely felt indoors. The thermal capacity of the walls introduces a heat lag which smooths out most of the temperature difference. There is no heating, although the climate is quite cold in winter.

Permanent ventilation is provided in the staircases and lobbies by means of projecting masonry cooling boxes. These have shuttered doors which can be closed in cold or windy weather. Rooms are normally ventilated at a high level by tiny ventilation flaps set in the walls between the fanlights. In the rare event of high humidity after rain, the lower shutters can be opened to provide cross ventilation at body height into the lobbies.
22.1 Characteristic house front, with a separate structure for the mafraj on the roof.

22.2 Exterior of House W from the west.

22.3 Exterior of House W from the east.

22.4 Exterior of the lower levels of House W from the south.
Key to all figures

a animal stalls
eu entrance hall upper level
gh ghâiy—water level
k kitchen
m mafraj
o loading and mounting animals
trl cold pool room
l terrace
v rain water cistern
wr well ramp
b bathroom
dh changing room
fr furnace room
b excursion room
l lobby
mn minaret
or restaurant/eating place
q public ablution area
s store
tm tomb
vm mun in charge
x minbar
brr boiler
d dâm
fr furnace room
hr hot room
lt laundry terrace
m mutâb
p passage
r room—general use and sleeping
sh sheep pens
tr treasury
w well
y women's room and wardrobe
c court
e entrance hall
g grinding mills
j grain and fruit store
lb lavatories/bathroom
nw washing floor
pl pool
rr reception room and business
sp shop
u shaft
wb water cooling box
z manzar

Fig. 22.1 Plans and section of House W.
22.5 Exterior of the upper levels of House W from the south.

22.6 House W. Entrance hall, showing some of the animals kept on the ground floor, a goat and two sheep. Note the feeding trough.

22.7 House W. The entrance from the street, seen from inside.

22.8 House W. Staircase.
22.9 House W. Lower living room, the south end.

22.10 House W. Lower living room, the north end.

22.11 House W. Staircase, showing the door to the small lavatory.

Fig. 22.2 House W. Diagram showing the functioning of the lavatory.

22.12 House W. Lower lobby.
The lighting levels are high, due to the large areas of fanlight above the low shuttered openings. In some cases the fashion for coloured glass has reduced them, but in the older houses the alabaster panels above the shuttered windows flood the interiors with a golden light.

Orientation is considered so important that there is a current saying that a house facing south ('adani) is called bayt kâmil, lit. a complete house, a house facing west (gharbi) is called half a house, and one facing north (qibli) is no house at all (ma yikûn bayt).

Yemeni houses are normally built for one family unit; old houses may have two, or even three, closely related families living in them; in a few cases houses are owned by a shaykh, or are wasaf foundations, in which case they may be subdivided.

The houses are seldom joined together to make one architectural facade. Each house, even if wall to wall with another, appears to direct attention to itself and pays little attention to an exact alignment with the others. Many of the larger houses are so packed that they do not have an entrance court, others stand in small gardens hidden by walls from the streets and lanes.

**A Description of an Average-sized House**

House W (fig. 22.1, pls. 44, 45 and 22.2) has lower levels of ashlar stonework, up to approximately 6 metres above ground level, and exposed baked brick (jaffîr, pl. jaffîr) above. The house is thought to be more than a century old, though it is clear that later modifications have taken place in the upper storeys, as has happened in most San'a' houses.

Externally the building is rectangular in shape; there is a slight irregularity in the western wall.

The house is entered through only one opening, a squat wooden door in the middle of the southern side (pi. 22.4). The street level has risen so that one now steps down 20cm to the interior floor level.

The ground floor contains the stalls for the animals, both large stalls (harr) and small. They usually take the form of enclosed rooms approached through a hinged wooden door, and ventilated onto the street through small openings in the outside walls. Goats, sheep, fowl, and occasionally a cow and a mule are kept inside the house of the city in this way. Sheep are sometimes provided with special pens. In house W these pens were under the stairs, with a feeding trough outside two openings in the wall of the pen, through which the sheep thrust their heads to eat (pi. 22.7). Recently the space above these pens has been closed in with plastered masonry in house W to prevent their escape. Firewood for the house is stored in the larger animal stalls. The ground floor of the houses also contains the closed room for soil (qû `ah) under the 'long-drop' lavatories. Here the excrement is stored and dried until it is shovelled out through a low opening in the street wall and taken away to be used as fuel in the public baths.

The square entrance hall (dihliz) of this house contains the circular stone grinding mill (maftân) standing on a square masonry base (pl. 22.6). This is used for grinding the grain and salt used in the house. From the entrance hall the stone staircase (darajî) winds upwards around three sides of a central stone pier (jaybah) which runs through the full height of the house (pls. 22.8, 11, 13). The entrance hall is lit through slits arranged in a pattern above the front door.

The entrance door is pivoted on stone pads top and bottom, and fitted into a recess in the thickness of the outer wall. It is furnished internally with two sliding wooden bolts. The lower one can be operated from outside by a large key, which must be turned four or five times to force the bolt to slide back by a series of notches cut in its under face (pl. 22.126). The upper bolt cannot be opened from outside, but it can be closed by pulling a cord passed through a hole in the door. This enables the inhabitants to completely secure the house against intruders, even the possession of a key to the house not enabling the door to be opened. This second bolt can furthermore be opened from any level of the house by pulling on a cord (majarr, sing.) which passes over a wooden pulley and up vertically through holes in the floors of the upper staircase lobbies; the cord is fastened to the end of the bolt, drawing it from its socket. It is customary for a visitor to shout from the street to the inhabitants above, who then open the door in this way. Alternatively, a special knock may be used on each house which is known only to close friends or the inhabitants. The bolt operated by the key serves then merely to lock the house when no-one is inside, to prevent inhabitants leaving, or as a second security lock at night.

The first upper level (storey: tabagah, more usually dawr, pron. dîr, also tarabîy, pi., tarabîh) of the house W contains two rooms and a bathroom-lavatory. Above the entrance hall there is a lobby (qâlip or ejrâh), off which double doors open into a family living room (called a mawan wist, the equivalent of a lower dîwân in larger houses, into which strangers are customary shown for reception. On the opposite side of the lobby is a store room for grain (mukhân) and the bathroom/lavatory. The floors throughout are made of flag stones, which are carpeted in the family living room.

The family living room is furnished in the fashion of almost all of notches cut in its under face (pl. 22.126)). The upper bolt cannot be opened from outside, but it can be closed by pulling a cord passed through a hole in the door. This enables the inhabitants to completely secure the house against intruders, even the possession of a key to the house not enabling the door to be opened. This second bolt can furthermore be opened from any level of the house by pulling on a cord (majarr, sing.) which passes over a wooden pulley and up vertically through holes in the floors of the upper staircase lobbies; the cord is fastened to the end of the bolt, drawing it from its socket. It is customary for a visitor to shout from the street to the inhabitants above, who then open the door in this way. Alternatively, a special knock may be used on each house which is known only to close friends or the inhabitants. The bolt operated by the key serves then merely to lock the house when no-one is inside, to prevent inhabitants leaving, or as a second security lock at night.

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The family living room is furnished in the fashion of almost all
Within the last few years, has been to collect liquid at a sump at drainage sump, from which it is led to underground French of waterproof plaster called mashalah (p. 22.14). Frequently drains for dispersal into the soil. A recent tendency, introduced a small shutter (shåqûs) (pl. 56, 22.50).

Slowly grown up in the stone floor. The channel takes the liquid through an opening for ventilation which can be controlled by means of a small soft cushion on top called a mikhaddah. Strip carpets ~afif in older, unaltered houses, or in outlying areas.

Thicker, or coloured glass set in gypsum sheets, a process which is described below (p. 484b). (If plain glass this type of window is known as mughaffarah, are usually of panel shape.

Bring in the leather mat and let us eat'.

3% square, stuffed with straw (madkâ, p. 1. madâki ). There may softer cushions as head-rests, often fringed white anti-macassars, back rests, called wisâdah, which are stuffed with straw and leather mat used to be used for setting food upon, this being swilled down after washing on completion of defecation.

Firstly, by ensuring that liquid is not led into the 'long-drop' shaft, or the chamber far below, the excrement dries very quickly (San’a has a low humidity) and becomes odourless. Secondly, a pot or scoop (maghraf) stands on a stone cylinder near the lavatory with which the surfaces over which the liquid has flowed are swilled down after washing on completion of defecation.

The bathing facilities consist of a pair of square stones spaced approx. 12cm apart (‘ajidah, pl. ‘ajidî) on which the user squats, and a cylindrical stone (khurazah) centrally in front of them which has a recessed top upon which the water pot is set. This latter is usually an earthenware pot of about 20cm diameter, without handles and with an open neck approx. 7cm wide. Sometimes a low, more open, container is used. Often a much larger earthenware vessel for water is placed in one corner of the bathroom or its lobby, from which the bather’s supply can be replenished.

In the outer wall of the lobby (mas‘â) is a projecting window box (shubkâ), built of open-work masonry above timber beams (pl. 22.5), with spaces to allow the passage of currents of air. The bottom is made of wooden slats, or of boards with several holes drilled in them. This serves both to permit a view of the front door below without being observed, and as a cooling box in which earthenware jars of water may be placed, or hung on hooks, to catch the wind. It is therefore sometimes called sayl al-sharbah. There are two arched fanlights of coloured glass in the wall above to light the lobby. A neatly framed hole in the south-west corner of the floor allows the passage of the rope to open the front door bolt, which runs up that corner and continues through a neat hole in the ceiling to the floor above.

The second upper floor is reached by returning to the staircase and proceeding up a further three short flights around the central stone staircase pier. At the top of the second flight is a door which leads into a low bathroom (hammам mâ‘) which has a shower-bidet but no lavatory.

From the second floor lobby (pl. 22.12) double doors lead on the east to the main family room (diwan), and on the west to a private sleeping-living room with a store-room behind it. The family room is used, in many houses, only for important events, childbirth, weddings, feasts and the laying out of the dead, and kept locked at other times. In house W, where an uncle’s family share the house, it has become a second general-purpose room. The lobby has another water-cooling box built of masonry projecting through the front outer wall, with a wooden slat bottom which allows a screened view of the street and of people waiting at the front door.

The third upper storey is reached up a further three flights of the same staircase. At the top of the second flight is a bathroom similar to the one below it.

The lobby (pl. 22.13) has a third water-cooling box projecting through the front wall. This is centrally placed, while the two below are to right and left of the centre, so that all three retain a view of the front door.

In the east wall of this lobby a low door gives access to a store of generous area, reached down two steps, which, however, is less than two metres high.

On the other side of the lobby is the kitchen, (mawtâh, or, in San’a dialect, daymah pl. diyam), a smoke-blackened room containing a masonry bench in which are set the barrel-shaped pottery bread ovens (tannûr) on the northern wall (pl. 22.14). There is a masonry oven next to the bread-oven, which has a chimney emerging on the roof two floors above. The bread oven bench, more than a metre deep and a metre high, is composed of a row of three or four pottery ovens, each with a hole above 15cm in its top, built into a masonry bench, with front access (bâb al-manaq) to each oven so that hot coals can be inserted or removed during the cooking process. The masonry construction of the bench is packed with ash for insulation. There is another masonry bench on the southern wall, extending
slightly around the western side, which is used for the cutting and preparation of food, and for individual quick eating. Near the door is the raised washing platform which drains through the wall out to the vertical drain outside. A vegetable pounding stone (mashaqah) with a stone roller stands on the floor, and is operated by a woman squatting in front of it.

Smoke from the coals in the tanûr finds its way out through the northern, western, and southern walls, which are pierced with a large number of holes arranged in seven patterned areas (pl. 45 and 22.15). There is a window below the holes in the southern wall, closed by a single shutter.

On one side of the room there is a low hole for garbage to be thrown outside to the lane (zuqzuqi).

The fourth upper level is composed of three main rooms all at different levels, since each is approached from a corner landing of the three-flight staircase. The central staircase pier is here reduced to less than half its former width, since it now has to carry only the weight of the top floor and the roof. This permits the lobby to the room on the east to be made larger, and allows a small store-room for clothes to be included. In the outside wall of this storeroom is another projecting box for water cooling. This suite, at the right of the first flight, is used almost exclusively by women and young children.

At the head of the next flight two further steps lead to a smaller landing —off which opens the western room, a general-purpose room used for sleeping, entertaining close friends or eating. This is the only room in the house which has a view-window facing north, over the market (Sîq al-Milh) some 500 metres away, and for this reason is called by the name manzar, meaning a reception room with a view.

The final flight of steps leads to the highest room, the main entertaining room for private parties, in which gât is chewed in the afternoons. This room faces south, as it should ideally do to catch the sun, has a magnificent view over rooftops, mosques, minarets, and gardens, and is the principle manzar of the house (pls. 54, 55). In keeping with its function as the main entertaining room it is more richly decorated with plasterwork and coloured glass than any other room (pl. 22.18).

A small door at the top of the stairs, just outside the door to the higher manzar, leads on to the roof.

The roof is a flat plastered surface used for spreading out washing to dry. Rain which falls on the roof is collected at the low outer parapets and then discharged well clear of the walls by means of wooden spouts (mashrub/mizâb) averaging nearly a metre in length (pl. 22.3).

Variations in Other Average-sized Houses

Size of rooms: House W has smaller main rooms than the average San`â' house. House N (fig. 22.3, pls. 50, 74; 22.19-24) and house NT (fig. 22.4, and pls. 22.26-31, 34-41) have dawâns which are respectively 6.5m and nearly 5m long, compared with only 3.75m in house W. Similarly, the family living rooms of houses N and NT are both nearly 5m long while that of house W is again merely 3.75m. Finally, the manzar of house NT is 6.5m long, as against a little more than 3m in both house W and house N.

Wells: Many average houses have a well inside the house, whereas house W does not, situated as it is within 15m of a public well. The well in house N is in a small room off the ground floor entrance lobby, approached up a flight of steps. That in house NT ascends up through the house to the second floor from the top, the kitchen level (pl. 22.34). It is a small square shaft within the house, about 28cm by 22cm, built above a circular stone well which extends approximately 30m into the ground.

There are wooden pulleys over the well above the top level at each floor of the house so that water can be drawn on the ground floor for the animals, on the living floors for the living rooms (pl. 22.37), and on the kitchen floor for the kitchen. The well is cemented with a special strong waterproofing mortar made by mixing wood ash, animal hair and hairy seeds of rushes into the lime plaster. A leather bucket is used, drawn on a rope.
Vertical distribution of rooms: While house N has a very similar vertical distribution of rooms to that of house W, house NT is one floor lower, and has combined the family-living room level (usually the first upper level in a small house) with the kitchen level which remains on the second top floor. In effect this has eliminated the first upper floor level as it exists in house W, with the result that the **diwan** is the lowest main room. This is a variation occasionally met with in other small houses. In house NT the **manzar** is approached from the roof terrace, on to which the top of the staircase opens.

**Kitchens:** The kitchens of houses N and NT both have elaborate provision for disposing of the smoke through a range of chimneys immediately above the stove (pl. 22.40). The whole ceiling area of house NT above the stove is raised so that wind passes through on both sides to draw smoke from the room (pl. 22.38). In house N the kitchen is actually the highest room in the house, a few steps above the **manzar**. It seems possible that this house, which is often pointed out as being at least 250 years old, once had a higher room for entertaining; a supposition supported by a projecting water-cooling box at roof level.

These kitchens contain a washing floor (**sâhil**) with a raised kerb, which is drained through a hole in the wall, a feature house W does not have.

**Lavatories:** Both houses N and NT have bathrooms which contain lavatories on three upper floors. This means that a vertical soil shaft passes through the lower bathrooms. It is a
22.20 House N. Exterior of entrance.

22.21 House N. Interior of entrance.

22.22 House N. Staircase from landing, showing the pierced central pier.

22.23 House N. Eating a meal in the diwan.
plain masonry box plastered so that it appears part of the walling of the house. The lower box contains two shafts. Liquid passes on to a vertical draining surface on the outside of the house, shared by the three bathrooms.

Bathrooms in most houses are on the cold, or north, side of the building. The walls are hard smooth gypsum plaster for ease in washing.4

Alabaster Plasterwork: House NT preserves in its entrance hall, staircase and lobby walls an old feature which was probably removed from the other two houses at some time during their renovation. This is the decoration of the lower wall surface up to waist height with hard honey-colored plaster (marmar, or qamaruyuk) polished so that it shines like marble. In the lobbies the plaster surface is moulded into patterns, each contained within a framed panel (pl. 22.37). In the staircase a stepped band runs continuously and reflects the pattern of the stairs (pls. 22.29, 30 and 34). Throughout the house there is a theme resembling a fleur-de-lys with dots incorporated into this plasterwork, a half fleur-de-lys surmounting each step in the upper decorative band on some areas of the staircase wall. It has, however, been suggested that, 'In northern Yemen a constantly recurring motif, especially in external plasterwork seems to be the young dhurah plant'.5 This type of plaster is made of ground alabaster and gypsum; it gradually darkens with age until it is almost black, a characteristic shared by the alabaster panes in the upper windows (pl. 22.37). This darkening may be why it has been so often stripped from San‘ā’ houses. (Similarly, alabaster window areas have often been replaced in recent years by sheets of obscure or clear glass).

Windows: Both houses N and NT are older than house W, and preserve more of the original circular alabaster windows above the shuttered openings. Those of NT have tiny glazed opening sashes let into several of the alabaster panels, apparently to allow extra ventilation.

Rooms incorporated from adjoining houses: House N incorporates two storerooms on a mezzanine level between the ground and first floors which are within a neighbouring house. They are entered from the second staircase landing. This is not commonly done in San‘ā’.

4 Al-Râzi Târikh macfinat San‘â', 97, says that ‘one’s privy (khala‘) in San‘â’ is called mustarîd because of the pots in it of all these sweet-smelling herbs (rupûhin) which I have mentioned to you and the rest of odiferous herbs, and on account of their spaciousness, roominess, and the ‘concrete’ (quâtâf) of their pits (taking qû‘ân as a plur. of qû‘â) and channels (mîdâr), and walls, the penetration of air into them, and the clear light in them, unlike the privies elsewhere in which you come face to face with and see confinedness, and the foulness of the air that hangs about them, so that the relief through them is

5 Doe and Senior, ‘A fortified tower-house in Wâdi Jirda (Wâhîf Sultanate)', 1, 9.
22.22 House N. Manzar.

22.24 House N. Manzar.

22.25 A youth playing a flute in the manzar of a modest house.

22.26 House NT. View of exterior.

22.26 House NT. View of exterior.

Outside storerooms: House NT is one of a relatively small number of houses in Ṣan‘ā’ which have private storehouses (samsarah) attached to them. This is possible because the house is flanked by a second street on the south, from which a wide gate opens into a rear yard (hawiyy) which in turn provides access to the storehouse. The latter is a separate structure of roughly coursed rubble (pl. 22.41) with a ceiling of unplastered beams and tied sticks, waterproofed externally with plaster; it has a floor area nearly that of the ground area of the house. The storehouse may be reached from the house by means of a back door which opens into the courtyard from one of the animal stalls. Such stores were built related to the houses of the farmers who live in Ṣan‘ā’, but farm in areas outside the walls.

Symmetry: Symmetry, or at least symmetrical balance, was felt to be desirable in Ṣan‘ā’ houses, as is clearly evident by comparing the main facades of these three houses (pls. 22.2, 19 and 26). In house W this desire has produced a nearly symmetrical plan. In houses N and NT the plans are less symmetrical, because the staircase is on one corner, but the main facade retains its balanced eurhythmuy: even having a central doorway, in house NT, and in the other case having no doorway, which is on another facade, but instead two symmetrically placed lower windows.

It is thus clear that Ṣan‘ā’ architecture, even in small houses, had a strong ingredient of conceptual formality. It is this which gives a quality of ordered repose to the exteriors, a characteristic which is even more strongly felt in the interiors, with their plain whitewashed cubic or rectangular rooms punctuated with even rhythms of doors, square or circular windows and shelves; rooms which in each house are approached up a plain staircase of short easy flights within a square plan.

It is a classic architecture of simple form, proportion, balance and spaciousness.

**Large Houses and Palaces**

Large houses are substantially bigger than those considered above, both in area and in height. The added storeys make possible the inclusion of two new floors: a mezzanine between
the ground and the first habitable level, for the storage of grain and goods, and a large reception room on the roof, with a view in every direction, the mafraj. A tabagah is another floor with a makhzan wa-farr i.e., a store and a stable. The added area allows more spacious lobbies on each floor, which begin to be used for service activities, and sometimes permits suites of rooms for the use of different families sharing the same dwelling.

The entrance hall: In a large house the entrance hall is very spacious, allowing a number of saddle animals to be housed and providing space for riders to mount and dismount. A small masonry platform (raif) is usually built for the latter purpose against one wall, approached up a small flight of two or three steps (fig. 22.8). A second or alternative platform is sometimes provided outside in the street, built against the wall of the house next to the entrance door.

The entrance hall usually rises through two storeys, the mezzanine level for the storage of grain surrounding it, with access either through small doors placed high in the walls from the main staircase (house JY, fig. 22.8), or up a special flight of steps with secondary access from the main stairs (house S, plans, fig.
Fig. 22.4 House NT.
22.31 House NT. Lobby, at first floor level, showing the well in the wall, with a brazier and a bundle of leaves in front of it.

22.32 Alabaster plaster dado on the staircase wall of an old house near the Great Mosque.

22.33 A staircase and landing of another typical old house, with a decorated dado in alabaster plaster.

22.34 House NT. Staircase at second floor level, with richer decoration on the dado of alabaster plaster.
22.35 House NT. Lobby at second floor level, showing the communicating well to the lower lobby.

22.36 House NT. Lobby at second floor level with the entrance to the dëwân on the left.

22.37 House NT. Lobby at second floor level, showing the richly decorated dado, and the stand for a water jar.

22.38 House NT. Kitchen. The cooking range with the cupboard for fuel to the right.
An Arabian Islamic City

22.39 House NT. Roof.

22.40 House NT. Ceiling of kitchen, showing the flue over the cooking range to remove smoke.

22.5). One or two large arches, built of exposed stones voussoirs, usually cross the entrance hall to support main internal walls on the upper floors.

The masonry shaft of the internal well passes vertically through one corner of the entrance hall, with a door to allow water to be drawn from it for animals. The remainder of the ground floor space is given to animal stalls, which are small close rooms with ventilation holes through the outside walls and man-height wooden doors from the entrance hall. A room for an animal within the house is called al-kirs and one says ‘karras al-makân’, he made the room into a kirs. One room is given to the storage of fodder, and often another, low room, has a masonry bench with mills for grinding grain and salt built above it, approached up a short flight of steps.

The masonry room for collection of excrement from the lavatories above is also located on the ground floor, and emptied through a small low opening on the outside.

The Mezzanine level: Commonly this contains no living rooms, although there is one in the case of one very large old house (house S, plans, fig. 22.5). In this latter house, and in house B (axonometric, fig. 22.6) there is a guard room at mezzanine level which overlooks the entrance hall. It has a private sleeping room adjoining, together with a lavatory, in house B (pl. 22.55).

Most of the mezzanine space is used for grain stores. The wheat, corn, millet, or other grain, is placed in large open masonry bins called in some places mahjib or hijbah with walls which reach to waist level and are muqaddad, i.e., covered with gada. These stand in rows down one side of each storeroom (pls. 22.48, 49). In some houses (e.g. house JY) the grinding mills are placed in rooms on this level instead of in the entrance hall (pl. 22.71). Occasionally, when there is not enough space below, animals are housed in some rooms on the mezzanine floor.

The staircase: Staircases in large houses follow the same pattern as those in smaller buildings, but are often more generous in width. The steps and landings are of stone, and have steep goings, that is, the steps are wide (33-38cm) but the risers are rather high (25-33cm). Nevertheless the twenty-three metre climb (house JY) to the top floors of these high houses is less arduous than it might seem to those who have never experienced it. Flights are short and landings frequent; there is considerable variation in the number of treads in a flight, the staircase space being made so ample that extra treads can be incorporated without difficulty, to allow ingenious changes to floor level.

In the walls of the staircase there are sometimes high wooden grilles which permit women on the floor above to watch who is on the staircase without being observed themselves (pl. 22.72).
The houses of an‘āl

22.41 House NT. View from roof looking down on the sana‘ah at the rear of the house.

22.42 Diwan of a small house prepared for childbirth.

The central stair pier in large houses is frequently up to two metres wide, and contains recesses in which guards used to squat to control movement up the staircase (pl. 22.50). At higher levels these recesses become cupboards (khizānah) built of masonry and closed with small doors.

A few big houses had double staircases. Some of these undoubtedly resulted from the incorporation of two houses together, but one, at least had a short staircase which turned inside the main staircase, to provide separate access, through a separate outside door, to a small room on the first upper level (Dar al-Hamd Palace). It is not known what the function of this room was meant to be, but it is possible that it was a room for transacting public business, hearing cases, etc., the double staircase ensuring that visitors were unable to have access to the remainder of the house.

Storerooms: Large houses often have another floor level of storerooms (e.g. H, fig. 22.7; and pl. 22.65). These stores, if for grain, are called mahkān al-ḥubb, Husayn al-Amri called one mikhzan al-ṣafin, the flour store, but added that many other things are kept there like qisr, coffee, etc. Alternatively, there are rooms set aside as storerooms at higher levels in the house; these are called tabaqah if they are without windows.

The well: The well shaft rises either into the kitchen, passing through the entrance hall below (house BS), or it rises through the

22.43 House S. A photograph taken by a Turkish medical officer, ca. 1900. (University Library, Istanbul.)

22.44 House S. Exterior from the east.

22.45 House S. Exterior from the north.

22.46 Diwan of a small house prepared for childbirth.

22.47 House S. A photograph taken by a Turkish medical officer, ca. 1900. (University Library, Istanbul.)
Fig. 22.5 House S. Plans, section, and elevations. The broken lines indicate the destroyed upper section.
main lobbies which serve to the dīwān and the upper living rooms, so that water may be drawn in the public circulation area on each floor level, as well as in the entrance hall (house S, fig. 22.5, and pl. 22.51, house JY, fig. 22.7).

The first living level: In large houses the lobby often becomes a grand hall, almost as wide and long as a dīwān, but lit by fine windows, in which the work of preparing food, drink, brazier and water-pipe for smoking may often be carried on (pls. 22.58 and 69).

The first large reception room is entered off the lobby, as well as smaller living rooms, possible a storeroom for food, drink and tobacco, and a bathroom-lavatory. One of the smaller rooms may be used regularly as a family eating room in which case it is known as māhān al-ghāđāt.

The second living level: This is generally quite similar to the first living level in layout, type and size of rooms, and general appearance. The windows may be more splendid in material, colour and pattern than those below. The dīwān doors are usually kept locked, and are richly appointed and ornamented (pls. 75 and 22.73).

The dīwān and the family living room: These two rooms, almost always one above the other, are frequently very large, and are then crossed with masonry arches to strengthen the structures (pls. 60, 22.52). Generally, one end of the room is more important than the other, and is kept furnished with cushions, rugs and carpets; in the dīwān, this end is used for childbirth (pl. 22.42) and laying out the dead. In the case of the family living room, and of the dīwān when it is used for family gatherings and feasts, it is usual for older people to gather at the more important end with the young at the opposite end. Naturally when they are being used by the men, especially if there are visitors present, women do not use the rooms for eating or sitting. During feasts or when the rooms are being used for entertaining, the furnishings of the room will often be supplemented by the addition of a large brass tray carrying waterpipes, and by a brazier and spitroons— as described in the section on the mafraj below.

The windows of these two large rooms are occasionally splendidly decorated, the shutters of the lower, opening, section sometimes having different patterns carved on each shutter with bosses and fittings of ornamented brass or gilded iron (pl. 22.122). Sometimes a lattice box is provided, projecting from the building so that when women open the shutters to look out they cannot be seen from the street. Above there are large sheets of alabaster in fixed areas or double, plaster traceries, different in each panel, held much larger sheets of alabaster (pls. 42 and 69), the window tracery, may be provided to allow the smoke to escape.

Important officials or big landowners who transacted business in their houses did so in a lower room specially set apart for the purpose (house AAO), or in the dīwān, as in house M, where one of the most important men under the last Imāms held court from a large sitting platform recessed in the middle of the long wall of the room; it clearly shows as an elaborately supported and decorated projecting bay on the facade of the house (pl. 22.104).

Alternative second living level: In very high houses the dīwān may be relegated to the third living level. In this case a suite of family living rooms is often interposed on the second living level. This suite may be used privately by the dowager mother of the household, by a close male relative and his wife and children (son, brother, etc.) or by the women of the household as a living and entertaining unit. Sometimes one of the rooms is used mainly for sleeping. Being self-contained, space is at a premium, and such floors are characterized by one or two low storerooms at a high level approached up narrow flights of stairs made of hard gypsum plaster. One of these is used as a wardrobe for storing large quantities of women's clothing (makhzan kummah), it is usually over the bathroom-lavatory. If there is a second storeroom placed high up, it has a small workroom-store below it (fig. 22.9, pls. 76 and 22.94).

Some houses, such as house F, have a flight of stairs of this type leading to small upper rooms on the first floor level (pl. 70). In house H this flight is elegantly made of wood. The workmanship in this case is so fine that one suspects this to be a very old mubâr from a mosque cut down for re-use in its present position (pl. 22.66).

There may be more than one self-contained suite in a large house or a palace. In suites of this type, built in the last century, a new idea was introduced, that of the jamākān (Turkish, jamākān), a row of folding doors was fitted to separate a living room from a more private room behind it. Sometimes the jamākān doors have glass panels.

The kitchen level: On the second or third floor below the roof of the building is situated the kitchen, a slightly larger and more elaborate version of the kitchen than that in the average house. There is only one kitchen in the house, no matter how large the number of family units, and it is shared by the women. Food may, of course, be heated or re-heated elsewhere using braziers.

Large kitchens often contain a special low storage cupboard, built up of masonry, the khitānah (pl. 22.96).

In a few cases where the height of a house has been raised by the addition of extra floors, the original kitchen may end up well below the top of the building, indeed nearer the storeroom levels, but these exceptions do not alter the general rule. Reasons why the kitchen is normally on an upper floor include the seclusion of women, the need to serve refreshment up into the entertaining rooms, as well as down into the dīwān, and the desire to keep smoke and fumes as clear as possible from the windows of living rooms. In the few cases where the kitchen is low, a special well, the syyah, may be provided to allow the smoke to escape.

One of the oldest large houses, Bayt Mutahhar in al-Tāwûs Quarter, has a passage (makhān) to the kitchen (daymah) with holes in it to let out the smoke. On the sixth floor (al-dawr al-sâdî) of the house, the syyār al-daymah or kitchen flue warms the rooms.

The kitchen, like the bathroom, tends to be placed on the north, cold side of the house.

There may be a living room and storerooms used by the women and children on the same floor as the kitchen, or on the floor below. Sometimes the kitchen is on the roof of the main house structure, so that there are terraces opening off it, one of which contains the laundry. The kitchen may even be entered from an open terrace or courtyard (šamsiyāt) on the roof. The house normally continues upwards another floor or two, to the mafraj, but this top-most part of the building has a greatly reduced floor area.

The laundry, described as phurfat al-gībasī, may be on an open terrace, or under cover (fig. 22.9, pl. 22.97). It consists of a deep, open reservoir for rainwater, which is collected from the roofs above and drains into it down a plaster spillway, and a hard flat plastered (muṣabbad) or stone floor surface (sidji) on which the clothes are scrubbed. They are hung to dry on lines stretched across the terraces, or over the parapets. (A sāhil can also mean a platform for drainage, or a drain down the side of a wall for rain or a lavatory, etc.)

The upper reception rooms: In a large house these focus around the mafraj, the large high room, with, on at least three sides, long low windows (ṣafar, sing.), used by the master of the house for chewing qār and entertaining in the afternoons. But there are also other rooms for similar use. Often, one floor below the mafraj, there is a smaller version of the same room, perhaps with view

6 Rossi, L'Arabo parlato, 257, porede stamettes; it has no windows (nasūfā).
22.46 House S. Exterior from the west.

22.47 House S. Entrance, with the entrance doors in the distance.

22.48 House S. Large grain store on the mezzanine above ground level.

22.49 House S. Small grain store on the mezzanine above ground level.

22.50 House S. Staircase.
The Houses of San'a

windows on only two, or even one, side. It is called the manbar, the name used for the highest entertaining room of a smaller house. If it faces east, it may be called the sharjyiyyah. Since the volume of the house rising above this level is smaller, this lower entertaining room often has a roof terrace outside it. Sometimes it is the prerogative of the women to use this room for entertaining when the men are not in the house, in which case the terrace is carefully screened with pierced masonry arcading.

In other cases the arcading is open and unscreened, meant purely for decorative purposes, but convertible into a complete screen by hanging drapes over it.

Above the mafraj there is in a few cases another level, comprising one small room, the sifrah. This is used by the owner of the house when he wishes to chew qat or smoke alone, or with a small number of friends. The room is seldom more than two metres square, with a window on every side so that it enjoys magnificent views. In several cases, such as house B (fig. 22.6), it is situated on top of the staircase walls (see pl. 64).

In house B, and typically in large houses, the staircase continues unbroken from the bottom to the top of the house, a solid construction of stone with a massive central stone pier (qub al-daraj, acting as a kind of structural spine to strengthen the whole building. In some cases, though, the reduced size of the top two or three levels necessitates the inclusion of a new staircase serving them in a different position on the plan (e.g. house JY, fig. 22.8). In one large house (house H, fig. 22.7), the main staircase extends from first floor level up to the roof, but there is a separate wide staircase connecting the ground and first floors in another part of the plan.

Under the mafraj there is sometimes a low floor containing a storeroom for grain and clothes, or a minor living room, called the jabaqih. It is characterized by small windows; its main purpose in this position seems to be to raise the mafraj as high as possible so that it may obtain better views (e.g. house JY, fig. 22.8).

Another small room near the mafraj is the ka'mah. This has only one window, and is a room used by an old person who wants to chew qat alone. If the house has one, it is this room which is used for the dressing of the bride before her wedding.

The mafraj: (The word comes from faraja, it dispelled grief or anxiety.) This is the finest room in a San'a' house. It is usually approximately six metres long and four metres wide, with a lobby (hijrah or hijrat al-mafraj) four metres square continuing its volume at one end. The mafraj is a step higher than the lobby; it is separated from it by double folding doors. At the end of the lobby is a large window (jarf) closed by double folding shutters which open to almost the full width of the room. There is a large semicircular fanlight above ('aqd, sing.) containing alabaster slabs, or else gypsum plaster tracery in two layers spaced 10 or 15cm apart; the inner tracery is the only one of the two to be glazed, usually with brightly coloured glass, the outer layer unglazed. Similarly wide view windows are placed at the opposite end of the mafraj and in the middle of one long wall, and they have also semicircular fanlights of the same type over them. The remainder of the long wall has smaller openings with fanlights on either side of the main view window; the opposite long wall has usually high fanlights only, with decorated plaster shelves underneath to hold ornaments and articles for use in the mafraj. The shutters and doors are stained natural wood, except in the richest houses where they may be lacquered and decorated with paintings (pl. 53). The window shutters (tâqah, plur. tiquâ or tiyâq, darf, plur. durûf) have often a little shutter within them (shâqû, pron. shûgî). Its opening has a decoratively shaped top edge which is effective against the light in silhouette (pl. 63). Frequently the elaborate plaster decoration (naqshah, takhrim in San'a'),
Fig. 22.6 House B. Diagrammatic plans superimposed in perspective.

Fig. 22.53 House B. Exterior

The furnishings of the mafraj follow the traditional furnishings of all Yemeni living rooms, described above (p. 442a), but are usually of the richest possible materials. There is an expensive carpet in the central floor space (mushammah). A circular brass or silver tray (ma'sharah) stands on the floor near the entrance to the room, and is filled with pipes, braziers (masqid), jugs for water, incense burners (mabhahah for bakhur incense) and spittoons (madfall/matfal) for use when chewing qat (pl. 57). There is sometimes a high tray on a pedestal (ja'af al-jayami) with china cups for serving coffee. A low box which serves as a desk for writing may be brought in (mässah). Candlesticks (maszarah) sometimes stand on the wall shelves or on the brass tray.

On the same floor as the mafraj, or on the floor below, is a lavatory for people using the entertaining rooms. There is usually in the lobby a large water cooling box projecting from the building, or even a special room with pierced walls built on the end of the building or on a corner of it, in which earthenware jugs of water are placed for cooling.
22.54 House B. Street facade, showing the entrance doorway.

22.55 House B. The entrance hall.

22.56 House B. Motif of 3 snakes in carved stone, built into a corner of the street facade about four metres above ground level.

22.57 House B. The staircase, showing the grilles which allow the women in the lobbies above to observe movement on the stairs.
In some older houses, the room used as a mafraj is not a single room on a floor by itself, but is part of the main block of the house, sharing its level with several other rooms (e.g. house H, fig. 22.7 and pl. 22.63). One of the other rooms on the same level is called the manzar. Other big houses or palaces preserve a similar group of rooms below the mafraj (e.g. house M, pl. 22.104), to which the name manzar has later been transferred, although the largest probably served originally as the mafraj.

Window boxes of aromatic and flowering herbs are often provided for the mafraj and other entertaining rooms. Alternatively there may be a small garden of fragrant plants, mostly raybän, sweet basil, in pots on a roof outside these rooms.

Ideally, the long wall of a mafraj should face south, although east or west are alternatives sometimes accepted, for lack of better; but the Šan'ānī saying is, 'Mā bayt illā 'Adani, there is no room but one with a southern exposure.' The temperate climate of Šan'ā' means that protection against the wind is advisable on the sunless north side.

The Šan'ānis, like Europeans have a house-warming known as wakīrāt al-bayt when moving into a new house—the guest attending says mabrūk to the family.

Gardens and entrance courts: Large houses sometimes have entrance courts (hawsh, v. house H, fig. 22.7, pl. 22.63, house BT, fig. 22.9). On the streetside these have high gateways (pl. 22.98,105). Internally, the courtyard may be a small paved open space, or it may be planted with trees. Less often, there may be a back courtyard, sometimes planted in the same way. A small number of large houses stand apart surrounded by narrow gardens. These are always enclosed by high walls penetrated by a single gateway.

In view of the rarity of planted courts or gardens attached to the houses, it might be thought that in old Šan'ā' houses seldom enjoyed views from their windows into areas of plants and trees. This is far from being the case, however, as a great part of the city is devoted to large gardens (bustân) attached to the pious foundations (awgâf) for the maintenance of the mosques. There, vegetables and fruit are grown by the rentee farmer (sharîk or bistânî), the gashshâm, and these products are mainly sold.
directly to the houses encircling the bustan, the surplus going to the market. Thus the houses, more often than not, enjoy views over extensive market gardens which may be unsuspected by the casual passer-by in the narrow, masonry-lined streets and lanes on the other side of the buildings (cf. pis. 6, 8, and 49).

The gardens frequently appear to be sunk below ground level. This is sometimes a delusion, produced by the accretion of centuries of rebuilding along the streets, so that the buildings and the street level have been raised several metres. Sometimes, however, gardens are built in the bottom of claypits from which the material to make the bricks of the surrounding houses was taken; sometimes the market garden was dug below the level of water channels and ghayls to facilitate irrigation.

Palaces: There was little to differentiate palaces from the large houses of the rich, and in this section the two have been grouped together. Niebuhr mentions that when he saw it in the mid-12th/18th century the Mutawakkil palace (pl. 9.1) contained a spacious square chamber having an arched roof. In the middle was a large basin, with some jets d’eau, rising fourteen feet in height. This is the only recorded instance of an internal fountain in Yemeni domestic architecture.

The Islamic House - an Alternative Type

The best building is one the court of which is wide, its ceiling high, its chimney tall and its ablution-privy far removed.

(Khayru 'l-abniyati ma 'ttasa `a ahnu-hu wa-'rtafa `a saqfu-hu wa-tala madkhanu-hu wa-ba `uda mutawadda-hu.)

Al-Maydâni

Not all houses have their mafraj on the roof; there is an alternative type, the mafraj with a reflecting pool and fountain at ground level (shâdharwân or nâfurah). As this takes up considerable ground area there are now very few of this type within the walls of the old city; of course there may have been more in an earlier period. In the garden suburbs of Bir al-'Azab, Bir al-Bahmi and Bir al-Shams the larger houses and palaces commonly have a mafraj of this type, though the richest may have another on the roof of the house as well. They are also found in al-Rawdah, the resort of San‘â', 10km to the north, and to a lesser extent in other neighbouring towns.

A typical example is house G, near Bāb al-'Abilah. This is a low villa which belonged to the Imam's family before the 1962 coup. Its mafraj and the adjoining pool and fountain are shown in fig. 22.10, pls. 22.106, 107. Although built within the volume of the house, this mafraj is characteristically not entered from inside the house; there is a separate outside entrance to it past the pool. An open arcade of lime-washed plastered brickwork shields the mafraj pool from the surrounding garden, providing a sense of enclosure. It is overhung by trees planted just beyond the arcade. A trellis for vines crosses over the pool and its central fountain, supported at the centre by two columns which rise through the water of the pool itself.

A large arcade frames a loggia which separates the pool from the mafraj; the roof above the loggia acts as a screened terrace for the private use of the women of the house.

The mafraj is somewhat unusual in having a masonry bench along its rear wall, on which carpets and cushions for sitting are placed. Low cushions of the normal type are ranged along the side walls. It is possible that the purpose of this raised bench is to allow those sitting on it a better view of the fountain and water surface of the pool. However, this type of low mafraj does not always have the masonry bench, and there are one or two examples of the high mafraj which have it. Dhâmi in Jewish houses (see below) are frequently provided with such a bench. It obviates the need to build up the lying-in bed in the dhâmi with hard mattresses (see pl. 58). A third possibility is that this is a feature introduced by the Turks, either during the first or the second Ottoman occupations of the Yemen.

was even entirely open, upon one side. A number of fruit-trees grew in the garden. In the middle of it was a jet d’eau, similar to that which we had seen in the Imam’s hall of audience. The water was put in motion by being raised in a reservoir by an ass and a man who led him.

The Houses of San‘â'
An Arabian Islamic City

Fig. 22.7 House H. Exploded axonometric, showing the plans superimposed.
The Houses of Şan‘ā’

The Relationship of the Şan‘ā’ Houses to Village Houses and Farmhouses

High houses of the Şan‘ā’ type are found throughout the mountainous central plateau of the Yemen and mountains to the north and to the east; they occur further north, in the southern part of present-day Sa‘dah Arabia, and further south and east in southern Yemen and Ḥajramawt. Although there are local variations in concept, especially in detail, the essential nature of the house does not change; that is, it has four or more storeys, the lower ones serving to house animals and storage, and the upper ones for habitation, with the most important entertaining rooms on the top level. There is usually only one door, and the house is simple and massive in bulk. Villages comprised of houses of this type may be seen within a few kilometres of Şan‘ā’, and

11 Sa‘dah houses are discussed in Elke Niewohner-Eberhard, ‘Das jemenitisch-arabische Innenhofhaus in Sa‘达, Jemen’ in Der Islam, 1977, LIV, ii, 177-204.
present just as urban an appearance as the houses of Ṣanʿāʾ itself. True, in villages only the most important houses will have squared, ashlar stonework in the lower storeys, and fewer still will have burnt brick above. More commonly, the upper storeys are of sun-baked brick, and the lower storeys of coursed clay (zâbr). Farmhouses are often of the same type, but a different kind is also found, a cylindrical tower called a nābah/nawbah. This appears to belong to an early tradition of building which has survived up to the present day, as similar structures in pre-Islamic or early Islamic cyclopean stonework have been found in ancient sites.

The mountains surrounding the highland plateau afforded good shelter for marauding tribes who might at any moment descend to pillage the villages and farms of the agricultural areas. Throughout the region, circular defensive towers seem to have been used for domestic purposes. Some northern villages still retain clusters of them too numerous in number to have been part of a fortification system. It seems likely that the modern, square, tower-houses seen in farms, villages and cities are sophisticated descendants of such a prototype. An intermediate stage may be represented by the circular farmhouses which continued to be built until the present day. These will often have loopholes.
Cylindrical houses of this type have been incorporated into San'ā' as it has expanded (fig. 22.11, pls. 22.112-6). In addition there are several constructed of ashlar stonework as part of palaces of the ex-Imām (pl. 19.87). It is difficult to be certain whether the latter were built for extra security in defence or for architectural variety.

An obvious advantage of the cylindrical shape of these houses is that it increases their stability, especially if they are built in soft coursed clay. In addition it is claimed by some of the inhabitants that many existing nôbahs were once much higher. Evidence of their strength may be seen in the fashion, perhaps of fairly recent date, of building a large square mafraj at the top, often...
Fig. 22.8 House JY. Plans and sections.
cantiavered considerable distances beyond the sides of the cylin-
drical tower below (pl. 22.117). The vertical distribution of the accommodation in a nabah resembles closely that in the town houses. The entrance hall does not rise up through two storeys, but is limited to one, and the whole of the first floor is usually given to storage. More store-
rooms may be provided on the levels above. There is a dinaan for family occasions, sometimes a similarly large living room, with a small manzar at the top, flanked by a kitchen, or with one on the floor below.

**Construction**

The lower levels of the buildings are usually constructed of square ashlar up to between three and ten metres above ground level. The blocks are shaped from broken stone on the spot by masons (muwaqiq),13 men or boys, whose special task is preparing the blocks. Each worker squares behind a shelter to stop stone chips from hitting his neighbour, holds the stone in one hand and strikes fragments off the surface with the sharp edge of his adze-
like hammer (mifraz) (pl. 22.118). They earn a standard rate for each block, and are among the best paid workers on the building site.

There are two types of agreement between the person who commissions building work and the labour or builders. Where a contract is made for a piece of work to be executed for a fixed sum this is called amal muqata `ah. The other is called al-mushagah which is an engagement by the day from early morning to sunset (al-`amal be-l-yawmiyyah, min al-subh ila `l-maghrib). This period is naturally longer in summer than in winter, but no account seems to be taken of this when it comes to wages. In the summer of 1972 workmen on the house knocked off round about noon and chewed qat, returning to work some time between 2 and 3 p.m.

The description of the various qualities of cut stone was provided by 'Ali Hzam al-`ashedh of the Department of Public Works. It is curious that Qasim San`a`i (section 36, i) makes no reference to these different standards though we know from Habshusha8 that Imam al-Man~ûr `Ali (before 1224/1809) would use also to prevent salt, from which it seems to be impervious, to work and hardening rapidly on cutting, quarried at al-Jirâf north of San`a`.

It is used for the walls, jams and lintels of the lower storeys of San`a” buildings, but not for the foundations or thresholds, as it is easily worn and likely to be attacked by salts. Habash Dharmûri is famous. Shal dalam is rough untrinned stone used for the interior side of the wall, not the facing—it is used as rubble. The rough interior stone part of a wall is called tarbi`ah. Hajarah Hushayshiyyah comes from Bani Husaysh and Hajarah Sawayyiyah from near Jahanah. `Aqir` asqar provides a light coloured stone and a darkish stone. Writing in the twenties, Nazih al-Mu`ayyad9 says that white stone is brought from Nuqum, and black from al-Jirâf mountain west of al-Rawdah. They bring black volcanic stone, he says, from `Aqir or al-Sinayyat west of San`a”, which is harder than al-Jirâf stone. For decorative bands or patterns two other stones are commonly employed, harad, a grey limestone more often used for carved oil lamps and cooking pots, and balaq, a creamy white limestone on which inscriptions are carved as they were in the pre-Islamic age—the word itself is ancient. It is also now used for carving fine stone mills for domestic use. Another white stone is Hajarah Sa`awani from near-by Wadi Sa`aw. Sator` or jamim is a stone without holes. Tufla is also found, a pale buff volcanic stone which is easy to work but hardens on exposure to air. Other limestones used for ornament are green and dull red in colour, the latter called mabili after a plant with flowers of this hue. Stone is usually called after its colour and/or place of origin.

The extra large stones in the masonry of a house at the corners are called midmakh (madamik).

Walls are normally made with a facing of stones inside (mathna) and out (hasar al-nox), 20cm square or larger, with a central core (nasr), usually between 3 and 10cm thick, of clay plaster and aggregate (shafl). One way of determining the height of each stone is by the span (shibr) of a man’s hand. Although perfectly rectilinear on the face of the wall, the stones are rougher behind, and have a slight taper as their surfaces recede from the face. This means that a new course of stones (sar or bah) has to be propped at the correct angle with a wedge of soft gypsum plaster (quis) (pronounced guss, also gufej/gusje)39 which shows as a fine white joint, approximately 1mm high and later the space between the inner and outer rows of stones is filled with clay plaster mixed with crushed stone (kubah) before the next course can be begun (pl. 22.119). Such a stone wall is at least 45cm thick, approximately a dhirà, the building unit, which is generally 47.5 cm. On the rough inner facing of stonework a plaster surface is obligatory, al-guzz fawaj al-mathna. To the outside faces (wajahah) of the external wall are tied the crosswalls (gâti, p1., gawati `), by which plan the area is divided into easily roofed sections approximately three metres wide. The system is one of the two devices by which the stability of the structure is assured, the other being the strength of the staircase pier, usually built throughout its height in stonework. Both the external faces and the staircase pier are built using gypsum mortar for extra strength.

The inner faces (mathna) of the external walls support the floor, roof beams and lintels. The building of the external and internal faces of stonework is carried out by two entirely different

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12 Verb muwaqiq, yuwaqiq.  
13 See pp. 225a.  
14 Travey's Ar. text 103.  
15 Arwaq, 89, cited p. 45b, uses the same expression, but one cannot take it literally.

16 Rihlah, I, 133, II, 14.  
17 Ignimbrite.  
18 Rihlah, I, 133, II, 14.  
19 Quis (cf. Lane, Lexicon, juj) gypsum. It means in San`a” plaster in general.
trades, while a third trade builds the central rubble core (rassah) of the wall.

Cross walls are usually built of rough rubble (shif). They may be interrupted by large arches or door openings without their essential strengthening function being impaired.

Rubble stonework is also used in cheaper work, for storehouses or rear walls. It is usually coursed. Broken sandstone, limestone, rhyolite or basalt is used. Slightly better walls of this type employ roughly squared stones which are then brought up to level courses by thin stones inserted before the next row of squared stones is laid. A formalized version has alternate layers of thick and thin rectangular stones.

In the old stonework, such as that of the Great Mosque (pls. 18.5 and 6) and some older houses, each stone course leans outwards at a slight angle, so that the top edge of each row of stones projects about 1cm beyond the bottom of the row above it. This is known as al-binû al-'aslah (see p. 325b).20 Although the wall

20 One of the other places where we noticed this 'aslah work was in one or two patches of the Hawsh al-Waṣīf in which the camels that brought the incoming grain and fodder (waṣīf al-habb wa-'l-ṣalaf) used to stop, and the Waṣīf supplies were then stored in this ancient place. A zahrat Habash from the Great Mosque was built into a wall—a stone with four projecting rings. The Hawsh is in Bāṣrah, 'Abād.
Fig. 22.9 Houses F, A and B' showing the way in which they cluster together, in plan and section. (Not fully measured.)
appears to be stepping inwards throughout its height, because of similar pre-Islamic structures, of which the best examples we have to date are Axumite or pre-Axumite ones in Ethiopia; a desire to prevent cracking through settlement; the need to increase stability against earthquakes. They are further discussed below.

Axumite and pre-Axumite structures usually had a stepped lower wall, each step varying from 2 to 5cm. The number of steps was seldom more than eight, so that the upper part of the wall did not have them, whereas early San‘a‘ Islamic stonework is given them throughout its height. Another difference is that the Axumite walls were actually diminishing in thickness as they stepped, which the San‘a‘ walls do not.

Early builders may have felt that a possible defect in the stability of the San‘a‘ stonework lay in the tapered shape of each stone. In order to counteract any settling effect, the thickness of gypsum mortar under the back of the stone might have been slightly increased, so that if the mortar contracted on drying, or the wall bulged slightly (there are seldom stones running right through from the front face to the back face of the wall) the stones would be able to settle into a more upright position and the wall remain strong. For the same reason earthquakes might be thought to have been guarded against to some extent by this kind of stonework.

Stonemasons today do not practise this stepped stone technique; some of them believe that it went out of fashion more than a century ago, and hold it in contempt as a weak method of building walls. Perhaps they are repeating the opinion of Turkish military engineers? The stonemasons no longer retain any memory of the reasons why this strange technique was once used.

The first action in building a wall is that they spread (farasah) hishash aswad, also called harrī—rajjāh (spreading) min al-harrī al-sighar. Karri is also spread in muddy streets or in a court (jawwāyāh) rather as a sort of road-metal. The jum is put in as a foundation, then a layer of cement (nowadays), tarjīstāhzāfrī, then some three, four or more rows of bajār aswad.

Foundations project slightly on either side of the wall above, the additional thickness averaging about 20cm. They are made of rubble stonework using quarry stone, basilic boulders (jum) or wadi-bed stones. The lower courses of the wall above, up to a height of six or eight courses above ground level are built of hard black basalt quarry stone (sawda), each course being 20–25cm high. The stepped foundation generally begins slightly below ground (50cm), and extends down for 60 to 80cm. It has an earth core, whereas the wall itself has a hard mortar of lime and earth from 50cm below ground to one and a half metres above ground level to stop salts and damp rising in the stonework.

Brickwork begins above the stonework, which, in houses, ceases at between three metres and ten metres above ground level. Brickwork, being lighter than stonework, is more suitable for upper walls; bricks are easier to carry up staircases, and more flexible in permitting large openings.

Baked bricks (yafūr, pronounced yagūr) average 16.5cm square and 4cm thick, although there is considerable variation. Older bricks are as much as 8cm thick and up to 20cm square. They are made from local clay on the north east side of the city, a short distance beyond the walls. After being shaped in a box and dried in rows in the sun (pl. 22.120) they are stacked in one of a number of low brick kilns and burnt for two days using dung or slin and bones as fuel.

Because the bricks are normally square, it is not common for brick patterns to be created by variation in the bond; instead this is done by inserting bricks at an angle, by projecting or recessing bricks, or most commonly, by cutting a pattern into bricks laid in a normal bond (pls. 77 and 22.124). Arches over openings are usually double arches, the inner arch separated from the outer one by square bricks on edge, and the inner arch built up from half bricks, whereas the outer arch is a standard brick dimension in thickness. Voussoirs near the centre are sometimes slightly shaped into wedges to make the horizontal section of the arch stronger. This is done by rubbing the brick on the black pumice-like stone referred to above. Mortar for brickwork is normally clay mortar, with a little gypsum added, but this is changed to a pure gypsum mortar every five or six courses, over large openings and in areas of stress, such as the corners. On the outside face, where it is exposed to the weather, lime mortar is sometimes used for the outer joints.

Upper walls are generally two bricks thick, i.e. 36cm or more, on lower levels two and a half or three bricks in thickness. The topmost storey and parapets are sometimes only one brick in thickness, with extra reinforcements provided by piers.

Mortars have the same mixes and methods of manufacture as plasters, which are discussed below.

Unbaked brick (libin) is sun dried, and contains straw and chaff for greater strength. It varies in size from the common size of baked bricks up to the massive size used in farmhouses of approximately 44cm by 22cm by 11cm; even larger sizes are sometimes seen. Mouldings are usually executed in lightly-baked, small, common-sized bricks, or in fully-baked bricks.

At least two methods of building in unfired brick (binā al-libin) are distinguished, binā al-sayr when the bricks are laid with their ends to the outside, favoured for the largest brick sizes, and, secondly, binā al-khaf when the bricks are laid end to end with their long sides exposed.

Openings are bridged using arches of the same materials, or flat arches of small bricks resting on a row of thin timber beams. The mortar used is a clay, sand and straw mixture (milājah), sometimes with animal dung added; it is left to ‘mature’ for several days, fermentation produces chemicals which give it strength.

Unbaked brick walls are frequently used on cheaper work above stone plinths or lower walls. Occasionally the highest, thinnest sections of a house built mainly in unbaked brick will be executed in baked brick.

Coured clay (zabīr) is used for lower walls in cheaper work in San‘a‘ and is standard construction in many country towns and farms. It is laid in courses 50 to 70cm high, the bottom of each course slightly overhanging the one below and then tapering gently to be thinner at the top, creating a visual separation between the courses which is frequently accentuated by weathering. A foundation of coursed rubble usually extends above ground to a height of between 30 to 90cm. Often a layer of gravel or a course of bricks is introduced on top of the stones, before the first clay layer.

The clay is taken from a borrow pit near the site. It is mixed with sand, straw and chaff, water is added, and then it is beaten or trodden underfoot. It is left to mature for two days, during which time chemicals from the straw and chaff mix with the clay to produce a stronger and more water-resistant mortar.

The clay mixture is passed from the ground to the workmen on the walls by shaping it into balls which can easily be thrown.

21 Earthquakes did some damage in San‘a‘ in, e.g., Jamūdī I, 1077/1666 (Tabaq al-baylā, fol. 60b) and in 1314/1896-7 an earthquake accompanied by a red rain. The saying is, Ajbi Shibām kulla-hā milājah, All the roofs of Shibām (Kawkabān) are milājah.'

22 According to a United Nations survey undertaken in 1970, unbaked bricks of the large size cost 30 riyals per cubic metre including labour, baked bricks 100 riyals for the same volume with labour, and cut stonework 140 riyals.

23 Clay pits are studded throughout the city, both inside and outside the walls. The material for the city walls likewise came from some of these pits.
22.79 House F. The exterior.

22.80 House F. Looking down into the courtyard at one side.

22.81 House F. Detail of the external facade showing the windows and their shutters.

22.82 House F. The courtyard.
22.83 House F. The entrance hall.

22.84 House F. The entrance hall, seen from the entrance doors, the staircase door straight ahead, and, to the right, the door into the courtyard.

22.85 House F. The staircase, showing the alabaster panelling.

22.86 House F. Alabaster windows on the landing of a staircase in an old house in San'a'.
The builder catches them and lets them drop into position on the wall, then pummels them into shape so that they make a homogeneous mass 40 to 50cm wide. There is no shuttering.

Each course is completed and left to dry for from two days to a fortnight before the next course is begun. Openings are bridged with stone slabs, or with rough timber reinforcing built into the thickness of the clay courses.

Wooden bands (furushah, pl., furushât) run around many of the houses, especially those with lower storeys built in stone or brick. They appear to be carefully joined so that they form a continuous girdle holding the walls from bulging outwards; they would naturally take up stresses due to unequal settlement or earthquake shocks; a further advantage in their use is that they allow sections of the stone wall below them to be renewed with less danger of the wall above them cracking. There are usually two of these bands above and below the lowest large windows, acting as sill and head, and sometimes another running through the stone-work below. They are often whitewashed for weather protection and therefore not immediately recognisable as wood. Although other woods are used, a favourite for this purpose is apricot wood, which becomes stronger when it is damp and resists decay.

Plaster (quss, jass, pron. gufs, gasc) and plastering (tagsis). The bulk of all plasters used in San‘ā’ are derived from gypsum, the essential burnt gypsum ingredient also being popularly known as quss. Lime plaster is relatively little used, as lime (nûrah) is expensive, and is reserved for conditions requiring a good deal of waterproofing or protection from the weather.

Al-Ḥājj Muḥammad ‘Alī Nāṣir al-Maqwâlī, a shaykh or asâr of the San‘ā’ plasterers living in Hârat al-Tawâshi was brought to us by ‘Alī Ḥizzâm al-Sâbî, who helped interpret the difficult terms he used.

The best quss, he said, comes from al-Maqta’ al-Dâkhilî, i.e. Miniqat Bani Jarmûz, from Bayt Qâhrâh. The Dâkhilî and Khârîjî of the Bani Jarmûz are two villages separated by a big mountain, but the Bayt Qâhrâh are one family (waṣû). How ancient this is may be judged from al-Ḥamdâni’s remark on Shibâm al-Ghirâs below Dhû Marmâr (Alabaster) Mountain, ‘From Shibâm qussah is conveyed to San‘ā’, there being less than half a day between them.’ Jabal Dâbâb/Zâbâb which figures on von Wissmann’s map, provides the stone from which the quss is made by burning for three days (musâfat thalâthah ayâm), all of it giving ore (as it were) of quss (hullah va’di ma’dam quss). ‘When you have extracted quss stone,’ said al-Ḥâjj, ‘the quss grows in its place again, or it can grow itself without earth on it [in the mountain].’ The quss hâq al-Dâkhilî is pure (sâfî), and clear white (aḥmad ʿayyâd).

The more slowly it is burned the better the quss; if wood is used instead of oil for burning, the quss is better because it takes more time.’ (Uṣâl Sirhân al-Rawî—see n.30 below. A poem of Thâlabah b. Su‘ayr, said to belong to ‘Udhrah of reputedly Yemen stock, a pagan but said to have become a Muslim has a reference in a verse to Fādanu ‘bnu Hayyâta shada-hu bi-‘l-ājuri, the castle of Ibn Hayyah which he built with burned brick and asâr, which means quss gypsum. (C. J. Lyall, al-Mufaddaliyyât, Oxford, 1921, 256-7, trans., Oxford, 1916, 87).
22.89 House A. The side elevation (with House B alongside).

22.90 House A. The top of the house showing the outside of the mafraj.
The Khârîjî gûṣ of Bani Jarmûz is a new kind, coarse, composed of gûṣ with half grit (nâys)—it is in fact like nâys and red (muhammûr) in colour. It was stated to be used for the first coating applied to walls, mixed with red grit (awwaal qirshah min al-gûṣ tulâbbas 'alâ jadrân yukhlat 'alâ 'nâys al-âsâmar).

The gûṣ is pounded in a mortar, a hollowed out stone (yiddû-h mawhiz, hajar manqûrah/mahfûrah) with a piece of wood (khashabah) with two arms (masnadayn = sâidayn). This is women's work (amal al-niswân/harim/nisâ). The action of working plaster is known as khayshah. They work (yashtaghilû) the gûṣ mixture before it 'dies' (gabl mâ timût al-khayshah). Gûṣ min al-Dâkhiliû is allowed to cool for two weeks (yibrid usbâ'ûn) before being used for the operation known as ghasîl or washing down.

The various grades of plaster work are mashâh bi-l-mâhîj
22.95 House A. The kitchen showing the cooking range.

22.96 House A. The kitchen showing the other end, with a washing-up sink and a cupboard for fuel.

22.97 House A. The open air laundry on the roof.

22.98 House BT. The entrance.
application with a mālīj which is an iron (fāsidah ʿalā waqfah), i.e. with a plumbline (mazān khaṭt li-rumālī) so that you can apply the plaster. 28 477

Marshā khābān is second class work, it is application with the iron (mazāb bi-l-mālīj) judged only by eye. Marshāh is operation by hand (ʿanāmiyāth bi-l-tīyād) which is considered poor work (ʿamāl dār) and is the lowest in cost. Washing down is executed with quss using a leather or sheep’s wool (al-ghasil bi-ʿl-mīshāb) and a line (mastarah) on the outside of the makhrūshât. They may be simple (mulalgât), with decorated supports (arját makhrūshât) and their base (qâʿidah) having the shape of a bird. A top shelf (jabin = brow), a top shelf with a row of circles, etc.

28 The ‘builder’s cord’ is defined by Iklil VIII, 8.

Fifteen flights of stairs to upper storerooms (see p. 455b) as well as for constructing pierced treacy windows. Shelves (juṣfat, pl. taṣfat) may be ordinary without ornament (ʿālā bi-dāʿin ḫarshah = naqshah, i.e., plain (ḵhām)), or shelves may be ornamented (makhfūshât). They may be simple (muṣalqât), with decorated supports (ṣubūr makhfūshât) and their base (qâʿidah) having the shape of a bird. A top shelf (jabin = brow), a top shelf with a row of circles, etc.

The two grades of plaster are quss mixed with grit and the decorative grade composed of quss mixed with ground alabaster to produce a marble-like surface. The latter is used for internal decorative plaster-work, for making plaster shelves and small flights of stairs to upper storerooms (see p. 455b) as well as for constructing pierced treacy windows. Shelves (juṣfat, pl. taṣfat) may be ordinary without ornament (ʿālā bi-dāʿin ḫarshah = naqshah, i.e., plain (ḵhām)), or shelves may be ornamented (makhfūshât). They may be simple (muṣalqât), with decorated supports (ṣubūr makhfūshât) and their base (qâʿidah) having the shape of a bird. A top shelf (jabin = brow), a top shelf with a row of circles, etc.

When a masonry wall is built of stone which is uneven at the edges (as probably in the case of nabw waqf, p. 468a), the space between the blocks of stone is filled with quss-plaster, this filling being made to project a little to the front beyond the stone for strength and decoration—the process is called ʿakhbāsh, the putting of kohl around the eyes as eye-shadow, and one would say ‘unakbāsh-hā, we’ll give it a dressing of plaster.’

Makhfūshât, ornamented like women’s veils, mutafarnajât, Frankish type, with almond shapes (lawzah, pl. lawzāt), al-mawzah, banana, al-Ārais, head, ansâf halves, khâtam mathmûn (fi dâkhil al-ghurfah) and a line (mastarah) on the outside of the makhrūshât. They may be simple (mulalgât), with decorated supports (arját makhrūshât) and their base (qâʿidah) having the shape of a bird. A top shelf (jabin = brow), a top shelf with a row of circles, etc.

When the window with its frame is set in the wall, an application of plaster (ṣubb quss bi-l-ʿīsāl) is made to the spaces between the edge of the frame and the wall, ʿabbā literally meaning ‘a pouring’. Lime (jirmūn) made of burned limestone or chalk is mixed with grit and, in the best work, the burnt brick of the exterior of houses is protected with a coating of this lime plaster. Unburned brick may be protected with the same material or with the clay coating (milâjah).

The milâjah applied to clay walls differs little in composition from the clay bats used for adobe walls, except that the proportion of clay is reduced in favour of more grit and chalk. Cheaper burned brickwork is often protected externally with this clay coating, and it is also a common finishing material for the outside of houses in smaller towns and on farms. It is not usual to paint the clay coating which retains a good appearance, except possibly around important windows which are whitened with lime to give them a frame. Sometimes the clay coating is entirely repainted with a wash made from animal dung which hardens the surface and gives it a good appearance.

The Houses of Ṣan’ā’

There are two special plasters for permanent, weather-resistant, high quality finishes, khudr and qadd; the former is the cheaper and less durable of the two. 29

Khudr is a general waterproof plaster, floor or roof finish, or mortar. It is used for joining the stones in the floors of bathrooms and lavatories in houses and elsewhere, also for the stone pavings of mosques and public buildings. It is made by crushing together, dry, with a black stone, lime (mīrāb) and ashes (ramzād). The lime varies in strength depending on its origin: Ḥadālih lime is strongest, and needs only two containers (tanak) to five containers of ashes, whereas three containers would be needed of Ḥabālih lime for the same quantity of ashes; the latter come from the public baths, i.e. they are ashes from burnt human faeces.

The khudr is mixed with water and kept for one or two weeks, during which time it ferments. It is then made into a heap, which is kept turned over every fortnight, while it is being drawn upon for use. The mixture remains good for any period from two weeks to three or four months.

Qadd is used for both waterproofing and to protect the surfaces on walls, for lining important water cisterns, drains and for roofs: on mosques and other important and expensive buildings. The manufacture of qadd is an extremely skilled and prolonged operation. Grit is taken from stones called ʿāshîsh, which can be ground very fine; these measures of it are mixed with two of the lime (mīrāb); it does not matter whether the lime is slaked or not. If the lime is very good, five measures of the ʿāshîsh are used. Water is added, and the mixture is crushed together by pounding with a black stone; then it is left to ferment for a week. This is done by a trained worker (ʿʿāmil) under the direction of the ʿtṣaṣa.

When the mature mixture is ready, the walls are washed very thoroughly with a brush, then a layer of the mixture is applied, being beaten into place with a black stone throughout the whole of a morning until noon, when it is made smooth. When work starts again in the afternoon it is beaten again until nightfall. It is described as very laborious work.

Patterns are introduced at the end of the first day, using the black stone, and following patterns which were made on a drawing on the preceding day, by the ʿtṣaṣa. After each beating on the following days the patterns are made again.

On the second day the same procedure is followed again, but for a little less time. On the third day, by which time it is beginning to dry, the same practice is repeated. Usually it is dry after the third day, after which the second layer can be applied and treated in the same way for a day and a half.

After waiting a day until the second layer is dry, a wash of plain lime is applied, and this is polished with a piece of pumice. The next day the application of lime wash with a brush, and its polishing with pumice is repeated. It is then left for a week and the same process is repeated with a more watery mixture of the lime (1:1). After it is finally dry, a brush with very smooth hairs is used to brush down the surface while throwing on water; this will make the surface go cream in colour. This is very slowly executed, and a good ʿtṣaṣa will do only 1 metre by 6 metres in one day. After one or two weeks the process is done again.

(Some workmen speed up this stage by using a thin layer of pure lime on top of the qadd; the resulting surface is much less resistant to the weather, and salts will attack it.)

In the last stage, makhkhh baqar is needed. (This is the narrow

The source limestone is quarried from huge caverns north east of Ṣan’ā’, near the village of al-Ghiras. (cf. Nazih, Ṣan’ā’ I, 133, II, 14 (± 1928). The two grades of plaster are quss mixed with grit and, in the best work, the burnt brick of the exterior of houses is protected with a coating of this lime plaster. Unburned brick may be protected with the same material or with the clay coating (milâjah).

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An Arabian Islamic City

obtained by breaking open the bones of cows and scraping it from inside them.) This is put on the qaḍād with a cloth or by hand. The wall absorbs it. (The tools for all this work consist only of very fine black stone and an iron spoon.)

Where the work has to be especially good and durable it is a practice to put a single layer of qaḍâd on the surface of the stone wall, and then break it away completely to obtain a good ground on the wall for the final qaḍâd.

In roofs, the qaḍâd is laid on top of a surface of small stones which have been put on top of the earth layer of the ceiling construction. It dries quickly because of the sun. A second layer is usually applied, but not a third layer as would be the case in the best walls.

Every year qaḍâd gets stronger and darker. It has to be repaired with more qaḍâd, and cement cannot be used, as it would be turned black by the qaḍâd.

In a poem complaining of the neglect of mosques and the misappropriation of ṭawaf revenues that should be devoted to this purpose, Qâṣî al-Jamâli ‘Ali b. Sâlih says,31

Do not leave our ṭawâf to the Inspector (Nâzir)
To spend on carpeting for the belvederes (manâzîr)
Whose house has come, through qaḍâd(i)

31 Masâjid, 3, 902.
Into fine trim, in spite of any qâfī. 32
He has cemented (qaḍḍafaq) the hall-passage (dîhliz) and stairs (dîrîj), Added much decoration and picked-out plaster ornament (fiلاعب), 33 Till it has become a marvel to be seen (li-l-nâṣīr) Resembling the shining stars.

Internally, the wall panel or skirting has lucerne and burnt dung-cake ash (al-qâsif wa-l-kibâ al-muharraq) also called al-kuwâf or ranj applied on top of the quss of the wall (not mixed with it)—this is because it keeps the warmth (yâhârah bi-l-harârah) being mu'tadilah (temperate). They have a mortar (mâdaqq) and take lucerne and charcoal (sûrd) or nowadays hajar al-îmmir (old car batteries?) and pound the mixture and apply it to the floor of the rooms (yifsassaw qâ 'ah al-amâkin). The qâsif-lucerne of the mixture is used to apply it like a brush.

Upper floors are made by laying heavy tree trunks and branches stripped of their bark as beams across the space between the walls—these beams are spaced about 60cm to one metre apart, the space being known as al-îmmir. Then thick bundles of small sticks (al-asâbî, haqq al-bayt) are placed spanning between these above them (pl.22.123), finishing with a fine layer of clay and plaster covered with stone slabs for the floor surface. The sticks are of tamarisk (almâh). Usually brought from al-Shu'ub, al-Sîrîr, Ghaymân, `Amid and other places, but sticks for this purpose are now sometimes brought by truck from the lower regions of the Hodeidah road where the price is cheaper. In 1972 these latter cost one and a quarter riylâh an ordinary bundle (hizmah) and two riylâh for a large one. Gypsum (quss) mortar is used for joining the stones of the ordinary floors. The covering of the roof with stone slabs or, sometimes nowadays with tiles, is known as bullâtah. To the ceilings (fi bain al-sagf) is applied the clay and straw paste called mi'âbah. The sofit is then plastered with gypsum plaster and white-washed, this operation being known as bullâtat al-saqf. A decoration of circles is often made in the plaster of the ceiling, called mâyâbah (literally 'trays' but explained as dâ'irah, circle) and in the corners (fi l-zuwaw/zawâwi, pi., of zâwiyah) half circles (nuns dâ'irah), in accordance with the extent of the ceiling, are drawn out with compasses (bikâr/firja1).

Roofs (jubâ, pl., ajbi/ajbiyah) have the same construction as floors, but the finish is hard lime plaster for waterproofing purposes, instead of stone. Alternatively it can be a mixture of grit and lime which is rolled over with a heavy stone after each rain. The waterproofing material may be obtained from an old house which is being demolished. In houses built of adobe a specially good type of clay used to keep out water is turâb Shu`ubî which is strong (matin).

32 He means that he flouts the law in misappropriation of waqf income.
33 Filâj tafj, explained as al-fatahât fi l-quss, the openings in plaster decoration.
Woodwork: Ceiling beams often come from local ‘ilb (jujube) trees. Door and window frames are simply made of local punab wood, or of imported African wood. They do not have elaborate jointing, but there is frequently a single pegged joint in each corner. External doors are made of wide planks fastened to rear rails with decorative-headed nails or studs. There is often a smaller central door which opens within the larger one. Large doors are usually fixed directly to the stone reveal, without a frame. Often the head of the opening is arched, but the door head is rectangular behind it. Sometimes there is an edge beading on the outside with a fretted inner edge or a panel of bas relief patterning (pl. 14.4). Where there is a pair of doors there will be al-Haymah al-Sharaf, Li’ah and al-Mahwit. Tih wood is used for ceiling beams. Benteak headed his list of imported timbers, commonly used for making frames (al-fayyur wa-sir-lawâl = fanah of Hadramawt). Other imported woods are pine (al-ashed) called rubik in Sana’, Jubashi, Afrindi (Malindi?) and now Kisi (Kenyan). Sâsam wood is nowadays said to come from Hajjah. For Carpenters see also Landberg, Hadramoût, 336.
The Houses of San'a'

Fig. 22.10 House G. One of the villa-type houses with a mofraj at ground level looking over a pool with fountains. Plan and section.

a central cover strip. This is decorated with an extended base and capital treatment as though it were a long thin column. Often the shaft has a shallow flute or two. The 'capital' and 'base' are frequently identical.

The traditional type of door is termed of the mash type, the vertical planks (lawh jamb lawh) held together by a series of horizontal bars, the vertical planks are known as jahlyiyats and the cross-bars as 'awârid. Another name for the latter is 'awâbir—in a door onto the street, the 'awâri are in front of the door (fi wâjihat al-bâb), but 'awâbir are bars behind a door (min qaf ). The topmost inside cross-bar is called râdif (pl., rawâdif).

Internal doors and shutters are framed with two, four or six panels per pair. The panels often have ornamental, fretted shapes framing them. Patterns in low relief are carved into the surfaces of the panels or fretted into thin veneers which are applied afterwards. Occasionally the panels are thick slabs or wood fielded. Lattice screens to projecting window boxes are either framed with sihouette fretted panels let into them (pl. 22.122) or made up of slats spaced apart crossed by other slats at right angles (shabâbik mukharramah) which can be Turki or 'Arabi and are something like mashhabiyah work. Water is placed in them to cool. Two-flap window shutters, the flap being called sharshuwah, (pl., sharâshû) or a window frame inset with a smaller window shutter, (tâgah ma`a shâqûs) are alternative designs.

Joinery: Joining wood seems to be called hashû, which in standard Arabic means that with which something is stuffed or filled. A jamb is also a bar of wood (a tenon) fitted into a hole (a mortice) cut out of another piece of wood, the whole being known as dhakar wa-uniha, male and female. There is a hashî 'Arabi and hashîa Turki.

In the diagram of a joinery door the frame is fayyârât, the jamb is the shâqûs (pl. shawâgis, Rossi. Term 353) are tiny windows with or without glass set in plaster or a small wooden door in big window shutters.

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Fixing the windows and doors is clearly felt by the carpenters to be a ticklish problem, and then unhooked from its hinges while the frame is fitted into the masonry of the building in its final position. Re-assembly takes only one or two minutes and the whole opening unit is finished. This is done by using a hinge which is essentially a hook nailed to the opening element, fitting into a ring on the outer frame. Two such hinges are fitted to each shutter and three to each door. As later adjustment is never necessary, screws are not used, the ring having a spike at one end which is nailed into the frame, the hook then being passed through it and its position carefully checked before it is nailed into the sash, shutter or door. A further advantage is that elements may afterwards be freely unhooked and removed for repair. The same type of hook and ring (khuttâf) is used as a latch for shutters and windows.

The metal furniture of the door is of iron 'tinned' with lead (hadâd muhâyâyq bi-`l-qâdîr al-abâyq = al-ra`qâf) and is of local production (mu`âjj kha officially). The hinge (khuttâf, pl. khatâpf) has a hook which catches in a ring (tâziz mahalî), and the door is further garnished with white ornamental nails (masamir musabbarah) on the `awâbir bars. The top of the door sometimes has a rîj khaâbah, i.e. a wooden piece projecting from the top of the door on the hinge side and set in the frame to act as an upper axis, while on the lower end of the opening element, a ring is set to act as a lower axis. The bolt can be pulled back on its cord from upstairs, without anyone needing to descend.

A sort of metal boss on doors is called pâbî or pâbâbah. An embossed metal boss on doors sometimes has a rîj khaâbah, i.e. a wooden piece projecting from the top of the door on the hinge side and set in the frame to act as an upper axis, while on the lower end of the opening element, a ring is set to act as a lower axis. The bolt can be pulled back on its cord from upstairs, without anyone needing to descend.

A sort of metal boss on doors is called pâbî or pâbâbah. A flat-shaped piece of iron tinned over serves as a door knocker, hanging on a ring and tapping against a large stud in the door (pl. 22.20). The knocker is decorated with hammered circular marks in patterns; it is usually mounted on a thick wooden backing, which is shaped in silhouette to a decorative profile. The knocker is used by families of the household to sound a distinctive knock peculiar to that house, after which the bolt can be pulled back on its cord from upstairs, without anyone needing to descend.

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Door knockers (madaqah): A flat-shaped piece of iron tinned over serves as a door knocker, hanging on a ring and tapping against a large stud in the door (pl. 22.20). The knocker is decorated with hammered circular marks in patterns; it is usually mounted on a thick wooden backing, which is shaped in silhouette to a decorative profile. The knocker is used by families of the household to sound a distinctive knock peculiar to that house, after which the bolt can be pulled back on its cord from upstairs, without anyone needing to descend.

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Window: The `aqd or circular or half-moon shaped window for light above the lower, shuttered window opening used to be made of alabaster (`aqd hajar/gamari, sing., gamariyyah) from al-Harrâb of Bani Jarmûz, shown on von Wissmann’s map as north of the airfield of al-Râbah. This is expensive and not much used nowadays as they say, ‘you have to search for the mines for a long time in order to find a suitable place.’

Imported glass is said to have killed the gamârî (al-zu`jî al-mustawwad a `dâm al-gamari), but coloured glass has been employed for some time (see p. 492a); in the `aqd zu`jî; it is said to have been originally imported from Syria or Iraq. Sometimes nowadays where glass with moulded relief patterns (al-zu`jî al-hafarad/al-tharî) or coloured shajari panes with moulded patterns are used, and even more recently coloured plastic panes which are less attractive.

Window tracery is made by a special craftsman in a workshop away from the building site. A slab of gypsum plaster is laid out 4 or 5cm thick on a flat board which is slightly larger than the size of the window. Before this has set a pattern is sketched on it, mostly by eye, a slab of plaster slightly smaller than the space between the lines. When the slabs have been removed on either side of all the lines the pattern is left behind in plaster ribs about 1cm wide on face, 4 or 5cm deep and 2cm wide at base, resting on the setting-out board (pl. 22.127). After a final trimming this gypsum plaster tracery is left on the board for two or three days until it is quite dry and strong. If the tracery is to be fitted with coloured glass, another board is placed on top, the whole is turned upside down, and the back board is removed. Pieces of coloured glass are then cut roughly to the shape of each space in the tracery and laid in position. Finally, another 4 or 5cm of gypsum plaster is laid over the whole window, and cut into the same pattern before it is dry. The skill of these window makers enables them to remember the position in which they should place the knife to make the cut correctly for each part of the pattern. Apprentices make the cut slightly into the spaces, which gives them latitude for error, but this is slower as each bar of the tracery then has to be pared down until it is the correct thickness. When the window is completely dry two or three days later, it is strong and solid and can be carried to the building site for fitting into place. Even the single openwork tracery, unglazed, is amazingly strong and resistant to shocks; it can be carried and is used for the outer tracery screens of the windows, in which position it is apparently capable of surviving for several centuries.

The cost of a large tracery window in coloured glass was always very high, the figure quoted in 1974 being 5,000 rûfî ( = £500). Much of the finest work in qâyṣ plaster windows was done by Jewish craftsmen before the mass emigration of 1949–50. Occasionally a projecting water-cooling box was made in qâyṣ tracery—there is, for example, one on a house near Bâb al-Shu`ûb.

Stability: The thickness of the walls of the San‘î houses decreases gradually as the building rises in height. Nevertheless, the walls at their base seldom exceed 70cm thick, and the daring of the architects in building houses which are often more than twenty-five metres high remains surprising. Although collapses have been known, they are rare and usually limited to the outer wall nearest the street. This seems to support the theory that the real strength of the house lies in the staircase, the massive central pier joined to its outer wall by beams and stone steps constituting a braced structure usually more than four metres by five metres which serves to stabilize the remainder of the house. This is supplemented by the system of division of the building into sections, each approximately three metres wide, by crosswalls, described on p. 468b.

The wooden bands running around the houses at lower levels must also contribute considerably to their stability.

Proportion: San‘î builders prefer proportions derived from the perfect square, either singly or in multiples. Square windows and shutters are common. Usually, square doors are too wide, and then 3:2 is the favoured proportion. Important rooms are normally square in cross-section, and either two or three squares in plan.

Decoration

External decoration consists in the ornament on the door itself, already discussed, the ornament around the door, the friezes and decorative patterning of the upper wall surfaces, and symbols attached to parts of the exterior.

Ornament around the door has clearly changed with time. The oldest house doorway known, a blocked doorway on house M in the Tallah Quarter (fig. 22.12), has a single stone lintel capping the door opening, which is flanked by curious blank trefoil arches in two colours of stone, red and yellow. A wooden beam spans is because it gives them far more trouble than the actual carpentry itself.

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The Houses of San`a'

22.109 House at Rawdah. The house seen across the pool. Note the first mafraj at its base.

22.110 House at al-Rawdah. The second, separate, mafraj.

22.111 Another low mafraj in a house outside the walled city of San`a'.

22.112 A nôbah. Exterior view.

22.113 A nôbah, seen from below looking up.

across the top of the stone lintel, and this is decorated with patterns of studs and nails. On it rests a frieze of flush triangular stones, alternately yellow and red, below a wooden strip which runs right around the house. Above this is a plain band of stonework and then a band of intricately fretted stones in alternating colours, the same width as the lintel. Two courses up, beyond this frieze on either side, are two projecting bosses carrying what appear to be bulls' heads, like those above the north west doorway of the Great Mosque (p. 346b). Finally, a course above them, there are three slit windows, the central one with a fretted head in scalloping, and the outer two with pointed heads.

Older houses have very little ornament around the doorway, simply a number of vertical slits ending in curved or pointed arches in an area of the wall above the door. These, of course, light in the entrance hall (pl. 48).

House S, also reputedly a very old house, has a curious parabolic relieving arch above the flattened arch over the entrance door. This frames a stone panel containing three vertical slit

38 They resembled the bulls' heads projecting from pre-Islamic buildings in South Arabia as water-spouts.
windows. As in the case of the slits described above, these have the shape of their heads emphasized by a double frame made of grooves carved in the stonework. It seems possible that the upper arch was part of a pointed arch decoration which was executed in plaster and has since been stripped off.

The typical door treatment of a large fine house (pls. 22.69 and 130) has an outer ashlar frame surrounding the ashlar frame of the street door. This outer frame steps in just above door height, the steps being carried by a moulding of two circular bosses carved in the stone; the frame then continues up to become a high circular arch containing a thin stone wall or slab pierced with a large number (eight or ten) of vertical slits with semicircular or pointed heads. The curious moulding of two circular bosses may derive from a conventionalized Ionic capital of the type shown in pl. 15.36, or, more likely, it is an expression of an old practice or reinforcing the wall at this point with several headers made of wood logs built into the stonework, which may still be seen in a few houses.

The outer edge of the ashlar frame of the upper arch is narrower than the frame at door level, because of the stepping-in mentioned above. The lower vertical lines are usually carried up across the stonework of the lower wall, which may still be seen in a few houses. Other houses have occasional abstract or emblematic patterns and motifs which are taken from those used in the horizontal bands (pls. 82 and 130). Older patterns which are less frequently seen include a series of ≈ shapes, ≈ shapes, or the two used together in varied combinations. There are also lozenge ◦ shapes, sometimes with an infilling of a smaller ◦.

Older houses have upper windows for light, above their shuttered openings, which are made of one, two or more large circles (originally filled with alabaster, see above, but in some cases afterwards renewed with coloured glass). The circles are often contained in a decorative frame which resembles an arched window; the solid areas between the circles are then ornamented with motifs which are taken from those used in the horizontal bands (pls. 82 and 22.130). Often these upper fanlights occur over a space between two shuttered windows, as in the case of five fanlights over only three openings. Then the frame of the fanlight is extended down over the blank wall below and the empty space filled with a sizable area of decoration. Although these areas are genetically the same as the horizontal patterns, they are the richest and most imaginatively decorated in the whole wall surface. Occasionally a lattice effect is produced, not unlike a pierced screen, while other surfaces resemble hanging necklaces or festoons, although they follow straight and not curved lines (pls. 22.129 and 130).

The decoration in fired brick (naqshat yūjūr) which forms the cornice of a Šan`ā’ house is named from the fact that it is normally half-brick in thickness. By breaking the continuous zigzag lines and joining parallel lines together to make V and W shapes an almost infinite number of varied patterns are made (pls. 82 and 84). Loops are sometimes introduced at the points of the zigzag lines, well executed in cut brick, and in older houses these harmonize with the circular windows which used to be fashionable above shutters (pls. 77 and 83). If the loops appear above a single zigzag, foreign observers have remarked that the pattern resembles a row of ibex heads, but such symbolism is probably unintentional. Another variation introduces diamond shapes in the interstices between the zigzags (pl. 18). Older patterns which are less frequently seen include a series of ≈ shapes, ≈ shapes, or the two used together in varied combinations. There are also lozenge ◦ shapes, sometimes with an infilling of a smaller ◦.

Stars are often introduced; eight pointed stars are common, and five pointed stars are known. But the most interesting of the star patterns frequently found is the shield of David; this six-pointed star, formed of two crossed triangles, adopted as a common Jewish symbol in the Middle Ages, and universally recognised as such in modern times, occurs not only on houses known to have been Jewish in the al-Qā’ quarter, but is sometimes found emblazoned centrally above the doorway of houses in the old city. One of these houses is accepted by local scholars and by the present owners as a house built more than 350 years ago by Jews, before their expulsion from the old city (Bayt al-Ghurbāni, Hārat al-‘Alam, pis. 22.136 and 137). Several other houses in the same area which have the shield of David prominently displayed retain architectural peculiarities (see below) which make it probable that they are remodellings of Jewish houses originally built before 1660. But the fact remains that this decorative feature is incorporated in houses, and even in a few mosques, where it was clearly disassociated from any Jewish significance. This so-called Shield of David is known as Khāṣṭam Sulaymān, Solomon’s Seal, in Šan`ā’. It was said that the Arabs only learned of its significance as a symbol for the Jews after they had left the Yemen, and they considered its employment as a decorative motive in their houses

to be a Jewish trick. It may well, however, be a pattern of some antiquity, not specifically Jewish.

Not part of a pattern, but sometimes found on the corners of houses about seven metres above street level, are symbolic snakes. In country areas these are sometimes executed in iron, and project from the corners. But on the old buildings in 

[Algeria] which retain them they are carved in relief on stone. House B has three superimposed coiled snakes on the south corner (pl. 22.56) and three on the north. There are two sorts of snake, it is said, the hanash made in black stone which is malevolent (sharr) to keep off an enemy, and the hanash in white stone that is beneful (khayr).

Another feature occasionally found in 

[Algeria] houses is a pair of ibex horns projecting from one or more corners high up on the building.

The arched panels of the upper windows are usually framed by double arches, one inside the other. The origin of this characteristic feature may lie in the frequent practice of reducing the size of the fanlight over the shuttered opening to correspondingly diminish the size of the sheet of abaster or the panel of coloured glass necessary in the opening. An alternative explanation is that the span of the arched opening is reduced in this way for structural reasons. Certainly the two arches are stronger than one, but then the inner arch stands on the head of the shuttered opening below. Unless one can accept that there is a corbelling principle operating here, which seems unlikely in view of the way the bricks are laid, or that the wooden beam which usually acts as a lintel to the shuttered opening is strong enough to transfer the loads of the imposed coiled snakes on the south corner (p1. 22.56) and three on the north.

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[Algeria] houses is a pair of ibex horns projecting from one or more corners high up on the building.

Besides simple arches, trefoil arches and those with an arch rising out of a flat head (pl. 77) are found, particularly as heads to blank brickwork panels and frames around clusters of kitchen ventilating holes. Blank brick panels also commonly have corbelled heads. Pointed arches are seldom seen, and then only in a few very old buildings.

Parapet is of two kinds. If low, they are expressed on the facade as wide bands of decorative ornament, resembling those which separate the storeys below. If the parapet is high it is often pierced to allow people behind it to see out. Or at any rate it will include a pierced masonry water cooling box which projects from the facade. The external expression of a high parapet is usually to treat it as a series of blank panels with arched heads, and with the frames outlined in limewash. Occasionally the panelling is decorated with patterns, and more rarely, ornamental circular decorations as well (pls. 71, and 22.54).

In houses of the Middle Ages in the Byzantine empire. The double arches are usually linked at the top, often with a pointed fillet. There is frequently another pointed fillet above the outside arch, and occasionally flanking half dhurah shoots or fleur-de-lis decorations as well (pl. 71, and 22.54).

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Internal decoration is of two types, the abaster-plaster dado used to embellish entrance halls, storerooms, the first living floor and sometimes the divan floor of the older and finer houses, and the plaster bas-relief decorations of the main reception rooms.

Two types of pattern were most commonly used in the former, the dhurah shoot pattern, resembling the fleur-de-lis, and a key pattern, a simplified form of the Hellenistic pattern found on ancient decorated stones in South Arabia. The latter, bas-relief decoration, has a variety of detail but a general character which again seems related to the ancient vine ornamentation commonly found on pre-Islamic decorations in the area (pls. 18.21, 27).

The Age of the Houses

The Age of the Surviving Houses

The upper storeys of 

[Algeria] houses are generally more recent than the lower parts. There are various reasons for this; the thickness of the walls diminishes as the buildings rise in height, and at the same time the window areas are larger, leaving smaller pieces of brickwork to undergo weathering, wind stresses and cracking; 

[Algeria] builders are faced with the problem of wadi which is hard to distinguish from work of the last century. So stylistic criteria are not very reliable guides to age. Some reception rooms are dated e.g. house B, which has a mafraj dated 1322/1904-5. These permit the conclusion that many top storeys date from before the beginning of the century. But in most cases, we have to resort to the oral tradition and to documentation. The latter is weak because it does not as a rule specify which part of the house was built at which time, although in any case few documents have been seen by the present authors, as is discussed further below. Oral tradition asserts that a number of the older houses have upper reception rooms more than one hundred years old.

The Age of the lower storeys, that is the entrance levels, the storerooms, the first living floor and sometimes the divan floor is often considerable. Techniques for establishing the age include documentation, stylistic change, and family tradition.

Documentation exists in the form of house deeds (ba'ilah, pl. ba'tilir). That is, deeds of grant or sale of the property; and there are also wills, which often describe the property and the building. Although owners of houses frequently divulge the dates on these documents, they are generally loath to produce them for the perusal of strangers, so that their word has to be accepted on dating. Occasionally it was possible to obtain the corroboration of reliable old men who had read the documents. Using this somewhat unsatisfactory evidence, the oldest house found was in Hârat al-Alami near the Al-Azhar Mosque, which was attested by two independent sources to the 6th/12th century. (One source

40 Qâdi 'Isâ', a former slave of the families of 

[Algeria], reports that snakes are represented on buildings as talismans against live snakes. Other such talismans existed in the 4th/10th century, for 

[Roman], Tosi, 2001, 52 says, 'There are several types of Additional notes, including the names of the building owners and the date of construction.

41 Cf. Rathjens, Sabaeica I, fig. 74.

42 Although owners of houses frequently divulge the dates on these documents, they are generally loath to produce them for the perusal of strangers, so that their word has to be accepted on dating. Occasionally it was possible to obtain the corroboration of reliable old men who had read the documents. Using this somewhat unsatisfactory evidence, the oldest house found was in Hârat al-Alami near the Al-Azhar Mosque, which was attested by two independent sources to the 6th/12th century. (One source

43 Qâdi 'Hasan', Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, and Qâdi 'Ali Abul'Rijal, Deputy Minister of Public Works.

487
believed that it could be as much as two centuries earlier than this.\textsuperscript{44} Strangely enough, the lower levels of this house are built of coursed clay and unbaked brick plastered on a rubble foundation (pl. 22.131); it has small circular windows; the surviving upper-most storey is clearly a recent replacement.

Bayt Sarhat al-Wardi, near Bb Shu’ub, is by the same evidence dated to the 9th/15th century. Bayt Dhulal in Bir al-`Azab, although the topmost storeys were destroyed in the sack of 1948, is mostly from the 10th/16th century. Then there is a number of houses for which documents are said to exist dating them to the 11th/17th and later centuries. House B (fig. 22.6; pls. 22.53-62) near Sūq al-Milj, belongs to the early 11th/17th century, although the whole rear block was added later, and the present mafraj is dated 1322/1904-5. House H (fig. 22.6; pls. 22.53-62) in the Sakhrah district, belongs to the third quarter of the 11th/17th century.

For the remainder of the houses it is necessary to revert to oral tradition. But since most of them have remained in the same family for centuries, and are part of quarters for which a good deal of traditional history is known by the local inhabitants, this evidence cannot be entirely valueless, providing several independent witnesses are carefully selected and questioned. Following this technique, the oldest houses are said to survive in the Gharqat al-Qalis quarter near the citadel, one of which, a small house, is pointed out as dating from the 5th/11th century, while other old houses are found in the adjoining Ĥaraj Zabārah. In the latter quarter, the ruined lower storeys of house S (fig. 22.5; pls. 22.43-52) are said to date from the late 8th/14th century, house BT (fig. 22.9; pls. 22.98-100, 102) from 896/1509,\textsuperscript{45} house A (fig. 22.9, pls. 22.88-97) from the 12th/18th century. In other parts of San`ā', house M (pl. 22.104) at Filayhi is two hundred years old, the top three

\textsuperscript{44} The former.
\textsuperscript{45} Three independent sources gave this precise date.
floors added fifty years ago. House JY (fig. 22.8; pls. 22.69-76) in al-Abhar quarter has the same history. House N (fig. 22.3; pls. 22.19-24) near Bab al-Salam, is said to be one of the oldest houses surviving in the area, and to date from the early 11th/17th century. House W (fig. 22.1; pis. 22.2-18), in al-Humaydi quarter, is more than a century old, the topmost room having been subsequently rebuilt. House AA, near the Sid'ah, is a relatively modern house built about seventy years ago (pl. 22.78).

Several houses appear in early Turkish photographs taken in the nineteenth century (e.g. pl. 22.133) which belong to a type which has disappeared, except for the single example of the oldest datable house, in Hārat al-'Alami, mentioned above, of which the old part is only that preserved on the lower levels. The photographs show high houses of baked brick above ashlar stone lower levels. Their distinctive feature is that the lights above the shuttered windows are single circular openings let into the smooth surface of the wall without any surrounding frame to link them to the windows below. Similar circular lights in mosques seem to be earlier than the 11th/17th century, and probably belong to an ancient type. Their resemblance to the high 'false' lights of the outside walls of the 3rd/9th century mosques of Samarra is striking.

Stylistic dating is not very valuable for dating houses built less than three hundred years ago. Clearly the rate of change of style was extremely slow until recent times. Nevertheless it is possible to point to some features that date a house as relatively old. Stepped stonework went out of use a hundred years ago, according to stonemasons, and is likely to have been rarely used for quite a long period before that. Associated with it in most cases are large beams built into the stonework, whereas more modern buildings either do not have them at all, or have only a few of moderate thickness. Entrance doors in old houses have frequently become sunken (e.g. house F, fig. 22.8; pls. 22.79-87) and one has to descend three or four steps from street level into the ground level of the houses. Older houses, such as the reputed oldest house in Gharqat al-Qals referred to above, have new entrance doors and new ground floor levels, because the street has risen so much that the original door lintel is now only a few centimetres above the road surface. Unusual wooden doors of apparently great age are sometimes seen.

The evolution of windows can be easily read from the buildings themselves, although there is as yet no certain means of dating the earliest. The latter have tracery in brick or stone instead of tracery in gypsum sheets, and naturally much smaller openings in any fanlight (pl. 22.132, top windows). There are not many of these left in Ṣan`ā', but more in towns which reached their apogee in the Middle Ages and have declined since, such as Thulā (important in the 3rd/9th to 9th/15th centuries). The antiquity of alabaster windows is well authenticated (see below). The oldest seem to have been single circular windows, as has already been observed; but pairs of circular windows, one above the other, held in a single, arched frame were also of great antiquity. In houses more than one hundred years old another type of window can be seen. This is a wide semicircular arch opening into the lobby of the dīwan level. Sometimes there are windows set back one and a half to two metres, to provide a small balcony. In other cases there is a projecting masonry box for water jars below, and the window is set back slightly in its wide arch. The window is either made up of three circles in early plate tracery, or of several large sheets of alabaster butted together to provide a single surface (pls. 22.133-135). Houses which are reputedly old have noticeably more

46 The oldest datable alabaster windows are those of the Shibām mosque, which were apparently installed to protect the fine ceiling from damage in the early tenth century. Ronald Lewcock & G. R. Smith. "Two Early Mosques in the Yemen", AARP, London, 1973, IV.

22.118 Construction of a house: A stoneworker expertly shaping a tapered building stone with a square face which will show when built into the wall.


22.120 Construction of a house. A brick field, with the bricks, shaped in a wooden mould, laid to dry in the sun before firing in the kilns in the background.
22.121 Construction of a house. Detail of a house front, showing the decorative technique against the background of stone and brick.

22.122 Construction of a house. A projecting screened wooden window in which water jars are kept to cool.

22.123 Construction of a house. Laying the twigs across the beams of a ceiling. A thick layer of clay on the twigs serves as a sub-floor for the stone paving.
alabaster windows than recent buildings. Coloured glass was originally inserted in very small pieces into a slab of gypsum plaster, to judge by the oldest examples (e.g. the house near the citadel, and pl. 86). This technique resembles closely that used in the windows of the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem.

47 Nazih, Rihlah, 176. ‘I passed by some of the places where I saw great alabaster (marwar) stones being sawn into fine transparent plates (alwâh) with special sharp saws. San‘a’ to the exclusion of anywhere else in the world, is distinguished by the craft (majâ‘iyyah) because alabaster is used for window glass only in San‘a’.’ Cf. Ibid, II, 14.
48 Creswell 5, plate 3. The earliest examples known in the Yemen are those of the Ashrafiyah mosque in Ta‘izz, late 7th or 8th/late 13th or 14th century, where they both survive and are represented in blind windows as part of the stucco decoration. Ronald Lewcock & G. R. Smith, ‘Three medieval mosques in the Yemen’, Oriental Art, London, 1974, XX.

49 Paulus Silentiarius’s description of Sancta Sophia.
50 Khirbat al-Mafjar, ca. 136/740; Mausoleum of the ‘Abbasid Caliphs, Cairo; 7th/13th century.

The antiquity of coloured glass in Islamic architecture is beyond dispute. It was used in Christian Constantinople in the sixth century A.D. and presumably it was under Byzantine influence that it passed into Arab buildings. The earliest coloured glass in San‘a’ is that in the Qubbat Talhah, which is in
The Antiquity of the Type of Tower House Founded in Ṣan‘ā’

High houses existed in the Yemen in pre-Islamic times. A Himyarite inscription in Ta‘izz Museum refers to the construction of a house with “six floors and six ceilings.” A stone of unknown provenance shows a graffito of a house with nine storeys. That the great Ṣan‘ā’ palace of Ghumdan actually existed is attested in inscriptions and in many Islamic histories. It had at least seven high storeys, improbably as many as thirteen, and even twenty, more improbably still, and its total height awed all the historians. Reports of its height vary—one account says it was 200 cubits.

It was a square building with its four walls each executed in a different coloured stone; there was a special room at the top “with windows” each fitted into a frame (“door”) of marble, which in turn was held “in a jamb made of teak and ebony.” The ceiling of this upper room was variously described as being of “one large slab of marble,” i.e. of alabaster, so that [the shadow of] birds flying past might be seen. A high mound opposite the south east door of the Great Mosque, the top of which is actually the highest point of ground of the old city, is thought by both Islamic scholars and archaeologists to be formed of the ruins of this building. It was possibly erected in the mid-3rd century A.D. and destroyed on the orders of ʿUthmān, the third Orthodox Caliph, in the 1st/7th century.

The appearance of the pre-Islamic house in the Yemen almost certainly inspired the Axumite architectural style recorded in the great stelae of Axum, which are variously thought to date from the third and fourth or fifth and sixth centuries A.D. These include a number of features typical in the Ṣan‘ā’ houses described above. They have the same formal symmetry, with one great entrance door (fig. 22.12). There are no windows on the ground floor, but small windows clearly express a storage mezzanine above it. The first large windows, marking the first living floor, occur above that. The windows are made up in the same way as the Ṣan‘ā’ windows. That is, there are wooden shuttered openings shown below, and over each a fanlight with a single large sheet of material serving as glazing. The top floors are indicated as having bands of wood encircling the houses, of the type that still survive in the coastal buildings of the Red Sea in the Yemen and Sa‘udi Arabia, where rubble stone and clay are widely used in high buildings, as they were in Axum, and in Southern Anatolia.

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(e.g. houses N, NT, S, H and possibly M). However, there is some slight evidence that separate mafraj rooms on the roof were built much earlier, see below.

22.128 External gypsum tracery, in two layers, in front of internal gypsum tracery fanlight.
The first description of San'ā' houses in Islamic times occurs in Ibn Rustah's Kitāb al-Ādq al-naḍisah, written ca. 290-300/903-913. He says that there are 'good dwellings (manāzil), some above others', presumably meaning that they rise up behind each other to obtain the view and sun. 'Most of them are adorned with gypsum (ṣajj), baked bricks (şütr), and symmetrical stones. Some have foundations of gypsum and baked bricks, while the rest have beautiful symmetrical stone. Some of the ground floors are constructed with gypsum and baked brick, some with [simply] gypsum. Most of the roofs (ṣâh) are covered with pebbles on account of San'ā's rains.'

Al-Hamdâni, (ob. 330/943) includes several references to San'ā' houses. One 62 compares high mud towers (âtâm) with the dwellings of San'ā' 'because of their height'. Another 63 refers to excellent sanitation: 'The least dwelling there has a well or two, a garden and long cess-pits separate from each-other, empty of ordure (aḥdâ), without smell or evil odours because of the hard concrete (al-qaḍā al-sulb), and fine pasture land and clean place(s) to walk. A lavatory (mustarâh) of these passes by inheritance from one to another over the centuries without being uncovered or swept.' The implication is that lavatories do not need to be drained or cleaned.

Al-Râzi, (ob.460/1073) describes the area around the Jabbānah during the `Abbâsid rule of San'ā' (138-248/755-862): 64 'the houses were upon the road right and left [of the single door of the Jabbānah], stretching up to the sky, with dwelling places and high rooms (ghuraf) of the most splendid construction and most beautiful workmanship. They were the most imposing of the dwellings (manāzil) of San'ā'—they were the dwelling places of such governors as came from Iraq, and their entourage of those governors who had accompanied them, along with merchants and men of wealth, substance and easy circumstances who dwelt there. The shade of the musâllâ and the Jabbānah came from a shadow extending from those houses upon the right and left because of the height of their ceilings and the loftiness of the building . . . They had fashioned rings of brass 65 like a hollow statue (muṭḥâ) in the form of a bull. On each of these doors there was a ring of brass like this statue. When any of them was struck with [the ring] it gave out a sound and a strong echo.'

Of the houses of San'ā' generally, al-Râzi says that they were 'tall and imposing and many had high prices'. 66

Ibn Baṭṭûṭah, who visited San'ā', probably in 718/1311, wrote that it was 'a large and well constructed city, built with bricks and plaster'. 67

The first European visitor to describe the houses was John Jourdain, who in 1609 saw 'many faire houses'. 68 Sir Henry Middleton in 1611 found the town built `of stone and lime'. 69 Niebuhr described the houses in 1763 using the terms we use

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61 Ed. M. J. de Goeje, Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum, VII, Leiden, 1897, 409. One should probably understand that the ground floors are sun-dried brick and gypsum.
62 Syrârà, 239-40. See Ibn Quraysh, Kitâb al-Āḏq al-naḍisah, ed. de Goeje, Leiden, 1904, 225-6, for a man building an âṯâm in San'ā'.
63 Al-Ikíl VIII, ed. al-Kirmili, 2.
64 Th rikh, 90 seq.
65 Cf. Anum stele.
66 Râzî, 111-2.
68 Cf. p. 108b.
69 Cf. p. 108b.
today, and published the earliest known illustration of them, a drawing of a house in Bir al-`Azab which is in the style still in use, with the natural exception of large glass sashes behind the shutters in the upper windows which were introduced within the last century. 70 Cruttenden’s drawings of 1836 71 are quite recognisable. The oldest photographs of houses (pls. 10.14-16 and pl. 22.133) show that the general style in use in the late nineteenth century has continued unchanged to the present day, although there were a few ancient houses still surviving then, as is mentioned above. 72 Since the war and Egyptian occupation from 1962-68 there have been many modern innovations, the use of concrete, steel doors, larger windows, a tendency to prefer low villas to the tower houses of the old city, and the use of bright colours in decoration. Nevertheless the old crafts and the traditional building styles retain their popularity and are everywhere still in use.

70 Cf. p. 442a.
71 Cf. p. 111b.
72 Cf. Ibid and pl. 9.5.
The Houses of San’a’

22.133 A Turkish photograph from the late nineteenth century showing a San’a’ house of an early type which no longer survives. The upper window are single circles of alabaster. (University Library, Istanbul).

22.134 Windows of a type once fashionable contained inside a large arch.

22.135 Large arch fanlights used to light the central lobby on the upper floors of an old house.

22.136 House G1, in San’a’, believed to be an early seventeenth century Jewish house in the old city.

The Origin of the San’ā’ Type of Tower House

The San’ā’ house belongs to a type which does not differ in its essential concepts throughout north and south Yemen,\(^{73}\) with the exception of the Red Sea coast. In the latter area there are two distinct types of house. One is single storeyed with a front courtyard, conforming to ancient Egyptian, East African, Omani and Persian precedents. The other is high, like the Yemeni house of the highlands, but its construction and pattern of distribution of windows of a type once fashionable contained inside a large arch.

rooms are sufficiently different to allow us to consider it as a separate type. It belongs to the world of the Red Sea trading cities, ultimately linking up with the houses of Mecca and Medina through Jeddah; this type also occurs on the other side of the Red Sea, in such towns as Suakin/Sawakin.74

The houses of the Yemeni highlands extend further north to include the areas that were anciently part of the Yemen, particularly Najran. Here, although there are minor differences, the concept of the house is essentially identical with that of San‘â’. In the northern Hijaz the Yemeni pattern of living does not occur, although the houses are still high square blocks without proper courtyards; it is possible that in the remote past the two types of house shared a common ancestor.

It is abundantly clear that the Yemeni highland house has no links at all with courtyard houses of ancient type, which occurred in antiquity in basically the same form from Spain and Morocco to Mesopotamia.

The Yemen highland house therefore appears unique, a product of Arabia and probably of South Arabia itself.

The only qualification which needs be made to this statement is that, since ordinary houses are usually stylistically the descendants of the palaces of a preceding generation, there may prove to have been some mutual interaction between the ancient palaces of the Axumite empire in Ethiopia and those of Southern Arabia, a problem that awaits further archaeological excavation in both countries.

The Jewish House

There were large numbers of Jews living in the Yemen from the pre-Islamic era. At the time of the emigration of 1949 to 1950 they constituted roughly a fifth of the population of San‘â’, dwelling in al-Qâs to the west of Bir al-`Azab, but largely working during the daytime in the old city as craftsmen, merchants or builders.

75 Temple of Allât at Ram, mid 2nd c. A.D.; temples at Gerassa, theatre and baths at Philippopolis.
76 Sir H.W. Bailey, personal communication.
77 Cf. p. 391.
The history of the Jews in Ṣan`ā' has already been studied. They appear to have lived unsegregated from Muslims throughout the old city until in 1066/1679 they were moved away to near the Red Sea coast. A year or so later they were permitted to return to Ṣan`ā' though no longer to dwell within the old walls, but instead, they were allowed to settle next to the Bawniyah quarter, which seems to have been a village already established for more than a century. The area of al-Q’ built up by them soon had its own narrow sûq and, in 1906, more than thirty synagogues.

Before the Jews emigrated from Ṣan`ā' their houses were visited and studied by a number of scholars, which resulted in the publication in 1957 of *Jewish Domestic Architecture in Ṣan`ā', Yemen* by Carl Rathjens. Subsequently, the son of the Chief Rabbi of Yemen, Joseph Qâfih, published in Hebrew, *Jewish Life in Ṣan`ā*,

As the Jews left, their houses were taken over by Muslims, who usually proceeded to live in them making only the most minor changes. Thus it is possible to study many of the houses today, measuring them, and producing accurate plans and sections for the first time. This work also enables some conclusions to be reached which differ slightly from those of the earlier studies.

House J (fig. 22.13; pls. 22.138-42) is a relatively small house in a street close to the centre of al-Q’. It does not differ in any substantial way from the largest houses of the quarter, which simply proliferate the number of rooms and apartments, and have a larger courtyard or courtyards to make this possible.

The essential difference between the Jewish house and the Islamic house was that the former had as its focus a courtyard from which all the main rooms opened on the roof. A second peculiarity was the Jewish practice of arranging the rooms around the courtyard so that two were seldom on the same level, the principal entertaining room being highest, the divān next, and so on downwards until the kitchen was below the level of the courtyard and the lavatory lower still. This involved small flights of stairs before each doorway leading up or down.

The explanations given for both these features are religious. The need for a courtyard was explained to Goitein: ‘According to strict Jewish law, during the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated for seven days in September-October, a man should not only take all his meals in a room covered only with branches of a tree or similar light material, but also sleep in it.’ The courtyard made possible

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77 See chap. 20.


79 Jerusalem, 1957.

80 Jerusalem, 1966.
this temporary construction, but Goitein adds, 'in order that the light material covering the tabernacle should not be blown away by the winds', one had to build a screen wall around the courtyard, called a kuwwabah. The screen wall was sometimes pierced with a projecting masonry box for water jars, and even by areas of gypsum tracery contained in arches.

The hierarchy of levels around the courtyard probably has something to do with the first explanation. That is, as the courtyard served to house the tabernacle during a brief period each year, it became a sacred place for that time, and no room could be exactly on a level with it. In particular the lavatory and bathroom had to be below it, as they were in the synagogue. The extra height given to the entertaining room is due to the necessity of giving it a view.

The front door openings of Jewish houses are usually simple rectangular constructions in large blocks of stone, like the oldest houses in the old city. Jewish door knockers are frequently like Islamic ones, but there is also the use of a ring as a knocker, recalling the type mentioned by the historians (p. 493).

House J has a single door from the street into a stone-paved lobby which has two short flights of stairs down to right and left into stables; also on the right is the long flight leading upstairs while straight ahead is a short flight leading down to the lowered ground floor under the courtyard and the rooms on either side of it.

Entering the large open central space of the lowered ground floor, there is a room containing stone hand-mills raised on stone sockets on the left, a second storeroom with shelves next to it, while on the right there are two storerooms, through one of which one enters the garden which adjoins the house, the latter was probably the workshop of the Jewish house. A third room is entered only from the garden, and was once perhaps the room used by the Jews for the distillation of brandy.

Above, the staircase disgorges onto the open courtyard (hijrah). On the right (south) a short flight of three steps leads up to al-makān al-kabīr, the equivalent of the Islamic diwan in both design and function. This Jewish room differs from the diwan only in occasionally having a raised masonry bench at one end, a frowān. Next to this room on the right in house J is a low bathroom (with-

81 Ibid. 6.
82 The Jews from Yemen continue this practice to this day. This information and the translation of Joseph Qâfih's Jewish Life in Sana' is.
83 The explanation given for this feature by Rathjens (p. 14) does not conform with the houses studied here.
84 There is an unaccounted for space between the ceiling of this storeroom and the floor of the large room above. Such spaces were kept by the Jews as low storage places entered through a hole in the ceiling which was afterwards plastered over. Cf. Rathjens, op. cit., and Qâfih, op. cit. Similar hiding places for valuable goods were sometimes built into Islamic houses.
86 Cf. p. 455a.
out a lavatory) which is down two steps.

On the other side of the courtyard, the left (north), there is the main reception room, raised so that it has to be approached up a flight of five steps. Under it is a kitchen, entered by descending two steps. Further away (east) there is a small room for general use, two steps above the courtyard.

On the same side of the courtyard as the staircase (west) there is a second living room three steps up, with a scullery (sâhil) underneath for washing dishes: the latter is entered from the kitchen. Entered from the other side of the kitchen, and placed under the small courtyard room, is a storeroom without windows, used as a larder.

The floors of the main rooms in a Jewish house were made of a beaten bed of clay and pebbles (qâdâq), and not generally of the stone paving used in Islamic houses.

Frequently the doors opening from the courtyard have a small timber ledge above them to shed the rain.

The open courtyard has a drained floor on the south east corner for washing clothes, dishes and, on sunny days, even small children. It is screened from its neighbours and the wind by a high wall penetrated by a masonry cooling box for water jars. Warm water for washing was obtained by the Jews by leaving water in big brass bowls standing in the sun. There were usually aromatic plants growing in pots along the screen wall.

The lavatory is not, in this house, approached from the courtyard, which is in many other cases, but from a landing halfway up the staircase; this takes it even further than usual below courtyard level.

The Jewish houses of al-Qâ' are not built of squared ashlar stonework and baked brick, but of the common rural building materials, rubble stonework, unbaked brick and coursed clay. These materials are usually plastered over with clay plaster reinforced with chaff or an admixture of animal dung. This surface looks very fine indeed as long as it is annually renewed, and has the advantage that it forms an impervious skin over every-thing underlying it. So these materials, with translucent alabaster panels set into them for windows (pl. 22.138) may not necessarily have been used in al-Qâ' because the Jews were uncertain whether they might be moved out again and lose almost everything, as had happened in 1066/1679. Instead, they may have been chosen because they had discovered the technique of building with them to be economical and structurally superior to the stone and baked brick of Şan'a, at least in low buildings. The houses in the old city that seem to have been Jewish houses before 1066/1679 are much closer to the Islamic houses both in height and building materials.

The Jewish houses of al-Qâ' are much lower than Islamic houses in accordance with the sumptuary regulations of Islamic South Arabia. True, there is a record that the houses were originally higher in al-Qâ' and were reduced by order of the Imam, but there is no doubt they were. But they were also larger in plan than they had ever been able to be in the press of the old city, for at least hundreds of years before. The advantage of the increased size of the plan, of course, was that more living rooms were able to be grouped around the courtyard. As this also increased the area available for storerooms and stables underneath, the mezzanine could be eliminated. Thus the height of the house could be reduced from four levels to two, with great increase in amenity. If a rich man could acquire a larger site, or join two houses together, as often seems to have happened, then he could continue to increase the accommodation without going upwards, something that could not easily be done in the Islamic house with its more rigid concept of grouping rooms around a single staircase instead of around large and flexible courtyards.

This seems borne out by the few remaining Jewish houses in the old city. They are higher, built of ashlar stone and baked brick, with the courtyard at the third level. Although they were subsequently altered, it is possible to see that, as the courtyards were smaller, the living rooms were grouped around them on two levels, and this necessitated several separate staircases which climbed more than the height of a storey to reach the rooms they served (pl. 22.137). There are similar Jewish houses, apparently dating from medieval times, preserved at Thulû.

Finally, the origin of the Jewish house in Şan'a does not seem to link, as Ratheneus postulated, with courtyard houses of Mediterranean type, nor with a hypothetical courtyard house in pre-Islamic South Arabia, of which there is as yet no evidence. It seems, instead, to be an adaptation of the indigenous Yemeni house to Jewish needs, or at most a fusion, probably before Islam, of Jewish living concepts from the north with ancient local traditions of construction and dwelling.

To convince ourselves of this it is only necessary to examine what happened to the Mediterranean courtyard house when the shortage of space forced buildings upwards in Cairo during the Middle Ages.

The concept of the Mediterranean urban house is that the rooms look inward to the courtyard (Greek houses at Priene, Pergamon, Delos, etc., and the Roman domus at Pompeii, Herculaneum, etc.). The essential difference between the Jewish house in Şan'a and the Cairo house is that in the latter the courtyard remained the visual focus of the house. In particular, there is an

87 In Hadsamawa, also, for example in Tarim, water for culinary and other purposes was placed on the roof in aluminium dust to heat and thereby economise in fuel. Water so heated quickly boiled over a light fire of palm leaf (sa'f).

88 Brauer, Jemenitische Juden, 269. Fourteen prohibitions are listed including *Construire de maisons plus hautes que les maisons des musulmans.*

89 Niebuhr, Reisebeschreibung, 1774, 422: *Description, I, 116,* no Jew was allowed to build over 14 coudées/dhirâ` in height.
open loggia, now on a higher level, looking down into the courtyard. But in house J in Ṣan‘ā’, in this respect typical of the Jewish houses there, there is no centralized visual focus in the courtyard.

On the contrary the rooms look outwards, the ʿdmān looking at other houses across its garden, the mungar at other houses across the rooftops, exactly as happens in the Islamic houses of Ṣan‘ā’.

Fig. 22.14 Houses MM and B. Elevations.
Chapter 23
The Public Bath
(Hammām, pl., hammāmāt) 1

The earliest European account of a public bath in South Arabia is, strangely enough, of one at Aden where one would have imagined the climate so hot as to make it hardly necessary.

I must confess, that there are not to be seen of the kind, fairer Stoves and Baths than those of this Town [Aden]; they are all lined with Marble, or Jasper, and covered with a fair Dome, through which the Light comes, which is adorned within side with Galleries, supported by magnificent Columns. All the Building is perfectly well divided into Chambers, Closets, and other vaulted Apartments, which all meet at the principal Hall of the Dome. 'Tis needless to give here a more particular Description, and to speak of what passes in these agreeable Places; 'tis much the same as is to be seen in the great Cities of Turkey, of which the Accounts of the Levant make frequent mention.

De la Roque 2

Ritual ablution, simple reasons of cleanliness and comfort apart, is one of the basic requirements of Islam, for one cannot perform a valid prayer unless one is in a state of ritual purity. In the Yemen, more especially in the north, water is not always easy to obtain, and round San‘a’ fuel is expensive. That well-water is drawn by human labour for the household, coupled with fuel problems, naturally does not encourage extensive washing of the person. Though of course in the highlands there is open-air bathing in running streams or pools, the cold months for an appreciable part of the year are not conducive to bathing. 'Cold bathing in running streams or pools, the cold months for an appreciable part of the year are not conducive to bathing,' runs a well-known proverb—because it renders one reluctant to perform the prerequisite ablution in cold water, and many is the time one has heard early morning ablutions accompanied by grunts and groans at the bitter cold of the water on one's limbs.

The heated indoor bath in northern Yemen is certainly a desirable luxury, to the extent that the Badawî proverb quoted by Nazib 3 when discussing the public baths of San‘a’, is most appropriate—'Na‘im al-dunya fi ‘l-hammām, The (whole) delight of this world lies in the hot bath.'

There are a number of hot springs in the Yemen used as public baths—those at al-Sukhnah in the Thīmāmah were favoured by Imam Aḥmad Ḥamd al-Dīn, the warm baths of Hammām ‘Alli are well known, and, for instance, in the Wādī Madhab of the Baraj region, there is a hammam or hot spring where as many as twenty cars may sometimes be seen today, with bathers from Ṣa‘īdah or Khamir. There are probably many more but one does not know whether they had anything to do with the introduction of the fuel-heated hammam.

The question as to when the public hot bath, the hammām, was first introduced into the Yemen is not an easy one. According to Fränkel, hammām itself is a loan word in Arabic from Aramaic, which, he maintains, derived it from the classical Thermana. In Ḥaḍramawt however the word hammām is used in the sense of a covered hall, 4 part of the mosque inside which the prayer is performed when it is cold, but it does not seem to have any direct connection—at least with hammām the bath. It is, of course, true that in winter water is heated at Ḥaḍrami mosques of the interior. There do not seem to have been hammāms in our technical sense at pre-Islamic Mecca and Medina—not only has the writer no recollection of any mention of them in early Islamic literature, but several Traditions (Hadith) support the view that the Hijāzis were not acquainted with them. Ibn Mājah 5 reports the following, 'The land of the Persians/foreigners (al-A`ajim) will be opened up to (conquered by) you and therein you will find houses called hammāmāt. Let not men enter them without a waist-wrappers (mayazir) and prohibit women from entering them (at all) unless sick or following parturition (nufasa).’ Then again, 'Muṣlimmad forbade the hammāmāt to men and women, then permitted men to enter them in waist-wrappers (mayazir) but did not extend permission to women. ‘Ālīshah, says yet another Tradition, was visited by certain women of al-Shām (Syria or simply the north) to whom she said, 'You are those whose women enter the baths.' The tenor of the injunction that follows is against a woman taking off her clothes except in her husband’s house. 6

It does not automatically follow, accepting the proposition that the hammām was not found in the pre-Islamic Hijāz, that it

1 The public baths are sometimes referred to by foreign visitors as 'steam baths' or 'Turkish baths'. Neither term is correct. The baths do not use steam, either for heating or for bathing inside the hot rooms. Nor were the baths developed by the Turks—in Anatolia, having their origins, as they do, in a long evolution during the Byzantine era, from the hot baths of the ancient world. For these reasons the ساّل baths are referred to here simply as ‘public baths’. J. Sourdel-Thomine, Encyc. Islam, 2nd ed., art. hammam, says that already in the 4th/10th century hammamāt Ramaysyah, Greek baths, are alluded to in Arabic literature.

2 A voyage to Arabia Felix, London, 1732. For a public bath at Zabid, at the end of the 8th/14th century, see Histoire Ya‘ma, Chronicle of the Rashid dynasty of Yemen, Tokyo, 1974, 57 and 61, called Dār al-Hammām.

3 Rijūl, I, 150.

4 Cf. A. Grohmann, Sudarabien als Wirtschaftsgebiet, Wien, 1917, I, 13, 187. The south Arabian coast has also hot springs as in Wādī Khit territory, and in Ḥaḍramawt at Tabālah and al-Hāmi.


6 Sunan, ed. Muḥammad Baqī‘ Abī al-Bājī, Cairo, n.d., II, 1233; a similar Tradition is in Abī Dāwūd, Sunan, section on the hammam.

7 Ibid, 1234.

8 Al-Tirmidhī in section Ṣafā, 43. Al-Tirmidhī, section Ṣafā, 119, reports also, 'The earth, all of it is a place of prostration (masjid = mosque) except the hammam. There is a Tradition with a counter Tradition about the lawfulness of the recitation of the Qur`ān in the hammam, and one against praying in the hammam, etc.'
23.1 Hammâm Yâsir. The facade containing the entrance door, approached down the narrow lane.

23.2 Hammâm Yâsir. Interior of the changing room. The domed ceiling is supported on double squinch arches.

23.3 Hammâm Yâsir. View of the changing room.

23.4 Hammâm Yâsir. View of the changing room. Note the palm leaf matting on the floor.

Key to all figures

- a animal stalls
- cu court upper level
- eu entrance hall upper level
- gh ghayl—water level
- k kitchen
- m mahaj
- o loading and mounting animals
- pfr cold pool room
- rl library
- t terrace
- v rain water cistern
- wr well ramp
- b bathroom
- ch changing room
- f warm room
- h excrement room
- l lobby
- mn minaret
- or restaurant/eating place
- q public ablution area
- s store
- tm tomb
- vm man in charge
- x minbar
- br boiler
- d dirām
- fr furnace room
- hr hot room
- lt laundry terrace
- m mihrab
- p passage
- r room—general use and sleeping
- sh sheep pens
- tr treasury
- w well
- y women's room and wardrobe
- c court
- e entrance hall
- g grinding mills
- j grain and fruit store
- lb lavatory/bathroom
- nw washing floor
- p pool
- rr reception room and business
- sp shop
- u shaft
- wb water cooling box
- z manzar
Fig. 23.1 Hammam Yâsir. Ground plan, roof plan, and long section through the building.
was also unknown in the highly civilized Yemen. The Persian Abnā who, we know, controlled the Qati' district of that in any way suggests this in the literary sources at our disposal. For the present it is safest to assume that the hammām was introduced after Islam, but it can be postulated that this took place possibly even in the Umayyad period. In this connection it is interesting to learn that in Bayrām in the early days of the Umayyads, the Governor, the redoubtable Ziyād b. Abī-hi 'used to prohibit hammāmāt except in the places where they cause detriment to no-one. His regulation, one imagines, is taking into account such factors as smell, smoke and drainage, not moral issues. One would expect the introduction of hammāmāt to Ṣan'a' when Quṣayr 'Amrah and the Khibār-Mafjar baths had been constructed, even if the actual style or architecture might be different.

The very fact that the first Zaydi Imām, al-Ḥādī, is credited with pronouncements about bath-keepers in his fā'ah implies that public baths were already in existence before 900 A.D. in the Yemen. Al-Rāzī records that in 353/964 there were 13 public baths in Ṣan'a', and in 381/991, 106 mosques and 12 public baths. That the hammāms al-Ṛzzī speaks of were the hot baths and not mere bathing places is evident in that he says, 'A man enters the hammām and stays there an hour until his sweat commences, then he goes on sweating.' Whatever theoretical objections or prejudices there may have been about hammāms in the very early days of Islamic expansion the bath very quickly became associated with the mosque, no doubt because of its value as a place of ablution before prayer. This can already be seen in the account of Baghdad by Ibn al-Jawzi (late 6th/12th century) and one finds this in the main towns of the Yemen, as for example Raddâ, where 'Amīr b. 'Abd al-Wahlâb built his beautiful mosque, and at the same time constructed a public bath close beside it.

The manuals of ḥisab, market and town regulations deal also with the public bath, and these remain constant over the centuries so that the regulations of Qādī San'a' hardly differ in any respect from those of the third century Imām, ʿUṭrīṣ. The great Islamic theologian al-Ghazālī (11th-12th century A.D.) epitomizes the 'Manners of the Bath' as 'covering the privy parts and lowering the eyes to avoid looking at the privy turning to look (at) others and withholding greeting, sitting about little, washing after sexual intercourse (fānaḥah) before entering, and washing the feet with water before going out for this puts headache away'. There was even a Yemeni book on the bath composed by Ḥāmid b. Muḥammad al-Ḥānī (flor. 1073-1151/1662-1738), Ẓāhir al-ḥammām fī-mā ja'a fi ʿl-ḥammām, though whether copies are still extant is unknown to us, most likely a book on rules of conduct.

Last all these precepts convey too serious an impression, it must be said that the bath is centre of social intercourse and relaxation as the eye-witness accounts below will show. The poet al-Khaṣṣānī (mid 12th/18th century) in the dialogue (muḥāfarrāḥ) between the rival villages of Bīr al-ʿAzīz and al-Ruwaḏāh, has Bīr al-ʿAzīz boast of possessing a hammām (which today al-Ruwaḏāh also has), and, among others, two celebrated verses were composed by a poet and official of the latter part of the 11th/17th century on being met by a friend who asked him why he had gone to the bath, I entered not the bath on pleasure bound.

How so—when passion's fire consumes my frame?
Mere flowing tears sufficing not I found,
I entered that each limb might weep the same!

Some wealthy Ṣan'a'ī families and at least one inn (Samsat-ar-Muzzayyin, see p. 290b) had at one time private hammāms, but the expense of their maintenance, necessitating, as it did, the residence in the household of a member of a bath-keeper family (ḥammāmī), meant that the number of private hammāmāt was severely limited.

There are seventeen public baths in Ṣan'a' today, one of them in the 'Urdī, the 19th century Turkish Barracks.

**List of the Baths of  Ṣan’a’**

**Ḥammām al-Sultan**

Situated west of Masjid-al-Taqwīm on the west side of Bustān-al-Sultan Quarter. Sultan Tuğhtagın b. Ayyūb constructed Ḥammām al-Sultan at the time when he laid out (bkhuṭṭ) the Quarter called Bustān-al-Sultan west of al-Sālīh which at that date formed the furthest western boundary of Ṣan'a' town. This Quarter he laid out as a place of residence for himself; his family, ministers and men of state, building many palaces (quṣūr), mosques and baths in it, and extending Ghaṣil Alī to it. These palaces flourished until the Amir Yāḥya b. Ḥamzah, brother of the Imam 'Abdullāh b. Ḥamzah entered Ṣan'a' and destroyed the Sultan's palaces, removing their doors, windows and timbers to Žafir al-Ẓabir (Ẓafir of Dhi Bīn). The last known restoration of this bath was in the period of the Imam al-Mahdī 'Abdullāh b. Āmad (ob. 1251/1835-6) who ordered it to be restored, but it continued to preserve its older name.

**Ḥammām al-Ṭawāshi**

Situated east of the road leading from Sūq 'Aql to Bāb Shuʿub. Al-Tawāshi, the envoy whom the Sultan of India sent with a large present to the Pasha Muḥammad, a Turkish governor of the Yemen, stayed some time in Ṣan'a' and constructed Ḥammām al-Ṭawāshi in the 10th/16th century, assigning the revenue it produced as a waqf or pious foundation to the Tawāshi Mosque.
Hammâm al-Mutawakkil


Hammâm al-`Urđi (The Barracks Bath)

Inside the Barracks, situated to the south of the lower `Urđi. Field-marshall 'Abdullâh Pasha of the Ottoman Army constructed it during the second Ottoman occupation.

Hammâm al-Hamdání

Situated on the eastern edges of al-Bawniyah district. It was founded by the shaykh `Ali Yahya al-Hamdání who had been in the Sudan and was one of the rich merchants of 'San`a', in business in a big way. Built in the vicinity of his own dwelling some forty years ago, it was first private, restricted to him, his family and guests, but after their financial affairs deteriorated his heirs leased it out to become a public bath, and it is now known as al-Na`im.
Hammām 'Ali

Situated west of Masjid al-Qaḍi. The Amir ‘Ali son of the Imam Yahyā Ḥamid al-Din constructed Hammām 'Ali about twenty years ago, it being at the present time the best-known of the baths for cleanliness, fashion, elegance and health.

Hammām al-Abhar

Situated north west of Bāb al-Yaman.

Hammām al-Bawniyah

Situated in al-Bawniyah, one of the Quarters of Bīr al-‘Azab, north of the road leading from Bāb al-Ṣabīḥ eastwards to al-Ṣulbi18 (known since 1962 as Maydān al-Ulūb, called after an officer who attempted to assassinate Imam Ahmad in the Hodeidah Hospital in 1961). Al-Khaṣāni19 (mid 12th/18th century), as seen above, speaks of the wells, hammām, samsarah and suq of al-Bawniyah.

18 A ṣubād is a piece of hard open ground.
The Public Bath

Hammām Shukr

Situated east of the Sa'īlah on the road from the Dome (Qubbah) of al-Mahdī `Abūs to San`ā’, passing by Masjid al-Tawīs. It seems to have already existed in 977/1569. The Bayt Shukr is a San`āni family, mentioned in the Miswaddat Sinan, after which Hammām Shukr receives its name. There is a local tradition that it was at one time a Jewish bath.

Hammām al-Jilā’

Situated in the north west corner of the old city to the east of the Sā`īlah. It is said to be one of the baths constructed before the 10th/16th century, and it was private to the Jews when they used to live in San`ā’ town. When the Imam al-Mahdī Ahmad b. al-Ḥasan, known as Sayl al-Layl,21 ordered them to be removed from this Quarter in 1086/1675-6 to a Quarter restricted to them exclusively within which he permitted them to construct residences for themselves, making gates for the Quarter in the wall surrounding it, Hammām al-Jilā’ became restricted to the Muslims. The construction of the present bath is thought to be only two hundred years old.

Hammām al-Humaydī

Situated east of the road leading from Bāb al-Yāman to al-Naṣrāb Street. Al-Ḥafīz23 suggests that the Hammām and the Humaydī mosque were set up by the ancestor of Bayt al-Humaydī, a family still living in San`ā’. The hammām, the mosque, and two other mosques, al-Madhhab and Janāh, all use the same well which has a sabil at it.

Hammām Saba’

Situated to the north west of al-Jami` al-Kabīr, the Great Mosque in Ḥaft Ṭalḥah.21 It is also called Hammām al-Qū`ah.24 Qādī Ismā’īl suggests that the name may imply that the bath was originally founded before Islam.

Hammām al-Sūq/Sūq al-Baqār

Situated in the Cattle Market (Sūq al-Baqār) to the south of Masjid al-Filaiḥy and east of Masjid Dawūd in the area which, in olden time, used to be known as Darb25 al-Sirā, one of the two Quarters in early Islamic San`ā’.26

Hammām Shukr

Situated east of the Sā`īlah on the road from the Dome (Qubbah) of al-Mahdī `Abbās to San`ā’, passing by Masjid al-Tawīs. It seems to have already existed in 977/1569. The Bayt Shukr is a San`āni family, mentioned in the Miswaddat Sinan, after which Hammām Shukr receives its name. There is a local tradition that it was at one time a Jewish bath.

20 Ji, says Qādī Ismā’īl, is pronounced with the modification of the vowel of the Jīm, i instead of a, as is customary in San`ā’ dialect.
21 His biography is given in al-Badr al-lāli, I, 43, etc. He was known as Sayl al-Layl because of the sudden overwhelming nature of his attack in the campaigns he waged, like a flood coming down in the night.
23 Ibid, 115, 140, the latter speaking of Ḥaft Hammām Saba’.
24 Qū`ah (pl., quwâ `) are large soak-away drains and pits for the water of the baths, open to the sky. Houses have smaller quwâ, but they are roofed over (masqûfah).
25 Darb is an area, quarter, but can also mean a wall, etc.
26 Masṣajid San`ā’, 95, speaking of Masjid Mahdī in Sūq al-Baqār (the sabil of which goes back to 744/1343-4), says that when the water of the Mahdī, which served both the mosque and the hammām in its vicinity diminished, Imam Yahyā bought the house at the foot of the well-ramp (ṣijil al-mirna`), adding to the length of the ramp and having the well dug till the water increased.
27 See p. 153a
28 Ibid, 92.
Fig. 23.2 Hammam Shukr. Roof plan, ground plan and long section through the building.
23.14 Hammān Shukr. The interior of the changing room. While the niches around the walls are mostly storage places for clothes, that to the right of the kneeling figure extends to the floor and is a mihrāb to mark the direction of prayer.
Jews like the Muslims a hammâm was linked with a religious hammâm. Al-Faysh says it was Makhlafah that was the old Jewish synagogue Knîs bêt Mori Aharon `Arâgi (`Arâgi) ha-Kohen, also institution which its revenues helped support.

bestimmt sind, die im Knîs dem Lernen obliegen.' So among the Hammâm Yasir Hammâm al-Faysh or Hammâm al-Qã' al-Usâi by the Jews. Brauer 3i in discussing the important bath; this seems more likely. It is now one of the public baths.

Hammâm al-Maydân
Situated in the Maydân al-Qaṣr (re-named since 1962 Maydân al-Laqiquyáh,39 another soldier involved in the assassination attempt on Imam Abn in 1962), the large open area and parade ground of earlier times immediately west of the Castle of San`â'. It was built by the Ottoman Pasha Hâsan36 who left the Yemen in 1013/1604-5.

Hammâm Yasir
Situated north east of Sûq al-Milh. It is believed to be the oldest public bath in San`â'.

Hammâm al-Faysh or Hammâm al-Qã'32
Situated in Qã' al-Yahûd, reputedly Jewish, and supposedly dating from the early 12th/18th century. It is said that the Jews made it private and restricted to the Jewish community. The hammâm of al-Faysh says it was Makhlafah that was the old Jewish bath; this seems more likely. It is now one of the public baths.

Hammâm al-Faysh is confirmed by those now living in the former Jewish Quarter as having formerly been called Hammâm al-Usţa by the Jews. Brauer31 in discussing the important synagogue Knîs bêt Mori Aharon `Arâqi (`Arâqi) ha-Kohen, also known as Knîs bêt el-Usţa', adds, ‘Zu dem Knîs gehören ein Warmbad und mehrere Häuser, deren Ertrâgnisse für die bestimmten sind, die in Knîs dem Lernen obliegen.' So among the Jews like the Muslims a hammâm was linked with a religious institution which its revenues helped support.

32 Description, I, 333.
33 El Yémen, 112—he gives the fees for that bath and its attendants also.
34 Nashr al-`arf, loc. cit.
35 Nashr al-`arf II, 113.
The Public Bath

23.16 Hammâm Shukr. Inside the cold entrance room. The changing room is visible in the background. Entrance is from the right and was originally screened from the passageway through to the hot room in the foreground by a row of arcades which have since been broken. To the left is the cold pool.

the direction of Mecca.37 Entered through an arch on the western side of this large domed space is another smaller changing room, for private use. This has a low dome and a barrel-vaulted recess to the south.

The large domed changing room is separated from the smaller circulation space to the south by both a small and a large arch, and by two high steps making a descent of fifty-six centimetres. A kerb just inside the arches defines the dry palmleaf-matted area of the changing room from the wet stone-paved area on the south. The large arch is supported in the middle by an ancient pre-Islamic column, which appears to be a later reinforcement (pl. 23.5). This assumption may be incorrect, however, as a number of other baths have a central column under this arch. Perhaps the column was originally intended to separate people descending to the bath from people ascending from it, a pattern still preserved in Hammâm Shukr (fig. 23.2), and in the ablution places (mutâhir) of ghâylî at some mosques. To the west, within the changing room, is a low wall on which men's wet waist wrappers (jktâhs) are placed after the bathing process is finished; on the top step alongside they have been modestly removed under a dry wrapper brought by the bath-keeper. From this wall the wet jktâhs can be easily collected as the user leaves the bath after he has dressed and prepared for the street.

On the other side, the small arch in the south east corner contains the small pool of clean cold water, hollowed from a single square stone, which is used by bathers coming from the bath as a water reservoir from which to wash their feet before re-entering the mat-covered area of the changing room.

The lower room on the south side of the changing room is roofed on the west by a smaller dome, with the same squinches as that of the changing room, and by a low barrel vault running south. Like the big dome of the changing room, both the dome and barrel vault of this space are pierced with small toplights closed on the outside with glass sheets (perhaps originally alabaster) set in plaster. A domed ceiling (saqf muqabbâb) is called jumân or jumâl.

The area under the dome is half-filled by a large tank (barik)38 of cold water with its lip at chest height (pl. 23.6). It appears that, since all baths contain such a pool adjoining the changing room, it must once have been intended for some special purpose. That in Hammâm Yâsir is 2.50m long, 1.50m wide, and 1.25m deep. Others, although they are often polygonal in shape, are not very much bigger. They are therefore not big enough for a bather to swim in, but would merely be used for a cold dip, as was the practice of the Romans and the Byzantines after they had completed their hot bathing. Alternatively, it has been suggested that this cold pool was used for washing clothes, and particularly jktâhs; it is still used for the latter function by some bathers before leaving the baths. A final interpretation is that the cold pool was mainly intended as a reservoir from which the bather, having emerged from the hot rooms, dipped water to shower himself with cold water in completion of the bathing process; there is a row of circular stone seats against the eastern wall under the barrel vault which would seem to confirm this theory, although no similar practice survives to the present day.

Originally, a door in the south east corner gave access to the first of the temperate rooms (mabrad/frigidarium) on the southern side. Recently this has been blocked up and the room given over entirely to the function of a sump for the drainage, following a modern innovation introduced into many of the Şan'a' baths.

37 Not all baths have a mihrâb in the mikhla.
38 In al-Rawqlah bath this whole room is called al-barik.
23.17 Hammām Shukr. The interior of the west temperate room showing two stone basins for water from which individual washing may be done. Pipes in the walls lead hot and cold water to each of these basins.

Instead, a new doorway has been created giving direct access into the central temperate room, and incidentally eliminating entirely the urinal which used to exist at the eastern end of the first temperate room.

The number of temperate rooms is now reduced to two, the domed central room and a northern room which is darker and covered with a barrel vault. The dome is supported on a very simple kind of corbeled pendentive (pl. 23.7). A large arch spans across the small door between the two surviving temperate rooms, suggesting that they may once have been one space. A similar arch in the same place exists at Hammām Shukr (pl. 23.8). There are three small stone seats in the central room of Hammām Yāsir, but none at all in the northern room, which is essentially a washing floor on which the bathers sit, using water from one of the two square stone basins. Hot and cold water pipes lead into these basins. By contrast the central room is to a large extent a waiting area, and has no basins.

From this central temperate room an eastern door gives into the central hot room (pl. 92), which is flanked by other hot rooms on north and south (pl. 23.9). The central and northern rooms are domed and fairly well lit through the holes pierced in the domes. That to the south, however, is darker, and is meant for the final washing of the private parts of the body.

All three of these rooms are built over a low space, on the pattern of a Roman hypocaust, through which air circulates. The fire is nearest the central floor which, in spite of a considerable thickness of brick and stone, is so hot that it can barely be touched. Flues extend up the walls of the central rooms, one on the south east corner of the hot room and the other on the north west corner, so that the latter heats also the central temperate room.

The central hot room contains two square stone basins fed by hot and cold water pipes (pl. 23.18). These basins provide water for washing down the hot stone floor so that people can sit or lie on it, but also serve as convenient seats for those who are averse to hot surfaces. In the northern hot room there is a stone bench across the northern wall and part of the western wall, and three square stone basins which provide water for washing. The floor here is not so hot as in the central room.

The southern hot room, the darkest of the three, contains a deep tank on the eastern end which is fed directly from the hot water boiler over the fire (pl. 23.10). The temperature of the water in this tank may, however, be moderated by the addition of cold water which is led to it by a pipe from a cold-water tank nearby on the outside of the building. A square, solid stone basin adjoins this tank which allows a bather to adjust the temperature of the water to his own requirements, if he so wishes. Other baths frequently have a small circular stone seat (dakkah) as well, but the absence of one in Hammām Yāsir results in the stone basin being frequently used as a seat while hot water is poured over the bather's head and shoulders.

The remainder of the components of the bath may only be viewed by going outside and proceeding across the roof, past a series of projecting domes and barrel vaults (pl. 23.11) to the area east of the hot rooms. Here are located the hot boiler, below the roof level of the bath, and the furnace under it. The latter is stoked by descending a stair which winds down from natural ground level around a central stone core to a depth of nearly 4 metres.
Fig. 23.3 Hammam al-Maydan. The roof plan, ground plan and long section through the building.
Variations in the Design of Other Public Baths

All seventeen of the Ṣanʿa’ baths are partly underground. With only one exception, discussed below, they present unpretentious facades to the street and frequently pass unnoticed by foreign visitors. The domes of Ḥammām Shukr can be observed from the Sā'īlah on its west side, but this is purely fortuitous (pls. 90 and 23.13).

Ḥammām al-Maydān is unusual in having three changing rooms (fig. 23.3). The innermost one conforms to the typical Ṣanʿa’ pattern, but the outer two are designed on precedents from Istanbul and present a fine architectural effect from the street (pl. 93). These are composed of a large square block built of striped black and buff stonework, and covered by a high dome, and adjoining it on the east a narrower block of the same materials occurring in a number of other baths; the remainder have niches in the outer two and recesses for hot braziers underneath (pls. 23.21 and 22, and fig. 23.3).

Only in the north east corner is the platform replaced by a raised enclosure surrounded by arched screens, in which the ḥammāmī sat, and which was also reputedly used by musicians for the entertainment of patrons.39 This large room was apparently originally intended to provide the wide range of facilities still enjoyed by patrons of public baths in Istanbul. The patrons reclined on carpets spread on the platforms, and were served with coffee or other drinks and the maddā‘ah (water pipe).

In the centre of this room in the Ḥammām al-Maydān, and in an equivalent position in a small number of other baths (e.g., Ḥammām al-Sulṭān, pl. 23.28, and Ḥammām Saba’, pl. 23.27) is a polygonal or circular pool with a central fountain.40 Adjoining this central pool, and quite separate from the main changing area, there is sometimes a raised dream in a recess (e.g., in Ḥammām al-Ṭawāshīb).

From these forward changing halls the intending bather proceeds to the inner changing room, and then straight into the temperate and hot rooms, which in al-Maydān resemble closely those of Ḥammām Yāṣīr, described above.

Other baths, however, have the circular pool with its central fountain in the transitional space between the changing room and the first of the temperate rooms, that is, in the room which in Ḥammām Yāṣīr contains a square corner pool. An important difference in some cases is that the entrance lobbies lead into the transitional space, from which the changing room is then reached. This means that the intending bather is greeted by a cheerful fountain playing in a central pool before he goes through to change (pl. 23.28).

In other cases, such as Ḥammām Shukr and Ḥammām Sūq al-Bāqar, the entrance is first into the transitional space (majza’) before the changing room (mikkhā’), is reached, but there is no central pool and fountain, the cold pools being unpretentious square pools on one side of the room (fig. 23.2).

The general plan of three temperate (ṣiqāh/mabrad) and three hot rooms (ṣâdīr = calidarium) is varied only twice, in Ḥammām Saba’ and Ḥammām Sūq al-Bāqar, which have only two temperate and two hot rooms. Usually the three hot rooms have the fire underneath them, while the temperate rooms have flues (maqṣaf) on one side. Hot rooms have to be re-plastered with nīrāḥ about once a year.

The arrangements for heating the floor of the hot rooms by a hypocaust system does not change from bath to bath, though the number of rooms with floors heated in this way does change up to as many as six in Ḥammām al-Maydān. The number and position of the flues in the walls varies considerably, from only one flue in the wall between the central hot and temperate rooms in the case of Ḥammām Shukr (fig. 23.2), to four in Ḥammām Saba’ (fig. 23.4).

In Ḥammām al-Maydān the solid stone basins are elaborate in form, with three lobes on a circular shape, and decorated at the sides with carved ornament. Ḥammām Shukr, like a number of the other baths, has circular stone basins instead of square ones; there are rough square stones projecting from the walls of two of the hot rooms above head height, used for exercise on some occasions, but perhaps intended primarily to hold oil lamps at night, before electricity was introduced. Similar projecting stones occur in a number of other baths; the remainder have niches in the walls for the same purpose.

The furnance (mīḥrāq) room, boilers, reservoirs and wells are similar in all the baths. A chimney is called madkhanah, and a flue under the floor, millah.

Construction

The lowest levels of the bath are those of the furnance and the hypocaust (ṣāhirī) about half a metre high under the hot rooms (pls. 23.24 and 25). They are built of red brick (yâjûr); the hypocaust is made up of a series of barrel vaults about a metre wide and high, running from the furnance towards the temperate rooms. The furnance and the space containing the boiler above it are usually barrel vaults running in a transverse direction, and slightly wider in diameter. The boiler is a large cauldron, two or three metres in diameter made of brass or copper. In Ḥammām al-Maydān the hypocausts of the furnace are built entirely of brick domes.

The outside walls are built of squared stones on a stone foundation, a construction which extends up to roof height. Internal
The Public Bath

walls are sometimes brick, sometimes stone; if brick they are invariably protected with a thick layer of hard gypsum plaster which is then oil-painted. Internal stone walls are of roughly coursed ashlar, with openings spanned in brick or stone arches. Wooden ceilings are not used in any part of the bath.

Most of the domes and barrel vaults of the ceiling construction are of brick, often with parabolic rather than semicircular cross-sections to give them additional strength. They are pierced by a small number of glazed holes called al-thurayyâ, but at al-Rawâlah bath simply khuzgi (pl., khizgân) or holes, to admit natural light to the spaces below. The domes stand on a variety of squinch arches and simple pendentives, or even on short beams spanning across the corners (pls. 23.4, 7 and 28). They are thickly plastered externally.

All the brick used in the bath is of the dark red, highly fired type; even so, the life of the domes and barrel vaults is said to be shorter than the rest of the structure, doubtless due to cracking caused by differential expansion, and by the penetration of water. It is doubtful if any are more than two hundred years old, whereas the substructure walls are in many cases much older.

The bricks are sometimes thicker than those used in normal building, up to 5cm thick, perhaps in an attempt to strengthen the structure.

Fuel

For the fuel of the bath wood is sparingly used since it has always been expensive in the central highlands and is not easily available. Alternative fuels include skins, feathers, and bones from the slaughter yards. Old rubber flipflop shoes (shubshib, pl., shabâshib) and shoes (qanâṭir) are burned nowadays and burn well—the supply of these is of course limited. The most important fuel is human excrement (kharâ') which is stated to give a great heat and therefore to be specially appropriate for heating the bath. The excrement is collected from the lower level of the small chamber at the bottom of the 'long drop' (manṭal) found in every house for this purpose. The man employed for this purpose is called mujâhîth and he takes the excrement packed in skins through the streets to the madâfâ of the bath, an open court, where it dries, though it is already so dry when removed as to be almost odourless. It may also be spread on the roof as well as in the open court of the bath which is often at a level with the roof, and contains the reservoirs and well (pl. 23.26). The name mahkarnâ (from kharâ') is also given to the man who takes out the excrement from the houses—the fodder ('alâf) for his donkey is supplied by the bath-keeper. The hammâmi, we are informed, used also to use dung collected from the streets.

At al-Rawâlah the fuels used are cow-dung in rounds (kibyah, plur., kibi'), but there was also human excrement ready for burning there, but no heap of firewood which is evidently scarce. We noticed that when the fire was lit the entrance to the furnace was stopped up with clay bricks. A long rake (mughrafa) is used to remove the ash from the fire—this the proprietor of al-Rawâlah bath uses on his fields.

In ℓan’â the Bani Qurayb, from a village of Jabal al-Sawd, part of Jabal ‘Ayâl Yazid, used to sell to the country-folk the excrement from the privies and ash from the houses of the city, so it was not all used for the public baths.

The donkeyman who supplies the bath with fuel also removes the ash to sell to the orchards and vegetable gardens as manure.

In former times, according to the Hebrew sources, the bath...
keepers used themselves to collect the excrement burned in the furnaces of the baths. After the decree that the Jews should be obliged to make the collection the bath-keepers complained that they would lose a part of their livelihood through this new regulation. It was eventually agreed that the Jewish collectors should sell to the bath-keepers but at a very low price, and the bath-keepers should re-sell it to the customers to whom they have previously sold it. There was even a fixed measure named khabshat al-kharâ/khar' (the basket of ordure) which the Jewish collectors filled each day to sell to the bath-keepers, and the latter were always complaining that the Jews gave them short measure. The Jews complained to the bath-keepers for not giving them the full amount owed to them. The bath-keepers complained that they were not properly paid, and many of the strong and powerful did not pay at all! The collectors were actually paid by the Jewish community, and there is an allusion to this in the case brought by the Inspectorate of Waqfs against the Jews of Qâ` al-Yahûd for the payment of rent. 41 The Jewish proverb runs, "Honî al-kharâ 'îsâ l-râs za'dâ šajîh li-l-nâzis. A load of ordure on the head rather than having to depend on (other) people." It seems that in Šan`â' they took it out of the recesses by hand. At `Amrân they used to add ash (ramâd) to the ordure (zabil) until it became like earth (turîb)—the Arabs gave them money (zalat) for it. 42

Water Supply

There is naturally always a well very close to the bath house. The water drawn from the well passes into the main reservoirs (pl. 23.11), from which it is drawn as required through either the hot boiler or the cold reservoir immediately adjacent to the bath. There is a system of pipes throughout the bath, carrying both hot and cold water to the hot and temperate rooms. There are no taps in the pipes, instead cotton swabs are inserted into their ends, which can only be drawn out by calling one of the bath attendants, who removes them with a hooked wire. The tapless pipe end is called brîhî, but a hanafî (sic) is one that can be closed with a tap, and it is used for hot water.

Drainage

The floors of all rooms in the bath slope quite steeply towards a common drainage point situated on the line of the wall between the first of the temperate rooms and the changing or intermediate room, whichever is the closer. At this point the waste water ceases to flow across the stone floors, or in special channels provided for the purpose (which sometimes pass through the walls in small openings). Instead it descends underground in a sump and enters a large underground sewer, usually high enough to admit a man. These sewers are said to have originally extended for considerable distances to allow the water to be used in a vegetable garden or orchard. Now, however, the waste water from a bath or house is led to a wide stone or brick-lined pit by a channel called qa`dah, closely resembling a well but not as deep, situated usually just in front of the public bath, in the street. This is covered over with beams and stones so that it is not visible in the roadway, but it is opened every few years for cleaning. The tendency of the sump to get blocked or empty slowly has led many bath owners to close the first temperate room completely, providing entry instead directly into the central temperate room.

Open Time at the Baths

As a rule the baths are open four days for men and three for women, though arrangements vary at different baths. Men usually have the use of the bath on the Thursday, and always on the Friday. At one bath however the programme runs—Sunday, women; Monday, men; Tuesday, women; Wednesday, men; Thursday, women; Friday, men; Saturday, men. Some baths open more days for women than for men—which is more profitable to the bath-keeper since women remain longer and pay more, almost twice as much as men—but this is unpopular with the men of the district. Men go to the bath from dawn until about 9 or 10 p.m., but on women's days the bath is open from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. As a sign that it was a women's day the entrance to the bath used to be half curtained over, but this custom has fallen into desuetude of more recent years. E. W. Lane 43 remarks that in the Cairo of his day a cloth was hung outside the bath at the time for women. In Râma`dân the bath is open for men from the evening to after Sâ`al al-Fajr, the Dawn Prayer, and from 9 a.m. onwards up to the late afternoon (‘asr) for women. The fires burn from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m., from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 5 p.m. to 6.30 p.m., that is to say they have to be lit two hours before the bath opens. The bath is shut outside the hours mentioned, but it is never entirely closed unless it be for repairs.

Bathers and Bathing

As a well-established custom, to take the bath in Šan`â' has its fixed procedures and social conventions. These, to judge, for example, by accounts given by Lane for early 19th century Cairo, follow the same broad general patterns in other Islamic countries. They compare also with the humorous narrative of Morier's Hajji Baba of Isfahan and Mark Twain's wry experiences of the bath at Istanbul. We actually have a description by Manzonî 44 of taking the bath in Ottoman Šan`â'. Two modern accounts of the use of the bath follow, the first by the writer and the second by Qâ‘iq Ismâ`îl—they describe the procedure and customs of the bath from rather different angles.

The Use of the Baths

Description 1

The patron of the bath usually arrives with two clean futâhs in addition to that which he is already wearing, a towel, soap, and his own rough glove and soap glove, wrapped in a large scarf. Sometimes he will carry a complete change of clean clothing as well.

He takes off his shoes at the entrance to the changing room, and leaves them in the opening under the hammâmî's seat. 45 He is then attended by the hammâmî until a suitable clear space has been found for him to change, with a hook, and a clear shelf or niche for his clothes. The hammâmî then takes all his valuables and money back to a box on one side of his seat, into which they are securely locked. The hammâmî is responsible for any clothes or property lost in the bath, and is naturally careful to safeguard possessions. 46

The bather dresses in one of his (or her) spare futâhs. The men wear them around the waist extending almost to the ground, the women wear a longer futâh which ought to begin above the

42 Jemenica, 65, no. 404. Brauer, 254, also deals with the collection of excrement by the Jews.
43 Van den Broeke (see p. 109a) says that men have the bath in the morning and women in the afternoon. According to E. W. Lane, Modern Egyprians, London, 1895, 349-54 (ch. xvi), of the 60-70 hammâms in Cairo some were for men only, some for women and small children only, and some for men in the morning and women in the afternoon. Cf. S. Poole (Lane's sister), The Englishwoman in Egypt: letters from Cairo, London, 1844.
44 Loc. cit.
45 El Yémen, II 12 seq.
46 Shoes at al-Rawçlah bath are kept under the isgâh.
47 Shoes at al-Rawçlah bath are kept under the isgâh. Ameen Rihani, Arabian peak and desert, London, 1930, says that men have the bath in the morning and women in the afternoon. According to E. W. Lane, Modern Egyprians, London, 1895, 349-54 (ch. xvi), of the 60-70 hammâms in Cairo some were for men only, some for women and small children only, and some for men in the morning and women in the afternoon. Cf. S. Poole (Lane's sister), The Englishwoman in Egypt: letters from Cairo, London, 1844.
42 Jemenica, 65, no. 404. Brauer, 254, also deals with the collection of excrement by the Jews.
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23.22 Hammam al-Maydan. The interior of the changing room showing the great dome on squinch arches. The use of the niches in the wall for holding clothes can be seen. The stepping stone in the foreground allowed access for the washing of clothes in the central cold water pool.

23.23 Hammam al-Maydan. The interior of the Qiwân, the private changing room over the entrance passageway to the bath.

breasts. A few bathers wear rubber sandals into the bathing rooms, but this practice is unusual.

48 Nothing else is worn. This has evidently always been the case. Usâmah b. Munqidh tells how a Crusader lord at the bath tore the hulûsh off an attendant and was surprised to find the man had shaved the pubic hair. See P. K. Hitti, Memoirs of an Arab-Syrian gentleman, reprint, Beirut, 1964, 165.

Fig. 23.4 Damascus, Hammam. An Ottoman bath contemporary with Hammam al-Maydan in Sana'.

23.24 Hammam al-Maydan. The interior of the furnace room.
San'ā’—An Arabian Islamic City

23.25 Hammāmi al-Mavdan. The mouth of the furnace under the floor level of the baths.

The bather then proceeds to the top of the steps leading down from the changing room to the bath proper. There he washes his feet using water dipped from the small stone basin provided. He next proceeds right through the temperate rooms to the dark hot room, where the attendant douses him several times with very hot water dipped from the hot tank in that room. The attendant then goes with him into the central hot room carrying a dipper filled with water, and swills down an area of the hot floor so that the bather can sit or lie on it. The bather does this for five or ten minutes, unless he is trying to reduce weight or recover from an illness, in which case he might remain for as much as an hour. In the latter event the bather will not remain continuously in the hot room, but will go out to the temperate or intermediate rooms at regular intervals to cool off.

The purpose of remaining in the hottest room for this period is to build up a sweat, prior to the dirt and the sweat being removed by rubbing down with a piece of pumice stone or a rough woollen glove. Women prefer the former. To accentuate the process, exercises are sometimes performed by individuals, or, the room being relatively free, a group of people will form a line or a circle and go through the motions of a Yemeni dance, one or more of them humming the rhythm. Until a few years ago, it is said, this dancing was particularly in evidence for an hour after the midday meal, the young men being obliged to take part in it for exercise, or the young women when the bath was being used by them. This practice has largely disappeared, however. Occasionally a bather calls an attendant to massage him in the hot room, but if this practice was ever common it is now in decline.

Several times during the period spent sweating the bather calls the attendant from the dark room to douse him with a dipper of hot water. Finally he proceeds to a part of the bath in which he can find a vacant space next to a stone basin, and then either rubs the sweat and dirt from himself, peeling off the top layer of dead skin as he does so, or else he engages a bath attendant to do it for him.49 Members of a family or close friends often rub each other down. Children in particular are expected to attend fathers (or mothers) and elder brothers (or sisters). The process is completed by a careful dousing with water, adjusted to the desired temperature, from the stone basin, which has been completely cleaned out and filled with fresh water from the hot and cold pipes either by the bather himself or by the attendant.

Some bathers then return to the central hot room and undergo the cycle of sweating and rubbing-down a second or even a third time.

Others go directly to the next stage, which is a complete lathering with a cake of soap held inside a cellular glove (fīfī). The soaping begins with a triple lathering of the hair on the head, the soap being washed off in between, and continues to the upper body, then the outside of the legs under the fītāh, the bather standing during the latter process. After a cursory washing off with water the bather then proceeds back through the central hot room to the dark hot room where he washes the private parts of his body and is then doused three or four times from the large dipper by the attendant. Some bathers remove their fītāhs completely here and wash them. Once doused the bather leaves the hot and the temperate rooms as quickly as he can, and is followed by an attendant carrying a large dipper full of hot water, with which he is finally doused as he stands on the top stone platform of the changing room. After this he is expected to wash his feet again, using cold water dipped from the small stone basin which stands there. The hammāmi has brought his towel and his second fītāh from his bundle of clothes, and is waiting to help him change by putting the dry fītāh over his head and removing the wet one from underneath. The towel is then wrapped around his shoulders and he proceeds to his place in the changing room; there he squatting or sitting on his shawl, which is spread out on the mat surface, for up to an hour, talking to the other bathers, taking coffee, tea or water offered him by the hammāmi, and praying if he is in the bath during the time of prayer. Frequently a number of patrons forms into a rank which is led in a formal prayer by one of their number.

There is usually a mihrāb in the wall of the changing room to indicate the direction of Mecca. If he wishes, the customer may be massaged after the bath by the hammāmi or an attendant in the changing room.

The long wait in the changing room after bathing is due to the time taken for the human body to adjust to the difference between the high temperatures of the hot and temperate rooms and the outside air. During this time the bather continues to perspire and has to dry himself. Eventually he begins to feel cool and then dresses in preparation for his departure. The wet fītāhs and other objects are wrapped in the towel. The scarf is wound around his head to prevent the cold air on his wet hair from giving him a cold. Approaching the hammāmi’s seat he retrieves his valuables, offers a customary fee, either to the hammāmi alone, or to the hammāmi and the attendants (see below), and puts on his shoes. He then proceeds to the outer lobby, where he usually sits for a few minutes on the stone seat provided there for that purpose, further to adjust his body to the outside temperature while still sheltered from winds or breezes. He then makes his way home, with the scarf still wrapped around his head.

Description 2—The System of Regulation for the Baths and the Customs Followed There

The baths customarily open their doors daily from dawn-time up to three o’clock in the evening (nine o’clock Frankish (Franji) time), though generally only a person ritually impure (jnub) goes to them at this (early) hour. A person who needs to go to the bath may rise an hour or more before dawn so as to go to the bath, and if he finds it locked he goes to the bathman’s (hammāmi) house which is usually near the bath, knocks on his door and asks him to

49 Lane speaks of the joints being cracked in Cairo, and this is sometimes done at San’ā’ today.
Fig. 23.5 Hammām Saba‘. The roof plan, ground plan and long section.
open the bath. If he is a person known (to him) he hands him the key, and the bathman goes on sleeping until dawn. In this the system followed is that some baths are for men and some for women. Those baths allotted to men on Fridays the women will use. Those baths allotted to men on Fridays the women will.

During the month of Ramadan the time appointed for entrance to the baths commences from three o'clock (9 a.m.) in the morning up to sunset for men and women, and, for men only, from evening prayer (‘isha) until dawn.

The Baths at the Festival Seasons

(Mawâsim al-‘ayyâd)

Men, women and children alike increasingly repair to the baths during the three or four days before the Festival, and the nearer the Festival approaches the greater the crowding grows and that proportion (to them) increases. The festivals are the first Friday of the month of Rajab, the festival of Ramadan, i.e., ‘Id al-Fitr (the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast), and the Festival of ‘Arafa, i.e., ‘Id al-Adha (the Festival of the Sacrifices).50

For ordinary days the baths are only moderately frequented. It is a custom of persons of distinction, notables of the town and merchants, each to set aside a special day in the week on which to go to the bath, generally Thursday or Friday.52 Each making it his habit to take the bath at the nearest bath to his dwelling, though some of them go to another bath if that particular day should coincide with the women’s day. When he goes to the bath the man’s wife will already have prepared his bath clothes for him in a bugabah, i.e. a purrah (a cloth used for wrapping and carrying packages) in which she places a havâ (minshafah, towel)—sometimes she may put in two towels and one or two ṭuṣahs (waist-wrappers)—and she puts in clean clothes from under-clothing to outer clothes. The package of clothes (bugabah) is accompanied by a prayer-carpet (ṣaḥādah), or an ʿinār (i.e. ṭuṣah) or a small woollen rug (ṣamīlah)54 to be spread out under him when he emerges from the bath so that he can lie on it till the sweat dries off. With all this is a (cake) of soap, bath-bag55 (kis al-hammam) and a bunch of palm-fibre (lifāh)56 so that he will not have to use the bathman’s gear which a person unable to bring these things uses when he goes to the bath.

If he goes by himself he carries these things over his shoulder. If he is a man of rank it may happen that his son or younger brother will carry them for him—or the servant may go on ahead to the bath with them before the master comes, and await his arrival. As soon as he does arrive the chief bathman (kabir al-hammâmâysin) receives and welcomes him. As he enters the changing room (makkha), i.e. the place for undressing and dressing, until they come out.

50 Also called ‘Id al-Najā.
51 We are told however that small boys under six go to the bath with their father or his servant will carry them for him—or the servant may go on ahead to the bath with them before the master comes, and await his arrival. As soon as he does arrive the chief bathman (kabir al-hammâmâysin) receives and welcomes him. As he enters the changing room (makkha) he says to those present there, ‘Al-salam ‘alay-kum wa-na`im `alay-kum, Peace to you, and enjoyment.’ To this they reply with the words, ‘Wa-‘alay-kum wa-na`im ‘alay-kum, Peace to you, and enjoyment.’

52 On ordinary Friday nights Arab time (our Thursday evenings—hi jumāţa min al-ṣāwyah) a man spends the evening with his family (laylat al-jumāţa sawrah ma’al-ṣāwyah).
53 Havâ is iniq and Dhamar dialect.
54 A shamlah here means a small woollen rug carried over the shoulder. The ṣatir means a ṭuṣah, and the head cloth is μετους.
55 At al-Rawqah bath a ṭuṣah al-hammâm is used, for older children there, was a small oblong bag to go over the head—that shaped was made in Syria and was said to cost six ṭuṣāls.
56 The ṭuṣah is of two sorts, one is nassī makkharum woven with holes in it, ‘cellulite.’
57 ‘Iṣawā means muḥabbah-an, magaddâlan-an, i.e., you have not had a bath yet but when you do—then na`im-an, enjoy it!
58 Late call the parallel type in Egypt ‘hīgh clippis,’ but they seem to have fallen out of use in San’a now.
59 This is called as below, ‘the sweating of the bath (ṣawrah al-hammâm),’ (‘Arafa is the verbal noun). Qudārī al-ṣallīr cites the proverb, ‘Khadîr min aḥlam al-ṣawrah, la-aṣwaḏ al-ṣawrah, inna al-hammâm al-tarâq (al-balāq). Meat take the soup, of white radish the leaves, and of the bath the sweat (it makes you strong).’
60 In al-Rawqah massage or rubbing off the dirt was called fahas, yifhas. For children a stone madlakah, pl., madalik, was used.
61 At al-Rawqah massage or rubbing off the dirt was called fahas, yifhas. For children a stone madlakah, pl., madalik, was used.
The Public Bath

The man who saw to washing and soaping him receives a fee, the man who brought him the water has a similar fee, and the owner of the bath (qālib al-hammām) a larger fee. A notable will have coffee served him, either brought from his own dwelling, or else the chief bathman will have it prepared in his house. Sometimes this notable will bring with him a piece of aloes-wood (`ûd) to burn in a censer so that he can perfume himself with it, (inviting) those in the changing room to partake in this with him. When he leaves the bath he puts a shawl (shâl) over his head, but some put on the towel (hâsâl), winding it round the whole of his head so that only part of his face remains (uncovered) so as not to be exposed to the air (hawâ')—this action being called tabhiq, from the verb tabbâq, when one covers one’s head.

Some people come to the bath with a little henna with which to dye their white hair; some too, bring arsenic (zarnîkh) which they hand to the bathman to prepare for them and mix with another substance to remove their pubic hair, while others call in the barber (hallâq) to the bath to shave the hair of their heads. There are persons who are accustomed daily to make use of the bath after lunch to arouse their thirst to use qat, and some use it when they have not had a walk before lunch, for the same purpose. This sort of bath is called `urqat al-hammâm (the bath sweats). When a number of those persons gathers together in the bath, especially if they be of the inhabitants of San`itten, they dance a quick dance to the tune of the washwashah or else it is accompanied by some songs (aghâni) when there are persons there good at reciting them. Some too, go to the bath after chewing qat when they have drunk an excessive amount of water and want to turn it into perspiration, so as to rid themselves of it.

The tribes also make use of the bath, but they use it only for treatment of, either, cold which has affected one of their members, or rheumatism (riyâh) and so on.

Women’s Customs at the Bath

Women go to the bath at purification after menstruation—this is de rigueur, but they may also go to the bath though there be no need for them to do so, for cleanliness only. It is a women’s custom that all the women of one household generally go (together) to the bath, taking clean clothing with them along with the utensils of the bath, consisting of a scoop (maghraf), bucket (bâldi/bârdi), soap, ifsh and bath-bag (kir al-hammâm). In the past women used to take hair-earth (turâb rûs) with them, i.e., sticky white dust, to wash their hair, before applying soap, so as to remove the engrained dirt (bukhâr, p1., abkhirah) at the roots of the hair of the head, it being known as jahrah, but nowadays women use medical preparations to cleanse the hair.

61 Coffee brings out the sweat.

62 A shâl, pl., shân, is usually of the Kashmiri type.

63 There is a fairly widespread view that a bath between lunch and the qat session both makes the qat taste nicer and increases one’s capacity for chewing qat. It is however doubtful if anyone goes to the public bath solely to improve the effect of qat.

64 The washwashah is a ‘shushing’ sound made with the mouth. The bârdhunh song is also sung.

The dancing is purely and simply to work up a good sweat and old and young take part. Qâçii Ismail mentioned as possible dances the da’sah, bar`ah and hawshariyyah. The last word is no doubt equivalent to hawshaliyyah, meaning chaos (fawdâ) as in al-Khafanji’s poem in Masâjid tiSan`â, 71. Tribes dancing to the drum alone have each their own style of bar`ah, and at a gathering each tribe in turn will perform its own bar`ah with daggers (Yâfis perform it with swords). Then at the end it will be said, `urqat hawshaliyyah—bar`ah hawshaliyyah, Now it’s free for all, a general dance.’ Each will then dance his own tribal bar`ah at the same time as the rest—and hence the sense of ‘confusion’ enters. Only the raq has the pipe (mizmâr) accompanying it.

65 As much water is drunk with qat they have a sensation of heaviness (thiqal) in the belly.

66 Instead of a bucket women may take a afihah, a flat bowl, with them. Bardi, an iron bucket, is a Dhamar pronunciation.

67 Turâb rus/jahrah comes from the mountains but is, or was, sold in the towns.
San'ā’—An Arabian Islamic City

Some women used to go naked into the bath, but this is not reckoned nowadays to be a very widespread custom. It is a custom of some of the houses of San'ā’ to get in touch with the bath-woman so as to get a tank to themselves (li-yi'lah ilâ hamman bayyān) in return for fixed fees, so that, when they come to the bath the tank is ready for them, without anyone sharing in it with them except when they have bathed and left the bath.

Al-Khulwāh

Al-khulwāh is the clearing (ikhla’) of the bath for an hour or two for persons who ask for this in return for a fixed sum of money—in the past it was two riyāls an hour, but now it goes up to fifty riyāls, and may even go up to as much as a hundred riyāls if the person to whom the bath is exclusively let (al-mustakahh lahu) is obviously wealthy and well known. The bath is let exclusively to the bridegroom (harīm) and the bride (harīwah). The bridegroom’s people invite the bathman to clear the bath for an hour or two so that the groom can go to it, accompanied by his party (sumrah), friends and relatives, to take the bath, this happening before sunset up to the time of evening, or after the evening. When he goes to the bath a member of the family will already have received the key from the bathman and be waiting for him at the door in order to open it when the bridegroom arrives. When he does enter the door painted eggs are broken as he enters and as he leaves. The bridegroom goes to the bath on the night of the procession (laylat al-jufūsah), i.e. al-siyāf.

Similarly the bath is given over exclusively (yakhtali) to the bride two or three days before the procession (siyāf). The women of the family and her friends accompany her, and they may also invite some of the women of the bridegroom’s house. Decorated eggs are broken for her entry and on her leaving, for protection against Satan the Accursed. The henna-ing (nāgsh) of the bride by the tire-woman (muṣayyinah) takes place at her house after the bath.

The Hammāmi and his Employees

The hammāmi is of extremely low social status, and belongs to the group of occupations coming under the title of Bani ‘l-Khums. All professions involving the service of bodies of others are demeaning, but since the hammāmi used to collect human excrement before the Jews were set to this work doubtless this in itself was more than sufficient to Degenerate them to the lowest level. Qādi Ismā’il’s proverb underlines the fact: Qafr daymah wa-nagsh, bath and decoration of the bride, which is not repeated here. Nevertheless the hammāmi makes a lot of money, Manzoni and Nazih also call the bath proprietor mu’allim and the term is still often used today. All hammāmis questioned claimed that the bath had been in the hands of their family for as long as they had any knowledge. On more than one occasion the son of the hammāmi, who would eventually succeed his father, was pointed out, and was seen to be working as a muḥāyiyin.

All social classes are permitted to make use of the bath, even the low Akhḍāni class employed as sweepers, but their introduction to San'ā’ from the Thīmānī has only taken place since 1962, or so it is said. On the other hand it appears that the Jews were barred from using the baths of the Muslims, but had special baths of their own.

The hammāmi employs a number of muḥāyiyin (masons, those who use the rough glove, kīrīt). The number employed varies according to the size of the bath and the amount of custom involved. Thursdays and Fridays demanding the maximum, the average on those days being four or five in most of the baths; on other days only one or two are employed. These are, on men’s days, young men or boys, the hammāmi’s sons, for obvious family reasons.

Ownership, Management, and Maintenance

Thirteen of the baths belong to the Waqf, three to the Government (‘Aṣl, Makhla‘ah, and al-‘Urāj), and one (al-Ḥamāmī) is privately owned. The hammāmi, who would himself make between 50 and 150 riyāls a day, pays the Waqf or the Government about 100 riyāls a month, usually at a fixed rate. He must meet all the costs—labour, providing fuel, water and electricity. He pays no taxes on the baths, nor does he contribute to any night watch in his quarter. He usually collects the money from customers personally. The external maintenance of the bath must be done by the Waqf or the Government, unless privately owned. A man who takes water from the bath has to pay a tax. But all internal improvements or maintenance are done at the expense of the hammāmi. The hot rooms are replastered every year.

The baths used to be inspected by the Headman of the Bathmen (‘āqil al-ḥamāmīyyin) whose office also entailed giving decisions on any dispute between two hammāmis. Now they are inspected four to five times a year by the Health Department, but no one was certain as to when this started.

1 book the bath.' Lane, op. cit., 349-54, alludes to khilwah, booking the whole bath for a marriage.
2 That is the night of the procession of the bride to the house of the groom.
3 Bulshah means wudūh, appearance, revealing.
4 Rossi, L’Arabo parlato, 96, provides an Arabic description of the hammām wa-nagsh, bath and decoration of the bride, which is not repeated here.
reasons, and others who sometimes work, on a part-time basis in
afternoons, evenings or holidays. On women's days the hammāmi's
wife employs her own daughters or relatives on the same basis
when she can. Female bathers wash themselves.

The attendants are paid either directly by the customer, or by
the hammāmi when the customer has paid an inclusive charge.
They might make between 30 to 40 riyals on a reasonable day.

The work period does not often exceed eight hours per day.
Usually at least one of them sleeps in the bath.

Beside the mukāyysin there are other attendants:
The shāqi ibn-bārīd is responsible for keeping an adequate
supply of cold water in the cistern, drawing it from the well.
He would be tipped by the customers and his money is made up to
about 15 to 20 riyals per day by the hammāmi.

The mīqādī or stoker is responsible for the fire. He is paid
about 10 riyals a day by the hammāmi.

The shāqi ibn-hammām circulates in the Quarter to bring in
human excrement. He would set it out to dry and it is then taken
by the mīqādī to stoke up the furnace. He is paid by the hammāmi
at a rate of about 1/2 riyal per load. The donkey he uses belongs
to the hammāmi. He does not remove the ashes taken out of
the fire by the mīqādī. In the case of some baths this is now done by
the Municipality (Baladiyyah).

The rates of pay relate to the period before the high inflation
(ghalâ') and apply to not later than 1975.

Origin and Development

According to popular belief Ḥammām Yāsir is the oldest bath
and is at least a thousand years old. Ḥammām Shukr rates next,
with its age given at between eight hundred and six hundred years.
These dates must be treated with caution as we have so far
discovered no historical evidence to confirm them. After that
a large number of the baths is said to be four hundred years old.

Ḥammām al-Maydān is known to have been built at the same
time as the Bakiriyah Mosque, that is, in 1598 A.D., and there
is nothing in its construction to conflict with this date.

This gives us a firm datum, and allows us to conclude that,
both in style and construction and planning, some of the baths
are likely to be considerably earlier. It is interesting to notice
that though the first two changing rooms of Ḥammām al-Maydān
are quite close to the Ottoman baths in Damascus in design and
character, the back area of hot and temperate rooms is completely
different, conforming in San`ā' to the San`ā' tradition, which was
obviously firmly established by this date.

According to al-Ḥajari, Ḥammām al-Tawāshī was founded
in 1028/1614.

Ḥammām Sūq al-Baqar (Mahmūd) shows some internal
evidence of relatively early date—for instance it does not have a
central round or square pool in the intermediate space, and it has
only two hot rooms and two temperate rooms instead of the

72 The above list of employees may be compared with M. `Abdul Jabār Beg, op. cit.,
tabīb al-sundūq treasurer, qayyim lessee of the bath, nūkhīd stoker, qādīn supplier
of dung fuel, nūkhīd stoker, nūkhīd supplier. The Encyc. Islam (2nd ed.)
says that in the 16th/18th century Damascus baths had the qayyim lessee,
Kayyīm/mukāyysin masseur, and at later periods the word dalākī would be
used in some places.

In San`ā' the mukāyysin used also to circumcise (yutahhirun) not of course
at the Bath. Bayt Barqûq is a mukāyysin family of San`ā' which did this.
73 Mushifl San`ā', 17.
74 Ibid, 69.
groups of three found in Ḥammāms al-Maydān and al-Ṭawāshī.

If we now group together the baths which we believe likely to be earlier than the first Ottoman occupation of the Yemen, that is, Ḥammāms Sūq al-Šaqqar, Yāsir and Shukr, we find that all three have no central pool in the intermediate space. They are relatively small, compared with most of the other baths, and they have no al-ṭā‘āwi off the intermediate space. Ḥammāms al-Ba‘nīyā, al-Suljān, al-Muṭawakkilī and al-Ṭawāshī, all have the latter room, facing a central pool with a fountain. In this conjunction of features they seem to relate to a precedent established by the Ottomans. Other baths, such as Ša‘b, have the central pool without the al-ṭā‘āwi, so that, following this reasoning, they were either altered or entirely built since Ottoman times.

Assuming then that we have, in Ḥammāms Sūq al-Šaqqar, Yāsir and Shukr, three baths earlier than the 9th/16th century, and that they represent a tradition of grouping four, or, more usually, six small rooms together for the hot and temperate rooms of the bath, how early are public baths likely to have been in Ṣan‘ā’?

There are several pieces of evidence in answer to this question. The first comes from the historians. Al-Rāzi for instance, as seen above, tells us that in 353/964 there were 13 baths (ḥammām) in Ṣan‘ā’. In the same passage he says that there were 106 mosques in Ṣan‘ā’—which is quite close to the present figure.

The other piece of evidence is the design of the baths with their clusters of small rooms. Such a bath design is quite unlike that of the baths of Cairo (e.g., Ḥammām Bāshā, dating from the 8th/14th century). Nor does it ever lack the grouping of small rooms, but the furnace is at roof level, not underneath, and the heating is effected by circulating hot water and dropping it down into the pool from a height so that steam forms in the air of the bath. Nor are the Ṣan‘ā’ baths like those of Turkey, which are characterized by grouping all the small hot rooms around a central cruciform or polygonal space. Finally, they do not appear to resemble baths of an early period in Iraq or Iran, although relatively little has been discovered and published about the design of these.

There is, however, one type of bath that the Ṣan‘ā’ baths do resemble fairly closely. This is the type built during the late Roman Empire in Libya and northern Egypt (Leptis Magna and Alexandria). These baths have a number of features in common with those of Ṣan‘ā’, particularly their method of heating and the lay-out of their rooms. The Roman baths used the hypocaust method of heating the floor of the hot rooms, with flues passing up the walls, the practice still followed in the Yemen. Like the Ṣan‘ā’ baths, those of Roman North Africa had two or three rooms for the hot zone (calidarium) and two or three for the temperate zone, suggesting that a link may have existed between the architecture of the two areas during an early period.

Finally, there is one early Damascus bath with a closely related plan, Ḥammām al-Suljān, built in 684/1288, which alone among sixty baths in the city resembles the Ṣan‘ā’ type. It has been conjectured that it may be derived from Persia or Iraq, but perhaps it may not be too much to suppose that its design was taken to Syria from the Yemen?

Postscript:

As a caution to those who might leave the bath too precipitously, let the would-be bather take heed of the unhappy consequences which befell the two brothers Ibrāhīm and Dāwiid b. ‘Abdul-lāh, Amīrs at Ṣan‘ā’, as chronicled by the Ghayāt al-amāni, under the annals for the year 747/1346-7. They continued governing Ṣan‘ā’ until the weavers (al-faṣwāt) in it rose and entered the Qa‘r while the two Amīrs were in the bath (ḥammām). They were brought their breast-plates which they put on, and came out of the bath. The people rallied to them and some of the weavers they slew and others they took captive. Amīr Dāwiid was seized by a partial paralysis because of putting on the breastplate after the bath!'
Chapter 24
Children’s Games in Ṣan‘ā’

Introduction

Until the outbreak of the revolution of September 26th, 1962—which changed or altered many things in Yemeni social life—Ṣan‘ā’ boys and girls used to play quite a range of games, both physical and mental, some of which went back to antiquity, one generation of children inheriting them from another. Some other games had reached a high degree of refinement in respect of organisation or high objective and competition to achieve it. The purpose of most or even all of this was of course amusement. Boys and girls alike, between the ages of seven and fourteen were taken up with carrying on this sort of sport during week days after the late afternoon (‘aṣr) up even to the Maghrib prayer-call—whereupon the boys, all of them, would repair to the mosques with their fathers to perform the Maghrib and ‘Ishâ’ prayers—and darkness would envelop the city, the quarters (hart) and streets of which were not lit by electricity until the summer of the year 1960. Boys used not to play or spend the night time together except during the nights of the month of Ramaḍān. Probably no account of this has ever been written, and most games have come to an end and vanished completely—the more’s the pity and children today, the generation of the ‘Revolution’, no longer know any of these games or take part in any traditional activity like this since new forms of exercise such as football, cards (lu `bat al-waraq), trio-trac (dâmâ, Yemeni dumnah) and so on, have reached them.

I have tried to set forth, relying solely on memory, the names of the various games with a brief description of those of them best known and most important. These games, I must point out, are what my generation inherited and played in the fifties of the current century and which were played by children in the forties and long before that.¹

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¹ E. Brauer, Ethnologie der jemenitischen Juden, Heidelberg, 1934, 215-21, describes some Jewish children’s games and quotes the Arabic ditties that accompanied them, but they are not much like those described here. Cf. F. Rosenthal, Gambling in Islam, Leiden, 1975, for games for limited comparison (Translator).

2 Istalqaf, to be ready to catch. Cf. class. lagifa, to catch. Qufayqif is perhaps to be linked with class. qaffa, escamoter adroitement une pièce de monnaie entre ses doigts.

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1 Boys’ Games

i Ball Games

1 Al-Qâhish

This is played with a leather ball and small stick by two teams numbering in all over ten persons. It is a rough game and may be compared with hockey in that rival teams compete to hit the ball in the direction of one-another’s goal (hadaf).

2 Qufayqif

Qufayqif is played with a stuffed cloth ball and there is no set limit to the number of players. One of the players stands in front of the other players and when they are standing behind him he alerts them with the words ‘Mustalqafin`qufayqif.’ He then tosses the ball behind him, over his shoulder, or from his nose or ear, or under his leg—there seem to be six different movements which he may adopt. The boys behind him try to catch the ball and throw it at a goal in front of all the players. Any player who succeeds in doing this will then replace the player in front of the group.
3 Zaqqi-nî ... zaqqayt-ak³

The meaning of this phrase seems to be ‘Pass to me and I’ll pass to you’. Two teams of four each play this game with a cloth ball. The ball is passed by hand from one to another without it falling to the ground and the object of the competition between the two teams is to snatch the ball from the other team and keep it passing from hand to hand.

4 Al-Walish¹

A stick, a dirâ‘ (cubit) in length, and another, about ten centimetres long, are used, and there are more than two players. The larger stick is used to hit the smaller one. The distance it reaches is measured, using the large stick to do this. The players, more than two persons, continue on in this way from point to point, the intention being to see who can hit it the furthest distance.

ii. Sitting Games

5 Šiﬁ sâriq (Honest Man Thief)

This used to be played with a knee-bone joint (ka‘bî) (top of the fibula 7) but more recently they use a matchbox (‘ulbat khibir) instead. More than five players take part, sitting in a circle. The first player throws the bone by hand into the middle of the circle where it will lie with one of its four sides uppermost. If, in the case of the matchbox, it stands up on one of its ends uppermost.

If, in the case of the matchbox, it stands up on one of its ends uppermost. The larger stick is used to hit the smaller one. The distance it falls to the ground and the object of the competition between the two teams is to snatch the ball from the other team and keep it passing from hand to hand.

5 Sûfi sâriq (Honest Man Thief)

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6 Li‘bat al-aszâr (The Button Game)

Various clothing buttons are used and there can be two or more players. Often a yâlak, waistcoat, is laid down and a circular area made in it with a sort of rim not exceeding forty centimetres in diameter. A button is thrown onto this ‘board’ and the next player tries to flick (yugandil, gandalah, a flick) the one against the other with his finger-nails. First one runs one’s finger-tip between the two to see if they are apart, then one flicks the apricot-stone, though if you touch either when trying to determine whether there is a space between them you lose your apricot-stone, and if you miss you lose your stone also. The winner of the apricot-stones breaks them open with a stone and eats the kernels.

7 Al-Ghuraq (The Pits)

Buttons or apricot (harûq) stones, datestones or small pebbles (hucam) may be used as counters. Little pits, in two parallel rows of four each, are made, and on the right of them a bigger pit is made called al-Sûq, about ten centimetres away. The number of players is two and the game is very similar to Monopoly. In the pits the player ‘builds’ a samsarah or bayt or property of some sort, and distributes his stones among the pits. If, in the case of the matchbox, it stands up on one of its ends uppermost, the thrower becomes King—this of course is not very easy! If it lands on one of its narrow sides the thrower is designated Wazîr, and, if on the other narrow side (as agreed beforehand) he is designated `Askari or Soldier. One of the broad sides of the matchbox is named Šiﬁ and the other Sînî, Šiﬁ here meaning honest and Sînî simply thief. Judgements (šâ‘man) are pronounced on the Šiﬁq, the Wazîr consulting the King who orders the sentence to be executed by the `Askari. The penalty (sâriq) might be, say, to prepare tea, to carry the other players, some kind of hard exercise, or a bastinado on his feet (falakah fi rijl–u‘), etcetera. The next person to throw the matchbox so that it lands in the upright position becomes King replacing the original King. This is somewhat similar to ‘Forfeits’.

8 Waraq al-qumâr (Cards)

This game only started with the spread of imported cigarette packets to the Yemen—Bilâyirs (Players), Abû Jinayh (Goldflake) and Abû Wardah (Rose). The packet was torn in two and the two pieces used as targets. Stones (called mugâ‘ah) rubbed to the shape of a rolling pin (yad al-mashagah) found in the foothills of Nuqum or the debris of buildings were thrown at the packets from four to five metres away. There was no restriction on the number of players.

9 Li‘bat lu‘bat al-sanb (The Date Stone House Game)

Each player builds a house (dâr) or more than one single house, with date-stones (zanb, sing., zanbah)—some will build big houses, others smaller ones, according to their ability. The others fire at these houses by throwing a large date-stone called al-mambal (obviously a word connected with nabl, arrow or date-shaped pebble).

10 Li‘bat al-qurûq (= al-barâqûq) (The Apricot-Stone Game)

This is played with pairs (awwâżiyah) of stones. The player throws one stone on the ground, then a second stone, and tries to flick (yusandil, qandilah, a flick) the one against the other with his finger-nails. First one runs one’s finger-tip between the two to see if they are apart, then one flicks the apricot-stone, though if you touch either when trying to determine whether there is a space between them you lose your apricot-stone, and if you miss you lose your stone also. The winner of the apricot-stones breaks them open with a stone and eats the kernels.

* * *

Numbers 5, 6, 8, 9 of these games are described as al-muqâmûrâh al-barî‘ah, innocent gambling, no stakes being involved.

iii Shooting Games

11 Al-Agwa’as (Catapults)

The catapult (awwâz (class. bow)) is manufactured with a forked stick and rubber (maç) and used to fire small stones.

12 Al-Banâdiq (Pop-Guns)

These are manufactured from the branches of the fig (balas) tree which are hollow; into such a stick a small soft trimmed stick is inserted, running tightly but smoothly to eject a pellet. The striking head of this stick is teased out (manf ash) just as the head of a tooth-stick (musaâk) is, and is moistened with oil or saliva. The ammunition consists of seeds like those of dûrah, in fact pepper-tree (šâqr al-barî‘âjû’i) corns. The air compressed by the thrust of the striking head shoots the corns some four or five metres. One can play with this pop-gun by oneself or a group may participate.

iv Physical Games Played without any Gear

13 Ya‘jalâh, yâ masnâ (O Well-Pulley, O Irrigation Well)

This is played by not less than five players one of whom is the judge (hakâm), called the well-worker (al–sâni‘). The rest are divided into two teams, and having tossed for choice of role, one team mounts the others who are bent over to the ground in the prayer-stance known as rûkâ‘î, in a line all facing in the same direction. They commence by chanting the words above and follow with

³ A builder in clay would call to his mate, Zuqqi ‘l-khulab, Throw up the (lump of clay) to me. Zuqqi is so called because it is muka‘ab in shape.

⁴ E. Ross, L’Arabo parlare a San’â, Roma, 1959, 178, is incorrect in saying that this game is to throw a small stick (qiyam) at a target (nâsi‘) for which read napa‘). One says, Ayyab al-nasa‘, set up the target.

⁵ Ko‘b is so called because it is makâ‘ah in shape.

⁶ Amin midâ‘am, Šiﬁ in the Yemen is popularly used merely in the sense of a good, upright, man.

⁷ Šarrâf, ya‘ fi farsh, verbal noun, sara’rîf.
Children's Games

15 Tab al-balas
in which riddles (ahâf, sing., ahjiyah) are asked.

One of the riders will then call out, \(\text{an}^\text{a} \text{ji alladhi sammayt-ah kadhâ wa-kadhâ, Where are you —you whom I have named one team has replaced the other. This is a game of chance}

14 Jimâl al-dawlah gâlat `Surr' (The Camels of the State said ‘Ring’)

This game resembles the English ‘Oranges and lemons say the bells of St. Clements’. The ‘state’ would be the Imam and the bells are the bells hung round the camels’ necks, called \(\text{nâqûs al jamal. Two of the players face one-another and take hands, holding them above the line of the other players who pass under them. They try to seize or catch the last one rather like the way in which thieves would try to snatch the rear camel of a caravan. The player caught is then eliminated from the game.}

10 Professor Serjeant informs me that Brauer, op. cit., 216, describes a game

U-tayy fi u-‘amrey-ni
Tâjah furutânjâshah,
\(\text{Fi ‘l-bahr galtâsah,}
\text{Ya dik, ya tayyak,}
\text{Ya nayyâh,}
\text{Ya nizî al-qaryah}
B-ghayr anjâh.

Draw water for me and irrigate me,
\(\text{Tâjah furutânjâshah}^\text{bowl,}
\text{Plunging into the water.}

O cock, o crower, O bewailer,
\(\text{You who come down to the village}
\text{Without wings.}

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15 Al-Shibrizah\(^\text{15}(The Porcupine)

One player called al-qâ ‘id, the sitter, sits on the ground with his legs extended in front of him. The other players who would be, say, four or more, jump over his feet making various contortions, i.e. not just simple jumps. The qâ ‘id then raises one of his feet on top of the other and again the players jump over them. He then puts one hand with fingers fully extended above and touching the upper foot and the players jump over that. Finally he raises the fully extended fingers of the other hand on top of the first hand and the players jump again. The first player not to clear a hand or foot of the qa‘id takes his place. The game is so called because it reminds one of the quills of the porcupine.

18 Qass, qass al-maqass (It Cut, the Scissors Cut)

Returning from school all the way to their homes boys leap over the backs of others, one after another, for sometimes quite fair distances. The name of this game is probably derived from the scissors-like movement of leap-frog, but it is to be noted that a thief is called a maqass, scissors, and so is a merchant (bayyâr, musthâri) who overcharges his customers.

19 Dawwâmah/dañjâsh (Spinning Tops)

There are two sorts of tops, shaped like pears (\(\text{unbarûdah/}
\text{iyâh) having a nail fixed in the head. A cord is wound round the nail and it is thrown on the ground, making a sound after which these toys are named dawwâmah and dañjâsh, the latter a purely Yemeni name. Boys vie with each other in decorating these tops with various colours and different sorts of nail which alter the sound given out by the top. The dañjâsh was mainly used by Jewish children and is no longer to be seen in \(\text{San`â}.\)

* * *

These are the best known of boys’ games. Girls do not take part with them except in the games al-Zanb (9), al-Qawqa` (10) and ‘Jimâl al-Dawlah (14).

Now follow the games played by girls until they reach the age of puberty.

2 Girls’ Games

1 Yâ râbiyah, yâ rubâ\(^\text{14}(O Hillock, O Hillocks)

Two rows of girls face one-another a few metres apart, stamping the ground with their feet in time to the rhythm of songs of the dance (ahâzij al-li ‘bah). The two rows run up to each other until they are face to face, then they retreat backwards, half way back. Each side has a hâzijah, a girl with a talent for improvising in rhyming prose (saj’) or rajaz verse. Her words are taken up by the girls of her side and repeated after her. It is customary to commence the dance with the words of welcome yâ marhabâ, yâ marhabâ, then there follows satire (al-haţû). The chant Yâ râbiyah is a sort of chorus. The girls choose a theme upon which the hâzijah of one side will make saj’, for example, beauty, spring, food, and the hâzijah of the other retorts. This goes on till the abler of the two sides manages to silence the other. I recall a line of inventive of this sort,

Yâ ka’k baya al-kibâ\(^\text{14}

O cake among the dung fuel cakes!

To this the other side will reply Uhibûth, uhibûth, as they dance, and their hâzijah improvises her rejoinder.

involving the arrival at \(\text{San`â Gate of a camel caravan and declaring what merchandise it has brought with it, to the guard.}

12 This is how \(\text{xûzûd} is understood in \(\text{San`â}.\)

13 Rossi, op. cit., 177-78, has a shorter account of this game. He records a game, mulañjû, which he states is to be similar to it.

14 Metre mustûf’/\text{o} 3\text{a} 3\text{a}.

2 Tar`ays is yâ dhâ`ib wa-dhawâ`ib (Are You the One Who Guards the Kid, O Wolf and Wolves).

The girls form a circle, holding one-another’s hands, and go round and round quickly, and he tries to grasp one of them who defends herself from him by kicking (khadhf) him with her feet. The game concludes when the ‘wolf’, the boy, has managed to seize them all.

3 TihtZbatZ tihtZbah

Any pair of girls can play at this. They take hold of one-another’s hands, facing each other with their bodies bent backwards and whirling round quickly at the speed of a spinning top.

4 Hizza li, ya hizza lil’

A pair of girls performs this, by dancing (raqs), their knees bent, half-squatting on the ground, half jumping half walking and raising alternate hands to their heads like a salute, in time to the beating of the ground with their feet and the rhythm of the tunes of the songs (ahâzij) of the dance. The best known of the ahâzij and songs of this dance are the following words.

Hizza li, ya hizza lil’
Taht rummânah kabirah
Sawt man dhâ’
Sawt ba’jam,
Qad takahhal
Qad tidaghnaj
Qad nasaal San â’l-madinah
Ma ‘l-kabirah hi la inah
kad nazalna ‘l-yasen nyalli
wa-‘anâgid al-hafirah.

Shake to me, o shake to me. Today we’ve come down to pray
Under a large pomegranate
And the (grape) clusters of the (vin)yard.

Whose is that voice? (bis)
It is the stranger’s voice, (bis)
He’s got antimony round his eyes, (bis)
He has dotted himself up all gallant-wise,
He has come down to San’â’ city
To ask for the hand of the young(er) girl.

As for the old(er) girl she’s naughty,
She’s eaten half the millet bread piece.

At this point the dance will have reached its climax and be at its liveliest and it will break off with

Shâwish ya ‘hni ‘l-shâwish
Shâwish man ‘allama-ni?
‘Allama-ni Sa’ad al-Yamani.

Sergeant’s son of the sergeant,
Sergeant who was it taught me?
It was Sa’d al-Yaman taught me.

Sa’d al-Yaman and his brother Šâlih al-Yaman were men who flourished in the first quarter of the present century, farmers/peasants (ra‘iyah) of Bir al-‘Azab whose properties are well known including the garden in which al-Rahmah mosque was established and where Imam Yahyâ was buried in 1948. This Sa’d was famed for his manly qualities (rujûlah) and his expertise in dancing (raqq) and the bar‘înh dance with brandishing daggers, which became proverbial. Some of his grandsons are still well known in Sa’ā today.

Appendix

Rossi alludes, and no more, to a ball game with a ball called kurt (plur., akrât) and a ball and stick game called nishighah. He quotes a type of word game playing on the names of the days of the week. One child says, Al-yawm ahad, Today is Sunday. Another caps this with, Ra’s-ak mugahhat, Your head is eaten/beaten. There are innumerable games of this sort.

The madrahah-swing used to be used at feasts etc., and is still on some occasions seen today. There are special songs for it called aghâni ‘l-madârih. In older houses there is a swing in al-hujrah al-kabirah and even a special beam (khashabah al-madrahah) from which it was suspended.

Another game one still sees in the Šâ’ region is waqal, a sort of hopscotch.

* * *

16 Abbreviated for tar`a ‘l-tays.
17 The pattern f ‘ilâtun is the basis of these verses.
18 Perhaps the allusion is to shaking down the fruit from the pomegranate infra.
19 The girls are now talking of a man whom they hope has come to see them to choose a bride from among them.
20 Takahhal here gives the impression of doing oneself up in a rather feminine way, and tidaghnaj implies that he is rather a ‘softy’, perhaps mocking him.
21 Probably because the Turkish sergeant was well turned out and had an air of importance.
22 Cf. p. 312b.
Chapter 25
Şan‘ā’ Dress, 1920-75

This chapter describes the patterns of dress of Şan‘ānis in the years 1920-1975. It examines male and female dress separately, although a case could well be made for dividing the material by social class or rank rather than by sex.

In gathering material for this chapter, I relied upon the accounts of past convention given me by older Şan‘ānis. Their accounts were sometimes vague about the extent of variation in the clothing of different groups and about the timing of innovation. They also tended to tie change in dress very neatly to periods of political change. I tried to supplement these accounts by studying photographs for the period before 1960, collecting old or traditional garments, observing current practice where relevant, and by drawing upon written sources, both Arabic and European.

Traditional Ideals

If, in some societies, dress is a poor indicator of social status and wealth, such an approach to dress does not seem to have been favoured by those who held power in Şan‘ā’. Fact, or more likely fiction, the tale of al-Qu‘dārī suggests their ideals.

One Friday morning, the Governor (şâmil) of Şan‘ā, the Fāqîh ‘Ali al-Anīsī, was out walking among the people of Şan‘ā, well guarded by soldiers. In the crowd was a certain al-Qu‘dārī, a man who worked leather in the market, who was today dressed as well as any great shaykh. Riding on a proud horse, he wore a new deep black ḍamis, and about the belt holding his erect silver-embossed dagger (aṣīb) he had wrapped a brightly coloured cloth worked in gold. On his head was a shining indigo turban (qub) and over his shoulder lay a great striped cloth worked with silver thread (masnaf). As he rode out in front of the Governor’s party, his horse jostled someone, who happened to be a man of Islamic learning, an ʿālim. The ʿālim turned round in fury and there he saw al-Qu‘dārī dressed in all his finery. The ʿālim stiffened but said nothing. Returning home, he removed his clothing (a white zinnah and gamic, curved šimāmah dagger, white shoulder cloth and ‘imāmah) and sent it, tied in a bundle, to the Governor.

On opening the bundle the Governor was momentarily puzzled but, suspecting a meaning hidden in the gesture, summoned the ʿālim. Asked why he had sent his clothing, the ʿālim recounted the morning’s incident, and added that, looking at al-Qu‘dārī, no-one could have distinguished the true status of the two men. He then petitioned the Governor to assign a particular garb for each order of society so that in future each would receive the respect due to his standing.

The Governor ordered the town-crier (muzayyin) to summon all the men of the market. Next to the Governor stood the instruments of public correction (ta‘zir): the drums (marâfiq) with which a man was drummed round the town, the tar (quqrâr) to cauterize a hand when cut off, and the rod (‘āiyy). All having assembled, al-Anīsī called for the leather worker, and when al-Qu‘dārī came forward, the Governor remarked, ‘No, that is not the one; that is a shaykh.’ Staring at al-Qu‘dārī he repeated these words. Al-Qu‘dārī stood silent. Then al-Anīsī turned to the instruments beside him and asked the leather-worker what they were. Al-Qu‘dārī answered, ‘Al-marâfiq, al-qu(rân, al-‘āiyy.’ Slowly al-Anīsī turned to look directly at al-Qu‘dārī, as though he had only then demonstrated his sanity. The Governor ordered him to wear clothing suitable for one who works leather in the market: a dull zinnah and an inconspicuous turban. In fact, to answer the petition of the ʿālim, he then went on to assign a dress for each class of the men of the market: a headgear or manner of wrapping the turban, a suitable garment, a shoulder cloth (lihfah) and manner of draping it, and a belt (hizām) with appropriate dagger (jambayyrah).

The moral of this story is not hard to find. In Şan‘ā’ there is a hierarchy of occupations, recognized and affirmed by those who hold power. At the top of this scale are those who rule other men and those who by their knowledge of God’s law make possible a virtuous society in conformity with this law. Below them come

1 The major periods to which reference is made in the text are: the Ottoman occupation, 1872-1918, the reign of Imam Yahya Hamd al-Din, 1918-1948, the coup led by 'Abd Allah al-Wazir, 1948, the reign of Imam Ahmad Hamd al-Din, 1948-1962, the Yemeni Republic (accompanied by Egyptian intervention) and protracted war ending only in 1970s/1980s onwards.
2 I have failed to find any reference to 'Ali al-Anīsī and so cannot provide any judgement concerning the possible historical background to this tale.
3 I have reconstructed the tale from notes I made when the tale was first told me. I later taped a shorter version of the same story. I am grateful to my friend, an older school teacher originally from al-Rawqah, who told me this and much else of traditional lore.

* Acknowledgements

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The Department of Antiquities and Libraries and the Yemeni Studies Centre, Şan‘ā’ were so kind as to facilitate the research on which this article is based.

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3 Punishment below the kādah punishment, fixed by statute, see p. 140b, passim.
4 This is the šimāmah, cf. p. 156b passim.
San`ā' — An Arabian Islamic City

should receive it on sight, and wealth out of step with social degree

in keeping with this hierarchy, status that deserves respect

older woman, daughter of a very successful butcher of San`ā'.

suppressing an attempt by a lowly placed individual to exhibit

was usually accomplished by informal social control and not by

530

over his indigo cotton gamic he wound round and round a

skin lining, a great indigo cotton cloth (~abighah) over his shoulder

no enthusiasm for the minutiae marking their lower status. This

those who were subjected to such regulation had

Needless to say those who were subjected to such regulation had

my father looked better than he did.' After a

trained in Tradition (Hadith) and in shari`ah, it is of some interest

butcher. He wore a fine coat of woollen cloth (jûkh) with a sheep-

groups. In San`ā' these groups are usually called the Bani

mughbalas (vegetable growers, particularly of onions,

domestic life, and should be practised by traditionally marked

politics, and should be practised by traditionally marked

while in the tales the figure applying the sanctions is a man of religious authority

they make explicit a political philosophy left implicit by others, `Wa-kull dhâ'i

In essence, although jurists might cite relevant Traditions to

Zaydi law, as modified by the occasional decrees of the Imâm.s

and a wound to honour.' Al-Sayâghi praises such regulations because they

recognizably dissolute persons, or those whose manly honour is

who were in a position to promulgate regulations were

the two sexes from adopting similar dress. In his comment, the

In San`ā', buildings and mounts as well as dress were regulated by

important historically, does not concern us here.

the Indian Hindu traders was similarly regulated. `Il y a quelques an nées que les

The choice of white and red may not have been made at random, white

to examine what Zaydi fiqh had to say on these matters.

The codes of fiqh require a distinctive dress for protected

other professions in descending order—down to those whose

In keeping with this hierarchy, status that deserves respect

other profession, or by handling defining

it should receive it on sight, and wealth out of step with social degree

should not be advertised.

in our study the Governor is given the dramatic role of

a place located individual to exhibit

the signs of prosperity and higher status. In fact, such suppression

usually accomplished by informal social control and not by

formal regulation.5 An example of such informal control is the

account—now almost legendary in her mind—given me by an

maid, and my father looked better than he did.' After a

paused she added, 'My father was like the full moon (al-badr) but I
don't remember what the Sharîf looked like.' But since those in

who were in a position to promulgate regulations were

the Judge of the Proper Path (al-khalîfah bi-tashshab bi-gawmin fa-huwa min-hum wa-idhlal). Abu

either sex, and red since they are colours forbidden

It is my experience, however, that a regulation such as this, designed to limit

A similar case is made by Ye’mantii Zaydîs and exemplified by the Shârîf al-Askar of Ibn Miftâh. The

and diversified by Ye’mantii Zaydîs and exemplified by the Shârîf al-Askar of Ibn Miftâh. The

the Indian Hindu traders was similarly regulated. `Il y a quelques an nées que les

the individual Jew had a tribal protector, Jews sometimes neglected to wear Jewish

the two sexes from adopting similar dress. In his comment, the

the Indian Hindu traders was similarly regulated. `Il y a quelques an nées que les

jurists might cite relevant Traditions to

identify the person and the profession or occupation of the

the Judge of the Proper Path (al-khalîfah bi-tashshab bi-gawmin fa-huwa min-hum wa-idhlal). Abu

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validate existing patterns of social stratification, inequality obviously did not originate in Islamic prescriptions but rather in the local political and economic order. In a well-known passage of his biography, the first Zaydi Imam apologized for his compliance with local custom when, returning from the market in Sa'dah with a fine new coat (qaba' mul'am), he met his cousin, 'By God,' he said, 'I were among Believers, I would not wear a coat such as this. Indeed it is not my kind of dress. I would wear only rough clothing, but, if I wore such, people would think little of my position. So, I considered their ways and realized that they would obey only a leader who dresses in such clothing, but I feel as if a cloth of thorns lay against my skin.'

Even if this apology rings a little hollow, there is every evidence from his biography that al-Hadi found the marriage of theory and practice, of literature and illiteracy, and of town and country, thorny. The tribemen recognized the written tradition: he needed the services of documentation, of outside arbitration and judgement, and, at the higher levels, of communication with national politics provided by learned families. Those who made their livelihood from the services. A proverb says, 'When a city child is born, seven are born in the countryside to serve him.' Yet, if the townspeople enjoyed cultural and economic privilege, they nevertheless lived in the shadow—and for long periods under the formal protection—of the political organisations of armed agriculturists, the qab'il or so-called tribes.

Traditional notions of social rank embraced competing and at times contradictory claims to high status. The townspeople acknowledged that this was a custom of the tribes, but they were above doing that. It is said that this is done for good reason, the Prophet demonstrated that such actions were permissible. There is nothing wrong with avoiding entering the market) if that does result in lessening of a man's honor, in a diminution of his prestige or of the respect offered him, or in a man's being mocked. Indeed, in such a case it is a duty to avoid it. The situation depends entirely upon the individual, the time and the place. But if none of these circumstances be present, one should not avoid entering the market because that smacks of haughtiness. Then the ignorant man takes to imitating this until for no real reason it becomes a habit for him to disdain [to enter the market], since the origin of the ignorant man's action is pure habit and putting on the airs of the high and mighty (my translation).

As the tale of al-Qu'dari suggests, particular elements of dress (type of garment, shoulder cloth, headgear, dagger and so forth) used to be combined in the costumes worn by the different social groups, of the Caliphs who followed him, and of many of the Imams. Yet, it was the Prophet's habit to carry another person on his horse and to ride without a saddle; he is above doing that. It is said that it is done for good reason, the Prophet demonstrated that such actions were permissible. There is nothing wrong with entering the market] if that does result in lessening of a man's honor, in a diminution of his prestige or of the respect offered him, or in a man's being mocked. Indeed, in such a case it is a duty to avoid it. The situation depends entirely upon the individual, the time and the place. But if none of these circumstances be present, one should not avoid entering the market because that smacks of haughtiness. Then the ignorant man takes to imitating this until for no real reason it becomes a habit for him to disdain [to enter the market], since the origin of the ignorant man's action is pure habit and putting on the airs of the high and mighty (my translation).

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groups. Of these elements, two, the dagger and the headgear, were of particular significance.

There are basically two types of dagger (jambiyah) in the San‘î‘ area. One is the J-shaped ‘asîb (or jîhâz) with bone or wood handle. Housed in a leather sheath, it is worn on a leather or cloth belt. The ‘asîb was the dagger of the tribesmen or of those men of San‘î‘ who claimed tribal origin (‘Arab). The other, the slightly curved thîmâh dagger, has an ornate handle of silver filigree work and is housed in an embroidered case. It lies at an angle to the waist on a belt of woven, embroidered, or silver thread (tasjîh) cloth. The thîmâh was worn by men of religious genealogy; the Sayyids and Qâdîs, and occasionally by others by virtue of descent or occupation, chose to identify themselves with these groups and the urban literate tradition. The Banî ‘l-Khums did not wear an ‘asîb but might carry a small knife in a cloth sheath tucked in the belt, or very occasionally a thîmâh.20

Just as was the dagger, so the form of a man’s headgear was a sign of political status.21 The beard, which traditionally was not shaved, had a similar significance.22 Indeed, where Sayîd fiqîh accepted the formal removal of man’s headgear in public assembly as a form of punishment and of public shaming, a gloss on this passage discussing other forms of punishment refuses to accept the cutting of a man’s beard.23

Corresponding to the thîmâh dagger of the Sayyid, the Qâdî and the fiqîh was the headgear termed ‘imâmah. The ‘imâmah consists of a stiff pill-box frame about which is wound a miyâshkhah or, far more commonly and exclusively today, white muslin (thâmîh). The oldest version of the base is thought to have been a block of wood covered with a wooden frame (gâwâq Thulà‘î) over which fitted an embroidered top (qâh), of the same work as the kûfiyyah mukattabah worn by boys of wealthy families; a man also wore one or two sweatcaps (ma‘raqah) under the gâwâq. Another type of frame is the Meccan kûfiyyah qaṭqî, a similar pill-box shape, the sides of which are covered with patchwork of red, green or yellow cloth, and the top of which is finely worked with white thread. The most common ‘imâmah base today is made by sewing coloured thread over a stiff base so as to resemble the kûfiyyah qaṭqî. This ‘imâmah is said to have appeared only after 1948 when a number of important men imprisoned by Imam Ahmad in Hajjah set about making it.24 If one can believe older travellers, headgear has been growing lighter in recent times, although it is possible that the ‘imâmah was once made not of one stiff frame but simply by piling a number of soft hats one on the other.25

The cloth around the base was also wrapped and draped in different ways. It is said that the Qâdîs and other fiqîhâh wound the muslin cloth round and round giving the tightly folded, rippled look (‘imâmah mula‘waqah) commonly seen today. High ranking Sayyids wrapped the muslin (or silk) cloth in a wide and smooth band (‘imâmah mu‘awâlah). The etymology of the word

20 An older fiqîh has reported to me that, in the days of Imam Yahyà, men were distinguished by where they wore the thâmîh. The Imam and his ministers wore the thâmîh far to the right, the fiqîhî in the middle and the Banî ‘l-Khums to the left, the lesser side. This may have been the correct alignment, at least in the eyes of the fiqîhî, but it is my impression that the Banî ‘l-Khums tended not to wear jambiyûh much at all. For instance, the normal practice of a butcher in San‘î‘ was to wear over his simple dark cloth belt. The oldest version of the base is thought to have been a block of wood covered with a wooden frame (gâwâq Thulà‘î) over which fitted an embroidered top (qâh), of the same work as the kûfiyyah mukattabah worn by boys of wealthy families; a man also wore one or two sweatcaps (ma‘raqah) under the gâwâq. Another type of frame is the Meccan kûfiyyah qaṭqî, a similar pill-box shape, the sides of which are covered with patchwork of red, green or yellow cloth, and the top of which is finely worked with white thread. The most common ‘imâmah base today is made by sewing coloured thread over a stiff base so as to resemble the kûfiyyah qaṭqî. This ‘imâmah is said to have appeared only after 1948 when a number of important men imprisoned by Imam Ahmad in Hajjah set about making it.24 If one can believe older travellers, headgear has been growing lighter in recent times, although it is possible that the ‘imâmah was once made not of one stiff frame but simply by piling a number of soft hats one on the other.25

21 A man did not go without his headgear, as Niebuhr, Description, remarked in his day: ‘Comme il est incommode d’avoir toujours la tête si chargée, ils ôtent chez eux, ou chez leurs amis, tout ce poids, à un ou deux bonnets près, et le placent à côté d’eux, pour le remettre quand ils sortent; et ils ôtent et remettent leur turban

22 ‘Non-sentiment les Orientaux ont diverses manières de s’habiller mais encore de se laisser croître la barbe. Les Juifs, en Turquie, en Arabie et en Perse, conservent leur barbe dès la jeunesse, et elle diffère toujours de celle des Chrétiens et des Mohommedans, en ce qu’ils ne la rasent ni aux oreilles, ni aux tempes; au lieu que les derniers la rétrécissent en haut. Les Arabes tiennent leur moustache très-courte, quelques-uns la coupent tout-à-fait; mais jamais ils ne se rasent la barbe. Dans les montagnes de l’Yemen, on n’est pas accommodé à voir des étrangers, c’est une honte de paraître rasé...’ Niebuhr, op. cit., 1, 96. ‘Les Mohommedans créent, ou, comme le remarquent quelques voyageurs, que les anges habitent dans leur barbe. Il est très que quand quelqu’un, après avoir laissé croître la barbe, se la fait raser, il peut être très-sévèrement puni; et il devient la risée de ceux de sa religion,’ ibid, 1, 98. Or in the words of a traditional saying, ‘Zayyân Allah al-nilâh bi-l-thâmîh wa-qâh bi-dhikhr bi-l-dhikhr, God adorns men with beards and women with jewelry.’


24 I am grateful to Ismaïl ‘Alî al-Akwa‘ and ‘Abdullah ‘Atîq for this information.

25 Renzo Manzoni, El Yemen, traite sur Arabia Felice, Rome, 1893, 192, reports that up to eight caps were worn. Although the number of hats described by Manzoni and Niebuhr (see n. 27) is surprising, it does seem that headgear has become lighter with the years. The modern ‘imâmah is now commonly wound with less muslin than previously, but whether—as Niebuhr might have interpreted this change—the trend indicates greater modesty among the scholars it would be hard to say: ‘Les Mohommedans m’ont paru forcer de prendre un turban de grosseur excessive, quand ils voulaient passer pur des savans du premier ordre.’ Niebuhr, Description, 1, 90.
muqaswâlabah would imply that the cloth of the 'imâmah hung down the wearer's back. 26 This was the common form of 'imâmah in Niebuhr's day, but in the Ḥamîd al-Dîn Imâmî, only the Imâm and men of his family wore an 'imâmah that had a long section, adorned with a fringe, hanging far down the back. 27

In some of the more distant areas of the countryside tribesmen did not wear headgear but left the hair long. 28 Around Ṣâni‘, however, headgear was the rule, among men of the country as of the town. The stock headgear of a tribesman was the qûb, an indigo-dyed cotton turban wrapped about a small crocheted sweat-cap. In fact the qûb was in no sense restricted to the tribesmen but was worn by many craftsmen of the market and by some of the Bâni ʿl-Khums.

In proverbs headgear could stand for those who wore it. A Jewish proverb opposes the two types: mā sabarat-sâh bî-l-mu‘ammim, khallî bî-l-muqâbbîn, 'if it didn’t work out with the men of the 'imâmah, leave it for those of the qûb.' 29 (This shorthand reminds one of the idiom of industrial society, though here it is hats, not collars, that are white and blue.) Al-Akwâ’s 'imâmahs, cotton worn around the shoulders, either alone without a shirt or with another form, suggesting the special concerns embodied in female dress of different classes did change over time. Fashion and articles in the dress of different classes did change gradually. Two factors shaped the pace and form of change. Until the middle of this century, clothing and clothing were costly. This was true of both local production and luxury or common cloth imported from India, Syria, and Europe. Most people purchased and received dress on ceremonial occasions, notably marriage and festival days, and wore garments for as long as possible, patching and re-dyeing them. Change likewise took place within a coherent aesthetic tradition. Clothing was designed not so much to display or present the bodies it fitted, as to cover and hide their forms. Some outlying groups of the Yemen did not wear headgear, but there are many exceptions. Some tribesmen wore a small crocheted sweat-cap, either alone without a shirt or over the dress of men and women.

As noted above, legal tradition forbids women from adopting the habit of men and vice-versa. The introduced ʿimâmah was in no sense restricted to the tribesman although some men carry a shoulder cloth simply for ornament, others need a cloth for more utilitarian purposes—carrying loads, as a cover when sleeping or in cold weather, etc. I suspect, therefore, that this detail reflects as much a contemporary longing for rules as it does the rule bound character of past society. Niebuhr pointed out that fashion changed in the great cities of the Islamic world just as it did in comparable centres in the West. 30 Concerning the ʿimâmah, ʿal-ʿAmthal al-Yamînîyah, Leiden, 1970, 145, no. 1083.

Women’s Dress

The variety of men’s dress pales before the differences between the dress of men and women. As noted above, legal tradition forbids women from adopting the habit of men and vice-versa. Women’s dress, although it shared many basic forms with men’s
dress was ordered along quite different principles. A man's dress reflected his role in political society. If he 'dressed up' on the festival day, or if, when relaxing, took off some of his clothing, he presented essentially one guise to all. On the other hand, within urban society, female dress incorporated no specific marks of status and occupation. A woman's dress has become, in the process of urbanization, a more significant indicator of her status and occupation. To the extent economic differences were marked, yet a woman could more easily adopt the dress of another group than could a man. But, through the manipulation of veiling, she drew the lines of social division central to her life.

Fiqh tradition takes about as strong a stand as is possible on the covering required of a woman before all men except her husband and men of her family within the prohibited degrees. Even the face, and, if possible, the feet and ankles too, should be covered. This covering is relaxed only in the case of the child, the woman past menopause, and of the dead. If we examine the legal rule, namely, that women should veil 'from' all men outside the family, here we find the kernel of a confrontation. On the face of it, a woman is to veil 'from', to maintain a symbolic distance between herself and foreign men. If we go a little further and consider woman as a representative of her family, her veiling can be said to mark the others of different rank. If, in life, these aspects are inseparable, in analysis we may dissect them by approaching them from different perspectives, from each of which one of these aspects appears more clearly.

First, however, a word on language—although too much may be made of it, in Arabic a woman veils herself 'from' (atatâqatâ 'an or min) or 'towards' ('âla, even 'against'). In order to simplify problems of translation, I have substituted for veiling or covering the analogy of 'keeping one's distance', an idiom common in English. In fact, the cultural ideal was also to keep women apart from foreign men and, except at certain times of the day, even from their own menfolk, but in practice, or 'under circumstances in Sânã' made the actual physical separation of women rather difficult. Unlike the homes of the upper classes of many Islamic towns, such as Zabad on the coast, the Sânã townhouse did not provide inner courtyards or fully separate quarters for women. Within the house, the lihmah (the face veil formed by a long rectangular piece of cloth wrapped ingeniously so as to cover the forehead, nose and mouth) allowed a woman to veil from men who were not of the immediate family and yet to be unhindered in her movements. Thus, the lihmah veil permits women to be symbolically separated from men without having to be at any physical distance.

If, then, the veil signifies a woman's separation from men foreign to her family and class, this article of apparel must do the reverse and underscore her adherence to the men of her family, whether by blood or marriage. In Zaydi fiqh a marriage contract is drawn up between the husband (or his representative, and in the case of a minor, his guardian) and a woman's marriage guardian (soâlîyy l- dikr, her father or, failing him, the men of her family and paternal lineage in a set order of precedence). Although a woman, particularly a divorcer, has considerable freedom of choice as to her partner, notwithstanding what is true in other contracts, a woman cannot represent herself in a marriage contract, nor can any woman act for another. In so far as possible, moreover, the law systematizes the code of honour according to which all sexual relations (with free women) must occur within marriage.

Most women marry; a girl who remains unmarried past puberty is felt to be in a temporary, almost incomplete state. Indeed, whereas a boy receives his adult dress at the conventional time of puberty, a girl veils from somewhat before the time she is legally marriageable and assumes the dress of an adult woman only at marriage, regardless of whether this is before or after her physical puberty. The covering of a woman's body is seen as a symbol of woman's adherence to the sexual code, which defines her position in relation to the basic patrilineal organization of society. As culturally valued, her veiling advertises her isolation from other men, and with that her abstention from taking the initiative in sexual behaviour. After all that has been said about the veil, the true oppressiveness of the symbol may fall on men for it never allows them to rid themselves of their suspicion that, although women are punitively in their use of the symbol, they are perhaps not always committed to the code of behaviour which would have the symbol represent.

The second aspect of veiling, in which a woman is considered as a representative of her family, will become clearer if we climb down from the generalities of woman's position in the social structure and look at the veil from the vantage of the person within. She experiences the cover not so much as a burden but as a protection from the possible, and expected, aggressions of strange men. For so, on the other side of the coin, was the system maintained. In the words of a proverb often quoted in this connection, 'a man most desires what he is denied.' Men, it presumes, are waiting for a glimpse of the face or body, or even an invitation from other men's women. Such an occurrence is a slight, not only to the woman but also to her man's honour. Women, as male honour incarnate, come under the cross-fire of masculine competition.

Indeed, the richest aspect of veiling is its manipulation as a sign of high social status. As the veil symbolically isolates a woman from foreign men, it also implies that she is so well provided for by her men-folk as not to need any truck with outsiders. And, obviously, it is the social systems in which I have taken for granted a culturally ascribed, positive value for the veil, such as no such functionalist account can suffice to

37 Tribal women married into Sânã' or following men who had moved into Sânã' adopted the dress, and, in time, other women accompanying their husbands on administrative duty elsewhere in the Yemen could adopt local dress. In everyday life, regional dress (e.g. the tribe-woman and the woman beggar, cf. p. 535) distinguished an outsider from the Sânã' woman, but within town society there was little formal restraint on conspicuous consumption by women of lower status descent groups. This is to be expected in so far as women can pass from one family (and status group) to another and hypergamy is not uncommon. Still, women's gatherings are a study in informal politics and a stage where no dress goes uncommented.

38 Ibn Miftâh, op. cit., IV, 113-114. While the chorus of commentators on these points is not unanimous, it is overwhelming. In practice, even the most orthodox may allow their women to go unveiled before very old men as well. There are also legal manipulations that can extend the circle of men within the legally defined prohibited degrees. A girl of an important family tells me that she will still a girl was married and later divorced so that she and her mother would thereby be able to go unveiled before her 'husband' and his father.

39 A full analysis of these patterns is beyond the scope of this chapter. As a result I have confined my remarks here to a general description of clothing and veiling and shall present a more analytical study of dress and status in another paper.

40 A similar point is made by H. Papenek writing of purdah in S. Asia ('Purdah: separate worlds and symbolic shelter', Comparative Studies in Society and History, The Hague, XV, 295).

41 In Zaydi law a woman may be married from nine years of age. A girl of good family might begin to veil at about seven or eight years of age, wearing a lihmah or head/face veil. In the street she wore over this a burdah (a black lace panel with holes for the eyes, decorated with shells, coral, buttons and other hanging ornaments) and a fiqâh (a shawl over head and back). She might wear a sitârah (the woman's outer cloak) as she neared marriage, but it was usually only at marriage that she received the elaborate headpiece for the woman's face panel (râs maghmîq) embroidered with gold and silver thread, decorated with coral and little hanging chains (durâî). Only on the night of her marriage, did she discard her childhood pungâ (a bonnet made of a square piece of cloth rising to a point in the back and fastened under the chin).

42 The word aggression should not be understood in its violent aspects. Suggestion suffices in such a context. Although tales of physical aggression discussed by women, it is my impression that these reflect more the considerable tension by which the sexes are kept apart rather than fact.

43 Ḍabîd shayr l'fââlina mî muhâ'.
The roots of this high estimation lie in cultural veil. Although there is no thorough study dealing with the history of dressing in the Middle East, an examination of the uses of the word hijab (veiling and the veil) in older Arabic texts suggests that the ancient symbolism of the veil was adopted in various aspects of Islamic practice. Hijab refers not only to the veil and seclusion of women but also to the practice of the Caliph of Islam veiling himself by a curtain 'from' the common court and crowd, and also to various uses in religious devotion, particularly by mystics in the sense of a curtain between man and the Divine Reality. In short, it was associated with some of the most highly valued persons and religious symbols and, at some time in the formative period of the religious codes, the face-veil for women was made informal practice.

Such a high value for the veil is reflected in the claims made in the biography of al-Hadi, the first Zaydi Imam of the Yemen. If he saw a woman he ordered her to wear a veil, and if she was past menopause, he ordered her to wear a cloak. He was the first to bring the burqa face-veil to Yemeni women and he ordered them to adopt it. The association of the veil with urban religion was as true traditionally as elsewhere in the Islamic world. For the most part tribeswomen did not veil their faces but wore throughout life a simple black qarqush, which was wrapped round with a large head-scarf. The outer cloak of the tribeswoman differed from area to area, and only women of a few settlements of the San'a' plateau (al-Rawja, Hadhad, Qaray al-Qabil) and of other northern towns wore a San'a' sitarah. As one might expect, there were women who stood as the antithesis to the aspirations of the urban woman, unveiled women, hereditary beggars, dancers and singers. Certain ulema advised Muslim women to veil themselves both from infidel women and from wandering women and to shun them. It is reported that al-Hadi, the first Zaydi Imam, kept his daughters from meeting such women, and a Qaç' Abdallah al-Dawwar explained that this was necessary lest they tell Muslim women about their lives and infect them with their licentiousness.

Once again, the boundaries marking social divisions and female virtue would seem to be the same. If before the public male world women's dress was forbiddingly exclusive and protective, within her own society, that of other women, dress served to demonstrate status in other parts.

A woman's day and wardrobe were divided into two parts. From the moment she rose in the morning, often for the dawn prayer, until after the mid-day meal, she worked at household tasks. The maintenance and operation of the household depended on the labour of its women, and there were few servants even in wealthy households. A woman's work included fetching water, sorting and grinding grain, baking the daily break, cooking, sweeping, washing, and tending the household animals. Women's work was organized by women. Even in a small and modest family, a young woman rarely began her domestic tasks after marriage without the help or supervision of an older female.

In large and prosperous households, which might comprise as many as five or six adult women, work was usually divided or taken in turns so that some women enjoyed an occasional morning off. Slowly, a woman gained in seniority in the household. When or if she reached the top she would manage the household, budgeting the stocks and supplies and directing the work of a team of women. Although a woman's progress in the domestic economy usually depended on success in marriage and childbearing, in building her so-called uterine family, this was not invariably so, especially not in the most important households of the town where a woman might have resources of her own and where the number of women in the household allowed greater specialization of labour. In such families, not only a widow but even an unmarried, barren, or divorced woman, by the kindness of some of her younger women and bringing up children, might become an outstanding manageress and petty capitalist. Such women, often formidable characters in women's society, joined forces with solidly established mothers and household heads of the middle levels of society in promoting something of a serious or censorious tone in San'a' women's society. Such women never failed to comment upon other women's, and especially younger women's, performance of household work. A woman usually saw fit to dress as practically and inconspicuously as possible in the morning hours—typically in a simple cotton zinnah (a calf-length dress with narrow sleeves) dyed and re-dyed black, and on her head, a 'minimal' 'ushbah.

Following the afternoon (aqr) prayer a woman normally changed her dress to go out to a woman's party or tafrijah. Although such a tafrijah could be a simple, informal gathering of family and neighbours, the most important of such gatherings were those marking the turning points in a woman's life—marriage (in the days of Imam Yahya for several afternoons prior to the consummation of the marriage and for twenty days thereafter), childbirth (afternoons during a forty day post-partum resting period), and death of family members (usually a ten-day period of mourning).
mourning gatherings). It is impossible in this chapter to deal with these ceremonies in any detail. A few words must suffice to place the clothing described.

As is to be expected, a bride is singled out by a ceremonial dress. In the large gatherings in her parental home before she goes to her husband, the girl is brought in by the shirah (the marriage dresser who is sometimes also the singer in a more modest manner), fully veiled; and so she remains until her marriage night. A red qinda covers her face and an Indian silk maqramah her hair and shoulders. A sprig of rue is placed where the two cloths are pinned. Even today the bride is customarily dressed in the older gamish and in traditional silver jewelry now no longer worn except occasionally by a mother honoured in the post-partum celebrations. Such traditionalism (dress is only part of the paraphernalia of the rite) may be understood to bestow on the actors the power and protection of the received social order, but the veil obviously invites dramatic manipulation. At the marriage night, usually a Thursday or a Sunday since Friday and Monday are times of 'blessing' (barakah), when the shirah has dressed the bride to meet her husband, she first takes her into the assembled women. There she lifts the veil from the girl's face, a gesture she will repeat later in the evening. The bride sits with her eyes downcast or closed under circumstances. Even today the bride is customarily dressed in the older gamish and in traditional silver and coral jewelry, and a full 'ushbah. In these gatherings, however, although the mother and child are raised above the other women on a bed, they are often almost dwarfed by the elaborateness of the staging. Such a room (makân al-awlâd or al-walidah) is hung with prayer rugs, paintings, furnishings and as many suggestions of fertility and divine protection—Qur'âns, swords, ostrich eggs, gourds, bunches of rue, and so forth—as the family possesses or cares to exhibit. Indeed, the very opulence of the staging reminds us of the obvious fact that such gatherings are a ceremony that honour not only the mother but also the household to which she has delivered a child. And, in practice, although the expenses incurred in providing a woman with a full childbirth ceremony are seen by the mother and by the other women as recognition of the mother's place in her marital home, so does the richness of the furnishings and of the hospitality reflect the status of the household.

Women attending such gatherings were no less concerned than their hosts with appearance. They wore an 'ushbah headdress which we have seen could be quite an elaborate affair, and as fine a dress as they could afford. From sometime early in this century an 'ushbah headdress as common among Mamlûk women.

52 However important mourning ceremonies ('aza) may be in social life, they are not discussed in this context. Women's mourning dress was traditionally an indigo-dyed gamish and a black headdress turned so as to hide any ornament, often covered with a cotton maqramah like that worn by Jewish women. Here, as in other family rituals, women played a more developed role than men. For instance, men do not usually gather to mourn the death of women and of younger children, and, one might add, Islamic law prescribes a dress of mourning for the widow but not for the widower.

53 The account given here is of traditional ceremonies as performed today. None of my informants believed, however, that the particular elements of the ceremony described here had changed much during this century.

54 The quoted with its vast proportions and very wide sleeves is a very old garment (much discussed in Habash) and in the early years of this century was more commonly worn by all women to such gatherings than it was at the time under discussion. For instance, R. Kastouri, op. cit., 1906, describes the gamish (shâb he calls it) as the better dress of San'âni women, when he visited San'â in the late 19th century.

55 Today all the tashbik are made largely from gold pins with only a little silver ornament. Sayyid Ahmad as-Shâmi reports that the much finer pearl tashbikh headdresses, examples of which are preserved by Yemeni Jews in Israel, were fashioned also by women. Other informants disagree. It is probably, however, that the older tashbik was the property of only a few of the highest families and that most women were dressed only in an 'ushbah.

56 Jewelry is not discussed here in any detail since it is a complex specialty beyond my competence. The collection of jewelry worn by a bride in the 1920s or 30s usually included three strings of amber dust kirab, a lubbah mukhlih, a 'azam lu'l, a dukkah muharrafah, a mulubbas mukhlih, and an 'ađ mirjân, or some combination thereof.

57 A typical 'ushbah in order of placing the articles on the head includes: 1. al-rafsudhah (a plain head-scarf), 2. al-makkahnugah (a narrow dark cloth wound about under the chin and over the head through which the maridiq are pierced), 3. al-farrudî al-mulubbasah (a white Syrian open weave cotton cloth with red or black border onto which silver and coloured tassels are sewn), 4. al-maranq al-dahbatî (long pins ending in silver, often gold tipped ornament, on which are threaded coral and silver ('ir) beads. Another type of maridiq is called muhâkamâr. An older informant also said that there was a third type qa'dîq, but I have not seen these and the word qa'dîq usually refers to ornaments worked into the ends of the hair. These pins are pierced through the makkahnugah and extend in a line with the chin), 5. al-qashiq (gold coins sewn on a cloth worn at the crown of the head, usually in three rows of seven each), 6. al-mashiiq (sprigs of sweet basil, raybân, or occasionally rue, shâhârî, lying along the maridiq), 7. al-qashîq al-mu'âlî (a single piece of satin or silk worked heavily with gold thread, or al-qashîq al-maritâr when worked with sequins), 8. al-ummar (a silk scarf of geometric design with tassels), 9. al-arawagh (a long silver embroidered band about two metres in length, wound about the headress so as to give it a distinctive and lovely uplifted shapeliness, and 10. a qidâ (a rectangular light-weight silk or synthetic cloth with metallic thread or sequin appliqué, also imported from south Asia), or for occasions such as the post-partum gatherings, a maqramah (a word that can be used for any large rectangular shawl) to cover the head, but here designating one of Indian silk heavily woven with gold thread). See also the description given in 'Abd al-Wâs' An-Wâs', Tarikh al-Farîs, Cairo, 1927, 303-03, and in the poem of Muhammad Muhammad al-Dhabîbî, al-IMhilâm ilahah miyyâh, Ta'iz, 1969, 24-25, translated in the text.
A woman was walked up (muhjah) in this life, she was buried alive. If she learned to read they said: she is indecent. Only the nashahdah should recite aloud.

At home (you would find her) winding out thread, or winding lucerne around sorghum stalks (to feed to the cow) in the entrance way. Only when she had finished milking (the cow) did she get dressed (to go out). In the old days women were content. On her head she'd wear a scarf, a qinah and farrauds, two spans and a cubit long. And a qa'ah twenty fathoms long and three qahit, braided into the ends of her hair.

Along the side of her cheek would be marataq, dababiss, sprigs of herbs, and earrings. She'd bind her head with a qashiyah and nine different scarves. The head of a woman was like a dome. Her husband, poor fellow, would get stuck in it.

If he were spending the evening with her, how should he handle it, when he wanted to see the roses of her cheeks? Consider my friend, all that effort. Down behind her it (the end of her 'usbah) hung just like a tail.

How much trouble a house gave her, biting her many times (under all that cloth).

She reeled her face with a cut of hair, so that the husband of a thin-haired woman was shown half her hair.

(Only) when she sleeps—if ever she gets the time—would she see her face itself.

For as the housework and cooking a man still led an easy life.

The house was arranged like a flower, you'd long just to sit in it.

Soon after midnight a woman would get up to grind the grain—at dawn she'd be off to fetch water from the spring.

She'd sail into the kitchen like a flood—in the evening she'd milk two cows.

She would sit drinking qisr coffee, sorting the grain, and then get up to draw water from the well (in the entrance hall of the house)—it would be brackish.

When she had kneaded the dough she would end up crying if the fuel were wet or the dung cakes damp (i.e. if they wouldn’t light properly).

After lunch she goes to a woman's gathering, covering herself in a siyarah with coloured spots.

If it was a shikla the she wore a shajma, swinging coquettishly among the young girls.

A woman would wear a dress (shuqah), a fine qamis and Harazi trousers (khasa mawi bi-shaghk Harazi),

58 The cut of the zinnah mukarnashah (a longer dress with tucks on the bodice and pleated cuffs) was the cut worn by all women. But far more important than the cut was the cloth. The favourite cloths in the earlier years of this century were Syriam striped mixed cotton and silk cloths (Muqri), velvets, Indian brocades, and, reports a Syrian visitor, French silks.

I also saw various kinds of coloured silk in bright colours like red, yellow and green, most of them being French manufactured. These silk fabrics wealthy Muslim ladies use for their clothes. I was told that some of them spend lavishly on their clothes, and the cost of a lady's dress, with the work on it, embroidery (tabl) and decoration in gold thread (al-kayyiq al-qadi'iyah) or silver and gold (thread) comes to between thirty and fifty English guineas.

Jewelry was also an indispensable part of a woman's presentation, and is even be said of her self-estimation, since she owed her jewelry to the marriage payments made for her, payments which women sometimes describe as 'my price' (qimati). Traditional jewelry was of fine silver work, though corals and pearls were also much used and liked. What little gold women had in the earlier years of this century was worn though as earrings, as coins across the crown of the head (al-qashiyah) or strung on a necklace. The standard piece of jewelry for everyday wear by the 1930s was not the work of local craftsmen, but consisted of imported necklaces of large beads of kiran, amber, amber dust, or artificial amber, depending on the quality.

A woman's marriage trousseau formed the basis of her wardrobe. As the years passed, however, a wife rarely failed to impress on her husband the 'public' aspect of her appearance in women's gatherings, suggesting that if she shone among other women so too did her family's reputation. If she could not hold her head up, either her husband was unable to provide for her suitably or he did not care for her. When such an argument failed, women often invested in clothing and jewelry what money they made or received as gifts.

Many of these aspects of traditional women's life are brought together in the poem of Muhammad al-Dhahban of which I have translated couplets 14-30. Although the poet purports to inveigh against the old order, he reveals a certain ambivalence both concerning women and concerning the passing of a way of life.

Good folk, what was a woman's life like (literally, the woman, how was she)? How hard she worked yet still was despoiled. They would stop her learning to read/recite even the Qur'an.

Weary and frustrated she was in this life. She was bound up in an 'usbah. She was silent, unresponsive; the Imam left them stupid.

58 The cut of the zinnah mukarnashah and particularly the ruffled or pleated cuffs may have been modelled on a Turkish dress as were the buttoned cuffs on the male zinnah. There is, however, no certain evidence for this, and narrow sleeves have been known in the area for a long time. L.A. Mayer op. cit. 22, 'Narrow sleeves are to be seen on the women's dresses of the Ta'izz area, but these fan open extended for many inches beyond the tip of the fingers and are usually shown as Qalûn for that matter. But they were the overlong sleeves, which if stretched, may have been modelled on a Turkish dress as were the buttoned cuffs on the

59 The whole of a woman's body was so classified in Zaydi times. For this they receive a small remuneration.

60 Narrow sleeves were of course known in the Near and Middle East long before Maqūl, or Qalun for that matter. But they were the overlong sleeves, which if stretched, extended for many inches beyond the tip of the fingers and are usually shown as ending at the wrists in many folds. The sleeves of the zinnah are usually shortened by wide folds on the upper part of the sleeve. Narrow and very long sleeves are to be seen on the women's dresses of the Ta'izz area, but these fan open below the wrist.

61 Nasha: nakedar, nakedness, decency, that which is covered from sight. The whole of a woman's body was so classified in Zaydi life (see my remarks p. 514a) and—wishful thinking!—so was her voice.

62 Literally 'nusha: nakedness, indecency, that which is covered from sight.

63 Nasihahdah are women (of any class) who have learned to recite the nasihah, religious verses of Yemeni authors (e.g. al-Bur) recited in mourning gatherings. For this they receive a small remuneration.

64 Thistle was-nukaddah had the nasihah and the flatik the wool. Nashah is also used for any thread. The woman winds out the thread and then re-does it adding other threads into it and finally winds it all into tassels, such as may be sewn into scarves, cf. farrauds and nasihah n. 59.

65 Sharihah: said to mean pleased, happy, but perhaps with the connotation of being easily pleased, pleased with little.

66 Qubay: silver triangles that were braided into the ends of the hair.

67 Qasr: disaster or struggle.

68 Qasr: used for the tail of any animal but properly the fat tail of a sheep.

70 Qasr: cut of hair made first for a woman at her wedding. Older women in particular wear two long curled qasr along the side of the face.

71 In short it was a ruse of sorts since the husband would imagine that she had a lot of hair from the fullness of the qasr exposed (6).

72 Infusion made from the husks of the coffee bean.
San'a’—An Arabian Islamic City

Silver bracelets worked with ṭāhara and two strings of real kidah, Red bindarah shoes (bashmash) too, like the other women of the quarter. When among the womenfolk, the bride was silly and laughing. Women were still content in those days. On her wedding night the bride would sit up (all night), wearing the qamāţā until finally the herder (who goes round collecting the sheep in San'a’ in the morning) came by. In a shining jaylānī qamīţ and a sinnah so large that it would fill the street with their robes. When the women (came to visit) on the seventh day, they filled the street with their robes. A woman walked with the forward dip of a dancer—a fair rose but with a weak mind.

If we can now step back from the clutter of sartorial minutiae through which we have been making our way and consider the larger patterns into which they fall, two points stand out—a fine concern with status embodied in the dress of men and women, and the strikingly different yet complementary structuring of the dress of each sex. As his dagger illustrates especially clearly, a man's costume accented his dominant political and sexual role, whereas a woman's dress emphasized her domestic and reproductive role. Bearing this in mind, we may perhaps better understand the storms provoked by deviation from any such traditional code of dress. To its defenders dress is not a matter of individual style, but instead a necessary expression of 'political' order, that is, of the division of labour.

 Changes in Recent Times

In investigating the question of when and how these customs came to change, I asked an older Fīrah a 'lim of a traditional stamp when men had first begun to shave off their beards. He replied: 'From the Republic only. Now they imitate the West in everything. And the outside world doesn't imitate us in anything: just imagine if, as we have argued, dress incorporated certain symbols of status, so too we should expect its change to bear some such connotation. Pressures for political and economic change that were building around the Yemen were repressed during the reign of Imam Al'mad. So too, like the other women of the Peninsula. A plethora of headgear is about, and only men of explicitly modernist or government and trading circles regularly boreheaded. A robe or fujah—though not the qamīţ—is still the dominant garment. A young man who cannot afford to take over another tradition wholesale must choose from what is at hand. The position of a woman means that she may diverge very little from dress acceptable to her family and to the wider society. Lastly, the way in which the sewing of women's garments was done played a part. Many women sewed in order to make a supplementary income, but with the most informal training and with a basically uniform pattern. To date there has been little competition from specialized tailors or seamstresses which might encourage diversity or higher standards of sewing. These facts are only beginning to change today when, within a decade, the old

other Arab capitals. Be this as it may, in the beginning of the 1962 Revolution the dress of the Imams and with them that of the ulema in general became a symbol of the old order. Radio broadcasts for a time, decreed the unclean 'imāmahs' (al-ʿimāmah al-majlisah) and it was not uncommon for men in the beginning of the conflict to change their costume just to pass unnoticed by the crowd.

Underlying changes in patterns of dress are several related factors: the breaking down of the Yemen's isolation, increasing emigration of Yemeni labour to work abroad, penetration of the Yemeni economy by foreign foodstuffs and consumer goods, and a political change whereby the government espoused a formally egalitarian and ameliorative language. Government statements now no longer began only 'In the name of God' (Bismillah) but 'In the name of God and the people' (Bismillah wa-smīm al-ḥasb). The most pronounced of the old status symbols have been abandoned by almost everyone who yet has a life to carve. So the traditional headgear—'imāmah or black turban of the tribes—is seen only on older men, those on whom their parents set the marks of manhood long before 1962. The jambiyah has not vanished though younger men who wear it tend to adopt sports-wear and trousers as the background. Certain patterns do remain, since change follows divisions of class as well as differences of generation. Those who come from the old elite remain meticulous in their public dress. If it is now a European business suit that he has adopted, the man of the government will be quite as deliberate about wearing it to work as his father was in donning his outfit (qiyāfah) before appearing to the public eye.

For the mass, however, change is still more gradual and contact with the outside world is largely with the rest of the Peninsula. A plethora of headgear is about, and only men of explicitly modernist or government and trading circles regularly boreheaded. A robe or fujah—though not the qamīţ—is still the dominant garment. A young man who cannot afford to take over another tradition wholesale must choose from what is at hand. The position of a woman means that she may diverge very little from dress acceptable to her family and to the wider society. Lastly, the way in which the sewing of women's garments was done played a part. Many women sewed in order to make a supplementary income, but with the most informal training and with a basically uniform pattern. To date there has been little competition from specialized tailors or seamstresses which might encourage diversity or higher standards of sewing. These facts are only beginning to change today when, within a decade, the old
city of  Šan‘ā’i has become a small enclave in the midst of Adenis, Europeans, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Americans, Arabs from various countries, and Yemenis from every district. Contact with different styles does not lead directly to their adoption by the women of old  Šan‘ā’. Changes have come largely through imitation of the younger women of the élite, who, following the careers of their fathers or husbands, have lived long outside  Šan‘ā’, most often in Saudi Arabia, Beirut or Cairo.

This appears also to have been the path of change before the revolution. A number of important changes is said to have been introduced to  Šan‘ā’ by some of the younger women of the Imam’s family in the 1940s. Among these changes were a shift in dress style from the full-length, waistless, long-sleeved dress to a shorter dress with a waist, very full pleated skirt and three-quarter length sleeves, and the replacement of the ʿuṣbah by a simpler headdress. The latter consists of a single scarf tied under the chin, a ʿlithmah, and a ʿmaṣar(r), a piece of Indian brocade or cheaper Japanese metallic synthetic which, wrapped about some paper, is tied stiff and crown-like around the brow. ʿimâmah was sometimes also worn over such a paper crown with the tassels arranged about the face, the ensemble then being called ʿażjah. A change in the marriage headdress was also said to have been introduced about the same time—from ʿażbih or full

83 In a woman's gathering a young woman from al-Bayţā’, who did not wear such a ʿmaṣar(r), annoyed by the coolness of some of the ʿimâmah there, remarked, 'Stop looking down on me, when you are still wearing ʿimâmah.' However conventional this headdress now seems, it too once met with a cool reception from older women who likened the woman who wore it to a Jew with a bandaged head, 'Sû al-Yahudi al-maftūj.'

84 It is formed of three pieces, a skirt, a triangular cover for the upper torso, and a chiffon scarf as face-veil. It is not like the one piece ʿabâyah or ʿshyar worn in Arabian towns and in Aden.

539
with it the liithmah face-veil and, in town, the sharshaf. Such a development where the veil falls from the women of the 'Westernizing' upper classes (and often of families with an old urban tradition) and rises among the woman of rural origins and newcomers in the process of modern urbanization has occurred in many Islamic countries and, in so far as one can tell, is now occurring in the Yemen. As men enter the labour force of the oil economies, women assume the garb of urban housewives.

In the past the types of cloth available on the market were few and relatively costly. The poor wore dark utilitarian cottons. For those who could afford them the cloths of choice were the velvets and fine cottons of Syria, the silks of France, and the cottons, silks and brocades of South Asia. Today the old routes to Asia have not been cut, nor has the taste for brilliant colour and for gold and silver thread work died. Thanks to the genius of Japanese and, more recently, of Korean industry, cloths of bright colours and flashing metallic thread are now within reach of all. The old custom of tabdul where a limited collection of clothing was shared back and forth has more or less died; mass-produced fabrics and growth in cash income allow more women far more dresses. Girls of wealthy families are now happy to invite attention by being the first to wear a dress of the latest fabric to appear on the Şan’â’ market, or by exhibiting some more exotic variety of the Japanese spectrum of fabrics purchased in Jeddah by an obliging male. Increasingly, such women wear, under the maxi-sharshaf, the styles of Europe. Largely restricted from competing in the open labour market, women now provide a showcase for imported goods in a growing consumer society.

Fig. 25.1. Various types of silver jewellery (drawn by Barbara Sansoni).

azrûr birr | azrûr mişárârah | azrûr shâ’rîyyah | azrûr shâbuk

Hanging pieces

azrûr tishjûr

End pieces of choker or necklace (azrûr tishjûr)

which colonialism has formed and which the Persian and Turkish invaders brought into our good and civilized land. As they wished to distinguish their protected women from the women of the despised populace, they kept them sitting at home and dressed them in the sharshaf and the ṣurge’ to guard them from the eyes of the despised native.’

From the introduction by Muhammad ʿAbd al-Malik al-Mutawakkîl to Muhammad al-Sharifî, Dumruʿ al-Sharashîf, Şan’a’, 1971, pp. 7-8 (my translation)

86 An important and detailed description of stitches and patterns of textiles with numerous sketches, embroidery, threads, is provided by Aviva Müller-Lancet, The Jews of Yemen, Chicago, 1976, 21-27. It also contains photographs of certain items of costume. The Arabic technical terms are given in all cases. The editors are indebted to Mr. Burt Blechman on the New York University Medical Library for a copy of this work.
Types of chain (duqqah), worn by a man on the jambiyah without the dangles. The dangles (namiinim) are worn by women on the forehead.

Type known as ġazam, with string often of coral or silver beads and coins. 'anbarshah (small hanging piece)

qublah, as big as 75mm in diameter.

Half of ġazam.

san'â' Dress

silsah mufasayyah, with precious stones.

shumayl, wide silver bracelet.

Silver bracelets (hadwad, plur., hadawad)

zunâbil, filigree basket-like ornament.
Chapter 26
Şan‘ā’ Food and Cookery

Introduction

The Şan‘ā’is, says al-Hamdānī, “have arts in [the preparation of] foods which the foods of no other town can attain.” Elsewhere he supplies a list of comestibles available in Şan‘ā’ which includes fruits, vegetables—not very many, varieties of wheat—the Bawnī wheat of Qa‘al-Bawn north of Şan‘ā’ is specially renowned, grains, bread, and animal products such as milk, curds and ghee (samm). Though the medieval Rasūlid treatise, Bughyat al-falālahān is mainly concerned with the Lower Yemen and the Tiḥmāh, much of what it has to say about grain, fruit and vegetables applies also to Şan‘ā’ and the north. By way of comparison with present-day Şan‘ā’i food it may be considered the rations required for the men working on the Mi‘rib Dam, as set forth in two of the pre-Islamic Dam inscriptions, that of Shuralīb and that of Abrahah, separated chronologically by 93 years. Professor Beeston writes:

‘Each list has three main sections: cereals and dates; meat; liquor. Under the first of these headings the Shuralīb text lists, besides dates, “fine flour (ṣüd) and meal (ṭin) [Ar. ṣāḥīn] of wheat (br) [Ar. ‘burr], barley (ṣüy) [Ar. ša‘r] and gādd (which is probably dhurah).” Abraham subsumes all the foods under the generic description ḍayy (da’ay), “flour”, without further specification. Under the second heading we have in Shuralīb, ḍibyṃ/waqfīm/wqīfīm, and in Abrahah, ḍibyṃ/waqfīm/wqīfīm, from which one would infer that ẓiy and qaṭ both mean small cattle, i.e. sheep and goats. It would also be a possible suggestion that ḍiby was contrasted with both the oxen and small cattle, and hence probably camels. But the Corpus editor has taken ḍiby as “sheep” and qaṭ as “goats”. One reason for the Corpus proposal is clearly the fact that in between this item and the liquor item Shuralīb, (but not Abraham), inserts a separately enumerated group of ḍimūn/‘alūkān, taken by the Corpus as “full grown camels and young camels”, which seems to me etymologically very speculative. Still, in terms of general sense it has something to recommend it, inasmuch as one would quite expect camels to be separately enumerated.’ The liquor section is again fairly straightforward. It lists (fermented) liquor (ṣīgy) of ḍimīb and ḍy, probably fresh grapes and raisins. Shuralīb then adds “liquor (ṣīgy) of dates”, and Abrahah “mer of dates”. According to the classical Arabic lexicographers mīsīr is specifically nabīdī made from dhurah; but in Sabaeic it evidently had a wider sense. Shuralīb, (but not Abrahah) finally adds ḍibī (obviously the modern ḍibs) and ḍīnt, the latter rendered by the Corpus and Conti-Rosini as “butter” which is certainly wrong if taken in the strict sense. Food in Şan‘ā’ is known as ukāl and the traveller’s provisions are called rasīūd or ẓād—while Hamdānī uses the term sufrah.

Writing in the late 11th/17th century, Qa‘ī Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Ša‘būlī tells us, of Şan‘ā’;


So it is—and the markets are full of fine victuals,

How many a merchant there is of choice wares,

Never does it lack in fruits, or the cries of the merry jesting,

Except for a short season, fixed and determined,

About a month or two—this is true and no lying,

How many a craftsman it has, devout and decorous.

Hamdānī makes reference to books on cookery, though the text seems to indicate that he does not mean Yemeni books, but among Rasūlid writings still extant in Ms. it is more than likely we shall upon some treatise on the culinary art. Some notion of the range of dishes about the mid 12th/18th century may be gained from a poem cited by Zābārāh, and how different these were from the traditional diet of Ḥaḍramawt can be seen from ‘Alī Bā Gharīb’s poem written in Indonesia, expressing his yearning to taste again the simple foods of his native land. Since

G. L’E. P., Paris, 1963, IX, 103-7, discusses food apparently in a temple’s store, ṣha‘mīn, ḍimīb, ḍīnt, the first probably equivalent to ṣhāmīn (milk fresh or collected in a skin (Lane), ḍīb, date-honey, grape-juice or bee-honey, though date-honey seems most likely. ḍīb, for which he suggests the qibl or soft heart of the palm-tree, is more likely to be something like ḍib wqīfīm (see n. 64), heart of wheat. This would keep whereas the ṣīgy would go bad.


the qūzī roast lamb figures in the poem in the Nashr al-'arf,⁹ it is possible that this method of preparation was introduced during the first Ottoman occupation, and during the second Ottoman occupation, such items as baqlawah, bālūzah etc. Basis¹⁰ and zalībīyya could perhaps also have been introduced during the first Ottoman period.

The large temporary labour force in Aden, especially after World War II cannot but have introduced new foreign items of diet for at least occasional use in parts of the Yemen and in San'ā' itself. Sayyid ʿĀbd Allāh al-Sāmī informs me that in his youth vegetables were not much eaten in San'ā' but now their use has greatly expanded. I can confirm this was also the case in the Aden Protectorates where the potato (as apart from the sweet potato in Ḥaḍramawt) became a common article of diet only after World War II, along with other vegetables introduced by the British. After 1962, the occupying UAR forces introduced new Egyptian tinned foods, and the million and more their country with many foreign foods—this has made a marked difference to the diet of both town and countryside.

Over twenty years ago I was told that al-Zayyād mā ya‘qdīn al-samak 11 abād-an, the Zaydis never eat fish; it is said also that the mountains are the fish dead, worms. Ḥamdīn himself makes no allusion to fish as part of the diet. The Jews used however to sell fresh water fish in San'ā',¹² Formerly only fish preserved in some sort of way would be eaten in San'ā' and preserved in some sort of way would be eaten in San'ā' and San'ā' süqs, and frozen broiler fowls. A round qaṣr of white cheese smoked brown on the outside is imported to San'ā' from War II, along with other vegetables introduced by the British.

As already seen⁹ sheep-or-goat mutton is preferred to beef. San'ā'is had no tabu on eggs, but in 1972 they were small, often with their departure.

With their departure.

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The large temporary labour force in Aden, especially after World War II cannot but have introduced new foreign items of diet for at least occasional use in parts of the Yemen and in San'ā' itself. Sayyid ʿĀbd Allāh al-Sāmī informs me that in his youth vegetables were not much eaten in San'ā' but now their use has greatly expanded. I can confirm this was also the case in the Aden Protectorates where the potato (as apart from the sweet potato in Ḥaḍramawt) became a common article of diet only after World War II, along with other vegetables introduced by the British. After 1962, the occupying UAR forces introduced new Egyptian tinned foods, and the million and more their country with many foreign foods—this has made a marked difference to the diet of both town and countryside.

Over twenty years ago I was told that al-Zayyād mā ya‘qdīn al-samak 11 abād-an, the Zaydis never eat fish; it is said also that the mountains are the fish dead, worms. Ḥamdīn himself makes no allusion to fish as part of the diet. The Jews used however to sell fresh water fish in San'ā',¹² Formerly only fish preserved in some sort of way would be eaten in San'ā' and preserved in some sort of way would be eaten in San'ā' and San'ā' süqs, and frozen broiler fowls. A round qaṣr of white cheese smoked brown on the outside is imported to San'ā' from War II, along with other vegetables introduced by the British.

As already seen⁹ sheep-or-goat mutton is preferred to beef. San'ā'is had no tabu on eggs, but in 1972 they were small, often with their departure.
made in Ša‘dah—one speaks of a maqīla Šādīyyah, but they are, or were, made in other places. In Barāt in 1973 a large maqīla cost forty ryāds. There are various shapes and sizes. Pieces of ḥaraṭ are found on medieval, perhaps even pre-Islamic sites so stoneware must have been manufactured for many centuries. The madhalah/ maskalah made of ḥaraṭ is deeper than a maqīla—it was compared, very neatly, with the shape of the Egyptian tarbush, and it is used for baking dishes directly over the fire, as for instance the maqīla ḥaqq al-bihānah for maizel-cake. The maqīla ḥaraṭ is used for saltah/hilāb, and a bigger open pot for sauces and bread dishes. These stone dishes always have a pleasing coal-black colour as a result of the process known as ṭadrīs. When they ‘train’ (vidarīs) or ‘break in’ the maqīla they rub it with oil (zayt) or fatty things (ḥaqq ḏasimāh) so that it drinks up the fatness (ṣurbation ḍusimāh). The black colour is then laid in the sun and onions put in it. Presumably the black colour comes from the burning of the oil into the stone when cooking. Like so many other things it figures in a San‘ānī proverbial saying, ‘ṣaltah-bil-bilbah,’ for baking dishes directly over the fire, as for instance the tannūr-oven (pl., ṭamarrūn) has a cover (ṣural), a basket tray is ḣuṣʿa ḥuṣʿa, but there are many types, some imported from the Tiḥāmah. The smooth sheep skin (ṣard al-ḥanām al-ṭājī) upon which a meal used to be set is called ṭagāf; the basket for bread is ṭawrah.

The clay coffee-pot jabahīn/jamanah ‘hansels (tardīs) itself.’ The small metal jazīzáh (= kanahā) is also used. The jamanah/jabahīn has a handle (mahzam), neck (raqaḥab) and dhannāb, a little projection for the finger on top of the handle.

Water for culinary or other purposes in Šan‘ā’ had to be drawn from a well in or near the house. She might say, ‘Anʿ anza‘ mā, I am drawing water’, or ‘Anʿ aqīb al-dālī tla-ḥilīr, I let down the bucket into the water.’ A bucket/glass etc., full of water would be a ḍafrah mā.

**Some Cookery Terms**

Without, or with too little salt (ṭāfī) One says, ‘ṭād-ṭāfī tāfī, it is still not salted enough. Give me a pinch of salt—Ītālī ḍīhrāfīkī milḥ. A piece of salt is ikšīr milḥ (archaic?). Tough, of meat, is ‘aūs. Šan‘ānīs say, ‘Ṣulān aṭtāṣṣ al-taṣfahm mā-ḥā, It is hard work coming to an understanding with so and so.’ Of something hot to the taste such as chillies, one says, ‘Qaḍā‘qā ḍī-hāfā qaṣīyy.’ To shrink (in cooking) is tamqar or ṭibīqī ṣāmīrah or tala‘ṭaṣ. A crumb is ūṭrah. Rosī supplies some terms that do not figure in the recipes infra, maqīlīyyīt cooked, muṣqalī fry, nāḏī boiled.

The only fat Annika Bornstein mentions is samī which she translates as ‘butter-fat’, and this has not been altered where her text is quoted. When local samī (balādī) is prepared fenugreek (hilāb) and black cummin (ṣīḥah) are added into it. It is very expensive, but, as she says, the preferred fat. In English samī is sometimes rendered as ‘clarified butter’, but the more convenient Anglo-Indian term ‘ghee’ is used here everywhere else. It is often replaced by imported tinned margarine (samīn shajārī), locally produced sesames oils or other imported oils. Shajārī is usually boiled and hilāb added into it, possibly also other ingredients—it is then called samān maqīlī.

**Labān** is butter-milk, ṭalib is fresh (ṭaṣīḥ) milk of cows or sheep-and-goats. Ṭahrīr or yīrīr, the latter word from Turkish, is curds (yoghurtt) made by adding ṭāṣīḥ, curdled milk, to fresh milk.

Āḥmad Qaryah in 1973, composed for me in colloquial Arabic in consultation with his sister in Šan‘ā’ a description30 of the various dishes in common use there. The following year Annika Bornstein sent me her informative paper dealing scientifically with Yemeni food. Broadly speaking Annika Bornstein’s classification has been followed in the dishes listed below, but Āḥmad Qaryah is quoted first and her description second. To this much addition has been made but further enquiry will of course produce yet more.

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20 A ṣafrah in tribal South Yemen is usually a wooden bowl.
21 Ḏīhrīkī milḥ, zamān shajī and rāfīkī milḥ, Cairo, 1933, 38, no. 441, has a proverb, ‘Ghīrā al-burmana ḍaḥša. The cover of the cookpot is earth-ware.’
22 This Persian word which came early into Arabic has a variety of forms.
23 L’Arabo parlato, 155.
24 See p. 558b, ṭamār, et passim.
28 Dīhrīṣ, from ḍharrā, to scatter, is used of other substances also.
30 Āḥmad al-ṭaḥrīkī bi-muṣqalība fil-ḥam al-muṣqalīl, so named because presented to me as Christmas!
Bread

Introduction

As in other agrarian societies the staple food (ubâl) of the Yemen is bread (luqmah, khubz), eaten dipped in a relish (idâm), varying according to circumstances from a vegetable stew, broth, fenugreek (gilbâh) to milk, ghee, etc. A piece of bread eaten after a meal without dipping (lauya bi-ma'âlâm) is called mahramat al-balqî in colloquial parlance. After a meal the host must give malûj-bread toasted (qumis = mhammar) with coffee, in wealthier houses richer fare. A proverb says, 'Dip the edge of the bread in the relish, my children, and you will have much property.' It is used of a person who permits himself what he prohibits to others.

Yemeni bread is mostly prepared in the form of flat rounds—the qurs. (If you say, 'So and so's round of bread is finished, Filân kîmlî qurs-ah,' it means that it is all up with him!) According to Annika Bornstein the ordinary qurs is only slightly leavened. Baps (kidmah see no. 6 infra), which Rossi calls soldiers' bread since this is what they usually have, are also common. Some kinds of bread are prepared from a mixture of grains (cf. nos. 5, 7) but breads made from a single kind of flour, without any admixture is called daqîq fars. Small oblong loaves of imported refined wheat flour baked in modern bakeries are now commonly sold in Šan'î, but they are naturally less nutritious than bread prepared in Yemeni fashion from native cereals.

These loaves are known as rûs an Indian word long in use in Aden.

'The people of Šan'î,' says ed. al-Islâmî and al-Faiṣî, Cairo, 1371 A.D.; most are still known today.

For some reason people appear not to care for barley bread but they eat it all the same, as may be perceived from the proverb, Khubz al-sha' al-maklî muddâmâm, or Šu' al-Haṣî al-maklî muddâmâm. As well as al-Haṣî barley, wheat (birr) of Haṣî is said to be eaten 'madmînî', disliked, but al-Malîk al-Afîl. lists it among the varieties of wheat known to Šan'î folk without disapproval.

One of Qûdî Ismâ'il's proverbs shows that kadrî, Thîmah dharab-bread, is not highly esteemed.

Some houses, according to ed. al-Wâsî, bake two or three times a day, but Annika Bornstein found it was usually baked at the present time at midday in quantities sufficient to do for lunch, supper and the next day's breakfast, but sometimes it is also baked fresh for breakfast early in the morning.

A piece of dough left over from the preceding batch of bread is dissolved in salted water and mixed with flour, salt and water, to make a soft dough which is left to rise overnight. Next morning the dough is re-kneaded, adding more flour and water, and left to rise for another hour. Town housewives however now use dry yeast which reduces the time for rising to one hour only. This is linked with a proverb, 'The beginning of yeast is water, Āuwal al-khammarî màqâlî' (this apparently means that one cannot stay out of a thing). When the dough ('ujûm) has been baked into bread there is left in the bowl (gâsîh) al-taṣâsî (a residue). They rinse the bowl with a little water called (ghâsîyûl) among which they put a little ground flour (gûnîn) and next day it is yeast (khamirî).

The actions in the making of bread are (imperative feminine): 1 'Ajînû u-khammîrî w-mallîshî, knead, adding yeast and salt, 2 Iftaqîdî (al-'ajîn), inspect the dough, 3 (When khamirî, risen) ujlâyîqâdî, light (the tannîr), 4 Khârîjî, take out the pieces of dough, ikâ'îl (tibîm-hâ), work in the two hands, 5 Iftaîî, work between the makhbassah-pillow and the hand, or, ishînî, work between the edge of the hand and the palm, 6 duqî or ikbihût, put on side of the tannîr, 7 Iftakî, remove.

Yemenis naturally prefer their bread oven-fresh and it is bright direct to the diners who eat it very hot (yâhûl fars dâfî). So that proverb says, 'What comes quickly is hotter,' 'Ad al-muhqâzîsî ambînî.' The basket used for carrying bread is known as tawrah; this is also used of big baskets for carrying grain on the head.

Kinds of Bread

1 Bread Made from Imported Flour (al-khubz min al-daqîq)

a We take (nâjûr) a little wheat flour (gûnîn) and a little refined (gâfî) flour, mixing it all up and kneading yeast and salt with it until the dough is ready. We then put small pieces into the pot (laqân, pî-, âr.), along with a little ground flour, into the bottom (gâsîh) of the pot. Then we take the round pillow (makhbassah) and bake with it (mîhbar-ah) until it is cooked (mâlîkîh). We never take it out with the makhbassah (mâbîd-ah bi-l-makhbassah) but take it out from inside the oven (tannîr) to the baskets (gûnîh). When the dough has risen it is divided into pieces and shaped into round balls, which are taken between the palms of the hand, pressed, shifted quickly from one hand to the other and pushed into a widening circular shape. When the dough is thin it is whirled on to a round pillow (makhbassah) and stretched out to an even circular shape. It is then flipped quickly onto the inside wall of the earthen oven (tannîrî) and baked for one minute until it is slightly brown. Other breads are prepared in the same way, except that instead of using the makhbassah the ball is struck directly on to the side of the tannîr and flattened there by hand.


39 'The cultivation of cereals...', 43.

40 Al-Āmîrî al-Yamâniyafa, I, 103, no. 291 and unpublished proverbs.

41 Tîrîkî, ed. al-Irâniyafa, Cairo, 1928, 299.


43 Al-Āmîrî al-Yamâniyafa, I, 103, no. 291 and unpublished proverbs.

44 From al-Ḥamdam, I, 260, no. 732. When the dough is ready. We then put small pieces into the pot (laqân, pî-, âr.), along with a little ground flour, into the bottom (gâsîh) of the pot. Then we take the round pillow (makhbassah) and bake with it (mîhbar-ah) until it is cooked (mâlîkîh). We never take it out with the makhbassah (mâbîd-ah bi-l-makhbassah) but take it out from inside the oven (tannîr) to the baskets (gûnîh). When the dough has risen it is divided into pieces and shaped into round balls, which are taken between the palms of the hand, pressed, shifted quickly from one hand to the other and pushed into a widening circular shape. When the dough is thin it is whirled on to a round pillow (makhbassah) and stretched out to an even circular shape. It is then flipped quickly onto the inside wall of the earthen oven (tannîrî) and baked for one minute until it is slightly brown. Other breads are prepared in the same way, except that instead of using the makhbassah the ball is struck directly on to the side of the tannîr and flattened there by hand.
26.1 Kneading wheat-bread.

26.2 Spreading the dough in a bowl.

26.3 Beating the dough with a makhbazah and the hand.

26.4 Trimming the dough on the makhbazah.

26.5 Sticking the dough to the side of the tannur.

c The pre-eminence of bread in Yemeni eyes is expressed in the saying, 'Everything a man ordinarily eats, drinks or smokes, says to the round (of bread), "My master" (Kull al-tawali' taqül li-'l-qur, "Ya sidix"). Nothing a man consumes can replace bread.

About a person you know intimately you say, 'Bread and dough made by my own hand, (khubz yadix wa-'ajix).'

Talking of a person who attempts to separate two complementary things, one says, 'Bread in San'a' and fenugreek in Dhamar (khubz fi San'a' wa-kilbah fi Dhamar).'

The baker recognizes the face of the man who has had lunch (Al-khabbaz yi'rif wajh al-mitghadd). He knows who has eaten and who has not. Bakeresses have a bad reputation. San'anis say, 'One bakeress doesn't like another (Khabbazah ma tibibb khabba-zah)', i.e., people of the same craft hate and envy one another.

2 Malüj3 al-birr/burr, Wheat-bread

We take wheat flour, adding yeast to it, then we add water and knead (itt wi-yi). After kneading it we leave it till it has risen (law-ma qaduh khamir). We light the oven until it is hot (nla'i 'l-tannür law ma qadiyah bamiyah) and, taking a little dough (ughayrah 'afin) in our hands, we bake them in the tannür-oven until they are cooked (tundaj), separate them (nkhatti-ha) with the makhdiron [from the side of the tannür] and remove them to the basket.

3 Malüj al-sha'ir, Barley-bread

a We clean (munaqqi), grind and sieve the barley and, taking a little yeast and salt, knead it with water and let it stiffen a little (nkhal-h gai shwayyakh). We bake in the tannür-oven and bake it with a little fenugreek (kilbah). We bake it (nimlij-ah) in the tannür until it is ready, removing it with the makhdä-iron.

The other proverbs are from his unpublished second volume.

51 Sing., tunuq'd, Cl. matulät, addict, habitué.

52 Qaçî Isma'il al-Akwa', al-Amthal al-Yamanzyah, I, 343, no. 1006. The other proverbs are from his unpublished second volume.

53 Pl. malüj, but Rossi, L'Arabo parlato, 159, gives a (collective) pl., malüj, sing., malüjah.

54 A piece of dough is 'ajinah.
26.6 The dough spread on the makhbazaah.

26.7 The dough being placed in the tannūr.

26.8 Dough sticking to the sides of the tannūr.

26.9 The making of malūjah, an unkneaded bread, worked only by hand.
26.10 A hand-quern (matham al-yad).

b 1,000 gms of barley-flour (or wheat [usually as in no. 2 supra, RBS]), or barley and wheat mixed); yeast, salt, water, 5 gms of ground fenugreek seeds soaked in water for some hours (cf. p. 553a).

The risen dough is divided into five balls, each ball smeared with the fenugreek seeds and flattened on the side of the tannür where it is flattened by hand and baked for three minutes. Malúj is eaten, as khub, with any food.

One piece of malúj: weight of flour, 200 gms: weight baked 400 gms.

c Yemenis say, 'Fenugreek is the fretted knife of bread (al-šilbah sharim al-ajsh). This is said to mean that fenugreek does to bread what the peasant's fretted knife does to the crop (ar-zar), i.e., it cuts, as it were, bread of thick consistency and renders it easier to eat.

A good type of barley used for malúj is saglah.

4 Jaḥīn55 of Ground Dhirah/dhurah-flour

a We scald it with boiling water (nasmūt/nasmūt-hā bi-l-fā'ir) and knead it with a little yeast and salt. After the kneaded flour has risen (yikhammar) we take a little ground flour on a plate and cut it into very small pieces (nīqass-ah šaghirah šaghirah). We then wet our hands with water (nībill ayyid-mā bi-l-mā') and, taking a little ground flour, we work on the pieces of dough (naʃal li-l-qafa' al-ajsh). Then we bake them in the tannür-oven until57 the jaḥīn is toasted (miḥammar) in the tannür. Then we take them all out (nibr'-i'd-hān).

b 850 gms of sorghum flour, some yeast, salt, water. The risen dough is divided into ten balls which are flattened by hand in the tannür and baked for three minutes. The jaḥīn is smaller and thicker than khub.

One piece of jaḥīn: weight of flour 85 gms; weight baked 170 gms.

c Goitein58 reports the proverb, 'No dog runs away from a piece of jaḥīn-bread (Ma kalb yikhmar min jaḥīnah). It seems to mean that if you invite a poor person to eat he will come—he will not turn up his nose at something good. Jaḥīn also figures in a common style of proverbial saying, in this instance used in Dhamār and Yarim.59 'A jaḥīnah all to myself, not bread-and-honey for me [shared with others] (λiṭaḥ šahād, wa-la šabāyā ša wa-l-nās).'60 Sabayā is a luxury (min al-ma'kalat al-fākhirah) whereas jaḥīn is eaten by most ordinary folk. The tale behind the saying is that a man was married to a pretty woman, but, as Qâṣī Ismā'īl discreetly puts it, discovered that she was not exclusively his own (khatiqah lahu) and so divorced her. Then he married another woman who was not pretty.

5 Qafa'ā61 Bread of Dhirah/dhurah

a We take a little dhurah-flour (Jaḥīn) and, using boiling water, we sprinkle it with it (nasmūt-ab bah), knead dough and let it stiffen a little. Then we take a piece [small enough] for our hands [to hold] and bake it (mīlāj62 in the tannür-oven until the latter is full of qafa'-bread, in such a way that there is not a strong flame in it (bi-kibayh tāкиn al-tannūr mā bish hā laḥah qašíyih), scattering the fire coals (nifās63) until it gets toasted (law-ma yihammarīn). Then we separate it [from the tannür] with the makhdā-iron into the basket (qhuqā).

b 1300 gms of lentil flour (or sorghum and lentil flour mixed), 8 gms yeast, salt, water, 10 gms of ground fenugreek seeds soaked in water.

The lentils are first ground in the quern (matham-ah) to remove the peel, then ground into a fine flour in the grinding mill. The risen dough is divided into ten balls, each ball is smeared with fenugreek seed and flattened by hand in the tannūr, where it is baked for about two minutes. Qafa' is a popular bread but less common than the others, since lentils are not always available and the lentil flour requires a long time to prepare. Qafa' is eaten with tea or qishr-coffee, but not usually with other foods.

One piece of qafa': weight of lentil flour 130 gms; weight baked 280 gms.

c A proverb in similar style to that on jaḥīnah, supra, runs, 'A qafa'ah of lentils all to myself, not husked wheat bread for me and others (Qafa'ah bilisin li wahād, wa-la hubshah naqṣyiy li wa-l-nās).'

6 Labūbah65 of Fermented Dhirah/dhurah, Pancake Bread

a We grind the dhurah and boil a small piece66 of 'aṣīd-porridge (qavārāh 'aṣīd yahиshah) which is to hand, in water. We take the ground dhurah-flour, sieve it and pour into the kneading-bowl (niskub-ah li-l-majnah). We add the 'aṣīd-porridge and salt to the ground dhurah-flour, kneading it with the yeast and adding water to it a little. We knead it until it is runny like water (law-ma qadʿī ṭaḥkī sa-l-mā') and we leave it to work (niyarīq is yikhammar).

56 jaʃam explained as 'to burn with boiling water.' One says, jaʃamjaʃam, she scalded herself. jaʃam is also explained as rashk to pour, v.a. jaʃam.
57 Law-ma = ilā mā.
58 Yemenica, 181, no. 1423, translating jaʃinah as kashfurah as-dura.
59 Al-Amrkhāl al-Yamānī, 1, 404, no. 1202.
60 See Bread dishes, no. 3, infra.
61 Sing., qaf'ah, defined by Qâṣī Ismā'īl as khubah dhurah wa-l-adās, and my notes say, bread of lentils, wheat (qamūb) and qubāh sawda, black cummin. A solid local bread of khamfr (yeast) called qurma (pl., quram) was stated to be the same as qaf'ah. Cf. Rossi, op. cit., 159.
62 Syn. mikhab.
63 Explained as niʃafirūs. Class., ʃaʃd, break asunder, scatter.
64 Qâṣī Ismā'īl, unpublished volume, defines hubshah al-bār as al-naqṣyiy bi al-bār ba li ʃuṭat qishr-6i.
65 Sing. lapubāb.
66 This was explained as 'we take small naʃar-measures of 'aṣīd (nafṣ yahiiṣah).'

The naʃar is a sixty-fourth part of a qahf (cf. pp. 156-57, n. 141).
with the yeast. We set up the girdle (mirakkib al-jullâf) on the tannûr-oven and, taking a little firewood, dung-cakes (khâbâ') and kindling twigs (laywah), light (nibrîl) the tannûr so that the girdle may heat up. Taking a little oil (jabûf), we dip the rag in it and grease (nîsîm) the girdle with it (nûqîhs al-khârbîq fih wâ:nîdîshin bi-ta'a l-jullâf) once it has become hot. Then we take a gourd-sieve (madhâr) with holes, a place for two fingers below and for one finger above,62 into which the big (middle) finger63 enters. We sprinkle (nîdîr) the labûbah-pancake [batter] from the gourd-ladle on to the middle (la wasa') of the girdle, covering the top (lit. mouth, jum = lag) of the girdle so that the labûbah-pancake will cook, and (then) do another one (nîdîr thaynîh). 64

b 425 gms of sorghum flour, salt, water, 5 gms yeast. The fluid dough is left to rise for about one hour. It is then put in a small can,65 poured onto a flat disc, and baked for about one minute. Labûbah has the shape and consistency of a pancake. It is not baked in every home but only by certain families who sell the bread in the market. Labûbah is usually used for making the dish shafūt.7

Once piece of labûbah: weight of sorghum flour 85 gms; weight baked 140 gms.

c Al-Hamdânî74 says of labûbah-pancakes, 'It is called al-jaṣîf, bread of dhuhrâh (khubz al-dhuhrâh 'alâ l-‘aṣîf).’ So then it was not a new dish in the 4th/10th century. The writer has eaten similar pancake-bread in Addis Ababa. A Yemeni proverb runs, ‘Sabbirî labüb.’ 76 If Sabbirî says, ‘Wait, broth, until the Pancakes come to you.’ This is explained as

Fattah80

This is bread of ḍhurâh, unleavened (fatîr) as contrasted with khâmîr, leavened with yeast. Perhaps it is hardly a category on its own.77

b Sayings about fatîr include, ‘Fatîr is better than the Sultan’s table (Fatîr khayr min simâj al-Sulûm).’ The simâj is properly the mat or cover upon which food is laid. ‘Take a small piece of your unleavened bread (Khudh min fatîr-ak ‘as),’83 means content with a little of your provision.

9 Qurmah = qasîfî’ah (no. 5 supra and n. 61)

Goitein84 reports two sayings about the qurmah, Al-qur’m al-mammad yiradd al-damm, Thick dhuhrâh bread produces blood. Behind the other saying, Al-qur’m afdal min al-Qur’an, Dhuhrâh bread is more important than the Qur’an, is the story of a faqîh who piled up Qur’ans one on top of the other to get at a basket containing the breakfast bread, that was hanging from the ceiling.

Bread Dishes

1 Al-Fattah Shredded Bread with Ghee, etc.

a It is [prepared] from bread (khubz) itself. We heat the stone bowl (ni‘mamî t-’maqîl) on the top (lit., la wasa’) of the tannûr-oven and put a little ghee (sann) to it. We now take the piece of bread (khubzah) which we put in (wasa’) the stone bowl and, taking a spoon (ma‘laq), we rub it (na‘bas-hâ’) along with the ghee until it is broken up into very small pieces (nîqatîs qatî’uṣrûkayyir). [It is eaten hot.]

b Fatûs –2 pieces of khubz (170 gms), 100 gms of butter fat, salt, water.

The bread is broken into pieces and heated in a pan with the butter fat, water and salt. Fatûs is the common name for any dish prepared with pieces of bread. It may be prepared with butter fat only, eaten with meat soup, or mixed with some other ingredients to make it tasty, e.g., bananas or honey.

c Fatâh87 is the same as class. Arabic ṣhîrîd, a dish that is well known to Tradition. It is the method of using up left-over bread which quickly goes hard in hot countries, or the bread may be kept for later use, and this treatment makes it more palatable.

2 Al-Shafût

a We take labûbah-pancakes and put them into shallow bowls (ṣâhîn). We crush leeks, mint and a few spices with a rolling-pin (najurr niṣâwî)88 al-bay‘ah wâ-l-‘ma’â the-qasîf al-bahârîit. After crushing this we put it into butter-milk (nafal-ah bayn al-laban), pouring it on top of the labûbah in the middle of the bowls.

77 Al-Amhîl al-Yâmînîyâl, I, 10, no. 30. Laṭbîh is Aden pronunciation.


79 The recipe calls for 1/8 (thumâni) of a gadd of dhihrâh. Half of this is crushed and half ground. The half that is crushed (gashûk) is put in water in the evening and ground wet next day in a special small quern. The dhuhrâh flour is called za‘fîl and the runny dough is called mudhûn in Jâmî’a.

80 Cf. Rossi, op. cit., 159.

81 The word for 'a proper ma‘amîya baker’s oven, quite distinct from the tannûr.'

82 Sing., faţûrah. Cf. Dozy, Supplement, fatûrah, pain sans levain, etc.

83 Both come from Qâ‘î Ismâ‘îl’s unpublished proverbs.

84 As is explained in hari‘ah.

85 Yemenica, I, 119, no. 867, & 120, no. 886.

86 Cf. Gloss. dial., 2490, fatûrah.

87 For faţûrah see Nashr al-arif, I, 422; Al-Amhîl al-Yâmînîyâl, I, 11, no. 33; Dozy, Supplement.

88 Cf. Gloss. dial., 2394.

89 The faţûr (possibly f’târ or f’tûr?) and masqahîf are the round rolling pin and the small flat grinding stone upon which one crushes spices and herbs. One says masqahîf to include both the rolling pin (which is sometimes called yâd al-masqahîf) and the masqahîf itself. Rossi, op. cit., 155, gives the latter a plural masqîfûs and the crushing or pounding, za‘ub, yinbûs.
3 Al-Sabây, Wheat Pastry with Ghee and Honey

a We put dough of wheat in the shallow bowl (qabīn) and clap it between the hands (nisnītah). Then we take the ghee and add to it (naf'al lak) a little of the dough (in the shape of) long strips (al-daquivos) which we put onto the round bread (al-daqiq al-Rūmī) consisting of pieces of the same dough. We bake it, using the round pillow (makbhabah). We remove it with our hands from the middle of the tanūr-oven.

b 300 gms of wheat flour, 150 gms butter fat, 170 gms honey, salt, water, yeast.

The risen dough of flour, yeast, salt and water is divided into halves. One half is made into long strips onto which butter fat is poured. The strips are pinched together and put in circles on the breads, which are then flattened on the makbhabah and baked in the tanūr for about one minute. The baked breads are put in a pan with melted butter fat in between and served with honey.

c Qāqā Isma'il⁹⁹ says sabây is made of heart of wheat (laban) mixed with honey and ghee. He considers it one of the choice dishes of the Yemen, as in fact the proverb on p. 548b would indicate. It may be in allusion to this kind of dish that when a marriage agreement has been concluded between two houses nearly related in descent (nasab), it is sometimes said, 'We have added honey to the ghee (Zidnā 'ala 'l-sann asāl).’ We have added one good thing to another.

4 Al-Sūsi, Wheat Bread with Eggs

a We bring the bread to the stone bowl (maqāli) when heated, adding to it a little ghee. We mix up (makhkūbah) the eggs⁹⁵ and sprinkle them little by little on each bread round (al-daqiq al-Rūmī), 1 egg (50 gms), yeast, and a little black cummin. We heat (nisammi) the tanūr and cover it after putting the stone bowl down below (nisnī), al-madalhah into it (nisam). We turn up (nisād) the hole of the foot [at the foot of the tanūr], sealing them up (nakhim 'alay-hin) until they are cooked. When they are ready we remove and turn them out from the stone bowls (maqāli) into baskets.

b 430 gms corn flour (al-daquivo al-Rūmī), 150 gms butter fat, 1 egg (50 gms), yeast, water.

The flour, yeast, water and some of the butter fat are kneaded together to a smooth dough which is left to rise for one hour. The risen dough is put in a pot smeared with fat. An egg is put on the top and the cake is baked for about thirty minutes on the coal in the tanūr. Kubānah is eaten as dessert with tea or qat coffee.

c Kubānah was also a dish favoured by the Yemeni Jews. At Nahal Halavy and Habshūsh, after the morning prayers, were served the kubānah, the traditional Sabbath food. ‘It had been kept warm from Friday in a madhalah, a stone dish of the kind manufactured at Sa'dah, which lends a particularly agreeable flavour to the food preserved in it.’ It is described as 'a Saturday dish consisting of dough kept warm from Friday and mixed with soup of melted butter when served.'

5 Bint al-sahn (Daughter of the Bowl), Wheat Flour, Pastries, Eggs and Honey

a A little wheat and ghee, and a little flour (daqiq). We mix the eggs, pouring them among the flour (bayn al-ta'ījim), kneading it with yeast (khmērah) and salt. We take (it), cutting it up into small pieces in the bowl (laqan) with a little flour (qabīn), working it (nisnītah) by clapping it in our hands in the shallow bowls (qabīn). We take the first round (qabīn)' and sprinkle it with ghee, and the second, sprinkling it with ghee, and add black cummin to it. We take it to the oven (firm)⁹⁶ for it to toast and cook (yīhammir wa-yunfaj). We sprinkle the bowl with honey and ghee.

b 900 gms of white wheat flour, 200 gms of butter fat, 3 eggs (150 gms), 150 gms honey, salt, water.

The ingredients are mixed, using about half the amount of butter fat, and working into a smooth dough. The dough is divided into twenty small balls which are flattened by hand and put in layers in a pan with melted butter fat between the layers. The dish is left to rise for about one hour and then baked on the coal in the tanūr for about ten minutes. Bint al-sahn is served with melted butter fat and honey.

6 Al-Dhamil, Fancy Bread made with Eggs

A little wheat flour (daqiq) and a little Mīrgī (refined) flour. We take ghee, eggs, black cummin, yeast and salt, kneading the flour and eggs together. We heat the tanūr-oven and when it gets red (wa-luwa mā yīhammir) we take the pieces of dough and bake them in the tanūr until they are ready (yinfdajayn) then separate them with the makhdūr-iron.

7 Al-Kubānāh, Maize-cake

a We take (nishill) a little maize-flour (al-daquivo al-Rūmī), a little ghee, a little warm (dāfi) water, yeast and a little black cummin. Taking the stone bowl (madhalah/maqāla) we turn (ninkut) the dough on to the ghee in the stone bowl, and put the eggs on top of the dough and black cummin. We heat (nisammi) the tanūr and cover it after putting the stone bowl down below (nisnī), al-madalhah into it (nisam). We turn up (nisād) the hole of the foot [at the foot of the tanūr] sealing them up (nakhim 'alay-hin) until they are cooked. When they are ready we remove and turn them out from the stone bowls (maqāli) into baskets.

b 350 gms of soured skimmed milk (labān), 150 gms honey, salt, water.

Wheat bread with eggs is also called labüb (naf'al !ah). We take (it), cutting it up into small pieces in the bowl (laqan) with a little flour (qabīn), working it (nisnītah) by clapping it in our bands in the shallow bowls (qabīn). We take ghee, eggs, black cummin, yeast and salt, kneading the dough on to the ghee in the stone bowl, and put the eggs on top of the dough and black cummin. We heat (nisammi) the tanūr and cover it after putting the stone bowl down below (nisnī), al-madalhah into it (nisam). We turn up (nisād) the hole of the foot [at the foot of the tanūr] sealing them up (nakhim 'alay-hin) until they are cooked. When they are ready we remove and turn them out from the stone bowls (maqāli) into baskets.

8 Al-Zalābīyah/Zalåbîyah, Flap-jacks

We take wheat (flour) dough, letting it be a little runny (rakhāyyah). Then, taking the pan (qawāsh),⁹⁷ we put into it some sesame oil (ṣalt al-qīfīlah). We heat it till the oil is boiling (qad al-qār bi-qār), and put pieces of the dough into the pan until the yezmīgh, i.e. yibāshīh-ba yaqṣīshīh, is wet and wash it, then yīḥallāh al-ṣīh fi 'l-sams, take it up onto the roof-top in the sun. At the madghār, sunset, they would wet it again, wetting in all three times and drying it. They then would grind it with mashbonat al-sad, the quern, and yīmāṭ bi-l-mankhūl al-mānīm or fine sieve, also called al-qishtah or al-manīqah.

Syrm., naskab, Dozy, Supplément, romensor.

Syrm., naskab, Dozy, Supplément, romensor.

This hole (manīqah) is for inserting and poking the fuel, as well as making a draught to draw up the fire.


Cfr. Nahal al-'af, I, 427, for a verse, W3alšabinya Sayṣaṣi 'l-Makārīmi inna-hu waṣaṣa 'l-ṣīhāt šabīt jāmān (ju 'aṣid). The zulābīyah of Shuraf al-Makārim (a šaqīq), in the large bowl, is an ingot of gold. One says nasaḍ albun, we flatten so as to get something. Cfr. Ross, op. cit., 160.

Syrm., jā'af.
first side (waqâh) cooks—when we turn it over with the skewer (ma'tzîsh-hah bi-l-simmarah) so that the other side can cook also. Then we move it on to a shallow bowl (ga'ân) with the skewer.

9 Ma'sûb(ah)

Ma'sûbah is a kind of the well-known dishes (âjîmah) with the people of San'a'. Ma'sûbah is hot wheat (bread) shredded onto ghee (al-burr al-sâkhîn yuqalt 'ala l-sunn), or as Manzoni 110 describes it, pesu di panini messi a ricovero con burro e miele. In Dathînâh 111 ma'sûbah is a wheat-flour pancake cooked on a griddle and eaten with a relish (khuşâr) of ghee or milk.

A woman is given ma'sûbah to eat for forty days after she has given birth (see p. 557b).

**Dough-porridges**

‘Aşîd/’aşîh 107 Dhurah Porridge

a First of all (wasul mab) we boil water, sieve the flour (taqîn), put salt in it and, taking a spurtle (ma'tam), stir (na'âr) (it), pouring the flour around the water, using the spurtle. They thicken it (yâmmatnî-hâ) (employing) the spurtle and pour it from the bîrmah-into the stone dish (mâqâla). They pour ghee and broth [on it] after making a little pit (fâyûmah) for the ghee in the middle of it. b 500 gms sorghum flour (or maize flour), salt, water.

The water is heated in a clay pot (bîrmah), and the flour added under continuous stirring. Some more hot water is added as required until the porridge is thick and smooth. Cooking time is about twenty minutes. ‘Aşîd is, together with bread, the staple food in the mountain areas, and is eaten almost daily in the villages, less often in the towns.

c ‘Aşîd is a dish that was common in Arabia from ancient times. Lâné notes that it was made of wheat flour, as my notes confirm also for present-day San'a', and in a Tradition it is known that it was made in a bîrmah-then as now. One says, ‘Aşîd cooked in a jug (‘Aşîd waqât-î kia). This is an impossibility on account of the narrow-vase-like neck. The town of I;Iâbba of the former Walîdî Sultanate is also teased with cooking a ‘Aşîd in a ku’dâh, a narrow-necked vessel. In the Yemen the saying is applied to the land which the villager was cultivating for him, and was invited by him the share of the crop due to the proprietor (malik) of the land which the villager was cultivating for him, and for the ghee in the middle of it.

b 500 gms sorghum flour (or maize flour), salt, water.

The water is heated in a clay pot (bîrmah), and the flour added under continuous stirring. Some more hot water is added as required until the porridge is thick and smooth. Cooking time is about twenty minutes. ‘Aşîd is, together with bread, the staple food in the mountain areas, and is eaten almost daily in the villages, less often in the towns.

110 Sîmânar, not a 'hook' here, but a long straight iron skimmer.

111 Nashr al-’arf, I, 588, 427.

112 Eil Yemén, Roma, 1884, 218.

113 C. de Landberg, Eindt., Dâthînâh, Leiden, 1905-09, I, 52, 211.

114 Rossi, op. cit., 160, specie de polenta.

115 Ma’tam = ‘aşîd zaqîrâh, small stick. A ma’tam is used for stirring/mixing ma’tâm. One says, ma’tâm-misîn al-’aşîd.

116 The change of subject occurs several times in these accounts.

117 The ‘aşîd;

118 Also explained as ghuqâh. In both ‘aşîd and karish you make a small fork (pit) in the middle—into this you pour warm ghee (sammân dafî) and dip into it the pieces you take from the rest of the dish.

119 Brauer, op. cit., 102, 188 seq., points, has an account of how the Jews make ‘aşîd and the Yemeni ‘ašîd, the third day after child-birth when there is a visitation of the mother of the new-born child. See for Hadramawt, Prose and poetry..., 25 seq., a khûbâh (ma’âjimah) on ‘aşîd. Gotein, Jemenita, 100,

saying, ‘Tûbi lah min bayn al-‘aşîd, it will appear to you from amid the ‘ašîd', means that you may meet with harm from a quarter least expected. 119

A San’ani joke at the expense of the (alleged) ignorance of tribesfolk is embodied in the saying, ‘Indîgh-ih, tindîgh-hî, hû sabâyâ, hût mâ-ih ‘aşîd. Chew it, chew it, it’s sabâyah not ‘ašîd! The story runs that a villager (gara’ez) went to San'a', taking with him the share (fîjishah) of the crop due to the proprietor (malik) of the land which the villager was cultivating for him, and was entertained by him as is the custom of land-owner and sharecropper (sharîk/safîr). The villager, in voraciousness (sharâkâhah), was gulping down his food without chewing it, so the person next him addressed the above words to him—meaning chewing this choice dish (wheat-flour, honey and ghee) slowly, so as to derive the full enjoyment from it, for it is not a little thought of dish like ‘ašîd. The latter would be the villager’s ordinary everyday fare.

**Al-Harish/haris, Wheat Porridge**

a We coarse grind wheat flour (niqishsh tahîn al-bîrîn) in the quern (ma’tam) of the house, not the machine-mill (al-’ajûn) of the Sûq, until it turns into small pieces. (Then) we take boiling water with the coarse ground wheat (jâshîsh), thickening it until it is cooked (nimtin-hâ 110 law ma’ta’îfâ) and pour it into the stone bowl (mâqâla) li-l-mâqâla. They make a hole in it in the middle of the stone bowl into which we put ghee and broth and eat (it). Or else we put into the hole only honey and ghee.

b 570 gms of coarse wheat flour, 150 gms of butter fat, 150 gms of honey, salt, water.

The grains are coarsely ground in the mazhabnah or in a machine mill. The porridge is prepared as ‘aşîd, and served with melted butter fat or honey. Harish is popular but is less common than ‘aşîd and often served as a fast food. 121

**Gruels and Broths**

1 Nashûf, Wheat and Barley Gruel

a Dhurah or wheat is ground and cooked in butter-milk, to which salt, butter-milk and spices (bâzâ’û) are added, and you have barley-broth that is never absent in the country at any midday meal. Old bread (lqamah bâ’i’tah) which cannot be eaten without a condiment (siğh) 122 is broken into this broth. b 350 gms skimmed sour milk, 100 gms of barley flour, 2 pieces of khûbs, thyme, 100 gms of butter fat, 185 gms of coarse wheat flour, chillies, salt, water, garlic.

The milk, water, and coarse wheat flour 124 are boiled together for fifteen minutes. The barley flour is then added and the gruel is boiled for another ten minutes. The spices and herbs are ground together on the mazhabnah, mixed with the gruel and boiled for another few minutes. The khûb is broken to pieces and heated in a pan with the gruel. Nashûf is served with melted butter fat.

c Ahmad Qarâyah’s list of San’a’ dishes did not include nashûf—it is a dish of the qabî’ûs, uncommon in San’a’. Those not well off eat it when unable to afford meat; it is not considered a high dish


111 Qa.î Isma’il, unpublished, and Goitein, op. cit., 103, no. 706.

112 For the text’s suffix ‘aîsh which seems incorrect.

113 Qa.î Isma’il, unpublished, and Goitein, op. cit., 103, no. 706.

114 Prose and poetry..., 29.


116 Nashr al-’arf, I, 588, 427.

117 Al-Amthal al-Yamaniyah, 163, no. 1261.

118 For the text’s suffix ‘aîsh which seems incorrect.

119 Jemenica, 186, no. 1261.

120 Made with jashush al-birr, the ground grains that come out of the mazhab (verb, jashush, yjashsh-ah).
which one would offer to a guest. It can be eaten with 'asfd, fatuf or khube. It is given to sick or ailing persons. Goethe quotes a saying, 'Al-nashif yihqafti 'l-mahshif. Nashif covers over the uncovered.' The allusion is to an ugly woman who conceals her ill-favouredness with her dress and ornaments, as nashif covers over stale bread.125

2 Al-Maṣṭī/madīd, barley Gruel

We pour butter milk (laban) into a bowl, pour thyme (sa'tar), peppers, garlic (thimāl) and salt together, and mix it in ground barley flour (gaftin). We let this boil, then remove it back from above the fire and pour it into the bowl (l- ṣalāq). We take spoons and sup (nansha)126 (it) and take the barley (luqmah)127 and eat it.

The milk and flour are boiled together for about twenty minutes. The herbs and spices are ground on the mashaqah and mixed with the gruel just before it is ready. Melted butter fat may be added to the gruel. Maṣīt is often served with 'asfd by pouring it into a hole made in the porridge, or it can be eaten with pieces of bread.

Qaḍī Ismā'īl defines maṣīt as gruel (al-haṣ) which the poor use to season their bread, made generally of barley and ghee, and Rossi,128 latte allungo con acqua e bolito con semioli (the Lower Yemen term for maṣīt is aṣam129 which is a relish/seasoning (ṣād) made of barley flour and butter-milk (lāban al-mahshī). A Tīmāhī130 saying is Zawm 129 ṣāzīḏ ṣawīḏīn ṣawīḏīn, Gruel (made by) a blind woman and flour ground by a crazy one. It is used of bad unfinished work.

3 Al-Shurbah, Savoury Porridge

180 gms of coarsely ground wheat flour (or rice flour), 100 gms of butter fat, 350 gms of skimmed sour milk, 70 gms of spring onions, salt, pepper.

The flour is boiled with salt in water for about half an hour. The spring onions are finely cut and fried131 in some of the butter fat and then added to the porridge together with the milk and spices and left to boil for another twenty minutes. Shurbah is served with melted butter fat. In the Highland areas, shurbah is eaten daily during Ramaḍān instead of aṭlī (beans) which is not eaten during this time, seemingly because it is rather heavy to digest.

4 Al-Laṣīs, Gruel

A Rossi132 calls laṣī flour of cereals seasoned with salt and parsley (prezzemolo) specially advised for children, and Qaḍī Ismā'īl simply calls it grain (kabb) boiled with water.

A proverb runs, 'Idda lī wa-addi lāk, wa-līs lī aqīl lāk, Give me and I'll give you; make me laṣī and I'll fry for you.'133 This seems to mean—You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.

5 Maraq, Broth

Maraq is simply the water in which any flesh is boiled with the spices (bāšīṣ), fat and morsels of the flesh. A spoon of pumpkin (dabba) called shaqafah is used for ladling the maraq.

'Take the top of broth and the end of coffee,' Alay bī awsal al-maraq wa-akhir al-gahwah, runs a proverb.134 The top of broth is better than the bottom of the pot because of the fatty bits of meat (dūṣmūt al-labān) which collect on the top, but the end of gīsh al-bunn is sweeter and tastes better than the first sips of it.

6 'Adasiyyah, Lentil Broth with Bread

We take two lentils (bīlīn) and coarse grind them until they split in half (wa-najīshīsh al-lām laš yūsīq aqīl). In them we put all the spices (bāhrūt) along with the leeks (bayāh). They add the 'aṣīḏ135 which consists of ground barley flour (qaftin al-saṭīr) with a rolling pin they crush (yisābūt) the spices along with the leeks. They leave the coarsely ground (lentil) flour (al-jashūd) until it boils and put the spices and leeks to boil along with it until cooked. It can either be eaten (innā al yu'kal) with bread (luqmah) such as faṣūt, or without bread.

Two pieces of ḫubb (170 gms wheat flour), 200 gms of husked lentils, 200 gms of barley flour, 50 gms of butter fat, 20 gms of leeks, 5 gms of garlic, salt, water, pepper.

The lentils are lightly ground in the maṭanah to remove the husk. The barley flour and the lentils are boiled in water for about half an hour. The leeks are ground in the mashaqah together with the spices, mixed with the gruel and boiled together for a short while. The gruel is then heated in a pan with the ḫubb broken into small pieces and served with a little melted butter fat.

7 Birā,136 Chick-pea Broth

We take a little of chick-peas (aṣar),137 potash (ḥatūm),138 thyme, chilies (hibba)140 and salt. To it we add a little black potash (nafal zughayyah hatum aswad). We boil it until it is cooked (nāḏīj), then taking a little ground dārūsh flour (qaftin), we mix it with the chick-peas (waqīlīt ha ma'a l-ṣūr) and taking the stirring spoon (mamhad)141 we stir it in with it (nimkhad/ nimkhāt ha bah) in the pot (waqīl al-tall)142 until the chick-peas thicken into a paste (yīfīrāq) and so on.

8 Shabisah, Pap

This should probably not really be considered as a dish! It can be pap of rice and butter.143 It is for infants, a Kinderbrei of Mehlu Sann,144 administered from a manṣhīq/manṣhīqi, and may be flour of any grain boiled with a little water and saṃnuh.
**Vegetable Stews (tabikh/labikh)**

In the Yemen, in *San‘* itself, there are various kinds of vegetable stew (*tabikh/labikh*), such as ladies’ fingers (hâmiyâ), beans (*fâsîlîyâ*), rice, potatoes (*bâfâjâb*), spring onions (*bârâjâb*), and pumpkin (*âmbâb*). They are cooked in the same way. The best known and characteristic Yemeni dish of these is fenugreek (*hilbâh*).

1 **Tabikh/Stew**

100 gms ladies’ fingers, 250 gms of potatoes, 100 gms of tomatoes, 70 gms of spring onions, 50 gms of butter fat, garlic, salt, pepper.

The onions are fried in fat. The spices and other vegetables are added with some water and boiled until soft for about 45 minutes. No water is discarded.

2i **Hilbâh/hilbâh, Fenugreek**

a We take ground fenugreek flour (*dhirâs*) 146, a quantity of a couple of spoonfuls (*gadar ma‘atqaytayn*), fetch two cupsfuls (*baraqayd*) of water, putting them in a bowl (*gapsh*) for a short time—about three hours or more. After this dry out the water (*mnâsîn*) 147 from it and whip it with our fingers (lit. *hând*) 148 until it rises (*tamaqfikh*). 147 We taste it (*naq‘am-hâd*)—if a little bitterness (*bâgbâb*) 149 still remains in it, we whip it a second time until there no longer remains any bitter taste in it.

After this we crush (*nizahlûg*) leeks (*bâyâh*) and spices for it on the *mâshaq* with water putting (*muqat-ah*) them in the fenugreek and whipping it, just a little, once more.

After this we fetch meat broth and vegetable stew (*tabikh*) in the stone bowl (*masîlî*) heated up, add a little fenugreek to it, mixing it with the broth, and eat it.

b 15 gms of ground fenugreek seeds, 60 gms of leeks, 3 gms of chillies, 3 gms of garlic.

The ground fenugreek seeds are soaked in water for about four hours. The water is discarded and the seeds are whipped by hand 144 until white and frothy. The leeks and spices are sometimes replaced by vinegar and the sauce is then called *hamidâh*. Horse radish dipped into *hamidâh* is a typical Ràdàmân food.

2ii **Al-Hâmîdâh/hilbâh hâmîdâh**

a One pours vinegar on to some of the *hilbâh* in another pot, this being eaten before the meal. Horse radish (*ifîf*) is dipped in the fenugreek and eaten. The other part of the *hilbâh* is eaten at the end of the meal with bread. 152

b *Al-Hâmîdâh* is a little *hilbâh*, salt, sugar and some vinegar (*khâllî*) which is made from raisins. We mix it all together, and take horse-radish (*qushmiqîf*) and eat it.

c *Hilbâh* figures in proverbial sayings quoted supra in connection with Khubs and Malîj (*p. 545b infra*). Goitein 154 quotes an expression, *Samîn il-hilbâh*, So long as (lit. the years of) *hilbâh* last. This is in allusion to the fact that it does not go bad unless it is ground when it becomes bitter in three weeks. *Wannaw-nawwa:naw* 156 Help me and I shall stir the fenugreek, is said of a man who undertakes a piece of work but does himself perform only the simple part, leaving the main or essential part to others.

Al-Wâsî 157 says the ground spices and vegetables (*khudr*) 158 mashqâb comprise mint (*waraq al-na‘na‘ah*), coriander (*hebâb*), leeks, salt, chillies (*bâbîb*) and some cummin—*if* fresh ones (*alkhâfîr al-taftiyah*) are lacking then dry *kuftâr* can be used pounded, with water added. Goitein’s 159 list comprises *bâbîb*, *hâwâ‘î j khâdîr*, *lit.*, green spices, i.e. coriander, *hâwâ‘î j sasâdâ*, black spices, i.e. pepper (*fulîh hâb*), cardamom (*kâyl*), salt, cummin (not essential), garlic. The writer has a many a time seen tinned Italian tomato puree, poured into *hilbâh* and mixed with it, sometimes along with the remains of dishes that came earlier in the meal. 159 Al-Wâsî attributes to fenugreek the properties of aiding digestion, bodily health, sexual power, clearing obstruction, and driving away pain. He advises that two broad beans (*fîl*) and a spring (*ût*) of fenugreek be put in the above mixture before it is pounded up.

3 **Al-Saltâh** 160

Saltâh is *hilbâh* with broth (*marâq*) and vegetable stew (*tabikh*). This term was said to be *kalâm al-Mâsîrî*, of the dialect of the Mashriq. It is used in *San‘*. It is derived from salat, *yasîl*, to scoop up *hilbâh* with pieces of bread.

4 **Al-Qillâh/fîl, Broad Beans**

a 300 gms of broad beans, 100 gms of butter fat, 100 gms of tomatoes, 5 gms garlic, 3 gms of chillies, salt, water.

The beans are soaked in water overnight, then boiled for several hours in salted water and fat. The spices and tomatoes are boiled with the stew for the last few minutes. *Fil* is a common breakfast dish, eaten with pieces of bread. During Ramâdan *fîl* is not usually eaten but replaced by *sharbâh*. 161

b Tinned Egyptian fil mudammas is now widely sold in the süqs. It does not seem to be distinguished from fil Sâdîn, ground-nuts, known in the Yemen as *al-hâb al-asâs*.

Of proverbial dicta *Qâ‘iq Ismâ‘îl* 162 cites, ‘*Law mî taknî qillâyâh*, ‘*If‘ isn’t worth a bean.’ One says, ‘*Mâ‘â‘î nî qillâyâh*, or, *Mukhkh-uî miqîl al-qillâyâh*. He hasn’t got a bean (of intelligence), or, His brain is like a bean.’ Goitein’s 163 gives *Qillah Yamînî, s’ad zamânî*. When I have Yemeni broad beans my time is happy.’ A Jewish proverb says that *qillâh*-beans are indispensable for the Sabbath.

145 The cow-pea, *vigna sinensis* (*dijrah*/*dijrâh*), does not seem to be highly esteemed, according to al-Amthal al-Yamaniyah, I, 33, no. 93. Cf. Jemenica, 152, no. 1148, ‘When food is flavourless, then welcome o cow-pea, Ma‘a la-kafa’ ya bayya’ al-dijrah.’ 152 In the word *kahfa* does not seem known, but dhirâs is described as *hilbâh*, tasteless, without sour milk (*hîban*). Goitein gives ghee as an alternative seasoning to it. It is served as a mush (*maqlâ*), boiled with salt but without spices (*bâhârây*). At the season (*masîm al-dijrah*) it is eaten for amusement (*lî-taftiyah*) especially by children and women. According to Muhammed Ahmad Haydarah, *Tabikh al-Yaman al-‘arîd*, I, 197, dîrîdîn gathered from Kâmîn II, 8 February.

146 Syn. *phasis al-hilbâh*.

147 *Nazzaz* means *ninashkî al-mâ‘* min *al-hilbâh*, we dry the water out of the fenugreek. One says to a girl, *Râ‘a‘awab* *hilbâh*, Go and let (lit.) beat the fenugreek (to get the bitterness out of it).

148 See n. 131 infra.

149 Syn. *zikrahâb*, expands, or *tabikh*, rises.

150 Syn. *hamidâh*.

151 Al-Wâsî, *Tabikh al-Yaman*, 299, says it is beaten with a spoon for ten minutes, till it becomes white. They pour off the water (*shُînâh*), and the more they stir it the more it expands till it fills the stone *maqîf*. Cf. Goitein, *Jemenica*, 171.

152 Ibid, loc. cit.

153 *Fîl* in *San‘* is not used of white half radish, though it is used in other parts of the north, but it would be understood in *San‘*.

154 Jemenica, 86, no. 575 and 171, no. 1336.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid. cit.

157 [Goitein’s notes on vegetables (*fîl*) in the Yemen is distinguished from the Turkish introduced *fîl* (*qurtâb*)].

158 Loc. cit.

159 Cf. Ameen Khâni, *Arabian peak and desert*, London, 1930, 157. He mentions particularly *bîbah* earrings, which is perhaps most important of all.

160 Nasîr al-‘arîf, I, 427, this shows the term was known in the latter 11th/12th century.

161 Anna Borstein’s description.

162 Unpublished. A *gillâyâh* is *bôbîb wâsîbî min al-fîl* al-maqlîy.

163 Op. cit., 123, no. 884. Cf. ibid, 130, 959, al-qillâh al-maqlîy, steeped beans, and a discussion of types of bean known to the Yemen. *Qillah* native to the Yemen is distinguished from the Turkish introduced *gillâyâh* by a dark stripe. *Qillah* is the name for the dried bean which when fresh is called *garrîn* (*garrîn*). It is eaten cooked in the pod (*mayîk*), like dîrîdîn at the season (*masîm al-garrîn*). Muhammed Ahmad Haydarah, *Tabikh al-Yaman al-‘arîd*, says *green fîl* *garrîn* is found from about *Tammuz* 8/August 19.
5 Al-Zahawiq/sahawiq, Hot Sauce

a 100 gms of tomatoes, 3 gms garlic, 3 gms chillies.

The fresh tomatoes are ground on the mashqah. The sauce is eaten with pieces of bread, boiled potatoes or other boiled vegetables.

b Arab informants say it is prepared from tomatoes, leeks (baw'ah) and baharati, spices—perhaps the latter term covers the red bishari and green fijfli peppers used.

c What is pounded (sahqi) is called zahawiq.

A woman would say to her daughter, ‘Ya binti izbaqi ‘l-bay’ah, My daughter, pound the leeks.’ To which the girl would reply, ‘Nabi, yunmi, Yes, mother.’

6 Al-Shariyyah, Sippets

Sha’riyyah is used in hibah or stew (qabbih) and is prepared as follows.

We knead a little ground flour and twist it with our hands into small pieces (subihar = wa-niftil-ah) onto the basket (li-assaq al-sughat), leaving them until they dry (la = maw tabiis/dipsis).

Then we toast them on the tin tray (wa-ba’dah lam khammar = fi-tabiys) over the fire coals. We set to warming (majuur nifilmni) the stone maqta, adding a little (nafa’il isgahayyarah min) ghee, a little boiling (water) and salt. We boil it until the water dries off (yansiy = min-ah) and it is cooked. Then we eat it.

Another version calls it a piece of wheat dough (qayna) formed into little shapes like rice. They make it round (yibarram-ah). It is described as like macaroni.

Al-Ṣalatah/Salatah, Salad

Salad seems to be a recent introduction to the Yemen, and in Ettore Rossi’s glossary neither ‘salad’ nor ‘tomatoes’ figures among the entries. Salatah may be derived from the Italian insalata.

It consists of small pieces of tomato (jamūsin), red onion (baw‘alah) and some vinegar (khall) along with salad leaves (waraq al-salatah, lettuce). It is used with shushir or so (hakadshah, by itself).

The baw‘alah is not hot tasting (faqab). The leaves of the horse radish (qushmi = fijl) which is hot to taste, are also eaten.

Spices

A distinction was made between baharati spices which were said to be garlic (shimah), chillies (bishari) which are hot to taste (faqab), thyme (sa’ar), coriander (kaabara) and haraayyi = haraayiy. The latter are said to be of two sorts, those used in broth (maraq) and those used with coffee.

Other spices are cardamom (hawli), cinnamon (qirjah), cloves (zirr), cummin (kammin), ginger (sinjalbi), mint (na‘aili), parsley (baqdamii = Class, baqdami), saffron (sa‘farin). Black cummin (jabbah sawda) is also known as shanish.

The madall container for water to drink at qat sessions is perfumed by heating a little piece of haraay stone, a round piece called fa’al upon which are placed spices and incense called 164 A baw‘alah is Anika Boroinstein’s spelling, and it could be correct, from sahqi = sahqi. The baw‘alah = faqab.

165 It is twisted between the thumb and forefinger.

166 Sic, but the longer form of śuṣād is also used.

167 A tabit is a large tin (tanak) tray with edges, Turkish ṭaπ. 168 Syr, yinshah. Cf. Oros, edj, wumar.

169 To this strange form of verb may be compared the śa’ānī adjective masqayal = sawal, long, mudifumamah, rounded.

170 Made from local grapes and on sale in the markets.

171 Mashriq pronunciation. Hot = warm is simply karr.


173 The Prophet is said to have made an iqta’, perhaps to be rendered ‘grant’ of

bakhur mā’, and as they roast the madall is censed with them and the water poured into it. Bakhur mā’ consists of thud, jawi aloes-wood, cardamom (hawli), cloves (zirr) and a very little sugar. In Ḥadramawt glasses for water are censed in much the same way.

Marib173 rock salt is known in Ṣan‘a’ but at present they mostly use salt produced at Ṣa’il.

Cakes

1 Al-Ka’k (sing., ka’kah), Cake

We take a little ground flour (qahin) along with eggs, yeast, salt, a little hot water (min al-dabî) and ghee. This we knead and cut into small pieces in a tabbi-tray and take to cook (li-yinda) in the oven (fīr).

Goitein174 says the ingredients are flower, eggs, oil and ghee and black cummin (qubbah sawda). The dough which is made sour is formed into rounds (yaqurrash-hun aqab) and it is baked on the side of the oven which is covered with the clay cover (kuwain). A proverb runs, ‘Mā yiddaw-sh ka’k wa-aswān, They don’t bring cake and teeth together.’ Cake is hard and needs good teeth.

2 Al-Shariyya, Sweet Bread

We knead flour (dāqiq), cut it up into small pieces on the tabbi-tray and take them to the oven (fīr). We let them cool (nibarrid) and add sugar-water to them (nafa’il al-sharīb). Sharīb also called al-shirāha is sugar and water boiled together and poured over the sha’ariyyat.

3 Al-Rawani/rawwāni, Cake

We mix eggs, flour (qahin), ghee and a little of baking soda (karbīnah), knead it [into dough], place it on a tabbi-tray or a shallow bowl (qahin) and take it to the oven (fīr). After it is cooked we add sharīb to it like (we do with) sha’ariyyat and it is cut with a knife (skinīn).

Ahmad Qaryah said the ingredients also included yeast (khamirah) and salt of alum (milh al-shabb). This is naturally a rather expensive dish.

4 Baqlawāt and Qatā’if

These pastries although obviously introduced from the Ottoman Empire, are said to differ a little from their Turkish counterparts.

Meat

Introduction

Meat, commonly called shirah as already explained,175 is mutton (qanām) of sheep or goat, or beef (baqar), the former being greatly preferred. If one is to take it literally, a proverb, ‘Aṣāf al-bayl wa-lshabb (sharab),’ Tendons of camel (meat) rather than beef fat,’ shows that tribesmen of Marib prefer the worst camel meat to the juiciest beef. When in the Mashriq the writer found that the tribes there would not cook their meat till tender since they liked to tear at it with their teeth. A ram’s head

Ma‘rib salt to a certain AbyaQ b. Iammal. 174 Jennemann, 142, no. 1052; Rossi, op. cit., 160, sweet of sugar, eggs, flour and butter.

175 It was suggested that the name of this sweet bread might be that of a family which made it. The Bayt Barakat, a family originally Turkish, is renowned even today for making al-ṣa‘ānī.

176 Qaryah remarked that ramāq had ‘nearly a rashfat’ and could be pronounced ramstell. My notes say it is like cake with powdered sugar.


178 Cf. p. 234; Rossi, op. cit., 159.

179 ‘Asb = qasih al-maṣfūq, Qa‘id Isma’il, unpublished proverb.
is to be preferred to a (woollen) sackful of locusts (Rās al-kabīḥ vsa-lā ghirārat jarādī).180

There is a great lore in south west Arabia concerned with meat ranging from knowledge of the various sorts and qualities of meat,181 parts of the animal, division of meat to guests,182 to slaughtering on ritual occasions and such social usages as the offering of *aqrāh* in a variety of circumstances. Something of this figures from time to time in earlier chapters of this volume. A strange tale, not easy to interpret, makes the claimant to this figures from time to time in earlier chapters of this volume. 

Samsarah,183 of country folk one of the escort took it to the women of the Hādā raw liver was brought to us and they themselves ate part of the stomach raw.

In Islamic food law, would not be eaten. With the broad humour of the animal are eaten and the brain, liver (khubarâ) included the penis (zubb) of the animal which, in Islamic food law, would not be eaten. With the broad humour of country folk one of the escort took it to the women of the samsarah, causing great merriment all round, explaining that the women should have it because they are ahl-ah. When, in 1972, we were entertained by the Bukhayti shaykhs of the Hādā raw liver was brought to us and they themselves ate part of the stomach raw.

Amika Bornstein merely notes that beef (meat) and chicken are usually boiled and sheep meat sometimes is fried. All parts of the animal are eaten and the brain, liver (kubid) and kidney (khuwaq) considered special delicacies. Such meat dishes or ways of cooking meat as have come to notice are the following, but it is not claimed that the list is complete.

Preparation of Meat

1 Al-Daqāq, Chopped-up Beef Stew

We boil water and taking a little onion (baqal), a few leeks (baq'ah) and spices (baqārā), knead one into the other mix them with the chopped-up beef. We let the water boil in the birnālah-pot and, squeezing them (the pieces of beef) together in our hands into small pieces (miqammis-hā' 184 'ašā qī') [drop them] into the pot into the boiling water until they cook.

The small pieces of meat are called kubaybāt/kubayyibāl.185 and seem to be minced or chopped up into a daqāqah and a little salt added. Kubaybāt were also described as minced/chopped/hashed meat and meat balls with onions (al-lāh-m al-masīr wā-t-kubbah) fried with oil and ghee.

2 Al-Qazaqīs, Fried Mutton-fat

This is rump and tail fat (ilyahltharbah)186 of sheep-or-goats (jalliy) cut into small pieces and fried. The name is derived from the sound of ghee or oil frizzling over the fire (tqazqaz). When the jassār sells lamb he throws in a small piece of fat (qughayyarah min al-tharbah). Qazaqīs are eaten especially at 'Id 'Arafah. Because they are soft with no bones people say, Wa-lâ ghirārat jarād! (Râs al-kabsh wa-lâ ghirārat jarād)! 187

3 Al-Qalīyyah

Al-Wāsī188 asserts that 'when meat is well cooked it can go on for six months without turning bad (yataghayyar)'. In San'a' this meat is called al-qalīyyah. This seems to reflect al-Hamdānī,189 statement in that San'a', and San'ā' alone, meat cooked with vinegar and left in a covered pot can remain as fresh as on the day it was cooked for up to two months—one finds it solid (jamid-an) and re-heats it. Qalīyyah190 was explained as meat full of fat (dasam).

4 Al-Dawākhīl, Offal

The daqākhīl are the lungs and heart. If they do not eat them on their day (that on which the animal is slaughtered) they go bad and are unlawful, not fit for eating (fādā lam ya'kulū-ha fa-hiya 'arbi).191

5 Hadid, Soup

Hadīd is meat soup with a covering of pepper (shattah) and black fīlīl pepper.

6 Qūzī,191 Young Lamb

The qūzī (a Turkish word for lamb) can be boiled in broth (maraq) with spices (baqārā), or else be roasted in a tannīr-oven when the fire-coals have been removed and the qūzī put into it. In the latter case it is known as jarshāb.

7 Ḥanīd, Ḥanīd, meat roasted in the tannīr with the top and bottom of it closed.

Sweets (*halāwā*, pl., *halawiyāt*) and Desserts

1 Al-Muḥallabiyyah,192 Jelly

a We boil water with sugar, mixing in a little milk (halab) starch (masār) and a little rosewater (mawāzir) until it boils. Then we remove it from over the fire and put it into shallow bowls (bathth) in a cooling window (bayt sharbah = al-shubbāq haqq al-mā') for water.

b 50 gms of cornflour, 100 gms skimmed milk powder, 250 gms sugar, water, cinnamon, cloves.

The sugar and spices are boiled in water. The milk powder and starch flour are sieved into the water and boiled for a short time under continuous stirring. Muḥallabiyyah is served cooled, after meals, as a dessert.

c The sugar used is of the Mīraṣi (Rossi,193 Mīraṣi) type, the name said to mean coming from Marseilles (but see n. 203). Fine Powered sugar is bathth, and nūfah is expensive sugar crystals in the form of mūkā'abūt, used with 'innāb spices in coffee.

2 Al-Balūzah194

This is said to be a kind of muḥallabiyyah without milk. It is probably the Perso-Turkish pālūdah, a kind of jelly or blancmange.

3 Mulawwazah

This is a sweet made of sugar and almonds (lawz).195

4 Luqūm

This sweet is made of flour, almonds and sugar.196

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180 Ibid.
181 For example our companions in 1978 were eager to stop in Bayt al-Faqih because of the excellent mutton of the district.
184 Qūzī, Supplément, palūzah, crème, colle de farine.
185 Al-Badr al-muzil li-'l-l}azn ... , Cairo, 1345 H., 8.
186 Ibid., 1, 427, etc.
188 Rossi, op. cit., 160.
189 Ibid.
190 Cf. Naskr al-arj, 1, 427, etc.
191 Rossi, op. cit., 160.
192 Rossi, op. cit., 160.
193 Ibid.
194 Ibid.
196 Ibid.
5 Burayk
This sweet is made of flour, sugar and eggs.198

6 Kabid faras
is halwa of sugar and starch.

7 Mushabak
a solid sweet of sugar, flour (daqiq) and ghee, made in Hodeidah.

8 Ghasiisi is dry toasted (chick-)peas ('atar) eaten by children at the doors of schools or houses in the streets and suqs. There is a street-cry to announce it—al-maghisi al-ghasiisi al-daf."200

9 Jilgilan, a sweetmeat made of pressed sesame-seed and sugar, is eaten in San’â’. In the south it is called mugalal.

10 Tunfash, Popcorn
This is prepared from maize (hubub Rumi) imported from abroad. It is heated on the sâj metal plate until the white centre comes out of it. It is not special to the Id.

11 Masbali Rumi, Corn in the Cob (toasted).

12 Luw‘aas
The lu‘aas (sing., lu‘aq) al-dhirih is the sweet part sucked by tribes-people from the millet-cane (qasab haqq al-dhirih) when it is still green, but lu‘aq al-qaad seems from descriptions to be a sort of barley-sugar.

13 Al ‘Asal al-aswad, Black Honey
'Black honey' is made of sugar and alum (al-sukkar wa-l-shab) though, of the latter only a pinch is used. A strong infusion is made of coffee-husk (qishr) which is heavily boiled to bring the colour of the qishr into the infusion, then the actual qishr husk itself is strained away. The sugar and alum are then boiled up with the coloured infusion extracted from the qishr husk.

This 'honey' is a substitute for natural bee honey (al-‘asal al-mubt) which is far too dear for most Yemenis to use. It would otherwise be wealthy houses (al-buyut al-kibarat) which could afford it. Or else bee honey would be used as a prescription (wasf jibbi) for illness. Honey as a valuable remedy in case of sickness is commended in Prophetic Tradition. In the north the best honey is said to be ‘asal ‘Allani, honey of the star ‘Allani (September), good red honey. Al-‘asal al-Sayf of the preceding season is said to be red in the Yemen and apiculture in the Yemen is extensive. Hamdanî197 tells us that ‘Hadri honey was exported to Iraq in sections of dhurah cane (qasab) and cites a verse of Imra’u ‘l-Qays on al-shuhd al-Hadari. Under the Rasûlds it formed part of the revenue from certain districts.198

A common proverb in various versions in south Arabia is, La sibab-ah ‘asal la tilbus-uh kull-uh, if your friend be honey do not lick him all up. That is—do not presume on your friend’s kindness.199

Drinks

1 Coffee

It need hardly be said that the love of coffee, its cultivation, preparation and use is great indeed. The history of the coffee trade with eastern countries and Europe has been extensively explored by many writers. So no attempt is made here at a summary of what is known about Yemeni coffee, and only a few examples collected at more or less random, are set down here.200

The infusion of the husk called qishr is widely drunk, even as far as Hâdjaramawt where it is served with ginger and other spices. In the Yemen the spices used with qishr are called ‘innab.201 The coffee berry (bunn) is drunk also, rather after the style in which ‘Turkish’ coffee is prepared. When the berry brought such high prices from foreign merchants it was seemingly much less drunk than it is now. It is packed in coffee baskets of various sizes known as a‘yar bunn, haqQ al-bunn made of palm-leaf. Qihaw is coffee of excellent quality, well prepared; the dimunitive, qihawayah, in contrast, means poor coffee. A clay coffee pot is called jamaanah202 and the biggest size of jamaanah203 is known as al-farkh. The spout of the jamaanah is stuffed with a liyah fibre to retain the grounds (khathab, a term also used for tea-leaves) of qishr coffee. A jaswuh is a metal pot of the type known in other Arab countries as a kanakah used for the coffee berry. The berry is separated from the qishr on a maqsharah and is known as (bunn) ‘aﬁ. Coffee provided at a tafrisah, a women’s afternoon gathering, or a funeral (marwah), has spices like ginger (sinjabih) bought in Suq al-Miyârah.204 Rossi reports that the best bunn, coffee-berry, is Anisi, Madaf, Sayh of Kawkabân, and Haymi.

The introduction of coffee into the Yemen is associated with the saint Ali b. ‘Umar al-Shadhilî (ob. 828/1424-5), but Landberg205 suggests that it must have been considerably before this time. Al-Shadhilî is buried at Mocha at the mosque associated with his name. In the Lower Yemen it is or was customary to pour a libation to him (Fatiha, li-mi’sh Shadhilî)206 when drinking it, and gahkwah Shadhiliyah is commonly said at least among the Shâﬁis. Although the ulema attacked the use of it at first it has long had a respectable character and is sometimes associated with religion or nearly so.207

In the Yemen the al-îb Kibs, the people of Kibs the well known village in Khawliân, badly destroyed by Egyptian forces, are noted for their love of coffee and have many jokes (nawadîr) and tales (tarîfah) about coffee. Kibs is celebrated as a centre of scholarship and kirah of the Kibsî sayyids who used to organize a special caravan of pilgrims to Mecca at the time of the hajj. One of the Kibsî people was sitting in the court of his tower-house (dar) as is the custom there, drinking coffee, when a stone fell on his head, whereat he is reported to have exclaimed, ‘Better it fall on my head and not on the coffee-pot.’ In general lijah means ‘Your lord (wâl id-sayyid may refer to the Kibsî sayyids) doesn’t need anything from you.’ In general lijah means to put something in the mouth of a person or thing—so it can be used of feeding an infant or old man.204

In this qahwah the coffee berry, mostly from the Kibsî or from the shammamta al-lifah.208 Another saying is, ‘If a Kibsî loses his senses get him to sniff at the fibre (in the spout of the coffee-pot), (lijah sayyakh al-Kibisy shammamta al-lijah).209

Mauritius sugar and coffee in a kettle to cook. One says, laqoom al-bunna/ qishr. Cf. Al-Ahmûl al-Yamanîyûh, I, 91, no. 253, ‘Süd-al-milagam nabi, means ‘Your lord (wâl id-sayyid may refer to the Kibsî sayyids) doesn’t need anything from you.’ In general laqoom means to put something in the mouth of a person or thing—so it can be used of feeding an infant or old man.204

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198 Sijah, 1986. For some notes on honey see Brian Doe and R. B. Serjeant, 'The diary of a Mocha Coffee Agent', Mauritian sugar and coffee in a kettle to cook. One says, laqoom al-bunna/ qishr. Cf. Al-Ahmûl al-Yamanîyûh, I, 91, no. 253, ‘Süd-al-milagam nabi, means ‘Your lord (wâl id-sayyid may refer to the Kibsî sayyids) doesn’t need anything from you.’ In general laqoom means to put something in the mouth of a person or thing—so it can be used of feeding an infant or old man.204

204 See Qanûn Sunû’, section 6.

205 Etudes..., Daqish, II, 1072, and the entire section Tâbîkh en-qu’ran, 1055-78.

206 Gâzirah, opening sâwah of the Qur’ân, would be recited and a little coffee poured on the ground.

207 Cf. ‘Kibî al-Baqâ wa-sulmah bi-l-muqâmûh mab al-hûd wa-l-ghubah’, in the diary of a Mocha Coffee Agent, Mauritian sugar and coffee in a kettle to cook. One says, laqoom al-bunna/ qishr. Cf. Al-Ahmûl al-Yamanîyûh, I, 91, no. 253, ‘Süd-al-milagam nabi, means ‘Your lord (wâl id-sayyid may refer to the Kibsî sayyids) doesn’t need anything from you.’ In general laqoom means to put something in the mouth of a person or thing—so it can be used of feeding an infant or old man.204

208 Al-Ahmûl al-Yamanîyûh, loc. cit. and I, 96, no. 271. Lijah is described as 38-53.


198 Sijah, 1986. For some notes on honey see Brian Doe and R. B. Serjeant, 'The diary of a Mocha Coffee Agent', Mauritian sugar and coffee in a kettle to cook. One says, laqoom al-bunna/ qishr. Cf. Al-Ahmûl al-Yamanîyûh, I, 91, no. 253, ‘Süd-al-milagam nabi, means ‘Your lord (wâl id-sayyid may refer to the Kibsî sayyids) doesn’t need anything from you.’ In general laqoom means to put something in the mouth of a person or thing—so it can be used of feeding an infant or old man.204

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208 Al-Ahmûl al-Yamanîyûh, loc. cit. and I, 96, no. 271. Lijah is described as 38-53.
They say to a woman, ‘When you are in a bad state drink/gulp down some coffee to yourself, Ḩāḍa ẓa'ī'l-ash-shiribī/ṣaḥāfiṣ līsh ẓaiḥāq/gaḥaṭ. 209 This will relieve of cares and anxiety.

Qādi Ismā'īl 210 tells of a qabīfli from the country who came to stay with a friend in Șān‘a’. His friend woke him early to pray the dawn prayer (ṣa‘īlāt al-fajr). When the qabīfli did not comply his host said, ‘God bless with rain the country (in which they rouse the guest to take coffee, saying), ‘Get up (to go out) and relieve yourself, then come back and take coffee’, but in Șān‘a’ it’s ‘Get up and pray, get up and pray’, Ṣaqq īli ḥam-bīṣād ‘qum shukh tuwa-‘ra‘q ẓaiḥām; ammā ḥā ṣaḥ-ḥā ṣaḥ-ḥā.’”

2 Tea

Tea is cheaper than coffee (1973) but is not much used. It is fairly new in Șān‘a’ and came in perhaps about the forties or fifties of the present century. This is parallel to the earlier introduction of tea into Ḥajramawt from the Far East—in the Ḥajramātī cities it was drunk by the wealthy but was less respectable than coffee. 211 In Șān‘a’ a certain ‘Ali Dārīllah used to sell it at the gate of the secondary school near the present Wīzīrīt al-Tarbiyah wa-l-Ta’lim. People say of it, ‘Tea dries up the mind, wa-‘rja’ ṭaḥwī’, amma fi San‘a‘, ‘qum iālī, qum iālī!’’

3 Sharāb al-qadīd 212 Apricot syrup drink

We leave the apricots (bārqaq) until it is dry, then wet it (nībit-ah) with water so as to rid it of dust, and put it in a bowl (ṣaḥāx) with water and sugar, boiling it until it is cooked and setting it in a cooling window (shabbāk) to cool. The boiled apricot kernels (qabīf) 213 we eat with the syrup, removing the stone (qubbī) from it.

The kernel of the apricot stone (qawwāq) is called tawhīm. Some kernels are bitter (qubī = gharī ḥā, not sweet), but some are lāwī (lit., non-dried-like) and taste sweet (a ‘m-ḥā ḥā). Bitter kernels are mixed with raisins (ṣāhib) and heated which removes the bitter taste (qabīfāh).

4 Sharāb al-sha‘īr Barley-water

We bring barley, boiling it with water and sugar till it boils, then take it off, pouring the water off (nībit-ah wa-nināzāz al-mā) the barley. We drink it while it is hot.

This is a rather expensive drink (1973) but is supposed to be good for one’s health.

Seasonal and Festival Foods 214

The times of year when fruit in season is eaten are given in the almanacs, and the Bughyāt al-‘al-faḥām 215 for example notes when green wheat grain for parching, called farīk, and green dūrak grain, called sābih is eaten. There are however certain occasions upon which special foods are consumed. All the days of autumn (kharīf) people eat al-ṣaiḥ (vb. yishīl) which comprises lentils (bilsin), toasted apricot-stone kernels (tawhīm 216 min ḥabībāt al-bārqaq—yihmmār-al-ḥā, pumpkin (gār) seeds, chick-peas (jakhish/ jakhish) and almonds (lātai). All these seeds are of course parched or toasted.

During Ramāḍān diet varies a little from the ordinary. Shūfīt, hāmîdāh, salad (ṣalātah), horse-radish (qusmī) and its leaves and jelly (mawḥallābīyāh) are eaten, but fūl is avoided as already remarked. At the ‘Id, mulayyam sweets are eaten and there is a saying, ‘Chick-peas [parched] and raisins are the sweets of the Feast, Ḏākīsh/jakhikh (= ‘atar) wa-sābīb ja‘lār 217 al-‘Id.’

The customs connected with the rich special diet provided for the woman who has given birth to a child hold a special interest that makes it appropriate to conclude this chapter with a description of them. In early pregnancy a woman, at this stage called mu‘ayyifah, probably from ajā’, to find repugnant, asks for food (ṣāḥī) from her neighbours and/or relations, very likely on account of the morning sickness common at this stage.

After parturition, for up to forty days—when she goes to the hammām—a woman receives this special diet, and during this time she does no work at all. Daily for fifteen days, she is given a shuqri, a small chick about two weeks old, but possibly for a lesser period if the family be poor, and the chicken broth (maraq al-shuqri) as well. If it is a male child and for some reason or other there is no shuqri, they would at times give her fresh liver (ṣaiḥ bībī kābīd tāsīl). In spring 1979 the shuqri, which is greatly preferred to the imported dressed broiler fowl, and indeed is more expensive than it, was costing thirty to thirty-five riyač, for they think the Yemeni type is superior to the imported. She also gives ma‘shāb (Bread dishes, no. 9), a wheaten bread dish, but with extra honey and ghee beyond what is usual. Coffee with fresh dates, etc., is obligatory (al-‘aqabah bi-l-tra’aj al-haṣīyyah)—in fact the brazier (mawqūd) with coffee keeps going day and night. The two smallest children in the house with the mother who has just given birth—it is suggested that this is so that they may not be against the newly arrived child—or for some such reason.

At dawn (fajr) after the birth the new mother is given a drink of eggs (ṣhirb bayd). Perhaps also at this time she is brought ruc (shaddāb) 218 for good fortune, to avert the evil eye (yaiṣil al-yun) and against the Jinn. In the morning of each day and at night she is censed with aromatics—they cause her to stop the Jinn (Ṣabāh kull yatam va-l-layl tajjammar bi-l-hukhūr yibakhkhir-ha li-man al-fajr). In the morning about 7 a.m., and for seven days, her breakfast (fajur) is ma‘shībah along with coffee called qubīfah al-wal‘ūdah consisting of spices and fresh dates, 219 all boiled up together in the coffee jamānkah-pot—this is so that the blood will return (ya‘īd al-dam). She must also have bread freshly baked that morning (kuḥār ṭa‘īryy). After this she would have fruit or tinned (fruit) (fasāakhir wa-ma‘alabūt).

At noon, about 12 a.m., she will have harīsh wheat porridge or sabāyī wheat pastry with ghee and honey, or ma‘shībah and the chicken (shuqri), with such vegetables as are the ordinary food of the house—and of course, coffee.

The evening meal (ṣāḥī) will be mainly chicken or meat. For the first seven days after parturition the husband’s family provides the special diet for the mother, and for the next seven days after that the mother’s own family does so. On the first
morning her father and mother will come to make the congratulatory visit—al-farâh—which is the term also applied to the gift of the ingredients of the new mother's coffee (maswâd, qahwat al-wâlîdah), the spices (al-hawâyiyîn)226 etc., brought by her father. For these seven days in the morning the relations and friends make congratulatory visits bringing shadâb-rue with them; nowadays the custom has grown up of bringing presents also. This goes on till a little after mid-day (gâhhr). On the third day after parturition the women of her family bring a dallâh of coffee (qahwah) and rue to ward off the satans (shadâb-yiqra' al-shayâyîn, yirda' hurum). On the seventh day the new mother goes to the hammâm-bath. They make her wear coral and cense her with al-shâfin).221 They break an egg for her at the door of the bath and when she returns they break an egg for her (yikârû la-hâ 'l-bawâyij saman wa-'asal, yirda' al-shayâyîn). This egg is usually broken in front of the door of the house. They wave this egg in a circular motion around her and then dash it on to the ground. It is interesting to remark that, when staying with a Bohrah family in Bombay, festal domestic ceremonies include the same action with a coconut, but without throwing it down. Similar customs of breaking eggs at a birth are also found in the Qaba'il, by the child's maternal uncle. Visitors bring a white wheat pastry with ghee and honey. The maternal uncle (khâlîf) holds the baby boy and the musawiyîn224 circumscribes him—the circumciser (mukhallatîn) is paid by his father, or, among the Qabilî, by the child's maternal uncle. Visitors bring a white dress (kadhâh), described as maqâmît, a kirbâsah which is a skirt (fasân) for the boy.

On the fifteenth day the mother's family pay her the visit, bringing her the gift called ziyârah (yiżâh, yiddaw la-ha 'l-ziyârah) a gift of ground flour (qâhin), eggs with ghee and honey on top (bayd faṣagh saman wa-aśâl), chickens and, optionally qahwah or qishr coffee. Nowadays, but not formerly, they bring clothing, a bâthiyyûnah, cover/blanket, for the infant.

After the first fifteen days there is a haftah in the birth room, a tafsiyah, in the afternoon which goes on until the forty days are completed, with the saffah and raqîs dancing and maswâd. If the child is a boy they praise her (yimdaheâ-hâ), saying 'Jannah bi-mâ jâ lish, Felicitations on what has come to you,' or 'Twist ghaythb, here meaning, 'something awaited,' but if it be a girl the visitor will say, 'Jannah lish bi-'l-îfâvah, Congratulations on your health.' This means that the visitor is not overjoyed (farbân) by the arrival of a girl!

On the fortieth day225 the new mother's family make an invitation (aszâmîh)—they feast the parturient (yishkâmûm, bâlîkîlîdah),226 the feast being known as al-shikmah. It is a large entertainment (diyâfah) with a dhabîbîh slaughter animal. After the shikmah come uwwayyîn hafîlah two days of celebration.

It will be perceived that a birth involves the families in a great deal of expense and it is little wonder that this should be expressed in a proverbial saying, 'Irsayn wa-ta'âwîlîdah, (Rather) two marriages which cost plenty than a single birth.'

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220 The farâh hjâwâyî would include raisins (za'âb) and the fresh dates (ra'sîf qây al-qahwah).
221 No informant has been able to say exactly what tashâwir is.
222 Account of the life of the Prophet in prose and sung verse.
223 In San'a' girls are not circumcised, but they are in the Shâfî'î Tihâmâh, although it is said that this custom is falling into disuse. Cf. Rossi, op. cit., 179 for a brief note on circumcision.
224 One finds musawiyîn in every Quarter of San'a', but there is no restriction limiting a family to employing any musawiyîn local to the Quarter.
225 Rossi, loc. cit., describes a ceremony called Wafî which is basically the expulsion of an 'invisible' being called al-Zinay'îyyûnah, which they believe rests under the bed of the parturient woman.
226 He describes also the ornamentation (khijjîf) of the birth room with drawings containing pious phrases, verses of the Qur'ân, the name of the Prophet and that of 'Ali, and cloth called muwâydan, which are taken down on the fortieth day.
This volume concludes, as it began, with verses on Ṣan‘ā’.
These are composed by the contemporary poet of the colloquial,
Muḥammad al-Dhahbānī, a Ṣan‘ā’īī humorous versifier of the
Bani Ḥushaysh—though unlike that tribe which supported the
Ḥamīd al-Dīn, he opposed the Imāmic régime. He is a pleasant­
spoken rather quiet man of, now, 60, hailing from Dhahbān village,
15 kilometres from Ṣan‘ā’. As a boy he attended elementary
schools in the capital. Before the 1962 coup he composed lyric
poetry (ghazal and waif), but after this he started writing political
verse in support of the Republic. During the short­lived Govern­
ment drive against qāt in 1972 he followed the official line with a
diatribe against ‘Ṣuṭjarat al-qāt’.1 His partisanship for his
‘Ḥimyarī’ ancestors probably implies a corresponding antagonism
to the descendants of ‘Adnān, i.e., the Sayyids!
Most of al-Dhahbānī’s verses in ḥumayni have been delivered
over the radio for they have a swinging quality to them coupled
with rich colloquial diction and expression that cannot but appeal
to the Ṣan‘ā’īī, but they sometimes also appear in the newspapers.
Al-Dhahbānī nevertheless has not always a proper understanding
of language, sometimes using words in totally incorrect senses.
Now and then a line of verse can be quite lame, perhaps because,
being an extempore poet, his muse fails him, but it is alleged that
he is a muṭābaṣṣīḥ which it is suggested may be the cause. In
some quarters one hears regrets expressed that he should have
turned his talents to propaganda, but this is a field where poets
are rarely discriminating!
The verses that follow are taken from a poem, Old and new,2
composed on ‘Īd al-Nāḥr, the Feast of the Sacrifices, on Mount
Nuqum. 1
1 Lord of the Living and of the Dead,
Thou Sustainer of all created beings,
Forgive my trespass, erase what is past,
Make my end good and virtuous acts rewarded.
2 My head has turned grey, but I’m a failed pupil,
Sitting among humble folk, loaded with chains,
My pen and my tongue are a­fighting
Those wearing crowns and those of [social] ills.
3 My mind is distraught—what shall I do?
Shall I look at Ṣan‘ā’, rub the salt in my wounds,
(To see] how it was in former time?
It was blind, in ruins and ugly!
4 We used to chat of an evening by the light of lamps
Irrigating them with paraffin from dusk—

The poor man’s lamp with a cotton wick.
By oil-(light) he would pass all his evening times.

5 Ṣan‘ā’ too was kept in the dark, unjustly treated,
With diseases it was enfevered,
With streets of dust, deep in dust,
Streets dark and full of insects.

6 The shops of the Market folk were (mere) holes.
You’d see a shop like a fodder store [for beasts].
Even the merchant was a boorish ignorant fellow,
Importing black cotton or striped (Shāmi) cloth.

7 The labourer, a poor fellow, to be pitied,
At times he’d work, at times rest idle,
Many the workman there was, depriving his family of food.
Whatever came his way the Qāt Market would take.

8 The barber—his shop was a hovel.
Anyone coming for a shave would give him a buqṣah
Pity on him—what sort of life was that?
Should he rest to take breath, he’d perish, alas the pity of it.

9 The blacksmith sticking by his bellows,
With his own hands cuts and welds.
‘His soup is his sweat’, charcoal hard (to get).
The clamour he makes shakes everyone in the Quarters.

10 A fellow (working) in the Carpentry Market
Was in suffering night and day.
He turned grey-haired from hard work with the awl.
If he rose to saw giddiness overcame him or death.

11 With his water-skin the water­carrier passes by
From sparrow­fart till after dusk,
His breakfast (but) a bap stuck in his neck­opening,
Wearing a (sleeveless) jacket made from cow­hide.

12 The butcher calls/invites any one who comes to him.
If he sells his meat [on credit] his business declines.
He used go around like the ḍallālūn.
The list of the debts (owed him) comes to four columns.

13 The cook cooks in a birmah­pot,
Half of the fenugreek (ḥilbūh) is on his fleece­lined coat.
At the baker’s door there are seventy cats.
He hates if the bakeresses come [and outsell him].

14 Woman—folks, how did she stand?
How she laboured! How she was despised!

1 Al-Thawrah, Ṣan‘ā’, 4.iv.72.
They used to stop her, should she say
She would like to read the very Qur'an itself.

15 In her worldly affairs she was frustrated, wearied, Bound up with the 'ajabah-headband,
Dumb she was, become stupid.
The Imam left them in ignorance.

16 Woman—she was kept in purdah,
In the [living] world was (already) in the grave.
If she could read/recite they said it's a shame—to be kept hid. Only chantresses recite.

17 In the house she'd unravel the woof then re-ply it, Or in the dhbeh make millet-stalks and hacsene into fodder twists [for the animals]. Putting on her (good) clothes when she'd finished milking. Women in days gone-by were merry.

18 Verses 18 to 22 describe the traditional costume of San'ami women and have been quoted in cap. p. 537a-b.

23 As for the housework and cooking,
The husband too had the time of his life.
A room would be all arranged like a flower,
You'd want to sit in it—this would be your utmost desire.

24 She'd rise early to grind, from midnight,
Early in the morning she'd go off to the ghayl,
Swishing into the kitchen like a flash-flood.
In the evening she'd milk a couple of cows.

25 She'd sit drinking (qishr)-coffee and sorting through corn,
If she had kneaded she'd start to cry,
(At) wet firewood and dung-cake fuel still damp.

26 She'd lunch, then go to women's gatherings a-visiting.
This verse and the four following verses deal mainly with her costume (see p. 537b).

31 Who left us ill-favoured and dishevelled? Who made us live a life like cows? (None other but) Mam Yal}ya—he could hardly die—
He died only through four revolts!

32 Men in olden time would fight together,
They'd stab (each other) with their daggers.
In the evening she'd milk a couple of cows.

33 Ignorance struck at them with its whips.
They were occupied only with daily needs and buying grain.
Mam Yal}ya spread out his (prayer) carpet,
Made them mindless and filled them with prayers.

34 He let them sing of his name,
Say—how fortunate his star is.
The man of honour would come running to present his gift,
So that he would pray blessings on him.

35 Ignorant folk he misled into error. Made a tail [to his turban].
Any stupid man would kiss his knee.

The 'Liberals' he dubbed hostile to the 'Alawis,
And in prison murdered them by hundreds.

36 Sitting resplendent in his carriage,
Dressed in a cloak shining with silver broderies,
A turban green, couleur de rose,
And striped shawl tricked out with holy verses.

37 His dagger belt (reached up) to his chest,
Inscribed with gold, red-glowing like a coal,
Twenty rosettes set round the dagger,
Of purlas-silver, finely inscribed.

38 His (led) horse behind (the carriage) a-jingling
With bells and silver balls—sweet basil,
And the black slave with sword drawn—
Any who'd attack the Mäm—he'd chop him into little pieces!

39 Beside him we (looked like) flies,
With a couple of caps and only two long shirts.
Black as crows we were then.
We didn't dare wear silken cloth.

40 He was, they say, of the Ahl al-Khatwah,
Knowing beforehand what we shall be doing tomorrow
While we were still bemused with sleep.
How could we know how to revolt?

41 We used to recite in the Qur'an-school,
The pupils would be exhausted by the over-crowding,
The stink of microbes would rise to a man's height,
Filth and disease—long lines of lice.

42 We'd read the A.B.C. on (our) boards.
If the stink spread around we'd flee to the (play)ground.
We used to drink from the dirt on the bottom of the jar—
In the water were numbers of insects.

43 We used to recite Bism al-Bâsimi,
And 'Ali has nothing', in darkness,
With a dominie (faqih) dry as a bone,
Who hung up above him a couple of bastinados.

44 Ugly (indeed) was the state of San'a',
The Imam let it become mortified for very shame.
The Saba' Bath he called a soak-pit,
And the hero of Ghayman, he said, had (his) defects.

The remainder of the poem extols the Russian arms acquired,
the employment and training of Yemeni women in the San'â' textile factory, but seems to know no other than these dubious benefits to the country. Since it attacks King Faisal it would be composed during the Nasserite intervention. Another poem, composed in September 1964 tells us,

Bâb al-Sabah was a dump for firewood,
And the ghayl (ran) beside the ablution-places.
If rain came the road was stopped up with mud—
Everyone walking past would hold his nose [because of the evil smell].
Bâb al-Yaman—how was it, the Grape Market
And the Samsarah of Dâr al-Tawashî?
It was impossible to walk without boots,
Because of the profusion of garbage.

Sayyid Aþmad al-Shâmî remarked that in his days the streets of San'a' were clean (as indeed the photographs taken by Dr Hugh Scott in 1937 clearly show), and if one did see a piece of paper in the street, one was told to collect it and put it somewhere more

1 Ibid, 17.
2 Firewood being sold there.
3 At one time the tanneries were mainly in Harat al-Ṭawâshî.

6 Turkish qanfarah/qanfarah = kundur, jarmah. It seems that many people did not wear footgear in San'a' in those days.
fitting since it might have the name of God upon it. You were not even allowed to blow the mucus (muhkāj) from your nose onto the street. During the floods of August 1975 the writers found the state of San'a' streets was perhaps much worse than formerly as garbage now includes a mass of plastics, tins, cardboard etc.

Commentary

Verse 1
This is a conventional religious opening of a type common to all verse in southern Arabia, perhaps Arabia in general.

Verse 2
Rāsib, a failed pupil, aqāja', pl. of wadā' humble, ḍānim = mushakkal, lettered.

Verse 3
Mā bayn af'a~ bayn... This is a conventional religious opening of a type common to all verse in southern Arabia, perhaps Arabia in general.

Verse 4
Uṣbāh, lit. a piece of cotton, wick.

Verse 5
'Ad = ād, maqfûmah is translated in its double senses, ghabrā ūm. of qāghar, meaning covered with ghabrā, quīmī = zalām.

Verse 6
Khaqānīn, sing., khaqūq, hole, tībir = tībahīr, mīthān, place for fodder, dūshūnīn Turco-Persian, al-mughaffil alladhî mii ya'rif shay, ghayr mutā'ālim, al-qabīlāt 'adwūn al-madānî. The last explanation is interesting—the tribesman foe of the townsman. He is illiterate, not a gārī. Dūmah is women's cotton used for al-tarjūlah huqq al-lihāb, the lower part of the trousers below the knee. Incidentally the commentator in mentioning this latter used the respectful phrase 'Hzrān Allah, God honour you (see p. 423a). Baymah, pl. baqāmah, is a sort of striped (mukaffa't) cloth, not plain (sadāh) with marks on it like finger prints (baqāmah, pl., abūmā).

Verse 7
Yinum = yisratāh, zārat, many, miyrim, depriving. The workman would spend all his money on it. This is a common complaint not only in San'a' but in Aden.

Verse 8
'Iṣkhak, often a brushwood hut, yā ghabans, alas, ā yihlak = la-yihlak, āsarat = nadamat, sighs. ʿĀsaratāt means 'What a pity' and Ghabnīn 'aylāh, 'How much you have suffered'.

Verse 9
Lāri, sticking to, yilāsī, to weld, lit., stick together, sadāw, charcoal, qāri = šīb. Line 3 is a proverb, 'Araq-ah maraq-ah.

Verse 10
Minjarāh, carpentry, mikhdrāh, awli, cf. khadar, yakhdhir al-bāb, make a hole in the door, sayyakh, ʿubzbī daquzkhāh.

Verse 11
Yilwā = yinur, faṭhīdha, see p. 33a, ṣarbarāh, see p. 33b, ṭama', see p. 549a, jāyba, the opening, or opening of a garment above the chest which is used as a receptacle for small things including foodstuffs.

Verse 12
The dalīl or commission agent of course goes round the market to get business—it would seem that butchers once did the same. Khānāt means columns of figures. 'Ad means like, like.

Verse 13
Jamrah, fleece-lined coat. Ṣaumāt-a = ḫabāzāt.

Verse 14
In Ḥaḍramawt and Iraq I have found that there was a view popularly held that if women learned to read and write they would only use this to write lovers—something of this notion was current in San'a' also. Women of the ulema classes however did learn to read the Qur'ān, be they of the Ḥāshimī or Qādirī classes. By the end of Imām Yahyā's reign at least some girls were going to schools.

Verse 15
Makā'ud = maqābīnān, ṣanā'īnīn, mā bish lāhā rāyāh. Kaldāh means 'adam al-nilbāh, and there are verbs lākada and ṣilakada. 'Uṣbāh see p. 536, makā'ud = balīd.

Verse 16
Maḥjūrah, in purdah, secluded, ʿarāh, would be something that brings ʿār, shame etc., something to be kept covered. The nasāshādah, Ahmad al-Ṣamā'ī informs me, sinšid bi-l-ṣiyāt wa-l-ʿāshār al-Yamanīyyah min dūn al-lāl al-ṭarab wa-l-ṣāhār ṣāl al-mayyī, chants (Qur'ānic) verses, Yemeni poetry without a musical instrument, and collects (dhikr) around a dead person. Men nasāshādin do the same. The women perform at a wedding ('arī), death (māṣīt), circumcisions (ṣāhib). The sort of Yemeni poetry that might be sung would be that of al-Bur'ī, whose ṣāḥīn is printed. The nasāshādah is not a wailing woman, she is not drawn from any particular class. They are considered ʿafāšaṭ sayyādāt, ladies, but do not of course belong to the Prophet's house. Often they are employed in teaching girls who call them respectfully, Saydat-nī. Al-Dahābīn in a note to his poem calls them women who wash the dead, but al-Ṣamā'ī says this is another matter. He remembered Banāt Lawzah were women who wash the dead. These women are respected and given an honourable place in a room.

Verse 17
Tinsil = tukhurrij min al-ṣīq 'at al-qūmāsh al-nilbāh, she unravels the wool (bread-wise thread) from a piece of cloth. Basically nasālāh is the warp (length-wise thread), but ghasālāh is the wool. Nasālāt = faṭsal to turn into ṣitāh, and the worker is faṭsal (this last word in Aden is a term of abuse, meaning 'pimp'). Haddab, to make fringes, or to re-do thread, strengthening it by twisting new thread into it.

Verse 18
Bit-ṣāqīb, to make twists of millet (sorghum) and lucerne for foddering sheep-and-goats or cattle (ṣāqīb, pl. al-ṣāqīb 'ib-l-ghānam am ṣaḥāq al-baqār). This would be done in the entrance-hall (dhikr, see p. 41a) of the large San'a'ī house. Shārābīn, merry, they like gay occasions (yibibbayn al-zānah), they like the cup and the drum (yibibbayn al-kās wa-l-tâs), i.e., al-ghubānī, singing. 'The cup' is not to be taken literally!
Verse 23

Bastawāh = ‘āmal al-bayt, sabrah = žāh, mahfūsh = munazzām, naṣīf. The mafraj with its flowered cushions on three sides is not inaptly compared with a flower. Khawrāh = al-ummiyyah; your desire of desires would be realised. Khawrāh is also used of the cravings of pregnancy.

Verse 24

Tabāta = jihat, towards, ghayl, see p. 19 seq., daymāh, kitchen. The last line is typical of the humorous anti-climax characteristic of al-Dhahbānī’s verse.

Verse 25

Tināqqi al-habb, see p. 546b, tīnāq, nassā, draw water, ‘wājī = mālī, bāwāq, see p. 33, lānh, see p. 395a, n. 29, ladanāt = fi-hā rujūbāh. The mudabbiṭumāqyib was the name applied to the Jewish collector of dung or excrement. Musāqyib in this sense is ancient as in Ašā Māyṁūn, Dīwān, ed. Geyer, GMS, London, 1928, 184.

Verse 26

Tafṣirāth, women’s afternoon gatherings, see p. 33a, n. 11, verb tafārraṭat.

Verse 27

In connection with this verse may be quoted the women’s song, Ḥalafī lat yā Muḥammad, Mā zidt raja’t lak bayt, Illā bi-maqramāh wa-sirwāl if arażī, I swear to you Muḥammad I shall not come back to your house again, except for a headcloth and the lesser disturbance up to the coup d’état of 1962. Ḥalafī lived to a great age.

Verse 28

Shū’ah = bāshi’, but shū’ah is also said to mean rimmah, an evil smell, shamār, explained as rakh, weak, ghayr murattab, disorganised. Al-Mām = al-Imām. Kawdāyín = kāā. This attack on Imām Yalāyī is of course completely unjustified. By ‘four revolts’ al-Dhahbānī must mean the Al Wazīr revolution of 1948 and the lesser disturbance up to the coup d’état of 1962. Yalāyī lived to a great age.

Verse 29

Yaḥtāmūn = takhūṭāmū (al-khiṣām wa-l-tanāfūs), ḍarībāt = al-bard, cold spells.

Verse 30

Sarāḥ = maṣṭūf = ma’isah, shiyāţah, see p. 164b seq., ghaffāl, made stupid, ignorant. The allusion is to Imām Yalāyī’s promotion of religion and care for mosques. The verse has a Marxist colour.

Verse 31

Yaḥtarīmū = takhūṭāmū (al-khiṣām wa-l-tanāfūs), ḍarībāt = al-bard, cold spells.

Verse 32

Verse 33

Verse 34

Verse 35

Verse 36

Verse 37

Verse 38

Verse 39

Verse 40

Verse 41
Verse 42

Lathī, the wooden board used in elementary schools, corresponding to the slate used (formerly?) in Britain, for copying and learning the Qur’an. Jahūr, the earth etc. in the well-water that sinks to the bottom of the jar (dawb).

Verse 43

Bism al-Bāsīmi is the name of a sort of recitation, used only in the Yemen, which children at the elementary stage learn in order to get to know the letters of the alphabet and the vowels. The title is derived from bismillāh. It has such definitions as ‘al-bā’ nuqṭah min asfūl, wa-‘l-tā’. . . the b has a dot below and the t . . .’. The verse’s ‘Alī has nothing’ means that it has no dots. The village faqīh used to teach (and doubtless still does) in the elementary school (yudarris fi ‘l-mīlamah). He was also mostly the sinaydar of the mosque. He acted as a sort of local adviser (mustashār). For the local villagers or tribes he used to write their makātib, e.g. al-baṣṭa’ir (house-deeds), ‘uqūd al-dayn (debt contracts), al-‘uwād (pacts), al-sawāj wa-‘l-jašāq (marriage and divorce). In the proverbial literature he is often satirised or a figure of fun. The bastinado, faqahah (Dozy, Supplément, faqahah, fully described there) is said to be a sort of pole with two holes at the ends, a rope being attached from one hole to the other. When a child has to be punished his legs are inserted between the rope and the pole and the apparatus wound tight—the soles of his feet are then held up to be beaten. In the villages where children mostly go bare-foot this punishment on their horny soles is probably not so severe as it sounds.

Verse 44

Qū’ah, see p. 516a. It seems that this bath was commonly known as Ḥammām Qū’ah, but, the title being distasteful, it was called Ḥammām Saba’. Its ugly title was not given it by Imām Yabīy of course. Makhmū’ah = maqhūrah, put to shame, mortified, snubbed. The hero of Ghaymān is probably Sayf b. Dhi Yazan, still a popular hero of the remote past to Ṣan’ānis.
San'a today. A map of San'a (courtesy the General Organization of Antiquities and Libraries) of the old city and modern adjacent areas. An indication of the present-day growth of the city is gained from von Wissmann's map (p. 118) and also from the aerial photograph on p. 21.
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List of maps
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Yemen vilayetii hantasi, 1:500,000, 1323 (1907).
[This map was used as the basis for the U.S. official map of the Yemen (38336 12-63), 1:500,000, 2 sheets]
The glossary contains words and expressions in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, and Himyarite. It includes a list of terms with definitions and cross-references to related entries. The entries are organized alphabetically and include various topics such as family, commerce, agriculture, and culture. The glossary aims to provide a comprehensive reference for understanding the linguistic and cultural context of these languages.
San'a—An Arabian Islamic City

Atkû, 'awâ'id mu'tâdah mujriit-un; 'Adad, 'Adah ( 'awil'id), Awliyà Allàh, 'Adanï, ' Abâ, 'Abbâl, 'Ahd (' uhüd ), 'Aduww; akhadha a.m., 574

Amal (a'mizl), 'Al/aq al-binâ ', 'A/am ( a ' lam ) , integrity, 225b; 'Adhâqï ('adhâqi)!)lât), 'amàlah, with cog-wheel, 264a

Alïf; 'alüfah, oak-galls, or substitute for them, 230a ( n ) & b ( n )

Alûfah, mu'izwadah

Al'imm ( 'ulamâ' ) , 'AlClwah, min 'a., 'Ajaz (ya'jaz), 552b ( n ); see 'ajjal,

Alâj; see laj

Alûfah, mu'izwadah

Alûfah, mu'izwadah

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San'a'- An Arabian Islamic City
Glossary

roadcast, 759

broadcast, 759
Glossary

Qidha, Qidam; Qidam, Qidam.

Qilya/ah, Qilib, Qilib, Qilib, Qilib.

Qillah, Qildil (Q<stdlib), Qildil.

Qildiyah, Qildiyah.

Qishr (al-bunn), Qilis, Qilis, Qilis.

Qiyâ<J, Qisr, Qisr, Qisr, Qisr.

Qirrihah, Qindil (Q<stdlib), Qindil.

Qiyâ<J, Qisr, Qisr, Qisr, Qisr.

Qumash, Qumash.

Qushnah, Qushnah.

Qu H ah, Qu H ah, Qu H ah.

Quurwah, Quurwah.

Qublah (Q<stdlib), Qublah, Qublah.

Qublah, Qublah.

Qulaz (Tur.), Qulaz (Tur.), Qulaz (Tur.).

Qur~ (a qriir), Qur~ (a qriir), Qur~ (a qriir).

Qar, Qar.

Q rdah, Q rdah, Q rdah.

Qishf, Qishf, Qishf, Qishf.

Qisâmah; qubâbah, Qisâmah; qubâbah, Qisâmah; qubâbah.

Qil/ah, Qil/ah, Qil/ah, Qil/ah.

Qadim, Qadim, Qadim, Qadim.

Qubâbah, Qubâbah, Qubâbah, Qubâbah.

Qubl, Qubl, Qubl.

Qub, Qub, Qub, Qub.

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San’a—An Arabian Islamic City

Zangeneh, pair, 526b
Zardah (zamaldah), to flatten, 550a (n); see zalabj
Zummak/zirwa, thick creamed milk, 150a, 432a (n), 552a
Zumqah = quqqah, everywhere, 149a
Zaarrat/jarzak, type of animal, 72b, 352a; also form qarayn, 74b (n); cf. maring
Zawaj, type of grape, 217b
Zawaj (zawab), to flatter, 550b (n); see zabiyâ
Zawm(ah)/zum, boiled curdled milk, 150a, 432a (n), 552a
Zawqab, = taqa/bab, to whore, 149b
Zayariaziyarat, type of arbalest, 72b, 74a; also form ziyârât, 74b (n); cf. zabariyyat
Zaytün, type of grape, 271b
Zaxvan, to decorate, 324b; tazyin, decking out, 234a (n); tazayyan, reading for tazabban, 182a (n); zînah, play, 74a; yi,~ibbayn al-z., they (f.) like gay occasions, 561b; zinah, silver ornaments, 238b; see muzaY.Yin
Zifef; see zaff
Zihrah, small room, 457b
Zîj, astronomical handbook, 34a & b
Zimizm, jewelled nose ornament, 239b
Zinil'; see zàni
Zinhil (zanGbil), z. qishr, basket of coffee-husk, 159a; var. zambil, basket, 543a; zaniibil, basket-like silver ornaments, 239b
Zinjiri, chain decorations, 479a
Zinjabil, ginger, 312b, 554a, 556b, 557b (n)
Zinnah, full or calf-length garment, 529a, 532a, 533a, 535b, 538a; z. mukarmashah, garment with tucks on bodice & pleated cuffs, 537a
Ziqq, bellows, 236a (n); z. (azqàq) , skin containers, 186a & (n), 186b; see zaqq
Ziqqah, alley, 127b
Ziqziqah; see zaqzaq
Zirr, cloves, 554a & b, 555b
Zirr(azr(lr), button(s), various types, 239a; see /i'bat al-azriJr
Ziyllrah, visit, or gift given at visit, 558b; yijîb/yiddi. z., to gift ~ visiting gift, 558b; ziyiirat a/-ar~àm, exchange of gifts with relatives, 252b; see mazyUr
Ziyârât; see zayiiri{
ZiY.Y, dress, 421a
Ziyyüfim (Heb.), forgeries, = Ar. muzayyaf, 239a & (n)
Zu'bah (zu'ab), leather bag, 167b, 168a (n)
Al-Zubânâ, star name, 32b
Zubdiyyah (zabiidi), type of pot, 167b (n)
Zubrah, hammer, 425a (n)
Zughayyirah, a little, 552b; see zaghirah
Zuharah, Venus, 130a
Zuhd; see zQhid
Zu~al, Saturn, 149b (n)
Zujâj, glass, 'aqd z., z. baradi/shajarî/thalJ Ï , glass with moulded relief patterns, 484a; see lawh
Zulfah, portion of the first pan of night, 33b
Zullah, = n~, al-layl, middle of the night, 33b; see zallah
Zûm; see zawm
Zumbah(ât), round cutter to make metal blank, round stamp of seal, 261b, 226b; see zambah
Zunniir (zanânir), ringlets or side-locks of Jews, 39a, 419b, 421a; {Ül al-zanânir, length of locks, 167a (n)
ZuqQq, lane, 391b; see muzqur; zaqq
Zuqzuqi, lane, 391a (n), 443a; see muzqur
Zu~al, giraffe (?), hom, 263b; see sayfani (SQY/)
Zu'üf, dhirah (millet) flour, 549b (n)
Zafar, a disease of horses, 225b & (n)
Zalama, to ill-treat, 80a; zulim, oppressor, 155b; zâlim, injustice, 56 la; zulûmât, wrongful acts, 163b; ma:;;lümah, unjustly treated, kept in the dark, 561a; see ma:;;âlim; 4aw' :;;aliI.m, light before sunrise, last shadows of night, 33b; see jalis
Zal, to continue, 229a (n); see maJalis
Zalim, to measure
Zalr, tali' af-z., midday lunch, or midday call to prayer, 33a; see zaahir; he'd al-z., afternoon, 33a; see jalis
Zulm, unfairness, injustice, oppression, etc., 152a; zulûm, point of midday, 33a; see waqt al-:;;.., midday lunch, or midday call to prayer, 33a; see zaahir; he'd al-z., afternoon, 33a; see jalis
Zulm, al-Z. (al)-Awwal & (al)-Thâni, star names, 32b; Tali' al-Z., the ascension of the Zulm(s), 33b
Index of names of persons, families, tribes, races, nationalities, titles and supernatural beings

In classifying entries no account is taken of the Arabic words, (Abd, Abu, b. b. b. b. b. etc.) which are disregarded, as are European official titles with alf, etc. Some unvocalised names e.g. Sh m r, are entered in full and shortened form, the fuller form usually, but perhaps not invariably, is given in the Index: sometimes both are entered. The titles and names of the Imams are particularly confusing but it is hoped that a correct identification has been made in each case in the Index, for example in the case of the Mutawakkil: Proper names of persons given to surnames and wells are not included in this Index but in that of Place names (see below). Such general names of frequent occurrence as those of groups like Shafi'i, Sunni, and and supernatural beings are disregarded, as are European given to Europeans. Such general names of frequent occurrence as those of groups like Shafi'i, Sunni, and Shiah are only included in a few significant instances.

The following abbreviations are used: Ab. (Abjad), b. (broad), br. (broad), Muh. (Muhammad), Q. (Qadi), S. (Sayyid), Sh. (Shaykh). In page references (s) stands for separate, but this is frequently omitted where, e.g., the note only completes a reading in the text.

Abdulhamit II, Ottoman Sultan, 97b (n)
Abd al-Karim al-San'ani, 54a
Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, Umayyad Caliph, 47b (n), 61b, 62a
Abd al-Ansar al-Di’i, 51a
Abd al-Razzaq al-Faqih, 53a
Abd al-Nabiyy b. Mahdi, 397b
Abd al-Malik al-Yamani, Faqih, Amir of
Abd al-Razziiq al-Harithi, alternatively called 'Abdullah, 46a & b.
Abd al-Razzaq b. al-Iasaan al-Ruqayli, 325a
Abdullah b. Harharah, Sultan, 80b
Abdullah b. Ibrahim, Yu’firid, governor of
Abdullah b. al-Mutawakkil Al; ‘Ali; ‘Ali
Abdullah b. al-Masri, 55a
Abd al-Malik b. Abi Talib, S., 429a
Abd al-Malik al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik b. Al; ‘Ali; ‘Ali
Abd al-Malik b. ‘Abd al-Rahman al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik b. ’Abd Allah al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik al-Afqal, Sultan, 34b; see al-Malik al-Afqal
Abd al-Malik al-Hindi, 90a
Abdul ’Aziz Al Sa’üd, King, 100a, 102b
Abd al-Razziiq al-Harithi, 91a
Abd al-Razzaq al-Faqih, 53a
Abd il-Hamid, Ottoman Sultan, 96a
Abd al-Malik al-Mutawakkil, 54a
Abdilhamit II, Ottoman Sultan, 97b (n)
Abd al-Malik b. Al; ‘Ali; ‘Ali
Abd al-Talib, b. ’Abd Allah al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik al-Hindi, 90a
Abd al-Malik b. ’Abd Allah al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik al-Hindi, 90a
Abd al-Malik al-Afqal, Sultan, 34b; see al-Malik al-Afqal
Abd al-Malik b. Al; ‘Ali; ‘Ali
Abd al-Talib, b. ’Abd Allah al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik al-Hindi, 90a
Abd al-Malik b. Al; ‘Ali; ‘Ali
Abd al-Talib, b. ’Abd Allah al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik al-Hindi, 90a
Abd al-Malik b. Al; ‘Ali; ‘Ali
Abd al-Talib, b. ’Abd Allah al-’Adil, Ayyubid, 305b
Abd al-Malik al-Hindi, 90a
Place Name and Geographical Index