

Yaman: Its Early Medieval History

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Reprint of the 1892 edition. Hardbound. Cloth. Oversized octavo. Book xxv, 358 p., 1 l., 152 p., 1 large folding genealogical table, folding Map. London: E. Arnold, 1892. Yemen was one of the oldest centers of civilization in the Near East. Between the 9th century BC and the 6th century AD, it was part of the Minaean, Sabaean, Himyarite, Oatabanian, Hadhramawtian, and Awsanian kingdoms, which controlled the lucrative spice trade. It was known to the Romans as "Arabia Felix" ("Happy Arabia") because of the riches its trade generated; Augustus Caesar attempted to annex it, but the expedition failed. In the 7th century, Islamic caliphs began to exert control over the area. After this caliphate broke up, the former north Yemen came under control of Imams of various dynasties usually of the Zaidi sect, who established a theocratic political structure that survived until modern times. (Imam is a religious term. The Shiites apply it to the prophet Muhammad's son-in-law! Ali, his sons Hassan and Hussein, and subsequent lineal descendants, whom they consider to have been divinely ordained unclassified successors of the prophet.) Egyptian Sunni caliphs occupied much of north Yemen throughout the 11th century. By the 16th century and again in the 19th century, north Yemen was part of the Ottoman Empire, and in some periods its Imams exerted control over south Yemen. This is a history of the Arabs of Yemen during the Medieval Period. It is a translation of `Umarah ibn early work on the subject. "Umarah ibn's reputation is primarily as a poet, but he is also a leading historian of his native country, Yemen.

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